

**Negotiated Revolution:**  
**The Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile**

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## Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to rescue revolution, both as concept and practice, from the misplaced triumphalism of the contemporary world. Given the relative openness and flux which characterises the post-cold war international system, the extent and range of problems which plague the world, and the enduring human proclivity for change, it would be folly to ignore a process which has had such a constitutive impact on world politics over the past few centuries.

To that end, this thesis is a comparison of three contemporary 'revolutions': the end of apartheid in South Africa; the collapse of communism in the Czech Republic; and the transition from military dictatorship to market democracy in post-Pinochet Chile. It asks two main questions: first, do these transformations represent, in a substantive sense, examples of revolutionary change? Second, in what ways do they compare and contrast with past revolutions?

The first two chapters deal with the principal theoretical and methodological issues posed by the dissertation. I outline how an *International Sociology* operating as a 'middle level analysis' can unravel processes of complex social change in world politics, including revolutionary change. I then set out the case for a conjunctural, process based approach to the study of revolutionary change, defining revolutions as *the mass, rapid, forceful, systemic transformation of the principal power relations in a particular society*.

The three case studies use primary and secondary source material to both back up and challenge these assertions. I argue that, while the Czech Republic and South Africa *can* be considered as substantive examples of revolutionary change, Chile is better understood as a case of transition – only a partial modification of the society's main power relations has taken place over the last ten years or so.

But although both the Czech Republic and South Africa share many characteristics with past examples of revolutionary change, they also differ from them in a number of crucial ways: the role of the 'international' and the state, the nature of violence, the use of ideology, and the process of negotiation itself. As such, they signify a novel process in world politics — *negotiated revolution*.

I conclude by examining the utility of the concept of negotiated revolution for understanding other examples of radical change, both actual and potential, in contemporary world politics.



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## **Abbreviations**

ANC	African National Congress
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum
APLA	Azanian People's Liberation Army
AU	The African Union
AVF	Afrikaner Volksfront
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BIS	Bezpečnostní Informační Služba
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Area
CEI	Central European Initiative
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CNI	Central Nacional de Información
CNS	Coordinadora Nacional Sindical
CODESA	Conference for a Democratic South Africa
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COPACHI	Comité de Cooperación para la paz en Chile
COSAG	Concerned South African Group
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPC	Confederación de la Producción y del Comercio
ČSSD	Česká Strana Sociálně Demokratická
CUT	Central Unitaria de Trabajadores
DA	Democratic Alliance
DINA	Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional
DP	Democratic Party
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FPMR	Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	General Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GNU	Government of National Unity
HNP	Herstigte Nasionale Party
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IFPs	Investment Privatisation Funds
JMC	Joint Management Centre
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
KDU-ČSL	Křestanská a Demokratická Unie – Československá Strana Lidová
KSČM	Komunistická Strana Čech a Moravy
MAPU	Movimiento de Acción Popular
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
MERG	Macro-Economic Research Group
MIR	Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
MPLA	Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola
MNU	Movimiento Nacional Unidad
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Area

NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP	National Party
NNP	New National Party
NWO	National Women's Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Občanská Demokratická Aliance
ODS	Občanská Demokratická Strana
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OF	Občanské Forum
OH	Občanské Hnutí
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCOP	National Council of the Provinces
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano de Chile
PEM	Plan de Empleo Mínimo
PLPs	Presidential Lead Projects
POJH	Programa de Ocupación para Jefes de Hogar
PPD	Partido por la Democracia
RDP	Redistribution and Development Programme
RN	Renovación Nacional
SABC	South African Broadcasting Council
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	South African Development Community
SADF	South African Defence Force
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SANGOCO	South African National NGO Coalition
SAPS	South African Police Service
SERNAM	Servicio Nacional de la Mujer
SOFOFA	Sociedad de Fomento Fabril
StB	Státní Bezpečnost
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCDP	United Christian Democratic Party
UDI	Unión Demócrata Independiente
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UDF	United Democratic Front
UP	Unidad Popular
US	Unie Svobody
WHO	World Health Organisation
WNC	Women's National Coalition
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## **Introduction:**

### **The two faces of revolution**

Revolutions, like the temple of Janus, have two faces. One is an elegant, abstract and humanitarian face, an idyllic face, the dream of revolution and its meaning under the calm distancing of eternity. The other is crude, violent and very concrete, rather nightmarish, with all the hypnotic power, loss of perspective and breadth of understanding you might expect to go with nightmares.<sup>1</sup>

From the time of the great exchanges between Thomas Paine and Edmund Burke over the sanctity or barbarism of the French Revolution, scholars have disagreed fundamentally over what John Dunn calls the ‘two faces of revolution’. For an activist like Paine, revolutions were ‘a renovation of the natural order of things, a system of principles as universal as truth and the existence of man, and combining moral with political happiness and national prosperity’.<sup>2</sup> But for the conservative Burke, a staunch critic of the events of 1789, the revolution was nothing more than a ‘monstrous, tragic-comic scene’ with potentially fatal consequences for the future of Europe.<sup>3</sup>

In reality, revolutions neither fulfil the expectations of the romantics who advocate them, nor become the dystopia feared by those who promote their overthrow. In order to understand the significance of revolutions therefore – in this age or any other – it is important to cut a swathe through both of these myths: the exaggerated fantasies of revolutionaries themselves and the claims of those, often conservative, thinkers who either don't like revolutions or who deny the

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<sup>1</sup> Dunn (1989: 4).

<sup>2</sup> Paine (1993: 103).

<sup>3</sup> See Burke in Brown, Nardin and Rengger (eds.) (2002: 292-300).

importance of the process both to domestic societies and international relations. Revolutions neither start history afresh from a fictitious year zero nor can they be reduced to mere trifles or footnotes in history. Revolutions and revolutionaries have a formative effect both on the particular societies within which they take place and the wider international relations within which they interact. Yet, in reality, much of the new order is curtailed by old regime structures and much of the revolutionary programme is never initiated in the first place.

In the present day, much of the passion and drama which characterised the great debate about the two faces of revolution seems strangely out of place. To all extents and purposes, the age of revolutions has been consigned to the archives. Even one of the theorists most attuned to the formative impact of revolution on world politics, Fred Halliday, subtitles his most recent book on the subject, *The rise **and fall** of the sixth great power*. The term revolution has been reduced to a sound bite, more often a means to peddle magazines, sell cars or spin policy proposals than a call to action. Revolutions appear to have little place amidst the apathy and weariness of mainstream political discourse in advanced market democracies. In an era seemingly best captured by Fukuyama's infamous phrase 'the end of history', revolutions have been tamed and commodified, irrelevant to a world in which the big issues of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been settled.<sup>4</sup>

This thesis is an attempt to rescue revolution, both as concept and practice, from the misplaced triumphalism of the contemporary world. There are two main reasons why it is wrong to write off either the study or practice of revolution. First, as Martin Wight points out, revolution along with war, is the key constitutive element of the contemporary world. Over half of the last five hundred years of world politics have featured some kind of conflict

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<sup>4</sup> See Fukuyama (1992).

between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary states.<sup>5</sup> In recent times, particularly during the cold war, much of the drama of world politics was played out through processes of revolution and counter-revolution.<sup>6</sup> As Fred Halliday writes, ‘revolutions were not mistakes or detours but part of the formation of the modern world’.<sup>7</sup>

Since the end of the cold war, the dream of a new world order founded on peace, prosperity and security has collapsed in many parts of the world. A decade or so on from the apparent triumph of Western market democracy, relatively few of the world’s nations can be labelled ‘democratic’.<sup>8</sup> In the former Soviet states of Central Asia, a disturbing melange of authoritarian alternatives, mafiosos and former party cadres are carving up the spoils of a failed transition. In Latin America, populists, past dictators and strongmen, some actively rejecting ‘Western-style democracy’, are returning via the ballot box.<sup>9</sup> Armed conflict continues to plague Africa, from The Great Lakes to the Horn. In South Eastern Europe, a decade of war has reaped a devastating legacy on the social, economic and political landscape of much of the region.<sup>10</sup> Fundamentalist groups of various hues question the very foundations of modernity.

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<sup>5</sup> See Wight (1978).

<sup>6</sup> For more on this, see Schutz and Slater (eds.) (1990).

<sup>7</sup> Halliday (1999: 331).

<sup>8</sup> Writing in 1999, Fred Halliday claims that no more than a fifth of the world’s states are democracies. Although many states bear the trappings of formal democracy, often these are no more than convenient smokescreens masking the continuation of semi-authoritarian regimes.

<sup>9</sup> This trend is best epitomised by the example of Hugo Chavez, a former Venezuelan paratrooper who returned as president in 1998, six years after he had conducted an attempted coup, in order to lead a ‘peaceful revolution’ against the ‘rancid oligarchs’ and ‘squealing pigs’ of the old regime. But other examples are also pertinent – the former dictator of Bolivia, Hugo Banzer, was re-elected as president in 1997. Since Banzer’s death in 2002, the country has witnessed a period of some turbulence. In Peru, Alberto Fujimori’s period in office ended in 2000 with his forced exile amidst a welter of political and financial scandals. His successor, Alejandro Toledo, was forced to declare a state of emergency in 2002 as a result of increasingly violent grass roots protests. The current instability which mars Ecuador and Argentina, along with Colombia’s longer-term volatility, serve as potent examples of the region’s unsteady milieu.

<sup>10</sup> Although many states in the region, among them Serbia, Croatia and Kosovo now bare the trappings of formal democracy, the region remains mired in deep seated problems from which it will be difficult to recover, not least among them the spectre of a return to authoritarian rule.

There is, as yet, therefore no concrete understanding or general agreement about the key features of contemporary international relations. Questions loom large over whether the world is operating under the suzerainty of an American empire, if there is an imminent multipolarity marked by the rise of global institutions and organisations, or whether the fundamental challenge of the epoch is a clash between radically divergent views of modernity. Furthermore, the pressing concerns facing the world – civil conflict, poverty, inequality, disease, social dislocation and environmental catastrophe – hint at the continuing salience of radical change. Given, then, both the relative openness and uncertainty which characterise the structural conditions of the contemporary era and the persistent conflicts which mar world politics, it seems strangely remiss to omit the process which, throughout history, has had both such a foundational influence on world politics and which remains, both as aspiration and practice, so relevant to the study and practice of world politics.

The second point about the importance of revolution to the modern world is a more theoretical one. As I discuss in chapter two, many of those who deny the importance of revolution to the contemporary world do so because they mistakenly equate revolutions with certain core, inalienable features. Such a view is misguided because it reduces revolutions to static objects of analysis rather than seeing them as dynamic processes with changing features dependent on their historical context, social conditions and collective action. The concept of revolution exists in every major language group in the world. It also has a long and diverse heritage traceable back to ancient China, Hebrew scholarship and Greek philosophy.<sup>11</sup> Yet the nature and meaning of revolution has changed across time and place, varying from the classical concept of a return to a previous order to the volcanic ruptures associated with the

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<sup>11</sup> For more on this, see Halliday (1999) and Arendt (1963).



French Revolution and other modern revolutions.<sup>12</sup> There is no theoretical reason, therefore, to suggest that revolution cannot take a contemporary form in keeping with an era marked by globalisation and heteronomy. This form, I argue, is ‘negotiated revolution’.

The term ‘negotiated revolution’ was one that I first employed during a masters thesis on the collapse of communism in 1996.<sup>13</sup> However, much as I would like to claim sole ownership of the concept, any claim of originality has been tempered by subsequent research in the field. Since the onset of my PhD in 1999, I have come across the term ‘negotiated revolution’ in various guises. Its initial use, it seems, dates back to a book written in 1993 by two eminent South African scholars, Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley.<sup>14</sup> It was further popularised in South Africa by the journalist Allister Sparks, who used the term as the subtitle of his investigation into the secret talks which took place between the apartheid regime and ANC leaders prior to the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990.<sup>15</sup> Further afield, the Hungarian social scientist, Gustav Tökés, used ‘negotiated revolution’ to describe the pacted, elite controlled transition from communism to liberal capitalism in Hungary.<sup>16</sup> Outside these two area specific settings, the concept has featured in some general literature on transitions.<sup>17</sup>

But despite such usage of the term, my conceptualisation of negotiated revolution contains an essential originality. I argue that negotiated revolutions are *like* other examples of revolutionary change in three main ways. First, they are conjunctural processes which take place when rulers can no longer rule and the ruled will no longer go on being ruled in the

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<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the changing meaning of revolution, see pp 55-60.

<sup>13</sup> See Lawson (1996).

<sup>14</sup> See Adam and Moodley (1993a).

<sup>15</sup> See Sparks (1995).

<sup>16</sup> See Tökés (1996).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Kennedy (1999).

same way.<sup>18</sup> Second, they are mass, rapid, forceful, systemic transformations of a society's political-coercive, social-ideological and economic power relations. Third, they have a *constitutive* effect on the norms of the global order and the rules of international relations. But negotiated revolutions are distinguished from past examples of revolutionary change by five core features: the role of the international and the state, the nature of violence, their appropriation of ideology and the process of negotiation itself.<sup>19</sup>

This thesis is therefore premised on two key assertions. First, that both theoretically and empirically, revolutions remain central to any nuanced understanding of contemporary world politics. Second, that the contemporary form of revolutionary change – negotiated revolution – is crucial to unravelling the complexities of the post-cold war world. The central story of human history is the dialectic between freedom and domination, a story intrinsically bound up with conflict, change and therefore, revolution. There seems little sound cause for suggesting that this should cease to be the case as we enter the twenty-first century.

## Structure

The first chapter of the thesis provides the overarching context for the rest of the work. It is based on the premise that the century old division between Sociology and International Relations (IR) founded on the sanctity of state borders has no analytical value in explaining contemporary world politics. I therefore set out to integrate International Relations more firmly within the broad family that constitute the social sciences, not as an adjunct to more

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<sup>18</sup> Revolutions are conjunctural in the sense that they are a complex amalgamation of systemic crisis, structural opening and collective action within a rapidly changing context. In this, I broadly follow Foran (1993b) who argues that revolutions incorporate a multiplicity of factors and causes – international, economic, political and social. Foran claims that understanding revolutions as conjunctural phenomena characterises 'fourth generation' approaches to the study of revolutions.

<sup>19</sup> I am not saying by this that these five features were absent from previous revolutions but that the *novelty* of negotiated revolutions lies in their *particular* appropriation of these factors. These issues are discussed in length in chapter six.

prominent cousins, but as a relatively autonomous field with substantive points to make about key events and processes in world politics. I make the case for an *International Sociology*, defined as the attempt to systematically and rigorously explore patterns in world politics, trace a path of causality through these events and highlight generic themes within them.

This *International Sociology* is made up of three core components. First, I outline how history, properly applied, can tease out, refine and test general propositions. I trace the relationship between history, sociology and IR over the past two centuries, showing how all three disciplines are integral to understanding world politics. Second, I explain how an intermediary approach centred on institutions and organisations can unravel the interplay between structure and agency, showing how the reproduction of social structures is always at least partially contested. Again, I trace the historical dimensions of debates in the field to make the case for a ‘theory of the middle ground’ which sees organisations and institutions as tangible sites by which to study processes of social action, social change and thereby, revolution in world politics. Finally, I look at how a sociological conceptualisation of power relations can serve as a systematic lens by which to assess these processes. I use insights from both sociology and political science in order to advance a concept of power as a relational phenomenon which runs alongside processes of social action and social change. I pool institutions and organisations into three core sets of power relations – economic, political-coercive and social-ideological – so as to establish whether individual cases warrant the term ‘revolution’.

The second chapter acts as a link between the broad themes of the first chapter and the more detailed analysis of the case studies which follow. I begin by clarifying some common errors made about revolutions, setting out the case for seeing revolutions as dynamic processes with

features contingent on both their world historical context and their particular social settings. The second section adds weight to this argument through a detailed examination of existing approaches to revolution. I look at the historical development of major theoretical paradigms, critically assessing how the principal research traditions have evolved over the past two centuries. The third part sets out a distinctive approach to studying revolutions. I make the case for a conjunctural, process based survey which distinguishes between revolutionary situations, events and outcomes, and focuses on how power relations are rapidly and *systemically* transformed by revolutions, thereby differentiating them from transitions, examples of regime change or longer term evolutionary change. I conclude by delineating the core elements of ‘negotiated revolutions’, outlining the principal features which set such transformations apart from past examples of revolutionary change.

The three case studies, each of which have their own chapter, incorporate findings drawn from interviews in the UK, fieldwork abroad and a thorough review of secondary material. Each chapter is divided into two sections. The first part outlines the long-term and short-term causes, events and outcomes of the Czech, South African and Chilean transformations, tracing how structural forces intertwined with collective action in the genesis of each case. I use the approach outlined in the second chapter – *Studying Revolutions* – to compare and contrast the three cases with past examples of revolutionary change. The second section of each chapter uses the *International Sociology* outlined in chapter one to gauge the extent of each society’s transformation, comparing key institutions and organisations before the ‘revolutionary moment’ with their contemporary manifestations. I argue that, while the Czech Republic and South Africa *can* be considered as substantive examples of revolutionary change, Chile is better understood as a case of transition – only a partial modification of the society’s principal power relations has taken place over the last ten years or so. But although

both the Czech Republic and South Africa share many characteristics with past examples of revolution, they also differ from them in a number of crucial ways. As such, they signify a novel process in world politics – *negotiated revolution*.

The final chapter of the thesis explores the divergences between negotiated revolutions and past examples of revolution. I survey in some detail the five key characteristics which make up negotiated revolutions. First, negotiated revolutions are actively welcomed and formatively encouraged by international structures and agencies. Second, in negotiated revolutions, revolutionaries deliberately eschew the blind obedience to a particular ideology which legitimised the excesses of many revolutions in the past. Third, violence appears in structural and latent forms rather than as an explicit tool. Fourth, revolutionary change itself is negotiated by old regime and alternative elites. Finally, because negotiated revolutions result in the institutionalisation of democratic regimes based on the rule of law, they do not lead to the development of stronger, more bureaucratic states.

In the final section of the thesis, I make the case for seeing negotiated revolutions as central to any discussion of radical change in the contemporary world. As the only examples of relatively peaceful yet revolutionary transformations between autocracies and market-democracies, negotiated revolutions have distinct and profound consequences both for the international system in general, and for those states facing similar contexts and pressures in particular. The age of revolution is not yet over. The debate which has raged from the time of Paine and Burke over the two faces of revolution remains one of immense significance to the contemporary world.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Towards an International Sociology**

The 'international' is not something 'out there', an area of policy that occasionally intrudes in the form of bombs or higher oil prices but which can conventionally be ignored... The requirements of inter-state competition explain much of the development of the modern state, while the mobilisation of domestic resources and internal constraints account for much of states' successes in this competition. Disciplines such as political science and sociology on the one hand, and International Relations on the other, are looking at two dimensions of the same process: without undue intrusion or denial of the specificity of the other, this might suggest a stable and fruitful relationship.<sup>20</sup>

Neither the idea nor the practice of International Sociology is especially new. In 1966, the World Congress of Sociology first included a panel on 'The Sociology of International Relations'. Since then, a number of scholars ranging from Evan Luard to Fred Halliday have sought to delineate a discrete field of analysis which explicitly links IR and Sociology. There is even a journal now dedicated entirely to the subject. Yet the relationship between IR and Sociology remains, for the most part, uneasy. In recent years, International Relations scholars have increasingly encroached onto traditionally sociological terrain through interventions in debates about structure and agency, and the role of formal and informal institutions. But all too frequently, these interventions are marred by the piecemeal application of out-of-date theories to inappropriate issues. At the same time, sociologists, particularly historical sociologists, have repeatedly ignored or marginalised International Relations, even when dealing specifically with international events or the core concepts of world politics.

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<sup>20</sup> Rosenberg (1990: 17).

This chapter is an attempt to build some foundational links between International Relations and sociology, using insights from both disciplines to construct a workable, rigorous and systematic International Sociology. At first glance, this may seem a forlorn endeavour. After all, most IR scholars still consider the relative anarchy, disorder and scarcity of international relations quite distinct from the hierarchy, order and density which characterises domestic relations. There are several reasons why I believe that such a viewpoint is badly misplaced. These reasons are dealt with in some depth during the course of this chapter. For now, I will restrict my critique to two introductory points.

First, order is not a top-down functional process derived from hierarchical social systems. Domestic orders, despite the existence of single overarching authorities, remain prone to conflict, civil war and revolution, processes which can hardly therefore be considered as the sole province of the international. It is absurd to claim that processes of social action operate differently according to some arbitrary distinction between endogenous and exogenous boundaries. Rather, both domestic and international relations are united by a common sociological process – the interplay between structure and agency which engenders social action and social change. It is clear that the key structures of the contemporary world: the market, patriarchy, the states-system and so on; the key issues facing the world: the persistence of violent conflict and war, terrorism, inequality and poverty, environmental derogation, international crime etc.; and the key agencies of the modern era: states, transnational firms, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social movements and the like are at once both global and local in aspiration, shape and impact. Cocaine which arrives on the streets of London travels from Colombia via Poland; the taxation of electronic goods requires agreements by both international and domestic actors; decisions about whether to go to war in Iraq are subject to bureaucratic competition,

pressure from domestic elites and public opinion, as well as the choices made by allied and competitor states, multilateral organisations and agencies. The study of international relations in such a context is about recognising the connexity *between* the domestic and international and exploring how both fields are mutually constitutive of the other, not reifying capricious distinctions which fail to stand up to either theoretical or empirical scrutiny.

Second, a number of scholars, among them Justin Rosenberg, Adam Watson and Nicholas Onuf, have shown how core ‘taken for granted’ assumptions of IR – anarchy, sovereignty and the balance of power – are better seen as social constructions dependent on time and place, used functionally by scholars to cordon off areas of analysis and maintain intellectual hegemony over the field.<sup>21</sup> As such, these concepts, masquerading as timeless truths, are made to *appear* natural, immutable and eternal. Fred Halliday argues that International Sociology can serve to denaturalise these basic (mis)conceptions, emancipating IR from a fetishised micro-theory which fails to account for structure and history, an anti-foundationalism which rejects rationalism and a general drive to presentism.<sup>22</sup> By focusing on large-scale processes of social action and social change over time, International Sociology can shed light on shifts within the major contours of world politics and indeed, on the study of modernity itself. As such, International Sociology can provide a vigour and rigour to IR which many contemporary approaches lack.

My general thrust then is to integrate IR more firmly into the broad family which constitutes the social sciences, not as an adjunct to more prominent cousins, but as a relatively

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<sup>21</sup> Adam Watson (1992) shows persuasively how the international system has variously been characterised by empire, hegemony, suzerainty and dominion as well as anarchy over the past five thousand years. Similarly, Justin Rosenberg (1994) demonstrates that the concept of a timeless ‘states-system’ operating under eternal rules can not hold up to the rigours of close historical analysis. For a closer discussion of Onuf, see pp 36-38.

<sup>22</sup> For more on this, see Halliday in Hobson and Hobden (2002).



autonomous field with substantive points to make about the key processes which make up world politics. As such, this chapter makes the case for an International Sociology made up of three core components: the proper use of history; an intermediary approach to social action and social change; and a well developed conceptualisation of power relations. Each of these three aspects has a crucial role to play in unravelling and better understanding the complexity of world politics. Taken together, they offer a powerful corrective to both the practical and theoretical barriers which have grown up between IR and Sociology and point towards a potentially more profitable relationship in the future.

### **The proper use of history**

Historical sociology has the potential to demonstrate by its achievements the practical value of investigating the past and carrying out systematic comparisons across time and space, drawing out similarities and difficulties, tracing long-term processes, seeking out causes and pursuing effects, indicating the way people shape and are shaped by the institutions which bind them together and keep them apart...historical sociology can help us distinguish between open doors and brick walls.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Sociology and history***

History, as a method of description, analysis and comparison was germane to sociology as it developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Montesquieu, Vico and Ferguson were pioneers of an approach which saw social factors as crucial to understanding human progress and comparative historical work as the principal means of generating 'intelligible order' from the 'meaningless diversity' of events. For Auguste Comte, first responsible for coining the term sociology, the discipline was a kind of 'super-history' in which regular links between empirical phenomena could be explored, tested and established across time and

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<sup>23</sup> Smith (1991: 183-4).

place. For Comte, the use of historical analysis was the principal distinguishing feature which marked sociology out from philosophy. Systematic historical analysis was also the main tool of nineteenth century giants like Durkheim, Marx and Tocqueville who wrestled with the profound changes taking place in European economic, political and social orders under modernity. Early sociologists searched for deep analogies from the minutiae of detail. Sociology was conceived and, at least initially, developed as the study of social change made comprehensible through the systematic use of historical analysis.

However, as the discipline developed, it lost sight of this close association with history. Functionalism, structuralism and to an extent, interactionism became dominated by ahistorical, meta-theoretical debates about the essential nature of humanity, social action and social change. It was only in the second half of the twentieth century that history found its way back into the sociological lexicon. Neil Smelser, S.N. Eisenstadt and Reinhard Bendix published important works which returned to the core concerns and methods of sociology. E.P. Thompson and Barrington Moore continued this trend, followed more recently by Charles Tilly, Perry Anderson, Immanuel Wallerstein, Theda Skocpol and others. Fernand Braudel famously evoked Montesquieu with a magisterial evocation of the importance of the *longue durée* in *The Mediterranean*.<sup>24</sup>

These scholars shared an appreciation that any understanding of contemporary social relations can only be formed by knowledge of the long-term and short-term antecedents which generate them. This means accepting that contemporary conditions are inherited from the past, constraining and enabling the action of people in the present day. As Theda Skocpol points out, sociological work that is historically sensitive can discriminate between

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<sup>24</sup> For more on the evolution of historical sociology as a particular field of study, see Smith (1991).

intentional action and unintended consequence, pick out the particular from the general and unravel the interplay between structure and agency. For Skocpol, there are three types of historical sociology: the first, best exemplified by Smelser, applies a general theory to a particular case; the second ‘interpretative’ type, characterised by Thompson and Bendix, uses broad concepts to establish meaningful patterns about historical processes; the third, ‘analytical’ approach is typified by Skocpol herself as well as Barrington Moore and Marc Bloch.<sup>25</sup> This approach looks for crucial similarities and differences about known history in order to generate causal regularities. In this way, Skocpol argues, analytical historical sociology ‘illuminates the contours and rhythms of the changing world in which we live’.<sup>26</sup>

Much of the rediscovery of the importance of history by contemporary sociologists can be attributed to a re-reading of classical texts, in particular those of Weber and Tocqueville. Weber recognised that processes of social action and causation were messy and complex, involving both enduring structures and creative agency. Only through detailed historical analysis could researchers tread a coherent path through this maze, picking out empirical patterns observable across time and place. The resultant sets or constellations of social action, Weber labelled ‘ideal types’. As someone whose own research crossed continents and epochs, Weber was acutely aware of the particularity of social phenomena. He saw meaning as bound by social context and therefore subject to change over time. Observers themselves were ‘morally laden’ by values and preconceptions of their period and social setting. Historical research was therefore doubly important in keeping scholars sensitised to changing social contexts.

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<sup>25</sup> A recent IR centred book outlines seven types of historical sociology: neo-weberian, constructivist, world systems, critical, historical materialist, structuralist and post-modern. See Hobden and Hobson (2002).

<sup>26</sup> Skocpol (ed.) (1984: 216).

Many contemporary historical sociologists have also adopted a comparative approach popularised by Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville famously asserted that, ‘without comparisons, the mind does not know how to proceed’.<sup>27</sup> Like Weber, Tocqueville recognised that thorough historical research was vital to understanding the particularity of case studies, for example why aristocratic government was successful in England but not in Ireland. Through comparative, historically grounded work, key generic variables could be observed and isolated. In this way, Tocqueville showed that democratic societies could be liberal or despotic depending on their moeurs (customs), their degree of local autonomy and the quality of their intermediate associations, among other factors.

There is therefore a substantial lineage to comparative, historical work rooted in both classical and contemporary texts. My argument is that history has three main influences on sociology: highlighting the importance of temporal context; recognising particularity; and allowing for a dynamic account of social action and social change. First, if it is to be useful, sociological theory must account for changing temporal context. For example, modern examples of revolutionary change diverge fundamentally from cases drawn from previous epochs precisely because the context for action – domestic and international – as well as key structures and agents of change are substantively different. Second, history is crucial to ensuring that generalisations are sufficiently nuanced. The three case studies used in this thesis aptly demonstrate the importance of recognising the particularity that exists within a general framework or ideal type. While South Africa and the Czech Republic share similar logics in terms of their causes, events and outcomes, Chile differs in some fundamental ways from the other two cases. Third, historical, comparative work can direct sociology as a discipline away from static, snap shot approaches of society to one which makes sense of the

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<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Welch (2001: 59).

dynamism of social action and social change. Rather than searching for a kind of functional fit between social and historical processes, history itself can be the tool kit or route map which serves to orientate research, highlight meaningful patterns and test findings. As Philip Abrams sums up,

Social explanation is necessarily historical. Historical sociology is thus not some special kind of sociology; rather it is the essence of the discipline...sociology that takes itself seriously must be historical sociology.<sup>28</sup>

### ***History and sociology***

But while sociology has been rediscovering its apparently forgotten association with history, contemporary historians have faced a battle with colleagues who eschew any connection with social science in general and with sociology in particular, seeking refuge in descriptions of great events and individuals which ignore scholars looking at the same phenomena through a more theoretical gaze. These traditionalists are, in the view of E.H. Carr, rooted in a nineteenth century positivism, best exemplified by Lord Acton, which shuns any notion of ethics in order to 'show how it really is'.<sup>29</sup> To this day, many historians consider themselves as chroniclers, transcribers and narrators, incompatible with sociologists who depend on generalisation and explanation. A number of scholars from both sides of the barricades serve to reinforce a division of labour in which each side is mutually disdainful of the other.

But such a view is mistaken for three reasons. First, even history which passes for mere narration is not free from the particular angle, approach and context within which the author writes. The choice of subject, materials or period is determined by what the author deems to be significant. From Herodotus to Simon Schama, the values of historians, the choices they

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<sup>28</sup> Abrams (1982: 17).

<sup>29</sup> Carr (1964: 14).

make and the context within which they write have played a key part in the creation of historical 'facts'. Often as E.H. Carr points out, these 'facts' are no more than interpretations of others 'accepted judgements': those considered to be insignificant are tossed aside while others are made 'objective'; documents and other raw materials are themselves bound by their own social context. The very act of historical research is therefore an act of interpretation and reinterpretation. History, as E.H. Carr notes, is a dynamic, *social* process in which 'facts' and interpretation interact in 'an unending dialogue'. He writes,

The reciprocal process of interaction between the historian and the facts, what I have called the dialogue between the present and past is a dialogue not between abstract and isolated individuals but between the society of today and the society of yesterday. History is the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another.<sup>30</sup>

Second, historical research is and always has been about making connections and patterns from seemingly inchoate events. For Philip Abrams, the art of pulling disparate strands together into a coherent sequence is the very stuff of historical research. Yet this task is a profoundly sociological enterprise. As such, much historical work can really be described as sociology without the label, mixing a narrative account of what happened with an interpretation and analysis of how and why events unfolded as they do. Historians weave a path between sociology and history, one which involves arranging events into a cogent pattern and offering an explanation for why this pattern is significant. They therefore carry out the same essential task – generating analytical order – that is so germane to sociology.

Third, all historical surveys are necessarily stories about causation. As such, they recognise that events do not follow a unilinear path but are the result of a multiplicity and conjunction of factors. For example, any worthwhile exploration of the attacks on the World Trade Centre

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<sup>30</sup> Carr (1964: 46).

rests not on a narrow focus on Osama Bin Laden, al-Qaida or the Taliban but on a broader take which encompasses the politics of the Middle East, the formulation and perception of US foreign policy around the world and the internal politics and wider history of Islam.

Without such understanding of the historical, and therefore the social context, which lie behind events in world politics, what passes as history is not really proper history at all. In fact, it is profoundly ahistorical.

It is important, therefore, to recognise that just as history is a core component of any sociology that takes itself seriously, so sociological reasoning is germane to historical analysis. While history has often kept its covert sociological agenda hidden, so sociology has often concealed its core relationship with history. Scholars from both disciplines have struggled to accept Ernest Gellner's essential point that 'happening is something more than contingency and something less than necessity'.<sup>31</sup> In truth, the combination of history and sociology is essential to any research which looks to unravel the dynamic between particular and general, individual and collective, agency and structure. Perhaps E.H. Carr puts it best,

Sociology, if it is to become a fruitful field of study, must, like history, concern itself with the relation between the unique and the general. But it must also become dynamic – a study not of society at rest (for no such thing exists) but of social change and development. For the rest, I would only say that the more sociological history becomes and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both...let the frontier between them be kept wide for two-way traffic.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Abrams (1982: 314).

<sup>32</sup> Carr (1964: 66).

### *History, sociology and International Relations*

This is the case for what Charles Tilly calls ‘a permanent encounter between sociology and history’.<sup>33</sup> But there is another step in the argument. Few historical sociologists, even those studying large-scale international processes like the formation of states or the transition from feudal to capitalist societies, have incorporated International Relations literature thoroughly into their work. Michael Mann, in writing what is effectively a history of everything, adopts an entirely unsatisfactory view of the state and the international system which borrows heavily from the dominant paradigm of International Relations, realism, but fails to take into account the multitude of criticisms made of key realist concepts over the last thirty years or so.<sup>34</sup> The relationship between historical sociology and IR is seemingly caught between two unfortunate stools: neglect or misuse.

There are two main reasons why historical sociology needs to incorporate IR from the ground up. First, the main preoccupation of historical sociology – large-scale social change – is intricately bound up with the international. Far too often, debates about profoundly international concerns – wars, revolutions or the spread of capitalism – have failed to properly integrate debates already deeply entrenched in IR. Yet as I outlined earlier in the chapter, global terrorism, migration, global trade rounds, world poverty, disease and famine are issues which cannot be adequately studied without due reference to the *constitutive* role of the international. To extend my earlier phrase, it is fair to say that any historical sociology which takes itself seriously must be international.

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<sup>33</sup> Tilly (1981: 52).

<sup>34</sup> See Mann (1986 and 1993). Mann has since acknowledged that he, like many historical sociologists, acted like a ‘raiding party’ on IR, returning with a certain degree of loot, almost all of which was taken from realism. See Mann (ed.) (1990).



Second, IR, like sociology, has a deep association with history. Whether one traces the discipline back to Thucydides' *Peloponnesian Wars* or sees it as a more modern incarnation stemming from works like E.H. Carr's *The Twenty Years Crisis*, classical IR texts are, perhaps more than any other social science, deeply rooted in historical analysis. Indeed, outstanding pieces of historical sociology like Fred Halliday's *Revolution and World Politics*, Buzan and Little's *International Systems in World History* and Michael Doyle's *Empires* have been penned by IR scholars. However, just like sociology before it, so the relationship between IR and history has fluctuated, important for the English School, but exorcised from behaviourism and much neo-realism. A general tendency to favour commonality, continuity and generality has been matched by a contemporary infatuation with nouveau philosophical debates about epistemology and ontology, fact and value, explanation and understanding. As Buzan and Little recognise, when history has been used, it has often been shoehorned into grand theoretical explanations.<sup>35</sup> This has served to somewhat distance IR from historical analysis: International Relations, if you like, without the international relations. Just like sociology, IR is overdue a reminder of its long and fruitful association with history.

The first component of International Sociology therefore is the proper use of history. History grounds and anchors any approach to the study of social action and social change, giving work both particular resonance and sensitivity. Good social science draws patterns from historical evidence and tests these generalisations across time and space. As Fernand Braudel writes, 'sociology and history make up one single intellectual adventure, not two different sides of the same cloth but the very stuff of the cloth itself'.<sup>36</sup> But, in the contemporary world more than ever before, it is imperative that such an enterprise fully utilise the rich tapestry of

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<sup>35</sup> On this, see Buzan and Little (2000)

<sup>36</sup> Braudel (1980: 69).

material available in International Relations. This thesis is an attempt to fulfil just this task: the proper use of history to explore complex events and processes in world politics.

### **Studying social action**

At each stage of history, there is a historically created relation of individuals to nature which is handed down to each generation from its predecessor; a mass of productive forces, capital funds and conditions, which, on the one hand, is modified by the new generation, but on the other, prescribes for it its condition of life and gives it a definite development, a special character. It shows that circumstances make men just as men make circumstances.<sup>37</sup>

In its broadest sense then, International Sociology is the historical, comparative study of world politics. As such, it is an attempt to systematically and rigorously explore events in world politics, finding significant patterns in processes of social action and social change in order to trace a path of causality through these events and highlight generic themes. In this section of the chapter, I outline how an intermediary approach to studying social action and social change is a central tool in this task, providing a locus of study which can support Marx's claim that 'circumstances make men just as men make circumstances' while providing tangible empirical and theoretical benefits.

### ***Structure and agency in sociology***

The genesis of the debate about social action and social change goes back to the very earliest days of sociology. Sociology developed as a 'progress science', an attempt to map the history of social institutions in order to demonstrate the evolution of humanity from relatively simple

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<sup>37</sup> Marx and Engels (1976: 172).

societies to complex or heterogeneous orders.<sup>38</sup> Early sociologists like Bonald, Comte and Spencer saw these institutions, among them religion, family and community, as the social glue which determined individuals' integration into society. The trend towards individualisation which accompanied processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and bureaucratisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was therefore considered to be deeply unsettling to the social fabric of western societies, turning what Tönnies described as *Gemeinschaft* (community) social orders centred around mutual trust, intimacy and 'organic will' into *Gesellschaft* (society) orders which, in contrast, were anonymous, technocratic and mechanical. In the face of these changes, people's control over their own lives was significantly diminished. Bonald wrote as early as 1796 that 'man does not create society, it is society that creates man'.<sup>39</sup> Hegel claimed that 'fate drags the one who does not will, it leads the one who does'.<sup>40</sup>

But while the seeds of contemporary structuralism were planted deep in the sociological imagination, they were not the sole roots of the discipline.<sup>41</sup> Very few early sociologists accepted the complete domination of social structures over human agency. Most, as the above quote from Marx testifies, saw a duality to micro and macro processes, even if they tended to emphasise the importance of the latter over the former. Although Comte, Durkheim and a number of other influential scholars who were to become associated with functionalism continued to emphasise a resolutely top-down view of social action, most sociologists sought

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<sup>38</sup> Comte, Spencer and Marx all shared in this attempt to outline the various stages of human development, although their causal mechanisms and explanations, of course, varied considerably.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Bottomore (1975: 143).

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Gerth and Wright Mills (eds.) (1991: 167).

<sup>41</sup> It is worth remembering that this concentration on social structures was as much a practical necessity as it was the result of hardened theoretical reasoning. In the discipline's infancy, sociologists needed to distinguish their subject from various competitors, both imminent in the case of psychology or more established in the case of philosophy. Many sociologists therefore went along with George Simmel's description of 'formal sociology' as the study of social configurations, distinct from the actions and motivations of individuals which were the rightful province of psychology.

some way of mediating between subject and object, material and ideational, social construction and verifiable reality. Max Weber, for example, accepted that although the great structures of modernity acted like an 'iron cage' isolating, alienating and removing individuals from the product of their labour, escape from this 'disenchanted world' was possible through a Dionysian flight based on charismatic authority, a quality vested solely in human agency. Weber, perhaps more forcibly than other influential social scientists of the period, took great care to show how individual creativity, however weak, could offer a challenge to the domination and authority, legitimate or otherwise, of social structures.

Weber's 'interpretative sociology' (*Verstehende Soziologie*) considered individuals as the meaningful unit or 'atom' of social action. Weber argued that only people can feel, think, perceive and therefore apply meaning and motivation to social life. As such, they form status groups based around common practices, world views and lifestyle. Although people act, at least in part, as products of their social organisation, they also play a *formative* role in the creation of social institutions and the social world around them. This point remains one of paramount significance to sociology as a discipline and in particular to how it developed in the United States.<sup>42</sup>

One of the pioneers of sociology in the United States was Charles Cooley. Cooley followed a line of earlier thinkers, most notable among them William James, who saw individuals as existing in a state of permanent engagement with others and their social environments, far removed from any notion of isolated individuals rigidly yoked to overpowering social structures. Cooley argued that individuals and their social relations could not be separated;

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<sup>42</sup> Of course, much work in this field, particularly around the sociology of knowledge, took place outside the United States, most notably in Germany and Austria. See, for example, Mannheim (1960), Scheler (1980) and Schutz (1981).

instead, he saw them as mutually and dialectically connected. It was therefore not possible to graft an individual 'atom' onto a society dominated by structural forces. Rather, 'self and society are twin born'.<sup>43</sup> Cooley argued that identity, or sense of self, was a 'looking glass', reflecting how others saw and communicated with us. Human personality, for Cooley, stemmed from an interactive, dynamic and distinctly *social* process.

Other American sociologists extended Cooley's line of reasoning in important ways. George Herbert Mead, like Cooley, accepted that individuals take part in a dynamic interaction with the social world around them. But Mead was interested in the patterning of these interactions into structures like norms, customs and laws which he labelled as 'the generalised other'. The principal points of mediation between individuals and these 'significant' social structures were, according to Mead, language and symbols.<sup>44</sup> John Dewey further augmented Cooley's work by showing how people's sense of self was not rigid but a dynamic process which adjusted to changing circumstances and social contexts.<sup>45</sup> Robert Park, meanwhile, focussed on the dynamic of social groups and organisations themselves, looking at how patterns of competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation shaped social roles which in turn channelled behaviour.<sup>46</sup> Erving Goffman showed how individuals acquire knowledge of the scripts, rules and frameworks, both formal and informal, which form the basis for the construction of social action.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Cooley (1902: 316).

<sup>44</sup> For more on this, see Mead (1981).

<sup>45</sup> See Dewey (1930).

<sup>46</sup> See Park (1952).

<sup>47</sup> For more on this, see Goffman (1959).

These scholars, known collectively as interactionists, make three cardinal points.<sup>48</sup> First, they argue that individuals are *connected* to social structures rather than isolated or removed from them. According to interactionists, individuals formatively construct the world around them through mutually agreed upon language, symbols and roles, creating the very structures which in turn act back on them, constraining people's behaviour. Second, interactionists see social action as a *dynamic* process in which people and structures alike play formative roles. Therefore, social change is understood as arising from the mutual negotiation between the agency of individuals and the structures within which they live. Third, interactionists understand that individuals are not isolated but relational beings, connected to each other through networks based on common interest and identity. Rather than a static conception of society, interactionists see social action as a collective, dynamic enterprise.

These arguments have been taken up by a host of modern scholars, most influentially by Anthony Giddens.<sup>49</sup> In numerous texts, Giddens describes social structures as rules and resources, including formal laws and informal social practices. Giddens' 'theory of structuration' asserts that the structure-agency debate starts from the wrong place by separating the two concepts rather than seeing them as analytically unified. For Giddens, human agency, by which he means the action of reflective, relatively autonomous individuals and groups, produces structures which simultaneously serve as the conditions for the reproduction of human agency. This process is continuous. As Giddens writes,

Social structures are both constituted by human agency and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution...men produce society but they do so as historically located actors and not under conditions of their own choosing.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Some of these scholars are claimed by other 'schools', both philosophical and sociological. Hence, John Dewey is often referred to as a 'pragmatist' and Mead as a 'social psychologist'.

<sup>49</sup> For another pioneering work in this field, see Berger and Luckman (1979).

<sup>50</sup> Giddens (1984: 159).

From Weber to Giddens, the majority of both classical and contemporary theorists have therefore situated their approach somewhere between the extremes of those who claim on the one hand that individuals are mere vessels carrying within them the inherent properties of structures, and on the other, those who argue that individuals are utility maximisers, acting as the sole makers of their own history. Social structures certainly do exert powerful influences over people's lives, affecting both everyday social action and wider processes of social change. Black South Africans under apartheid faced deeply entrenched structures which disenfranchised them politically, exploited them economically and severely restricted their freedom of movement and association. Social structures, ranging from the laws which govern us to the informal rules of social etiquette, play a vital role in delineating the space available for social action and laying down the contours by which social change can occur.

But it is equally apparent that, if enough people break the law, eventually the law changes, either informally or formally. This basic truth has been the foundation for social protest movements ranging from civil disobedience campaigns in the United States to liberation movements throughout the developing world. Human beings are not puppets whose movements are controlled by unseen forces nor are we automatons, doomed to respond to stimuli in prescribed ways. If this was the case, history would offer no surprises, no tale of David defeating Goliath, no example of revolutionary change being made in unlikely circumstances. Each of the three case studies in this thesis is a story of people actively creating and responding to changing contexts, constructing novel social orders which are both constrained and enabled by social structures inherited from the old system. In sum, therefore, my argument is that International Sociology *must* be premised on at least a broad acceptance

of Marx's claim that circumstances and action are mutually constitutive. Three questions, however, remain: how, in what ways and to what extent?

### ***Structure and agency in International Relations***

Until the 1990s, the heavily charged debate raging around structure and agency in other social sciences drew barely a murmur from the IR academic community. Indeed, IR theory continues to be dominated, at least in the United States, by a standpoint, realism, which along with its contemporary offshoot neorealism, asserts that the anarchical environment of world politics *determines* the behaviour of its constitutive units, normally considered to be sovereign states. Structures like hegemony or the balance of power, as a function of the anarchic system, prescribe patterns of behaviour therein.<sup>51</sup> But this resolutely top-down view fails to explain action on the ground, how the various units and actors of world politics play a *formative* role in the creation of their conditions, in developing the mechanisms which sustain order in the international system and in processes of social change. As John Ruggie points out, it is not enough to talk about hegemony as if it were some kind of timeless independent variable. Rather, it is particular *types* of hegemony that make the difference to the operating rules, norms and practices of international relations in a particular epoch. Hence, it is not hegemony per se but *US* hegemony which helps explain the core features of contemporary world politics.<sup>52</sup> If the international system determined the actions of its constituent parts, observable effects would follow discernible causes without room for unseen or collective action, unintended consequences, creativity or surprise in world politics.

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<sup>51</sup> Realism is, of course, a broad church and many scholars would argue that neorealism differs fundamentally from its more classically aware cousin. For exemplary illustrations of these schools of thought, see Hans Morgenthau (1948) and Kenneth Waltz (1959, 1979).

<sup>52</sup> For more on this, see Ruggie (1998).



The radically stilted conception of social action offered by realists and neorealists is not without challenge, perhaps most prominently by the English school of writers, epitomised in the past by such prominent figures as Martin Wight and Hedley Bull, and more recently by Barry Buzan and Tim Dunne. English school theorists contend that world politics consists of an international society in which actors share common norms, interests and institutions ranging from the traditional – diplomacy, international law and the balance of power – to more contemporary examples such as globalisation, the market and a belief in universal human rights. Regularised patterns of activity ensure the fulfilment of the basic goals of members of a political community: security from violence, guarantees of exchange and property rights. This inclusion of the institutional mechanisms which offset anarchy and the addition of a normative basis to international order mark significant improvements on traditional realism. The English school note to good effect how the institutionalisation of action through shared rules, routines, procedures, conventions and roles tends to reduce ambiguity, uncertainty and thereby the anarchy of world politics. In this way, the English school's analysis of how social action takes place in world politics without recourse to a top-down, static viewpoint certainly warrants merit.<sup>53</sup>

Most recently, a constructivist school of thought has emerged in IR, utilising many of the arguments found in English School writing, as well as a number of concepts drawn from interactionism to claim that, despite the lack of a single unitary body laying down global standards and operating procedures, order within world politics has long featured mechanisms which set and sustain common sets of interests, rules and practices. Furthermore, this routinisation of processes and the formalisation of international institutions and

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<sup>53</sup> There is, of course, a degree of variety within the English school itself, not least between 'solidarists' and 'pluralists'. For more on the importance of this distinction, particularly regarding the concepts of order and justice, see pp 342-343.

organisations has increased steadily over past centuries. For example, while in 1860 there were just five international organisations and one international NGO, by 1940, there were sixty-one and 477 respectively; by the turn of the millennium, there were 260 international organisations and over 5,000 international NGOs.<sup>54</sup> From just a small number of individuals in key states or a hegemonic authority exerting authority over much of world politics, now a multiplicity of agencies interpret, negotiate and act within commonly agreed rules of the game.

One of the most prominent members within this constructivist camp is Alexander Wendt. Wendt sees world politics as made up of three principal structures: shared knowledge, material resources and practices. Shared knowledge is the level of intersubjectivity or shared expectations. Material resources stands for financial power, military force and so on. But Wendt argues that these material resources have no intrinsic value; their meaning is acquired through the structures of shared knowledge within which they are embedded. In this way, five hundred British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than five held by North Korea. The third level of Wendt's analysis is made up of social practices, the processes through which meaning is constituted. For Wendt, if actors stop behaving in a certain way, then the corresponding structure also ceases to exist. However, Wendt acknowledges that because structures are *perceived* to be real, they exert significant power and may be difficult to change. Hence,

To say that structures are socially constructed is no guarantee that they can be changed. Sometimes, social structures so constrain action that transformative strategies are impossible.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Figures taken from Michael Barnett in Hobden and Hobson (2002).

<sup>55</sup> Wendt (1992: 80).

For Nicholas Onuf, another leading constructivist, world politics is a complex web of formal and informal rules. Agents are tied, through these rules, into networks, institutions, associations and organisations. Membership of these groupings and regimes are choices made by international agents. Equally, they can choose not to follow the rules laid down by these groups. Therefore, the United States does not have to abide by the ruling of the World Trade Organisation in its trade dispute with the European Union, Iraq could ignore United Nations stipulations to co-operate with weapons inspectors and North Korea can stand aloof from virtually all internationally accepted standards, norms and conventions. For Onuf, rather than a system of anarchy, international relations is better described as a 'heteronomy' in which a multiplicity of agents is involved in the construction of rules and institutions over interwoven and overlapping jurisdictions. For Onuf, the rules constructed by these actors are the mediating link between international agents and global social structures. His key point is that both elements in this relationship are co-constituting, simultaneously enabling and constraining social action. Therefore, states which have created the International Criminal Court are also subject to its jurisdiction. European states which have chosen to pool economic decision making in a continent wide central bank are thereafter constrained by its decisions.

John Ruggie claims that this failure to understand how rules *constitute* as well as regulate activity in world politics is the principal failing of contemporary realism.<sup>56</sup> For Ruggie, rules are prior to structure. Therefore, property rights have to be established before a market economy can function. The principle of exclusive territoriality must be recognized before guiding structures like the sovereign state or self-determination can be realised. Furthermore, these rules are socially constructed in the same kind of way as interactionists noted over a century ago. For example, communism was the 'generalised other' which defined and helped

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<sup>56</sup> Ruggie's focus on constitute and regulative rules is drawn in part from Wittgenstein.

to construct US national identity, state formation and foreign policy. For Ruggie, world politics is an arena which is becoming increasingly dense and therefore increasingly similar to domestic societies.

Wendt, Onuf and Ruggie make several important points. First, they see social action as co-determined and co-formulated by both agency and structure. Second, they accept that ideas just as much as material relations are central to understanding the relationship between structure and agency. Third, they recognise the power of enduring patterns in the world but accept that even the most powerful social structures are historically particular, created by the actions and needs of people in a particular time and space: no autocratic regime, however immutable it seems, lasts forever; world religions are forced to reform their practices or face losing moral authority; ways of doing business vary greatly over time and place, witness, for example, the general shift over recent decades from Fordism to 'just in time' manufacturing techniques or the difference in banking systems between Japan, the US and the UK, all apparently 'advanced' capitalist states.

More pertinently to the core concerns of International Relations, Nicholas Onuf points out that conceptualisations of anarchy are particularly time-bound. During the Middle Ages, religious belief, ideas of natural law and the baronial system provided effective bases for political authority, law and order, tying subjects together within a cosmic order. According to Onuf, it was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as ideas of democracy and nationhood developed, that the concept of anarchy was formalised to establish legitimate legal-political authority over a particular territory. For Onuf, anarchy is a modern social construction, coming to stand for the difference between the maintenance of order within the state and the wilderness beyond state frontiers.

What this above trawl through both sociological and IR approaches to structure and agency indicates is that it is essential to adopt a dynamic understanding of social action which looks at the patterns and regularities of underlying, enduring mechanisms but also the collective action which both reproduces and changes them. It is clear that in world politics as much as domestic settings, much of what is taken to be empirical reality is socially constructed. However, this does not mean that reality does not have enduring standing conditions which can be systematically and therefore usefully studied. Nor does it mean accepting that individuals are necessarily aware of the authority of these structural forces or that they have the power to transform them. But a nuanced, theoretically coherent analysis of social action must accept that structures can be both reproduced and transformed by intentional action, even if this entails unintended outcomes. Empires rise and fall, the world system oscillates between hierarchy and anarchy, revolutions prompt a transformation in both a particular society's economic, political and social relations, and its wider international relations. My conception of International Sociology is geared to unravelling the complexity which lies behind this interaction between social action, both deliberate and unintentional, and structures, socially constructed but with an enduring authority and dynamic of their own.

### ***Institutions and organisations***

What, then, is a viable unit of analysis which can incorporate the logic of both creative agency and structural authority, in John Searle's words, a medium capable of uncovering nothing less than 'the structure of social reality'?<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, how is it possible to delineate between what Searle describes as 'brute facts', or the physical structures which characterise the 'objective world' and the 'social facts' which make up the stuff of everyday

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<sup>57</sup> Searle (1995: 5).

social relations?<sup>58</sup> For Searle, ‘brute facts’ – mountains, atoms and the like – provide an unquestionable, underlying fixidity to the world around us. In stark contrast to this world of certainty, the social world is characterised by mere representations and symbols – money, language, rules and so on – without which societies could not function but which depend on a staggering array of prior metaphysical assumptions. If there is a relationship between these two apparently dichotomous worlds, where and how does it take place?

Over the past century, sociological realists, taking their cue from the work of Roy Bhaskar and Jeffrey Isaac in particular, have attempted to close the apparent gap between the reflective world of social construction and the logic of rationality which dictates that a tangible, objective world exists in which real causal mechanisms can be usefully observed. These scholars argue that, while ‘social facts’ may be nebulous and relatively unstable, this does not make them mere chimeras. Rather, just as interactionists have consistently pointed out, language, norms, rules and the like stand as necessary, implicitly understood intervening variables between the social world and the world of ‘brute facts’. They are tools of correspondence between structure and agency, material and normative issues, physicality and social construction which make it possible to delineate significant patterns within the social world. The key task of the social scientist, given this starting point, is to determine the most appropriate vehicle by which to usefully study and interpret these patterns.

In attempting to find such a conduit, historical materialists look to class, critical theorists to language and a number of contemporary scholars focus on the role played by new social movements. As I detailed above, a number of IR scholars have looked to rules as intervening variables par excellence. But over recent years, a number of scholars in political science and

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<sup>58</sup> Searle borrows the term ‘social facts’ from Durkheim.

sociology have turned to the study of institutions as a means of generating a workable approach to unravelling the interplay between structure and agency. Advocates of the 'new institutionalism' such as Walter Powell, Paul DiMaggio, James March, Johan Olsen and Sven Steinmo claim that institutions can lay bare the dynamic between people's interests and preferences, and the standing conditions and patterned relations within which they act and which are effected by their agency. Institutions, for these scholars, are the sites where structure and agency, material and normative factors, social facts and brute reality are joined.

Although the study of institutions is a growth area in IR, studies are often bogged down by a confusion over terminology. This is partly because the term 'institution' has often been used interchangeably with 'regime', defined by Stephen Krasner as, 'sets of implicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area'.<sup>59</sup> This is not far away from Hedley Bull's definition of institutions as 'sets of habits and practices shaped towards the realisation of common goals'<sup>60</sup> or Robert Keohane's conceptualisation of international institutions as 'persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity and shape expectations'.<sup>61</sup> Drawing heavily on more sociological approaches to institutions, I use two terms in the thesis: institutionalisation, by which I mean the formalisation of networks of interest and identity through adopting common rules, norms and practices; and institutions,

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<sup>59</sup> Krasner (1983: 17).

<sup>60</sup> Bull (1977: 17).

<sup>61</sup> In Neumann and Wæver (eds.) (1996: 103). According to Keohane, there are three types of international institution: formal intergovernmental and transnational organisations; international regimes, by which he means the explicit rules which govern issues; and conventions, or informal, implicit practices.

the result of this process defined as sets of common understandings, rules and practices operating in a particular field.<sup>62</sup>

The array of approaches looking at the role of institutions in processes of social action and social change tends to be better at understanding how institutions are stabilising, constraining factors than how institutions are also enabling, creative organs. For example, Hedley Bull delineates five institutions – war, the balance of power, diplomacy, international law and the management system of the great powers – which act as mechanisms of order within the anarchical environment of world politics. But institutions may be sites of disorder as well as units of social order. For example, contemporary institutions such as human rights and humanitarian intervention clash with those of sovereignty and self-determination; as does globalisation with nationalism and neo-liberalism with protectionism. Some of the strengths to be gained in using institutions as analytical tools can, if not carefully applied, become weaknesses. By including informal and formal elements such as rules, roles, customs, laws, organisations and practices in one unit of analysis, there is a danger that institutions become intangible and elusive; by focusing on stability, scholars tend to omit the disruptive potential of institutions; by looking at how institutions are constituted by actors, it is easy to miss their enduring power. However, these weaknesses can be rectified by a fuller understanding of organisational dynamics.

The foremost theorist of organisation is Max Weber. Weber argues that organisations are structures of domination which provide ‘an authoritarian power of command’ demanding

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<sup>62</sup> It is important to note that the institutionalisation of rules, practices and norms is an exclusive, as much as an inclusive, process. It defines who or what is not a member of the group or regime just as clearly as who or what is included.



obedience.<sup>63</sup> This 'rational' form of domination has a tendency to spread across whole 'fields' such as banking, insurance or manufacturing. Although organisations may originate with diverse approaches and forms, once established, they increasingly come to resemble each other. This homogeneity of form results from both internal arrangements and external constraints. For DiMaggio and Powell, there are four principal sources of organisational conformity: isomorphism or the tendency for one unit in a field operating under the same structural constraints to resemble another; coercive pressures stemming from shared rules and practices, legislation and standard operating procedures; mimetic pressures which come from both a tendency to copy successful organisations and sharing personnel; and normative influences stemming from establishing a professional ethos and a legitimate cognitive base for a 'field'.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, they sum up,

Individuals who make it to the top are virtually indistinguishable...they tend to view problems in a similar fashion, see policies, procedures and structures as normatively sanctioned and approach problems and decisions in much the same way.<sup>65</sup>

This extension of Weber's theory of rational domination is given extra strength by the work of Robert Michels. For Michels, organisations create a minority of leaders who possess 'power assets' in the form of superior training, tactical acumen, intellectual expertise, resources, bureaucratic power and psychological awareness vis a vis the membership of the organisation. For Michels, such oligarchy is intrinsic to all large-scale organisations associated with modernity: political parties and trade unions as much as big business.

Therefore, all complex systems follow the same essential process,

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<sup>63</sup> For Weber, this form of rational, legal authority is only one of three forms of domination. The others are traditional: belief in immemorial customs; and charismatic: the exceptional sanctity or heroism of an individual.

<sup>64</sup> As Schrödinger writes, 'organisations suck orderliness from their environments'. In DiMaggio and Powell (1982: 5).

<sup>65</sup> From DiMaggio and Powell (1982: 21-22). It is important to note that these processes are only tendencies, not determining forces. As Charles Handy (1996) notes, there are many types of organisation, although Handy acknowledges that each type tends to share the same essential structure around a professional core, contractual fringe and flexible labour force.

As a result of organisation, every party or professional union becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed...the leader's principal source of power is found in his indispensability. One who is indispensable has in his power all the lords and masters of the earth...It is organisations which give birth to the dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organisation, says oligarchy.<sup>66</sup>

Michael Mann also asserts that organisations have 'an inherent tendency' to specialisation, stratification and hierarchy because the institutionalisation of rules, laws and norms necessarily divides organisations into haves and have-nots. For Mann, those at the top of the organisation have an 'immense organisational superiority' over others through a process of 'organisational outflanking'. The majority of members in an organisation lack both the ability and knowledge to organise collectively and rebel. They are deeply embedded in the power relations of the organisation. Those members of an organisation who have responsibility for defining collective goals and who wield sanctions for non-compliance have what Jürgen Habermas describes as a 'structural advantage' over others.<sup>67</sup> Those low down the chain of command in an organisation have little power to resist.

However, this focus on the stratification of power and authority within organisations is only part of the story. As Stephen Clegg notes, given these conditions, the loyalty of members to such an organisation may be tenuous, 'to be invariably told, rarely asked, infrequently consulted, and be expected not to participate in the formation of collective goals is hardly a secure basis for obtaining commitment to these goals'.<sup>68</sup> Tony Giddens also recognises the possibility of resistance to bureaucratic order. Giddens 'dialectic of control' contends that

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<sup>66</sup> Michels (1959: 113).

<sup>67</sup> See Habermas (1987).

<sup>68</sup> In Clegg (1989: 135).

power in bureaucracies is not streamlined at the top with the masses compelled to a life of servitude. In fact, those in positions of authority need to secure the active compliance of the dominated. Therefore, the 'rule book' is open to interpretation and counter-sanctions can be developed, witnessed for example by the development of strikes as the counter-sanction to the labour-worker relationship.

Strategies of rule must therefore be modified if they are to remain effective over time in the face of struggle, innovation and manoeuvre. First, the conflict between an organisational elite over resources and authority may lead to fracture. Second, relationships within organisations, even in situations of apparent domination, are always based on some degree of negotiation and reciprocity. Even slaves rebel; even dictators delegate. In each of the three case studies I look at during this thesis, apparently closed organisations such as the communist party in the Czech Republic, the army in Chile and the broederbond of Afrikaner businesses fractured, opening up the possibility for large-scale social change. In each case, it was the interaction between collective action, social structures and overarching context which enabled these changes to take place. Rather than hierarchical closed shops, therefore, organisations more closely resemble circuits around which resources and authority flow; individuals always have the capacity to interpret and negotiate policy, norms and rules at a number of what Clegg describes as 'nodal points'.<sup>69</sup> Organisations are complex flows of authority and power up, down and across formal hierarchies and structures. Hence, for Giddens,

However wide-ranging the control which actors may have over others, the weak nevertheless always have some capabilities of turning back resources against the strong.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> See Clegg (1989).

<sup>70</sup> In Isaac (1987: 89). For Giddens, at the very least, people have freedom over their own body and a capacity to say no, even if that entails self-destruction, the most basic form of resistance.

Members of organisations are therefore always relatively free to articulate their interests, position themselves strategically and fix their relationships vis a vis others. As practices, norms and procedures are repeated and institutionalised, so the dynamic is reproduced and space opens up for new connections, relationships and networks to be institutionalised. Although they are inhibited by processes of rule making, supervision and regulation, such structures are not wholly constraining, they are also enabling and generative, open to negotiation and resistance. Delegation always features some degree of discretion and interpretation (action), even if this takes place within set parameters and rules (structures). Organisations, along with institutions, therefore represent tangible sites in which to study the interplay of social action and social change.

### **Conceptualising power relations**

A focus on social action as it is negotiated in both institutions and organisations coupled with an understanding of how history and social context impacts on this agency, constitute the first two parts of my conceptualisation of International Sociology. By returning to two core concerns of sociology – the proper use of history and what Robert Merton calls ‘a theory of the middle ground’ – I have traced a means by which to unravel and describe processes of social action and social change in world politics. However, as yet, I have no means by which to organise and evaluate these processes. In order to take on analytical value, it is necessary to have some means of *assessing* processes of social action and social change. In this section of the chapter, I look at how a viable conceptualisation of power relations can provide a systematic tool for evaluating and structuring these processes.

### *The failure of orthodoxy*

For such a central topic of analysis, power is a radically underdeveloped concept in International Relations. Power derives from the Latin word *potere*, which literally means ‘to be able’. It has therefore normally been applied in the social sciences as a causal concept signifying a capacity to effect people or events. Yet, in International Relations, power has tended to be used in a static sense to denote the distribution of resources and capabilities within an anarchical system, often in terms of the balance of power, a term used to denote the maintenance of equilibrium within the state system.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps the most widely accepted view of power in International Relations remains that offered by Thucydides over twenty-five centuries ago, ‘the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept’.<sup>72</sup> For Thucydides, power, particularly material resources, determines the outcome of conflict, in turn determined by the lack of an overriding central authority in the international system.

To understand the flaws in this conception of power, it is worth turning once more to the work of Max Weber. For Weber, power (*macht*) is ‘the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests’.<sup>73</sup> Power, therefore, is agency – the capacity to act, despite the wishes of others. However, Weber also recognised that power has a second form. For Weber, societies are not bound together by social contracts or moral consensus, but

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<sup>71</sup> However, it is important to note that within this generalisation, different scholars of International Relations take their own stance on how the balance of power is formulated, even those operating within the same school of thought. Hence, within realism: Henry Kissinger claims that the balance of power has to be made by statesmen; for Kenneth Waltz, the balance of power is determined by the anarchical structure of the state system itself; and for Hans Morgenthau, the balance of power is a tendency within the international system which needs to be actively maintained.

<sup>72</sup> Thucydides (1961: 38). Another foundational quote is from Niccolò Machiavelli (1998: 50), ‘if a prince want to maintain his rule he must be prepared not to be virtuous, and to make use of this or not according to need’. This forms the basis of the notion of *realpolitik*.

<sup>73</sup> Weber (1978: 278).

rather by force. Harmony and order are sustained by structures of domination, the 'authoritarian power of command' which elicit obedience. For Weber, domination (*herrschaft*) is 'the probability that a command within a given specific context will be obeyed by a given group of persons'.<sup>74</sup> Legitimate forms of authority, whether traditional, rational or charismatic, are vested in classes, status groups and political parties, together providing the 'iron fist' inside the 'velvet glove' of social order.

The distinction Weber makes between power and domination is an important one. The traditional view of power in IR conflates the two terms, using them interchangeably. In other words, power is really 'power over' others or the strategic capacity to achieve ones goals through the organisation and mobilisation of resources. But such a view makes four crucial mistakes. The first stems from the long-standing association between orthodox IR theory and North American political science and in particular, with behaviourism. Behaviourists see power as willed, observable action taking place between two actors. For Robert Dahl therefore, 'A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would otherwise not do'. For Dahl, 'there can be no power at a distance'.<sup>75</sup> But, as Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz point out in a now famous article, behaviourists study only one face of power, observable decision making, omitting a second face, the realm of 'non-decision making'. Behaviourists do not account for unmeasurable, indirect elements of power which include setting the rules of the game, making sure certain issues do not reach agendas or preventing others from articulating their interests.<sup>76</sup> Schattschneider calls this 'the mobilisation of bias', writing that,

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<sup>74</sup> Weber (1978: 278).

<sup>75</sup> Dahl (1961: 17).

<sup>76</sup> For more on this, see Bachrach and Baratz (1962).

All forms of political organisation have a bias in favour of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others, because organisation is the mobilisation of bias. Some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out'.<sup>77</sup>

Traditional IR theory therefore fails to allow for a structural or systemic concept of power in which collective forces and social arrangements serve to control political agendas. The traditions, rules and environments we operate within enable or constrain the actions we are capable of taking. Power is not just about actual, observable cause and effect but also about how issues are influenced, shaped and manipulated by wider social forces. Power is both the capacity to effect others and a structural phenomena which makes decisions appear to be 'natural' or 'right'. Figures as diverse as Antonio Gramsci, Talcott Parsons and Michael Foucault have written extensively on how power is both a medium of conflict and a covert force which may prevent conflict from occurring in the first place.<sup>78</sup>

Second, orthodox IR conceptions of power fail to understand the true nature of social structures. As I outlined above, structures are, to adopt a term used by Angus Stewart, 'inherently unstable'.<sup>79</sup> In other words, rather than fixed sites of domination which compel individuals to slavishly follow in their wake, structures are processes which are relatively open to negotiation, resistance and change. Furthermore, as Fred Halliday points out, structures can be precipitants of change and conflict. Environmental disasters, processes of ageing, economic crashes, wars and revolutions are structures which create disorder and promote change rather than acting as a constraint upon it.<sup>80</sup> Even prevailing contemporary

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<sup>77</sup> In Lukes (1974: 16).

<sup>78</sup> See Gramsci (1991), Parsons (1937) and Foucault (1989).

<sup>79</sup> See Stewart (2000).

<sup>80</sup> For more on this, see Halliday in Hobson and Hobden (2002).

structures like capitalism, the state system and patriarchy are open to challenge, generating counter movements by a variety of domestic and international networks and social groupings.

The third problem with the orthodox IR conceptualisation of power is to see it solely as a top-down means of maintaining order, failing to understand that power is also an emancipatory force which *empowers* groups and thereby elicits social change. Power may be a weapon of the strong employed against the weak, but it is also a weapon which is turned back on the dominator. Conflict within the plural orders that makes up contemporary societies take place over numerous issues – the legitimate role of government, levels of state surveillance, privatisation programmes and so on. Internationally, the validity of transnational systems of governance, the authority of the United States as global hegemon and even the supremacy of neo-liberal capitalism are all relatively open to question. As I explained in the previous section, social structures, however enduring, are open to contestation by the collective action of social groupings. Power *enables* both domestic and transnational actors – NGOs, social movements, even revolutionaries and terrorist networks – to form alliances and act together in order to achieve change. These insights mean widening the concept of power in International Relations beyond the study of powerful people, sovereign states and hegemons. Such a narrow, elite focus omits entire categories and groups of people from world politics, as Cynthia Enloe labels them: ‘the marginal, the silenced and the bottom rung’.<sup>81</sup> When studying processes of social change in world politics, it is necessary to look at what has changed ‘on the ground’ in people’s everyday lives as much as the machinations of ‘high politics’. Beyond an understanding of power, therefore, as simply a function of the

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<sup>81</sup> Enloe (1989: 11).



distribution of resources, we need to understand how power is a relational phenomena that is produced and generated. The flip side of domination is freedom.<sup>82</sup>

Fourth, as Barry Hindess points out, the outcomes of conflict and competition are not *determined* by the amount of resources or capabilities of the actors involved. If so, more power would always prevail over less. But history tells us that this is not always the case: small groups from Cuba to Russia have enacted successful guerrilla campaigns against far better resourced opponents; transnational non-governmental organisations like Amnesty and Greenpeace have made a substantial impact on human rights and environmental regimes respectively; in the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile, opposition groups negotiated sweeping reforms despite the counter measures of far better resourced opponents. There is no necessary connection between capacity, action and outcome. In reality, much depends on context, situation, what others do and the unintended consequences of actions as well as the resources which are available to be deployed. Successful outcomes are the product of the struggle itself: the complex, fluid processes which make up events as much as any prior capacity. As Barry Hindess notes,

By reducing outcomes to the realisation of capacities scholars ignore one of the most basic and pervasive features of social life, namely that struggles over divergent objectives really are struggles, not the playing out of some pre-ordained script.<sup>83</sup>

Power can therefore be seen as a relational phenomenon which runs alongside processes of social action and social change. Power, as it is carried by social structures and agents, mirrors the processes which I outlined in the previous section of the chapter. As such, it is a force both of coercion and consensus, a tool of domination and emancipation and constituted both

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<sup>82</sup> For more on this, see Wrong (1995), Stewart (2001) and Sylvester (2002).

<sup>83</sup> Hindess (1996: 343).

in terms of oppression and resistance. Power relations are therefore a systematic lens by which to observe and assess processes of social action and social change as they take place in institutions and organisations within a particular time and place in world politics. Just one final question remains – how to organise such a survey of power relations so that it can make sense of the complexity of world events.

### ***Organising power relations***

One sociologist who has successfully incorporated a systematic study of power relations into his work is Michael Mann.<sup>84</sup> For Mann, global power relations are codified in four central sources: ideological, economic, military and political. Ideological power is the domain of meaning, norms, rituals and social cohesion. Economic power derives from subsistence needs and is organised into realms of production, distribution, exchange and consumption. Military power comes from the dual needs of defence and aggression and is concerned with the mobilisation of violence. Political power is bound up with the usefulness of central governing bodies in particular territorial spaces. For Mann, ‘the struggle to control ideological, economic, military and political power organisations provides the central drama of social development’.<sup>85</sup> His four sources of social power are ‘an analytical point of entry for dealing with the mess of history’.<sup>86</sup>

Mann’s division of power relations into four core fields is a useful means by which to organise and structure empirical work. In the case studies which follow, institutions and organisations are pooled into three central domains of power relations: economic, political-coercive and social-ideological. Economic power relations incorporate big and small

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<sup>84</sup> See, in particular, Mann (1986, 1993).

<sup>85</sup> Mann (1993: 9).

<sup>86</sup> Mann (1993: 19).

business, trade unions and key state actors as well as institutions encompassing privatisation, liberalisation and redistribution programmes. Political-coercive relations look at political parties, the armed forces and the secret services as well as institutions ranging from elections to foreign policy making. Social-ideological relations centre on the media and truth commissions as well as institutions like gender relations and religious belief. Such a classification will provide the tools by which to clarify whether the three cases actually warrant the term 'revolutionary change'.

## **Towards an International Sociology**

This chapter is based on one central premise, that the century old division between sociology and IR based on the sanctity of national borders has no analytical value in explaining processes of social action and social change in the contemporary world. Rather than accept this false dichotomy, it makes more sense to examine how the two arenas connect and share common dynamics of action, order and change. I explored how an International Sociology could fulfil this task. First, I outlined how history, properly applied, can tease out, refine and test generic themes which emerge from comparative study. Second, I explained how an intermediary approach to studying social action centred on institutions and organisations can unravel the interplay between structure and agency, showing how the reproduction of social structures, evident in organisations and institutions, is always at least partially contingent. Finally, I looked at how a sociological conceptualisation of power relations can serve as a systematic lens by which to assess processes of action and change. The rest of this thesis serves as a test case for these proposals through an in-depth study of three case studies: the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile. But before moving on to a detailed discussion of these transformations, the next chapter situates the thesis among approaches to revolutionary

change, defining the particular variables and units of analysis which will be studied during the course of the dissertation.

## Chapter 2:

### Studying revolutions

There are few things less becoming to the study of human affairs than the complacency of a triumphal age.<sup>87</sup>

In the introduction to this thesis, I made the case for seeing revolutions as central to our understanding of contemporary world politics. This chapter puts weight on this argument, illustrating the flaws which derive from what Fred Halliday calls ‘the complacency of a triumphal age’. It is divided into four parts. I begin by clarifying some common errors made about revolutions, arguing that numerous scholars falsely ascribe certain inalienable characteristics to revolutions, imbuing them with a set of fundamental qualities which revolutions must be seen to possess. I make the case for seeing revolutions as dynamic processes with features contingent on both their world historical context and their particular social settings. The second section augments this argument through a detailed examination of existing approaches to revolution. I look at the historical development of major theoretical paradigms, critically assessing how the principal research traditions have evolved over the past two centuries. The third part sets out a distinctive approach to studying revolutions. I make the case for a conjunctural, process based survey which distinguishes between revolutionary situations, events and outcomes, and focuses on how power relations are *systemically* transformed by revolutions. I conclude by delineating the core features of ‘negotiated revolutions’, outlining the principal features which set such transformations apart from past examples of revolutionary change.

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<sup>87</sup> Halliday (1999: 1).

## The contingency of revolutions

Over a decade on from the collapse of communism in the Czech Republic and the transformations from autocracy to market-democracy in Chile and South Africa, there are many who doubt that these upheavals represent substantive examples of revolutionary change. Some, for example the historian and journalist Timothy Garton Ash, claim that the collapse of communism is better seen as 'refolution', originating in top-down elite reform of a bankrupt system and taking place without the violent struggles common to past revolutions. Others, for example Samuel Huntington and Leslie Holmes, see the transformations as part of a longer lineage of democratisation and transition, attempts to join the liberal-capitalist world system and catch up with the material standards of Western states. My argument is that, despite their novelty, many features of these 'negotiated revolutions' are familiar to students of revolutionary change. Most importantly, the generic definition of revolutions — *that they are rapid, mass, forceful, systemic transformations of a particular society's principal power relations* — holds.<sup>88</sup>

Many of the scholars who deny that these three case studies are revolutionary do so because they equate them with certain core features — class based, violent, utopian and so on — revolutions must be seen to contain. Such analysis is misplaced because it reduces revolutions to static objects of analysis rather than seeing them as dynamic processes with changing features dependent on historical context, social conditions and collective action. There is no universal quality or image that encapsulates or constitutes a revolution — they may be velvet or violent, reactionary or progressive. Indeed, the very meaning of the word 'revolution' itself has shifted significantly over time and place, from Ancient China to the Middle East. In Europe, revolution — derived from the Italian verb *revolvere* — traditionally evoked a return to

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<sup>88</sup> This definition is explored in more detail later in the chapter. See pp. 96-98.

a previous order, for example the restoration of the monarchy witnessed by the Glorious Revolution in England in 1688. It was only during the eighteenth century and in the aftermath of the French Revolution that the word took on more modern connotations, becoming associated with volcanic ruptures, sharp breaks with the past, a progressive step from which societies could not turn back.<sup>89</sup>

In modern times, therefore, it has become commonplace to equate revolutions with 'newness'. In this spirit, scholars often lament the lack of a utopian vision or grand plan in the revolutions of 1989 and after.<sup>90</sup> In the three case studies I look at, it is argued, revolutionaries had no world vision to match the dreams of equality and liberty espoused in France and Russia. But demanding that every revolution conjures a new world vision as an essential criteria for its definition would disqualify almost every case from being labelled as a revolution. Third world revolutionaries from Mao to Castro and Neto to Cabral have fused a basic grounding in historical materialism with a dash of nationalism, and an occasional sprinkling of religious fervour. All have looked to the past as much as the present, let alone to a vision of a future utopia to legitimise their revolt. Indeed, as Marx recognised, all revolutionaries look, at least in part, to the past for their unifying message.

Just as they (revolutionaries) appear to be revolutionising themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in this time honoured disguise and this borrowed language.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> For more on this see Arendt (1963) and Halliday (1999).

<sup>90</sup> For more on this debate as regards the Czech case, see pp. 127-129. I deal with these issues more generally and in more depth in chapter six.

<sup>91</sup> Cited in Padover (ed.) (1972: 245).

Therefore, to be revolutionary, ideas do not necessarily have to provide some new set of original precepts. Rather, revolutionary ideology coalesces around a fertile blend of the time honoured and the novel, inspirations to action in a given historical context. Ideas, as they are in every revolution, were crucial to all three of my case studies – freedom, justice and equality resonated within particular historical contexts to unite opposition groups and exert pressure on the old regime. Equally, in each of the three cases, utopian visions were explicitly disavowed, both for strategic reasons and, in the aftermath of the collapse of communism, for their association with failed utopian projects. Instead, alternative messages of ‘a return to Europe’ or ‘la alegría ya viene’ (joy is coming) provided a call to arms which resonated with the popular mood without diluting or diminishing the vitality of the ideal itself.<sup>92</sup> In fact, by linking their ideas back to older themes of social justice, equality and freedom, revolutionaries in the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile showed how longevity could serve as a mark of strength. As Thomas Paine, a revolutionary writing over two centuries ago, recognised, the concept of freedom from oppression contains an eternal authority,

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.<sup>93</sup>

The other key feature which has, over time, been most closely coupled with revolution, is violence. As Chalmers Johnson writes, ‘nonviolent revolution is a contradiction in terms’.<sup>94</sup> Mao Zedong puts it even more strongly,

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<sup>92</sup> For more on this, see pp. 332-334.

<sup>93</sup> Cited in Katupe and Zollsod (1970: 49).

<sup>94</sup> Johnson (1982: 7).



A revolution is not the same as inviting people to dinner, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing fancy needlework; it cannot be anything so refined, so calm and gentle, or so mild, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an uprising, an act of violence whereby one class overthrows another...to right a wrong it is necessary to exceed proper limits, and the wrong cannot be righted without the proper limits being exceeded.<sup>95</sup>

However, my argument is that violence is contingent to processes of social change, including revolutions. Great scientific breakthroughs, the industrial revolution and widescale parliamentary reform programmes have had substantial impacts around the world, yet more often than not have taken place without recourse to large-scale violence. Social change itself therefore, has no necessary causal link to violence. In fact, as Johan Galtung and others point out, violence in its structural form such as repression, exploitation, marginalisation, sexism, racism and so forth is used to *suppress* rather than instigate change. For these scholars, violence is a means of order – the stifling of change – as much as a signifier of upheaval. Hannah Arendt, in a survey looking at the connection between violence and revolution, finds that violence only became associated with revolutionary change through the 'terror' of the Jacobins during the French Revolution.<sup>96</sup> The close link between revolution and violence is therefore a modern trend. Yet the greatest theorist of modern revolution, Karl Marx, recognised that revolutions varied in type from country to country. As such, they did not *have* to be violent,

The institutions, mores and traditions of various countries must be taken into consideration and we do not deny that there are countries where the workers can attain their goals by peaceful means.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Mao (1954: 27).

<sup>96</sup> For more on this, see Arendt (1963).

<sup>97</sup> Cited in Padover (1972: xxiv).

What has been constant to revolutions over time is the concept of *forceful* change, that large-scale transformations must involve a sense of compulsion. The transition in Chile as well as the transformations in the Czech Republic and South Africa follow this logic. All featured years of violence — both explicit and structural — leading up to the transformations themselves; revolutionaries in all three cases were prepared for violent conflict and the old regime maintained control of the means of violence. That they did not use these means was the result of willed collective action within a context which enabled the relatively peaceful negotiation of power rather than prompting violent confrontation. Therefore, the concept of *force* was a central part of the process of negotiated revolution and violence, albeit latent, was present in all three cases.

A revolution therefore is not a static template composed of generic ingredients or variables. Instead, they are processes whose meaning and nature remain subject to historical context, both international and particular. Yet, in the contemporary era, revolutions continue to be coupled with certain features, masquerading as objective criteria, without which they are considered to be ‘invalid’. By this myopic categorisation, revolutions can safely be removed from further study. Indeed, over the last twenty years or so, a new field of research, dubbed ‘transitology’, has sought to subsume revolutions within waves and counter-waves of democratisation, starting in Southern Europe in the 1970s before moving on to Latin America in the 1980s and Eastern Europe in the 1990s.<sup>98</sup>

But the popularity of transitology as a field masks significant weaknesses. First, generalities about transitions from authoritarian rule tend to overplay similarities and downplay

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<sup>98</sup> Seminal texts in transitology include O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (eds.) (1986), Linz and Stepan (1996) and Huntington (1993).

differences. It is not clear, for example, whether it is in fact even possible to denote general categories of 'authoritarian' and 'totalitarian'. As this thesis makes clear, the particularity of the Chilean case makes it incomparable as a process next to the more profound transformations which took place in South Africa and the Czech Republic. Indeed, it can be argued that transitology fails to distinguish appropriately even between the cases it chooses as archetypal. Hence, the particular role played by tourism, intellectual networks and international factors in Spain sits uneasily next to the cases of Greece and Portugal.<sup>99</sup>

Second, transitologists tend to overemphasise the role of political institutions to the neglect of economic and social factors. As the next section of this chapter makes clear, it is crucial in assessing processes of transition or revolution to understand such transformations in the round, as embodying changes in the structures of governance but also in the means of production and the means of information. Third, and perhaps most crucially, transitologists fail to build in a formative role for the international in processes of transition. As such, they miss crucial factors, both long-term and short-term, which contribute in a *constitute* sense to the causes, events and outcomes of these processes.

The failure of transitology as a field is a salutary reminder that there is no universal magic formula which can account for all instances of radical change over time and place. The balance found between long-term and short-term, generality and particularity, international and domestic, as well as the relative weight given to political, economic and social factors are the key challenges that any student of revolutionary change faces. The validity and importance of this point will become more clear after a survey of the principal approaches to revolutionary change.

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<sup>99</sup> For more on this, see Wiarda (2001).

## **Theories of revolution**

Revolutions have been the subject of study by sociologists, historians, political scientists, philosophers, psychologists and economists alike. Doyens of social theory including Marx, Durkheim, Tocqueville and Weber all incorporated analysis of revolutions in their work. These accounts helped to establish fissures in the study of revolutionary change which are still apparent today. Lenin, Mao, Guevara and many others drew their initial cue from Marx. Tocqueville provided key insights for structuralists like Theda Skocpol and Barrington Moore. Weber supplied many of the key themes which lie behind the political conflict school of theorists like Charles Tilly and rational choice scholars such as Rod Aya. Functionalism as espoused by Brinton, Johnson and Huntington originated with Durkheim; merged with more psychological accounts, Durkheim's views are clear in the frustration-aggression approaches of James C. Davies and Ted Gurr. A number of IR writers on revolution, for example David Armstrong, draw, at least in part, on the writings of the conservative critic of the French Revolution, Edmund Burke. This section of the chapter outlines and critiques the main arguments of these schools and begins to form a distinctive approach to the study of revolutionary change in world politics.<sup>100</sup>

## ***Historical materialism***

There can be little doubt that Karl Marx in particular and historical materialists in general have contributed the most influential accounts of revolutions in the social sciences. For Marx,

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<sup>100</sup> I do not pretend that the survey of major approaches to revolutionary change which follows is in any way complete. Many theories are a mixture of approaches, see for example Kimmel (1990) and Goldstone (1991). Others exist completely outside the scope of these schools. For example, Nikki Keddie (1992, 1995) uses concepts drawn from quantum physics to argue that major historical events such as revolutions actually derive from the build up of a myriad of minute causes and are made up of a multitude of contradictory events, decisions and permutations, all of which contribute to their outcome. As such, they can neither be quantified nor accurately predicted. I am also well aware that I refer only in passing to important historical works on revolution, including Rudé (1964), Hobsbawm (1990) and Eckstein (1994).

revolutions are the locomotives of world historical change, providing a necessary step in the progression of all societies as they move from feudalism to bourgeois capitalism and eventually to communism. Revolutions stem from contradictions within a society's economic relations, particularly ownership of the means of production. Marx believed that the seeds for the destruction of capitalist society lay in the contradictions and antagonisms between classes arising from the exploitation and domination of the proletariat by the ruling class. Eventually workers would become aware of their position and spontaneously rise to crush their exploiters. By necessity, such social revolutions would be violent, for the ruling class were unlikely to relinquish their position by choice. As Marx famously noted, 'violence is the midwife of every old society that is pregnant with the new'.<sup>101</sup>

There is much to admire in this conceptualisation of revolutions. First, the story is a powerful one – it has attracted supporters from around the globe drawn to the overarching principles of liberty and progress. It is impossible to study revolutions of the twentieth century without paying due attention to the practical influence of historical materialism. Second, Marx places revolutions at the centre of his analysis, highlighting the importance of revolutions both to the development of domestic societies and also to world politics – the formative influence of revolutions on the international system has often been denied by scholars of International Relations.<sup>102</sup> As such, Marx claimed that world capitalism as a system helped to create the conditions for revolutions and that the goal of revolutions was or should be the liberation of workers around the world.<sup>103</sup> Third, the concept of social revolutions as discrete from

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<sup>101</sup> Cited in Lenin (1937: 18).

<sup>102</sup> For example, Kissinger (1957) and Armstrong (1993). For more on this, see pp. 91-94.

<sup>103</sup> Although Marx wrote about the world system of capitalism and its revolutionary properties, his theory also contended that revolutions were the result of endogenous class contradictions. Therefore, his analysis includes both internal and external components to processes of revolutionary change.

political revolutions, palace coups or putsches is useful in understanding the *systemic* nature of revolutions, a distinction I will explore in more depth later in the chapter.

However, there are also significant problems with Marx's view of revolutions. First, it has an overwhelming economic bias – class antagonisms and conflict over the means of production are the central drama which precipitate revolution. Yet revolutions are not merely fights between the working class and the ruling class over ownership of the means of production; in reality revolutionary movements are made up of complex, shifting coalitions of social networks and groupings, often with disparate aims, motives and intentions. Indeed, Robert Dix labels revolutionary movements 'negative coalitions' because the only thing members share is a desire to be rid of a particular regime, despot or tyrant.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, revolutions are not restricted merely to economic relations or goals – they are also political and social projects taking in the whole sphere of power relations. As I will discuss later in this chapter, revolutions are *conjunctural* processes with a multiplicity of causes and systemic outcomes.

Second, although Marx studied revolutions, particularly bourgeois revolutions, in some detail,<sup>105</sup> he did not allow a formative, dynamic role for actors in the creation of revolutions: revolutionaries, social movements and political parties have at best bit parts to play in Marx's inevitable revolutionary struggles. This omits a key feature of revolutions – that they are processes of social action and social change in which outcomes are not determined but fought over by and within institutions and organisations operating within a number of power domains.

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<sup>104</sup> For more on this, see Dix (1984).

<sup>105</sup> See, for example, Marx (1978).

But perhaps the most important criticism of Marx's work is that the theory didn't work in practice. In countries such as Germany and England where conditions appeared ripe for revolution, no such uprisings occurred. In 1848 and 1870, revolutions around Europe were either hijacked by the bourgeoisie or successfully resisted by ancien regimes. Instead, communist revolution in Europe appeared only in Russia, a country in which an absolutist monarchy presided over an economy dominated by subsistence agriculture.<sup>106</sup> Peasants as well as the industrial proletariat were leading actors in the Bolshevik Revolution, a bourgeois revolution itself commandeered by more radical elements. Indeed, the failure of revolutionary movements in Europe during the nineteenth century prompted a revision of Marx's work by a number of his immediate successors, most notably by two leaders of the Bolshevik revolution, Lenin and Trotsky.<sup>107</sup>

Lenin understood that revolutions were not the spontaneous result of the proletariat realising self consciousness. In fact, the working class tended to develop unions and fight for reform rather than revolution. Lenin acknowledged that for revolution to succeed, there must be both a revolutionary ideology which united people and a committed revolutionary movement to organise insurrection.<sup>108</sup> As he wrote, 'give us an organisation of revolutionaries and we shall overturn the whole of Russia'.<sup>109</sup> The bourgeois intelligentsia, aware of the needs of the proletariat, had a responsibility to lead the class struggle, imparting their knowledge to the workers through propaganda and agitation. In time, this political education by a revolutionary vanguard party would engender a revolutionary class consciousness. For Lenin, the vanguard

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<sup>106</sup> Rus<sup>6</sup> Russia did undergo some industrialisation prior to 1917, but this modernisation was, by and large, piecemeal, and the country still lagged considerably behind other European countries in terms of economic development.

<sup>107</sup> Mal<sup>7</sup> Marx's views on revolution were also subject to criticism from a number of 'revisionists', most notable among them Kautsky and Bernstein.

<sup>108</sup> Len<sup>8</sup> Lenin's fellow revolutionary Trotsky (1932: 18) also understood the need for a revolutionary organisation. As he wrote, 'without a guiding organisation, the energy of the masses would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a piston-box'.

<sup>109</sup> Len<sup>9</sup> Lenin (1957: 119).

party should be made up of ‘professional revolutionists’ – a committed, small band of well organised revolutionaries operating a central apparatus and a wider network of fellow travellers. Lenin recognised that revolutions encompassed the whole of society, therefore the vanguard party had political, economic and social responsibilities.

Lenin filled many of the gaps left by Marx. First, he understood that revolutions had actors – the organisation and leadership of a revolutionary party were crucial to the success of a revolution. Second, Lenin appreciated that revolutions were conjunctural processes, beyond the more narrow economic conceptualisation of Marx. Third, Lenin recognised that revolutions were the result both of action, and inaction, by elites and the wider public. Hence,

It is not enough for revolutions that the exploiters should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes, it is essential for revolutions that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the lower class do not want the old way and when the upper class cannot carry on in the old way – only then can revolution triumph.<sup>110</sup>

Finally, Lenin observed that revolutions were not unique processes distinct from everyday dynamics of social action and social change. Rather, they were extreme cases in which actors had unusual capacities to change power relations. Freed from the normal constraints, structures and institutions of everyday life, people were intimately involved in the creation of novel sets of power relations. As he famously commented,

Revolutions are festivals of the oppressed and the exploited. At no other time are the masses of the people in a position to come forward so actively as creators of a new social order.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Cited in Dunn (1989: 14).

<sup>111</sup> Cited in Skocpol (1979: 175).



However, despite his attempts to do so, there was one element of Marx's original work which Lenin failed successfully to update – why social revolutions occurred in countries of the semi-periphery which seemed to lack the objective conditions for major transformations. This lacuna was, however, largely filled by one of Lenin's contemporaries – Trotsky. Trotsky's theory of 'combined and uneven development' claimed that relatively 'backward' countries were more likely to experience revolution than those nations which experienced first hand the long-term, organic evolution of industrialisation, urbanisation and agrarian reform ushered in by modern capitalism. Because as Trotsky put it, 'a country can insert itself into development', backward nations could make 'special leaps' to overtake pioneering countries within a relative short space of time.<sup>112</sup>

For Trotsky, nations could insert themselves into modernity, using their 'privilege of historic backwardness' to overtake previously more advanced countries. In this way, Germany and the United States both surpassed Britain economically in the first part of the twentieth century. Revolutionary conditions did not have to arise gradually and inevitably; instead revolutions could be made quickly through rapid modernisation and the consequent sharp ruptures in economic relations. The consequence of combining large-scale industrial modernisation with a predominantly rural, peasant based subsistence economy was excessive hierarchy and instability. Without intermediate buffers to guard against uprisings from below, ruling classes were vulnerable to surges of discontent. As Trotsky observed of Russia, 'whereas in the dawn of history, it was too unripe to accomplish a Reformation, when the time came for leading a revolution, it was overripe'.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Trotsky (1932: 29).

<sup>113</sup> Trotsky (1932: 31).

Like Marx and Lenin before him, Trotsky significantly advances our understanding of revolutionary change, introducing a tangible notion of the world systemic context of revolutionary change. First, the combined and uneven spread of capitalism meant that it was not in the heartlands of Western Europe or North America that future revolutions would occur, but in developing countries of the semi-periphery, a point that became increasingly important as revolution became a central feature of the political landscape in the developing world during the twentieth century. Second, modernisation, with its resulting dislocations engendered by urbanisation, industrialisation and agrarian reform set challenges both for elites and wider social groupings. If these pressures were not met – particularly through the creation or development of intermediate associations between elites and wider social groupings – revolutions could occur.<sup>114</sup>

Historical materialism was further augmented by a number of revolutionaries in the Third World. Mao applied historical materialism to Chinese conditions, for the first time formally including the peasantry in the theory and practice of revolution.<sup>115</sup> Che Guevara and Fidel Castro also supplemented historical materialism through their concept of the revolutionary ‘foco’ – a band of guerrillas who, through dedicated struggle and relentless warfare, could create revolutions in seemingly unlikely settings. No-one more keenly recognised the importance of the international features of revolutions than Guevara, exemplified by his famous call to arms,

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<sup>114</sup> The lack of institutional buffers or intermediate associations between elites and the public has, since the work of Tocqueville, been considered a key element of revolutionary crisis. Its importance is born out by the example of a number of revolutions, not least the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

<sup>115</sup> Mao did, however, retain strong beliefs in most tenets of orthodox historical materialism, arguing that if conditions for a revolution were ripe, they were inevitable. Under the right circumstances, Mao wrote, ‘a single spark can start a prairie fire’. He was also convinced of the necessary violence of revolutions. Thus, ‘anything can grow out of the barrel of a gun’. Mao (1954: 118).

Create two, three, many Vietnams. It is the time of the furnaces and it is only necessary to see the glow...the solidarity of the progressive world for the Vietnamese people has something of the bitter irony faced by the gladiators in the Roman circus when they won the applause of the plebs. To wish the victims success is not enough, the thing is to share their fate, to join them in death or victory.<sup>116</sup>

As the original concepts of Marx have been supplemented by subsequent generations, they have increased in impact, travelling around the world, apparently able to explain gross inequalities and exploitation, proposing the way towards fairer, more just societies. No continent bar Australia and North America has been spared a social revolution conducted in the name of historical materialism. But the significance of Marx and his followers goes beyond the particular history of revolutionary struggle themselves – their theoretical approach also has powerful explanatory value. Most important is their emphasis on the international features of revolution: the notion of combined and uneven development; the disruptive effects of modernising forces; the goal of world revolution and the aid – formal and informal – revolutionaries have a duty to offer their compatriots abroad. Also crucial is the understanding by later historical materialists of the systemic nature of revolutions and that revolutions can be made in seemingly unpromising conditions with sufficient strength of purpose, strategic action and resources.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Guevara (1987: 1-3). Such a call to arms has long been a feature of left-wing battle cries, ranging from Marx, 'philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is to change it', cited in Blackey and Paynton (1976: 5), to Andre Gunder Frank, 'la revolución no se aplaude, se hace' (one does not applaud the revolution, one makes it), cited in Wickham-Crowley (1992: 4).

<sup>117</sup> There are a number of other Marxist-Leninist ideas which significantly further our understanding of revolutionary change that I do not have the space to include here, for example Gramsci's concept of hegemonic power and Trotsky's notion of 'permanent revolution'.

## *Structuralism*

Structuralism shares many similarities with historical materialism. First, structuralists acknowledge that revolutions play a central role in the development of societies, acting as links between ancien regimes and modernity. Second, structuralists agree that international factors – the spread of capitalism unevenly around the world, relative geo-political position, defeat in war and so on – are key determinants of revolutionary change. Third, structuralists argue that revolutions are inevitable, the result of particular relations both internal and external to societies which determine whether revolutions take place or not.<sup>118</sup> However, structuralism also adds important elements to the analysis of revolution offered by Marxism, particularly through insights of the political crisis and battle for the state which precedes revolutionary struggles and which forms a key component of revolutionary events themselves. Also, structuralists have been forceful in arguing that elites can influence both the emergence of revolutionary crisis and the direction of revolutionary change. Overall though, by downplaying, or even ignoring, agency, culture and ideology, structuralism omits as much as it augments.

Perhaps the ‘founding father’ of structuralism is Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville argued that the French Revolution was not the inevitable result of dissatisfaction with the absolutist regime of Louis XVI, rather it was the result of elite fracture and reform which allowed the ‘middling’ classes of burghers, merchants and gentry to press for more radical reform. Defeat in the Seven Years War with England, the example of a successful bourgeois revolution in America and the growth of powerful new ideas like nationalism eroded the authority of an

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<sup>118</sup> This is a rather crude generalisation – many structuralists, like many Marxists, agree that revolutions contain at least a degree of agency. See, for example, Goldstone (ed.) (1991). However, the dominant strand of structuralism, exemplified by Skocpol (1979, 1994), is non-voluntarist.

absolutist state already weakened by internal cleavages.<sup>119</sup> The programme of limited reform instigated by the ancien regime was constrained by the actions of parlements, the newly empowered bourgeoisie and popular uprisings. Contra Marx, during the 1780s, France experienced relative economic growth: trade, national income, industrial and agricultural production rose; Paris was rebuilt; the middle classes became richer and the peasants more free. As Tocqueville observed, revolution was not the result of worsening economic conditions. To the contrary,

It is not always when things are going from bad to worse that a society falls into a revolution. It happens most often that a people which has supported without complaint, as if they were not felt, the most oppressive laws, violently throws them off as their weight is lightened...The regime which is destroyed by a revolution is almost always an improvement on its immediate predecessor and experience shows that the most dangerous moment for a bad government is that in which it sets about reform...evils which are patiently endured when they seem inevitable become intolerable once the idea of escape from them is suggested...Feudalism at the height of its power had not inspired Frenchmen with so much hatred as it did on the eve of its disappearing.<sup>120</sup>

Tocqueville provides significant insights into the nature of revolutionary change. First, he situates revolutions in their specific international context, over and above the generic world historical conditions noted by Trotsky and other historical materialists. For Tocqueville, defeat in war, the spread of radical ideas and relative economic decline all played a leading role in the French Revolution. Second, Tocqueville asserts that revolutions are essentially political processes – they are caused by state crisis and their central dynamic is a fight for

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<sup>119</sup> Elite fracture was principally the result of the introduction of internal tolls, taxes and peages; from December 1788, there was almost continuous peasant revolt. According to Rudé (1964), the rejection of the new stamp tax by parlements and the subsequent bankruptcy of the French government acted as the final spark which lit the revolutionary crisis.

<sup>120</sup> Cited in Kimmel (1990: 28).

political power and control of the state. Third, Tocqueville understands that revolutions are neither top-down processes in which structures and elites determine processes of transformation, nor are they solely bottom-up instances of popular dissatisfaction. Rather, he argues, revolutions are processes in which social context, elite action and inaction, the role of alternative elites, wider social groupings and popular uprisings all play a part. As I discussed in the previous chapter, structures and agents mutually constitute processes of social action and social change. Tocqueville recognises this dynamic of social action within revolutionary processes. Finally, Tocqueville realises that revolutions are not the result of an absolute decline in living conditions, but are more likely prompted by *perceptions* of decline.<sup>121</sup>

Tocqueville's arguments have been updated and enhanced by two modern theorists of revolution: Barrington Moore and Theda Skocpol. Moore argues that all societies follow one of three possible paths to modernity, each of which features a distinct logic characterised by the type of revolution it goes through. The first is a bourgeois revolution as experienced by the United States, France and England in which an independent bourgeoisie carries out violent change, leading to the institutionalisation of parliamentary, capitalist democracy. The second is revolution from above, in which a weak bourgeois impulse aborts revolution from below. Instead, an alliance between the landed upper class and a weak bourgeoisie establishes a reactionary capitalist revolution, with Fascism the result. Examples of this transition include Germany and Japan. The third route to modernity is communism brought about by peasant revolution, taking place in countries where there is no commercial revolution in agriculture, the middle class has no significant role in modernisation and peasant institutions survive intact to endure new stresses and strains they are ill equipped to meet. Examples of this type include Russia and China.

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<sup>121</sup> For more on this, see the section on frustration-aggression, pp. 88-91.

Moore's work is resolutely economistic and materialist – he has no time for the role of culture, ideology or even politics in his analysis. Also, writing in 1967, Moore found it difficult to include examples of Third World revolutions in his typology, particularly India. He would find it near impossible today to explain a whole range of modern revolutions – Iran, the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and many post-colonial revolutions – which don't fit into his taxonomy. However, Moore's work highlights a crucial point about the importance, or even the necessity, of revolutions to processes of modernisation, a theme I will return to in depth later in the thesis. Furthermore, as a model for and the teacher of one of the most important contemporary theorists of revolutions – Theda Skocpol – Moore deserves close inspection.

Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions*, a sweeping comparative survey of revolution in France, Russia and China, is a classic illustration of structuralism. Skocpol is 'resolutely non-voluntarist', echoing the words of Wendell Phillips that 'revolutions are not made, they come'.<sup>122</sup> Skocpol argues that revolutions do not arise, nor are they observable, through the interests, motives or actions of individuals, groups, classes or organisations but are multi-faceted processes full of contradictory aims and events. Therefore, she argues, scholars should 'rise above' the viewpoints of participants and look for the macro patterns – structures – which explain revolutionary change. For Skocpol, two structural patterns above all lie behind revolutions: international relations and the potentially autonomous state. The former, Skocpol argues, is crucial because the uneven spread of global capitalism together with the growth of the international states system have disadvantaged some states vis a vis others. Military backwardness and political dependency undermine the legitimacy of the central

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<sup>122</sup> Skocpol (1979: 17).

state, politically autonomous from other domestic power structures because of its dual functions: maintaining domestic order and competing with other states abroad.<sup>123</sup> Defeat in war or the threat of imminent invasion by more developed countries matched with pressures to domestic class structures results in administrative and military crises, opening up the way for revolt from below to succeed.<sup>124</sup> Failure by the state successfully to push through radical reforms leads to revolution. For Skocpol, revolutions are primarily political processes which start with state crisis and end with the consolidation of new state organisations. Thus, Skocpol writes, 'social revolutions in France, Russia and China emerged from specifically political crises centred in the structures and situations of the old-regime states'.<sup>125</sup>

Skocpol's work on revolution has attracted perhaps more interest than any other over the past twenty-five years, some favourable, much critical.<sup>126</sup> For my purposes, she has usefully illustrated the international features of revolutionary change and shown the central role of political factors in revolutions, both useful additions to historical materialist accounts. But, there is a major problem with Skocpol's fusion of international with structural. The international does play a central role in revolutions, but this goes beyond the provision of a mere permissive context. Rather, international agency, in the form of ideas, political organisations and the power of example can all play a leading role in revolutionary dramas.

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<sup>123</sup> As Skocpol notes, these functions may bring the state into conflict with other domestic power structures. For example, war can hinder business profitability, witnessed, for instance, by sharp falls in the stock market.

<sup>124</sup> Skocpol assumes that peasants carry out insurrections as part of the routine of rural life. In this, she follows work by Wolf (1969), and Scott (1976, 1985) which argues that peasants are constantly engaged in some form of protest against their conditions. What changes in revolutionary situations is that state crisis from above allows revolt from below the space to become more widespread.

<sup>125</sup> Skocpol (1979: 46).

<sup>126</sup> Critics include Kimmel (1990), Collins (1980), Nichols (1986) and Sewell (1985). These critics are, in part, answered by Skocpol (1985, 1994) herself, Goodwin (1988, 2001) and Wickham-Crowley (1991).



Furthermore, Skocpol's analysis has difficulty explaining a number of contemporary revolutions, particularly Iran, where an urban based revolution took place within a relatively modern country without a substantive international crisis, carried through, at least in part, by the middle-class under the banner of a traditional religious doctrine. Skocpol also struggles to explain some older examples, for example, why there was no revolution in Germany in 1918 given the promising social, political, economic and international conditions. It can be argued that Skocpol's analysis cannot even elucidate her own case studies. China is a two-stage revolution separated by thirty years of agitation and organisation in the countryside by the communist party; the Russian revolution was, to some extent, made by the Bolsheviks; and ideology was a key factor in France, Russia and China. By removing human agency, organisational capacity and a formative role for culture and ideology from her account, Skocpol has failed to capture the complexity of revolutionary processes.

Skocpol, like many other structuralists, spends too much attention on the causes which lie behind pre-revolutionary pressures and too little on revolutionary events themselves. By downplaying or even omitting the actions of people involved in revolutionary struggles, structuralists cannot explain how revolutions are made in unpromising circumstances nor why revolution does not occur when the right structural conditions are in place. Revolutions are foretold neither by the movement of stars nor by the existence of particular structural alignments. They are complex processes in which social change is negotiated by a range of agencies in a rapidly changing context, both international and domestic. Skocpol's account, like those of other structuralists, does not stand up to the test of close historical scrutiny.

## ***Functionalism***

Functionalism originated in the nineteenth century in the work of Auguste Comte and his student, Emile Durkheim. Functionalists argue, contra both historical materialists and structuralists, that the central dynamic of society is not conflict but consensus. For functionalists, social norms, values and institutions, rather than inhibiting awareness of exploitation and class consciousness, are collectively sanctioned by members of a social order, helping to integrate social groupings, maintain order and establish equilibrium. This normative, integrative element to social order is necessary and beneficial to societies.

Without socially agreed upon rules and patterns of behaviour, there would be chaos, disorder and from time to time, revolution. Functionalists assert that during periods of rapid change, social and technological progress undermines the social glue which holds societies together. Subsequently, reduced levels of moral integration and regulation lead to a breakdown of the old order, the alienation, or anomie, of elites, mass discontent among the wider public and a loss of legitimacy in the central governing order. If elites prove intransigent and fail to respond to the growing crisis, revolution can occur. As this passage from Durkheim makes clear, functionalists are, in the main, deeply suspicious of revolution.

I am quite aware when people speak of destroying existing society, they intend to reconstruct them. But these are the fantasies of children. One cannot in this way rebuild collective life: once social organisation is destroyed, centuries of history will be required to build another. In the intervening period, there will be a new Middle Ages...It will not be the sun of a new society that will rise, all resplendent over the ruins of the old, instead men will enter a new period of darkness.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Cited in Kimmel (1990: 38). Such condemnation is hardly restricted to functionalists. Hence, Jack Goldstone, a leading exponent of structuralism, writes, 'revolutions may liberate ideas, but they tend to enslave men and women'. Goldstone (1991: xxiv).

Functionalism, despite its origins in Western Europe, has become most strongly established in North America.<sup>128</sup> One of the central figures in what Lawrence Stone calls the ‘first generation’ scholars of revolution, Crane Brinton, has produced a particularly influential functionalist account of revolutionary change. Brinton argues that all revolutions have an anatomy, passing through various stages illustrated by the analogy of a fever.<sup>129</sup> For Brinton, revolutions start as symptoms originating in the decay of ancien regimes structures and the resultant imperfect equilibrium within a society. These symptoms become fully blown during revolutionary crisis, in which a phase of dual sovereignty is experienced. The revolution passes through a period of moderate rule before reaching a delirium in which it is taken over by a radical sect carrying out a campaign of terror. From this peak, the fever calms down and convalescence, illustrated by the period of Thermidor, begins, although not without occasional relapses. Eventually, normality is restored – some things change, others do not. In the meantime, Brinton argues, the patient – society – has been through a terrible ordeal.

Brinton is an exemplar both of the pros and cons of ‘first generation’ approaches to studying revolutions. On the one hand, he uses comparative history to test his theoretical premises and finds distinct, interesting patterns in processes of revolutionary change. However, Brinton is guilty of drawing misleading, general rules from his particular examples. The French Revolution is used by Brinton as an exemplar of all revolutions – he creates arbitrary stages and fits history round them, applying them loosely to a range of other settings for which they are ill equipped. This focus on ‘great revolutions’ leads to a stunted picture of revolutionary change which can not account for revolutions that have taken place in the developing

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<sup>128</sup> This is hardly surprising – the functionalist focus on order and their disapproval of revolution was well received by scholars in the United States, where during the Cold War, foreign policy was geared at containing social revolutions around the world, usually equated with Soviet efforts to unsettle the balance of power.

<sup>129</sup> Brinton, like many theoreticians of his era, used the example of ‘great revolutions’ such as France, Russia and England to illustrate his points. For a discussion of both the merits and difficulties inherent in such an approach, see chapter six.

world.<sup>130</sup> Brinton ignores how revolutions have not just been fevers which divert from the standard course of consensus, order and stability, but programmes of liberation from which society and its structures do not return to their former arrangements. There may be patterns to revolutions and these may be testable by comparative history, but to be worthwhile, the archetype must be drawn from beyond England, France and Russia.

An equally important figure among functionalist approaches to revolution is Chalmers Johnson. For Johnson, a 'homeostatic equilibrium' is maintained in society through the inculcation of shared norms, values and institutions, creating a moral community in which constraint is backed up by coercion. Drawing heavily on the high priest of functionalism, Talcott Parsons, Johnson argues that when the authority of the system is questioned, for example in periods of rapid change or if an elite abuses its position, a power deflation occurs in which coercion increasingly has to be used to bolster the ailing system. Without effective reform by elites, a dysynchronization emerges between values, status and the division of labour, a system dysfunction which undermines social integration. Revolutions are a chance to recreate the social order afresh with new rules and structures. Crucially, for Johnson, modernity demands revolution. Sooner or later, the old order will crumble because its structures and capacity to deliver do not fit the changing environment within which it operates. However, the timing of revolutions is dictated by elite action or inaction: military weakness, the existence of a viable opposition and alternative ideologies all play a part in hurrying revolutions along or slowing them down.

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<sup>130</sup> Although Brinton can hardly be blamed for this, as he was writing before the majority of revolutions in the Third World had taken place.

There are a number of useful points in Johnson's analysis. First, he understands the specific dislocating effects of modernisation; that the inclusion of immanent social groups, networks and organisations is the key to stability in times of rapid change. Second, Johnson acknowledges, unlike many functionalists, that social integration and moral consensus is as much to do with coercion and repression as it is to do with socially agreed upon standards, norms and rules. Third, Johnson does include a notion of agency in his theory – elites have a focal part to play in revolutionary situations. However, there are also numerous problems with his work, some stemming from his use of a top-down, static view of society common to functionalism, others relating to his particular assertions. Johnson's focus on stability and consensus means that he is weak on processes of conflict and change; he is particularly unable to understand the formative role played by social groups in the *creation* of revolutionary situations. Along with other functionalists, Johnson lacks an account of the motives, interests and ideas which mediate between conditions and action. Johnson's work lacks historical specificity – he cannot say why, under the right conditions, revolutions do not take place and vice versa. Finally, elite reform is not the sole determinant of the timing of revolution. As I discuss later in this chapter, elite action, along with the collective action of other key groups, takes place within a rapidly shifting context. It is this interaction between context and collective action which determines the success or failure of reform measures.

Probably the most important functionalist theory of revolution is provided by Samuel Huntington. For Huntington, stability within countries is the result of a congruence between social, economic and political institutions. Good governance, stemming from the existence of legitimate, effective, authoritative government regulates behaviour, maintains social order and resolves disputes. However, during periods of rapid modernisation, social and economic change tends to run ahead of the development of political institutions. Processes of

urbanisation, higher literacy and educational standards, enhanced social mobility and so on diversify society along new, more complex lines – ethnic, religious and occupational – and raise levels of political consciousness. But political modernisation – the rationalisation of authority, the differentiation of political structures and the inclusion of the masses in political processes – lags behind. Traditional political identities remain, there is no separation between military and political spheres, and political parties fail to emerge. Old loyalties centred in the village and family are attacked and new animosities based around class, religion and ethnicity are unresolved. The result is a loss of moral consensus, a decline in social capital and a void in political authority as the links binding individuals, groups and society are broken. Frustration, instability, disorder and conflict follow. Huntington quotes Tocqueville, ‘if men are to remain civilised or become so, the art of associating together must grow and improve in the same ratio in which the equality of conditions is increased’.<sup>131</sup>

Huntington advances our understanding of revolutions in a number of ways. Most importantly, he understands that political dynamics of governance, legitimacy and institutional inclusion play important roles in revolutions. Without effective intermediary associations which act both as links and bulwarks between individual and society, government’s are prone to surges of discontent from below.<sup>132</sup> This is evident in all three of the case studies discussed in this thesis. Also, when governments lose legitimacy – through defeat in war, economic instability, elite fracture and so on – they become more susceptible to challenges from below. As Huntington recognises, governance during periods of great change and crisis are critical to how revolutionary situations unfold. Finally, Huntington

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<sup>131</sup> Huntington (1968: 4).

<sup>132</sup> Other scholars have made similar claims. For example, McDaniel (1991) argues that revolutions occur in countries which experience ‘autocratic modernisation’ without a parallel expansion of social, political and economic institutions. The result is a loss of legitimacy in the regime, the breakdown of the state and the emergence of a revolutionary situation.

usefully unpacks the various elements of modernisation – social, economic, political – and shows how they interact to exert substantial pressures on the existing social order. Failure not just by elites but also by wider social groupings, intermediary institutions and organisations to deal with these challenges can lead to the emergence of a revolutionary crisis.

However, as much as I agree with Huntington's focus on the *systemic* challenge of modernisation, and on institutions and organisations as key variables in the study of revolutions, I do not accept key elements of his thesis. First, as I discussed at length in the first chapter, organisations and institutions, even in seemingly absolutist regimes, are sites of resistance and conflict as well as units of consensus and stability.<sup>133</sup> Second, Huntington, in common with functionalists in general, has a top-down, static conception of social action and social change. For Huntington, systemic processes of modernisation disrupt the existing social order, creating space for revolutionary movements to exploit. But this is only part of the story. Pressures for change are not just the result of macro patterns, they are also the result of agency by social movements, social groupings and networks operating in civil society. This agency actively helps to *create* the space in which substantial change can occur. Furthermore, this dynamic is not just apparent in times of great dislocation, but part of everyday processes of reform and appeasement. What is different about revolutionary periods is that the context of social action and the goals of opposition alliances are more far-reaching: a relatively open system provides the permissive context for large-scale change and key social groupings seek to fundamentally restructure the social order. In other words,

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<sup>133</sup> By absolutist, I mean more than the specific connotation the term implies with European states of the late feudal period. Rather, I am talking about the concept of a state which is governed by an absolute ruler or authority and which holds, or seeks to hold, some kind of 'total' control over its people.

revolutions differ from everyday dynamics of social action and social change primarily by their *scope, depth* and *effect*.<sup>134</sup>

Functionalism offers some insights into the processes which make up revolutionary change, but each contribution contains important weaknesses. First, functionalists stress the importance of modernisation and the lack of homology between structural environment and social institutions. However, they reify society as a 'bounded unit', ignoring or downplaying the formative role of the international in domestic processes and rooting modernisation to a static rather than dynamic view of structure and agency. Second, functionalists allow a formative, if limited, role for agency in their work, particularly elites. However, as will become clear when I move on to detailed analysis of the case studies, elite action and inaction have a far more complex role in revolutions than they allow. Third, functionalists understand the importance of elite fracture, loss of legitimacy, the role of opposition elites and alternative ideology, norms and values in the emergence and development of revolutionary situations. But this view lacks real understanding of the political processes centred around organisational capacity, the fight for resources and strategic action which make up revolutionary situations and revolutionary events. For this, it is necessary to turn to the political conflict school of revolutionary change.

### ***Political conflict***

Political conflict approaches owe much to Max Weber. Weber argues that revolutions are rooted in a crisis of the state and its institutions emerging as a result of particular historical patterns and trajectories. For Weber, modernisation, defeat in war and rapid economic change upset the existing order. Revolutions are not inevitable – they can be avoided through

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<sup>134</sup> For more on this, see Sztompka (1993).



effective reform and their path altered by inspirational leadership. Importantly, Weber notes that the result of revolution is not liberation from tyranny or the utopia sought by revolutionaries. In fact, revolution results in the institutionalisation of a stronger state than that which was overthrown, resulting in a regime of bureaucratic domination which effectively enslaves members of a polity. To paraphrase Charles Tilly, 'states make revolutions and revolutions make states'.<sup>135</sup>

Weber's view of revolution shares much in common with other approaches to the subject. For example, like a number of theorists, Weber roots the causes of revolutions in long-term processes of modernisation; like structuralists, he sees revolutions primarily as political crisis centred in the state; and like functionalists, Weber understands that elite reform has an important bearing on revolutionary change. But Weber's schema also has distinctive merits, including his understanding of the role of leadership and the differentiation he makes between revolutionary causes, events and outcomes. Of principal benefit is Weber's understanding of how revolutions are both the result of long-term pressures and short-term precipitants, over which agency has a crucial bearing. For Weber, revolutions are caused by long-term, structural shifts or preconditions, medium-term precipitants or the emergence of new structural patterns, and short-term triggers – immediate historical events. Both the *longue durée* and evenements alike therefore play their role in revolutionary struggles. This central idea, along with many of Weber's other contributions, have been enriched by the work of a number of modern scholars, perhaps most notably by the American political scientist and historian, Charles Tilly.

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<sup>135</sup> This is a play on Tilly's famous dictum, 'war makes the state, the state makes war'. Tilly (1993: 32).

For Tilly, revolutions are three stage processes, rooted in a dynamic of political conflict. The long-term development of revolutions features the emergence of rival interest groups sharing common structures and identities which determine their capacity to exert pressure on the government. In the medium term, these groups mobilise their resources and look for opportunities to act within an environment oscillating between facilitation and repression.<sup>136</sup> Revolutionary situations are represented by the existence of effective, mutually competing claims over a previously unified state. To be effective, rival blocs must have access to the means of force and be supported by a significant part of a previously loyal population. If the government is either incapable or unwilling of suppressing the new coalition against it, a condition of multiple sovereignty is achieved.<sup>137</sup> In the short-term, a fight for control of the state occurs, in which the collective action of groups determines the outcome. When one claim displaces another and takes control of the government, the means of production and important social symbols, the revolutionary situation has ended.<sup>138</sup> The outcome of revolution results is the reconstitution of the government and its apparatus.

Tilly's analysis contains a number of valuable points for the study of revolutions. First, he distinguishes between revolutionary situations which are the result of both long-term and short-term causes, revolutionary events which are determined by collective action and revolutionary outcomes featuring the institutionalisation of a new political order. Such an approach is extremely useful in rectifying some of the weaknesses inherent in alternative approaches to revolutions. Rather than narrowly focusing on structures or top-down processes as *determining* events and outcomes, separating revolutions into distinct processes outlines

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<sup>136</sup> For Tilly, the larger the group, the greater the repressive environment because of the threat posed to the government. However, the more power a group holds, the more facilitative the environment, as the government is forced to negotiate with the group.

<sup>137</sup> Tilly is here drawing on Trotsky's notion of 'dual power' or 'twofold sovereignty'.

<sup>138</sup> For Tilly, the key to the outcome of revolutions is held by control over the means of coercion, particularly the armed forces.

the interplay between structure and agency. Second, Tilly recognises that, while a relatively permeable or closed structure enables or constrains opportunities for radical reform respectively, it is also the action of opposition groups which play a part in *creating* a facilitative or repressive system. Third, for Tilly, revolutions are not irrational, unique explosions of frustration but logical processes based on the relative strength and weaknesses of elites and opposition groups taking place within a particular historical context. Tilly makes clear that organisational capacity, the availability and use of resources and the action of the public are central to revolutionary change. This successfully links the conditions lying behind revolutions with the collective action of groups who make them.

However, for all that he advances our conception of revolutionary change, there are flaws in Tilly's account. First, like historical materialists, Tilly's view of revolutionary change is one-dimensional, although he focuses on political rather than economic relations. Tilly's view of political relations is limited, failing to include room for ideology, leadership or psychology in the fight for control of the state. As Jack Goldstone points out, the state is only a part, if commonly the dominant element of political relations, in a society. The breakdown of the state in revolutionary crisis, therefore, represents the collapse of central authority and the capacity of the state to dominate other political actors, but it hardly constitutes the disintegration of all political power relations. Tilly also downplays the systemic nature of revolutionary processes which take in economic and social relations as well as processes of political conflict. As a result, Tilly fails to differentiate between types of political conflict: coup, rebellion, putsch, palace coup, transition as well as revolution.<sup>139</sup> Tilly's account is

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<sup>139</sup> Other scholars have been more successful in this enterprise. Rosenau (1964), for example, distinguishes between personnel wars which take place for control of the government, authority wars which lead to a change of regime, and structural wars or social revolutions which encompass a much broader transformation of power relations.

over-mechanistic, reminiscent of Brinton's theory of the anatomy of revolutions.

Revolutionary causes are not determined by structures, nor are revolutionary events by their collective action or revolutionary outcomes by political processes alone. Rather, revolutionary causes, events and outcomes all feature the interaction of structure and agency mediated by the range of power relations – political-coercive, social-ideological and economic.

Another school broadly derived from Weber's account of the political processes which make up revolutions is rational choice. For scholars like Rod Aya, Charles Taylor and Mancur Olsen, revolutions are intentionally made by egoistic individuals who choose to form groups, associations and collectives in order to best maximise rewards that they feel to be rightfully entitled to. This action is instrumental, strategic and based on self-interest. It is also conditional on the co-operation and reciprocity of others – 'free riders' who seek to benefit without paying their dues face appropriate sanctions. Revolutions occur if enough people intend to create a new society, and if they have the capacity and opportunity to make one. Rational choice scholars criticise the work of structuralists and functionalists, who they argue, provide tautological leaps of faith which work backwards from the outcome of revolutions to their causes, assemble disparate groups into homogeneous masses and ignore revolutionary events when political conflict and manoeuvring take centre stage. Rational choice theorists argue that understanding the collective action of particular social groups which make up revolutionary events must go alongside paying due attention to the causes and outcomes of revolution. Hence, as Aya writes, it is necessary 'to study revolutions in bits'.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Aya (1990: 176).

Rational choice approaches benefit from an intricate understanding of the dynamics of political manoeuvring, collective action and political power but their overall framework is deficient and misplaced. As I discussed in the previous chapter, people may be rational, intentional, reflexive satisficers but this does not make them narrow, self-interested, egoistic utility maximisers. Rational choice cannot explain why people sometimes act in ways that are seemingly irrational or against their self-interest, for example by smoking, taking drugs or perhaps, participating in revolutions. Nor can rational choice explain what Kuran calls ‘preference falsification’ – that there is a difference between how people act publicly and their private preferences. For Kuran, actors have ‘revolutionary thresholds’ when they are sufficiently caught up in a revolutionary bandwagon to air their private views in public settings. In autocratic regimes, private opinions are likely to be held secretly because of the costs associated with expressing dissident opinions. This is why revolutions in autocratic states tend to surprise observers – latent revolutionary bandwagons attract supporters who previously appeared submissive towards or supportive of the regime, a contention that holds true from 1917 to 1989.

Rational choice theory also fails to offer any account of the unintended consequences of people’s actions, the norms and principles which lie behind social action and the ways in which groups, institutions and organisations contain certain dynamics beyond the sum of their parts.<sup>141</sup> By omitting ideology, structure and context – both domestic and international – from their analysis, rational choice scholars provide a stunted account of social action and social change. They therefore fail to grasp one of the fundamental, and also one of the bitterest lessons of revolutions, explained by Friedrich Engels,

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<sup>141</sup> Trotsky (1965: 12), a committed revolutionary, understood this well, ‘no revolution has ever anywhere wholly coincided with the conception of it formed by its participants nor could it do so’.

People who boast that they have made a revolution always see the day after that they had no idea what they were doing, that the revolution made does not in the least resemble the one they would have liked to make. That is what Hegel calls the irony of history.<sup>142</sup>

Political conflict approaches usefully unpack revolutions into causes, events and outcomes, offer insights into how organisational capacity, resources and leadership effect the progress of revolutions, and for the most part, provide a far improved conceptualisation of structure and agency and the link between voluntary collective action and contextual conditions than other major approaches to the study of revolutionary change. Political conflict also succeeds in correcting the most glaring deficiencies of historical materialism, structuralism and functionalism – the omission of people themselves in the creation and course of revolutionary struggles. Revolutions are co-dependent on broad processes of historical context and the collective action of groups. Eric Hobsbawm puts this well,

History is made by men's actions, and their choices are conscious and may be significant. Yet the greatest of all revolutionary strategists, Lenin, was lucidly aware that during revolutions, planned action takes place in a context of uncontrollable forces.<sup>143</sup>

### ***Frustration-aggression***

Frustration-aggression approaches draw in part from functionalist concerns with norms, values and the moral integration of society, Freudian notions of the irrationality of revolutionary outbursts and the work on dependency pioneered by scholars like Andre Gunder Frank. The most important modern exemplar of this approach is James C. Davies. For Davies, 'revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective

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<sup>142</sup> Quoted in Halliday (1999: 8).

<sup>143</sup> Hobsbawm (1973: 12).

economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal'.<sup>144</sup> Davies follows Tocqueville and Frank in arguing that revolutions are not bought about by an absolute decline in people's living standards but through a relative decline vis a vis reference social groups. In periods of modernisation, people's expectations of their social status and economic rewards rise alongside the extension of opportunities and the success of other groups. But this period of rapid growth tends to be followed by sudden economic downturns, which Davies calls the J-Curve of development. The J-Curve results in a sudden increase in anxiety and frustration as anticipated notions of reality fail to materialise and progress is blocked. Ted Gurr labels this process 'relative deprivation' – the gap between what people expect to get and what they actually receive.<sup>145</sup> The frustration and aggression which form as a result of relative deprivation form the basis for political organisation and mobilisation, which may in turn engender civil war and revolution if the response by government forces is forceful.<sup>146</sup> For Davies and Gurr, therefore, revolutions are not rooted in social processes but brought about primarily by people's state of mind.

This conceptualisation offers some useful insights into the study of revolutionary change. First, the approach is particularly helpful in outlining revolutions in the Third World. The rooting of revolutions in a sharp economic downturn following a period of rapid growth is commensurate to the process of development most modernising countries experience – the frustration, insecurity and anger associated with the J-curve are important psychological accompaniments to more sociologically oriented processes. Second, frustration-aggression takes us beyond accounts of absolute or objective decline as preconditions of revolutionary

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<sup>144</sup> Davies (1962: 6).

<sup>145</sup> Although Gurr is widely associated with the foundation of the term 'relative deprivation', it actually first appears in the work of W.G. Runciman (1963).

<sup>146</sup> For Gurr, unrealised *aspirations* may be disappointing, but they are tolerable. However, unrealised *expectations* – the false hopes bought about by exposure to new ways of life and ideas, and an awareness of the poverty of one's situation compared to others – are intolerable, providing the seeds for revolutionary action.

crisis to an understanding of the *relativity* of decline. Individuals and social groups always compare their lot to others, this is the relational dynamic at the heart of human association. As Lawrence Stone notes, ‘human satisfaction is related not to existing conditions but to the condition of a social group against which the individual measures his situation’.<sup>147</sup> We do not compare through objective, physical criteria but through normative perceptions of what matters and why – meanings, symbols and values are central to processes of political, and ultimately, revolutionary conflict. Similarly, frustration-aggression explains why the *perceptions* of actors matter. There are no indices which can absolutely measure the failure or legitimacy of a regime – these are perceptions held by elite and public alike according to the context of the time. Jack Goldstone has written persuasively on this, contending that revolutions start with a *belief* among the elite that the state as currently constituted is unjust, ineffective or obsolete, particularly apparent during the collapse of communism in Eastern and East-Central Europe. The importance of *perceived* failure in processes of revolution will become increasingly apparent during the course of this thesis.

However, frustration-aggression on the whole is unsatisfactory. It is a narrow viewpoint, omitting social and political forces in favour of a psychological-economic focus. The theory is weighted far too heavily on the side of voluntarism and too lightly on the structures and contexts which at least partly explain revolutionary processes. The account offers much into why people revolt, but little on how, where and in what circumstances they are able to do so. Relative deprivation on its own explains nothing. Indeed, as Theda Skocpol queries, ‘what society lacks widespread social deprivation of one sort or another?’ The concept is so general it applies to all cases of revolution, but this is because it lacks particularity – theorists fail to connect it to the myriad of other forces which make up revolutions. Relative deprivation may

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<sup>147</sup> Stone (1966: 173).



be a necessary element of revolution but it is not sufficient to explain the complex dynamics which lie behind processes of revolutionary change. Perhaps Rod Aya sums this up best, 'grievances no more explain revolutions than oxygen explains fires'.<sup>148</sup>

### ***The contribution of International Relations***

Revolutionaries have always been keen to emphasise the international elements of their uprising. Yet the contribution of International Relations as a discipline to the study of revolutions is patchy. On the one hand, traditional orthodoxies in the field – realism, liberal-pluralism and the English school – largely deny or minimise the importance of revolutions, arguing that revolutionary states may disrupt world politics and create a lot of noise but, in time, are socialised back into the international order.<sup>149</sup> They draw, to an extent, on the legacy of Edmund Burke, a fierce critic of French revolution, which he dismissed as 'a monstrous, tragi-comic scene'.<sup>150</sup> However, a number of writers such as Modelski and Halliday have significantly enhanced the study of revolutionary change, showing how international factors play a central role in the causes, events and outcomes of revolutions. My aim is to find a line between the exaggerated claims of revolutionaries on the one hand and the scepticism of mainstream thinkers on the other. In reality, revolutions may be accommodated into the international system, but not without exerting a tangible effect on the structures of the international order. As Mark Katz observes, this effect varies from case to case, therefore, 'revolutions upset the existing international order but not all revolutions upset it equally'.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Aya (1990: 23).

<sup>149</sup> Partial exceptions to this include Carr (1950) and Wight (1978). Wight, for example, argues that the years 1492-1960 were more 'revolutionary' than 'unrevolutionary'.

<sup>150</sup> Burke in Brown, Nardin and Rengger (eds.) (2002: 292-300).

<sup>151</sup> Katz (1997: xi).

One of the principal established IR theorists of revolution is David Armstrong. For Armstrong, there is a paradox at the heart of the relationship between revolutionary states and the international order – revolutionary states must establish relations with the international society of states, its members and its principles, rules, laws and institutions, even while revolutionary states profess to reject exactly these practices. For example, all revolutionary states run counter to Westphalian principles and institutions including sovereignty, the sanctity of international law and diplomacy, instead proclaiming ideals of ‘universal society’ and world revolution. This has led to confrontations between revolutionary states and counter-revolutionary coalitions seeking to contain revolutionary regimes.<sup>152</sup> Ultimately, however, for Armstrong, pressures to conform prove stronger than idealised claims of self-reliance and radical global change, and the revolutionary state is socialised into the international order. Despite challenging the consensus which lies behind international institutions, revolutionary states have no choice but to accept international mechanisms and regimes governing trade, alliances and security. To function as a state, revolutionary states give up many of their revolutionary aims.

But the relationship between revolutionary states and world politics is more evenly balanced than Armstrong supposes. As Fred Halliday shows, revolutions are always international events – revolutionaries follow the example of other transformations, the vision of revolutionaries cares little about national boundaries and all revolutionaries seek to export revolution abroad. For example, Cuba provided troops for liberation movements from Algeria to Nicaragua, sending 377,000 troops over a concerted period of time to support the MPLA in

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<sup>152</sup> The containment of revolutionary states was a core feature of US foreign policy during the Cold War, perhaps espoused most clearly by the former US ambassador to the Soviet Union, George Kennan, ‘if you go out and light a fire in a field, it begins to spread a little bit, but it has died out where you lit it. It burns only on the edges – and so it is with Russian communism’. Cited in Halliday (1994: 12).

Angola alone. Nor did the Cuban government confine itself to military matters, providing training, technical support, agricultural assistance and health care advice to a number of revolutionary states around the world.<sup>153</sup> Goals of world revolution may rarely, in practice, be either attempted or achieved, as strategic calculations about the availability of scarce resources and alternative ideologies like nationalism impede the spread of revolutions abroad, but even as aspirations, revolutions play influential roles in the growth of protest movements, rebellions, coups and reform overseas.<sup>154</sup>

As noted earlier in this chapter, revolutions also have international causes – comparative weakening vis a vis rival states, the combined and uneven spread of global capitalism, the removal of support from regional or global leaders and the transnational movement of ideas and symbols are all crucial to the onset of revolutions. As Halliday again notes, the international system as a whole has a direct bearing on the timing of revolutions.

Conjunctural crisis in the international order, including social, political and economic elements and featuring a breakdown in international forms of control and the weakening of hegemonic power lead to the onset of revolutionary waves or epochs.<sup>155</sup> For example, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the removal of the military guarantee for client states in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s had a direct bearing on the collapse of communism. Such general challenges tend to be met by international counter-revolution and the emergence of new institutions which guard against further disruptions to the international order, ranging from the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to the post-war development of the

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<sup>153</sup> For more on this, see Eckstein (1994).

<sup>154</sup> Andrew Scott argues that, in the modern world, intervention by revolutionary states tends to be informal, covering cultural activities or covert practices rather than the formal activities – propaganda, training and aid – which characterised such relationships in the past. He calls this process ‘informal penetration’. For more on this, see Scott (1982).

<sup>155</sup> Mayer (1977), Boswell (ed.) (1989), Goldstone (1991) and Katz (1997) all write about how general crisis in the international system tend to provoke waves of revolutions.

United Nations and the European Union. Revolutions therefore have a dual international importance – they are, in part, formed by their international context and they have in turn a formative influence on the structures of the international system itself.

Therefore, despite the distrust of revolution among many IR scholars and widespread scepticism about their impact, some theorists have developed significant insights into the international features of revolutionary change. First, they have shown how revolutions have numerous international components: the spread of revolutionary ideas across countries; the demonstration effect of successful revolutions; the attempt to export revolution abroad; the role of counter-revolutionary alliances; and the significance of international agency. Second, IR scholars have shown how revolutions tend to take place in eras of ‘world-systemic opening’ and within ‘permissive world contexts’; widening our understanding of context and action in revolutionary change.<sup>156</sup> Third, IR scholars have demonstrated the dually formative relationship between revolutionary states and the international system, how historically both have helped to constitute the other. Between the romantic ideals of revolutionaries and the cynicism of conservatives lie important truths about revolutions, as Trotsky sums up, ‘revolutions may fail in their ideals, but they do change the world’.<sup>157</sup>

### *The generic features of revolutionary change*

From this review of the major approaches to revolution, it is evident that no theoretical school is valid in its entirety. Yet it is possible to glean something of interest from each approach.<sup>158</sup>

In this way, some generic features emerge about the dynamic of revolutionary change:

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<sup>156</sup> For more on this, see Foran and Goodwin (1993).

<sup>157</sup> Cited in Blackey and Paynton (1976: 270).

<sup>158</sup> I do not mean by this that these approaches are equally valid or equally improbable.

- From historical materialism comes understanding about the centrality of contradictions and processes of conflict, that revolutions are systemic, affect the world system and are brought about both by the incapacity of rulers to carry on ruling and by groups in civil society who will not go on being ruled in the same way. Historical materialism also introduces the concept of combined and uneven development which prompts us to focus attention on semi-peripheral states.
- Structuralism provides us with understanding of the formative role of both international and domestic structures in revolutionary processes, the notion of state crisis and the historical particularity of revolutions.
- Functionalism can be credited with a focus on the interaction of processes associated with modernity which necessitate a radical response – reform, coup, rebellion, transition or revolution. Functionalists also provide us with insight into how revolutions have patterns, although these vary according to time and place, and that action, or inaction, by elites may have a role to play in the timing of revolution. Finally, through the work of Huntington, functionalism establishes the centrality of institutions to revolutionary change.
- From frustration-aggression comes understanding of the importance of perceptions and the notion of relative, rather than absolute decline.
- Political conflict theorists establish the value of studying long-term as well as short-term antecedents to revolutions. They also usefully highlight the importance of

resources, capacities and opportunities in revolutionary processes, outline the need to study ‘revolution in bits’ and look to balance accounts carefully between structure, agency and context.

- From IR comes awareness of the dually formative relationship between the revolutionary state and the international system, the significance of widening our consideration of the context of revolutionary action, how particular historical periods are more susceptible than others to revolutionary upheaval and that a myriad of international factors are intricately bound up with revolutions.

Combining these features means developing what John Foran calls a ‘conjunctural approach’ to revolutionary change.<sup>159</sup> In the next section, I outline what such an approach looks like in more detail.

## **Studying revolutionary change**

As the above survey shows, the study of revolutionary change is not an absolute science – the scholar must make philosophical, political, qualitative decisions about the nature and importance of revolutions based on nuanced argument backed up by appropriate material. This thesis attempts to make such a judgement. As such, I define revolutions as *the rapid, mass, forceful, systemic transformation of the principal power relations in a society*. The crucial word in this definition is systemic. By this, I mean that revolutions are processes in which *all* of the major domains of power relations in a society are transformed. Revolutions should therefore not be equated with processes of structural change, transition or regime

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<sup>159</sup> For more on this, see Foran (1993b).

change in which a partial modification of a society's power relations takes place. As will become clear later in this thesis, this distinction allows me to differentiate between Chile, which can be seen as an example of transition and the other two case studies, both of which are better classified as exemplars of revolutionary transformation.

Although revolutions have both long-term and short-term causes and outcomes, the actual transition from one regime to another takes place fairly quickly. It is important to note that there is some variation to this process – while the Czech communist regime was overturned in a matter of weeks, negotiations in South Africa rumbled on for three years. What differentiates revolutions from other forms of social change is their rapid, fundamental, comprehensive nature. While evolutionary change is major but takes place only over the long-term, radical reform programmes take place in the short term but do not engender fundamental, comprehensive change; transitions are both medium-term in their effect and take place over a medium-term time frame.<sup>160</sup> In contrast, revolutions are rooted in both the *longue durée*, which provides the seeds for the revolutionary crisis to emerge and in short-term triggers which ignite the revolutionary process. One must therefore be prepared to delve around the historical archives as well as revel in the drama of revolutionary events themselves if one is to understand *why* revolutions take place *where* and *how* they do. As Jack Goldstone notes,

Although the fall of a government may be sudden, the causal trends leading up to that fall, the ensuing struggle for power among contenders and the reconstruction of a stable state often span decades.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> For more on this, see Motyl (1999).

<sup>161</sup> Goldstone (1991: 37).

To constitute a revolution, systemic change must, at least in part, be the result of a significant contribution from social movements in civil society and substantially involve the wider public. This distinguishes revolutions from processes of reform from above, palace coups or putsches. Although led by an elite, revolutions are mass events in which the population is prepared to defy the old regime and overturn the existing order. Revolutions should not be seen as volcanic explosions in which actors and structures behave in peculiar, or even unique, ways. Instead, they are the most clear illustrations possible of the dynamic of social action and social change at work, played out by institutions and organisation and observable through the lens of power relations. As Michael Kimmel notes,

Revolutions are of central importance for social science not only because they are extreme cases of collective action but also because revolutions provide a lens through which to view the everyday organisation of any society.<sup>162</sup>

### ***Revolutionary situations***

The starting point for the emergence of revolutionary situations is the dynamic of social action and social change outlined in the previous chapter. I observed that social action is a complex phenomenon, dually constituted by structures and actors, observable through a middle level analysis that looks at processes of negotiation and change in institutions and organisations through the lens of power relations. My argument is that these processes take place both through everyday dynamics of consensus and conflict, and in more extensive processes of social change such as revolutions. Therefore, revolutions are conjunctural phenomena which clearly demonstrate the link between actors and the social world they inhabit. One of the goals of this thesis is to unravel this complex relationship, from the emergence of revolutionary situations to their outcomes.

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<sup>162</sup> Kimmel (1990: 1).



Revolutions tend to take place in eras of world systemic upheaval, in which the international order is relatively open to revolutionary challenges, for example through changes to the existing operating environment and structural mechanisms such as the balance of power.<sup>163</sup>

For each of the three case studies employed in this thesis, the end of the Cold War and the relative opening up of the international system thereof provided both the structural space and also the capacity for international agencies ranging from election monitors to media outlets to play a crucial role in the emergence of a revolutionary situation. The example of other successful transformations is easily apparent: Poland and Hungary to the Czech Republic, Zimbabwe and Namibia to South Africa, the ‘wave’ of Latin American democratisations in the 1980s to Chile.

States most susceptible to these contextual changes are those on the semi-periphery of the world system, dependent geo-politically and economically on other states, and facing the systemic challenges of modernisation featuring cycles of rapid growth and sharp downturns with their dislocating effects on existing political-coercive, economic and social-ideological power relations. Revolutionary situations emerge when this relationship of double dependency becomes unsustainable. In other words, revolutionary conditions surface in countries where the ruling regime does not cope effectively with these changes and an opposition group exists with an internationally recognised and domestically legitimate leadership, espousing an alternative ideology, offering a viable plan for radical change, holding sufficient resources to proffer a credible challenge and carrying the support of significant social groups and members of the public. In each of the cases I look at in this

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<sup>163</sup> There are, of course, exceptions to this dictum. For example, revolutions in Ethiopia, Iran and Cuba all took place without an apparently facilitative international environment. Yet this does not mean that such revolutions were without international causes, both in terms of structure and agency. On this, see Halliday (1999).

thesis, Václav Havel, Nelson Mandela and Patricio Aylwin led substantial organisations which in turn commanded the loyalty of large swathes of the general public and key sections of the elite. These levels of material and social capital provided a genuine challenge to the authority and legitimacy of the old regime. In other words, neither the rulers nor the ruled were willing or able to go on in the same way – the legitimacy of the old regime collapsed and both elites and wider social groups believed that radical change was inevitable.

Revolutionary situations therefore stem from systemic crisis. First, changes in the structures and norms of world politics provide the overarching global context and the removal or emergence of important international agents. Second, changing geo-political and economic contexts contribute to revolutionary possibilities. Domestically, revolutionary situations emerge from political-coercive crisis in which the legitimacy of the old regime collapses and a viable alternative is offered; a relative economic crisis; and a social-ideological crisis in which alternative ideas, a widespread perception of failure and a belief that things are getting intolerable worse lead to the possibility of revolutionary conflict. Finally, sparks or triggers – the release of Nelson Mandela, the apparent murder of a student by the secret police in Prague, a referendum on the military's rule in Chile – act as the final straw, fatally destabilising the existing social order and deepening the revolutionary crisis.

### ***Revolutionary events***

The dynamic of revolutionary events takes its character from the type of social order in which the revolution takes place and the collective action undertaken by social groupings, old regime and alternative elites. If a social order is relatively closed, in other words if there are few institutional sites to manage conflict, if old regime structures dominate the principal fields of power relations and there are limited means to effectively channel political

challenges, then the social order will be compelled to accommodate rival movements and resources, often through violent means. Nelson Mandela writes forcefully on this,

It was only when all else had failed, when all channels of peaceful protest had been barred to us that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political struggle. We did so not because we desired such a cause but solely because the government had left us no other choice.<sup>164</sup>

However, old regime reform of a previously closed system will not work either. As Tocqueville noted two centuries ago, opening up a closed system only allows more space for opposition movements to manoeuvre. For those who have been fighting for scarce resources with little chance of success in impermeable social orders, the chance to operate in more amenable conditions means an opportunity to spread messages, organise resistance and develop resources more widely. For reform to work, there must be effective intermediary channels between old regime structures and civil society networks and groups. Without such intermediary links, reforms will only serve to make revolution more likely. By reforming structures they previously dominated, absolutist regimes to all intents and purposes surrender legitimacy – such regimes stand for total control or they are nothing. This makes absolutism as a system inherently unstable – it resists the dual dynamic of consensus and conflict I outlined in the previous chapter as central to processes of social action and social change. If alternative actors are excluded from the political process, they will force their way in. As Trotsky notes, ‘the history of revolution is first of all a history of the forcible entry of the masses into the realm of rulership over their own destiny’.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Cited in Gerassi (1971: 346).

<sup>165</sup> Cited in Friedland (1982: 1).

Revolutionary events feature the collective action of a number of groups, both supporting and opposing the old regime, within both international and domestic contexts. This fight is resolved through purposive, rational, intentional collective action and reaction by domestic and international combatants over political-coercive, economic and social-ideological power relations.<sup>166</sup> Also central to discerning the direction of revolutionary struggles are changing macro-patterns, again both domestic and international. The results of revolutionary events therefore stem from the interaction between collective action, with its reliance on rapid reaction, effective leadership, organisational capacity, utilisation of resources and coalition building, and the continually changing context in which the struggle takes place, broadly conceived. Revolutions are therefore complex events. But this does not make them unobservable. By examining the transformation of a number of key institutions and organisations operating within the principal power domains of the society, it is possible to disentangle the roles of structure and agency in revolutions and follow events as they unfold.

### *The outcomes of revolutionary change*

For Hobsbawm, there are three elements which define the outcome of revolutions. Revolutions are over in the short term when the incoming revolutionary regime is either safe from power or overthrown by counter-revolutionary forces. The ‘minimum condition’ of revolutionary success is the takeover and establishment of state power or its equivalent by revolutionaries. The ‘maximum condition’ of revolutionary success is the establishment of a new social and legal framework, and the institutionalisation of a new political and economic order as the ‘children of the revolution’ emerge onto the public scene.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> I do not mean by this that actors create a revolution exactly in the ways they envisage, but that, at all times, they are acting intentionally. Of course, contradictory interests, the quality of available leadership and unintended consequences all influence how events turn out.

<sup>167</sup> According to Hobsbawm, if these conditions are not met, the revolution is incomplete, as was the case in Bolivia in 1952. For more on this, see Hobsbawm (1973).

I broadly accept Hobsbawm's reasoning. Revolutions are over when one side emerges victorious, taking immediate control of the principal means of production, means of violence and means of information in a society. However, in the long-term, a revolution is only successful if the principal power relations in a society are systemically transformed. This means the institutionalisation of novel means of economic, political and social power relations, ranging from programmes of privatisation and liberalisation, the advent of new constitutions and electoral procedures, and new measures opening up education systems, the media and so on. Such a process is observable through studying how key institutions and organisations representing the principal power relations in a society change over time. It would be foolish to claim that everything changes after revolutions. In reality, some power relations are so entrenched they cannot be altered, other measures are blocked and there are some things revolutionaries do not wish or attempt to change. Nevertheless, despite some continuity between old regimes and the new revolutionary order, a transformation does occur from which there is no going back. As Kamrava states,

Revolutions give birth to radically different systems from the ones they replaced. New symbols and values, new forms of identity, new modes of conduct, and new organisations and institutions emerge and replace those of the old order. Revolutions lead to changes in both the subjective as well as the objective aspects of life.<sup>168</sup>

Not only do revolutions have profound effects inside societies, they also have important international consequences. Later in the thesis, it will become clear that, while the international order unquestionably effects the development of revolutionary states, the counter also holds true. The dually formative relationship between revolutionary states and the international order will become increasingly evident during the course of the thesis.

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<sup>168</sup> Kamrava (1992: 93).

## Negotiated revolution

The bulk of the remainder of this thesis tests the arguments made in these first two theoretical chapters through the example of three case studies: the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile. My argument has three main thrusts. First, I will establish that the first two cases can be considered as revolutions, countering those who deny this claim because these transformations were not violent, did not proffer a new world vision and have not delivered substantive changes to the societies in question. Second, by comparing these two cases with Chile and demonstrating what the Chilean case lacks, I will demonstrate that my approach carries real explanatory purchase. Third, I will show that both South Africa and the Czech Republic, while exhibiting many similarities with past models of revolutionary change, contain distinct logics. As such, I argue that they exemplify a novel process in world politics — *negotiated revolution*.

In many ways, the ‘negotiated revolutions’ in the Czech Republic and South Africa follow the conjunctural processes I outlined earlier in the chapter – the causes, events and outcomes I set out in detail over the next three chapters will be broadly familiar to most students of revolution. But there are a number of ways in which negotiated revolutions do not appear like traditional models of revolutionary change. Rather than seeking autarchy, revolutionaries actively sought to join the international order; in fact, that is one of their primary goals and means of legitimacy. Nor did these three cases follow the pattern of counter-revolution, war, terror and so on which have characterised many revolutions in the past. In chapter six, I will discuss in detail the variables which distinguish negotiated revolutions. For now, I will confine myself briefly to outlining them.

First, negotiated revolutions have a distinct logic in that they are ‘catching up revolutions’ which seek liberation rather than utopia. This means that they do not follow the same patterns as past revolutions nor do they appropriate ideology in the same way. Second, negotiated revolutions have some distinctive causes – they are welcomed and actively encouraged by leading international agents. Third, revolutionary events themselves run somewhat differently in negotiated revolutions – round tables replace guillotines as revolutionary change is negotiated by the collective action of international agents, old regime and alternative elites, and representatives of wider social networks and groupings. Revolution occurs because the atomisation of the system demands systemic transformation. Negotiation takes place because no agents seek traditional revolution. Finally, in terms of their outcomes, negotiated revolutions do not lead to the development of a stronger, more bureaucratic state. Furthermore, as the only examples of relatively peaceful yet revolutionary transformations between autocracies and market-democracies, they have distinct and profound consequences both for international structures and for those states faced with similar contexts, processes and issues.

## Summary

During his defence to charges of treason bought by the Cuban state after his first attempted revolution in July 1953, Fidel Castro spoke of the timeless power of revolution and the righteousness of his cause,

The right of rebellion against tyranny, honourable magistrates has been recognised from the most ancient times to the present day by men of all creeds, ideas and doctrines... Condemn me. It is of no importance. History will absolve me.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Castro (1962: 65).

In this chapter, I have attempted to weave a line between the romantic ideal of revolution espoused by revolutionaries and the denial of its importance by its critics, tracing how the major schools which study revolution have developed over the past two centuries. I developed a conjunctural, process based analysis which differentiated between revolutionary situations, events and outcomes and defined revolutions as *the rapid, mass, forceful, systemic transformation of the principal power relations in a society*. To somewhat abridge a concept from Schumpeter, revolutions are processes first of creative destruction and secondly of destructive creation. I also began to outline the distinctive features of negotiated revolutions, the major focus of the thesis. The next three chapters are devoted to detailed analysis of the transformations in the Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile, aiming both to counter the claims of those who downplay their significance and also to establish their distinctiveness. History will serve as a litmus test for the theoretical posturing of the past two chapters.



## **Chapter 3**

### **A story of memory over forgetting:**

#### **The Czech Republic**

In Poland it took ten years, in Hungary ten months, in East Germany ten weeks, perhaps in Czechoslovakia it will take ten days.<sup>170</sup>

Timothy Garton Ash's glib aside to Václav Havel during the November revolution of 1989 may have seemed nothing more than a throwaway comment at the time, but it turned out to be unexpectedly and remarkably prescient.<sup>171</sup> Within two weeks of the onset of negotiations, the communist regime in Czechoslovakia had resigned; a month later, Havel was proclaimed the first non-communist President of Czechoslovakia in over forty years; six months on, free elections resulted in a crushing victory for the opposition over the old guard and the start of far-reaching political, economic and social changes. As Garton Ash writes, 'by a mixture of popular protest and elite negotiation, prisoners became prime-ministers and prime-ministers became prisoners'.<sup>172</sup>

The 1989 revolution is just the most recent example of an ongoing Czech struggle between liberation and suppression, or what Milan Kundera calls 'a story of memory and forgetting'.<sup>173</sup> Indeed, Czech history is littered with dates rich in their association with insurgence: 1620 – when defeat in the Battle of White Mountain led to 300 years of

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<sup>170</sup> Garton Ash (1990: 80).

<sup>171</sup> As the title makes clear, my focus in this chapter is on the revolution and subsequent transformation of the Czech Republic. When appropriate, I refer to Czechoslovakia, the Czech Lands and Slovakia. Occasionally, Czech is used as an abbreviation for both Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic.

<sup>172</sup> Garton Ash (1990: 20).

<sup>173</sup> See Kundera (1982).

subjugation under Germanic tutelage; 1918 – the year Tomáš Masaryk engineered the emergence of an independent nation-state out of the ashes of World War One; 1948 – when a coup led by Klement Gottwald ushered in forty years of communism; 1968 – the year of Alexander Dubček’s failed attempt to give socialism a human face; and finally 1989 – when hundreds of thousands of Czechs took to the streets in a Velvet Revolution that marked the final collapse of the communist order.

Yet the causes, events and outcomes which lie behind the events of 1989 are masked by two prominent myths. The first seeks to deny the significance of 1989 and the changes which have taken place since then. Deputy Chairman of the Czech Communist Party Miroslav Ransdorf outlined the basis for just such an assessment to me in the restaurant of the Czech parliament in April 2001. According to Ransdorf, now a democratically elected member of parliament, any insurgency in 1989 was confined to a rabble of intellectuals without popular support or legitimacy. The villain in Ransdorf’s story was Mikhail Gorbachev, a western stooge who treacherously opened up his country to foreign domination and forced others within the Soviet sphere of influence to do likewise. According to Ransdorf, the right economic reforms combined with strong leadership could have seen the Czech communist regime hold on to power. Before long, he reasoned, the fog enveloping the 1989 revolution would be lifted and Czechs would welcome back the Communist Party with open arms.<sup>174</sup>

Ransdorf echoes views held by numerous members of both the Czech elite and the international cognoscenti. Yet such a view is far from being the only myth which surrounds the Czech revolution. There is also a rival story told by the activists and intellectuals who

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<sup>174</sup> Interview with Miroslav Ransdorf, Prague, 5 April 2001. Ransdorf’s predictions are, to some extent, coming true witnessed by the recent electoral performances of the Communist Party. For more on this, see pp 138-140.

make up the nascent movement for global civil society. For these people, the 1989 revolution was an epiphany marking the onset of a new politics, a moment of international mass action stemming from the concerted opposition of NGOs and social movements both in Eastern Europe and further afield. Thus, the overthrow of communism marks a staging post in the history of radical protest epitomised by the arrival of the philosopher and playwright Václav Havel as president of the Czech republic, an event which holds out hope for the future of cosmopolitan politics.

Neither myth holds up to close scrutiny, yet each contains a kernel of validity. Interestingly, both sides highlight the importance of the international to the events of 1989. Ransdorf and his fellow apologists draw attention to the importance of Gorbachev and Soviet 'new thinking' as structural preconditions for revolution to take place and succeed. For their part, the activists emphasise the role of international agency in both destabilising the communist order and hastening its departure. Yet, crucially, both myths lack balance. As this chapter shows, the events of 1989, a mass event without doubt, have led to substantive changes in Czech society. These changes are not confined to an urban elite but can be seen across the gamut of power relations – political-coercive, economic and social-ideological. But the revolution has not changed everything. As such, the revolution of 1989 does not signify the clarion call of a new politics in which civic groups remove the claims of vested interests and create a new system without reference to the old. This chapter cuts a path through the muddy mythologizing represented by both extremes in order to highlight both the important changes and also the particular continuities within Czech society since 1989.

## **Negotiated revolution**

In the second chapter of the thesis, I critiqued existing approaches to the study of revolutionary change and sketched out a model which incorporated the best elements of various schools. I argued that a number of generic features lie behind the dynamic of revolutionary change. First, revolutions tend to occur in waves during historical epochs in which the international system is relatively open. Second, they take place in semi-peripheral countries in which rulers cannot carry on ruling and groups in civil society will no longer go on being ruled in the same way. Third, revolutions arise because of structural weaknesses in the old regime which become evident as a result of an immediate or relative crisis. Finally, I maintained that revolutions should be studied 'in bits' so that the dynamic between agency and structure could be made clear. This section of the chapter explores the 1989 Czech revolution in the light of these guiding principles, comparing it with past models and outlining its discontinuities. In this way, the distinctiveness of the Czech revolution in particular and negotiated revolutions in general will begin to emerge.

### ***Towards a revolutionary situation***

Revolutions tend to occur when a state's structural weaknesses broaden into crisis during times of immediate or relative decline. However, communist Czechoslovakia was an anomaly among former communist states in that it did not feature a crisis brought about by loss at war (like the Soviet Union), economic collapse (like Poland) or attempts to reform society from above (like Hungary). Even more surprising is the lack of even a sense of relative decline. Rather, in the 1980s, there seems to have been an overriding feeling of stagnation in Czechoslovakia. A 1986 opinion poll asking whether things had improved, stayed the same or got better over the previous five years found most Czechs insistent that little had changed: 60% claimed that social security provision was much the same as five years before, 67%

agreed that little had changed in health care as did 62% about housing. Only 7%, 12% and 7% respectively thought things had got worse in these areas.<sup>175</sup> Although the Czech economy stuttered during the 1980s, there were certainly not the shortages, hyperinflation and runaway debts which strangled neighbouring states. 1989 was not therefore rooted in the same type of state crisis common to past revolutions.

So why did the revolution take place in 1989? First, it is important to understand the longer term context which lay behind the velvet revolution. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the Czech Republic has a long history of subjugation and rebellion. Many of these rebellions have been led by intellectuals who evoked Czech nationalism and freedom from ideologies drawn at first from the reformation and later from the enlightenment. The first Czech hero of the modern era, Jan Hus, Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague, led a concerted Czech uprising against the Holy Roman Empire in the early fifteenth century. Two centuries later, Jan Komenský (Comenius), a pastor, guided Czech resistance in the Thirty Years War, a conflict which ended in disastrous defeat at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 which saw virtually the entire Czech nobility destroyed. As a result, the country lost its independence for three hundred years, becoming part of the Habsburg Empire, its autonomy circumscribed and its culture heavily Germanicized.

During the nineteenth century, the industrial revolution, urbanisation and the emergence of an imminent Czech middle class prompted a renaissance in Czech nationalism. Political clubs led a resurgence in the use of the Czech language which provided the seeds for a general movement towards autonomy. But it wasn't until the early twentieth century that this movement engineered sufficient support, both domestically and internationally, for the

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<sup>175</sup> See Krejčí and Machonin (1996).

recognition of Czech statehood.<sup>176</sup> The architect of the newly independent Czech state which emerged in 1918 was another academic, Tomáš Masaryk, a philosopher who believed in the virtues of Plato's philosopher-king. Masaryk governed Czechoslovakia<sup>177</sup> during virtually the entire inter-war period, a period in which Czechoslovakia alone among Eastern European states featured a functioning democracy in which political parties (including the communists) fought regular elections and minority rights (important in a state in which around a quarter of the population was German) were protected. An independent judiciary guaranteed freedom of association and assembly. Indeed, it could be argued that during the inter-war years, Czechoslovakia more closely resembled a Western European rather than an Eastern European state. Just over a third of Czechs were involved in agriculture in 1930 compared to over a half of Poles and Hungarians and three quarters of the populations of Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria. Half of all Czechs lived in towns compared to only a quarter of Poles. Just 4% of Czechs over the age of 16 in the same period were illiterate.<sup>178</sup>

However, in 1936, an ill Masaryk was forced to hand over the presidency to Edvard Beneš.<sup>179</sup>

But Beneš lacked the international clout, much of it gained by Masaryk's bold stand alongside the allies during the first world war, of his predecessor. In 1938, the British removed any guarantee for the Czech regime at Munich, in a stroke ceding control of Sudetenland, the richest part of Czechoslovakia, to the Nazis. The loss of a third of the country's land, half its coal production and nearly 30% of its people exacerbated internal conflict. In October, Slovakia, long resentful of Czech domination and wealth, seceded from the union. Hungary, in turn, took over part of Ruthenia. In March 1939, Czechoslovakia was

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<sup>176</sup> This was not for the want of trying. There were two general uprisings against Habsburg rule in 1848 and 1918, the latter ending in independence for the Czech lands.

<sup>177</sup> Slovakia was welded to the Czech state in 1920, becoming the fourth province of the new state alongside Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

<sup>178</sup> Figures taken from Wolchik (1991).

<sup>179</sup> Masaryk died the following year.

invaded, occupied and annexed by the Third Reich under the pretext of guaranteeing the rights of the Sudeten Germans. The invading troops met little resistance. The Czech government was forced into exile, split into two rival factions – the first led by Beneš in London, the second headed by the communists in Moscow.

During the war, domestic Czech resistance to the Nazi regime was slight and it was not until May 1945 that Prague was liberated by the Red Army. Immediately after the war, a National Front government representing six main parties was set up to govern the country. Special courts were introduced to try 130,000 suspected collaborators. As a result, 20,000 Czechs were imprisoned and over 700 sentenced to death. The three million Sudeten Germans were stripped of their citizenship, expelled from the country and their assets seized without compensation. Most were attacked as they fled and, amid chaotic scenes, 19,000 died. Beneš struggled to maintain order, particularly as the communists, led by Klement Gottwald, took control of key government positions in the Ministries of the Interior, Information, Education and Agriculture, providing the party with control of the media, police, the redistribution of land and admission to higher education. In 1946, communist party membership reached over one million. In elections held that year, they became the largest party in Czechoslovakia, taking around 40% of the vote.

Communist influence was felt most strongly over economic policy. In October 1945, Beneš announced a series of decrees at Košice which included the nationalisation of all banks, the seizing of considerable industrial assets and a central plan for economic progress. But, following the 1946 elections, the new prime minister, Klement Gottwald, pressurised Beneš for more radical reforms. In 1947, communist leaders forced Czechoslovakia to withdraw from Marshall Plan discussions. In February 1948, twelve non-communist ministers resigned

in protest from the government, replaced by communists who immediately set up action committees and a people's militia to safeguard their authority. Later that month, Beneš resigned, replaced as president by Gottwald who, on the order of his Soviet advisers, began a wholesale purge of political and civil organisations.

During the 1950s, Czechoslovakia's Stalinist elite ensured that the country was home to the most unyielding form of communism in the Soviet bloc. The church and army as well as political institutions were subject to thorough purges. Non-communist groups ranging from trade unions to voluntary associations, seminaries and student groups were dissolved. Virtually all private ownership was eliminated. Five year plans favoured heavy industry and foreign trade was redirected en masse away from Western Europe towards Warsaw Pact countries. By 1960, 90% of farmland had been collectivised.<sup>180</sup> Neither Khrushchev's stunning denunciation of Stalin in 1956 nor uprisings the same year in Hungary and Poland had much effect on the Czech regime, which continued to be run by a cadre loyal to the memory and politics of Josef Stalin.

But the huge programme of nationalisation and collectivisation failed to yield any substantial improvement in living standards. In the early 1960s, economic growth began to slow, tension between Czechs and Slovaks grew and students, dissidents and intellectuals began to question the hardline policies of the communist elite led by the neo-Stalinist president, Antonín Novotný. As the decade progressed, this simmering conflict surfaced more openly. Reformers forced the release of political prisoners and a relaxation in official censorship. In the Soviet Union, economic reforms under the Brezhnev regime further eroded the authority of the

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<sup>180</sup> For more on this, see Wolchik (1991).



Czech leadership. In 1967, Novotný was forced to resign, making way for a radical Slovak reformer – Alexander Dubček – as First Secretary.

Dubček promised to introduce ‘socialism with a human face’. His ‘Action Programme’ included an end to censorship, freedom for the press, the right to political assembly, a new constitution, an independent judiciary, the right to travel and trade beyond the eastern bloc. Finance Minister Otto Šik drew on Soviet reforms to promote decentralisation, the reduction of price controls and an increased role for market forces. Czech economic, political and social life was opened up for the first time in over twenty years in what became known as the ‘Prague Spring’. Václav Havel outlines the hope raised among Czechs during this period,

The personal and conceptual changes which occurred early in 1968 were, in their most profound sense, the result of a deepening chasm between the true opinion and will of society on the one hand and official political ideology and practice on the other...Newspapers began to print the truth, people gathered in independent organisations and clubs, and the free exercise of citizenship and free political thinking began to awaken and develop.<sup>181</sup>

But Dubček’s reforms did not find favour in Moscow where they were seen as undermining Soviet political, economic and military hegemony in the region. In July 1968, the Soviet politburo ordered the reversal of reforms. A succession of meetings between Dubček and his fellow Warsaw Pact leaders failed to establish a compromise. On 21 August, Czechoslovakia was invaded by five states: the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. As with the invasion of the Nazis in 1938, there was little formal resistance from either the Czech population or the armed forces to the incursion. Despite potent symbolic gestures like the self-immolation of Jan Palach, a student in Prague, the invading troops had little troubling

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<sup>181</sup> Havel quoted in Navrátil (1998).

re-establishing Czechoslovakia's client status. Although Dubček stayed ostensibly in charge for another year, he was ousted in April 1969 by Gustav Husák, a Soviet lackey and hardliner. Husák immediately established a programme to 'normalise' Czech society.

Normalisation was a totalising environment in which structural violence was used to secure compliance. Half a million party members were forced to resign; all members of the state and federal legislature were reselected; every literary and cultural journal was closed; 1,200 scholars lost their positions; and an anti-Catholic programme was initiated. So-called soft tools of repression like the denial of education, demotion, forcing people into manual labour, phone tapping and the interception of private mail were backed up by harder tools including interrogation, unlawful detention, arrest and imprisonment. Between 1945 and 1989, 250,000 Czechs received sentences for political acts, half in absentia. Of these, 243 were executed, 3,000 died in prison, camps or mines, 400 were killed trying to cross the border and 22,000 were sent to forced labour camps.<sup>182</sup> Václav Havel describes the fear that this smothering of public life engendered in an open letter written to President Husák,

For fear of losing his job, the schoolteacher teaches things he does not believe; fearing for his future, the pupil repeats them after him; for fear of not being allowed to continue his studies, the young man joins the Youth League and participates in whatever of its activities are necessary...fear of being prevented from continuing their work leads many scientists and artists to give allegiance to ideas they do not accept, to write things they know to be false, and to distort and mutilate their own works. In the effort to save themselves, many even report others for doing to them what they themselves have been doing to the people they report...Order is established at the price of a paralysis of the spirit, a deadening of the heart and the devastation of life. Surface 'consolidation' is achieved at the price of a spiritual and moral crisis. True enough the country is calm. Calm as a morgue or a grave, would you not say?<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Figures in Williams and Deletant (2000).

<sup>183</sup> See Havel (1975: 5-15).

Despite this climate of fear, opposition movements did exist in Czechoslovakia. According to Barbara Day, there were three main strands to Czech opposition: a liberal wing epitomised by Václav Havel, reform communists led by Jiří Hájek and permanent opposition communists, often with a religious element, headed by Jan Patočka.<sup>184</sup> These three were the founding members of Charta 77, an organisation established to monitor the Czech government's commitment to human rights as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. Along with VONS, a committee to protect the unjustly prosecuted, Charta 77 was the main focal point for Czech dissent. Although small, its importance outweighed its numerical strength. As Robin Shepherd notes, Charta 77 represented the Czech social conscience and 'a refusal of the spirit of freedom and truth to lie down in the face of overwhelming odds'.<sup>185</sup> In addition to these groups, an underground intelligentsia and 'chata culture', so named after the country houses in which people retreated to talk freely among families and select friends, played an important role in Czech resistance. Samizdat publications, secret seminar programmes like the philosophy courses taught from home by Julius Tomin or those organised by the Jan Hus Foundation, as well as ecological and jazz groups were key forums of dissent.<sup>186</sup>

Very few members of either the elite or the wider public retained a belief in the tenets of Marxism-Leninism. In an interview held in Prague during April 2001, Professor Jan Sokol outlined a story which exemplifies the de-legitimacy of Marxism-Leninism as an ideology during this period. Sokol told of a friend who returned to Prague in 1970 after two years in

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<sup>184</sup> For more on this and other opposition networks, most notably academic associations, see Day (1999).

<sup>185</sup> See Shepherd (2000: 33).

<sup>186</sup> A parallel French group, the Association Jan Hus, prompted one of the greatest Cold War embarrassments to the Czech government after drugs were planted by the StB on Jacques Derrida who was visiting Prague on behalf of the association. The French government, outraged, forced the Czechs to release Derrida without charge. However, many other academic visitors, including Richard Rorty, Jürgen Habermas and Roger Scruton were placed on the Index of Undesirable Persons (Index Ne-žadáných Osob), making them *persona non grata* in Czechoslovakia.

the Netherlands, complaining that ‘there were far too many communists over there. At least in Prague, I won’t have to meet any’.<sup>187</sup> In such an atmosphere, the legitimacy of Czech communism came increasingly to rest on economic performance.

But during the late 1970s and into the 1980s, Czech economic performance began to falter. In 1980, the economy contracted by 2%, followed by three more successive years of negative growth. Capital productivity, already declining at the end of the 1970s, continued to fall throughout the 1980s. Although many members of the communist elite were broadly aware of the difficulties facing the economy, there was a general failure in understanding the *structural* elements of the crisis, rooted in the shift from heavy industry to consumer goods, services and information. Between the Prague Spring and 1987, Czech exports declined by 13% while imports of office and computing projects rose by 66%. At the same time, wages began to drop. From a position of near parity with Austria in 1968, an average Czech’s income was only just over half their Austrian counterparts by 1987.<sup>188</sup>

During the 1980s, a young grouping within the communist party used new opportunities for travel and alternative media outlets to gauge the true picture of the contest between communism and capitalism. While market democracies seemed to possess an internal dynamic which stimulated creativity, it was clear that communism faced endemic problems stemming from the incapacity of its supply mechanisms to match consumer demand and its political system to effectively reflect or channel alternative opinions. As Valerie Bunce shows, the lack of buffers between the Party and the public prevented a ‘feedback loop’ from informing party leaders about what was really occurring in wider society. The homogeneity

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<sup>187</sup> Interview at Charles University held on 4 April 2001.

<sup>188</sup> For more on this, see Lewis (1994) and Saxonberg (2001).

of communism created a clear distinction between 'them' and 'us', polarising opposition around common themes and interests. Also, because the only opportunity for political progress was within the confines of the Communist Party, it became increasingly factional, divided into islands of autonomy in which cliques jealously guarded their relative independence.<sup>189</sup> While a number of Czech communists favoured reform, the majority of the leadership of the Communist Party remained hardliners. They believed that with continued faith in the policy of normalisation, the Communist Party could maintain its grip on power.

In the mid 1980s, the impermeable structural conditions under which normalisation prospered began to be lifted. Central to this was the elevation of Mikhail Gorbachev to the post of General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1985. Gorbachev was part of a fresh wave of Soviet thinkers who recognised the deep rooted problems facing communism. Soon after taking power, Gorbachev outlined a programme of perestroika – restructuring – and glasnost or opening. Far reaching reforms to the Soviet economy, political and social life were set out and Gorbachev strongly advised his fellow leaders in Eastern Europe to follow suit. Gorbachev also initiated a new approach in Soviet foreign policy. This 'new thinking' combined a belief in disarmament and multilateralism with a respect for the autonomy and self-determination of individual states. As he outlined in a speech in 1988,

In a situation of unprecedented diversity in the world, the imposition of a social system, a way of life or political order from outside by any means, let alone military, are dangerous trappings of past epochs. Sovereignty and independence, equal rights and non-interference are becoming universally recognised rules of international relations...To oppose freedom of choice is to come out against the objective tide of history itself.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> For more on this, see Bunce (1999).

<sup>190</sup> Quoted in Wheaton and Kavan (1992: 18).

The removal of the Soviet military guarantee was a key factor in the opening of the communist order, at least partly responsible for structural reforms which took place in Czechoslovakia itself. After succeeding Husák as General Secretary of the Communist Party in December 1987, Miloš Jakeš introduced a mild version of perestroika – přestavba. Although not a substantial programme, přestavba did lead to a higher degree of decentralisation, an expansion in the use of incentives and an increase in the role of workers in decision making. The regime even endorsed a semblance of glasnost. In March 1987, Charta 77 activists were allowed to assemble at the grave of one of their founders, Jan Patočka, and in 1988, permission was granted to publish openly the underground journal *Lidové Noviny*. Later that year former President Dubček, a powerful symbol of Czech opposition and independence, was allowed to leave the country to receive an honorary degree from the University of Bologna.

These moves by the regime prompted an upsurge in activity among opposition groups. In 1987, a 'Decade of Spiritual Renewal' was announced by the Czech Catholic leader, Cardinal Tomášek. One hundred thousand people took part in a pilgrimage to the holy site of Velehrad and over half a million signed a petition started by a Moravian Catholic demanding freedom of religious belief. Dozens of independent, informal groups were set up ranging from the Movement for Civil Liberties to Obroda, a reform communist group. A group of radical economists situated at the Institute of Prognostics in Prague published a series of reports which argued that up to two million workers would have to be laid off to make Czech industry competitive. The State Planning Agency itself accepted that 40% of Czech industrial enterprises were uneconomical and should be closed.

At the same time, protestors on the street grew more bold. In August 1988, the twentieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact intervention attracted an unsanctioned protest of over 100,000 people. The commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the Republic in October and further demonstrations to coincide with the visit of French President François Mitterand in December drew huge crowds onto the streets of Prague. In January 1989, another unauthorized protest, this time to remember the twentieth anniversary of the suicide of Jan Palach led to violence, with over 500 protestors arrested. Further demonstrations in Wenceslas Square and the Old Town prompted action by the regime. Václav Havel was arrested and in April, tried and sentenced to prison. However, under pressure both at home and abroad, the regime released him in May. As Havel wrote at the time,

To outside observers, these changes may seem insignificant. They may ask: where are your 10 million strong trade unions? Where are your MPs? Why does Jakeš not negotiate with you? Why is the government not considering your proposals and acting on them? But for someone living here, these are far from insignificant changes; they are the promise of the future.<sup>191</sup>

Opposition momentum continued to intensify throughout the summer. In June, Charta 77 produced a document, 'A Few Sentences', setting out conditions for talks with the authorities. It was signed by over 40,000 people. That same month, Solidarity won the Polish elections, followed soon after by the announcement of round table talks in Hungary. In July, Gorbachev wrote to Jakeš demanding either reform or the removal of Soviet support and the issuing of an apology for the 1968 invasion. Both around the region and at home, pressure was mounting on the regime – a revolutionary situation had developed.

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<sup>191</sup> See Havel (1990: 185-186).

In the last chapter, I argued that revolutionary situations feature systemic crisis. First, revolutions occur within a context of world systemic opening in semi-peripheral countries dependent geo-politically and economically on other states. Czechoslovakia fulfils these criteria – the arrival of Gorbachev marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War and the opening up of an international environment which had previously been hostile to revolution, seeing it as an unsettling challenge to an already precarious balance of power.

Czechoslovakia, perhaps more than any other eastern bloc country was dependent on the Soviet Union. During the mid-1980s, 80% of Czech trade was conducted through CMEA – there was little of the relative economic freedoms which could be found in Poland and Hungary. Geo-politically, the Czech state suffered by the weakness of its own armed forces and the trauma of invasion which had loomed large in Czech life since 1968. As round table talks between the communists and opposition groups in Poland gathered pace and demonstrations began in earnest against the communist regime in both Hungary and East Germany, international example served as a bulwark to Czech opposition.

Second, I argued that revolutions take place when the legitimacy of the ruling regime fatally collapses and an opposition group exists which espouses an alternative ideology, offers a viable plan for radical change, holds sufficient resources to proffer a credible challenge and carries the support of significant social groups and members of the public. All these conditions bar one existed in Czechoslovakia in 1989. The communist leadership was split between reformers and hardliners. As I have demonstrated elsewhere in this chapter, the final, tenuous hold on legitimacy by Czech communists relied on the performance of the economy. But in the 1980s, the structural weaknesses of the centralised command economy became glaring. At the same time, opposition groups, espousing a clear alternative ideology centred around the legacy of the inter-war years and the Prague Spring, Havel's concept of 'living in



truth' and widely held principles of democracy and freedom, increased in strength. Previously quiescent groups joined the opposition, ranging from Catholics led by Cardinal Tomášek to reform communists. Burgeoning public protests clearly demonstrated both public dissatisfaction with the existing regime and growing support for opposition groups. 'A Few Sentences', among other texts, set out viable principles both for negotiation with the communist regime and also those of a future Czech state.

However, the opposition lacked one vital factor – resources. They did not possess the coercive resources for a fight, the organisational reach to mobilise around the country nor sufficient political legitimacy either domestically and abroad. None of the opposition, bar Alexander Dubček who was still in exile in Slovakia, were well known around the country, let alone further afield. Indeed, as Monika Pajerová, a former student activist during the revolution told me, most of the public, if they knew of opposition leaders at all, thought of them as criminals.<sup>192</sup> Therefore, when the decisive sparks and triggers signifying the final destabilisation of the communist regime emerged, negotiation rather than violent conflict was the only viable means for securing radical change in Czechoslovakia.

### *Revolutionary events*

By November 1989, the communist regime was in crisis, weakened by the changing international context, internal splits and an upsurge in opposition support. On Friday 17 November, 15,000 students gathered in front of the Pathology Institute to commemorate the death of Jan Opletal, a student shot and killed at a demonstration against the Nazis in 1939. The official demonstration organised by the Communist Youth Union swelled to 50,000 as it marched beyond its approved limits to Wenceslas Square. There it was attacked by riot police

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<sup>192</sup> Interview with Monika Pajerová and Marian Kiss, Prague, 5 April 2001.

and special anti-terrorist forces. In the fighting that followed, over 500 people were injured and it was reported that a student had been killed. This ‘massacre’, as it came to be known, proved to be the spark which ignited the revolution.

Over the weekend, students set up strike committees, theatres refused to perform and Václav Havel returned from the country to launch Civic Forum, a movement encompassing the whole range of opposition groups from Catholic conservatives like Václav Benda to neo-Trotskyists such as Petr Uhl. Civic Forum demanded that the communist leadership resign, political prisoners be released and a commission set up to investigate the ‘massacre’. Over the next week, these demands grew in popularity. The official organ of the Socialist Party, *Svobodne'Slovo*, normally a favoured mouthpiece of the communist regime, published the Civic Forum demands on its front page. Daily briefings at the Civic Forum headquarters, the Magic Lantern theatre, took place in front of an array of foreign media. On 20 November, the Communist Youth Union joined the strike along with a number of secondary schools. Civic Forums were established in Brno, Olomouc and Ostrava, and a parallel organisation, Public Against Violence, was set up in Bratislava. For the first time, news of the strikes appeared on state television and German media reported that a revolution was underway.

On 21 November, over 200,000 demonstrators listened to opposition leaders speak in Wenceslas Square and for the first time, representatives of the communist leadership met with an opposition delegation. Various groups representing workers, lawyers, journalists and athletes came out in support of Civic Forum. By the end of the week, it was clear that the regime lacked both the will and the support to crack down on protestors. Soviet Ambassador Loneakin officially ruled out Soviet support for an armed response and Chief-of-Staff

Václavík appeared on television to state publicly that the army would not fight its own people. The path to negotiation was clearing.

On Friday 24 November, the whole of the politburo resigned and Jakeš was replaced by Karel Urbánek. Over the weekend, Dubček arrived in Prague and spoke to over 600,000 people at Letná Park where demonstrations had moved to accommodate the massive crowds. A special mass to mark the canonization of Agnes of Bohemia drew 750,000 people to St Vitus cathedral, a display of opposition strength and solidarity broadcast live on television across the country. Negotiations between the communists and Civic Forum began in earnest. The principal communist negotiator, Ladislav Adamec, was taken by Havel to the Letná Park demonstrations only to be met by a cacophony of boos and whistles as he spoke. On Monday 27 November, a two hour general strike proved a resounding success. The next day, Adamec accepted Civic Forum demands to end the leading role of the Party, free political prisoners and allow new political groups to join the government.

However, on 3 December, the new cabinet announced by Adamec reserved sixteen out of twenty-one posts, including the crucial ministries of Defence and the Interior, for communists. A massive demonstration on 4 December, threats of a second general strike and urgent meetings between Gorbachev, Urbánek and Adamec proved decisive. On 7 December, Adamec resigned to be replaced by Marián Čalfa, the Minister for Constitutional Affairs. Čalfa proposed a cabinet comprised of eight communists, one representative from the Socialist Party and the People's Party each and eleven non-communists. Čalfa's cabinet included some remarkable announcements: Jiří Dienstbier, a leading member of Civic Forum, became Foreign Minister; Ján Čarnogurský, a Slovak dissident released from prison just weeks before became one of four Deputy Prime Ministers; and Petr Miller, a worker from the

CKD electro-technical works just outside Prague became Minister for Labour and Social Affairs. A number of communists in the cabinet were only so in name alone including the leading Prognostics, Valtr Komárek and Vladimír Dlouhý, placed in charge of economic reform. President Husák swore in the new government on 10 December and then immediately resigned. A week later, Dienstbier and his Austrian counterpart began formally dismantling the barbed wire which separated the two countries and which represented the frontier of the iron curtain. On 28 December, Dubček was confirmed as Speaker of the Federal Assembly. The next day, 29 December, Václav Havel was sworn in as the first non-communist President of Czechoslovakia in over forty years.

In the previous chapter, I argued that the progress of revolutionary events depends on the interaction between collective action and the changing context in which the revolution takes place, both international and domestic. In the case of 1989, the context was unusually favourable to revolution. The electoral victory of Solidarity, negotiations in Hungary and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November exerted substantial pressure on the Czech regime and raised the hopes of the opposition, providing what Havel called ‘a chain of spectacular transformations’.<sup>193</sup> International media helped to produce a tidal wave of expectations as they travelled from capital to capital. The domestic context also significantly aided revolutionaries, particularly following the ‘massacre’ of 17 November. From that point, key groups in society began to move over to the opposition. The Communist Party remained fatally split, unable to keep pace with the changing mood of the nation. At a special party congress held in December, the entire leadership was ousted and only four members of the two hundred strong central committee retained.<sup>194</sup> The national strike proved to be the most

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<sup>193</sup> Quoted in Kumar (2001).

<sup>194</sup> For more on this, see Hanley (2001).

important display of collective action, its success acting as a defiant message pointing to the extent of popular support for radical change right across the country.

The 1989 revolution therefore clearly illustrates the complex interplay between structural conditions and collective action. But what was novel about the process of the Czech revolution was that the changing context did not ally with agency to provoke violent confrontation between the old regime and the insurgents.<sup>195</sup> Instead, radical change took place through negotiation. The opposition had neither the will nor the means to confront the regime violently, while the communists, internally divided and without the backing of the Soviet Union, lacked the capacity to call on their coercive apparatus.<sup>196</sup> There was revolution because neither side was prepared to accommodate the other and negotiation because neither was willing or able to go down the path of violence. As Timothy Garton Ash acknowledges, 'round tables replaced guillotines'.<sup>197</sup>

### *Revolutionary outcomes*

Timothy Garton Ash and others contend that the novelty of 1989 lies solely in its process: through a mixture of elite weakness and public demonstrations, non-violent transformations occurred which featured original ways of dealing with the crimes of the past, in Czechoslovakia illustrated by the policy of lustrace.<sup>198</sup> What these revolutions lacked, according to these commentators, was a guiding set of ideas or blueprint for change that could radically change the world, the type of utopian vision so evident in the French and

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<sup>195</sup> With the exception of Romania, this was common to all revolutions in the region in 1989.

<sup>196</sup> There remains some disagreement about the role of the armed forces, police and security apparatus during the events of November 1989. To all extents and purposes, it seems that the police, security forces and people's militias were willing to follow party orders, whatever they may be. But the loyalty of the armed forces was in question, leading to uncertainty among the communist leadership about instigating a crackdown. For more on this, see Cotter, Edmunds and Forster (eds.) (2002).

<sup>197</sup> See Garton Ash (1990).

<sup>198</sup> For more on lustrace, see pp 163-165.

Russian Revolutions.<sup>199</sup> As François Furet writes, ‘despite all the fuss and noise, not a single new idea has come out of Eastern Europe in 1989’.<sup>200</sup>

However, a simple concentration on the ‘how’ of 1989 and a dismissal of the ‘why’ makes several mistakes. The equation of revolutions with unique, volcanic ruptures is, as I made clear in the previous chapter, a singularly modern phenomenon. Revolutions are at once both ruptures and restorations, Janus faced processes which as Barrington Moore puts it, ‘march into the future facing resolutely backwards’.<sup>201</sup> In this sense, there is no contradiction in labelling the events of 1989 as ‘rectifying revolutions’ or indeed, as negotiated revolutions.<sup>202</sup> Revolutionaries in 1989 followed their predecessors by looking backwards as well as forwards, to 1660 and 1848 as well as to 1789 and 1917. In the Czech case, the image of Hus, Masaryk, Dubček and others was constantly employed in order to make sense of, legitimate and popularise the revolution.<sup>203</sup> And yet, there *was* something novel about the role of ideas in 1989 – the deliberate lack of a utopian vision; what Václav Havel calls ‘anti-ideology’ and György Konrád ‘anti-politics’. Czechs, along with other Central and Eastern Europeans in 1989, wanted to return to Europe, to catch up with the West, to become what they perceived as normal again. Precisely what they did not want was the autocracy which comes from blind loyalty to a grand vision or theory. The Czech revolution was founded on a principle of liberation, not utopia.

The conscious disavowal of utopian prophecies had a profound impact on the outcome of the revolution. Because Czech revolutionaries shared the same commitment to freedom,

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<sup>199</sup> On this, see Garton Ash (1990, 2000).

<sup>200</sup> Quoted in Kumar (2001: 38).

<sup>201</sup> Quoted in Kumar (2001: 166).

<sup>202</sup> The term ‘rectifying revolutions’ was coined by Jürgen Habermas.

<sup>203</sup> For more on this, see Kumar (2001).

democracy and capitalism as countries in the West, they were actively welcomed and supported by international agents. Unlike past revolutions, there have been no proselytising ventures and no grand coalitions to restore the old order. In past revolutions, the need for victors to shore up fragile positions against both domestic competitors and external enemies led to the growth of strong states. But in 1989, Czechs were actively fighting against an omnipotent state apparatus. As a result, the contemporary Czech state is not the beast created by past revolutions but a relatively weak body characterised by split and rupture.

A further original feature of the 1989 revolution is the role played by violence. The approach of dissenters – the concept of ‘living in peace’, the focus on civil society and their willingness to negotiate with a brutal regime – played a central role in minimising violent conflict before, during and after the revolution in the Czech Republic. However, violence was present in the Czech revolution. As explored earlier in this chapter, structural violence was one of the main weapons used by the communist Czech state to maintain order: both soft and hard coercive tools were routinely employed against opponents of the communist regime, real and imagined. Even during the revolution, the means of violence remained, potentially, at the disposal of the communist regime. That state actors and opposition groups declined to use force, yet accomplished sweeping transformations of power, illustrate one of the crucial differences between 1989 and previous models of revolution: violence appeared in structural or latent form, but not as an explicit policy tool.

On the whole, the outcomes of the 1989 revolution have been profoundly different from past examples of revolutionary change. Rather than the autocracy and despotism which has marred many revolutions in the past, the outcome of the Czech revolution has been the construction of a new social order based on negotiation. Rather than the pattern of terror,

counter revolution and war which has characterised past revolutions, Czech society has seen the institutionalisation of democratic politics based on the rule of law. The next section looks in more detail at these outcomes in order to gauge the extent of the changes which have taken place in the Czech Republic since 1989.

## **Revolutionary transformation**

If there is anything worse than communism itself, it is what comes after.<sup>204</sup>

In the first chapter of the thesis, I outlined how a middle level International Sociology looking at processes of negotiation and change in institutions and organisations could unravel the interplay between agency and structure and lay bare the complex dynamics which make up processes of social change, including revolutionary change. This section puts this method into practice by looking at how political-coercive, economic and social-ideological power relations in the Czech Republic have been transformed since the revolution of 1989 through the lens of a number of institutions and organisations. I start with the shift from Democratic-Centralism to multi-party democracy, exploring how elections and political-parties, the security services and armed forces, as well as foreign policy making have altered since 1989. The second section looks at the move from central planning to market capitalism, focusing on how privatisation and liberalisation have helped to engender a radically different set of economic relations. Finally, I evaluate the shift in social-ideological power relations, analysing the role of the media, the policy of lustrace, gender and race relations in the creation of a post-communist civil society.<sup>205</sup> Taken together, I argue that these transformations constitute systemic, revolutionary change.

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<sup>204</sup> Adam Michnik, the leading Polish dissident, quoted in Sakwa (1999: 114).

<sup>205</sup> These examples were chosen for several reasons: availability of information, comparability across case studies and relative importance.



### *Political-coercive power relations*

A citizen was asked under what circumstances he would sit on a hedgehog with a bare bottom. After thinking, he replied, 'If the hedgehog was shaved, if the bottom was someone else's, or if it was the party's orders'.<sup>206</sup>

Nowhere is the extent of change in the Czech Republic more evident than in the transformation of its political-coercive relations. From the monolith of Democratic-Centrism with its pre-determined elections and insistence on the leading role of the party has emerged a system of free elections competed over by a cornucopia of political parties and movements. From a vast state security apparatus which at one time could count 10% of the Czech population among its web of informers has emerged a distrusted, impoverished service with little practical authority. The pro-Soviet foreign policy demanded by membership of the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War has been turned into a new focus centred around NATO and the European Union. This section monitors these changes and demonstrates the degree to which political-coercive relations have altered over the last fourteen years.

### *Political parties and elections*

Many Czechs assert that their country is unique among former Communist states because of its long democratic legacy. As I mentioned in the previous section of the chapter, during the inter-war years, Czechoslovakia more closely resembled Western Europe than its Eastern neighbours in terms of its social, economic and political structures. A large middle class and a low literacy rate engendered a flourishing democratic culture in which negotiation and coalition building, if sometimes fraught, allowed five major political parties (The Pětka) to

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<sup>206</sup> Quoted in Myagkov (1976: 2).

compete openly for power. The Prague Spring of 1968 stands as a further landmark to the Czech democratic heritage, a tradition only interrupted by the unwelcome interregnum of the communist period, seen as an anomaly for an advanced country surrounded by states for which autocracy is the norm.<sup>207</sup>

Whether these claims stand up or not, and they certainly possess at least an element of truth, the communist political system as set out by the Soviet Union and copied by its satellite states bore little resemblance to anything Czechs had experienced before. Under communism, the Communist Party and the government executive (the Council of Ministers and the Presidium) exerted tight control over political power, particularly through nomenklatura.<sup>208</sup> They dominated political relations by establishing networks which cut deep into the fabric of political policy making, appointing election candidates, administrators and regional apparatchiks. The only political parties which existed beyond this structure were stooges; elections were show events leading to predetermined outcomes.

The legacy of the inter-war period and the memory of the Prague Spring were important mobilising tools during the revolution. A 1998 survey found that 32% of Czechs thought that the inter-war years were the best time for the country in the twentieth century. Next came the period from 1989 with 20% and after that 1968 with 17%.<sup>209</sup> Such memories helped Czech reformers move swiftly after the revolution towards the institutionalisation of a democratic system. Parliament became bicameral with a Lower Chamber of Deputies made up of 200

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<sup>207</sup> It is worth bearing in mind the differences here between the Czech Lands and Slovakia. While the Czech Lands were ruled from Austria, allowing for a degree of autonomy and political participation, Slovakia was governed from Hungary, leading to far tighter restrictions on political and social action. As a result, Slovakia was more rural, had a lower level of literacy and a weaker sense of nationalism than the Czech Lands. These divergences in turn reinforce distinct historical lineages, for example around religious belief.

<sup>208</sup> Paul Lewis (1994) estimates that up to 100,000 Czechs could be defined as nomenklatura under communism.

<sup>209</sup> Survey in Miller, White and Heywood (1998).

members serving four year terms. Parties were required to pass a 5% threshold for representation in parliament, a limit intended to reduce the potential hazards stemming from the introduction of a multi-party system after forty years of one-party rule.<sup>210</sup> An upper house, or Senate, was created, made up of eighty-one members serving six year fixed terms with rolling elections held every two years for a third of the seats. Under the new system, the President was to be elected by Parliament and able to run for a maximum of two five-year terms. The President was granted the capacity to sign laws, veto legislation, and appoint and dismiss senior officials including the Prime-Minister and Supreme Court justices.

In the first elections held after the collapse of communism, turnout was 97%, with the umbrella opposition group Civic Forum (Občanské Forum) receiving over half of the total votes cast. In all, twenty three political parties took part in the election, including bizarre one-offs like the Friends of Beer Party and the Erotic Party.

#### 1990 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic<sup>211</sup>

Party	Percentage of votes	Parliamentary seats
<b>Civic Forum</b>	51.6%	50
<b>Communist Party</b>	13.7%	12
<b>Christian Democratic Union</b>	8.7%	6
<b>Self-Government Moravia and Silesia</b>	8.5%	7
<b>Others</b>	17.5%	0

<sup>210</sup> The downside of this system is that many votes were left unrepresented. For example, in 1992, only eight parties broke through the threshold leaving 19% of votes unrepresented.

<sup>211</sup> These figures represent the vote in the Czech Republic for the Czech parliament rather than the federal legislature. Therefore the total number of parliamentary seats on offer was 75 rather than 200.

Civic Forum initially governed with the support of the Christian Democrats and a number of independents. However, in 1991 the Forum split into two rival camps: the centre-right Civic Democratic Party (ODS) led by Finance Minister Václav Klaus and the centre-left OH headed by Foreign Minister Jiří Dienstbier. Klaus believed in ‘a market economy without adjectives’, arguing that individual liberty and self-interest would inevitably create a harmony of interests around which social change could take place. By contrast, Dienstbier held that moral integrity, intermediate associations and civil society should be actively encouraged to safeguard against autocracy and engender the development of a truly democratic, pluralist culture. In the elections of 1992, against a backdrop of worsening economic conditions, Klaus’ arguments won the day. Following a turnout of 85% and with around forty parties vying for office, the ODS received nearly 30% of the vote.<sup>212</sup>

#### 1992 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic

Party	Percentage of votes	Parliamentary seats
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	29.7%	76
<b>Communist Party</b>	14.1%	35
<b>Social Democrats</b>	6.5%	16
<b>Liberal Social Union</b>	6.5%	16
<b>Christian Democratic Union</b>	6.3%	15
<b>Republican Party</b>	6.0%	14
<b>Movement for self-government</b>	5.9%	14
<b>Civil Democratic Union</b>	5.9%	14
<b>Others</b>	19.1%	0

<sup>212</sup> There was also a rise in the vote for extreme parties, with the communists taking second place and the far right Republican Party crossing the 5% threshold which assured them of parliamentary representation.

The 1992 elections brought two leaders – Václav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar – into office in the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively who cared little for the niceties of parliamentary democracy.<sup>213</sup> Instead, they moved quickly to dissolve the federal state, Klaus by stressing that Slovakia was a drain on the more prosperous Czech Republic, Mečiar by playing on time honoured Slovakian themes of nationalism and resentment against Czech domination. By the end of 1992, Klaus and Mečiar had engineered a ‘Velvet Divorce’ between the two countries, despite low levels of public support.<sup>214</sup> The split necessitated new elections and a delay in the establishment of a second house of parliament. It also strained imminent party loyalty to breaking point. The so-called ‘political tourism’ of deputies during this period meant that 70 deputies out of a total of 200 crossed the floor to change their allegiance between 1992-1994.

The period 1994-1996 was a turning point in the Czech transition. First, firm steps were taken in the consolidation of the political system. In 1995, a new Electoral Law was passed which raised the electoral threshold for multi-party coalitions to 9% for three parties and 11% for four parties. Deposits were also increased and subsidies for votes gained introduced. As a result, the number of national parties dropped as did the proportion of unrepresented votes. However, a second change was less welcome. In the early 1990s, public satisfaction with the transformation had been high. But this support buckled in the wake of an economic downturn, corruption scandals and a rise in extremism. The first Senatorial elections in 1996

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<sup>213</sup> This is a little harsh on Klaus, who although a populist is hardly on the same level as Mečiar, a man with more than a sprinkling of authoritarian fervour.

<sup>214</sup> Only 11% of Czechs and 17% of Slovaks supported the divorce – over two-thirds wanted there to be some kind of union between the two states.

saw only a 35% turnout, while the Republican Party and Communist Party continued to perform well in both local and national elections.

#### 1996 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic

Party	Percentage of votes	Parliamentary seats
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	29.6%	68
<b>Social Democratic Party</b>	26.4%	61
<b>Communist Party</b>	10.3%	22
<b>Christian Democratic Union</b>	8.1%	18
<b>Republican Party</b>	8.0%	18
<b>Civil Democratic Union</b>	6.3%	13
<b>Others</b>	11.3%	0

Following the 1996 elections, a weak, minority government led by Klaus struggled on, imposing austerity measures to counter the economic downturn including slashing public sector spending, raising interest rates and lowering corporation tax. But these measures could not protect the Czech currency from devaluation in May 1997 by 15% against the US dollar and the German mark. Following a scandal in which \$5 million of illegal money paid by state enterprises first appeared in an ODS Swiss bank account and then turned up as payment for new offices for the party, Interior Minister Jan Ruml and eventually, Klaus himself were forced to resign. Ruml left the ODS to set up the right wing Freedom Union (US) while Klaus was retained as leader of the ODS. President Havel appointed Josef Tošovský, a former Governor of the Czech Central Bank to lead an independent interim government until new elections could be held. Investigations into improprieties by all major political parties

followed and public confidence in the political system reached a nadir – only 5% of Czechs polled during 1998 said they were satisfied with the transformation to date.<sup>215</sup>

### 1998 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic

Party	Percentage of votes	Parliamentary seats
<b>Social Democratic Party</b>	32.2%	74
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	27.7%	63
<b>Communist Party</b>	11.0%	24
<b>Christian Democratic Union</b>	9.0%	20
<b>Freedom Party</b>	8.6%	19
<b>Others</b>	11.5%	0

The elections of 1998 resulted in victory for the centre-left Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) led by Miloš Zeman, a former colleague of Klaus from the Institute of Prognostics. However, the ODS, with over a quarter of the total vote cast, had enough leverage to establish an ‘opposition agreement’ with the ČSSD in which Zeman became Prime Minister, Klaus became Speaker of the House and immunity from prosecution for past corruption charges was granted. It was a move heavily criticised by politicians, commentators and members of the public from across the political spectrum as it served to carve up the principal areas of political authority between the two main parties, marginalized the popular President Havel along with numerous small parties, and served to curtail debate about the radical reforms most analysts believed that the Czech economy and political system required.

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<sup>215</sup> Investigations were carried out into some extremely senior figures. Accusations were even made that President Havel had benefited from insider knowledge during a property deal.

The late 1990s saw a concerted effort to challenge the opposition agreement. In 1999, Václav Fischer stood and won a senatorial by-election as an independent – in May 2000, he was voted the most popular politician in the Czech Republic. At the same time, former student activists arranged a series of events to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the 1989 revolution under the banner, ‘Thanks now leave’ (Děkujeme, Odejďte). The movement demanded the resignation of the old guard and the introduction of major political reforms. Surprising both themselves and the authorities, their public events drew 50,000 people to meetings in Wenceslas Square; 150,000 signed a petition blaming Klaus and Zeman for the failure of reforms; a third of Czechs indicated in opinion polls that they would vote for the ‘Thanks now leave’ if it were a political party and 56% supported calls for the current political leaders to stand down.<sup>216</sup>

Further opposition to the status quo came from the Quad Alliance made up of four parties: the Christian Democratic Union (KDU-ČSL), a modern version of the inter-war Catholic People’s Party; the Freedom Union (US); the Civil Democratic Alliance (ODA), a largely intellectual party; and the smaller Democratic Union (DEU). In 1999, the Quad Alliance won a crucial bi-election which meant that the governing pact no longer held the three fifths majority required to push through changes to the constitution. In senatorial elections held the next year, the grouping took seventeen out of twenty-seven available seats. However, during 2001, internal squabbles led to a splinter in the movement which significantly weakened the Quad’s position in the run up to the 2002 elections.

Today, the far left continues to be represented by the unreconstructed Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM), the only Communist Party in the former Soviet bloc that has

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<sup>216</sup> Figures taken from Connolly (1999).



refused to change its name or apologise for the excesses of Communism. As Seán Hanley points out, the KSČM went through a number of internal disputes in the 1990s, finally coalescing around the views of a neo-conservative faction led by Miroslav Grebeníček and Miroslav Ransdorf. Grebeníček and Ransdorf accepted that the KSČM faced a number of years in the political wilderness, but argued that if the party stayed true to its central principles – resistance to capitalism, a leading role for the public sector, nationalisation, hostility to western institutions like NATO and the EU, and an ambiguous attitude towards the history of Czech communism – it could hold on to a significant proportion of its older voters, while also attracting young, uneducated and increasingly alienated urban voters. To all intents and purposes, this strategy appears to have succeeded. In regional elections during 2000, the KSČM received 21% of the vote. As the table below indicates, the KSČM also performed extremely well at the 2002 parliamentary elections. Membership of the party has stabilised at around 150,000, making the KSČM easily the largest political organisation in the Czech Republic.<sup>217</sup> Of all the political parties operating in the Czech Republic today, KSČM voters feel the strongest attachment to their party.<sup>218</sup>

In the build up to the 2002 parliamentary elections, public confidence in the political process was undermined by measures introduced by the governing ‘pact’ designed to secure their grip on power: the introduction of a first past the post electoral system intended to reduce the role of smaller parties, a number of policies aimed at weakening the role of the presidency and attempts to curtail the independence of the central bank.<sup>219</sup> Although these measures were rejected by the constitutional court, the pact did succeed in raising the threshold for

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<sup>217</sup> For more on this, see Hanley (2000).

<sup>218</sup> According to Klará Vlachová, 55% of KSČM voters have either a strong or very strong attachment to their party compared to just 24% of ČSSD voters. For more on this, see Vlachová (2001).

<sup>219</sup> Under the terms of the Czech constitution, the key functions of the presidency are: selecting constitutional court judges, appointing the seven member governing board of the central bank, returning legislation to parliament and selecting the Prime Minister designate after general elections.

parliamentary representation from 7% for two parties, 9% for three parties and 11% for four parties to 10%, 15% and 20% respectively. But such moves were not without their cost. Public trust in political parties dropped to just 12% and turnout in the 2002 elections plummeted to 58%.

### 2002 parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic

Party	Percentage of votes	Parliamentary seats
<b>Social Democratic Party</b>	30.2%	70
<b>Civic Democratic Party</b>	24.5%	58
<b>Communist Party</b>	18.5%	41
<b>Christian Democrats – Freedom Union</b>	14.3%	31
<b>Others</b>	12.5%	0

Following the elections, the ČSSD, now under the leadership of Vladimír Špidla, retained control of the Chamber of Deputies while the ODS saw a substantial reduction in its vote. Dramatically, the communists took nearly a fifth of the popular vote. A three party coalition featuring the ČSSD, the Freedom Union and the Christian Democrats formed a new government, but with the slimmest possible majority: 101 deputies out of a total of 200. Infighting within the ČSSD between those loyal to outgoing Prime Minister Zeman and the new guard which formed around Špidla broke out into open hostility throughout the winter of 2002-3, most notably when Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda's public assurance that the Czech Republic was part of the US coalition in Iraq was forcefully retracted by the Prime Minister. This factionalism, accompanied by ongoing friction between the left wing ČSSD and the

right oriented Freedom Union made the government both unwieldy and unstable. Most observers do not expect it to see out its full four year term.

Indeed, in the first few months of 2003, the fragility of the ruling alliance was displayed by the repeated failure to endorse a new president to replace Václav Havel. When Havel stepped down in February 2003, having served his maximum two terms in office, there was still no agreed candidate to take his place. Events became increasingly farcical as a popular singer, Karel Gott, threatened to stand for the post, seeking to bypass parliament and hold a public election instead. Finally, in March 2003, at the third time of asking, Václav Klaus, back from political obscurity, used the support of forty-one communist deputies to defeat the government sponsored candidate, Jan Sokol, registering the required number of votes in parliament by a majority of just one.

As the above survey indicates, the Czech political system has seen a sea change since 1989. The Nations in Transit Survey now places the Czech Republic among the most consolidated states of the former Soviet bloc in terms of democracy, the rule of law and governance.<sup>220</sup> Where once a single party dominated the political system, now a multitude of parties compete for power – formal democracy has been established. But as yet, parties are weak – they have few members and relatively undeveloped infrastructures, making them heavily dependent on individuals and personalities.<sup>221</sup> According to Vladimír Tismaneanu, the story of political relations in the Czech Republic since the collapse of communism can be characterised as a movement from Hobbes to Burke, or from anarchy to governance.<sup>222</sup> But this choice has seen

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<sup>220</sup> See Karatnycky, Motyl and Schnitzer (eds.) (2002).

<sup>221</sup> See Hofferbert (ed.) (1999). However, it is worth remembering that the majority of political parties in Western Europe are also experiencing a steep decline in membership.

<sup>222</sup> For more on this, see Tismaneanu (1999).

many voters go unrepresented and bigger parties compete only to divide up the spoils of government. The petty factionalism which has marred post-communist political relations has eroded public trust in the formal political process. Even today, fourteen years on, the majority of political parties appear as top-down creations rather than organic developments rooted in social structures; their identities seem ephemeral and loyalty to them shallow.<sup>223</sup> But although 62% of Czechs are dissatisfied with how democracy is developing in their country, there is no doubt that, as a political system, democracy is 'the only game in town'. 95.7% of Czechs polled for the European Value Survey agree that democracy is better than any other form of government, the highest number in Central or Eastern Europe.

#### *Security services and the armed forces*

Before the revolution, the state security apparatus represented by the Státní Bezpečnost (StB), was a despised but powerful institution in Czech political life, in Václav Havel's words, standing as a 'hideous spider whose invisible web runs right through the whole of society'.<sup>224</sup> With 9,000 full-time officers supplemented by a range of informants, the StB counted up to a tenth of the population among its numbers.<sup>225</sup> Control of the StB during the communist era was a priority for the party leadership. The top 1,000 positions within the Interior Ministry and the StB were reserved for party members and up to 90% of StB staff were also members of the Communist Party. The StB was principally used by the regime to monitor and disrupt opposition movements. According to Kieran Williams and Dannis Deletant, three quarters of the signatories to Charta 77 were interrogated by the StB, 61% were arrested and over a third had their homes searched. Sixteen agents penetrated the group itself. The StB set up bogus dissident groups and infiltrated genuine organisations in order to sow discord amongst the

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<sup>223</sup> For more on this see Elster, Offe and Preuss (1998).

<sup>224</sup> Quoted in Vladislav (1986: 7).

<sup>225</sup> It is worth noting that many people helped the StB unwittingly.

opposition. They also devised a plan, codenamed Norbert, to arrest prominent activists in the event of a prolonged series of protests against the regime. Norbert comprised a central list of subversives, at its zenith including nearly 15,000 people, who the StB was to arrest at the order of the politburo. Recent research indicates that the StB were ready to enforce Norbert in November 1989 but were not given the go ahead by the leadership. At the time of the revolution, Norbert remained unused, just one of around 50,000 ongoing StB operations.<sup>226</sup>

After the revolution, President Havel appointed Richard Sacher, a member of the People's Party, a former Catholic satellite party of the Communist Party, as Minister of Internal Affairs. Sacher oversaw the abolition of the StB in February 1990. In its place new departments were set up including a rapid deployment unit and a force specially detailed to the protection of government ministers. But widespread criticism of Sacher, stemming from his incompetent dismissal of officers who then had to be reinstated and his proposal that tainted officers should be allowed to stay on the official payroll for six months after dismissal prompted Havel to appoint Ján Langoš and Jan Ruml, former members of Charta 77, in his place. Under Ruml, the security service was further revamped through the creation of the Federal Service for the Protection of the Constitution and Democracy, modelled on the FBI. Counter-intelligence work was moved to the Ministry of Defence and formal links between the military and security apparatus severed. By August 1990, 14% of former StB staff had been sacked while many others left of their own accord, reducing the overall size of the organisation by nearly a quarter. In 1992, the security apparatus was remodelled as a four agency Independent Security Service (BIS) reporting directly to parliament and the Prime-Ministers office rather than to the Ministry of the Interior. At the same time, the external intelligence service was transformed into a unit to protect the president, combat terrorism and

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<sup>226</sup> For more on this, see Williams and Deletant (2000).

tackle drug smuggling. In June 1990, Deputy Foreign Minister Luboš Dobrovský claimed that there were no Czech spies operating abroad. By 1993, Václav Klaus could declare, 'I don't need intelligence services, CNN is enough for me'.<sup>227</sup>

The Czech armed forces, although not fulfilling the extensive role carried out by the military in other Soviet bloc countries such as Poland, were a key pillar of communist rule. Loyalty to the regime was secured through what Andrew Cottey calls 'dual elite loyalty' in which the senior ranks of the armed forces were reserved for members of the party. General Karol Pezl, former Chief of Staff and the man put in charge of reforms to the military after 1989, claimed in an interview with me that 98% of the army were members of the Communist Party in 1989.<sup>228</sup> Programmes of political education and the distribution of substantial resources to the armed forces ensured compliance with party decrees. But this nexus between the armed forces and the Communist Party meant that the armed forces never became fully autonomous from civilian control. The key transition since 1989 has therefore been the transfer of allegiance from communist civilian control to democratic civilian control characterised by parliamentary and governmental influence over defence policy, the military budget, oversight and staffing within the defence ministry.<sup>229</sup>

The key task in the months immediately following the revolution was to depoliticise the armed forces and end the 'leading role' of the party within the military. To this end, the Main Political Administration governing the relationship between the party and the armed forces was abolished, nearly 10,000 soldiers including 5,000 officers and seventy-four generals were forcibly removed from service, military parades were banned and military training in schools

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<sup>227</sup> Quoted in Williams and Deletant (2000: 83).

<sup>228</sup> Interview with General Karol Pezl, Prague, 5 April 2001.

<sup>229</sup> For more on this see Cottey, Edmunds and Forster (eds.) (2002).

abolished. In March 1990, membership of political parties while in army services was proscribed and, later that year, Luboš Dobrovský became the first civilian head of the Czech armed forces since World War Two, opening up the military and its budget to public scrutiny.<sup>230</sup>

As a result of these moves, the military budget was significantly reduced, falling from 2.6% of GDP in 1992 to 2% in 2000.<sup>231</sup> Numerous cuts were made ranging from disbanding military counter-intelligence to decommissioning a third of military equipment. In 1993, the new constitution divided responsibility for the armed forces between the president, parliament and government while a new State Security Council was convened in order to consolidate civilian control. By the end of 1993, only 117 out of 7,000 former members of Military Intelligence had retained their post and all commanding officers of the General Staff had been replaced. Between 1989 and 2003, the overall size of the armed forces were cut by nearly a half and the number of generals reduced from 240 to just twenty.<sup>232</sup>

However, the National Military Strategy due to appear in the early 1990s was incessantly delayed, finally emerging in 1997 only to receive a barrage of criticism, not least because it lacked any concept of a co-ordinated chain of command. Towards the end of the decade, more concerted attempts were made to update and modernise the structures of the armed forces. Small elite forces, including a specialist chemical warfare unit, were bolstered and Czech forces took part in military action in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite

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<sup>230</sup> Indeed, Dobrovský was the first civilian head of the armed forces in any post-communist state.

<sup>231</sup> The figure of 2% actually represents an increase on mid-1990s figures, forced by accession to NATO.

<sup>232</sup> In early 2003, the Czech military comprised just over 60,000 personnel, compared to well over 100,000 before 1989.

lukewarm public support, the Czech Republic formally joined NATO in March 1999.<sup>233</sup> As a result, a massive programme of upgrading, including a \$2.5 billion order for new attack jets was passed by parliament. In 2002, a new act promised a thorough overhaul of the Czech military by 2007.

There have been a number of problems associated with reform of both the military and the security services since 1989. First, the two institutions have found the ideological and bureaucratic legacy of the past difficult to shake off. In particular, their allegiance to extreme parties remains strong – in a poll taken in 1996, 14% of the Czech security services and the military claimed to support the neo-fascist Republican Party while 11% and 18% respectively backed the KSČM. Second, civilian control has been hampered by a lack of expertise, inadequate transparency and weak budgetary control. Third, there has been a notable absence of political will. A 1994 NATO report found that only thirty officers in the entire army had the required level of education, training and linguistic skills to function in a NATO institution. The report found that the majority of weapons being used by the army were obsolete, many tanks lacked night vision and a number of planes were of ‘second world war standard’.<sup>234</sup> By and large, reform of the security services and armed forces have been considered secondary to ‘higher’ issues of economic and political restructuring throughout the 1990s.

Two central imperatives lie behind the attempted reforms of the Czech coercive apparatus since 1989. First, there has been a successful attempt to separate key structures within the apparatus from the overarching control of the Communist Party. Second, there has been an

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<sup>233</sup> Czech support for joining NATO was the lowest among applicant countries – only 36% of the public supported entry compared to 61% of Poles.

<sup>234</sup> For more on this, see Herspring (1998).



ongoing attempt to professionalise and modernise the services to meet the challenges of the post-cold war world. This has necessitated a substantial shift in terms of culture, organisation and personnel which remains, to some extent, unfulfilled. But significant steps have been made. For example, half the posts in the Ministry of Defence are now manned by civilians, a parliamentary committee scrutinises and has the capacity to modify or reject budgets and effective control of both services rests with political leaders. At the same time, priorities have been reassessed. For example, the security services now deal almost exclusively with problems of racketeering, drug smuggling and white collar crime. But the shallow scale and poor quality of reforms reflect the low level of priority given to them. A failure of political will has translated into a lack of proper planning, programming and budgetary procedures. Where once feared, large organisations played key roles both in public policy and the private lives of Czechs, now distrusted, demoralised, shadow institutions carry out their functions under public scrutiny with a negligible impact on the daily lives of Czech citizens.

### *Foreign policy*

Under communism, Czech foreign policy was tied firmly to the Soviet Union through membership of the Warsaw Pact. Following the 1968 invasion, this body became broadly delegitimised in Czechoslovakia. It was therefore no surprise that one of the main rallying cries of the 1989 revolution centred on the Czech 'return to Europe'. After years of facing East, post-revolutionary foreign policy turned firmly to the West. In June 1991, the Czech Republic joined the Council of Europe, an organisation whose members had to be committed to free elections and the rule of law. In October 1993, an Association Agreement with the EU was signed, marking the onset of negotiations leading towards eventual membership of the Union. In October 1995, the Czech Republic became an official Associate Member of the EU and in 1996, an application for full membership was lodged. After the Czech public voted

overwhelmingly in favour of joining the union in a referendum held in June 2003, accession procedures are on schedule to be completed by 2004.<sup>235</sup>

The first post-revolutionary Foreign Minister was Jiří Dienstbier, an intellectual who just weeks before had been working as a railway stoker. Following through on his concept of anti-politics, President Havel appointed Frank Zappa as an ad hoc, if short lived, adviser on foreign economic and cultural relations.<sup>236</sup> Under Dienstbier, Czech foreign policy developed a distinctly ethical element with Czech peacekeepers sent to Yugoslavia and Mozambique, arms sales controlled and human rights violators such as North Korea publicly vilified. But Dienstbier's policies conflicted with a number of vested interests and structural constraints: Klaus and central government over Central European co-operation; the Ministry of Foreign Trade over the sale of T-72 tanks to Syria; and the Presidential office over a meeting with former Austrian Chancellor Kurt Waldheim. The most important structural constraint was over arms sales. Before the revolution, Czechoslovakia had been the world's largest per capita exporter of arms. Concerted lobbying by leading arms manufacturers managed to overcome Dienstbier's attempts to instigate restrictions on the industry. In 1995, only sixteen out of nearly 600 applications for arms were rejected and sales were permitted to Cambodia, Syria and Algeria among other 'illiberal' states.

Nevertheless, the new foreign policy team did achieve some notable successes. Within three months of the revolution, the Soviet Union had agreed to withdraw all its troops from Czechoslovakia, a move completed in June 1991, in turn a month ahead of the final dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Co-operation with Slovakia has seen the creation of a joint

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<sup>235</sup> Just over 70% of Czechs voted in favour of membership in the June referendum on a turnout of around 55%.

<sup>236</sup> Zappa's appointment did not last long. Under pressure from US Secretary of State James Baker, his posting was withdrawn in 1992.

chemical warfare unit, a joint battalion and a common skies policy. Membership of transnational bodies has been actively sought. In 1991, Visegrad was formed, made up of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, followed later that year by CEFTA, the Central Europe Free Trade Area, initially made up of the same three countries but later expanding to include Slovenia and Romania. The Czech Republic was also one of the founding members of the Central European Initiative (CEI), a body encompassing sixteen states from Italy to Latvia.

By far the single most important international institution involved in Czech foreign policy since 1989 has been the European Union. Under the EUs PHARE project, stabilisation programmes, stand-by loans, debt relief and technical support were provided in return for inflationary controls, convertible currencies, reduced budget deficits and privatisation programmes. In total, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the body responsible for allocating funds agreed under PHARE, funded twenty four projects worth 525 million ECUs in the Czech Republic during the 1990s. A Generalised System of Preferences was also established to boost levels of trade between Czechoslovakia and the EU, allowing for some tariff and quota advantages, particularly in industrial goods. But overall, EU programmes were not on the level many Czechs expected and wanted. Sums granted to the Czech Republic under PHARE were far less than those provided to Poland and Hungary while protectionism of so-called 'sensitive' areas like agriculture and textiles proved an acute hindrance to the expansion of the Czech economy.<sup>237</sup> EU initiatives dried up almost completely in the late 1990s as Western attention turned to monetary union rather than enlargement. Demands for economic liberalism were not matched by practical help for

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<sup>237</sup> Under PHARE, Poland received help for 70 projects worth 1,309 million ECUs and Hungary 49 projects worth 1,053 million ECUs.

democratisation. Only at the Nice summit in 1999 was a formula finally ironed out for enlargement and EU attention turned at least partially back towards the East.

At the turn of the millennium, a number of controversies mar Czech relations with its neighbours. The 1948 Beneš decrees, for example, continue to sour German-Czech relations. In 2002, Chancellor Schröder cancelled a visit to Prague in protest at the Czech government's refusal to consider compensation for the Sudeten Germans, a powerful lobbying group now mainly settled in Bavaria. In turn, Miloš Zeman refused to attend a Visegrad meeting after Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán claimed that the decrees violated EU law.<sup>238</sup> Czech relations with Austria are little better. The Temelin nuclear power station situated close to the Austrian border, the case of the Sudeten Germans and harsh Czech criticism for the Austrian Freedom Party led to an open row between Chancellor Schüssel and Prime Minister Zeman in 2002. In 2003, President Havel was one of eight European leaders to sign a letter publicly endorsing US policy in Iraq to the public displeasure of Germany and France, as well as leading members of the Czech government, including Prime Minister Špidla who, under pressure from the public and his party, had already refused to sign it.

### *Summary*

Overall, the transformation of Czech political relations since 1989 has been both widespread and successful. From being governed by an unaccountable oligarchy, the Czech Republic is now run according to a codified system of operating procedures. There is broad understanding and acceptance of the explicit and implicit rules of the game and there are signs, most notably in the example of 'Thanks now leave', that point towards the evolution of

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<sup>238</sup> In April 2002, all 169 Czech Deputies voted in favour of a bill making the decrees unchangeable and unchallengeable.

a substantive political culture. Critics claim that the Czech political system remains one of elites carving up fiefdoms in smoke-filled rooms. But all too often, analysts measure democracy in terms of ideal types which bare little resemblance to reality. Western European models of democracy have taken centuries to evolve, experiencing their fair share of corruption, nepotism and cronyism on the way. As Aviezer Tucker writes, 'a bunch of crooks cheating their voters is not anything exceptional in world politics'.<sup>239</sup> It could be argued that the corruption scandals of recent years mark both the degree of Czech 'normality' and indicate just how radically the current system is removed from its communist predecessor. In the past, neither would communists have considered there to be anything unusual about currying favour through backhanders nor would the press have reported any incidents of it. The Czechs are institutionalising their own version of democratic practices – the challenge for scholars is to re-examine their own concepts in the light of these dramatic changes, not to condemn transformation through ill-suited and ill-applied preconceptions.

### *Economic power relations*

#### *The seven wonders of Czech communism*

Everybody has a job

Although everybody has a job, nobody works

Although nobody works, the Plan is fulfilled up to 105%

Although the Plan is fulfilled up to 105%, there's nothing in the shops

Although there's nothing in the shops, we've got enough of everything

Although we've got enough of everything, everybody steals

Although everybody steals, nothing ever goes missing

And the eighth wonder of the world is that it has lasted for 41 years.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> See Tucker (2000: 241). In 1999, the Czech Republic was voted twenty-seventh out of fifty two countries on the corruption index of Transparency International.

<sup>240</sup> Slogan in Brno, November 1989.

According to many commentators, the Czech Republic has accomplished one of the most successful economic transitions of any post-communist country. From having the most centrally planned economy in the former Soviet bloc, the Czech Republic now has a system over three-quarters of which is in the hands of the private sector. The communist reliance on heavy industry has been replaced by a new focus on services and tourism. In 1995, the Czech transition appeared so successful that Prime Minister Václav Klaus felt able to call it 'complete'. However, Klaus' trumpeting of Czech economic prowess proved to be misplaced. Faced with a number of unresolved structural weaknesses, the Czech Republic experienced a severe downturn between 1996 and 1999. Even today, Czech GDP per capita hovers only stubbornly around pre-revolutionary levels. Key competitors who had previously been lagging behind have caught up and even overtaken the Czech Republic on some indicators. Although it may therefore be questionable as to whether the Czech economic transformation can be considered wholly successful, it is indisputable that radical changes have taken place in the society's economic power relations since 1989.

#### **Performance of the Czech economy 1990-2001**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>GDP (\$bn)</b>	32.3	25.4	29.9	34.3	39.7	50.3	56.6	52.9	47.8	47.4	50.4	56.7
<b>GDP (% change)</b>	-1.2	-11.5	-0.5	0.1	2.2	5.9	4.8	-1.0	-2.2	-0.2	2.0	3.3
<b>Unemployment (%)</b>	0.8	4.1	2.6	3.5	3.2	2.9	3.5	5.2	7.5	9.4	9.7	10.2
<b>Inflation (%)</b>	9.7	56.6	11.1	20.8	10.0	9.1	8.8	8.5	10.7	2.1	4.0	4.7
<b>Real wages (%)</b>	NA	-26.3	10.2	3.7	7.7	1.7	8.8	1.8	-1.2	6.0	3.0	3.3
<b>Exports (\$bn)</b>	5.9	8.3	8.4	13.0	14.0	21.5	21.7	22.8	26.4	24.6	31.5	33.4
<b>Imports (\$bn)</b>	6.5	8.8	10.4	13.3	14.9	25.1	27.6	27.2	28.9	23.4	32.2	36.5
<b>Trade balance (\$bn)</b>	-0.6	-0.5	-2.0	-0.3	-0.9	-3.6	-5.9	-4.4	-2.5	1.2	-0.7	-3.1

*Sources: Czech Statistical Office, Department of Finance and official sources*

### *Liberalisation*

Unlike its neighbours, the pre-revolutionary Czech economy benefited from relatively low inflation, a small budget deficit and a negligible hard currency debt. Furthermore, as a heavily centralised and tightly controlled economy, it was possible to instigate far reaching reforms beyond those in Hungary and Poland where more complex systems allowed vested interests to hinder far-reaching programmes. However, Czech reformers did face their own constraints. Unlike Poland and Hungary, Czechoslovakia had little experience of trade with the world market – the economy was deeply integrated into the communist economic system. Nevertheless, post-1989 leaders were clear about the need for wide-scale reforms.

Economists turned politicians such as Valtr Komárek, Vladimír Dlouhý and Václav Klaus, strongly supported by Western donors, promoted an agenda of sweeping neo-liberal reforms including opening up the Czech economy to free market competition, price liberalisation and mass privatisation.

The first steps towards ‘shock therapy’ were made in 1990. In September, Czechoslovakia regained membership of the IMF and secured most-favoured nation trading status from the USA; in December, the central bank made the Czech Koruna internally convertible; and a month later, trade with former communist countries began to be conducted in hard currency.<sup>241</sup> Such policies had dramatic effects on the Czech economy and society: in 1991 alone prices rose by over a half while wages dropped by 26%; between 1989 and 1992, government expenditure fell by half and the number of Czechs in poverty rose from 4.2% to 26.7%. Between November 1989 and June 1992, the price of meat rose by 166%, dairy by

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<sup>241</sup> Along with other changes, this reform led to a drastic reduction in trade with former communist countries. From a high of 60% of GDP in 1989, this figure declined to 40% in 1991 and 20% GDP in 1992.

275% and shoes by 221%. As the table below shows, between 1988 and 1993 there was a sharp drop in Czech's purchasing power.

**'Do you have enough money for':**

	<b>1988</b>	<b>1993</b>
<b>Food</b>	89.3%	55.2%
<b>Clothing</b>	80.3%	38.7%
<b>Housing</b>	88.6%	40.5%
<b>Health</b>	92.6%	54.3%
<b>Education</b>	90.3%	45.1%
<b>Culture/Leisure activities</b>	71.9%	32.4%

*Source: Abridged from Krejčí and Machonin (1996)*

The dislocating effects of these radical reforms dented Czech optimism about the future. In 1991, over half of Czechs said that they felt positive about the future but by 1993 this figure had dropped to a little over a third. Even fewer believed that changes made since 1989 had been positive – a vast majority, combining those who believed that changes had been too slow with those who thought things had gone too fast, became critical of economic reforms. Yet by the mid 1990s, there seemed more grounds for confidence. As the economy grew at around 5% per year, the two stage privatisation programme began to reap benefits and visitors flooded into the country – 100 million tourists brought in \$2.9 billion, much of it in hard currency, in 1994 alone. In November 1995, the Czech Republic became the first post-communist country to join the OECD and in 1996, the Czech Republic was rated higher than any other former Soviet bloc state by Western investors. Later in the same year, private sector



share of GDP rose to 75% and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) reached an all time high of \$6.7 billion.

However, a second downturn in 1997 dented public faith once more. The trade balance deficit reached an unsustainable 10% of GDP. A stabilisation programme including budget cuts, limitations on imports and currency devaluation failed to provide a remedy for endemic, structural problems stemming from poor corporate governance, corruption and an underfunded, undervalued public sector. Although the government survived a vote of no confidence in June 1997, corruption scandals prompted mass resignations, and by the end of the year, the government had collapsed, mirrored by a sharp decline in public support for the economic transformation.

#### Czechs content with the economic transformation 1993-1998

	03/93	03/94	03/95	03/96	03/97	03/98
<b>Successful</b>	26%	28%	31%	28%	18%	5%
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	26%	17%	18%	19%	27%	61%
<b>Neither</b>	42%	47%	44%	43%	44%	31%
<b>Don't know</b>	6%	8%	7%	10%	11%	3%

*Source: Abridged from Shepherd (2000)*

Since the turn of the century, the Czech economy has begun to recover – in 2000 GDP grew by 2%, followed by over 3% growth in 2001 and 2002. By 2003, GDP per capita was over \$15,000, lower than South Korea but higher than other developing nations such as Hungary, Poland and Chile. Inflation has stabilised at around 4%. But other signs are less positive.

Unemployment continues to rise, reaching the psychologically important threshold of 10% of the working population in January 2003.<sup>242</sup> Even the biggest Czech companies are struggling against foreign competition – Škoda's market share has dropped from 95% of the domestic market in 1989 to approximately 50% in 2002. Both foreign donors and domestic economists doubt that much progress has been made in dealing with the core structural problems of the Czech economy. There is a widespread sense that one orthodoxy, belief in the centralised, command economy, has been replaced by another in neo-liberalism. As Jan Sokol told me, 'we Czechs go from one extreme to the other, from communism to caring about no one'.<sup>243</sup>

On the whole, liberalisation has engendered substantial changes in the Czech economy. Two-thirds of Czech trade is now with the European Union; foreign direct investment since 1989 has totalled over \$26 billion, the highest per capita sum in the region and worth over 10% of GDP. Investment by major international players like Philips, Bosch and Volkswagen has helped to produce a significant rise in exports, amounting to a 17% increase in 2000 alone.<sup>244</sup> Such foreign owned firms, unheard of under communism, now contribute half the Czech Republic's total exports. The service sector has also expanded dramatically – tourism now accounts for 6.5% of GDP and Prague sees twenty million visitors per year bringing in US\$ 4,000 million per year in receipts. Whether one considers liberalisation successful or not, there is no querying the scale of changes it has produced in Czech economic relations over the past decade and a half.

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<sup>242</sup> There is considerable regional variation in unemployment – while only 3.8% of people in Prague are without work, the figure is as high as 21.5% in parts of Moravia.

<sup>243</sup> Interview with Professor Jan Sokol, Prague, 4 April 2001.

<sup>244</sup> EIU Country Profile (2002).

### *Privatisation*

Under communism, private property and enterprises in Czechoslovakia were seized by the state under huge campaigns of collectivisation and nationalisation beyond those attempted by any other Soviet bloc country. After the revolution, privatisation therefore emerged as a litmus test for Czech commitment to the free market, becoming the fastest and most thorough programme carried out in any post-communist country. Czech privatisation incorporated three elements: restitution, small privatisation and large privatisation. Restitution returned property seized by the communists in 1948, although the programme demanded that claimants had to be Czech citizens and residents. Under restitution, approximately 100,000 physical properties including houses, farms and shops were returned to their pre-1948 owners. Small privatisation encompassing small industry, the retail and service sectors took place between October 1990 and January 1991, culminating in mass auctions which saw over 22,000 small enterprises sold. Large privatisation took place in 1991. For a nominal fee of 1,000 Kr (35\$), Czech citizens could buy vouchers enabling them to invest in banks, hotels, department stores, heavy industry, wholesalers and the like. Initially, interest was low with only 30% of the public taking up their entitlement. However, during late 1991, Investment Privatisation Funds (IPFs) were set up promising vast returns on investments. As a result, 80% of the adult population took part in the first wave of large privatisation, 72% through IPFs. After a second wave in 1994, 70% of the Czech economy lay in private hands. In 1996, the Privatisation Ministry was officially closed.

However, there were a number of flaws with Czech privatisation. First, because many of the IPFs were set up by banks which remained in state hands, indirectly, supposedly private enterprises continued to be owned by the state. Also, the ownership of private sector IPFs by public sector banks created a significant conflict of interest. When some IPFs took out loans

they could not repay or needed capital investment, they had no choice but to return to the banks which owned them. This in turn created a crisis in the banking sector – they could not foreclose on their own businesses nor liquidate their own funds. The consequent failure of the government to reform the banking sector deepened the problem. Unaccountable ownership, a lack of transparency and extensive cronyism led to a cycle of corruption and bad loans. In 1995, twelve banks failed and six went bankrupt because of an incapacity to cover withdrawals. State funds, amounting to 8% of GDP in 1995 alone, was spent repaying lost savings and shoring up failing banks. By 1999, Česká Spořitelna, the biggest bank in the country, had over US\$750 million in non-performing loans. Under mounting pressure from foreign investors, the government set up a Revitalization Agency to help with restructuring, eliminate bad debt and re-privatise the banking sector. In 2000, a number of large banks were finally offloaded and others permitted to become insolvent.

Such a clash of interests was made possible by a second structural problem with Czech economic reform – the lack of effective corporate governance. There was no independent watchdog to oversee the conduct of IPFs, many of which turned out to be inefficient, corrupt or both. As a result, over half of Czechs polled in 1998 said that they had been deceived by voucher privatisation, two-thirds said that privatisation had only benefited the government and the dishonest, and 82% expressed their dissatisfaction with privatisation. The level of corruption is evidenced by the case of Jaroslav Lízner, who not only ran the voucher privatisation scheme but also headed a leading IPF. Lízner was found with Kr 8.3 million (over US\$ 300,000) cash in a briefcase for use as a bribe to enable his company to buy a stake in a leading dairy enterprise. Lízner did not deny the charges, instead pointing out that such a deal was normal practice, a facilitation fee for services rendered. In 2002, a senior official in the Foreign Ministry, Karel Srba, was found with over \$750,000 cash in his

apartment, gains from a shady property deal. According to the World Bank, a quarter of Czech firms frequently pay ‘irregular unofficial payments to get things done’.<sup>245</sup> In 1999, an EU accession team reported that corruption was becoming ‘a serious cause for concern’.<sup>246</sup>

The lack of a stock exchange regulator proved a major factor in the failure to develop strong financial markets during the 1990s. The absence of effective legislation, particularly around bankruptcy and copyright laws, a lack of transparency and weak institutionalisation in a number of areas, most notably property rights, also facilitated the growth of bad debt and corruption while hindering efficient restructuring. Such loopholes left room for the so-called ‘privatisation of the nomenklatura’ as members of the old elite used their networks to secure favourable positions in the private sector. A case study by Ed Clark and Anna Soulsby carried out in 1997 found that twenty one out of twenty seven directors and fourteen out of thirty five managers in the four biggest industrial firms in the Czech Republic were former nomenklatura.<sup>247</sup>

The third main problem with privatisation was its piecemeal application. Despite Klaus’ insistence on the benefits of an unfettered free market and frequent tirades against protectionism, heavy industry, the mainstay of the pre-revolutionary Czech economy, was sheltered from privatisation and a number of loss making, inefficient state enterprises continued to receive extensive public subsidies well into the 1990s. As these firms finally went to the wall in the recession of the mid-late 1990s, rising unemployment produced extra burdens on the state as the costs of social security, unemployment benefits and health care

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<sup>245</sup> See World Bank (2000). It is worth noting that the comparable figures for Poland and Hungary and 33% are 31% respectively. However, in Slovenia the figure is as low as 8%.

<sup>246</sup> Europa (2001).

<sup>247</sup> For more on this, see Clark and Soulsby (1999).

soared. In the face of this downturn, Czechs turned in swathes to the informal economy, worth an estimated 10-15% of GDP in 1999.<sup>248</sup> In turn, this lowered the tax take of the government, placing additional pressures on already stretched public services.

There are signs that some of the problems associated with privatisation are finally being addressed. Harmonisation with EU directives has seen changes to the bankruptcy laws and the commercial code as well as necessitating anti-corruption measures and new tax regimes. The workforce is becoming increasingly educated and professional. Yet for all this, more than 60% of Czechs are living on below-average incomes, receiving levels of public benefits which the state cannot afford to maintain. In 2002, 9.1% of GDP per annum was spent on state pensions to support an increasingly ageing population; health care expenditure per head is six times the level of 1989; and education spending has risen over 12% per pupil in real terms since 1989.<sup>249</sup>

### *Summary*

Numerous problems beset Czech economic relations: a burgeoning budget deficit and high levels of debt (reaching \$24 billion in 2002); bad loans in a shaky banking industry; and unsustainable levels of public spending. Yet, for all these difficulties, it is indisputable that the Czech transition from command economy to free market-capitalism has been far-reaching: 90% of agriculture and 80% of industry is now privatised; well over a million Czechs are registered as self-employed entrepreneurs out of a workforce of five million people; and 64% of employees work in the private sector. But as the winners get richer and

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<sup>248</sup> See Europa (2001).

<sup>249</sup> In total, 21.7% of Czech GDP is spent on social benefits compared to over a quarter in Hungary and nearly 30% in France. However, it is worth noting that less than 20% of GDP is spent on social benefits in Portugal. Figures from EIU Country Profile (2002).

the losers poorer, public confidence in the market is being badly shaken. Although many Czechs still support a market economy, most believe Sweden offers a better model than the United States – three quarters of Czechs think that the economy should be under greater state control. The lesson, as Karl Polanyi, himself an émigré from Central Europe pointed out over half a century ago, is that a market economy cannot succeed without a ‘market society’.<sup>250</sup> All economic acts are necessarily embedded in social structures. If market capitalism is to be truly popular and successful over the long-term in the Czech Republic, more attention must be paid to the social-ideological relations within which the economy operates.

### ***Social-ideological power relations***

Over here nothing is permitted and everything matters; in the West, everything is permitted and nothing matters.<sup>251</sup>

Under communism, social-ideological power relations were closed and impermeable. Travel was restricted, media input and output censored, appointment and promotion the preserve of party officials. There was no notion of a private or civil sphere – all relations were considered public and political in the name of an ideologically derived goal, Marxism-Leninism. As a result, opposition to communism had to take place beyond the confining tentacles of the state. As Timothy Garton Ash writes,

The best writers are published by underground papers, the best teachers work out of school, banned theatre companies just carry on performing, in monasteries, while sacked professors continue lecturing as ‘private guests’ at their own seminars; churches are also schools, concert halls and art galleries. An entire world of learning and culture exists quite independent of the state that claims to control it.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> See Polanyi (1985).

<sup>251</sup> Adage from the communist period quoted in Leff (1997: 117).

<sup>252</sup> Garton Ash (1989: 95).

Václav Havel captured the harsh reality of social-ideological relations under communism in his essay, 'Power to the Powerless', written in 1985. Havel used the example of a grocer who put up a sign saying 'workers of the world unite' in his shop as an example of the false legitimacy of communism. Although the grocer did not support or believe in communism, by putting up the sign he publicly demonstrated his loyalty to the system, securing a quiet life for his family in exchange for his compliance. According to Havel, this type of action was tantamount to collaboration, making individuals complicit in the production and reproduction of communism. By maintaining a façade of obedience, 'individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, are the system'.<sup>253</sup>

Following the revolution, a culture of freedom began to erode communist led conformity. By 1998, there were over 30,000 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in the Czech Republic. A host of social indicators have improved since the revolution. Infant mobility had been reduced from ten per 1,000 births in 1989 to just over seven per 1,000 births by 1998. Secondary school attendance rose from 79.6% in 1989 to 97.4% in 2000. However, not all changes have been for the better. As two of the leaders of the 'Thanks now leave' movement told me, one of the unintended consequences of the move to market-democracy has been the destruction of old, informal networks of support. Where once an extended family provided childcare or a neighbour supplied cheap goods, an individualistic culture has emerged in which social relations have been formalised and routinised.<sup>254</sup> As the transition has become more painful, so levels of social capital have declined. Trust in the new Czech Republic has fallen markedly for political and coercive institutions: in January 1991, 71% of Czechs said they trusted parliament but by 2001, this support had dropped to 29%;

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<sup>253</sup> See Havel (1985: 31).

<sup>254</sup> Point made in an interview with Monika Pajerová and Marian Kiss, Prague, 5 April 2001.



Czechs have the lowest trust in the region in the military and the judicial system. Yet the most recent European Values Survey found that Czechs enjoy the highest levels of trust in Europe in the media: 75% of Czechs say that they trust television and 79% believe what they hear on the radio.<sup>255</sup> Overall, therefore, the transformation of social-ideological relations since 1989 has been mixed. This is hardly surprising. The development of civil society, active citizenship and a culture of rights and responsibility takes both time and careful nurturing to sustain. It is likely to be a generation before the effects of the 1989 revolution are fully felt in the Czech Republic's social-ideological relations.

### *Lustrace*

The policy of lustrace, literally meaning illumination or purification, was the principal attempt by the Czech government to hold people accountable for the crimes of the communist period. The lustrace law in October 1991 set up a commission of fourteen MPs to remove and exclude former agents and collaborators of the StB, secretaries of the Communist Party from the level of district committee and above, and members of the People's Militia from high public office, government bureaucracy, the media, universities, the police and armed forces for a period of five years. However, the policy as devised was deeply flawed and many politicians, including President Havel, refused to vote for it. In the end, the law was passed in the Federal Assembly by a vote of 183-117, giving it just three more votes than the required three-fifths majority.

The problems with lustrace were manifold. First, the commission relied on StB documentation which many argued was incomplete, could have been doctored to appease bosses or implicate enemies and failed to differentiate between formal informers and those

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<sup>255</sup> European Values Survey: electronic version stored in the LSE electronic library.

who unwittingly helped the security services. Second, the law did not exempt anyone on the grounds of mitigating circumstances, even torture, threat or blackmail. Third, lustrace presupposed guilt, requiring the accused to prove their innocence rather than accusers to establish culpability. This allowed lustrace to become both a powerful political tool and a moral condemnation of people who were, at least initially, unable to defend themselves. Names of people under investigation were regularly leaked to the press, only later for them to be found innocent. In the most famous, or perhaps infamous case, Jan Kavan, a dissident who had spent much of the communist period in exile abroad claimed that he had no knowledge that he had been targeted by the StB, had been denied access to crucial files and prevented from presenting witnesses. Kavan won his appeal and later became Foreign Minister, but not before comparing lustrace to McCarthyism, declaring ‘we are at the top of the league at witch-hunts’.<sup>256</sup>

Lustrace has failed to have the impact many of its supporters hoped for. As the table below shows, only a small percentage of those investigated have been found guilty and the majority of those have been demoted rather than dismissed. Most of those investigated were classified by the StB as ‘candidates’, meaning that they were considered potential agent material rather than actual operatives. In addition, 80% of cases that have gone to appeal have been won by the accused. Nevertheless, in 1996 the law was renewed in the light of public concern about oppression during the communist period – 81% of Czechs say that more should be done to punish those responsible for the injustices of communism.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Quoted in Nagle and Mahr (1999: 85).

<sup>257</sup> See Miller, White and Heywood (1998).

### Applications and convictions for lustrace 1991-1998

	Total	Found guilty	Cleared	% found guilty
1991	17	1	16	6.25%
1992	189,000	12,917	176,083	7.34%
1993	16,700	455	16,245	2.8%
1994	40,408	608	39,800	1.53%
1995	12,188	349	11,839	2.95%
1996	8,593	262	8,331	3.14%
1997	7,967	208	7,759	2.65%
1998	11,209	218	10,991	1.95%
Total	286,082	15,018	271,064	5.25%

*Source: Williams and Deletant (2000)*

### Media

Under communism, media output was severely restricted. State newspapers and television stations poured out unchallenged party propaganda and opposition samizdat publications were ruthlessly suppressed in what Carol Leff calls ‘a velvet prison of conformity’.<sup>258</sup>

Immediately after the revolution, censorship was lifted and in March 1990, a new Press Law was instigated which allowed privately run newspapers to publish, although electronic media remained state owned and regulated. By mid 1990, there were already twenty-five major new publications in Czechoslovakia and in May 1990 the first independent state television station, Prima, was launched, followed by the privatisation of the former state station CET21 in 1993 and the introduction of the first private television station in post-communist Europe, TV-

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<sup>258</sup> Leff (1997: 117).

Nova, a year later. The collapse of communism also saw an explosion in private publishers with over 800 created in 1990 and a further 4,000 in 1991.

Initially, the problem for the authorities was not liberalising the media from decades of stunted development but controlling its excesses as a range of organisations, including groups intent on inciting racial hatred, manufactured their own publications. In 1992, the Radio and Television Broadcasting Board was set up under parliamentary control to oversee the operations of broadcast media and regulate licenses. But with weak libel laws and little effective regulation, print media struggled to establish a culture of independent investigative journalism. Even today, some years after the revolution, many stories are published unsubstantiated while others are the result of unsourced, untraceable leaks. The major political leaders and parties have regular slots in both the print and broadcast media to propagandise their views. Until the 2002 election, for example, Václav Klaus had a regular column in *Lidové Noviny* and a five minute slot on TV-Nova every week. In 1993, Petr Uhl, a high profile former member of Charta 77, resigned his post as Director of the TV and Radio Council claiming that undue political interference was being exerted on the ostensibly independent body. Protests at the end of 2000 over the appointment of Jiří Hodač, considered an ODS stooge, as Director of State Broadcasting indicate that both journalists and the public remain wary about the high level of political intrusion into the media. In February 2001, under mounting public pressure, Hodač and his management team were forced to resign.

Despite such incidents, the post-communist Czech Republic enjoys a radically different media than before the revolution. There are now over 5,000 periodicals and newspapers at local and national level, as well as more than sixty private radio stations. Indeed, in 2001, *The Economist* calculated that the Czech Republic has the world's fourth most free press, ahead

of both Germany (seventh) and the UK (ninth).<sup>259</sup> Consolidation of the market has taken place – although there are still 2,500 registered publishers in the Czech Republic, only 500 put out more than ten titles per year. Multinationals now dominate much of the print media: German companies are in control of ten out of twenty-three dailies and the Swiss company Ringier owns the most popular daily, the tabloid *Blesk* (Lightning). For all its faults, the contemporary Czech media offer a choice and diversity unrecognisable from the grey, state run propaganda of the communist era.

### *Identity politics*

The collapse of communism has provided fertile ground for the growth of racism in the Czech Republic. The removal of old certainties afforded by the restrictive shell of communism has allowed previously submerged and latent prejudices to bubble to the surface. Fuelled by worsening economic conditions during the mid-late 1990s, the strong electoral performance of the neo-fascist Republican Party and the rise of publications like *Politika*, a focal point for anti-semitic writing, racism has emerged as a pervasive problem in the post-communist era. During the 1990s, there were over 1,500 violent attacks reported by skinheads against Roma, resulting in thirty deaths. The Secretary of the Republican Party, Jan Vik, makes no apology for such actions, 'Roma murder, rape and rob decent people. It is high time to resolutely stop the raving of these black racists who are acting as parasites to the detriment of the whole society'.<sup>260</sup> In 1999, the leader of the Republican Party, Miroslav Sládek, offered a car to the Czech mayor most successful at expelling Roma for their town.

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<sup>259</sup> Leader in *The Economist*, 14 March 2001.

<sup>260</sup> Quoted in Fawn (2001).

Racism was not an unknown phenomenon under communism. During the communist period, the Czech government actively supported sterilization and abortion for Romany women, a policy which was not repealed until 1991. Roma unemployment was high or their work restricted to menial or manual labour. The forceful resettlement of Roma in small groups around the country left them isolated and open to resentment from local populations who perceived Roma as receiving preferential access to housing and social assistance. The popular perception of Roma even before 1989 was of lazy, dirty criminals who abused social services and posed a significant threat to majority values.

But since 1989, this often hidden chauvinism against Roma, a group which now makes up 2.4% of the Czech population, has become increasingly pronounced. On May Day 1990, 200 skinheads went looking for gypsies and Vietnamese to attack in Prague while April 1991 saw a string of assaults on minority groups both in Prague and Northern Bohemia. In 1992, a poll found that half of all Czechs either approved of skinhead attacks against Roma or didn't condemn them. Nearly three quarters of Czechs polled in 1996 thought having a relationship with Romany was a bad thing – only 5% thought it was good. Half of all Czechs favour expulsion and another third want Roma to be isolated or concentrated in particular areas; 87% say they *would* mind Roma living in their neighbourhoods and two thirds of Czechs think that minority rights should be restricted in the interests of the majority population.<sup>261</sup> It is not uncommon to find signs around the country proclaiming 'no dogs or gypsies'.

Such views are given further credence by official policy. The Citizenship Law of 1993 deemed 100,000 Roma to be stateless through retroactive residency requirements and demands that Czech citizens have clean criminal records. In the mid 1990s, 62% of the police

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<sup>261</sup> For more on these polls, see Shepherd (2000).

force said that they thought racially motivated crimes were provoked by Roma themselves. Those crimes that are investigated rarely end in prosecutions. In 1998, the mayor of Usti'Nad Labem announced plans to build a wall around a Roma housing complex on the grounds that it was necessary 'to separate the decent people from those who are not'.<sup>262</sup> During the first years of the new millennium, the Czech government repeatedly refused to interfere with, let alone buy, a pig farm built on the site of a concentration camp used to house Roma during World War Two.

As Erin Jenne writes, the result of this official and private held prejudice has been the construction of a Roma 'ethnoclass'. Roma are heavily discriminated against in the workplace and over-represented in a range of social categories, from unemployment rates to residency of mental asylums. Recent government figures found that Roma unemployment was anywhere between 70%-90% and that nearly three quarters of Roma children were being educated in schools for the mentally handicapped. The infant mortality rate for Roma is twice that of the national average while Roma life expectancy as a whole is ten years below that for white Czechs. It was therefore little surprise that in 1997, many Roma seized the chance to emigrate en masse to Canada following the lifting of visa restrictions. Over 1,000 were admitted in six months before requirements were reintroduced; 800 more were allowed to enter the UK in 1998 on the basis of racial discrimination.

In recent years, under significant international pressure from the EU, international NGOs and a range of new lobbying groups such as the European Roma Rights Centre, changes have begun to take place. In 1997, the government created a 'Roma Commission' to look at policy adversely affecting Roma in a range of government departments. The next year, the

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<sup>262</sup> Quoted in Nagle and Mahr (1999: 159).

government ordered training for the police in racially motivated crimes and ordered them to give such crimes 'preferential attention'. Parliamentary committees on minority rights were set up to act as a spur for national and local initiatives. A Romany co-ordinator was set up in Prague City Hall and the Deputy Prime Minister Pavel Rychetský launched a Romany Human Rights Programme during 2000. In 2002, widescale legislation was passed banning all forms of discrimination against Roma. The same year, a Russian educated Indian, Kumar Vishwanathan, established a 'coexistence village' in Ostrava to house both white and Roma families, with some support from the local council and central government. In January 2003, the first Roma, David Dudas, was ordained to the orthodox church.

However, on the whole, the experience of Roma in the post-communist Czech Republic is testimony to the fact that not all changes which have taken place since 1989 can be considered positive. The Czech Republic, a fairly heterogeneous country before the second world war, has become, principally as a result of official policy, a homogenous, mono-cultural nation in which 94% of the population are classified as white Czech. Given such a context, minority groups, particularly Roma, have been used as scapegoats for wider socio-economic problems. In 1989, President Havel said that the treatment of Roma would be a 'litmus test of civil society' in the new Czech Republic.<sup>263</sup> If that is so, then Czechs have failed it.

### *Gender*

Under communism, feminism was considered at best a secondary concern compared to the general struggle of workers against oppression, and at worst an irrelevance, an insignificant issue which would wither away once true equality was established. Equal rights, equal pay, a

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<sup>263</sup> Quoted in Fawn (2001).



right to work and education were enshrined in the constitution, as was six months maternity leave at full-pay. According to Ladislav Holý, 88% of women in communist Czechoslovakia worked full-time, amounting to 45% of the workforce, and 13% of women were the sole breadwinners in their household. Yet the apparently strong position of women in terms of their statutory rights and involvement in the labour force masked deep seated inequalities. Women, more often than not, faced a double burden of work and home duties, their average pay was 30% less than men's and many women worked in low paid, unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Opposition groups in Czechoslovakia committed the same mistake as the communist authorities by seeing gender issues as subordinate to the general fight for citizenship and human rights, assuming that once democracy was established women's issues would be automatically resolved. Of 573 documents published by Charta 77, none dealt with the position of women under communism.<sup>264</sup>

#### **Women in parliament 1981-2002**

	<b>Number of women</b>	<b>Number of men</b>	<b>Percentage of women</b>
<b>1981 National Assembly</b>	58	142	28.0%
<b>1987 National Assembly</b>	60	140	30.0%
<b>1990 Parliament</b>	22	178	11.0%
<b>1992 Chamber of Deputies</b>	19	181	9.5%
<b>1996 Chamber of Deputies</b>	30	170	15.0%
<b>1998 Chamber of Deputies</b>	40	160	20.0%
<b>2002 Chamber of Deputies</b>	35	165	17.5%

*Source: United Nations*

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<sup>264</sup> For more on this, see Šiklová (1997a).

Women's formal equality was established under the 1991 Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms which included chapters on violence against women, discrimination in job advertisements and so on. Yet many aspects of gender relations have been slow to change since 1989. In general, women's issues have been considered secondary to higher needs of economic and political reconstruction. For example, as the table above indicates, women are more under-represented in the post-communist Czech parliament than before the revolution.

There is also widespread acknowledgement of women's secondary position in the labour market. Around half of women are involved in the full-time formal labour market compared to three quarters of men. Many 'feminised' areas of employment such as health care, administration and retail are notorious for their poor quality of pay and conditions. This 'gender segregation' is matched by a substantial wage gap: men with university degrees receive on average 140 Koruna per month compared to 90 Koruna per month for women with the equivalent degree. In general, women receive around three quarters of male pay.

Such discrimination is also bolstered by a wealth of survey evidence: a 1995 survey found that 58% of managers believed that men were more suited to professional work than women, only 40% thought the sexes were equal and just 2% considered women to be more capable than men. Further research carried out in 1996 found 40% of women saying that they had experienced discrimination in the workplace.<sup>265</sup> Many Czech women continue to prioritise family over work – 94% say that their family is more important than work and only 40% say that they would continue to work if their husband earned enough to support them. As a result, the double burden of work and home life has continued unabated: 93% of Czechs say that

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<sup>265</sup> For more on this, see Šiklová (1996).

women do all the laundry in their household, 65% of women do all the shopping and 60% cook all the food.<sup>266</sup>

The first tranche of Czech feminist writing appeared in 1992. Even though debate has developed gradually since then, concepts like feminism and equal opportunities are still barely used and frequently misunderstood. Few women's organisations choose to label themselves feminist, among them the Czech Union of Women. When debate does occur, it is more often than not based around biological differences between men and women or perceived innate psychological and social distinctions. Advertisers tend to use crude stereotypical imagery of subservient women and powerful men. Tabloids featuring lurid pictures of women have become one of the boom markets in post-communist Czech Republic and pornography is the staple diet of the immensely popular TV-Nova.<sup>267</sup> The Helsinki Committee claims that incidents of rape and domestic violence are increasing in the Czech Republic while a Gender Studies Prague report found that of those women who are victim of domestic rape by their husband, partner or lover, 90% keep it secret.<sup>268</sup>

There are some signs that things are changing: 84% of NGOs in the Czech Republic are headed by women; the average age of women getting married rose from twenty to twenty six between 1989 and 2000; and a threefold increase in the use of the contraceptive pill has restricted abortion as the primary means of birth control. Whereas in 1991, half of all Czechs agreed that men had more right to a job than women, this figure had dropped to 18% by 1999. The most recent European Values Survey found a dramatic increase in the number of women

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<sup>266</sup> Figures taken from Kozera (1997).

<sup>267</sup> TV-Nova has sustained a market share of over 70% since its inception in 1994.

<sup>268</sup> See Kozera (1997).

who felt that ‘they had a great deal of control over their lives’.<sup>269</sup> As the table below shows, Czech’s attitudes to women’s roles are beginning to change, particularly among younger cohorts. Education about women’s rights and the possibilities open to them will be the most important step in starting to make the structural changes in gender relations which have taken place in so many other areas of life in the post-communist Czech Republic.

**‘A job is all right but what women really want is a home and children’.**

Age	Agree 1991	Agree 1999
18-25	24%	6%
26-33	22%	10%
34-41	25%	6%
42-49	33%	13%

*Source: European Values Survey*

### *Summary*

According to Richard Sakwa, there are a number of generic features which make up the transformation from communist to post-communist societies: first is the end of the Communist Party’s monopoly of political, economic and social power relations; second is the emergence of a pluralistic society, often poorly institutionalised; third is the uneven introduction of a market economy; fourth a process of liberalisation; fifth changes to class and employment structures as a result of the shift to a service economy; sixth a radical reorientation of foreign and security policy; seventh, a rise in identity politics such as race and nationalism; and finally, a contest between the emergence of a new elite and the

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<sup>269</sup> According to the survey, during the 1990s, women between the ages of 18 and 49 experienced, on average, a 14% rise on this index.

persistence of the old guard.<sup>270</sup> As the above survey shows, the Czech Republic has seen all of these changes since 1989. The transformation of political-coercive, economic and social-ideological power relations may have been uneven, but it has been systemic. As such, there has clearly been revolutionary change in the Czech Republic over the past fourteen years.

## Conclusion

Never was any event so inevitable, yet so completely unforeseen.<sup>271</sup>

Tocqueville's pithy summary of the French Revolution could be equally applied to the collapse of communism in 1989. For those living in Czechoslovakia during the late 1980s as much as for the experts who studied communism, revolution seemed anything but inevitable. As in past revolutions, collective action fused with structural context to produce a revolutionary situation, in turn leading to a series of revolutionary events and outcomes. The result has been a society with a radically different set of political, economic and social arrangements, a triple shift which amounts to a systemic transformation of power relations. Both Hobsbawm's 'minimum condition' of success (the takeover and establishment of state power) and his 'maximum condition' (the establishment of a new social and legal framework, and the institutionalisation of a novel political and economic order) have been achieved. Ideological monism has given way to an open society, the homogeneity of political life under communism has been replaced by an often bewildering pluralisation of political relations, the tired, stagnant formula of central planning has made way for the uncertainty of market relations. As such, the transformation of the Czech Republic in and since 1989 truly warrants the term revolution.

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<sup>270</sup> For more on this, see Sakwa (1999).

<sup>271</sup> Tocqueville on the French Revolution. Quoted in Bunce (1999: 56).

However, it would be foolish to claim that everything has changed. In reality, some power relations are so entrenched that they cannot be altered, other measures are blocked and there are some things revolutionaries do not wish or attempt to change. No revolution can ever start from a mythical year zero and reinvent social structures from scratch. Rather, the story of revolutionary change is bound up with compromise between social action and structural constraints, idealism and the needs of realpolitik. The Czech Republic is no exception to these long-established rules of thumb. This is highlighted well by Tina Rosenberg, 'history does not march, it lurches. Worse, it lurches in circles, hiccupping and banging into walls, unable to control or even be aware of its compass'.<sup>272</sup> The lurches of history since 1989 have helped to create a democratic state far removed from its communist predecessor. In this, the most recent chapter in a long history of struggle, memory has triumphed over forgetting.

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<sup>272</sup> Rosenberg (1995: 397).

## **Chapter 4**

### **The longest walk:**

#### **South Africa**

We, the people of South Africa declare for all our country and the world to know that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.<sup>273</sup>

These words from the Freedom Charter, first adopted by the African National Congress (ANC) in 1955, stood for decades as the moral compass for opposition to apartheid South Africa. This opposition, in many cases forced by domestic oppression to flee abroad, became by the 1980s a cause celebre for civil rights activists around the world. Indeed, few events in modern history resonate with as much force as the release of Nelson Mandela from jail in February 1990. For Mandela, it was another step on a personal odyssey which took him from freedom fighter to prisoner and finally the presidency. For many other black South Africans, Mandela's release represented a turning point in a longer struggle against oppression, one which began with the Union of South Africa in 1910, became institutionalised under the first apartheid government in 1948 and which grew in intensity under subsequent regimes until the release of Mandela and the onset of negotiations in 1990.<sup>274</sup>

The struggle against racial domination in South Africa took many forms: an initial movement for political rights developed into a widescale demand for civil rights after 1948, diversifying into a still broader struggle which incorporated mass action, political pressure and armed

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<sup>273</sup> Opening lines to the Freedom Charter, constituted after a public meeting in Kliptown, Johannesburg in 1955.

<sup>274</sup> Of course, it is important to realize that the struggle against racial domination in South Africa itself has a longer lineage in terms of South Africa's colonial experience. I am grateful to Colin Bundy for this point.

resistance after the massacre at Sharpeville and the banning of opposition parties in 1960. By the end of the 1980's, South Africa faced a systemic crisis – the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe allied to an increase in international pressure on the apartheid regime, domestic social unrest, high levels of political violence and economic stagnation brought the country to its knees. Out of positions of mutual weakness, combatants on both sides turned to negotiation. Four years of stop-start discussions between state leaders and former revolutionaries led eventually, although by no means inevitably, to South Africa's first truly democratic elections held in April 1994. Since 1994, a new order has begun to emerge in South Africa; great upheavals in the country's social, political and economic power relations are underway. This chapter tells the story of South Africa's long walk to freedom and the systemic transformation of power relations which have accompanied and continue to mark its revolutionary transition from apartheid to market democracy.

The chapter, like the previous one, is organised into two main parts. The first section outlines the critical causes, events and outcomes of South Africa's negotiated revolution, tracing how structural forces intertwined with contingent events in the genesis of the transformation. Once again, I use the approach outlined in the second chapter – *Studying Revolutions* – to compare and contrast the South African case with past models of revolution, demonstrating the novel process and the unusual role played by violence, ideology, the state and the international in South Africa's transformation. In this way, South Africa emerges as a practical example of my concept of negotiated revolution. The second part of the chapter focuses more closely on the changes which have taken place in South Africa since 1994, comparing key apartheid institutions and organisations with their contemporary manifestations. I will show that South Africa has seen and continues to play host to a systemic transformation of its principal power relations. As such, its transformation truly warrants the term revolution.



## Negotiated revolution

Mikhail Gorbachev, George Bush Sr. and Nelson Mandela are all talking to God. Bush asks how long it will take for his country to solve its problems. 'Not in your administration', God says, 'but in the next one'. Gorbachev asks the same question. 'Not in your lifetime, but in the lifetime of your children', says God. But when Mandela asks how long it will take for South Africa, God shakes his head. 'Not in my lifetime' he says.<sup>275</sup>

For much of the latter half of the twentieth century, few conflicts in the world appeared more intractable than the one between the apartheid state and the liberation movement in South Africa. It is therefore no surprise that the agreement delivered in 1994 by state and opposition negotiators is often described as a 'miracle'. Indeed, the relatively peaceful handover of power and the aversion of bloody civil war in South Africa are a remarkable testament to the politics of the possible. But to label them a miracle is to fail to do justice to the myriad of features, both in terms of conscious, deliberative collective action and also more intangible, facilitative structural conditions which combined to make the transition possible. This section of the chapter explores this rare conjunction of factors in three parts: the first looks at the combination of long-term and short-term causes which engendered the revolutionary situation of the late 1980s; the second charts in detail the revolutionary events of 1990-94; the final part briefly elucidates the outcomes of the negotiated settlement.

### *Towards a revolutionary situation*

The politics of racial domination in South Africa have a long history: in 1911, the Mines and Works Act imposed a colour bar in the workplace; the Native Land Act of 1913 restricted

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<sup>275</sup> Joke told in Hochschild (1991: 267).

black ownership of land to designated reserves; in 1923, the Natives Urban Areas Act introduced residential segregation in cities; and the Native Administration Act of 1927 brought in separate political structures for blacks and whites. But it was not until the election of the National Party government led by D.F. Malan in 1948 that racial policies took on a cohesive form. The new government's doctrine of apartheid – separateness – was a response to the radicalisation of black politics in the 1930s and 1940s, the partial desegregation of workplaces and cities which resulted from South Africa's involvement in the second world war and a new tide of Afrikaner nationalism originating, at least in part, from celebrations marking the centenary of the Great Trek undertaken by the Boers in 1836.

In the years immediately following his electoral success, Malan along with the Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd, forced through several key elements of apartheid legislation: the Population Registration Act divided South Africans into four categories – White, Coloured, Asiatic (later Indian) and Native (later Bantu, then black); the Group Areas Act decreed that all residential areas should be made separate with non-whites forced, if necessary, to relocate into townships; public amenities such as restaurants, cinemas and hotels were compelled to keep races apart; mixed marriages and then all sexual contact between races was proscribed;<sup>276</sup> the Suppression of Communism Act effectively silenced opposition to the government.

This legislation was not met without protest. First set up in 1912 as the South African Native National Congress, by 1948 the ANC was already the predominant opposition movement in South Africa. However it was the launch of the 1949 Programme of Action and the 1952 Defiance Campaign which qualitatively raised the profile, status and resource capacity of the

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<sup>276</sup> Between 1950 and 1980 over 11,500 people were convicted under the Immorality Act alone.

ANC, demonstrating the movement's capacity to generate and guide protest on a large scale.<sup>277</sup> The ANC used tried and tested methods of mass action – boycotts, stayaways, strikes and so on – and urged supporters to disobey curfew restrictions and refuse to carry passes. The ANC's Freedom Charter, first published in 1955, called for a South Africa with equal rights for all, becoming a symbol of the movement's commitment to non-racialism.

However, such unprecedented levels of protest only served to harden state oppression. Most of the opposition leadership was put on trial for treason in a case which ran on for five years. Although it proved ultimately unsuccessful in terms of prosecution, the Treason Trial did effectively silence influential opposition voices for the duration of the case. In 1959, the government began the first steps to establishing independent homelands for blacks and, the next year, declared that membership of political parties should be restricted to one race.<sup>278</sup> In 1960, police in Sharpeville killed sixty-nine unarmed protestors, many shot in the back as they tried to flee. A further wave of repressive legislation handed the police powers of detention without charge and banned the ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP).

In response, opposition groups set up armed wings: Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) for the ANC, Poqo (later the Azanian People's Liberation Army – APLA) representing the PAC. Various other dissident groups like the Yu Chin Chan Club in the Cape, Intaba, a rural guerrilla group which operated in the Eastern Cape and the African Resistance Movement, a white group,

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<sup>277</sup> ANC membership grew from 4,000 to 16,000 in the Transvaal and up to 60,000 in the Cape as a result of the Defiance Campaign alone. See Sampson (1999).

<sup>278</sup> The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act in 1959 was the most explicit attempt by the apartheid state to follow through the concept of separate development. The government envisaged 'independent' black homelands for each 'ethnic tribe' in South Africa. The first of these to begin the path to full independence was Transkei, which became self-governing in 1963. By the end of 1972, eight homelands were self governing entities. Transkei became an 'independent republic' in 1976, followed by Bophuthatswana in 1977, Venda in 1979 and Ciskei in 1981.

also took up arms. A number of ANC leaders fled abroad to Lusaka; PAC representatives likewise to Tanzania. In South Africa, a new generation of militants became embroiled in more radical movements such as Black Consciousness. The external wing of the ANC assumed broad control of the liberation movement: diplomats lobbied key states and the UN; the Soviet Union began to supply military training, arms and funds; African states from Algeria to Mozambique provided both ideological and practical support. Camps to train revolutionaries were set up in the so-called 'Frontline States' around South Africa, drawing national defence forces deep into conflicts in Mozambique and Angola.

During the 1970s, South Africa's economy, buoyant during the 1960s, began to stutter.<sup>279</sup> Faced with a world downturn as a result of the 1973 oil crisis, increasing black militancy at home and a wave of liberation struggles on its borders, the South African state again cracked down on dissent. In 1976, police opened fire on children in Soweto who were protesting against legislation which demanded that half pupil's instruction be conducted in Afrikaans. Protest spread around the country and between 500 and 1,000 people were killed in fighting between state and opposition forces. The government was further weakened by a corruption scandal in the Department of Information which led to the resignation of several leading figures, including the Prime Minister, John Vorster. After a fiercely contested election to replace Vorster, the successful candidate, Defence Minister P.W. Botha, announced that white South Africans must 'adapt or die'.

Botha promised both to reform apartheid and also crack down on dissent: a hearts and minds campaign backed up with an iron fist. Botha's 'total strategy' included reform of many 'petty', symbolic aspects of apartheid: public amenities in large cities were no longer

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<sup>279</sup> The South African economy grew by an average rate of 5% per year during the 1950s and 1960s.

officially segregated;<sup>280</sup> the Mixed Marriages Act was repealed; some private schools became multi-racial;<sup>281</sup> pass laws were abolished;<sup>282</sup> some moves were made to reduce the policy of job reservation for whites and formally recognise black trade unions.<sup>283</sup> Botha also attempted to restructure the political system, introducing a new tricameral constitution which set up distinct parliamentary bodies for whites, Indians and Coloureds. Not only were black South Africans excluded from such proposals – ostensibly the Black Local Authorities Act already gave power ‘over their own affairs’ to township community councils – but the new constitution actively sustained white domination. The Indian House of Delegates and Coloured House of Representatives provided only thirteen and twenty-five members respectively to an electoral college which was the mainstay of parliamentary authority – the white House of Assembly supplied fifty.<sup>284</sup> At the same time, real political power was vested in the office of the Presidency, the Cabinet and the President’s Council of which the President himself appointed nearly half the members.

The other side to these, albeit partial, attempts at reform was a significant rise in the role of the security apparatus to combat what Botha described as the ‘total onslaught’ waged by communist forces both inside and outside the country. Between 1976 and 1981, there were 112 attacks and explosions by opposition groups, including bombs at three key oil-from-coal

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<sup>280</sup> By 1985, forty-seven restaurants, eighty hotels, forty-three theatres and 160 cinemas had applied for ‘international status’ which allowed them to serve all races. This, however, was a tiny fraction of the number of places which remained segregated. See Omond (1987).

<sup>281</sup> Generally however, segregation and inequality remained the norm in South African education. 99.4% of students in the five Afrikaner universities were white as were 85% in the four English speaking universities. See Omond (1987). At the beginning of the 1980s, the government spent ten times the amount on white education as it did on black schooling. For more on this, see Thompson (1985).

<sup>282</sup> Pass laws were already becoming less applied. For example, while nearly 400,000 people were arrested under pass law legislation in 1976, this number had dropped to just over 150,000 by 1984. See Omond (1987).

<sup>283</sup> Despite such steps, black workers continued to be vastly worse off than their white counterparts. For example, in 1985, the average black worker earned half the amount white colleagues received for the same job. In 1984, the average black salary per month was R330 compared to R1,330 for whites. See Omond (1987).

<sup>284</sup> Neither black run municipal councils nor the new parliamentary assemblies for Indians and Coloureds carried any legitimacy with the wider public. Only 13% of Indians and 18% of Coloureds voted in the 1983 elections; 12% of blacks turned out to vote in municipal council elections held the same year.

refineries. In response, a new National Management System for state security was set up. At its pinnacle was a State Security Council responsible for formulating policy and advising the cabinet on all matters relating to state security. The system was a complex interlocking web which reached out over the whole country through eleven regional Joint Management Centres (JMCs), sixty sub-JMCs and 350 mini-JMCs. As the domestic crisis worsened during the 1980s, so moderates were sidelined and hawks like General Magnus Malan, advanced. Under Malan, defence spending increased at an average of 15-20% per year.<sup>285</sup>

But Botha's policies did not meet with unequivocal support even within his own party. The National Party had long been divided into *verligtes* (moderates) and *verkramptes* (hardliners).<sup>286</sup> In 1982, seventeen hardline MPs led by Andries Treurnicht, angry with Botha's reforms, left to form the Conservative Party. Meanwhile, leading moderates in politics, business and academia began to call for more radical reform to apartheid. In the late 1980s, contact began to be made between these moderates and members of the opposition, weakening what Anthony Sampson described as one of the most formidable barriers to change – the lack of contact and therefore knowledge adversaries possessed about each other. As Sampson wrote in 1987,

South Africa is a country of the deaf, of leaders who have never met each other: the censored television and newspapers give South Africans less news of key events in their own country that could be gained by a casual television watcher in the West; many foreign correspondents knew far more about black politics than the vast majority of South Africa's MPs.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> For more on this, see Alden (1995).

<sup>286</sup> For example, Albert Hertzog and three other National Party MPs had left to form the hardline *Herstigte Nasionale Party* (HNP) in the late 1960s.

<sup>287</sup> See Sampson (1987: 16).

Pieter de Lange, head of the influential Afrikaner broederbond, announced in 1986 that ‘the greatest risk is not to take any risks’.<sup>288</sup> Later that year, a group of leading businessmen under the stewardship of the chairman of Anglo-American Gavin Relly, flew to Lusaka for talks with senior ANC officials. Willie Esterhuyse, a prominent Afrikaner academic, led a delegation to England to meet key ANC figures like Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, establishing a group which was to meet twelve times in total. Other influential figures in the apartheid regime like Neil Barnard, the head of National Intelligence, also met Mbeki covertly while abroad. Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, former leader of the Progressive Federal Party, arranged a meeting in Dakar between Afrikaner intellectuals and ANC officials. Scenario forecasters at large South African companies like Nedcor, Old Mutual and Sanlam invited ANC officials to high profile seminars and briefings which actively called for negotiation. Behind the backs of hawks like Botha and Malan, what Allister Sparks describes as a ‘round table of informal talks’ was taking place. In return, barriers were being broken down and mutual suspicions assuaged.

The 1980s also saw a significant upsurge in opposition activity. In 1983, a new group, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed, initially as a multi-racial forum to protest against the tricameral constitution. Although banned in 1987, the UDF quickly re-emerged as the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) incorporating around 700 civic groups, students, youth and women’s organisations, religious bodies, trade unions and professional associations. At the same time, rising unemployment and continuing economic stagnation resulted in a wave of protests led by trade unions, spearheaded after 1985 by the Congress of

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<sup>288</sup> The broederbond was an association founded in 1918 whose members were ‘devoted to service to the Afrikaner nation’. All Prime-Ministers and the vast majority of Cabinet members from 1948 were broederbond members as were heads of Afrikaner universities, churches, state corporations, media, industry and so on. As such, the organisation was an extremely influential body. For more on this see Thompson (1985).

South African Trade Unions (COSATU). In 1984, violence in the Vaal Triangle near Johannesburg erupted into mass demonstrations. The government declared a state of emergency as Oliver Tambo, president of the ANC, called for South Africa to be rendered 'ungovernable'. Over the next four years, approximately 5,000 people were killed in a tidal wave of political violence; 45,000 were detained under emergency regulations; 700 attacks were made on police and military targets; teargas, explosions, fire-bombs and necklacing became everyday components of life in South Africa.<sup>289</sup>

But the crisis faced by the apartheid regime went beyond social unrest and political splinter. By the end of the 1980s, the South African economy was mired in deep structural weaknesses: a relatively low consumer base resulting from the exclusion of non-whites from the marketplace; a lack of skilled and semi-skilled workers because of decades of job reservation for whites and a failure to invest in non-white education and training; a protectionist market economy featuring high levels of state intervention; and a reliance on international investment and support threatened by mounting sanctions. In the early 1980s, growth significantly trailed behind population growth, living standards fell, unemployment rose and the gold prices upon which the South African economy relied dropped heavily. At the same time, the costs of managing the apartheid bureaucracy soared. The outlay from maintaining multiple departments of health, welfare, education and finance placed huge burdens on dwindling state coffers.

In 1985, a much trailed speech by Botha seemed to dispel all hopes of reform as he refused to 'take the road to abdication and suicide', railing against the 'barbaric agitators' who sought to

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<sup>289</sup> Necklacing, the lighting of a car tyre filled with petrol and then placed around someone's neck, was used by ANC activists to 'discipline' suspected informants. For more on this, see Manganyi and Du Toit (1990).



overturn apartheid. As a result, Chase Manhattan Bank declined to roll over short-term loans.<sup>290</sup> Other banks followed suit and \$400 million was withdrawn from the country in August 1985 alone. The Rand collapsed, losing 60% of its value, and currency dealing was temporarily suspended. Capital flight worsened as big businesses like GM, IBM and Barclays, along with leading pension and investment funds, began to pull out of South Africa. In September, the government announced that repayments on its \$24 billion foreign debt would be frozen. Business confidence in South Africa was shattered.

As pressure swelled on the apartheid government at home, so international condemnation of apartheid grew commensurately. In 1973, a UN convention on apartheid first declared the system 'a crime against humanity'; in 1977 an international arms embargo was imposed on South Africa; in 1985 member states were urged to suspend new investments in South Africa and impose wide ranging sanctions. But for years, traditional allies of white South Africa like Britain, the United States and West Germany successfully resisted calls for mandatory sanctions. However, in 1986, under mounting pressure from domestic constituencies and international agencies alike, all the leading investors in South Africa imposed sanctions ranging from bans on the import of steel and iron, coal, textiles and agricultural products to the withholding of vital exports like oil and sensitive computer equipment.<sup>291</sup> Such sanctions had a profound impact on the South African economy – Adam Hochschild estimates that the oil embargo alone cost South Africa refineries around \$6 billion per year.<sup>292</sup> By 1990, over

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<sup>290</sup> 85% of government loans in South African were short-term i.e. due to be repaid within a year. Any run on these loans therefore posed a significant threat to an already beleaguered economy.

<sup>291</sup> The degree of sanctions applied varied considerably. For example, while the United States and most Commonwealth countries banned all of these items, some states, for example Japan and the European Community had far reduced, and therefore, less effective, sanction regimes.

<sup>292</sup> See Hochschild (1991). P.W. Botha himself claimed that it cost the South African state \$2 billion per year between 1973 and 1985 to circumvent UN oil sanctions.

200 of the 300 US companies operating in South Africa had withdrawn funds. Investment from the US dropped from \$10 billion to \$700 million.<sup>293</sup>

Sanctions were not the only form of pressure applied by international agents on the apartheid regime. During 1986 and 1987, Oliver Tambo, leader of the ANC in exile, met British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe and US Secretary of State George Schultz, the first time these important allies of white South Africa had offered any public legitimacy to the ANC. In May 1988, president elect George Bush met Desmond Tutu; incoming Secretary of State Herman Cohen described apartheid as ‘an outrageous human rights catastrophe’.<sup>294</sup> Sporting and consumer boycotts prompted by strong anti-apartheid movements in Europe and the United States gathered pace. At the same time, South Africa’s regional hegemony was being undermined by its continued military belligerence in neighbouring states. In 1986, the South African Defence Forces (SADF) were defeated by a coalition of Cuban, ANC and MPLA forces at Cuito Cuanavale, prompting the withdrawal of SADF troops from Angola. Later that year, frontline states were bombed during a high profile visit to South Africa by a Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group. The bombing, authorised by Botha and Malan, was a public relations disaster which led directly to the imposition of mandatory sanctions by the Commonwealth, including long-time partner Great Britain. In 1990, after a violent struggle, South Africa finally granted Namibia independence. The country’s subsequent peaceful transition to democracy and the victory of former guerrillas – SWAPO – in elections served as an example of what could be achieved through dialogue.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Of course, the large-scale withdrawal of funds from the US was partly due to political concerns in the US itself, not least the pressure put on the government by the black caucus in Congress who spearheaded the campaign for an investment boycott. See Arnold (2000).

<sup>294</sup> Quoted in Sampson (1999: 382).

<sup>295</sup> The longer-term demonstration effect provided by other states in the region such as Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe which had successfully ousted former colonial powers also added to pressure on the apartheid regime while simultaneously providing impetus to opposition groups.

By the end of the 1980s, South Africa faced a burgeoning political, economic and social crisis with growing international demands for root and branch reform of apartheid. This conjunctural crisis was given its final fillip by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.<sup>296</sup> The 1989 revolutions removed the last vestiges of legitimacy for an apartheid state which had long claimed to be the only protection in South Africa against communist rule. The end of the Cold War significantly altered the strategic interests of major players in the area, not least the United States. Backing or at least 'constructive engagement' with white run South Africa could no longer be justified through anti-communist rubric or a *realpolitik* assessment of the regional balance of power. In turn, 1989 marked the end of Soviet bankrolling for the ANC and Moscow training for MK operatives.<sup>297</sup> The ANC was already struggling to maintain international support for its armed struggle as Frontline States, with the exception of Zimbabwe, refused to allow the ANC to use their countries as transit points for the movement of weapons and guerrillas. The armed struggle had become a symbol of resistance rather than a real threat to the existence of the apartheid state. For all parties, negotiations promised a way out of what Thabo Mbeki called 'armed equilibrium'.<sup>298</sup> Neither the government nor the ANC could hope for an outright victory and leading international agents were no longer willing to pay for or prop up their clients. As Anthony Sampson writes, 'the Afrikaners put their confidence in money and guns; the blacks in ideas and world opinion. Each tragically underestimated the other in this ultimate non-meeting of minds'.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> As F.W. de Klerk writes, 'a window suddenly opened which created an opportunity for a much more adventurous approach than had previously been conceivable'. See De Klerk (1998: 161).

<sup>297</sup> Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley estimate that 90% of the ANC's funds came from abroad. See Adam and Moodley (1993b).

<sup>298</sup> Quoted in Landsberg (2001: 197).

<sup>299</sup> Sampson (1987: 18).

The emergence of a revolutionary situation in South Africa featured many elements familiar to students of past revolutions. First, South Africa was a semi-peripheral country reliant on its main allies, particularly Britain and the United States, for legitimacy and practical support. The removal of these guarantees in the late 1980s and the opening up of the international system through the collapse of communism provided a facilitative context for the burgeoning economic, political and social crisis in the country. Second, there was a widespread perception in South Africa among the elite and members of the public alike that things were getting intractably worse and that only radical measures could avoid outright disaster. Third, the legitimacy of the apartheid regime was fatally undermined – economically the country was in recession, politically there were deep splits, socially the country was in turmoil. The strength of the ANC only served to exacerbate the weaknesses of the apartheid regime. The movement offered a viable alternative through its ideology of non-racialism and redistribution, held significant political capital both at home and abroad, was fronted by leaders of stature and could boast considerable resources. Following the rise in opposition during the 1980s, originating with the UDM but later spreading right around the country, South Africa had become, as intended, ungovernable. Fourth, Botha failed to understand, as Tocqueville noted two centuries before, that the most dangerous time for a bad government is when it undertakes reform. Authoritarian systems are all encompassing or they are nothing; attempts to reform apartheid only quickened its destruction. By 1989, there was a systemic crisis in South Africa more marked than at any other point in the country's modern history.

However, the conjunctural crisis in South Africa did encompass novel elements, features which are key to its conceptualisation as a negotiated revolution. First, international agencies actively welcomed the destruction of apartheid. During the Cold War, South Africa was a pawn in a global correlation of forces, albeit one which faced increasing moral indignation

and international pressure during the 1980s. Nevertheless, protected by its strategic alliance with the United States and other partners, and with the ANC funded by the Soviet Union, the apartheid regime appeared insured against violent overthrow. But after the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, the removal of the 'skunk' of apartheid became a universal goal of the international system.

Second, unlike past examples of revolution, there was no absolute state crisis in South Africa. Rather, South Africa featured a relative but systemic crisis exacerbated by collective action, a range of contingent events and overarching changes to the international environment: Botha's 1985 speech; the growth of networks connecting previously disparate elite and opposition groups; the bombing of frontline states; the policy of 'ungovernability' and the end of the Cold War among other decisions, events and structural shifts combined over both the long-term and short-term to create a revolutionary situation in South Africa. Crucially, during the 1980s, key members of the South African elite came to realise that apartheid had reached a dead end. For white South Africans, only negotiations offered the hope of preserving their domestic privileges and restoring their dignity abroad.

Third, opposition forces lacked the capacity to win a protracted war against the state. Although they could boast a 15,000 strong, committed army, reasonable organisational capacity and a high level of public support, the ANC could not hope to ultimately defeat an apartheid state which rested on a powerful coercive apparatus equipped with up-to-date weaponry, professional forces and large numbers of collaborators. The international legitimacy of the liberation movement rested on diplomacy and negotiation, not the armed

struggle.<sup>300</sup> During the 1980s, the ANC leadership began to realise that their key objectives could be realised through talks. For their part, government negotiators believed that they were most likely to secure their hold on power from a position of relative strength. Both sides, therefore, chose to talk rather than fight on indefinitely. What neither fully appreciated is that it is not possible to control the dynamic interplay between collective action and the various contexts within which combatants operate during periods of revolutionary upheaval, something which will be made clear by the detailed survey of the events of 1990-1994 which follows.

### *Revolutionary events*

The elections did not set us free but we did achieve the freedom to be free. There are new dilemmas in our new democracy and real problems which our institutions and media face. There are new responsibilities and new challenges. Nevertheless, few would now debate and argue about our response to these challenges. This is one of our country's real achievements.<sup>301</sup>

Lenin's famous maxim, much repeated in this thesis, holds strongly for South Africa – by 1989 neither the ruling elite nor the ruled were willing or able to go on in the same way. Within the apartheid regime, differences of opinion had become deep schisms, most notably surfacing following P.W. Botha's stroke in January 1989. Although Botha resigned as leader of the National Party, he was determined to stay on as President. But under growing domestic and international pressure to release political prisoners and negotiate with opposition leaders, moderates turned on Botha in a cabinet meeting in July, forcing him to resign. After a close fought election, the apparently verkrampte F.W. de Klerk defeated the verligte Finance

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<sup>300</sup> The Soviet Union, China and other communist states, most notably East Germany, provided the ANC with most of the resources for the armed struggle. The ANC depended on other sources of revenue – the UN and friendly states, mostly Scandinavian – for their non-military budget.

<sup>301</sup> Nelson Mandela, writing the forward to Asmal, Asmal and Roberts (1997: x).

Minister Barend du Plessis to become leader of the party and therefore President.<sup>302</sup> But De Klerk proved to be far removed from his image as an intransigent apologist for apartheid – he understood that apartheid as a system was failing. After a series of minor concessions, De Klerk secured the agreement of his cabinet for more far reaching steps at a two day bosberaad (bush conference) in December. Two months later, on 2 February 1990, he announced that ‘the time for negotiation had come’. In one fell swoop, De Klerk unbanned the ANC, the PAC and the SACP, eased emergency regulations, abolished media restrictions and announced the release of a number of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela.

For their part, in the late 1980s, the ANC could point to unparalleled unity, influence and resources, despite the loss of Soviet largesse. Since the 1960s, the ANC had been a party largely run by exiles; inside South Africa, with the majority of its leaders in jail and with public support difficult to quantify, the strength of the party was unclear. However, during the 1980s, ANC activists effectively co-opted the MDM, using the movement as a tool for reaffirming the predominance of the party within South Africa.<sup>303</sup> In addition, careful international diplomacy and lobbying ensured that the ANC was considered, at least in most foreign capitals, as the principal organ of South African opposition.

In 1988, the ANC took a decisive step in cementing this status by accepting the need for a mixed economy. Previously, the nationalisation clause in the Freedom Charter and the prominent role of the SACP in the movement had allowed opponents to claim that the ANC was just a front organisation for communists which would institute a centralised, command

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<sup>302</sup> De Klerk’s right wing credentials seemed impeccable. His father, Jan de Klerk, had been a cabinet minister under Hendrik Verwoerd and president of the Senate. His uncle was the former president J.G. Strydom, ‘the lion of the North’, a man dedicated to baaskop – white mastery.

<sup>303</sup> Many leading members of the MDM including Albertina Sisulu and Alan Boesak were also members of the ANC, an overlapping relationship mirrored by activists at every level of the organisation.

economy in South Africa if given the chance to take power. These arguments convinced key constituencies, both at home and abroad, that the economic policies of any future ANC government could be disastrous.<sup>304</sup> By accepting the need for a mixed economy, a message consistently reiterated by ANC negotiators in meetings with business leaders, the ANC assured influential members of the elite, both at home and further afield, that they could be trusted. In early 1990, the Harare Declaration outlined the ANC's terms for the cessation of the armed struggle and the onset of negotiations: commitment to a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa; universal suffrage; a codified bill of rights; the release of political prisoners; a lifting of the ban on the ANC and other opposition groups; the removal of troops from the townships; an end to the state of emergency; and the repeal of proscriptive legislation. The Declaration was formally adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and accepted by a range of international bodies including the United Nations. Both at home and abroad, pressure for negotiation was mounting.

The government's key demand was for a new constitution to be written by a convention representing all of South Africa's minority racial 'groups'. The government rejected what De Klerk called 'simple majority rule', arguing that the new constitution should be drawn up along consociational principles, safeguarding group rights and allowing for a minority veto on key issues. The government believed that, through an alliance with the Zulu Chief, Mangosuthu Buthelezi and other groups hostile to the ANC, they could isolate the ANC and preserve their hold on key institutional levers of power. The ANC, particularly its strong caucus of SACP members, was considered to have been severely weakened by the removal of

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<sup>304</sup> For example, the role of communists in the ANC and their role in formulating economic policy was long used by Margaret Thatcher as the principal reason for her failure to support the ANC's cause. In 1986, she famously declared that anyone who thought that the ANC were likely to form the next government of South Africa was 'living in cloud cuckoo land'.



Soviet support. In this assessment, government advisers were at least partially correct. In interviews held during September 2001, senior members of the SACP admitted that the conjunction of the collapse of communism and the onset of negotiations in South Africa was a ‘traumatic moment’, both personally and for the movement as a whole.<sup>305</sup> Many government advisers felt that ideological and generational cleavages within the ANC could be exploited.

The government therefore moved quickly to control the agenda. In 1990, the legislative pillars of apartheid were repealed, the homelands programme was abandoned and the National Party opened to people of all races. Later that year, De Klerk made a visit to Soweto, where he was warmly received. Such steps also generated international rewards – on a foreign tour, De Klerk was widely feted as the man who had single-handedly abolished apartheid. In December 1990, the European Community withdrew its ban on new investments in South Africa; economic sanctions were lifted four months later. The UN removed all sanctions in July 1991 in the light of what it described as ‘irreversible political change’ in South Africa. Initially at least, it appeared like the government was controlling the pace, flow and direction of change.

But the government was by no means united and white South Africans themselves seemed unsure about the necessity of large-scale reform. At the 1989 elections, the National Party’s share of the vote fell below 50% with the hardline Conservative Party picking up 31% of the vote and thirty-nine seats in parliament.<sup>306</sup> Its leader, Andries Treurnicht, seemed to speak for

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<sup>305</sup> Interviews with Essop Pahad and Raymond Suttner, September 2001, Pretoria and Johannesburg.

<sup>306</sup> The Conservative Party was not the only other party to do well at the 1989 elections – the liberal Democratic Party polled 20% of the vote and secured thirty-three seats in parliament, its best performance ever.

many when he said that ‘any attempt at multi-racialism will lead to never-ending conflict’.<sup>307</sup>

Demands for a white state – volkstaat – increased. In May 1990, a mass demonstration of over half a million people took place at the Voortrekker monument in Pretoria. Far-right groups like the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) led by Eugene Terre’Blanche proudly displayed swastikas and showed off their weapons; banners and slogans railed against the ‘swart gevaar’ – black peril – and promised a race war. Such claims were backed up by a spate of bombings and murders against black targets.

Additional opposition to negotiations came from Buthelezi’s Inkatha movement, restructured as a political party after 1990 as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Buthelezi was a former member of the ANC Youth Wing who was denounced as a ‘snake’ and a ‘puppet’ by the movement during the 1970s and 1980s because of his compliance with the apartheid regime and opposition to sanctions. Buthelezi’s stronghold of Natal had seen a vast escalation in tension between Inkatha and ANC supporters in the 1980s with approximately 3,000 people killed in political violence in the province during the decade. But after 1990, conflict both intensified and broadened, most notably extending to hostels in the Reef area of the East and West Rand. Five hundred people died in just eleven days during August 1990 and twenty-six people were shot dead on a commuter train travelling to Johannesburg. Violence threatened to derail the onset of talks.

But for all this, the ANC remained convinced that the stage was set for a transfer of power. Informal negotiations had been underway for some time and Mandela himself had been

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<sup>307</sup> Quoted in Meredith (1994: 26).

‘talking about talks’ with representatives of the government since 1985.<sup>308</sup> On 11 February 1990, Mandela was released from jail and taken to Cape Town City Hall where he spoke to a crowd of 100,000 people. After first calling De Klerk ‘a man of integrity’, Mandela repeated the words he had first spoken at the Rivonia Trials twenty six years before.

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to the struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.<sup>309</sup>

In May 1990, the ANC signed an agreement with the government – the Groote Schuur Minutes – which secured the release of political prisoners, the return of exiles and key amendments to security legislation. In August, the movement unilaterally suspended the armed struggle. But it was not proving easy to transform the ANC from liberation movement to political party. By necessity an umbrella movement, the ANC now had to respond to a rapidly changing environment by restructuring its internal systems, choosing new leaders and developing a party line on the nature of negotiations and the future shape of the country. In an interview in August 2001, Jenny Cargill, a former MK activist, pointed out that many activists left the movement in 1990, leaving the politicians to conduct negotiations.<sup>310</sup> Worried that multi-party talks would dilute its key objectives, the ANC held a conference in June 1991, reasserting the movement’s main goals of a majoritarian system and a rapid transfer of power. Mandela was elected President and Cyril Ramaphosa, leader of the

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<sup>308</sup> Initially, Mandela met with Hendrik Coetsee, the Minister of Prisons, Justice and Police. But later, he was to meet several key figures in the apartheid regime including P.W. Botha and F.W. de Klerk. As Allister Sparks writes, ‘for four years before the rest of the world knew anything of it, the future of South Africa was being explored in secret conversations in hospitals, prisons and a cabinet member’s house between government officials and their principal political prisoner’. See Sparks (1995: 36).

<sup>309</sup> Nelson Mandela speaking at the Rivonia Trial, April 20, 1964. Quoted in Johns and Davis (1991: 133)

<sup>310</sup> Cargill claims there was little resentment about this, arguing that the new environment necessitated different styles of working.

National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), became secretary-general. In September 1991, a formal National Peace Accord was signed, paving the way for multi-party talks.

The first Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA 1) was held at the World Trade Centre in Johannesburg in December 1991. Despite the absence of the PAC, the Conservative Party and the AWB, nineteen parties took part in the convention. The IFP did attend, although Buthelezi himself declined to come after his request for an extra delegation for the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini, was turned down. Proceedings got underway with a spectacular confrontation between De Klerk and Mandela after the president publicly accused the ANC of reneging on a deal to disband MK. What few delegates and watching members of the public knew was that the ANC and the government had signed an agreement – the D.F. Malan accord – which stated that MK would not be disbanded until the transition to democracy was complete as long as it provided details of its arms caches to the government and agreed to joint control of the armed forces once an interim constitution had been set up. Mandela, furious at De Klerk's tactics, was openly critical of the President for the first time,

Even the head of an illegitimate, discredited, minority regime has certain moral standards to uphold. If a man can come to a conference of this nature and play the type of politics he has played, very few people would want to deal with such a man.<sup>311</sup>

Despite the turbulent start to proceedings, a Declaration of Intent was agreed by all parties – that South Africa should be undivided and undergo peaceful constitutional change to multi-party democracy featuring universal suffrage, the separation of powers and a codified bill of rights. Five working groups were set up and a second conference (CODESA 2) convened in May 1992 to gauge progress.

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<sup>311</sup> Quoted in Sparks (1995: 132).

The first working group, on freeing the political process and providing a level playing field for elections, made little progress. But the second group, on the future political shape of South Africa, fared even worse, becoming deadlocked over a number of key issues. The government wanted key decisions in parliament to require 75% of MPs support, to institutionalise power sharing through mechanisms like a rotating presidency and set up an upper chamber of parliament representing provinces and minority groups with the power to veto legislation. The ANC, by contrast, sought a quick move to free elections with MPs responsible for drafting a new constitution and forming a government.<sup>312</sup> Although the third and fourth working groups on the nature and role of transitional arrangements and the future of homeland states were both largely successful, their work meant little next to the ruptures which emerged out of the first two groups. The final working group, convened to approve time frames for the transition, hardly met at all because so little had been agreed. In the end, CODESA collapsed ignominiously with all parties blaming each other for its failure.

The failure of talks had extreme consequences. In May, the ANC conference, dominated by radicals, called for a 'Leipzig option' of rolling mass action in order to prompt the collapse of the government. Senior officials agreed out of a need to both repair links with dissatisfied grassroots members and demonstrate their strength to the government. Ronnie Kasrils, a former Chief of Intelligence of MK, was charged with reconvening the campaign. On 16 June, the anniversary of the Soweto uprising, rallies, demonstrations and stayaways took place around the country. But on 17 June, a group of Zulu hostel dwellers brutally massacred

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<sup>312</sup> Interestingly, both the ANC and the government believed that a quick transition to free elections and democracy would favour the ANC. Using extensive polling data, the National Party calculated that, over time, they had a good chance of picking up black voters from the ANC. But in the end, it turned out to be the National Party that suffered more from delay, particularly after their complicity in political violence became clear. ANC support rose from 53% in October 1992 to 70% in October 1993. During the same period, public support for the National Party dropped from 28% to 16%. For more on this, see Johnson and Schlemmer (eds.) (1996).

forty-five people in Boipatong. Mandela formally suspended all talks, accusing the government of collusion in the attack and outlining fourteen demands which had to be met before talks could resume. On 3 August, a general strike saw four million workers stay away from work. In early September, a march led by Kasrils to Bisho, Ciskei to put pressure on its dictator, Joshua Gqozo, led to twenty-eight ANC supporters being shot dead by homeland defence forces. Mandela passionately evoked memories of Nazism,

Just as the Nazis in Germany killed people not because they were a threat to the security of the state but because they were Jews, so the National Party is killing our people simply because they are black. They are killing our people in an effort to stop the ANC getting into power.<sup>313</sup>

In 1992, it became clear that Mandela's concerns about the involvement of South African security forces – the 'third force' – in the escalating levels of violence were justified. During the year, evidence emerged that a secret war was being waged against the ANC by units of the security services including Vlakpaas, a notorious cell run by Eugene de Kock responsible for the murder and torture of hundreds of suspected ANC sympathisers. De Klerk instigated a commission under General Pierre Steyn, chief of the Defence Force, to investigate. Steyn found that the SADF had provided funds, arms and training covertly to the IFP and had actively initiated violence between Inkatha and the ANC. A further investigation headed by Judge Goldstone uncovered an edifice of corruption and collusion between the government and Inkatha. Senior politicians, including Magnus Malan, were forced to resign but De Klerk denied any personal involvement. Mandela refused to believe the president's protestations, publicly denouncing De Klerk as 'a totally different man than we thought'.<sup>314</sup> A 'war of memoranda' poisoned the atmosphere between the two men.

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<sup>313</sup> Quoted in Clark (ed.) (1993: 176).

<sup>314</sup> Quoted in Meredith (1994: 37).

But not all hopes for reaching a peaceful settlement had been exhausted. First, the government appeared to have secured white South African's approval for negotiations. After two stunning bi-election defeats to the Conservative Party in November 1991 and February 1992, the government held a referendum on 17 March 1992 asking whether they should proceed with negotiations. An overwhelming majority of the white electorate – 68% – voted yes, shoring up the position both of De Klerk and reformers within his party. Second, lines of communication between the ANC and the National Party remained open. Within the National Party, moderates led by Roelf Meyer were arguing for a break in ties with the IFP and more active, direct negotiations with the ANC.<sup>315</sup> For three months, Meyer met with Cyril Ramaphosa, forging a personal relationship and common set of understandings which would form the basis for future talks. Third, international agencies played their part in keeping discussion alive. The UN, led by former US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, the EC and the OAU sent observers to South Africa to monitor and investigate political violence. The United States, through Under Secretary of State Herman Cohen, applied pressure on the government to abandon its call for a minority veto which would be 'overly complex' and 'frustrate effective governance'.<sup>316</sup> Mandela and De Klerk put the iciness of their personal relationship aside to accept jointly the Nobel Peace Prize.

In September 1992, the ANC made important concessions to the government, reducing its fourteen demands to three: the release of political prisoners, government policing of hostels and the prohibition of dangerous weapons, including 'cultural weapons' like Zulu spears. The

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<sup>315</sup> Meyer's eventual victory on this point led to a minor split in the National Party with the resignation of a Deputy Minister and the defection of an MP to the IFP. But as 1992 and 1993 wore on, it became clear that the National Party was losing ground to both the IFP and the Freedom Front. This, to no small end, helped produce some important Nationalist concessions during the second round of multi-party talks in March 1993.

<sup>316</sup> For more on this, see Friedman (1993).

ANC also agreed to reign in extremists. Joe Slovo, writing in the *African Communist*, outlined a 'strategic perspective' which argued that the ANC would have to make far reaching concessions if it was to succeed in its key aims – the end of monopoly power, a new constitutional settlement, free elections and so on – including 'sunset clauses' which institutionalised power sharing for a fixed period, honoured the contracts of civil servants, provided some level of amnesty for security officers and allowed for a certain degree of provincial autonomy.<sup>317</sup> For their part, the government set up an independent review of police malpractice and carried out a mini-purge of Military Intelligence and the army – thirteen generals were retired and reform of the security forces hurried through. On 26 September, both sides signed a Record of Understanding, committing themselves to future talks.

Twenty-six groups reconvened in March 1993 at the World Trade Centre, this time including the Conservative Party, the PAC and the AWB. But although talks ostensibly embraced all parties, key decisions were increasingly taken bilaterally between the ANC and the National Party, together making up a 'sufficient consensus' for agreement. In May 1993, twenty-three parties signed up to a Declaration of Intent; in November, terms for the interim constitution were concluded, with both the government and the ANC securing important concessions. The election was to be held using a list system of Proportional Representation. The four hundred elected MPs would then be responsible for drawing up a new constitution, as the ANC demanded, but the process was to be jointly carried out with a senate made up of ten members per province, a concession to the government. Any political party with eighty seats (20%) had the right to a deputy president and each party with twenty MPs (5%) would have a minister, forming a Government of National Unity (GNU) which would rule for the first term

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<sup>317</sup> Slovo's essay prompted much acrimony both within the opposition in general and the SACP in particular. For more on this, see pp 206-209.



of parliament, five years. Although this was less than the ten years the government had hoped for, it was hardly the rupture with the past the ANC had anticipated. Cabinet decisions were to be made in a 'consensus seeking spirit', headed by a President elected by the whole of the National Assembly.<sup>318</sup>

But opposition to negotiations and the settlement remained strong. In April 1993, Chris Hani, MK Commander-in-Chief and SACP politburo member, was murdered. Nelson Mandela went on national television and appealed for calm, arguing that although Hani had been killed by a white man, a white Afrikaner woman had been the key witness in helping police to track down his killers.<sup>319</sup> Although there were large-scale protests in the week leading up to Hani's funeral, there was little violence and Mandela emerged as the primary symbol of political authority across the nation. But Mandela was powerless to control wider patterns of violence around the country. Between July 1990 and June 1993, one hundred people died on average a month in Kwa-Zulu Natal and nearly 5,000 were killed in the Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vereeniging (PWV) area of Transvaal. Special Defence Units (SDU's) set up by the ANC to defend their supporters only added to the violence. In late 1993, the APLA carried out a series of attacks on civilian targets in Cape Town, including bombing a popular bar and opening fire on parishioners in St James' Church.

But the greatest threat to the settlement came from the right. The Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF), an amalgamation of twenty-one Afrikaner groups led by Constand Viljoen, a former chief of the South African Defence Force, steadfastly opposed negotiations. Viljoen became a

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<sup>318</sup> As well as a Constitutional Court and a Human Rights Commission, the interim constitution also set up several other organisations: a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to monitor election preparations, an Independent Election Commission (IEC) to administer the actual election itself, an Independent Media Commission (IMC) to ensure fair treatment of all political parties and a National Peace-Keeping Force (NPKF) to contain any violence which broke out.

<sup>319</sup> It later turned out that Hani had been the victim of a conspiracy involving Conservative Party MPs.

figurehead for the Concerned South African Group (COSAG), a troupe which also included the IFP, the Conservative Party and the leaders of the homelands of Bophuthatswana and Ciskei – Lucas Mangope and Joshua Gqozo. In June 1993, AVF supporters invaded the World Trade Centre, assaulting black delegates and spraying graffiti over the walls. Although they were eventually persuaded by Viljoen to leave, it was a timely reminder of the power of COSAG to disrupt proceedings forcibly. In March 1994, Mangope asked Viljoen to help him quell civil unrest gripping Mmabatho, the capital of Bophuthatswana. But the AWB got there before Viljoen, chaotically careering round in pickup trucks and shooting randomly in the streets. Mangope turned on his former allies and ordered homeland defence forces to attack the AWB. The subsequent scenes of violence, including the live execution of AWB members, were relayed around the country. Pik Botha and Mac Maharaj were dispatched by the transitional government to Mmabatho, where they convinced Mangope to step down.

Everywhere, it seemed, the final barriers to elections were being lifted. Not only was Mangope deposed but the Bophuthatswana incident caused Viljoen to split permanently from the AWB. On March 22, Joshua Gqozo resigned in Ciskei. In a game of high brinkmanship, Mandela and Buthelezi secured a deal for the IFP's inclusion in the elections just one week ahead of polling day. When General Viljoen registered a new party, the Freedom Front, in dramatic fashion just twenty minutes before the final deadline, so the inclusion of all major combatants in South Africa's first free elections was secured.

Given the often fraught nature of negotiations, the extreme context negotiators operated within, the extent of divergences between former revolutionaries and their adversaries, and the disruptive role played by a number of actors ranging from security forces to former homeland leaders, it is understandable that some consider the negotiated settlement in South

Africa to be a miracle. But as the above analysis shows, in reality, the process of negotiation was a complex dynamic of collective action taking place within rapidly changing contexts. Faced with extreme barriers and constraints, negotiators secured a momentous agreement, but not without moments of real doubt: the breakdown of CODESA 1, the massacre at Bisho and the crisis in Bophuthatswana among many others. Just as the settlement was therefore not miraculous, neither was it inevitable. Rather, it was a remarkable testament to the politics of the possible, a process with profound consequences for the future shape of South Africa.

### ***Revolutionary outcomes***

Apartheid was not ended by military defeat but through sustained resistance and peaceful negotiation. Apartheid's ideology and practical legacy therefore remains to be undone, both here and abroad.<sup>320</sup>

Negotiated transformations are not violent fights to the finish but relatively peaceful processes in which deals are struck between revolutionaries and their adversaries. As such, there is no mythical date when the revolutionary army sweeps triumphantly through the capital, no attempts by members of the new revolutionary elite to export their struggle abroad and no international coalition to restore the old regime. Negotiated revolutions do not feature the absolute state crisis of past revolutions and do not therefore result in the growth of stronger, more oppressive states in their place. In fact, negotiated revolutions engender states fundamentally constrained by the settlement reached with the old guard. Negotiated revolutions consciously disavow utopian world visions which did so much to unite past revolutionaries but also to justify their outrages. Instead, they embrace time honoured, universal themes of freedom and liberation. The outcomes of negotiated revolutions are

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<sup>320</sup> Asmal, Asmal and Roberts (1996: 2).

therefore very different from past examples of revolutionary change, less dramatic perhaps but perhaps also less damaging to the long-term fabric of the society in which they take place.

As the above quote from Kader Asmal indicates, these ‘less dramatic’ elements of negotiated revolutions are both their strength and weakness: strength because negotiation offers a route out of impasse, an end to the tyranny of an authoritarian system and containment of the excesses of oppressors and freedom fighters alike; weakness because deals involve concessions from both sides of the barricades. For many participants and observers alike, any dilution of revolutionary aspirations and goals is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution itself. For these critics, the outcome of the negotiated revolution in South Africa is not only a failure to meet Hobsbawm’s maximum condition of revolutionary transformation, but also his minimum criteria. As such, the South African transition cannot be considered revolutionary on two grounds: first, because South Africa remains a country in which apartheid vested interests continue to hold power; second, because to be considered a revolution, the seizure of power and subsequent transformation must be total and uncompromised. If there is no ultimate victory, then how can, as Asmal puts it, the ‘ideology and practical legacy’ of apartheid ‘be undone’?

Nowhere is this criticism more sharply felt than over the debate surrounding the very heart of South Africa’s negotiated revolution – the process of negotiation itself. During negotiations, Joe Slovo and other senior officials argued that negotiations were a war of position in which the ANC would incrementally take over positions of power in preparation for a subsequent revolutionary transformation. Although the immediate outcome would be ‘less than perfect’, quantitative compromises would secure the qualitative bottom line and make it impossible for the regime to block subsequent transformation. But many members of the ANC, particularly

within the SACP, were resistant to any kind of compromise. Pallo Jordan and Blade Nzimande argued that there could be no common ground between the ANC and the government; negotiations were a process of war by other means which could only end in the absolute victory of one side over the other. Chris Hani maintained that the government was carrying on a 'low intensity war', using violence as a means to de-legitimise the opposition, destabilise the country and impose a negotiated settlement on a war weary population.

In some ways, Hani, Jordan and Nzimande were right. The negotiated revolution in South Africa did constrain the immediacy of transformation: revolutionaries and former enemies governed together, if not always in a consensual manner; some entrenched interests used their authority to restrict policy changes; big business succeeded in convincing the government of the importance of a neo-liberal macro-economic policy. But in four main ways, these arguments are profoundly mistaken. First, ideologues, romantics and fatalists alike have all tended to overplay the degree to which past revolutions engendered a sudden rupture with past social arrangements. Revolutions look both forwards and backwards – they never, despite claims to the contrary, institute a wholly new system while the ashes of the old remain warm.

Second, as I show in the next part of this chapter, South Africa *has* seen a demonstrable transformation in its principal power relations since 1994. Certain elements of this transformation have been quick, others more slow; a great deal have come about as the result of intentional action, other changes are unintended or contrary to the goals of revolutionaries themselves; many aspects are desirable, others less so. What cannot be denied is that contemporary South Africa features a radically different set of institutional and organisational arrangements than those of the apartheid era.

Third, the alternative to negotiation was not the outright victory of the liberation movement. As I outlined in the first part of this chapter, revolutionaries lacked the capacity to win a military victory over the old regime, just as the old regime could no longer carry on ruling in the same way. It was mutual dependence and mutual weakness which brought combatants to the negotiating table. At best, hopes that a violent seizure of power by the ANC would have succeeded can be described, as they are by Jeremy Cronin, as ‘over-optimistic’.<sup>321</sup> At worst, as Raymond Suttner points out, they are, ‘an opiate appropriate to the weak who concentrate their hopes on an otherworldly solution’.<sup>322</sup>

Fourth, attempting to continue the struggle to any kind of ultimate victory would have had far worse consequences than the outcomes of negotiation. South Africa featured years of both overt and structural violence in the lead up to revolution. As Pierre du Toit writes, under apartheid, South Africa was the most repressive society in the world: three and a half million people were forcibly uprooted from their homes; an insidious and pervasive ideology of racial superiority denied the rights of nine-tenths of the population to basic needs, schooling and work; key groups in South African society ranging from the church to the medical profession were complicit in the oppression of their fellow citizens by turning a blind eye or actively sanctioning police brutality and abuse; derogation, discrimination and humiliation were used as everyday instruments of psychological torture to erode the dignity, self-belief and security of non-white South Africans.<sup>323</sup> The result was a society of violent crime, rape, drug abuse, alcoholism and family breakdown.

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<sup>321</sup> Jeremy Cronin, 1993, *African Communist*, no. 131, p. 24.

<sup>322</sup> Raymond Suttner, 1993, *African Communist*, no. 131, p. 37.

<sup>323</sup> For more on this, see Du Toit (2001).

After many years of civil disobedience and non-violent protest, the ANC was drawn into an armed struggle by the violence of the apartheid state. The armed struggle may therefore be considered a just war, but certain methods it employed including necklacing, rape and torture must be seen as illegitimate. Just cause does not validate unjust conduct. The type of horrors carried out by Vlakpaas, Inkatha assassination squads *and* the Nelson Mandela Football Club could only have worsened if the armed struggle had continued. Policies like ungovernability and ‘liberation before education’ played their part in creating a culture in which violence was seen as a legitimate tool of expression. By advocating compromise over continuing civil conflict, South Africa’s negotiated revolution helped to reign in the excesses of both oppressors and the oppressed alike.

It therefore seems disingenuous to criticise the negotiated revolution in South Africa for apparently failing to deliver what many revolutionaries and South Africans hoped for. No revolution can live up to the ideals of its supporters – they are all, in their way, ‘less than perfect’. But as the next section of the chapter makes abundantly clear, there has been a comprehensive shift in South Africa’s principal power relations since 1994. Although this has not been carried through with the speed many South Africans wanted, it has engendered a society qualitatively removed from its apartheid predecessor. Some deep rooted elements of apartheid – violence, fear and cultural separateness for example – remain obstinately intransigent, but many more have changed fundamentally and in some cases, remarkably quickly. South Africa’s negotiated revolution has succeeded in ‘undoing’ the principal components of the apartheid system – as such, satisfying at the very least, Hobsbawm’s minimum criteria of revolutionary change.

## **Revolutionary transformation**

In this part of the chapter, I look in detail at how South Africa's principal power relations have been transformed since 1994. Using the *International Sociology* outlined in Chapter One, I compare institutions and organisations of the apartheid era with their contemporary manifestations. I find that politically, the country has witnessed a fundamental shift from the restrictive system of apartheid to an open, competitive democracy. A protectionist economy dependent on state intervention has been liberalised, broadened and developed. An active civil society has moved from the peripheries of society to the centre and a process of nation building has helped to mould radically divergent social-ideological arrangements. Although somewhat uneven in its effects, it is clear that South Africa's negotiated revolution has engendered a systemic shift in the country's power relations.

### ***Political-coercive power relations***

One did not have to be a political activist to become a victim of apartheid; it was sufficient to be black, alive and seeking the basic necessities of life.<sup>324</sup>

Under apartheid, South African political-coercive relations were absolutist.<sup>325</sup> Membership of a political party, eligibility to vote and participation in mainstream politics were denied to non-whites. From 1948, the National Party ruled without tangible opposition.<sup>326</sup> The system was overseen by a powerful security apparatus which ensured that any opposition was forcibly contained. But beyond the reaches of the state, a thriving anti-apartheid movement embracing civics, professional associations, banned political parties and of course, armed activists, meant that South Africa as a whole was heavily politicised.

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<sup>324</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, vol. 1 (1998: 136).

<sup>325</sup> I am referring to absolutist in the sense used earlier in the thesis i.e. as the attempt to generate some kind of totalising system of governance by a minority group within a particular society.

<sup>326</sup> Indeed the only parliamentary opposition to apartheid was for many years a lone MP, Helen Suzman.



Since 1994, this curious dichotomy of a dynamic set of political relations existing beyond the sterile, restricted space permitted by the state has been shattered by sweeping changes to political-coercive arrangements. In place of first past the post, whites only elections held between broadly similar parties are free elections using a system of proportional representation representing the whole gamut of political opinion in South Africa. A new constitution, perhaps the most liberal in the world, enshrines equality and human rights in a country which saw little of either under apartheid. Independent institutions – a constitutional court, an independent media, reformed security services – uphold democracy. The pariah foreign policy of the apartheid era has been replaced by an inclusive, participatory strategy placing South Africa at the centre of attempts to generate an African Renaissance. From denying basic rights to 85% of its population, South Africa has become a consolidated democracy. Nowhere are the revolutionary changes which have taken place in South Africa more evident than in the transformation of its political-coercive relations.

### *Political parties and elections*

The ANC began to prepare for elections in late 1992, setting up an election commission under the leadership of Popo Molefo and Khetso Gordon. The party had an election budget of R150 million, allowing it to carry out extensive electoral research including surveys, focus groups and interactive ‘People’s Forums’.<sup>327</sup> In January 1994, the ANC began to issue specific policy proposals and in February, published its manifesto, ‘A Better Life for All’. The centrepiece of the campaign was the Redistribution and Development Programme (RDP) which outlined the ANC’s commitment to basic needs. The party promised to supply clean

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<sup>327</sup> The ANC even had sufficient funds to hire some of Bill Clinton’s advisers such as Stanley Greenberg and Frank Geer.

water and electricity to two-and-a-half million people, build one million homes with running water and flushable toilets, carry out land reform, introduce universal pensions, make education compulsory and provide free health care for infants. As Tom Lodge writes, the ANC's proposals were 'simple, vivid and plausible', providing the right balance between technocratic know how and populist sentiment.<sup>328</sup>

Other parties ran less successful campaigns. The National Party sought to take credit for the transition from apartheid to democracy; its main poster read: 'South Africa is changing. We have done it'. Strategists tried to contrast the 'New National Party' with the 'Old ANC', arguing that the ANC was a party of protest riddled with communists who would wreck the economy. The RDP was described as a 'menu without prices'. But the National Party, like many other apartheid era organisations, found it difficult to move the agenda beyond popular perceptions of the ANC as a liberation movement which had successfully rid the country of apartheid and which now stood to redistribute wealth and develop the nation's resources. The Democratic Party ran a disastrous campaign which attempted to attack the record of both the National Party and the ANC. The IFP failed to make inroads anywhere outside Kwa-Zulu Natal. The Freedom Front, weakened by the split between Viljoen and the far right, also fared badly, receiving only a quarter of the Afrikaner vote.<sup>329</sup>

As it turned out, the ANC trounced its rivals, receiving just short of the two-thirds majority it needed to write the new constitution alone and taking control of six of the nine provincial governments. The election as a whole was deemed a success with twenty million people (86% of the electorate) casting their ballots, many waiting hours, occasionally even days, to

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<sup>328</sup> See Tom Lodge in Reynolds (ed.) (1994).

<sup>329</sup> For more on the various campaigns and the election itself, see Reynolds (ed.) (1994).

vote. Although there were undoubtedly difficulties – a shortage of ballot papers in certain areas, some irregularities in Kwa-Zulu Natal, isolated violent incidents including a bomb at Johannesburg International Airport – the election, closely scrutinised by domestic and international observers, was declared fair and free.<sup>330</sup> As Johnson and Shlemmer write, ‘there were two miracles about the South African election. One was that it took place at all; the other was that it was relatively fair’.<sup>331</sup>

### 1994 national elections in South Africa

Party	Votes	National %	Seats
<b>African National Congress</b>	12,237,655	62.7%	252
<b>National Party</b>	3,983,690	20.4%	82
<b>Inkatha Freedom Party</b>	2,058,294	10.5%	43
<b>Freedom Front</b>	424,555	2.2%	9
<b>Democratic Party</b>	338,426	1.7%	7
<b>Pan-Africanist Congress</b>	243,478	1.3%	5
<b>African Christian People’s Party</b>	88,108	0.5%	2

To some extent, the results of the election demonstrated the racial and regional polarisation of South Africa: 94% of the ANC vote was black; two-thirds of whites voted for the National Party; and 90% of the IFP vote was restricted to Kwa-Zulu Natal. But the make up of the parliamentary assembly vividly embraced South Africa’s diversity. Half the new MPs were black and forty were Indian; fifty-three were members of the SACP. The new cabinet also

<sup>330</sup> According to Johnson and Schlemmer (eds.) (1996), 19% of polling stations had no electricity, 14% didn’t have a telephone and 17% lacked voting materials. Tom Lodge (1999) contends that many problems were down to the incompetence and corruption of Election Commission staff: 45% of the Commission’s computers were stolen, 100 vehicles went missing and five officials were investigated for the concealment of ballot papers.

<sup>331</sup> See Johnson and Schlemmer (eds.) (1996: 349).

ranged widely across political belief and skin colour: Mandela became president with F.W. de Klerk and Thabo Mbeki the two Deputy Presidents; four SACP members including Joe Slovo, former MK chief-of-staff, became ministers; Chief Buthelezi was sworn in as Minister for Home Affairs; Roelf Meyer took charge of Constitutional Development. Winnie Mandela, although outside the cabinet, became Deputy Minister in the Department for Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.<sup>332</sup> The election of a new government was as much a beginning as an end, as F.W. de Klerk pointed out at the inauguration of the new President.

Mr Mandela has walked a long road and now stands at the top of the hill. A man of destiny knows that beyond this hill lies another and another. The journey is never complete. As he contemplates the next hill, I hold out my hand to Mr Mandela in friendship and co-operation.<sup>333</sup>

Between 1994 and 1996, parliament took on the role of a constitutional assembly. The resulting document published in May 1996 is perhaps the most liberal of its kind anywhere in the world. The document recognised eleven official languages ranging from English to Setswana. It also included a bill of rights stating the right of South Africans to social rights like housing, health care, food, water and education. Independent bodies including a Human Rights Commission and a Commission for Gender Equality were established to safeguard these rights. The constitution also created a number of new democratic institutions: a second house of parliament, the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), made up of ten representatives from each province; an Electoral Commission; a Public Prosecutor and an Auditor-General to investigate maladministration and check government spending.

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<sup>332</sup> In total, the cabinet consisted of twenty eight members: eighteen from the ANC, six from the National Party, three representing the IFP and one independent, the financier Derek Keys, replaced later in 1994 by another independent banker, Chris Liebenberg.

<sup>333</sup> Quoted in Meredith (1994: 188).

But the constitution writing process was not without difficulties. Disagreements between the National Party and the ANC over federalism, power sharing and the rights of minorities created friction as did cleavages between *verligtes* and *verkramptes* within the National Party. The already tempestuous relationship between Mandela and De Klerk was again put under stress, famously captured in a public slanging match on a Johannesburg street in September 1995. In August 1996, De Klerk, unwilling to put his name and that of his party to the new constitution, formally removed the National Party from the GNU. A number of senior members of the party including Pik Botha and Dawie de Villiers resigned, and Roelf Meyer left to join a new organisation, the United Democratic Movement (UDM). Later that year, De Klerk resigned as leader of the party.

Between 1994 and 1996, continuing political violence and a number of corruption cases weakened public faith in the government. In June 1994, over three quarters of South Africans felt that the country was moving in the right direction. But by June 1995, this figure had dropped to 64%; the following year only 57% thought the same.<sup>334</sup> On Christmas Day 1995, IFP supporters killed twenty ANC activists in Shobashobane and in April and May 1996, intimidation and fraud marred the first local elections in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Allan Boesak, ambassador-designate to the UN, was charged with embezzling funds from his own charity to pay for his wedding, settle his wife's debts and support the ANC's election fund. The Sarafina II scandal uncovered R10 million of public money which had been spent without proper authorisation on a play produced by a friend of the Health Minister, Nkosazana Zuma. The head of a new anti-corruption unit, Judge Willem Heath, announced that 'corruption has taken root through the entire administration'.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> See Reynolds (ed.) (1999).

<sup>335</sup> Quoted in Arnold (2000: 46). Between 1997 and 1999, R10 billion was recovered by the unit.

Throughout 1997 and 1998, public support for the government continued to falter. But as the election approached, a concerted hearts and minds campaign waged by the government began to pay off. The ANC concentrated on highlighting the achievements of the government at the same time as heavily criticising the ‘apartheid era’ opposition. Nearly two thirds of people polled in early 1999 felt that they could trust the ANC compared to only 14% who said the same of the New National Party and the Democratic Party.<sup>336</sup> By April 1999, public satisfaction with the government had reached record levels in twelve out of nineteen indicators. As the table below indicates, other than crime and job creation, the government scored well on all the key issues including housing, education, basic needs and the economy.

**‘The government is handling the following well’:**

	<b>April 1998</b>	<b>April 1999</b>
<b>Basic services</b>	67%	72%
<b>Health care</b>	57%	66%
<b>Education</b>	47%	64%
<b>Political violence</b>	62%	62%
<b>Housing</b>	54%	61%
<b>Economy</b>	22%	47%
<b>Corruption</b>	26%	44%
<b>Crime</b>	18%	26%
<b>Job creation</b>	12%	24%

*Source: Reynolds (ed.) (1999)*

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<sup>336</sup> See Reynolds (ed.) (1999).

During the election campaign itself, the ANC focused on its record: 750,000 houses built, 300 new health clinics, clean water for two and a half million people, free health care for pregnant women and young children, a range of legislation to protect workers. 'Together', claimed the posters, 'we can speed up change'. The principal opposition came from the reinvigorated Democratic Party (DP) led by a young, brash lawyer, Tony Leon. Leon provided a home for Afrikaners fleeing from the remnants of the National Party as it imploded in 1996. Leon's attacks on the 're-racialisation' of politics through policies like affirmative action and 'the intellectual no-go areas that dictate there may be no discussion, no debate and no criticism in the corridors of power' struck a cord among many white voters.<sup>337</sup> The New National Party (NNP), in contrast, had a disastrous election. The party was, in Tony Leon's words, 'paralysed by the past'; the legacy of apartheid was constantly evoked by rivals, the media and through processes like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In addition, many traditional supporters felt bitter at what they considered the party's capitulation during negotiations. In the end, the NNP was routed, losing control of its only province, the Western Cape, and dropping to fourth place overall.

The election was a far smoother operation than it had been five years before. Despite some logistical problems, voting was completed on a single day and 96% of voters felt that the elections were free and fair.<sup>338</sup> Turnout was high with 86% of registered voters casting their ballots.<sup>339</sup> The ANC came close to securing the two-thirds majority it required to change the

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<sup>337</sup> Quoted in Reynolds (ed.) (1999: 94).

<sup>338</sup> Some polling stations still reported long queues, for example up to 3km in Alexandria, Johannesburg. Other problems included untrained staff, registered people who had not been added to the electoral roll and a lack of voter education which led to a high number of spoilt ballots. In total, the Election Commission received just over 1,000 complaints. See Lodge (1999).

<sup>339</sup> However, a complicated registration exercise meant that only 80% of the eligible population were on the electoral roll itself. Turnout of the voting age population was therefore closer to 70%.

constitution, the DP became the main voice of opposition with the IFP third, still strong in Kwa-Zulu Natal but with little support outside the province. Small parties fared poorly, barely figuring beyond their regional strongholds: the UDM in Eastern Cape, the UCDP, a party set up by Lucas Mangope, in former Bophuthatswana, the Minority Front in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The Freedom Front, the Freedom Alliance, a far right group created by Louis Luyt, a former president of the Rugby Football Union, and former revolutionary parties saw their vote virtually extinguished.

#### **1999 national elections in South Africa**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>National %</b>	<b>Seats</b>
<b>African National Congress</b>	10,601,330	66.4%	266
<b>Democratic Party</b>	1,527,337	9.6%	38
<b>Inkatha Freedom Party</b>	1,371,447	8.6%	34
<b>New National Party</b>	1,098,215	6.9%	28
<b>United Democratic Movement</b>	546,790	3.4%	14
<b>African Christian Democrat Party</b>	228,975	1.4%	6
<b>Freedom Front</b>	127,217	0.8%	3
<b>United Christian Democrat Party</b>	125,280	0.8%	3
<b>Pan-Africanist Congress</b>	113,125	0.7%	3
<b>Freedom Alliance</b>	86,704	0.5%	2
<b>Minority Front</b>	48,277	0.3%	1
<b>Afrikaner Eenheids Beweging</b>	46,292	0.3%	1
<b>Azapo</b>	27,257	0.2%	1



The IFP decided to remain in the government with Buthelezi retaining his post of Home Affairs, although he turned down a deal which would have seen him become a Deputy President and the ANC take control of Kwa-Zulu Natal.<sup>340</sup> Racially, the assembly was a more representative body than 1994: black MPs made up 58% of the total, an increase of 6% from 1994; whites constituted 26% of the assembly, a decrease of 6%; Coloured and Indian representatives made up 10% and 5% respectively, just above their proportion of the country's population as a whole.

Thabo Mbeki, the new President, had worked hard as Deputy President to restructure the centre of government, creating a Co-Ordination and Implementation Unit (CIU) in his own office and a new ministerial post to oversee policy, staffed by an old friend, Essop Pahad. After he became President, Mbeki's centralisation drive gathered pace: ANC activists were parachuted into top jobs in civil society organisations; internal dissent was squashed; loyalists were promoted to key posts and a range of attacks were launched against apparently independent institutions ranging from the media to the Constitutional Court. In 2000, Mbeki made an extraordinary series of accusations against three ANC grandees, Cyril Ramaphosa, Mathews Phosa and Tokyo Sexwale, accusing them of plotting a 'coup' against him by publicly questioning his role in the murder of Chris Hani and seeking to replace him at a forthcoming ANC conference. In interviews held with a number of leading ANC supporters during August and September 2001, interviewees frequently remarked on how Mbeki had failed to move sufficiently away from a liberation movement mentality of ally and enemy, and how he still believed in the 'democratic centralism' practiced by the ANC in exile.

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<sup>340</sup> Another IFP member, Joe Matthews, also stayed on as a Minister in the Department of Safety and Security.

During June 2000, the NNP, DP and the Freedom Alliance merged to form a new opposition, the Democratic Alliance (DA) led by Tony Leon with Marthinus van Schalkwyk, leader of the NNP, as his deputy. In local elections held in December 2000, the DA polled 23% nationwide.<sup>341</sup> But in October 2001, the alliance was dissolved after disagreement over the sacking of the NNP mayor of Cape Town, Peter Marais. In November, the NNP and the ANC announced a co-operation plan which guaranteed the former apartheid era party two deputy ministries while granting the ANC a foothold in the Western Cape for the first time. In October 2002, over five hundred local councillors moved party in a fifteen day window used as a pilot for legislation which will allow national MPs to cross the floor for the first time. The big winners were the NNP and the ANC – in contrast, the Democratic Party lost over four hundred local representatives.

With the external opposition in a degree of disarray, the main constraint on the government comes from within. Since 1994, the ANC has governed as senior partner in a ‘tripartite alliance’ which also embraces the SACP and COSATU. However, both the SACP and COSATU are increasingly disaffected with the slow pace of change, the rightward turn of the ANC and post-1994 personnel changes within the ANC. Where once the ANC was a ‘moral movement’ which one joined out of ‘primordial loyalty’, now, in the words of Raymond Suttner, ‘joining the ANC is like joining the Rotary Club’, offering the chance to advance your career.<sup>342</sup> For their part, many members of the ANC consider the alliance an outdated relic of the liberation struggle and corporatism an unnecessary burden restricting the government’s capacity to deliver.

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<sup>341</sup> The ANC received 59% of the vote, down 6% from the 1999 national elections.

<sup>342</sup> Interview with Raymond Suttner, 4 September 2001, Johannesburg.

In 2001 and 2002, a wave of strikes jointly sanctioned by COSATU and the SACP led to open discord within the alliance. In July 2002, the central committee of the SACP voted to remove two of Mbeki's inner circle – Essop Pahad and Jeff Radebe. After the president refused to make the opening address to the SACP's annual conference, delegates chanted, 'let us fight because Mbeki does not want to talk'.<sup>343</sup> Although Mbeki promised to tackle 'bread and butter' issues at the ANC consultative conference in December 2002, many local activists do not seem to believe him. At the last local elections, less than half the ANC's registered supporters bothered to cast their ballot.

#### *Armed forces and the police*

After his inauguration in late 1989, F.W. de Klerk began to dismantle the security state inherited from P.W. Botha. Defence expenditure was reduced from 4.2% to 2.6%, military service was cut from two years to one and a number of military bases were closed. In 1991, the government destroyed its nuclear weapons and in 1993, abandoned its secret chemical warfare projects. Between 1992 and 1994, attempts were made to depoliticise the police service, in essence a paramilitary organisation under apartheid. The Security Branch was merged with CID to form a new crime fighting division. An Internal Stability Division was established to deal with political violence. Eleven apartheid era agencies were moulded into one new force, the South African Police Service (SAPS).

But many of these changes were only cosmetic. The double legacy of apartheid and ungovernability engendered a culture of violence in South Africa almost unparalleled in the world. One in every five households owns a firearm, gangs operate in every major town and city, four million weapons remain unaccounted for following the cessation of the armed

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<sup>343</sup> Chris McGreal, 'Mbeki allies purged by party', *The Guardian*, Monday 29 July 2002.

struggle.<sup>344</sup> The result is an orgy of violence – a murder every thirty minutes, a rape every ten minutes, an assault every three minutes. Although the crime rate on the whole has not risen since 1994, it has moved away from the townships into the cities, threatening people, often white South Africans, who could safely ignore it before.<sup>345</sup> Johannesburg city centre is now virtually a no go area – hotels, businesses and even the stock exchange have fled to the suburbs where the wealthy live barricaded behind fences, protected by armed response units. In 1994, 30% of whites and 11% of blacks said they felt unsafe because of crime; 82% and 53% now feel the same.

Meanwhile, the police force is a demoralised, inefficient and corrupt body: prosecution rates are only 22%; 7,000 police officers are functionally illiterate; 9,000 police officers were charged with criminal offences in 1997 alone; nearly 700 people died in police custody in 2000.<sup>346</sup> The criminal justice system still creaks under the legacy of apartheid. In 2000, the prison population was running at 75% over capacity, 4,000 children were in jail and over 60,000 people were awaiting trial.<sup>347</sup> Members of the public who can afford it are increasingly relying on private security firms. There are now over 5,000 such companies operating in South Africa, employing half a million people, four for each police officer, in an industry worth R10 billion per year.

The government has tried numerous initiatives to restore public faith in the police force. The Police Services Act of 1995 created an independent directorate to monitor the police and investigate complaints made against them. However the new watchdog has been so inundated

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<sup>344</sup> For more on this, see Du Toit (2001).

<sup>345</sup> According to the South African Institute of Race Relations, in many categories, particularly violent crime, the crime rate has actually fallen. For example, between 1994 and 2000, the murder rate dropped by 36%, attempted murder by 16% and violent robbery by 26%.

<sup>346</sup> See South African Institute for Race Relations (2001).

<sup>347</sup> See Human Rights Watch (2000).

with complaints, it has only been able to deal with between 5% - 10% of cases. Community police forums made up of local representatives and police officers set up in an attempt to build bridges and develop levels of trust have been infiltrated by criminals and marked by police non-cooperation. In 2000, the publishing of crime statistics by the government was suspended on the basis that the figures were unreliable and therefore creating an unwarranted climate of fear both within the country and for potential foreign investors.

However, the picture is not wholly bleak. Internally, the police now come under civilian control while new structures have promoted more accountability. The SAPS is now far more ethnically representative with three quarters of officers black and in 1999, a highly regarded public servant, Jackie Selebi, became its first non-white commissioner.<sup>348</sup> Some crime fighting initiatives have been successful. The Scorpions, an elite detective unit trained by the FBI, have proved effective as has the Metro Police Force set up in 2000 to curb crime in Johannesburg. Regional units to clear up cross border crime and clear arms caches have also accomplished much. In 2000, a Firearms Control Bill curbed the availability of guns.

But overall, the government has been more successful in transforming the defence forces. A new South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has been forged out of the SADF, MK, APLA and homeland forces. The predominant position of the military under apartheid has been thoroughly curtailed – in 2001 the military budget ran at only 1.8% of GDP. The military has largely been successfully de-racialised. In 1994, only 1% of SANDF officers were black. By 2002, 70% of the army were black including 40% of officers and five out of

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<sup>348</sup> However, only a fifth of superintendents are black. In 1998, a Black Officers Forum was established to speed up the movement of black officers into senior positions.

the ten top generals. Since 1997, the SANDF has been headed by the first ever black chief-of-staff, General Sipiwe Nyanda, a former commander of MK.

Civilians have also taken control of the Ministry of Defence, its budget and the hiring and firing of staff. Although restructuring has been difficult, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been modernized and a new Department of Foreign Affairs created with staff drawn from the old regime, the ANC Department of International Affairs and homeland foreign ministries. The new look SANDF has taken part in a number of engagements ranging from a peacekeeping role during the 1994 elections to an operation to restore democracy, somewhat haphazardly, in Lesotho during 1998. Reform has not been without its problems – many units are top heavy with officers and operating at less than 50% readiness. In addition, around a quarter of the 150,000 strong army are recognised as HIV positive, making them unusable for UN sanctioned peacekeeping duties.

### *Foreign policy*

Between 1948 and 1994, apartheid South Africa practiced what Peter Schraeder describes as ‘the diplomacy of isolation’.<sup>349</sup> But since 1994, South African foreign policy has been transformed. An extended range of actors including the Department of Trade and Industry, the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs and the parliamentary Select Committee on Defence all contribute to the policy making process. The scope of South Africa’s external missions has vastly increased – forty-three new embassies alone have been created since 1994. Foreign policy is no longer based on narrow support for counter-revolution abroad but on a humanitarian interventionism which has seen South Africa play an active role in conflicts in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Lesotho. All this is crowned by

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<sup>349</sup> See Schraeder (2002).

President Mbeki's call for an African Renaissance which has seen South Africa actively promote democracy and human rights around the continent and take the lead in international organisations like the African Union.

When Nelson Mandela became president in 1994, he promised to introduce an ethical dimension to South African foreign policy. In truth, however, the new government struggled to mediate between idealism and the needs of realpolitik. On the one hand, there was a ban on the marketing, export and transit of anti-personnel landmines. The parastatal elements of the powerful arms industry were broken up, arms sales to Turkey and Rwanda blocked and a new cabinet watchdog, the National Conventional Arms Control Committee, set up to oversee the industry. In 1996, the Cameron Commission concluded that all arms deals had to be authorised by parliament and made public. However, arms continue to be sold to countries blacklisted for human rights offences including a \$1.5 billion artillery system to Saudi Arabia and a \$650 million deal for the sale of tanks to Syria.<sup>350</sup> In 1999, a R30 million procurement deal for reequipping the army was agreed amid allegations of high level corruption.<sup>351</sup> Mandela's respect for universal human rights clashed with his continued support for former allies in Libya, Indonesia and Iran. Similarly, the policy of 'constructive engagement' with the Nigerian military dictator, General Sani Abacha, looked both unethical and unrealistic after the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the 'Ogoni Nine' in 1995.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> The arms industry in South Africa represents a powerful lobby. In 1994, weapon sales were South Africa's second biggest export and Armscor, the state parastatal responsible for the procurement, production and export of arms, was the twelfth biggest such company in the world. In total, the industry employs 54,000 people. For more on this, see Toase and Yorke (1998).

<sup>351</sup> In 2001, the scandal claimed its first victim with the arrest of the ANC chief whip, Tony Yengeni. In March 2003, Yengeni was sentenced to four years in jail for his role in the affair.

<sup>352</sup> After the murder of the Ogoni Nine, Mandela began to argue strongly for sanctions against Nigeria, but his appeasement of Abacha in the period leading up to 1995 was seen as a personal failure for the president.

Nevertheless, there has been a sea change in South African foreign policy since 1994. In 1994, the country returned to the OAU and the Commonwealth. In 1996, South Africa took over the chair of the South African Development Community (SADC), criticising the lack of democracy in fellow member state like Zambia and Swaziland and attempting to mediate between combatants in Zaire.<sup>353</sup> Mandela played a prominent role in persuading President Gaddafi to allow the Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie bombing to be sent for trial in a neutral country. In 1999, the government became actively involved in conflict resolution in Burundi and in 2002, South African troops were sent to Congo to safeguard its fragile peace settlement. Thabo Mbeki's evocation of an African Renaissance, based around the need for democratisation, sustainable development, good governance and liberalisation throughout the continent reached its apotheosis in 2001 at the G8 summit in Genoa, when his Millennium Action Plan was offered substantial political and financial backing by the world's richest states. In June 2002, Mbeki secured the further agreement of the G8 over funding for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad), seen as a key step to securing lasting economic and political reforms in Africa. The next month, the African Union (AU), replacing the OAU, was set up to provide an umbrella institution for the delivery of Nepad.

Both the Millennium Action Plan and Nepad stand as symbols for South Africa's new role both in Africa and with the wider world. In Greg Mills words, South Africa has gone from begin 'a pariah to a participant'.<sup>354</sup> Once the world's leper, South Africa now plays an active part in a number of international agencies, standing as a pivot between north and south and as a standard bearer for developing nations. As such, the country has received more than its fair share of help. Between 1994 and 1999, \$4.7 billion was pledged to South Africa by

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<sup>353</sup> Mandela also made unsuccessful attempts to moderate in Angola and Kashmir.

<sup>354</sup> See Mills (ed.) (1994).



international donors to help it democratise and modernise.<sup>355</sup> But the expectations which come from being a ‘beacon of hope’ can be a double edged sword. In an interview with me in September 2001, Steven Friedman, then Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, explained that the ‘desire to be world class’ created by both international and domestic actors can lead to dangerous levels of myopia. For Friedman, the desire to make South Africa a special member of the elite runs the risk of judging the country on false criteria which does little justice to its real context as a developing nation in Southern Africa. For Friedman, South Africa’s transformation was about making the country a ‘normal’ state, not an exemplar of unrealistic standards which could not possibly be upheld.

### *Summary*

Between 1999 and 2001, a gruesome story was relayed in court by Walter Basson, former head of the apartheid government’s Chemical and Biological Warfare programme. Basson, on trial for multiple counts of murder, recalled how his remit had included murder, germ warfare, money laundering and drug trafficking. Basson’s story was a chilling reminder of the despotic power of the apartheid state. Yet the apartheid state was in many ways weak – although it had considerable despotic power, its infrastructural capacity was insubstantial; it ruled out of minority force not majority will. Indeed, it was this infrastructural weakness which hastened its demise. But for the ANC, the inheritance of such a weak state was a major hindrance: negotiations meant that some apartheid era structures were difficult to erode, despotic interests remained powerful while democratic values, practices and institutions had to be instilled virtually from scratch. The achievement therefore in consolidating democracy since 1994 has been substantial. Democracy has truly become the only game in town. The

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<sup>355</sup> However, there were problems both in receiving and using these funds. Overall, about half the pledged funds had arrived and been used by 1999. See Michael Bratton and Chris Landsberg (2000).

next stage of South Africa's development will be the emergence of an opposition which reflects the needs and aspirations of a post-liberation electorate. Whether this comes out of, or in direct opposition to, the ANC remains to be seen.

### *Economic power relations*

The people shall share in the country's wealth. The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people. The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and the monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole.<sup>356</sup>

The apartheid economy was a restricted sphere based on racial discrimination and propped up by high levels of state intervention. For twenty-five years or so, the government convinced itself that its recipe of high tariffs, strict control of the labour market and state intervention in both the public and private sectors could produce a virtuous cycle of growth. But in the 1970s and 1980s, deep problems surfaced: low capital inflow as a result of protectionism; high wages, a shortage of skilled workers and market saturation as a result of job reservation; low productivity and competitiveness resulting from years of subsidies for farming, mining and other industries. On top of this, the world downturn of the 1970s, the growth of sanctions in the 1980s and increasing domestic opposition curtailed hopes of a revival. In the 1970s, the economy grew at an average of 2.5%, in the 1980s, it stopped growing altogether, in the early 1990s, it began to contract.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> The nationalisation clause of the Freedom Charter.

<sup>357</sup> In 1990 the economy retracted by 0.3%, the next year by 1% and in 1992 by over 2%. Between 1989 and 1993, 420,000 jobs were lost from the South African labour market. For more on this, see Lundahl (1999).

## Performance of the South African economy 1994-2001

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>GDP (Rbn) (1994 prices)</b>	531,537	548,099	570,855	585,103	589,110	600,159	618,666	638,010
<b>GDP (% change)</b>	3.2	3.1	4.2	2.5	0.7	1.9	3.1	2.2
<b>GDP/capita (R)</b>	13,159	13,884	14,150	14,196	13,965	13,815	13,986	14,321
<b>GDP/capita (% change)</b>	0.5	1.1	2.1	0.6	-1.3	-0.7	1.4	0.2
<b>Unemployment (%)</b>	NA	35.0	33.0	36.0	37.5	36.2	35.5	29.4
<b>Inflation (%)</b>	9.5	9.0	8.5	10.0	8.0	6.0	5.3	4.8
<b>Govt. revenue (Rbn)</b>	96,801	125,470	147,738	162,983	181,749	203,400	215,592	247,583
<b>Govt. expenditure (Rbn)</b>	123,620	148,935	176,301	191,112	201,213	218,175	233,944	262,674
<b>Deficit</b>	-26,811	-23,465	-28,563	-28,219	-19,464	-14,775	-18,352	-15,091
<b>Exports (\$bn)</b>	24,397	30,071	30,263	31,171	29,234	28,361	28,612	30,643
<b>Imports (\$bn)</b>	21,452	27,404	27,569	28,848	27,216	24,611	24,510	25,677
<b>Trade balance (\$bn)</b>	3,945	2,667	2,695	2,324	2,018	3,751	4,102	4,966

*Sources: Statistical Office, Department of Finance, South African Reserve Bank*

Discussions on the future shape of the South African economy took place well before 1994.

During the 1980s, the ANC made its own well documented transition from belief in a command economy to an acceptance of the need for a mixed economy based at least partially on market lines. In 1992, the ANC publicly came out in support of the ‘flamingo option’ as published in the Mont Fleur Scenarios, an influential report that called for gradualism rather than a dramatic economic shift, arguing that a number of structural changes needed to be put in place before there could be a real transformation of economic relations. The ANC set up a Macro-Economic Research Group (MERG), to look at ways of improving competitiveness and productivity. In 1994, five companies – Anglo-American, Sanlam, Rembrandt, Old Mutual and Liberty Life – were worth 85% of the entire capitalisation of the Johannesburg

Stock Exchange (JSE) between them. MERG reports contended that only a complete overhaul of competition policy, a lowering of tariffs, active support for small and medium size firms, extensive job creation schemes and a drive to raise skills, training and education standards could break up such monopolies and generate lasting growth.

### *Redistribution and development*

The South African economy is by far the largest in Africa, representing 40% of the total GDP for Sub-Saharan Africa and twenty times its nearest rival. South Africa holds nearly half of the world's diamond reserves and it is the world's largest producer of gold. Yet the restriction of economic activity to whites under apartheid generated massive discrepancies between racial groups. By 1994, South Africa was the most unequal country in the world.<sup>358</sup> While shopping malls in the major cities were teeming with luxury goods, half of South Africa's households lived below the poverty line, eighteen million people were 'struggling to survive' and eight million were 'completely destitute'.<sup>359</sup> A range of social indicators reinforced this dismal picture: twelve million people lacked access to clean water, a quarter of children under five were malnourished, twenty-three million had no access to electricity and two million did not go to school.<sup>360</sup> The distribution of life chances by race was also striking: of the 45% of South Africans living in absolute poverty, only 2% were white; in 1990, a quarter of whites had a high school qualification compared to 0.6% of blacks; the income of white South Africans averaged twelve times that of blacks.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> South African had a Gini coefficient of 0.65 in 1993 compared to 0.32 in Sweden and 0.28 in Japan.

<sup>359</sup> UN figures.

<sup>360</sup> For more on this, see Meredith (1994).

<sup>361</sup> For more on this, see Handley and Mills (1996).

In 1994, the ANC charged another group, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), made up of government, business, unions and NGO representatives, to reach a consensus on how to achieve the dual aims of economic growth and social equity. However, despite the veneer of corporatism, real power rested in the government's RDP Department headed by the former head of COSATU, Jay Naidoo. In theory, the RDP was intended to stimulate growth and employment through massive supply side projects. Its remit covered every area of social exclusion: unemployment, housing, health, education and basic needs including access to electricity, clean water and toilets. Presidential Lead Projects (PLPs) like the Katorus Project involving the provision of housing, education and health facilities as well as mediation in a dangerous part of Gauteng, were considered showcases for the programme.

But while the needs were great, the means were not available to deliver the programme's goals. To reach government targets, there needed to be increased spending of 21% per year in infrastructural investment alone. Although the RDP department had a large budget, it couldn't be spent without systems to manage schemes and allocate resources on the ground. The process of applying for a grant was extremely cumbersome, relying on local people applying through provincial offices and then the co-ordination of applications between provinces and the central RDP office. But one of the legacies of apartheid were multiple layers of inefficient and flabby bureaucracies – in 1992, the public service employed one and quarter million people, 15% of the economically active population of South Africa.<sup>362</sup> It was impossible to recruit, train and staff reconstructed tiers of municipal and local government

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<sup>362</sup> According to Fitzgerald, McLennan and Munslow (eds.) (1997: 108), the South African public service was 'a grey compartmentalised maze of incomprehensible rules, characterised by disinterested, unresponsive officials, constant deferral of problems between departments and offices, inaccessible bureaucratic practices and interminable red tape'.

overnight. Turf wars between departments held up RDP initiatives. As a result, the RDP failed to spend around half its allocated budget. In 1996, the office was closed and its projects redistributed around other departments.

Alongside an infrastructural incapacity to deliver the RDP, the government faced numerous other endemic difficulties. In 1995, 35% of the population were unemployed and 53% had no skills. Decades of underinvestment meant that levels of human and social capital were extremely low: the World Economic Forum ranked South African fifty-second out of fifty-three industrialised countries in terms of skills and production; 83% of schools lacked libraries, 61% had no telephones, 52% were without electricity, 24% had no access to water and 12% no toilets.<sup>363</sup> The non-payment of rates, a legacy of 1980s protest politics, meant that many local authorities were starved of much needed resources. ‘Liberation not education’ produced a lost generation of up to ten million young blacks without basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Yet despite the scale of these problems, public expectations ran high. After decades of exploitation and oppression, black South Africans were understandably anxious for rapid change. The clash between public expectations and the government’s capacity to deliver resulted in a range of industrial disputes. In 1995, police officers and civil servants went on strike over pay. Despite a 30% increase in spending on education, a number of teachers were laid off, again resulting in industrial action. In April 1996, COSATU called for all its members to take part in a one-day general strike. Twenty-thousand students, unable to pay their fees, were excluded from universities and technical colleges in 1998. In 1999, over three

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<sup>363</sup> For more on this, see Arnold (2000).

million workdays were lost because of strikes. Warnings from Nelson Mandela about the futility of such protests had little effect,

The government literally does not have the money to meet the demands that are being advanced. Mass action will not create resources that the government does not have. All of us must rid ourselves of the notion that the government has a big bag full of money. It is important that we rid ourselves of the culture of entitlement.<sup>364</sup>

Despite these problems, the government did succeed in redistributing and developing the economy in a number of ways. No pregnant woman or child has been turned away from a hospital, five million children are provided with a free sandwich every day, a million new homes have been built, nine million people have been provided with clean water, two and a half million new electrical connections have been made, and wage differentials have been reduced, particularly in the public service.<sup>365</sup> Key legislation like the 1995 Labour Relations Act and the 2000 Equality Act have institutionalised the right to set up unions and forums in the workplace, introduced the right to strike for non-essential workers and brought an end to unfair dismissal.

Between 1994 and 1998, policies of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) raised the value of stocks in black owned and controlled businesses from 0.3% to over 10% of the JSE.<sup>366</sup> New companies like Johnnic, New African Investments Limited (NAIL) and the National Empowerment Consortium (NEC), often led by former ANC activists and partially owned by unions, are now major players in the South African economy. In 2001, a commission, chaired

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<sup>364</sup> Quoted in Arnold (2000: 7).

<sup>365</sup> Wage differentials between the lowest and highest paid staff in the public service dropped from a ratio of 1:19 in 1994 to 1:14 in 1999.

<sup>366</sup> Obviously, the value of these 'black-chip' holdings fluctuates over time alongside trends in the stock market as a whole. Hence, there was a rapid decline in BEE representation from 10% to 2% of JSE holdings in 2001, to be followed by a gradual increase in their net worth. See *The Economist*, "Black empowerment", 21 July 2000 and *The Economist*, "Shades of grey", 7 September 2002.

by Cyril Ramaphosa, set ambitious goals for extending BEE including targets of 25% of JSE stocks, 30% of productive land and half government tenders to be in black hands by 2010. In June 2002, the government passed the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, which sought to redistribute the holdings of big mining houses to smaller, black run businesses. Affirmative action legislation like the 1998 Employment Equity Act have increased non-white representation in the public service, parastatals and big business; bids by black businesses for government contracts are now favoured under a new procurement act.<sup>367</sup> Black micro-businesses from vineyards to car-dealerships are beginning to emerge.

By the turn of the millennium, it appeared as though the South African public largely accepted the worth of the government's policies: 79% thought that the government had done a good job redistributing wealth; 61% said that the government had done well at development and welfare.<sup>368</sup> Social spending, worth just over half the government's budget in 1994, was responsible for 60% of government spending in 2000. But many South Africans want more – in the 2000 budget, the government announced that twice as much would be spent on servicing debt than health. South Africa, like other Southern African countries, is facing a huge burden as a result of HIV/AIDS: nearly one in five South Africans are HIV positive including nearly a quarter of all pregnant women; two hundred HIV positive children are born everyday and nearly half a million children are AIDS orphans.<sup>369</sup> On top of this, government is faced with enormous constraints: the need to make deals with big business, unions and other key brokers; the chronic inequality and underinvestment leftover by

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<sup>367</sup> However, there are ways around this legislation. For example, white run companies have adopted 'black front' organisations in order to receive preferential status when bidding for state contracts. Many others have deliberately kept staff levels below those required for affirmative action legislation to kick in.

<sup>368</sup> See Reynolds (ed.) (1999).

<sup>369</sup> UN figures. The government's record on AIDS has been patchy to say the least. A 1994 National AIDS plan has never been implemented and President Mbeki has been publicly lambasted, not least by Nelson Mandela, for questioning the link between HIV and AIDS.



apartheid; the lack of an infrastructural capacity to deliver ambitious plans. The government's record on redistribution and development is therefore mixed. To some extent, this is because of competing priorities: redistribution has been sacrificed on an altar of liberalisation.

### *Liberalisation*

After 1994, it became clear that the South African economy needed growth of around 6% per annum if it was to create the 400,000 jobs every year needed to cater for new entrants into the job market and other demographic changes. But during 1996, the developing market crisis began to have a detrimental effect on the South African economy. The Rand depreciated by 16% between February and April alone and there was a huge outflow of foreign capital. Later that year, the South African Foundation, a lobby for big business, pushed for radical changes in the government's economic policies. The Foundation catalogued a series of structural changes needed if the economy was to generate lasting growth: low taxes, flexible labour markets, privatisation, less regulation, lower exchange rates and a number of supply side remedies including job creation to raise government revenues. COSATU responded to this neo-liberal smorgasbord with its own report calling for a greater focus on social equity through higher taxes, an increase in labour rights, anti-trust legislation and public works projects. The government distilled these divergent visions into GEAR, the General Employment and Redistribution Strategy, a programme which called for a new emphasis on 'regulated flexibility'. GEAR reaffirmed the government's desire for high quality public services and improved job security for workers but focused on liberalisation as the principal means for stimulating economic growth. Budget deficits were to be reduced, privatisation programmes initiated, labour market flexibility heightened, tax incentives introduced, tariff restrictions lowered and the public services streamlined to push start the economy.

GEAR was not the first sign of a burgeoning belief in liberalisation. In 1994, foreign exchange controls had been phased out. The next year, foreign banks were allowed to open branches in South Africa. In 1996, South African joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO). As a result, tariff restrictions were cut from 10,000 to 5,000 lines and the levels of others significantly reduced. Foreign investment in South Africa grew commensurately, up 65% to R14 billion in 1997 alone, with foreign firms becoming particularly involved in large public works projects.<sup>370</sup> Travel into South Africa has doubled since 1994 and tourism is now the fourth biggest contributor to the South African economy.<sup>371</sup> For their part, South African companies have been quick to invest abroad, most notably through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). In 1995, the South African Power Pool was established, deregulating the electricity grid throughout the region. In 1999, a trade agreement between the EU and South Africa introduced a phased removal of tariffs on over 10,000 products. An SADC free trade area is planned for 2005.

But the opening up of markets has not been without problems. Although foreign investment has increased in South Africa, a number of large South African companies including Anglo-American, Old Mutual and South African Breweries have used the opportunity to capitalise abroad, most notably in London. With the economy in recession in 1998, public confidence nose-dived. In 1999, following reports that the economy had shed half a million jobs since 1994, support for the government's policies reached an all time low. Interest rates skyrocketed to 24%, inflation reached 33% and the Johannesburg Stock Exchange lost 15%

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<sup>370</sup> Since 1994, there has been a huge increase in both capital inflows and outflows. For example, British investment in South Africa is now worth R12 billion alone, half of which has arrived since 1994. Nine out of the country's top twenty employers are British.

<sup>371</sup> According to the South African Statistical Office, over six million tourists visited South African in 2000 compared to just over three million in 1994.

of its value. Privatisation programmes proved to be particularly controversial. Indeed, the prospective privatisation of a number of state parastatals, including Eskom, the state electricity company, and Telkom, the telephone operator, led to wide ranging strikes throughout 2001 and 2002.<sup>372</sup>

### *Summary*

The South African economy has been transformed since 1994. In place of the whites only, protectionist, interventionist economy of apartheid has emerged a liberalised, open and dynamic system which is beginning to tap more effectively into the country's resources and redistribute them more evenly. Given the structural problems inherited from apartheid, there was never going to be the dramatic overnight transformation many people hoped for. In addition, a number of features of a modern economy – capital markets, a private banking system, contract law, communication networks, a strong service sector and so on – were already in place. The gradualist approach of the government therefore sought to establish stability at the same time as carrying out reforms. Nevertheless, the result of government policy has been qualitative change: outputs, investment and exports have risen; the budget deficit has been slashed; inflation is under control; exchange controls have been abolished; new actors are making their mark. On the whole, the system is far more transparent and the environment for business more open than it was in 1994.

But for all this, much remains still to be done. The government treads a fine line between the need for structural changes which will stimulate growth and policies of job creation, the protection of workers and redistribution. The result has been a range of disputes – over

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<sup>372</sup> A number of Spatial Development Initiatives and private-public partnerships have been more successful, including the N4 toll road along the Maputo Corridor between Johannesburg and the Mozambique border.

working hours, the minimum wage and privatisation – many of them within the tripartite alliance itself. An influential recent book by the economist Sampie Terreblanche argues that the rigid race divisions of the old South Africa are being replaced by a newly stratified class based society.<sup>373</sup> Nevertheless, the government has succeeded in laying down the foundations for a modern economy in which all South Africans have a stake. In the years to come, the investments being made in basic needs, the establishment of fiscal discipline and the policies of liberalisation should generate tangible returns. After the oppression and stagnation of apartheid, the steps being taken along this path are no trivial matter.

### *Social-ideological power relations*

Having looked the beast in the eye, having asked and received forgiveness and having made amends, let us shut the door on the past – not in order to forget it but in order not to allow it to imprison us. Let us move into the glorious future of a new kind of society where people count, not because of biological irrelevancies or other extraneous attributes, but because they are persons of infinite worth.<sup>374</sup>

South African civil society has changed fundamentally since 1994 – its operating climate has been transformed, its *raison d'être* turned on its head, the best people have been co-opted by government and the private sector, while funding streams, particularly from abroad, have dried up. Many of the civics and NGOs which were at the forefront of the fight against apartheid are now part of the government apparatus, drafted into corporatist bodies like NEDLAC. SANGOCO, the organisation which represents civil society groups has yet to adapt to this changed environment and find a set of issues which resonates with the changed

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<sup>373</sup> See Terreblanche (2002). For other influential critiques of the economic dimensions of the South African transformation, see Adam, Moodley and Van Zyl Slabbert (1998), Marais (1998) and Bond (2000).

<sup>374</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, vol. 1 (1998: 32).

reality of social power relations in the new South Africa.<sup>375</sup> The media have been quicker to embrace the new, open climate: censorship has been abolished, ownership has been extended and black journalists are increasingly making their mark both in broadcast and print outlets. Gender relations have also been transformed since 1994. Since the end of apartheid, patriarchal structures have been broken down and new institutions created to ensure that the settlement reached in 1994 embraces equality and freedom by sex as much as by race.

But other elements of social-ideological relations have proved more durable. One of the tragedies of apartheid was the separation of people into distinct cultures, not just black or white, but Afrikaner, English speaking, Zulu, Xhosa and so on. The lack of contact between these groups bred not just ignorance, but also hatred. For black people, such cultures were the only identities on offer. They were therefore buttressed, reinforced and turned into positive sources of pride. However, as was the case between the Xhosa and Zulu, self-respect was often distorted into animosity towards other groups. For many white South Africans, other cultures were seen as threats to their way of life. Out of fear of being swamped, overrun or completely destroyed, they retreated, best illustrated by the laager tradition of Afrikaners. There remains precious little discussion today in South Africa about the positive aspects of multiculturalism, of how people and cultures are enriched and made stronger by experience of different ways of life, of how nations are formed out of a kaleidoscope of cultures. This has not been for the want of trying. The new South Africa has attempted to embrace the diversity of the nation: eleven official languages, a new anthem and flag, the sight of Nelson Mandela in a Springbok shirt celebrating victory in the Rugby World Cup, and Chief

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<sup>375</sup> Indeed, the main growth in civil society has been vigilante groups like Pagad (People United against Gangsterism and Drugs). Starting in Cape Town but copied in other cities, Pagad began with boycotts, marches and 'people's courts' to put pressure on those associated with the drugs trade. However, the group was bought into disrepute by the public execution of a gangster in full view of the police and the media in 1996. For more on this, see Adler and Steinberg (2000).

Buthelezi sending in SANDF troops to Lesotho all stand as powerful symbols of a new set of social-ideological relations. But the double revolutionary process of creative destruction and destructive creation – of destroying old social relations while simultaneously creating the new – has been problematic, best illustrated by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

### *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

The National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1995 which set up the TRC was one of the most controversial aspects of the constitution making process in South Africa. To secure the agreement of the National Party to the TRC, the ANC agreed to allow amnesty for people who came forward and made a full disclosure to the commission.<sup>376</sup> The trade off, as some critics put it, of truth for justice was highly contentious. The Commission acknowledged that it was dealing with divergent notions of truth: factual or forensic truth looking at corroborated, systemic human rights abuses; personal or narrative truth focusing on victim statements; social or dialogue truth based on the actions, or non-actions, of specific groups and organisations; and healing or restorative truth, dealing with the explanatory context for what happened. The Commission claimed to rest on restorative rather than punitive or retributive justice. Only through coming to terms with the past, claimed Desmond Tutu, chairman of the TRC, could South Africans find common ground and begin building a new nation together. The ‘systematic elimination of memory’, as Tutu called it, through censorship and the destruction of records needed to be reversed if the TRC was to serve as

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<sup>376</sup> Amnesty was agreed under the Norgaard principles, meaning that if the motivation for acts was deemed political, the target was governmental or military, if the act took place within a framework of ‘due obedience’ and if full disclosure took place, then amnesty could be granted. In most cases, applications for amnesty were turned down. In total, 1,200 out of 5,000 applications were accepted.

bridge between a divided past and a collective future. It was hoped that ubuntu, the Xhosa term for solidarity, would restore dignity, pride and humanity to the victims of apartheid.

The TRC met for the first time in January 1996, dividing into three sub-committees: human rights, amnesty and reparation. Its remit covered all gross violations of human rights committed between 1 March 1960 and 10 May 1994 and the commission was given two years to come up with its findings. Regional offices, community gatherings and public hearings took testimony from 20,000 people whose evidence was substantiated by an extensive Investigation Unit and Research Department. Four kinds of proceeding took place: public testimony from victims of abuses; hearings focusing on particular events like the murder of Steve Biko; special hearings, for example, focusing on the role of women or young people; and those based around institutions ranging from faith groups to big business. In total, 5,000 people applied for amnesty, including Minister of Defence and former MK commander Joe Modise, and former Police Commissioner General Johan van der Merwe.

A range of criticisms were made against the TRC. There was general disquiet about the religious overtones of the Commission while some claimed that commissioners were careerists using the TRC as a political vehicle for personal advancement. More specific condemnation emerged from the family of Steve Biko, who argued that the amnesty clause gave the Commission a quasi-judicial status which would preclude criminal prosecution being brought against violators.<sup>377</sup> A number of individuals and organisations failed to fully co-operate with the TRC, including the security services and former president P.W. Botha, who famously described the commission as 'a big circus'. Politicians on all sides rounded on

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<sup>377</sup> A more successful court challenge was mounted by former president F.W. de Klerk who managed to remove a finding about his role in the bombing of the headquarters of the South African Council of Churches in 1988.

the commission. The ANC argued that the TRC failed to properly distinguish between the just war fought against apartheid and the oppression of the apartheid state which amounted to a crime against humanity. Thabo Mbeki even claimed that, as such, the commission ran contrary to the principles of the Geneva Convention. For their part, the IFP and many opposition parties saw the commission as a partisan machine run by and on behalf of the ANC. Many members of the public seemed to agree that, by exposing the excesses of the apartheid era, the TRC was serving to divide rather than unite South Africans. To the end, the TRC proved controversial. The final two volumes of the report published in March 2003 included stinging criticism of both Buthelezi and De Klerk.

But overall, the TRC has been an extraordinary success. As much as the Commission had opponents, it had many more supporters. Its messy, even inchoate, process was typical of the transition South Africa was making as a nation. By choosing to operate in the public realm, the commission ensured that, for two years, its proceedings were the focal point and central drama of this transition. No-one could ignore what had taken place; the systemic abuses of apartheid were laid bare for all to hear, see and acknowledge. If nothing else, the TRC became a powerful corrective to the previously distorted history of the apartheid era, restoring the social memory of the nation. While it was limited, troubling and imperfect, it was also necessary. By disregarding punitive measures and settling instead for reconciliation, the TRC followed, as Willie Esterhuyse puts it, a kind of 'transformative justice', following the example set by negotiators that talking could triumph over violence. The alternatives – firing squads resulting in more violence; court cases without hope of success; a blanket amnesty or clean slate which would excuse the most heinous of crimes – were far worse than what actually took place. As Tokyo Sexwale, a former guerrilla and premier of Gauteng, explained in his personal submission,



There was a time when we thought that by now we would be cutting necks and putting people on the firing line. There was a time when we thought we were going to solve what you are doing here with a lot of gunfire, punishment and vengeance. But it is not gunfire, it is not retribution, it is not hatred that will solve this. It is ordinary people coming forward and saying I am prepared to hear the truth in its full ugliness but nevertheless I am prepared to forgive.<sup>378</sup>

### *Media*

Under apartheid, the media was tightly controlled through a Media Council which had the authority to apply heavy penalties for criticism of the government. A whole range of issues and policies were censored, no discussion or dissent was permitted, strong links between the government and the press were well established.<sup>379</sup> Only a resistance press kept alternative information alive: *Sechaba* and *Mayibuye* were published by the ANC; the SASO newsletter printed Steve Biko's column – 'I write what I like' – and the *African Communist* was a powerful voice representing the SACP. However, the vast majority of opposition publications were ruthlessly suppressed, most often closed down and their editors arrested. In the 1980s, as opposition to apartheid grew, so the media began to change. Even some of the Afrikaner press began openly to question apartheid, ranging from the faint criticism of loyal newspapers like *Beeld* and *Die Volksblad* to more outright hostility from *Vrye Weekblad* and *Die Suid-Afrikaan* (later *DSA*). A raft of new papers including *South*, *New Nation* and the *Sowetan* were also set up during the 1980s, some to powerful effect.

Since 1994, there has been a dramatic shift in the autonomy and operating environment of the media: censorship laws have been scrapped, the right to freedom of expression enshrined in

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<sup>378</sup> From the internet site of the TRC: [www.doj.gov.za/trc](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc).

<sup>379</sup> For example, D.F. Malan had been editor of *Die Burger* and Verwoerd editor of *Die Transvaler* before each became Prime Minister.

the constitution and freedom of information legislation passed. An Independent Broadcasting Authority has been set up to monitor the media industry and a new independent board established for the South African Broadcasting Council (SABC). In 1994, Zwelakhe Sisulu, the former editor of *New Nation*, became the first black head of the SABC; in 1999, the Broadcast Act enshrined the autonomy of state broadcasting. Ownership of print and broadcast media has diversified dramatically. Foreign companies have taken over a number of newspapers and black companies have bought into a range of interests, including Times Media Limited, privatised radio stations and new television channels such as M-Net. Hundreds of community radio stations have been licensed with many at least partially owned by labour interests, women and youth groups. Personnel changes are also beginning to take hold. By May 1999, there were eight black editors of major newspapers.

However, the ANC has on several occasions been criticised for attempting to constrain the freedom of the media: an apartheid era law was employed to block newspapers publishing the name of a country with which Armscor was negotiating an arms sale;<sup>380</sup> the Protection of Information Act was applied in order to detain a Swiss journalist over the possession of ‘confidential’ military material;<sup>381</sup> and the Film and Publications Act of 1996 restricts the publication of explicit material.<sup>382</sup> There have also been allegations that the ANC exerts excessive influence on the SABC. In 2000, the Human Rights Commission launched a controversial enquiry into racism in the media after complaints by the government.

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<sup>380</sup> However, after one newspaper, *The Sunday Independent*, did go ahead and publish the name of the country (Saudi Arabia), no action was taken.

<sup>381</sup> Later, this material turned out to be freely available from the TRC.

<sup>382</sup> However, this is usually confined to material adjudged to be inciting racial hatred.

Nevertheless, overall there has been a 'gigantic advance' in the South African media since the end of apartheid.<sup>383</sup> One of the most restricted media environment's in the world has become one of the most open. From a country where television was only permitted after 1976, the diversification of media outlets is a substantial advance. New actors, both domestic and foreign, have begun to change the face of media ownership and personnel. Like so much of South Africa's transition, this has not been easily accomplished. Remnants of the South African media which under apartheid co-operated with the regime remain; the quality of much of South Africa's media today is questionable; and the ANC government has tried on occasion to limit press activity.<sup>384</sup> But what is not in doubt is the South African media have witnessed a radical transformation since 1994.

### *Gender*

Apartheid was not only a racist system, it was also deeply sexist. Women had virtually no representation in parliament, numerous pieces of legislation reduced their influence both at home and in the workplace, there was practically no provision whatsoever for child-care and almost no gynaecological services in a country with the highest rate of cervical cancer in the world. Nearly three quarters of rural women scratched a living from subsistence farming and over four million women did not appear on official statistics at all.<sup>385</sup> In contrast, the Freedom Charter clearly espoused the ANC's commitment to a 'democratic, non-racist and non-sexist South Africa'. From the time of the first Pass Law protests, women played a prominent role in the liberation movement. The ANC Women's League, founded in 1948, was a powerful lobby which included senior party figures like Winnie Mandela, Albertina Sisulu and Helen

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<sup>383</sup> See University of Natal, 2000, *Transformation*, vol. 44.

<sup>384</sup> Few of the concerns about 'partisan' nature of the press have come true. For example, the *Financial Mail*, part of a group owned by business people with close links to the ANC came out in support of the UDM at the 1999 election. The press was almost universally hostile to President Mbeki after his 'coup' allegations in 2000.

<sup>385</sup> See Deegan (1999).

Joseph, while other organisations like Black Sash also ensured that gender equality remained a high profile goal of the struggle. During the 1980s, the Federation of South African Women, the United Women's Congress and a number of civics run by and on behalf of women played critical roles in the MDM. In 1987, an umbrella organisation, the National Women's Organisation (NWO), was formed to spearhead the fight against apartheid.

In 1992, NWO was transformed into the Women's National Coalition (WNC), a cross-party body representing over 100 groups dedicated to promoting women's interests. In 1994, the WNC published 'The Women's Charter' based on two main themes: equality and diversity. Most of the principal aims of the WNC, including the creation of a Commission for Gender Equality, a Woman's Unit and a National Gender Policy were taken up by the ANC. At the opening of parliament in 1994, Nelson Mandela called for 'a visible and practical improvement in the position of women' which must 'radically change for the better'.<sup>386</sup> The ANC applied a quota system which ensured that a third of their national and provincial lists were made up of women, distributed in positions which also ensured that a proportionate number were elected. As a result, nearly 30% of the ANC's new MPs were women, including four ministers and eight deputy ministers.<sup>387</sup> But other parties had few, if any, women among their ranks.<sup>388</sup> In total, 111 women MPs were elected, representing 27% of the total, far above the world average of 13%.

Since 1994, new organisations have been formed to lobby around key issues for women, in particular domestic violence, reproductive rights and health. The result has been a raft of new

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<sup>386</sup> Quoted in Deegan (1999: 83).

<sup>387</sup> Women were also placed in charge of big spending departments like health, welfare and housing. Deputies included positions in traditional 'hard' ministries like Finance and Trade and Industry.

<sup>388</sup> The National Party did best with 11% female representation.

legislation including a 1996 bill which permits abortion without parental consent, the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 which protects women from abuse and the Maintenance Act of 1998 which has improved the position of mothers dependent on maintenance from their former partners. The ANC government has repealed several discriminatory laws including the Common Law rule which gave a husband ultimate authority over his wife and their property. Nonetheless, women remain discriminated against in the new South Africa. Over half of all women are unemployed compared to just over a quarter of men, and female workers tend to be concentrated in the informal sector in unstable businesses like tobacco, textiles and retail. Women are barely represented in most public and professional structures: only 8% of COSATU officials are women while women make up just 20% of the legal profession and 15% of senior police officers.<sup>389</sup> In most cases, women continue to carry a dual burden of domestic and productive provider.

The position of women in South Africa has, however, improved immeasurably since the end of apartheid. Politically, women now constitute 30% of MPs, the seventh highest total in the world. Eight women became ministers in 1999 including the key post of Foreign Affairs; eight more serve as deputy ministers. The speaker, the deputy speaker and the chair of the NCOP are all now women. The message of gender equality is also beginning to extend beyond the ANC. Of the Democratic Party's eighty-two member federal council, twenty-eight are women; 18% of the NNP's electoral lists were women in 1999.<sup>390</sup> The combination of this improved political representation, new legislation and gender aware mechanisms contained in the constitution and instituted by the ANC have helped instigate a novel set of

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<sup>389</sup> From Marais (1998).

<sup>390</sup> However, this is still some way below the 58% of their membership who are women.

gender relations in South Africa based on equality rather than subservience. As such, gender relations can be said to have been transformed since 1994.

### *Summary*

In some ways, the dramatic social-ideological transformations which have taken place in South Africa refute the revolutionary laws which state that social change tends to trail behind the institutionalisation of new political and economic orders. Although change has been uneven, social-ideological power relations have undoubtedly been transformed since the end of apartheid. Principally, the erosion of dignity and self-belief which black South Africans faced on a daily basis has been powerfully refuted. As one interviewee put it, 'you don't have to jump to attention in hospital when the white doctor walks in like it's a military parade, worried about looking them directly in the eye'.<sup>391</sup> People are no longer confined to certain parts of town at particular times – there is the freedom to walk, talk and be where you like. For many young people, the liberation struggle has already been consigned to history – first time voters in 1999 were nine when Nelson Mandela was released and thirteen at the time of the first free elections. A friend, Terry Oakley-Smith recalls how, on the death of Govan Mbeki in September 2001, she asked her predominantly young, black staff what she should say in a letter of condolence to the president. Her staff looked at her blankly – none of them knew who Govan Mbeki was. A Johannesburg security guard, originally trained as a teacher, told me that he would be voting for the Democratic Party in the next election because the ANC was failing to deliver on education. I heard similar messages throughout South Africa, particularly in the townships. The challenge for politicians is to meet the test set by a post-liberation electorate and deliver the programmes that South African's novel social-ideological relations demand.

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<sup>391</sup> Interview with Vhonani Mufamadi, 4 September 2001, Johannesburg.

## Conclusion

One of the many paradoxes of apartheid was that it made South Africa an ‘abnormal society’ with which most others wanted both as little and as much as possible to do. Other countries hated it with a passion, but equally passionately wanted to help. Apartheid stirred the international conscience as few other post-war issues had, in a sense, making South Africa the world’s favourite pariah.<sup>392</sup>

Few countries in the world inspired as much passion as South Africa under apartheid. This chapter has offered a novel take on the transformation of one of the world’s most autocratic systems to market democracy, looking in depth at how political-coercive, economic and social-ideological power relations have systemically changed since the end of apartheid. It is a story which encapsulates the distinct elements which make up negotiated revolutions: the welcoming role played by the international environment and key international agents, the novel role of violence, ideology and the state, and of course, the process of negotiation itself.

It is this process which has led some observers, in my view mistakenly, to doubt the significance or long-term impact of South Africa’s negotiated revolution. It is true that because compromises were made, there has not been the total transfer of power many activists and revolutionaries hoped for. South Africa remains, to an extent, a two speed economy featuring an uneasy mix between first and third world standards. Some attempts at reform, in particular land restitution, have stalled while in some cases, most notably housing, quality has been sacrificed for quantity. Meanwhile, precious little opposition to the ANC has surfaced which is untainted by apartheid – the movement can at times appear arrogant and out of touch with developments on the ground. To many, the very concept of pluralism is a

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<sup>392</sup> Walter Carlsnaes and Marie Muller (eds.) (1997: 47).

relic of the apartheid era policy of divide and rule. It is understandable that people who gave up so much for the struggle should feel disappointed that utopia has failed to arrive.

But it is important not to lose sight of the bigger picture. Apartheid was an abhorrent system which compelled non-white South Africans, women and men, to a life of oppression and misery. It is important, too, not to forget the structural barriers which stood, and to some extent, continue to stand against radical change: separate cultures who had little knowledge, bar hatred, of each other; a flabby, inefficient and corrupt bureaucracy; a closed, interventionist economy; a political system without democratic values or practices in a region dominated by conflict. All too often, people are quick to criticise but forgetful of where the country has come from and how much has been achieved since 1994: a democracy consolidated; the economy liberalised, redistributed and developed; the status of women transformed, a free media institutionalised. The first half of revolutionary transformation – creative destruction – is complete. The second, more difficult part – destructive creation – is unfinished. Hobsbawm's minimum, but not yet his maximum, condition of revolutionary success has been fulfilled. The country which took perhaps the longest walk to freedom therefore still has some distance to travel. But the road it is on is truly one of revolution.



## Chapter 5

### Por la razón o la fuerza:

### Chile

We're going to suffocate from so much equanimity!<sup>393</sup>

Chile's motto – *por la razón o la fuerza* – has stood since independence as the central leitmotif of the country's development.<sup>394</sup> Derided by its detractors but lauded by its advocates as the Britain of Latin America, Chile has a long established history of gradualism, consensus and constitutionality.<sup>395</sup> However, numerous examples of domestic unrest and frequent wars with its neighbours aptly demonstrate Chilean's capacity to resort to force when reason is seen to be inadequate or exhausted.

The military coup of 1973 is one of the most profound examples of Chilean's occasional tendency to trump reason with force. There is little doubt that most Chileans and virtually all of the political and economic elite initially supported the action of the military. But this support waned, for the most part, when it became clear that the military did not see themselves as temporary arbiters restoring calm amid the chaos of the Allende period. Rather, the military regime institutionalised a new order which significantly recast Chilean society during the fifteen years of its rule. By the time Chileans voted to re-establish democracy in 1988, the zealous pursuit of neo-liberal economics backed up by the iron fist of dictatorship

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<sup>393</sup> Dorfman (1991: 24).

<sup>394</sup> 'Por la razón o la fuerza' directly translates as 'by reason or by force'.

<sup>395</sup> Chile was considered as such a model republic in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century that Europeans vied for the right to be associated with it. Therefore, while for *The Times*, Chile was the 'England of South America', for Bismarck, Chileans represented the 'Prussians of South America'.

had substantially increased the numbers of both rich and poor Chileans, virtually destroyed democratic practices and seen thousands of Chileans tortured, disappeared or murdered for daring to oppose the regime.

It is therefore little surprise that the vast majority of Chileans celebrated the re-emergence of *razón* at the end of the 1980s. But during the following decade, any sense of triumphalism faded as the new regime struggled to overturn the legacy of the military era. Although there were some notable successes – a significant reduction in poverty, reparations for human rights abuses, the re-establishment of many democratic procedures – the new regime was frustrated by institutional constraints, vested interests and its own insistence on consensus over conflict. Today, many Chileans share the exasperation of the character Paulina in Ariel Dorfman's play, *Death and the Maiden*, when she shouts at her husband Gerardo that, 'we're going to suffocate from so much equanimity'!<sup>396</sup>

This chapter explores the reasons behind the curtailment of radical change since the restoration of democracy. Like the previous two chapters, it is split into two main parts. The first section looks at the causes, events and outcomes of the transition, arguing that Chile lacks many of the theoretical features which make up revolutions. The second part focuses in depth on the changes which have taken place since 1989. Because Chile can not be said to have undergone a *systemic* transformation of its principal power relations, I argue that it constitutes a transition rather than a substantive example of revolutionary change. As such, it serves as a partial counterfactual to the two previous case studies.

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<sup>396</sup> In the play, Paulina, who has been brutally tortured and raped under the dictatorship, is forced to confront her main assailant, Roberto. With the help of her husband, Gerardo, she extracts a confession from Roberto. See Dorfman (1991).

## Negotiated revolution?

‘There would be no need for repression by the state if it were not for left-wing subversion and terrorism’, said the general. ‘There would be no need for it, replied Garcia, ‘but it would still happen. It always has’.<sup>397</sup>

This section of the chapter is divided into three parts. First, I look at both the long-term and short-term causes which led to the defeat of the military regime in the 1988 plebiscite. I argue that crucially, Chile lacked the systemic crisis which *forced* the old regime to negotiate and concede vital ground to the opposition in South Africa and the Czech Republic. Rather, the military regime was defeated almost accidentally by a conjunction of structural forces, its internal weaknesses and by the unity and skill of opposition forces. Second, I show how the military recovered to control the transition itself, building in a number of ‘authoritarian enclaves’ which significantly reduced the manoeuvrability of the incoming regime. Third, I compare the Chilean case with both past patterns of revolutionary change and with my concept of negotiated revolution.

### *Towards the transition*

The 1973 coup was not the aberration from a norm of stability it is often portrayed to be. Following independence from Spain in 1818, Chile established a conservative settlement based on a predominantly agricultural economy, a heavily stratified social order, weak parliamentary institutions and a strong presidency backed up by a powerful coercive apparatus, in which the armed forces were ostensibly committed to a non-partisan role upholding the constitution. But this settlement was interrupted twice, first by internecine battles during the 1830s, the second time by a more pronounced civil war in the 1890s in

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<sup>397</sup> From De Bernieres (1997: 168).

which parliament successfully fought for an increase in political authority. After the civil war, the newly established 'parliamentary republic' ushered in a phase of relative instability in which sixty governments held office over a thirty year period. The War of the Pacific (1879-1883) against Peru and Bolivia ceded land rich in nitrates and copper to Chile, leading to a rapid increase in mining, industrialisation and urbanisation. The emergence of an industrial working class helped fuel the development of worker, socialist and communist organisations.<sup>398</sup> These, often militant, organisations called for widespread changes to Chile's labour and political relations.

The Chilean economy was heavily disrupted by World War One and, in particular, by the weakness of the country's two main trading partners, Britain and Germany. In the years immediately following the war, a wave of strikes, protests and demonstrations became increasingly combative. In 1924, in a foretaste of events to follow fifty years later, General Carlos Ibañez and a group of officers noisily interrupted congress in a 'rattling of sabres', forcing the government of Arturo Alessandri to stand down and establishing a military junta in its place. The junta established a new constitution which introduced direct elections for the presidency, stripped congress of a range of powers and separated the church from the state.

Although control was handed back to Alessandri in 1925, Ibañez was elected president in 1927, ushering in Chile's first period of autocratic modernization. Ibañez oversaw the professionalisation of the carabineros (police force), the establishment of a new legal code and the onset of a substantial public works programme before he was forced to resign at the height of the general depression of 1929. During the depression, GDP dropped by 40% and

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<sup>398</sup> The Partido Obrero Socialista was formed in 1912, the Federación Obrera Chilena in 1917 and the Communist Party of Chile in 1922.

street violence once more became rife. Following a brief military coup in 1932 and a second period in office for Alessandri, a coalition of political parties took power in 1938, establishing the 'Estado de Compromiso' which governed Chile over the next thirty years. Urbanisation continued apace and the development of an aspirant middle class led to the extension of the franchise first to property-less men and then to women.<sup>399</sup>

In 1964, Eduardo Frei, candidate of the centre-left Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC), won the presidential election. Frei instituted a programme – 'revolution in liberty' – centred around the 'Chileanisation' of industry, extensive land reform and the inclusion of previously marginalized groups, including women, in policy making processes.<sup>400</sup> But Frei's reforms only served to polarise the country. Many on the right felt betrayed by Frei's leftward turn after they had supported him in the elections; large landowners bitterly opposed the break up of latifundia; and big business was firmly against nationalisation. For their part, many on the left, particularly those influenced by the example of Cuba, called for more radical reforms, including land seizures (toma).

These cleavages engendered a split vote in the 1970 presidential elections: Salvador Allende Gossens, representing Unidad Popular (UP), a coalition party of the left, squeaked home with 36.2% of the vote, narrowly defeating the candidate of the right, Jorge Alessandri.<sup>401</sup> Allende, the first democratically elected Marxist head of state in the world, declared in his victory speech that,

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<sup>399</sup> Women gained the vote in three stages: for local elections in 1935, for congress in 1949 and for the presidency in 1952.

<sup>400</sup> Under Frei, three-and-a-half million hectares of land were redistributed to campesinos and peasant co-operatives.

<sup>401</sup> Alessandri polled 34.9%. The PDC candidate, Radomiro Tomić, came third with 27.8% of the vote.

We shall abolish the pillows propping up that minority which has always condemned our country to underdevelopment. We shall abolish the monopolies which grant control of the economy to a few dozen families. We shall abolish the large estates which condemn thousands of peasants to serfdom. We shall put an end to the foreign ownership of our industry and our sources of employment...I won't be just another president. I will be the first president of the first really democratic, popular, national and revolutionary government in the history of Chile.<sup>402</sup>

Allende's 'Vía Chilena' was a radical package of social, economic and political reforms.

Despite opposition from a hostile congress, the president pushed through a number of important changes: five hundred big companies were nationalised; five million hectares of land was expropriated and over 2,000 land seizures (toma) tolerated; massive wage increases were granted to public sector workers; the franchise was extended to include illiterates and the age restriction for voting lowered to eighteen.<sup>403</sup> Initially, these policies appeared to be both popular and successful: GDP rose by 7.7%, unemployment halved and wages increased by a third in 1971. In April 1971, the UP vote climbed above 50% in local elections.

But Allende faced opposition from a myriad of domestic sources. Revolutionary groups like the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) and the Movimiento de Acción Popular (MAPU) called for armed struggle to ensure the total victory of the pobladores and campesinos. MIR's slogan was 'Political consciousness! And rifles!' But some peasants who had become smallholders for the first time under Frei were unhappy at plans to turn their land into state farms. Both big and small business felt threatened by the rapid increase in nationalisation, particularly the gremio movement of guilds and professional associations. Far right nationalist groups like Patria y Libertad caused blackouts by blowing up electricity

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<sup>402</sup> Quoted in Bethell (ed.) (1993: 157).

<sup>403</sup> Under Allende, the state's share of the economy reached 53% from a high of 43% under Frei. Land seized and redistributed amounted to half the total agricultural land in Chile.

pylons. The rationing of goods, including staples like beef, cigarettes and toilet paper led many women, particularly middle and upper-class housewives, to protest strongly against government policies. In December 1971, thousands of women took part in a 'March of the Empty Pots' in Santiago, beating saucepans to highlight the shortage of food.

Internationally, attitudes to the UP regime were mixed. The first foreign head of state to visit Chile was Fidel Castro, who in a three week trip publicly hectored President Allende about the true path of revolution. Allende also received lukewarm support from the Soviet Union and other Eastern-bloc states. In Western Europe, socialists and social democrats feted Allende as an exemplar of peaceful, but radical, change. The main opposition to Allende came from the United States. Under Eduardo Frei, Chile had been a showcase for the American government's Alliance for Progress Programme, receiving over \$1 billion in aid, the highest per capita sum in the hemisphere. The US government, most notably the influential Forty Committee, was deeply concerned that Allende's democratic socialism, if successful, could spread throughout the continent and even into Europe. As Secretary of State Henry Kissinger commented, 'I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people'.<sup>404</sup>

Fears were further stoked by Allende's refusal to compensate two US copper companies, Anaconda and Kennecott, for the nationalisation of the copper industry. The US government enacted a two track policy designed to pressurise the Allende regime. Track I aimed to push Christian Democrat deputies into using a loophole in the Chilean constitution which would allow Frei to challenge Allende in a presidential run off. When this failed, Track II was stepped up, intended to hasten military intervention through the use of propaganda, funding

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<sup>404</sup> Quoted in Sigmund (1977: 103).

for opposition factions and the provision of arms to far right groups. As Ambassador Korry reported to Henry Kissinger on 21 September, 'we shall do all within our power to condemn Chile and the Chileans to the utmost deprivation and poverty'.<sup>405</sup> In October 1970, CIA weapons were used in a botched attempt to kidnap General René Schneider, commander in chief of the armed forces.<sup>406</sup> Short-term credits were denied and aid cut off in an attempt to follow through President Nixon's instructions to 'make the Chilean economy scream'.<sup>407</sup>

During 1972 and 1973, Allende's Chile began to implode. Large increases in public sector investment and extensive money printing led to a sharp rise in public debt, a widening fiscal deficit and hyperinflation.<sup>408</sup> In October 1972, a lorry owners dispute turned into a general strike of the gremialistas. Doctors, dentists and lawyers shut their practices and shopkeepers closed their stores. In response, groups of workers occupied their workplaces. A standoff ensued and both sides prepared themselves for violent conflict. As *Punto Final*, a left wing journal put it, 'for Chile, the cards are on the table. It will be either socialism or fascism – there is nothing in between'.<sup>409</sup>

The president appealed for compromise, appointing three military advisers to his cabinet, including General Prats, head of the armed forces. Although the UP increased its share of the vote in congressional elections held in March 1973, it failed to achieve the outright majority which would have seen the party take over congress. Vigilante groups from both the left and

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<sup>405</sup> Quoted in O'Shaughnessy (2000: 30).

<sup>406</sup> The attack turned out to be counterproductive as Schneider was killed in the attack, becoming a martyr to the constitutionalist faction in the armed forces.

<sup>407</sup> The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities later established through a special investigation – the Church Report – that the CIA funnelled \$7 million into Chile between 1970 and 1973. However, the report concluded that this had not been a sufficient amount on its own to destabilise the Allende regime.

<sup>408</sup> Inflation reached a high of over 600% in 1973. The black market currency exchange rate was thirty times the official value of the peso while the budget deficit ran at 25% of GDP.

<sup>409</sup> Quoted in Cooper (2001: 22).



right took to the streets, creating a level of disorder which threatened to pull Chile into civil war. In June, an attempted coup (tancazo) by army officers was successfully dispersed by Prats but only after the loss of twenty-two lives. In August, after a group of officers' wives had publicly berated him as a 'coward', Prats resigned, to be replaced by his apparently loyal deputy, Augusto Pinochet Ugarte. Later that month, congress voted the actions of the government unconstitutional and invited the military to defend the nation.

In early September, the navy, backed by the air force, upped plans for a coup. After much vacillation, Pinochet joined the plotters on 9 September followed by the carabineros the next day.<sup>410</sup> Overnight, the navy took control of the port at Valparaiso. At 8.30am on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup>, the plotters publicly announced the coup. At 9.30am, just as plans for the attack on the presidential palace of La Moneda were being finalised, Allende read out his final message to the people on Radio Megallanes,

There is only one thing I can say to the workers: I shall not surrender. History has given me a choice. I shall sacrifice my life in loyalty to my people in the knowledge that the seeds we have planted in the noble consciousness of thousands of Chileans can never be prevented from bearing fruit. Our enemies are strong; they can enslave the people. But neither criminal acts nor force of arms can hold back this process. History belongs to us... In these dark and bitter days, when treachery seeks to impose its own order, you may be assured that sooner rather than later, the great avenues towards a new society will open again, and the march along that road will continue.<sup>411</sup>

After defending the palace all morning, Allende ordered his personal guard, friends and colleagues to leave La Moneda. When the army entered the palace, Allende was found dead with a shotgun, a present from Fidel Castro, lying by his side.

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<sup>410</sup> Pinochet's loyalty to the government seemed so firm that Allende, on seeing the ultimatum to resign signed by the four coup leaders was heard to say, 'poor Pinochet, he's been captured'. See O'Shaughnessy (2000: 56).

<sup>411</sup> Quoted in O'Shaughnessy (2000: 56-58).

The new regime quickly displayed its authoritarian zeal. On 12 September, the four man junta of General Pinochet, commander-in-chief of the army, General Gustavo Leigh, head of the air force, Admiral José Toribio Merino, commander of the navy and General César Mendoza, head of the carabineros, declared a state of siege. Congress was dissolved, trade unions prohibited, Chile's borders closed, a strict curfew authorised and political parties banned outright or indefinitely suspended. General Leigh announced that the aim of the junta was to purify Chile, 'to cut out the Marxist cancer and restore Chile to sanity'.<sup>412</sup> The few outbreaks of armed resistance to the coup were easily crushed.<sup>413</sup> On 19 September, Chile was declared an 'emergency zone' and military authority, including the use of military courts, was extended to cover most civilian activity. Nearly 50,000 people were held for interrogation in military barracks, hospitals and the two main football stadiums in Santiago. Fifty leading politicians were taken to Dawson Island in the sub-Antarctic where they were held in brutal conditions. By December 1973, 1,500 Chileans had been killed, thousands more sent to special prison camps and 7,000 forced into exile.<sup>414</sup> As Pamela Constable writes, 'a reign of state terror had begun'.<sup>415</sup>

Ostensibly, authority within the junta was fairly evenly distributed. The army took control of security, the navy was responsible for the economy, the air force took care of social issues and the carabineros dealt with labour and agriculture. Although General Leigh was expected to be the public face of the regime and leadership of the junta was supposed to rotate among the four commanders, real power lay with Pinochet and the army. In June 1974, citing the

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<sup>412</sup> Quoted in O'Brien and Roddick (1983: 79).

<sup>413</sup> The only armed resistance came in a handful of factories, the La Legua poblacion in Santiago and in isolated gunfights with MIR activists. There were, however, considerable peaceful protests against the coup in Europe and the United States, including a 10,000 strong demonstration in London.

<sup>414</sup> Between 1973 and 1988, 200,000 Chileans went into political exile, some voluntarily, others not.

<sup>415</sup> Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 20).

requirement in the Chilean constitution for a single leader, Pinochet persuaded fellow junta members to name him as chief executive. In August, Pinochet was elevated to the title of Supreme Chief of the Nation. In December, again citing legal technicalities, he persuaded the junta to name him President. Chile, in all but name, had become a dictatorship.

Unsurprisingly, the chief beneficiary of the regime's largesse was the coercive apparatus.

Between 1973 and 1981, the military budget rose from \$177 million to \$984 million, reaching 6% of GDP. Half the cabinet ranked officials appointed under the dictatorship were from the military, as were half its ambassadorial appointments and 40% of its agency heads and undersecretaries.<sup>416</sup> The armed forces saw their numbers treble and there was a substantial hike in military salaries and pensions. New institutions were set up to wage a 'total war' against communism, including the Superior Academy of National Security in 1974.

The centrepiece of the new coercive order was the Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (DINA). DINA was established to co-ordinate the various military intelligence units that each service ran. It became Pinochet's personal fiefdom, run by a close friend, Manuel Contreras Sepúlveda, who was answerable only to the president himself. Contreras and Pinochet turned DINA into a semi-autonomous arm of state terror, financed clandestinely and responsible for torture, murder and assassinations both in Chile and abroad. Opponents of the regime were systematically wiped out: MIR in 1975, the socialists in 1976 and the communists in 1977.

DINA agents murdered General Prats in Buenos Aires, Bernardo Leighton, a leading Christian Democrat in Rome and Orlando Letelier, Allende's Defence Minister, in

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<sup>416</sup> Pinochet was careful, however, not to let officers stay in one post for any significant length of time, thereby stopping them from building up a power base which could challenge his authority.

Washington D.C. At its height, DINA boasted a network of around 5,000 agents and informers. Its internal motto asserted that 'we will fight in the shadows so our children can play in the sunlight'.

The military took control or received support from a wealth of previously independent institutions. Immediately after the coup, the president of the Supreme Court, Enrique Urrutia, expressed his 'delight' at the military's action. In 1976, the chief justice professed his happiness at the perfect state of legal order and civil rights in the country, despite the use of military tribunals (*consejos de guerra*) which saw 6,000 people tried and over 200 executed in the first three years of the regime. In March 1974, the junta published their 'declaration of principles', arguing that they could not set timetables for their rule as their task was nothing short of rebuilding the country and 'changing the mentality of Chileans'. Twenty thousand staff and students were forced out of universities. A compulsory course in National Security was added to the school curriculum. Few media outlets escaped the state's *apagón* (cultural blackout). Those that did, such as *Mensaje*, *Hoy* and *Radio Cooperativa*, were subject to constant harassment. As Jean Cloyet wrote at the time, 'records are hidden, not as one protects a relic, but as one conceals weapons'.<sup>417</sup> Books, including works by Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Mario Vargas Llosa were banned as were films ranging from the *Day of the Jackal* to *Fiddler on the Roof*. Civil society organisations like the Centros de Madres, a network of women's organisations headed by Lucia Pinochet, the wife of the president, the National Youth Secretariat and the Juntas de Vecinos were all colonised by the regime.

At first, economic reforms lagged behind the regime's authoritarian thrusts. Although price controls and subsidies were removed, inflation remained high, running at over 300% in early

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<sup>417</sup> Quoted in Hojman (1985: 43).

1975. But between 1973 and 1975, a group of ardent monetarists from the Economics Faculty of the Universidad Católica who had previously trained at the University of Chicago, gradually asserted their influence over economic policy. The Chicago Boys produced an influential report in early 1973, a five hundred page dictat nicknamed *el ladrillo* (the brick), published by the Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (SOFOFA), a lobby for industrialists. This neo-liberal cook book contained the seeds of the Chicago Boys approach to policy making: a sudden removal of economic crutches to allow the market the freedom to find its own levels. After the coup, a number of these monetarists became key advisers to the government, most notably Sergio de Castro, former Dean of the Economics Faculty at Católica, in the Ministry of Finance. In 1975, the government announced its Economic Recovery Programme. Public expenditure dropped by over a quarter, tariffs were cut in half and a number of large state organisations privatised. The effects on the economy were drastic: GDP fell by 15% in 1975 and 10% in 1976; wages were cut in half and unemployment doubled in little over a year.

Shock therapy prompted the first widespread opposition to the regime. The Christian Democrats formally ended their involvement in government.<sup>418</sup> A number of politicians and academics founded or joined think-tanks, often funded by sister parties and organisations abroad. The Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT), the principal workers organisation which had been formally dissolved in 1973, re-emerged as a loose grouping, the Coordinadora Nacional Sindical (CNS), representing miners, construction and textile workers. In 1976, the CNS published an open letter protesting against the economic policies of the government.<sup>419</sup> Strikes erupted at El Teniente and Chiquicamata copper mines. Other

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<sup>418</sup> Many had already resigned in protest at the forced exile of Renán Ruentelba, a leading Christian Democrat in November 1974.

<sup>419</sup> Although it was formally banned in 1978, the CNS retained a membership of nearly half a million workers, becoming a fulcrum of the strikes which rocked Chile in the early 1980s.

unions, including the Unión Democrática de Trabajadores, a moderate organisation representing truck drivers, civil servants and dockers which had initially supported the government, came out strongly against the regime. Hundreds of thousands fled to Argentina to search for work.<sup>420</sup>

The principal source of domestic opposition to the regime was the church. Immediately after the coup, a coalition of religious bodies under the auspices of the World Council of Churches established the Comité de Cooperación para la Paz en Chile (COPACHI). COPACHI helped half a million people over a two year period, some with legal aid, others with food or medical care. Harangued by the military, the Comité was shut down in 1975 and replaced by the Vicaría de Solidaridad headed by Cardinal Silva, Archbishop of Santiago. At its height, the Vicaría boasted a two hundred strong staff made up of lawyers, social workers and administrators managing an annual budget of around \$2 million. The Vicaría made over 9,000 habeas corpus (recurso de amparo) petitions to the courts in the lifetime of the regime, although almost all were rejected because of the courts acceptance of Chile as in a 'state of internal war' which justified the use of emergency powers.

A number of civil society groups also stood against the regime. The Association of Family Members of the Detained-Disappeared was set up in 1974, using a range of tools including hunger strikes and 'surprise demonstrations' to publicise their cause. The Comité pro Retorno de los Exiliados Chilenos was formed in 1978 to lobby for those forced into exile. Despite the use of frequent search and destroy operations (allanamientos), a welter of self-help groups and 'solidarity organisations' sprung up in the poblaciones. Soup kitchens (comedas

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<sup>420</sup> Wright and Oñate (1998) estimate that 800,000 Chileans went to Argentina to look for work between 1973 and 1982.

infantiles y populares), handicraft workshops (talleres laborales), unemployment groups (bolsas de trabajo) and health centres helped to fill the gaps left by the removal of the social arm of the state and the banning of political parties. In the 1980s, the Chilean Commission for Human Rights began to publicly monitor and report on human rights abuses around the country. Bands like Quilapayún and Inti Illimani, along with street theatre groups and an array of samizdat style publications, provided the bedrock for a new wave of protest culture.

In the mid-1970s, the military regime also came under significant international pressure. UNHCR and the Red Cross were both important organisations in the immediate aftermath of the coup, helping upward of 5,000 foreigners to escape from Chile. A number of countries, including some in Latin America, suspended formal relations with Chile after the coup. The UK withdrew its ambassador after the torture of a British doctor, Sheila Cassidy, in 1976. In 1977, the UN voted overwhelmingly to condemn Chile for human rights abuses. The arrival of the Carter administration in January 1977 with its focus on human rights so soon after the murder of Orlando Letelier swung US policy decisively against the dictatorship. Carter accused Chile of 'condoning terrorism'. All non-humanitarian aid was cut off, the US ambassador was withdrawn and military co-operation terminated. US investigations into the Letelier murder tracked the assassination team directly to Contreras. Under severe pressure, Pinochet was forced to sack Contreras, dissolve DINA and hand over one of the agents responsible for the killing, Michael Townley, to US authorities.<sup>421</sup>

Pinochet considered such international meddling as an affront to Chilean sovereignty. He responded by cracking down on domestic dissidents and acting to institutionalise his regime.

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<sup>421</sup> However, Contreras was swiftly promoted to the rank of General and DINA more or less rebranded as the Central Nacional de Información (CNI). Townley was convicted by a US court and served three years in jail.

In 1977, all political parties were outlawed, public meetings banned and censorship extended due to the 'frequent abuse of the privilege of public freedom'. As Cesar Caviedes writes, 'from the political twilight that had fallen in 1973, the country was plunged into total darkness'.<sup>422</sup> Pinochet set up a commission, later a Council of State under former president Jorge Alessandri, to draft a new constitution.<sup>423</sup> Preparations were made for a plebiscite which could act as a vote affirming Chileans support both for the regime and the constitution. When Admiral Leigh publicly voiced his opposition to Pinochet's scheme, he was removed from the junta. In a landmark speech at Chacarillas, Pinochet outlined his vision of the future,

Our duty is to give form to a new democracy that will be authoritarian, protected, integrating, technically modern and with authentic social participation. The classic, liberal state, naïve and spineless, must be replaced with one willing to use strong and vigorous authority to defend the citizens from demagoguery and violence.<sup>424</sup>

The so called 'constitution of liberty' potentially gave the president sweeping new powers. Pinochet could be given an eight year term as president to run until March 1989, followed by the opportunity to extend his rule by eight more years if he was confirmed as the official candidate of the regime and won a plebiscite in 1988. The Council of National Security, dominated by the military, was to become the political executive. Congress, when it returned after 1988, was to be partially non-elected, containing a strong military presence and with only weak supervisory powers over the presidential office. The right to habeas corpus, bane of the military in its struggles with the Vicariate, was to be removed. In this way, Pinochet hoped to remain as a largely unfettered president until 1997. On 11 September 1980, 67%

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<sup>422</sup> See Caviedes (1991: 78).

<sup>423</sup> Alessandri later resigned from the Council of State, although he refused to publicly say why. In his stead, the main architect of the constitution became Jaime Guzmán, a leading gremialista.

<sup>424</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 71).



voted yes to Pinochet's carefully worded plebiscite.<sup>425</sup> Despite widespread allegation of fraud and vote rigging, the new constitution was passed into law in March 1981.<sup>426</sup> Pinochet could truly boast that, 'not a leaf moves in Chile if I don't move it, let that be clear'.<sup>427</sup>

In the late 1970s, it appeared as if the policies of the Chicago Boys had succeeded in turning the Chilean economy around. The economy recorded 8.6% growth in 1977, 6% in 1978 and 8.5% in 1979. Wages rose and consumer goods poured into Chile to feed the bulging wallets of the *cuesco cabrera* or yuppies. Between 1976 and 1981, over two million television sets alone were imported into Chile. In 1979, Pinochet outlined seven key areas which would be modernised: health care, social security, labour, education, justice, agriculture and the regions. A new phase of 'popular privatisation' begun, featuring the sale of state assets ranging from kindergartens to swimming pools.

But by the beginning of the 1980s, the Chilean miracle began to look more like a dystopia. The consumer boom had been based on credit, engendering a sizeable debt which in turn was underwritten, to a great extent, by bad loans.<sup>428</sup> The privatisation process was deeply flawed as numerous companies were sold off to state backers and cronies for a fraction of their real value. A handful of big groups (*grupos economicos*), chief among them Cruzat-Larrain and Vial, established control of huge swathes of banking capital and credit accounts, principally through shady deals and crooked accounting.<sup>429</sup> The currency was markedly overvalued, the trade deficit immense and the banking system in a mess. The lack of a state regulator or

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<sup>425</sup> The text of the plebiscite read, 'in the face of international aggression against our country, I support President Pinochet in his defence of the dignity of Chile and reaffirm the legitimacy of the government of the republic as sovereign leader in the process of the institutionalisation of the country'.

<sup>426</sup> For example, in nine provinces, more votes were cast than voters.

<sup>427</sup> Claim made in 1981. Quoted in Caistor (1998: 29).

<sup>428</sup> Constable and Valenzuela estimate that a quarter of the total capital and reserves of Chilean banks stemmed from bad loans.

<sup>429</sup> In 1982, Cruzat-Larrain and Vial controlled 42% of all the banking capital in Chile and 60% of all credit.

independent watchdog engendered a level of unaccountability which tied Chile together in a web of corruption and deceit.

In May 1981, CRAV, the sugar monopoly, abruptly collapsed. Other bankruptcies followed.

In 1982, GDP dropped by 14%, public debt reached 80% of GDP and a third of the workforce became unemployed – 62% of jobs in construction, 44% in mining and 30% of work in the factories were lost in a year. Over half a million Chileans were forced onto two state emergency schemes – the Plan de Empleo Mínimo (PEM) and the Programa de Ocupación para Jefes de Hogar (POJH) – being paid a fraction of the minimum wage for menial work or manual labour.<sup>430</sup> The peso, previously pegged to the dollar, was allowed to float freely, immediately losing 40% of its value. Despite an \$850 million rescue package from the IMF, the government was forced to take over nine key banks and financial institutions in an \$8 billion dollar bailout.<sup>431</sup>

The economic collapse punctured the government alliance. The regime had always been home to two main camps: duros who favoured more hardline policies; and blandos, who sought the eventual return of democracy, albeit in a partial or limited sense. Each had its own media, periodicals and policy institutes. But in the first decade of the military's rule, an alliance between the two principal hardline groups – the Chicago Boys and the gremialistas – saw the duros dominate policy making. But the crash of the early 1980s gave blandos an opportunity to reassert their position. In 1983, nine former National Party congressmen came out publicly against the dictatorship, setting up a new political party, the Movimiento Nacional Unidad (MNU) to establish a centre-right presence in any imminent transition to

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<sup>430</sup> PEM paid around a quarter and POJH about 60% of the minimum wage.

<sup>431</sup> After the takeover of these institutions, the state controlled 70% of the financial system in Chile.

democracy. Gremialistas responded by starting their own party, the Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI), to defend the interests of the regime.

Opposition to the regime mounted. From May 1983, monthly demonstrations were held around the country, most prominently in the shanty towns around Santiago. Poblador associations organised stayaways, marches and demonstrations. A new opposition coalition, the Alianza Democrática, initiated by Christian Democrats and moderate socialists, called for negotiation with the regime and a gradual return to democracy. A more hardline group, the Movimiento Democrático Popular, advocated mass action, 'popular rebellion' and the forcible overthrow of the regime. This divergence over strategy was mirrored by a number of ruptures within the nascent opposition: many exiled Chileans considered those who had stayed behind to be collaborators, while some of those who had remained in Chile deemed exiles to be cowards; those who had fought against the coup resented those who had initially supported it; people who favoured negotiation with the regime were distrusted by those who advocated a more adversarial course.<sup>432</sup>

In 1985, the church sponsored a talking shop, the Acuerdo Nacional para la Transición Hacia la Plena Democracia, to foster common principles, goals and tactics among the disparate groups. The result was the 'Manifesto for Democracy', signed by twenty-one leading politicians on behalf of eleven political parties ranging from socialists to the centre-right. The manifesto called for a lifting of the state of emergency, the legalisation of political parties and a peaceful transition to democracy through presidential elections, an elected congress and a new constitution. Half a million people joined a demonstration in Santiago to hear the leader

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<sup>432</sup> Much of this friction occurred within parties. For example, the split between the Altamirano (later Nuñez) and Almeyda factions within the Socialist Party.

of the Christian Democrats, Gabriel Valdés, exclaim, ‘the people are on their feet, saying enough dictatorship, enough decay, enough repression’.<sup>433</sup>

The regime seemed at first unsure about how to deal with the resurgent opposition. An *apertura* or opening saw Interior Minister Sergio Onofre Jarpa agree to negotiations with the main opposition leaders. From 1984, thousands of exiles were allowed to return home.<sup>434</sup> But at the same time, the regime declared a state of siege, arresting over 30,000 people, imposing a curfew and closing down all non-state supporting publications. Demonstrations were brutally dispersed and a campaign of murder begun in the poblaciones around Santiago. In 1986, the Asamblea de la Civilidad, a grassroots movement, published a list of demands (Demanda de Chile) for the return to democracy. When the government refused, the Asamblea called a general strike. The two day stoppage was met by extreme state repression. In one infamous incident of state brutality, two young students, Rodrigo Rojas and Carmen Gloria Quintana, were set on fire by a military patrol.<sup>435</sup>

By the mid 1980s, this state offensive appeared to have succeeded. Jarpa’s overtures to the opposition were ignored, leading to his resignation from the government. Higher copper prices and a partial retreat from pure neo-liberalism helped the economy register renewed growth, averaging 5% between 1986 and 1988. Inflation and unemployment fell as tariffs were increased, the budget deficit was allowed to rise and taxes were raised. A new finance minister, Hernán Büchi, secured over \$1.2 billion in loans from the World Bank, carefully supporting sensitive sectors while keeping a tight reign on the conglomerates and banks. In

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<sup>433</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 286).

<sup>434</sup> Exiles were used widely by the regime in propaganda campaigns. Claims varied from accusing exiles of fronting an ‘international campaign against Chile’ to condemning their supposed life of luxury abroad. Such campaigns did help to foster resentment between exiles and those who stayed behind. For example, a popular MIR slogan read, ‘el MIR no se asila’ (MIR does not seek asylum). The forced exile decree was lifted in 1988.

<sup>435</sup> Rojas, a US resident, died from his wounds but Quintana survived, becoming a powerful opposition symbol.

the meantime, hardliners in the opposition escalated their policy of sabotage and violence. Over 1,000 bombings took place in 1984 alone. In 1986, the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez (FPMR), the armed wing of the Communist Party, attempted to assassinate General Pinochet.<sup>436</sup> Their failure and the discovery of a substantial arms cache including 3,000 M-16 rifles, 150 rocket launchers, 2,000 hand grenades and two million rounds of ammunition imported from Cuba by the Frente was turned into a propaganda coup for the regime. An immediate state of siege was announced in which all the major opposition leaders were denounced and arrested.

International relations with the regime during the 1980s were mixed. The external wings of a number of opposition groups operated from headquarters abroad: the Communist Party in Moscow, the Socialists in Berlin and the Christian Democrats in Rome. A range of European countries also accepted large numbers of exiles: 30,000-40,000 in Sweden and up to 10,000 in Belgium. This exile diaspora set up thousands of groups to highlight the abuses of the dictatorship. In 1987, the Pope visited Chile, calling the Pinochet government 'dictatorial'. Democratisation throughout Latin America, most notably in Argentina and Brazil, acted as a spur to both domestic and international opponents of the regime. But, at the same time, European governments continued to provide loans and arms to the regime during the 1980s.

Initially, the Reagan administration followed a policy of engagement with the dictatorship. But in 1985, under domestic pressure to toughen up his stance, Reagan publicly vowed 'to oppose tyranny in whatever form, left or right'.<sup>437</sup> The State Department issued a statement describing Chile's human rights record as 'the greatest disappointment in the Western

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<sup>436</sup> Although Pinochet escaped with minor wounds, the assassination attempt, Operación Siglo, did kill five presidential bodyguards and injure twelve others.

<sup>437</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 290).

hemisphere' and the US sponsored the annual UN resolution reproaching Chile for the first time.<sup>438</sup> A number of government level loans were refused and ambassador Harry Barnes encouraged to establish links with opposition groups. As the plebiscite neared, the US government funded National Endowment for Democracy played a key role in ensuring a free and fair vote by helping to pay for voter registration campaigns, a parallel voting mechanism and election monitors.<sup>439</sup>

In 1987, all sides began to prepare extensively for the plebiscite. The UDI and the MNU joined together into one movement, Renovación Nacional (RN) led by a young, charismatic politician, Andrés Allamand. However, infighting led to the expulsion of Jaime Guzmán, who took many of his UDI supporters with him. This split between those, like Guzmán, who sought to perpetuate the regime and those, following Allamand, who wanted a return to democracy was in stark contrast to the new found unity of the opposition. The left had maintained strong networks throughout the mid-late 1980s, primarily through think-tanks and policy institutes, breaking down barriers and agreeing on common principles and strategies. They had learned harsh lessons from the failure of the Acuerdo and the unsuccessful strategies of groups like the FPMR. A new functional party, the Partido por la Democracia (PPD) was set up deliberately to eschew ideology and to act as a legitimate front against the dictatorship.<sup>440</sup> No extremism was tolerated and firm ground rules established which included acceptance of private property, macro-economic stability and the need for negotiated, peaceful change. In February 1988, fourteen political parties of the left joined the 'Concertación de Partidos por el "No"'.

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<sup>438</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 290).

<sup>439</sup> In total, over 1,000 international observers worked to ensure a fair vote in the 1988 plebiscite.

<sup>440</sup> In one of the most dramatic moments of the plebiscite campaign, Ricardo Lagos, leader of the PPD, engaged in a finger wagging dispute with Pinochet live on TV.

The Concertación entertained real hopes of winning the plebiscite. In July 1988, a public opinion poll found that 73% of Chileans did not trust the armed forces and 64% said that the military should have less power.<sup>441</sup> A stand-off between the Vicaría and the regime over the state's seizure of private medical files saw thousands turn up for demonstrations in the Plaza de Armas in Santiago. In August, the junta confirmed Pinochet as the official candidate of the regime despite a poll which showed that 69% Chileans considered this a mistake. In the weeks leading up to the vote, both sides were given fifteen minutes a day on state television to publicise their views. The opposition's slick bulletins stressed positive images of moderation and reconciliation, in contrast to the state broadcasts which portrayed the Concertación as covert communists inexorably tied to the Allende period. 'What is truly at stake is the freedom of Chile' claimed Pinochet while the opposition trumpeted that, 'la alegría ya viene' (joy is coming). Opposition rallies were dissolved, Concertación supporters attacked and over 2,000 arrests made. Nevertheless, on polling day, 5 October, seven million Chileans voted overwhelmingly 'No': 55% nationwide and ten out of twelve regions came out against the regime. The junta met overnight and persuaded Pinochet to accept the vote. After fifteen years, the dictatorship was drawing to a close.

There were three main reasons why the dictatorship lost the plebiscite in 1988. First, the failure of the left to oust the regime during the period of mass protests in the early-mid 1980s convinced opposition leaders that they had to follow a more moderate, constitutional path. This meant attacking those features of the regime which Chileans disliked – the infringement of civil rights, the decline in public spending and high levels of poverty – but accepting others, in particular its general macro-economic strategy. Extremism and the hope of a

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<sup>441</sup> See Drake and Jakšić (eds.) (1995).

complete, revolutionary victory were exorcised from opposition programmes. Instead, severe constraints were accepted as to what could be achieved. Thereafter, the unity and skill of the opposition movement produced a campaign which convinced the public that they could be trusted and which overcame people's dual fear of both the regime and the Allende era. Secondly, the regime was defeated by its own fixations on legalism and legitimacy. In creating a new constitution and in particular, the mechanism of the plebiscite, Pinochet created the path for his own downfall. Thirdly, international pressure ensured that the vote was carried out in a free and fair manner, and that the regime would accept the result. For example, in the immediate aftermath of the plebiscite, the Chilean ambassador was invited to the White House and told in no uncertain terms of the need to abide by the decision of the Chilean people, a point reiterated publicly by the US ambassador in Santiago.

In the years immediately following the military coup, Chile became, in Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela's words, 'a nation of enemies'.<sup>442</sup> But, 'in the late 1980s, this hostility began to thaw, debate challenged propaganda and a spirit of reconciliation began to replace the climate of war'.<sup>443</sup> The dictatorship did not fall at a time of dual sovereignty or state crisis but in a period of relative strength with a healthy economy, secure institutions and relatively few domestic or international pressures. Instead, an almost accidental process took place in which the administration collapsed on its own sword of constitutionality and the opposition accepted key elements of the regime's legacy. The regime's backward looking approach to the plebiscite failed to understand that Chile was no longer a 'nation of enemies'. Instead, Chileans had renewed hope in consensus and moderation. The constraints that this settlement bought with it are made abundantly clear by discussion of the transition process itself.

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<sup>442</sup> Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 245).

<sup>443</sup> Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 10).



### *Negotiating the transition*

After the plebiscite, the military regime and opposition leaders met in a series of negotiations to determine the future political shape of the country. Pinochet was determined to safeguard the 1980 constitution and leave any incoming regime *atado y bien atado* (well and truly tied). A number of binding laws – *Leyes de Amarre* – were introduced which institutionalised key aspects of the dictatorship's order and made it virtually impossible for the new administration to achieve any substantive reforms, at least in the short term. For their part, the opposition were operating within a context dominated by the fear of a return to dictatorship. Self-limitation saw opposition leaders restrain extremism and put aside their own long-term goals, proceeding only with the utmost caution. The resulting 'politics of agreements' was a settlement which restored democracy, at least in a limited sense, but which also created an order in which military authority remained prominent. As Kenneth Roberts writes,

The new regime was established with highly skewed democratic representation, limited civilian authority and a broad range of institutional prerogatives that maintained military tutelage of the political process.<sup>444</sup>

Despite the plebiscite defeat, the military were in a strong position to safeguard their interests: the economic system was prospering and still largely popular, particularly among business elites; key resources, including the means of coercion, lay in the military's hands; and the 1980 constitution provided a solid structure for state negotiators to work within.<sup>445</sup> Furthermore, at least until the elections, Pinochet remained president, using his position to push through numerous legislation – *Leyes de Organicos* – which limited the operating

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<sup>444</sup> Roberts (1998: 143).

<sup>445</sup> Under the terms of the constitution, a forty seven member upper house (senate) would include twenty-one designated representatives ranging from ex-presidents and commanders-in-chief of the armed forces to former university chancellors. As I discussed above, the constitution also essentially granted a policy veto to the military dominated National Security Council (NSC).

environment of the government-elect: a wave of privatisations, including the state airline and a number of media outlets, were hurried through; nine pro-military justices were appointed to the Supreme Court as members for life; a National Council for Television was set up, again staffed by regime loyalists; and guarantees were passed to stop the dismissal of civil servants by any new political masters. On top of this, the Ley Organica de las Fuerzas Armadas ensured military autonomy from civilian command. The military budget was to be sustained at 1988 levels in real terms and would include a percentage drawn from profits made by the state copper company, COPELCO. All military leaders were to stay in their posts with civilian authorities unable to remove them for at least eight years. CNI and military intelligence files were destroyed to prevent the incoming government from prying too deeply into the more unsavoury aspects of the dictatorship.

Nevertheless, buoyed by their success in the plebiscite campaign, opposition leaders were hopeful of achieving their four main negotiating targets: eliminating or at least reducing the number of designated senators; downgrading the role of the National Security Council; restoring the autonomy of previously independent institutions like the judiciary and the central bank; and ensuring that a new government had a sufficiently secure power base to launch reform programmes. Of course, this could not be achieved without the same focus on unity, moderation and consensus building which had characterised the plebiscite campaign. This meant accepting that, at least during this stage of the transition, only relatively minor gains would be achievable; large-scale constitutional change or attacks on inbuilt 'authoritarian enclaves' would have to wait. The opposition therefore broadly accepted the macro-economic policies of the regime, although they re-emphasised the need to redistribute resources more equitably and united around a figurehead, the seventy-one year old seven times PDC president Patricio Aylwin Azócar. Aylwin's slogan, 'growth with equity', was

designed both to reassure business elites of the Concertación's commitment to economic prudence and also to indicate to the public that the main priority of any future Concertación government would be poverty alleviation.

The negotiations themselves, chaired by Minister of the Interior Carlos Cáceres, were complex affairs held almost exclusively behind closed doors. In March 1989, rules for the elections were agreed. A binomial system was accepted which would see each district elect two delegates and two senators.<sup>446</sup> Political parties could put up candidates in any district but each also stood as a representative of wider groupings: Concertación representing the left, Democracia y Progreso for the right. To win both seats in a district, coalitions needed to win either two-thirds of the vote or register twice the support of their nearest *coalition* rival. If they failed to achieve this, the second seat went to the opposition grouping. This system was deliberately designed to favour the right.<sup>447</sup> While Concertación was expected to win a plurality in most districts, it was unlikely to do so by a sufficient margin to secure both seats in more than a handful of cases. The right would therefore take the second seat in a district despite a relatively low popular vote.<sup>448</sup> Electoral districts were also drawn up to favour the right, most notably through the over-representation of rural areas: while 400,000 voters made up a district in areas of Santiago, this was true of only 38,000 in rural Aysén.

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<sup>446</sup> The sizes of the districts were different for the lower and upper houses, hence the higher number of deputies.

<sup>447</sup> As Kenneth Roberts (1998) points out, the system also worked against those parties of the left, particularly the communists, who stayed outside, either through choice or force, of the Concertación coalition.

<sup>448</sup> In the event, the right took the second seat in twelve districts despite more votes going to two Concertación candidates. In the most famous example, in Western Santiago, Andrés Zaldívar, representing the PDC got 31.3% of the vote; Ricardo Lagos of the PPD took 30.6%, Jaime Guzmán, representing UDI got 17.2% and Miguel Otero of the RN got 15.3%. But, because the combined vote of the first two candidates, both of whom were fighting the seat under the rubric of Concertación was 62%, under the two-thirds threshold and less than double the right coalition's combined total of 32.5%, Zaldívar took the first seat and Guzmán the second.

But opposition negotiators did secure some important concessions. In April 1989, the number of designated senators were reduced from twenty-one to nine, the National Security Council was reduced to a more consultative body boasting an even number of military and civilian members, civilian control was extended over some aspects of military and police promotion and retirement, membership of the central bank's decision making council was made equitable between the military and civilian authorities, constitutional amendments were made easier to achieve, radical left-wing parties which did not advocate violence were legalised and trade union activists permitted to become members of political parties. A number of modifications were also instigated to reduce the powers of the presidency. The legislature was given new powers to overturn an executive veto, terms of office were reduced from eight to six years and presidential entitlements to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, exile political opponents and declare a state-of-siege clarified. In June, Pinochet agreed to the changes and in July, 86% of the public voted overwhelmingly in favour of the amendments.

In the second half of 1989, attention turned from the negotiations to the presidential elections. The right remained deeply split about the best way to conduct their campaign. The RN favoured a mixed approach which stressed the achievements of the military in restoring order and promoting economic growth but which was also humble and apologetic about human rights abuses and the creation of mass poverty. The UDI and the populist right were, however, dogmatically supportive of the regime and its achievements. In the end, Democracia y Progreso chose Hernán Büchi, the former Minister of Finance who had successfully masterminded Chile's return to growth after 1985, as their candidate. But Francisco Errázuriz, a populist businessman, also ran, splitting the ticket. In contrast, the left, renamed as the Concertación por la Democracia remained firmly united behind Aylwin. In

the event, Aylwin won 55% of the vote, trouncing both Büchi who got 29% and Errázuriz, who secured 15%. As President Aylwin eulogised, 'Chile has recovered its freedom'.<sup>449</sup>

The focus by the opposition on pacts and the interlocking checks by which the old regime sought to constrain popular sovereignty also characterised the negotiations themselves.

Despite the fifty or so constitutional reforms which opposition negotiators achieved, the old regime remained heavily institutionalised in the political, economic and social landscape of the country. As the causes and the events of the transition were so circumscribed, it is little wonder that the outcomes too have been rather less than the radical transformation many hoped for in 1988. It is to these that I now turn.

### *Outcomes of the transition*

The next part of the chapter deals in depth with the outcomes of the transition, looking at how Chile's principal power relations have changed since the return of democracy. As I indicated in the last section, these outcomes have been heavily circumscribed because of the ongoing structural hold of the military on key institutional levers of power and by the relative weakness of the new regime and its focus on *acuerdos* (agreements), consensus and moderation above conflict and radical change. In this section, I look at to what extent Chile's transition fits into the theoretical patterns I outlined in earlier chapters, thereby determining in a more abstract sense whether it warrants the term revolution, negotiated or otherwise.

As I discussed in chapter two, revolutions are caused by a dual process: the incapacity of a ruling elite to deal effectively with systemic upheaval and the existence of a rival group which espouses a sufficiently clear alternative to pose a viable alternative to the old order. As

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<sup>449</sup> Quoted in Constable and Valenzuela (1991: 369).

Lenin's maxim states, neither the rulers nor the ruled are willing or able to go on in the same way. In Chile, only part of this axiom holds true. First, there was not the international upheaval or domestic crisis to warrant a *revolutionary* challenge to the old order. The international context, yet to be fundamentally uprooted by the collapse of communism, was relatively stable in 1988.<sup>450</sup> Although there were some signs of a general winding down of the Cold War, there was also real ambivalence within key components of the international system to the military regime. European governments continued to deal with the dictatorship, particularly through arms sales and loans, during the 1980s while the US shifted its position regularly. Democratisation in Latin America, although providing tantalising glimpses of possible democratic futures for Chile, did not exert significant pressure on the military regime. There was also a split between political international agencies, like the UN, which regularly condemned the dictatorship and economic agencies, like the IMF and World Bank, which provided the resources to prop up the regime.<sup>451</sup> Therefore, there was neither the welcoming international environment nor the active support for systemic change which accompanied revolutionary change in the Czech Republic and South Africa.

Secondly, there was no sense of domestic collapse or crisis, absolute or relative, in Chile. To all extents and purposes, the regime had recovered from its nadir of the early-mid 1980s with a renewed grip on domestic authority due in part to the economic recovery and also to its monopoly of the means of coercion which it employed frequently and to devastating effect. The legitimacy of the regime, however, was tenuous, achieved economically through adherence to neo-liberalism, politically via the 1980 constitution and plebiscite, and socially

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<sup>450</sup> Indeed, General Pinochet was convinced that the dictatorship was a forerunner rather than an effect of the collapse of communism. As he told the journalist, Mónica González, 'We are an example for the whole world. The fall of the Berlin Wall was caused by Chile, we were the first to raise our flags against the Berlin Wall, we were the first to defeat communism'. Quoted in Dorfman (2002: 84).

<sup>451</sup> Initially, the money markets responded badly to the end of the dictatorship. For example, the day after the plebiscite, the Santiago stock exchange lost 16% of its value. The next day it fell another 10%.

only by maintaining order through repression and fear. The dictatorship, like other absolutist regimes, was therefore far more vulnerable than it appeared. But many older Chileans, including those on the left, remained traumatised by the memory of the Allende period and the subsequent repression by the military; many younger Chileans knew little of Chile's democratic heritage. Nevertheless, the strength, unity and purpose achieved by the opposition during the late 1980s, prompted partly by their failure to seize power during the mass protests of the early 1980s, managed to convince both domestic and international elites that they were a genuine alternative to the dictatorship. Economically, they promised to broadly maintain the neo-liberal policies of the military regime. Socially, they persuaded Chileans that there could be an end to the repression of the authoritarian era. Politically, by proceeding only through a series of agreements with key power brokers, they guaranteed the maintenance of order. As I outlined above, Chilean democracy, when it has existed, has virtually always been a system of elite pacts and compromise. It was this system that returned after 1988. As Ariel Dorfman writes,

The tragedy of my country and of so many other precarious democracies worldwide was that we could not put the murderers and violators on trial. That was the pact we signed, the consensus we reached. We thought – and we were probably right – that our ambiguous freedom depended on coexisting with the dictator's shadow.<sup>452</sup>

In sum therefore, Chile lacked many of the features which mark the onset of revolutionary change. There was not the significant shifts in the structures and norms of world politics to provide the context for revolutionary change nor persistent pressure from leading international agencies for radical change. Domestically, there was no real sense of failure or overriding feeling that things were getting intolerably worse, nor was there a final spark which ignited latent revolutionary fervour. Rather, by 1988, the military regime had simply

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<sup>452</sup> Dorfman (2002: 48).

run its course. Key political and business elites were confident, partly because of their frequent contacts with opposition leaders, that the economic system would be left largely intact by a return to democracy. Leading international agencies were broadly supportive of a peaceful return to a moderate form of democracy. The public were persuaded that they could vote in a free and fair way and that the opposition had finally buried the legacy of the Allende period. Like other examples of transition or revolution, it was a mixture of structural and contingent forces which ended the military period in Chile. But this was not the systemic crisis which characterised either past examples of revolutionary change nor the two cases of negotiated revolution I described in earlier chapters.

As I outlined in chapter two, revolutionary events feature some kind of opening which allows the space for revolutionaries to gather resources and pose a fundamental challenge to the old order. This was not the case in Chile. The military regime in Chile was an impermeable order which managed to see off both peaceful and violent challenges to its rule. The only substantial opening of the system took place during the crisis of the early 1980s. However, by rolling back its adherence to a pure form of neo-liberalism and through a renewed crackdown on domestic dissidents, the regime managed successfully to see off its opponents and close up the system once more. What changed in Chile was therefore not a forced opening of a previously closed regime but a pronounced shift in the strategy and goals of the opposition. Rather than looking to overturn the system as a whole, principally through mass action, the opposition accepted the broad parameters of the regime's order, fighting only on a restricted political terrain. The 1988 plebiscite was not the action of an embattled regime forced to accommodate rival groups because of a revolutionary surge from below. Rather, the authoritarian order provided a partial context for conflict within which opposition forces agreed to work. The opposition was successful in the plebiscite because they made better uses



of their resources, enjoyed superior leadership and ironically, because they adjusted better to a context which was set in place by the regime itself.

I have frequently used Eric Hobsbawm's definition of revolutionary outcomes in this thesis, namely that the 'minimum condition' of revolutionary success is the takeover and establishment of state power or its equivalent by revolutionaries and that the 'maximum condition' of a revolution is the institutionalisation of a new political, economic and social order. In Chile, neither of Hobsbawm's criteria have taken place. The opposition have not been able to take full control of the means of production, means of coercion and means of information because of the authoritarian enclaves instituted by the old regime. Nor, as I show in the next section, have they been able to push through a transformation of Chile's principal power relations. As a result, Chile has not provided the formative impact revolutions tend to exert on their immediate neighbours and the international system as a whole.

But if Chile has not featured the same type of causes, events and outcomes which characterise revolutionary change, then how closely does it correspond with my concept of negotiated revolution? I have posited five distinct elements to negotiated revolution: the process itself, the role of the international, ideology, the state and violence. Chile fulfils two of these criteria but crucially, lacks three. First, although round table discussions did take place in Chile, guillotines were never an option. Negotiations were not bought about by a condition of dual sovereignty and they were not a process embarked upon between equals. Although the opposition won the plebiscite, they lacked the resources, organisational capacity and crucially, the will to pose a truly systemic challenge to the old regime. The military permitted only those concessions which did not threaten their hold on key levers of power and the opposition did not seek to overturn the core elements of the system. Rather it was their

rapprochement with many aspects of the old order which allowed the opposition to achieve some successes during the negotiations themselves.

Second, Chile, as I outlined above, did not experience significant international pressure fundamentally to change its system. Three principal features of the international – the change in US policy under Jimmy Carter, democratisation in Latin America and the winding down of the Cold War – played a role in promoting peaceful, partial reform, but not at a level which would support revolution in Chile and mass disturbance to the regional and international system. While many governments welcomed the return of democracy to Chile, a significant group of international agencies were, at least initially, less enthusiastic and there was certainly not the wholesale celebrations which marked the collapse of communism in the Czech Republic and the end of apartheid in South Africa.

Third, while revolutionaries in the Czech Republic and South Africa were rooted in an ideology of freedom and liberty, the opposition in Chile sought a return to a democracy largely without ideals. Like the other two cases in the thesis, utopian ideology was deliberately disavowed in Chile: the opposition sought liberation not utopia. But unlike the Czech Republic and South Africa, the opposition in Chile renounced ideology altogether. As I showed above and will continue to make clear in the next part of the chapter, this was a transition determined by pragmatic pacts between elites who had little contact with and even less knowledge of the people they purported to represent.

However, in two ways, Chile does conform to my conceptualisation of negotiated revolution. First, structural violence was a key battleground of the transition, providing an important context for change and imparting significant consequences after the return of democracy.

Thousands were blacklisted, fired from their jobs and arrested for ‘subversive activities’ under the dictatorship. Many more were forced to leave the country. The fear engendered by this latent form of violence backed up by a coercive apparatus which used torture, murder and disappearance as everyday tools of repression has had profound effects on Chilean society: suicides tripled between 1970 and 1991, Chile has the highest rates of drug abuse and alcoholism in Latin America, family breakdown is rife. Even after the coup, much of this legacy remains to be undone.<sup>453</sup>

The second similarity between Chile and the two earlier cases of negotiated revolution lies in the role of the state. In Chile, as in the other two cases, the state has become weaker as a result of the transition. Partly this is because so many of its traditional roles and duties, particularly over public policy, were systematically eroded by the military.<sup>454</sup> Partly it is because the post-1988 state is hemmed in by the continuing authority of rival groups, most notably military and business elites. Because Chile is an open, export based economy, it is particularly susceptible to global economic shifts and exceptionally beholden to the behests of international lending agencies and investors. Thanks to the authoritarian enclaves inculcated by the old regime, the right constitutes a significant influence on both domestic and foreign policy beyond its popular mandate.

Theoretically, therefore, Chile neither conforms to traditional patterns of revolutionary change nor to most of the features which make up my concept of negotiated revolution. In the second part of the chapter, I look in depth at the changes which have taken place in Chile

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<sup>453</sup> For example, Sergio Buschmann, a member of the FPMR, was immediately put in jail on his return from exile in 1990. Although he was subsequently released, Buschmann was blacklisted, forbidden from opening a bank account, carrying a driving license or working. Eventually, he was re-arrested and put back in jail.

<sup>454</sup> For example, responsibilities for education, health care and social services were in large part either devolved to autonomous municipalities or handed over to the private sector during the military era.

since the restoration of democracy. I show that Chile has not seen a systemic transformation of its principal power relations. Therefore, in a material as well as in an abstract sense, I argue that Chile should be considered as a transition rather than as a substantive example of revolutionary change.

### **Revolutionary transformation?**

The sad reality is that we did not have the strength to morally transform our country...This should serve as a warning, because it bespeaks an incomplete democracy, a land that has not yet entirely shaken off the traumatic after-effects of brutality and terror. I do not doubt, however, that this deeper democratisation of Chile will slowly dawn...one must be patient. Perhaps the day will come soon when we will be able to finally take back the country Pinochet stole from us, the country we allowed him to steal.<sup>455</sup>

Chile has been through many important changes since 1989. Politically, an authoritarian regime which monopolised the means of coercion and dominated the political environment has been replaced by a democratic government which has pushed through a number of notable reforms. Economically, a wholesale assault on poverty has seen the numbers of poor Chileans dramatically reduced while workers have had their rights at least somewhat enhanced. Socially, the transition has been uneven in its consequences. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) delivered only a partial picture of the atrocities committed under the dictatorship. Some social relations, particularly those centred around religion, have taken a turn for the worse while others, most notably gender relations, have improved. Overall, therefore, Chile's power relations have undergone a period of profound change as the country makes the transition from authoritarian rule to market democracy.

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<sup>455</sup> Dorfman (2002: 193-4).

### *Political-coercive relations*

Chile is what I call a transvestite democracy. She looks like a nice, friendly young lady. But lift up her skirts and you're in for a big surprise.<sup>456</sup>

Chile's political coercive relations have changed in numerous ways since 1989. New political parties representing left and right compete freely in elections at local and national level. The coercive apparatuses, in particular the armed forces, have seen their authority slowly chiselled away. Foreign policy making has been broadened and the relative isolation of the dictatorship replaced by a policy of engagement with Chile's neighbours and the wider world. Although these changes fall some way short of a systemic transformation, they are important staging posts in Chile's transition from an era of *fuerza* to one of *razón*.

### *Political parties and elections*

Under the dictatorship, all political activity was considered as an attack on the authority of the regime. But the removal of formal politics from everyday life had an unintended consequence – a resurgence in grass roots activities centred around the neighbourhood and local community. A vibrant informal political sector existed beyond the reach of both the dictatorship and the opposition with its own ideals, networks and resources. It was this diverse movement which erupted into protests in the early part of the 1980s, centred in the *poblaciones* around Santiago. The protestas prompted the return of political parties, left and right, who attempted to direct the movement to their own ends. However, the elites who ran political parties had little direct experience of life in the *poblaciones* and those who did, such as the communists, were systematically removed from the opposition front line. In addition,

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<sup>456</sup> The academic Tomas Moulian, quoted in Cooper (2001: 87).

the withdrawal by the dictatorship from social functions meant that when democracy returned in 1989, the government lacked the organisational capacity, grass roots connections and the know-how to deal effectively with poblador groups and issues. This and the failure of the government to overturn the constitutional legacy of the military era provoked widespread public disenchantment during the 1990s. Today, low turnout at elections and the return of the populist right may herald a shake up of Chilean politics, and perhaps, of the Concertación movement itself.

As the tables below show, Patricio Aylwin convincingly won Chile's first post-authoritarian presidential elections held in December 1989, taking well over half the popular vote. In his inauguration speech in March 1990, the new President spoke of the need for 'national reconciliation' and 'justicia en lo posible' (justice as far as possible). Aylwin's style was dubbed the 'politics of agreements': a continual search for consensus and compromise. This approach was in large part founded on necessity. As the tables illustrate quite clearly, particularly that outlining senatorial elections, the binomial electoral system significantly reduced the overall gains of the Concertación alliance. Although Concertación won twenty-two out of thirty-eight contested senate seats and seventy-two out of 120 seats in the lower house, the nine senators appointed by Pinochet gave the right the capacity to block any 'controversial' government proposals. Genealogy, as ever in Chilean politics, was an important feature of the new political elite: Juan Pablo Letelier, the twenty-eight year old son of Orlando was elected as a Socialist Deputy; Andrés Aylwin, brother of the President, became a member of the Santiago chamber; and Carmen Frei, daughter of the former President, was elected as a senator.

### House of delegates elections 1989

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>59.9%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	26.0%	39	32.5%
<i>PPD</i>	11.5%	9	7.4%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	10.1%	18	15.0%
<i>Radical Party</i>	3.9%	6	5.0%
<b>Right</b>	<b>34.2%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40.1%</b>
<i>RN</i>	18.3%	32	26.7%
<i>UDI</i>	9.8%	14	11.7%
<i>Other</i>	6.1%	2	1.7%
<b>Other</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

*Sources: Abridged from official statistics, EIU, Roberts (1998) and Siavelis (2001)*

### Senate elections 1989

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>46.8%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	31.9%	13	27.7%
<i>PPD</i>	12.1%	1	2.1%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	Stood with PPD	4	8.5%
<i>Radical Party</i>	2.2%	3	6.4%
<i>Other</i>	8.2%	1	2.1%
<b>Right</b>	<b>34.9%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34.0%</b>
<i>RN</i>	10.8%	13	27.7%
<i>UDI</i>	5.1%	2	4.2%
<i>Other</i>	19.0%	1	2.1%
<b>Appointed<sup>457</sup></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>Independent</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

*Sources: Abridged from official statistics, EIU, Roberts (1998) and Siavelis (2001)*

<sup>457</sup> Appointed senators tended to vote with the right block throughout the 1990s.

The Aylwin government passed some important reforms. In 1990, an agreement with business leaders allowed the government to raise levels of VAT and introduce a new business tax, both of which were earmarked for the fight against poverty. A labour law restored the rights of trade unions and improved workplace conditions. The government set up the Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación (TRC), known as the Rettig Commission after its chair, Raúl Rettig, to investigate human rights abuses.<sup>458</sup> The president also created an office to help returning exiles re-integrate into Chilean society and a special commission to locate the disappeared, investigate outstanding cases and administer benefits for surviving relatives.<sup>459</sup> Most political prisoners were released.<sup>460</sup> In early 1991, censorship legislation was repealed.

However, the fragility of the government was exposed on a number of occasions. In the first year of democratic government, there were over a hundred terrorist attacks. In April 1991, Jaime Guzmán, now a senator, was assassinated in broad daylight by the FPMR in Santiago, prompting a media backlash against the government and a hefty rise in support for UDI.<sup>461</sup> In response to the attack, a far right group, Avanzada Nacional headed by a former CNI chief of operations, Alvar Corbalán, carried out a number of shootings against left wing targets. A governmental investigation into high level corruption involving General Pinochet's son, Augusto Junior, was interrupted when Pinochet mobilised several units of the army onto the streets of Santiago while President Aylwin was on a state visit to Scandinavia. The

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<sup>458</sup> For more on this, see pp 312-314.

<sup>459</sup> In particular, the Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación paid pensions and provided education grants to widows. It also examined 2,000 new cases brought by relatives of the disappeared. The Oficina Nacional de Retorno dealt with over 50,000 people in the four years of its existence.

<sup>460</sup> Aylwin pardoned 135 political prisoners. When he left office, just twelve remained in jail.

<sup>461</sup> UDI gained 10,000 members in the three weeks after Guzmán's murder, including leading figures like Hernán Büchi. A number of influential businesses, including *El Mercurio*, also gave new backing to the UDI.



‘Pinocheque’ episode was a clear indication that army loyalty remained tied to its commander in chief rather than to any civilian command. As Pinochet himself threatened, ‘si se toca a alguna de mi gente, se termina el estado de derecho’.<sup>462</sup>

Despite these isolated setbacks, the Aylwin government was popular. In April 1991, a poll found that 81% of Chileans thought that the performance of the Aylwin government was average, good or very good. In local elections held the next year, Concertación polled 54% of the vote, trouncing the right who took around 37%. In contrast to the left, the right continued to suffer from bickering and infighting. In 1992, two rivals for the right’s presidential nomination were forced to resign after one, Sebastian Piñera, discovered that his phone had been tapped by the other, Evelyn Matthei.

#### House of delegates elections 1993

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>55.4%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>58.3%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	27.1%	37	30.8%
<i>PPD</i>	12.0%	15	12.5%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	11.8%	15	12.5%
<i>Radical Party</i>	3.0%	2	1.7%
<i>Other</i>	1.5%	1	0.8%
<b>Right</b>	<b>36.7%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41.7%</b>
<i>RN</i>	16.3%	29	24.2%
<i>UDI</i>	12.1%	15	12.5%
<i>Other</i>	8.3%	6	5.0%
<b>Other</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

<sup>462</sup> Literally, ‘if they touch any of my people, it is the end of legality’. Quoted in Angell and Pollack (eds.) (1993: 143).

## Senate elections 1993

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>55.5%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>44.6%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	20.3%	13	27.7%
<i>PPD</i>	14.7%	2	4.2%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	12.7%	5	10.6%
<i>Radical Party</i>	6.3%	1	2.1%
<i>Other</i>	1.5%	0	0%
<b>Right</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>36.2%</b>
<i>RN</i>	14.9%	11	23.4%
<i>UDI</i>	11.2%	3	6.4%
<i>Other</i>	13.4%	3	6.4%
<b>Appointed</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>Independent</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

*Sources: Abridged from official statistics, EIU, Roberts (1998) and Siavelis (2001)*

The incoming government led by PDC stalwart Eduardo Frei was different in character and composition from that of Patricio Aylwin. While Aylwin had taken great pride in creating a ‘rainbow’ government which rose above ‘petty party politics’, Frei was an old guard social democrat backed up by an ‘iron circle’ (círculo de hierro) of close friends and supporters.<sup>463</sup>

Leading coalition members like Alejandro Foxley, Ricardo Lagos and Germén Correa were demoted from the cabinet, replaced by PDC loyalists. Frei also developed a more partisan approach to supposedly independent arenas, for example by interfering in the appointment of a new head of state television. Frei’s more confrontational, pro-business style of politics was a return to ‘politics as normal’ in Chile – the kind of elite, partisan approach which had existed before Salvador Allende’s victory in 1970.

<sup>463</sup> Frei was the son of the former president and husband of PDC senator, Carmen Frei.

But the Frei government was still severely constrained by the continuing belligerence of the armed forces. In May 1993, Pinochet, unhappy at the direction of human rights cases against the military, again deployed troops onto the streets. The 'el boinazo' episode, named after the berets worn by army commanders, led to a number of government concessions. In 1995, former DINA chief Manuel Contreras was found guilty of kidnapping and murder. The military initially refused to hand Contreras over to the civilian authorities. After a five month stand off, the military reluctantly agreed to Contreras' arrest but only after the government had consented to a rise in armed forces' wages, a cut-off date for future human rights trials and 'special' conditions for Contreras while he was in jail.

By the time of the 1997 elections, public disenchantment was rising: only 27% of Chileans said they were happy with their country's political system compared to 57% in 1993; 41% didn't register, abstained or defaced their ballots; in Valparaiso, the city which housed the Chilean congress, 'none of the above' won the most votes.<sup>464</sup> According to a study conducted by Paul Posner, Chileans placed fifteenth out of seventeen Latin American countries in their satisfaction with democracy.<sup>465</sup> Fewer than 10% of Chileans polled said that democracy was fully established and for the first time since the return of democracy, fewer than half of Chileans said that the country was progressing.<sup>466</sup> A corruption scandal was exposed in which swathes of public officials serving under President Frei were found to have accepted golden handshakes but then continued in office.<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>464</sup> All facts from Cooper (2001).

<sup>465</sup> See Posner (2000).

<sup>466</sup> For more on this, see Siavelis (2001).

<sup>467</sup> Officials implicated included the deputy head of the police, the head of the state oil company, the electricity regulator and the vice-president of the PDC.

### House of delegates elections 1997

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>57.5%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	22.9%	38	31.7%
<i>PPD</i>	12.6%	16	13.3%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	11.1%	11	9.1%
<i>Radical Party</i>	3.1%	4	3.4%
<i>Other</i>	0.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Right</b>	<b>36.2%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41.6%</b>
<i>RN</i>	16.8%	24	20.0%
<i>UDI</i>	14.4%	23	19.1%
<i>Other</i>	5.0%	3	2.5%
<b>Other</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

### Senate elections 1997

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>51.7%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>42.5%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	29.4%	14	29.8%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	14.6%	4	8.5%
<i>PPD</i>	4.3%	2	4.2%
<i>Radical Party</i>	1.8%	0	0
<i>Other</i>	1.6%	0	0
<b>Right</b>	<b>36.6%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>38.3%</b>
<i>RN</i>	14.8%	7	14.9%
<i>UDI</i>	17.2%	10	21.3%
<i>Other</i>	4.6%	1	2.1 %
<b>Appointed</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>Independent</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

*Sources: Abridged from official statistics, EIU and Siavelis (2001)*

In 1998, major infighting erupted in the Concertación alliance over the upcoming appointment of General Pinochet as senator for life after some deputies called for the former president to be indicted and tried for human rights offences. In 1999, the country slid into recession as a result of the world economic slowdown, falling copper prices and lower exports. President Frei's approval ratings dropped to 28%, their lowest level ever. A fierce contest saw Ricardo Lagos Escobar, founder of the PPD and former opposition activist, beat off the challenge of PDC veteran Andrés Zaldívar to become the Concertación's presidential candidate. In contrast, the right united fairly painlessly behind UDI stalwart Joaquín Lavín, the mayor of Las Coudes, a prosperous area of Santiago. Lavín ran a slick presidential campaign around the theme of 'Viva el Cambio', focusing on populist issues like poverty, crime and employment. Lavín's polished operation was in stark contrast to the more pedestrian affair run by Lagos, who promised to continue his predecessor's mixture of 'growth with equity'. In the first round of the election, Lagos squeaked home by 47.9% to 47.5% for Lavín, a difference of just 31,000 votes. In the second round, with the help of far-left supporters, Lagos won with 51% of the vote against 48% for Lavín.

The new president initiated a programme aimed at 'completing the transition to democracy' and reforming Chile's 'invigilated democracy'. In April 2000, a senatorial committee on constitutional reform was set up. Their report, published in 2002, finally set a timetable for electoral reform, the removal of unelected senators and the end of a political role for the armed forces. The Lagos government also passed a labour law which created an unemployment insurance scheme, strengthened the rights of trade unions and made redundancies subject to judicial review. A thorough modernisation of the judicial system saw the death penalty removed from the statute books, the creation of an independent office for public prosecutions and the introduction of legal aid. An emergency job creation programme

was set up to tackle unemployment. Major educational reforms saw an overhaul of the syllabus, an extension of the teaching day and more formal training for teachers.

But despite these reforms, public support for the new government was lukewarm. Rising crime and stubbornly high levels of unemployment hurt the standing of the government. In May 2001, 64% of Chileans said that the government was not fulfilling their expectations. A wave of attacks and land occupations by the Mapuche against forestry companies working on their ancestral lands added to the government's difficulties. Amidst a continent wide drift to populism, less than half of Chileans agreed that democracy was preferable to any other form of government and only 10% expressed trust in political parties.<sup>468</sup>

#### House of delegates elections 2001

Party/coalition	Percentage of total votes	Number of seats	Percentage of seats
<b>Concertación</b>	<b>47.9%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>52.5%</b>
<i>PDC</i>	18.9%	24	20.0%
<i>PPD</i>	12.7%	21	17.5%
<i>Socialist Party</i>	10.0%	12	10.0%
<i>Radical Party</i>	4.1%	6	5.0%
<i>Other</i>	2.2%	0	0%
<b>Right</b>	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>47.5%</b>
<i>RN</i>	25.2%	35	29.2%
<i>UDI</i>	13.8%	22	18.3%
<i>Other</i>	5.3%	0	0%
<b>Other</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

*Sources: Abridged from official statistics and EIU*

<sup>468</sup> See *The Economist*. "The Latinobarometro poll." 28 July 2001, pp. 51-52.

In December 2001, Alianza trimmed Concertación's majority in the House of Delegates from twenty to six. The big winners were the UDI, who became the largest party in the country, winning over a quarter of the popular vote. The Christian Democrat vote collapsed by a third as its centre-right voters abandoned the party for the UDI. The PDC responded by electing a new leader, Andrés Zaldívar, who promptly announced that the Concertación alliance was 'dead'. However, with only six out of ten Chileans casting valid ballots, the principal story of the 2001 elections remained one of widespread public scepticism and disenchantment with the political system as a whole.

This disillusionment was not helped by a wave of corruption scandals. Former Public Works Minister, Carlos Cruz, was arrested and five Concertación congressmen stripped of their political immunity after being accused of taking kickbacks from private contractors. Deputy Minister of Transport Patricio Tombolini was also forced to leave his post after allegations of bribes. The president of the central bank, Carlos Massad, resigned in early 2003 after it was discovered that his secretary had been passing on insider information to a private financial group. In February 2003, President Lagos appointed a former regional head of Transparency International, Luis Bates, as Justice Minister in an attempt to draw a line under the scandals. An anti-corruption commission was set up alongside moves to make civil service posts permanent and introduce an election campaign bill limiting party spending.

Chile's political system is far from perfect. First, parliamentary institutions can do little to challenge the power of the executive. The legislature, in the rare moments it does initiate and pass laws, tends to concentrate on insignificant issues: erecting monuments, declaring holidays, granting honorary citizenships and the like. Even the powers of MPs to request information from the executive and set up investigative committees have proved to be

ineffective.<sup>469</sup> Second, there is a huge gulf between the elites (cúpula) and the voters (la basa). Rather than full democratisation, Chile has seen a return to the politics of cúpula so common to its past. To some extent, Chile shares some of the features characterised by Guillermo O'Donnell's concept of delegative democracy: a strong presidency with the capacity to override weak representative institutions, policy making dominated by technocratic expert elites, the marginalisation of civil society groups and a leading role for the armed forces in the political life of the nation. The rise of the UDI, a party in which more members back an authoritarian system than democracy, is a salutary reminder of the relative shallowness of Chile's political transition to date.<sup>470</sup>

### *Armed forces and the police*

Under the terms of the transition, the civilian authorities gained a number of prerogatives over the armed forces: the president obtained the right to veto senior military promotions and acquired the final say in military acquisitions; the Ministry of Defence was handed over to civilians; and the guaranteed military budget was made a 'maximum' level. These prerogatives were used widely by the Aylwin regime. For example, Defence Minister Patricio Rojas managed to exert pressure over the military by refusing to sign routine administrative decrees regulating the internal affairs of the armed forces. The careers of officers allegedly involved in human rights abuses were frozen as the President vetoed their promotion. Some symbolic gestures also signified the return of civilian authority. President Aylwin refused to receive the presidential sash from General Pinochet and called the general to La Moneda on

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<sup>469</sup> Important issues like constitutional reform and the Pinochet arrests have been marred by political point scoring. In 1993, there was even a fist fight on the floor of congress over government plans to investigate financial irregularities.

<sup>470</sup> A quarter of UDI members favour democracy as opposed to 27% who prefer authoritarianism. Nearly half of the UDIs members are ambivalent about which system is better. The RN is split equally between each camp. Even parties on the left of the political spectrum contain a significant minority who prefer authoritarianism or are indifferent about the benefits of democracy.



several occasions to harangue him for military interference in the political process.<sup>471</sup> A number of reforms were also forced through by Justice Minister Francisco Cumplido: a new Internal Security Law was introduced, amendments made to anti-terrorist legislation and the Military Justice Code significantly altered. The Justice Minister also oversaw the disbanding of the CNI. Forced redundancies saw many carabineros tainted by their association with the old regime lose their jobs, 6,000 new staff were hired and the police budget was made accountable to governmental auditing for the first time. Responsibility for the police as a whole moved to the Interior Ministry.

However, as I outlined earlier in the chapter, formal relations between the civilian authorities and the armed forces were tense for much of the 1990s. In the early part of the decade, the army's advisory committee acted like a virtual shadow government, campaigning against the government and continuing to carry out surveillance against leading politicians. A range of incidents demonstrated the slowness by which coercive institutions adjusted to their supposedly independent, non-partisan role in the post-authoritarian period. On 11 September 1990, police units attacked a peaceful demonstration in Santiago which was mourning victims of the dictatorship, firing water cannons and live rounds into the crowd, killing two people and injuring many others. General Pinochet denounced the Rettig Commission as 'a sewer', dubbing it the 'Commission on Resentment and Revenge'. Even as late as May 1999, a student demonstrator was shot dead by police in Arica. In December 2000, 300 carabineros stormed the offices of the Communist Party, injuring ten and arresting forty others.

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<sup>471</sup> For his part, General Pinochet was happy to play these games of cat and mouse with the President, refusing to publicly articulate his subordination to the civilian authorities and failing to attend official engagements involving the President, including Aylwin's State of the Nation address.

Nevertheless, during the 1990s, civilians began openly to query the functioning of the armed forces. An investigation began into a 1981 bank robbery in Caláma organised by the security forces in which nine people died and nearly fifty million pesos were stolen. In 1991, an illegal arms sale to Yugoslavia by the state owned weapons manufacturer, FAMAE, generated a public scandal. Between 1989 and 1993, a senatorial committee examined a number of scams involving the highest echelons of the military. In 1994, it was claimed that top military officials had fraudulently traded over \$300 of CODELCO funds. Yet for all these difficulties, coercive institutions remain more trusted in Chile than the democratic organizations set up to administer and monitor them.

**‘How much confidence do you have in’:**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Much or some</b>	<b>Little or none</b>
<b>Police</b>	61%	38%
<b>Media</b>	57%	41%
<b>Armed forces</b>	53%	44%
<b>Government</b>	51%	48%
<b>Congress</b>	43%	51%
<b>Political parties</b>	27%	70%

*Source: Abridged from Camp (ed.) (2001)*

In 1997, the first post-authoritarian defence white paper was published, paving the way for a thorough modernisation of Chile’s armed forces. The main aim of the white paper was to keep the armed forces at the forefront of top level policy making, enabling them to play a new role at the heart of economic modernisation while maintaining the armed forces’ self-identity as the true guardian of ‘La Patria’. The army’s restructuring plan – the Fronteras Interiores – envisaged an occupation of Chile’s border territories by smaller, more mobile

garrison forces, helping to shore up Chilean claims to these barren areas and provide security for the government as they searched for new mineral resources. The navy advanced a more expansionist plan – the Mar Presencial – which called for the extension of Chile’s territorial waters beyond Easter Island and down to the South Pole, again ostensibly to help the government exploit potential natural resources. As part of the plan, the armed forces accepted a reduction in their numbers.

During the 1990s, although the armed forces have continued to receive an annual budget of over \$1 billion, the percentage of their funds drawn from the national budget and as a proportion of GDP has dropped significantly.<sup>472</sup> Nevertheless, the Chilean armed forces still receive more spending per capita than any other South American country. In 2001, a new \$2.3 billion dollar deal for equipment was agreed by the government, ostensibly to tool the armed forces to meet the challenges of a ‘globalised world’, namely peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and drug trafficking. Critics queried whether such laudable aims necessitated the purchase of new submarines, fighter planes and frigates. That such a debate was even aired so publicly and critically shows how Chile’s coercive relations have moved on since the restoration of democracy. Progress has been slow but after a decade of civilian rule, Chileans are free to question openly the prevalent role of the armed forces in their lives.

In 1998, a new, moderate head of the armed forces, General Ricardo Izurieta, replaced General Pinochet. Following the arrest of the former dictator, Izurieta retired twelve old school generals from the army, clearing the final remnants of the old guard from the top ranks of the military. In December 2001, the new head of the carabineros, General Alberto

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<sup>472</sup> In 1990, defence spending was 95% of the education budget and 270% of the sum spent on health. Defence spending now makes up half the education budget and is equivalent to government spending on health.

Cienfuegos, promised 'progressive' relations with the government and forced thirteen generals into retirement. Nevertheless, there is still some way to go before Chile's coercive relations can be said to have normalised. Although there have been some moves to restructure and depoliticise Chile's coercive apparatus since the fall of the dictatorship, the police and armed forces remain significant and trusted actors in Chile's political relations.

### *Foreign policy*

Under the dictatorship, Chile was as geopolitically isolated as it was geographically remote. Although few governments pursued a policy of consistent, outright opposition to the regime, even fewer actively engaged with it. No foreign head of state visited Chile between 1973 and 1981. In 1980, a planned state visit to the Philippines by General Pinochet spectacularly backfired when President Marcos, under American pressure, cancelled the visit at the last minute. Pinochet's plane was forced to stop, turn round and refuel at Fiji where his entourage was pelted with eggs and tomatoes. Chile's isolation was not helped by its aggressive posturing, most notably during the Beagle Channel Dispute with Argentina. The dispute, over the sovereignty of three small islands in the sub-Antarctic, had seen two failed attempts at arbitration by Britain. After the second, in 1977, both Chile and Argentina actively geared up for war, a situation narrowly avoided by papal intervention which awarded the islands to Chile but ceded a degree of maritime jurisdiction to Argentina.

After the return of democracy, Chile experienced a triumphant return to the mainstream of the international system. All Latin American heads of state bar Fidel Castro attended the inauguration of President Aylwin in March 1990. High profile trips were taken by the president to the United States, Japan and Europe. Trade agreements were signed with the EU and APEC, an application was lodged to join NAFTA and new relations were initiated with

Chile's immediate neighbours. In 1991, President Aylwin and President Carlos Menem of Argentina signed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship settling twenty-three outstanding border disputes.<sup>473</sup> A range of joint projects were set up with Argentina to take advantage of resources in the far south and Chile accepted the international regime covering the Antarctic. In 1992, Chile finally agreed to fulfil the peace treaty first signed in 1929 with Peru and Bolivia formally to end the War of the Pacific. In 1996, the country became an associate member of MERCOSUR, the trading union covering the Southern Cone. Bilateral trade agreements were signed with over fifty countries while Chile joined a veritable mass of international institutions: the WTO, Interpol, the WHO and UNECSCO among others. At the end of the decade, Chilean troops performed peace keeping duties in Kuwait, El Salvador and Cambodia. At the same time, the country reopened its borders to the outside world. Between 1990 and 2000, income from tourism tripled.

During the 1990s, moves were also made to broaden the scope of foreign policy making and to rein in the power of the National Security Council. A raft of new groups staffed by independent experts, political and military chiefs were set up as consultative and advisory committees. A new body, CONSUSENA, evenly split between political and military leaders was convened to assess Chile's long-term foreign policy aims. In 1995, a congressional committee on defence was set up while a civilian bureaucracy at the Ministry of Defence worked to broaden foreign policy making so that it included business and trade interests. However, to some degree, Chile's foreign policy making remains a less than transparent process in which the majority of decisions are made in secret behind closed doors. The public outcry over the arms procurement package in 2002 demonstrates the need for heightened legislative oversight to monitor foreign policy making processes.

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<sup>473</sup> This process was not finalised until 1998.

## *Summary*

Democratisation has proceeded in a series of lurches since 1989, interrupted by frequent intervention from authoritarian enclaves and constrained by a polity in which trust and confidence in political institutions are extremely low. To some extent, Chile is following trends prevalent throughout Latin America. In 2001, just 45% of Latin Americans thought that democracy was preferable to any other form of government, down from 61% four years previously.<sup>474</sup> In the same poll, nearly 70% of Chileans claimed to be dissatisfied with how democracy was working in their country. The focus on consensus, however well intended or indeed necessary, has masked the real conflicts, cleavages and competition upon which substantive democracies depend and thrive.

## *Economic relations*

There are two Chiles, one with credit cards and computers, and one that is just trying to survive.<sup>475</sup>

Under the military junta, Chile was dubbed by international investors the Latin American 'jaguar', capable of comparison with the tiger economies of South-East Asia. Certainly, Chile in 1989 was a radically different country than it had been fifteen years before. Under the military, Chile was made into a laboratory for neo-liberal experimentation.<sup>476</sup> The state was largely removed from social provision: government expenditure on health was \$11 per person in 1989 compared to \$28 per person in 1973; the military budget in 1988 was greater than that for housing, health and education combined; social spending, constituting only 40% of

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<sup>474</sup> See *The Economist*. "The Latinobarometro poll." 28 July 2001, pp. 51-52.

<sup>475</sup> See Caistor (1998: 60).

<sup>476</sup> Ironically, the only non-privatised section of society was the military, which continued to enjoy access to subsidised housing, education, transport and health facilities.

the level it had been in 1973, was determined by regional planning offices which determined eligibility for payments through ownership of household appliances rather than income.

The results of the policies instituted under the dictatorship were massive discrepancies between rich and poor Chileans. Fifteen years of boom and bust made little impact on the figures for GDP per capita – they remained broadly the same in 1989 as they had been in 1973. But by 1988, Chile was the seventh most unequal country in the world. The massive concentration of resources at the top was in stark contrast to life in the poblaciones where nearly half the population lived below the poverty line and a quarter were indigent. Chile was home to rampant consumerism, a culture of conspicuous consumption which so skewed economic relations that even the long-term unemployed owned a refrigerator and a television set, people accrued massive debts in order to send their children to private schools and talked into fake mobile phones just to pretend that they owned one.

The Aylwin government's policy of 'growth with equity' saw Chile experience a period of sustained economic growth while also allowing for a 30% increase in social spending. The government set up a raft of agencies to tackle social exclusion, using NGOs and community groups as sources for local provision and service delivery, particularly in the poblaciones. In the main, government policies succeeded in both tackling the structural weaknesses inherited from the military's frenzied neo-liberalism and reducing poverty. Despite a short lived downturn in 1999, Chile's economy was more solidly underpinned and diversified by the turn of the century while levels of poverty had halved. But continuing inequality and stubbornly high levels of unemployment remain difficult issues for the government.

## Economic indicators 1990-2001

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>GDP (peso bn)*</b>	9.2	11.9	14.6	17.7	22.0	25.9	28.3	33.3	34.4	34.0	35.5	36.5
<b>GDP (% change)</b>	3.0	7.3	11.0	6.3	4.2	10.6	7.4	7.4	3.9	-1.0	5.4	2.8
<b>GDP/capita (% ch)</b>	1.5	5.3	9.6	4.6	2.7	9.1	5.9	5.3	2.0	-2.2	3.1	1.5
<b>Inflation (%)</b>	26.0	21.7	15.4	12.7	11.3	8.7	7.4	6.1	5.1	3.3	3.8	3.6
<b>Real wages (% ch)</b>	1.8	4.8	4.6	5.1	5.2	5.1	2.7	1.3	2.7	2.4	1.2	2.6
<b>Exports (\$bn)</b>	8.3	8.9	10.0	9.2	11.5	16.0	15.4	16.7	14.8	15.6	18.2	17.4
<b>Imports (\$bn)</b>	7.0	7.4	9.2	10.2	10.9	14.7	16.5	18.2	17.3	14.0	16.7	15.9
<b>Trade balance</b>	-1.3	1.5	0.8	-1.0	0.6	1.3	-1.1	-1.5	-2.5	1.6	1.4	1.5
<b>Exchange rate (p-\$)</b>	305.1	349.4	362.6	404.4	420.1	396.8	413.8	419.3	460.3	512.0	537.0	636.4
<b>Unemployment (%)</b>	5.7	5.3	6.3	6.4	7.9	7.7	6.5	6.1	6.2	9.7	9.2	9.6

*Sources: Official government statistics, EIU*

*\* Figures from 1990-1996 not adjusted for inflation. From 1997-2001, GDP figure provided in real terms, fixed at 1997 prices.*

### *Growth with equity*

Although the dictatorship prided itself on its reputation for fiscal competence, the Chilean economy faced some endemic problems in 1989. The military's relatively strict adherence to neo-liberalism had seen the economy lurch from boom to bust with alarming force between 1973 and 1988. By the time democracy returned, all the signs were there of an unsustainable boom: GDP growth of 10% fuelled by high copper prices and low interest rates; a credit and spending spree; debts of over \$21 billion; exports far outpacing imports; and inflation running at over 27%. In 1990, the new finance minister, Alejandro Foxley, announced a Stabilisation and Adjustment programme, using a number of 'corrective policies' to push down inflation and control the burgeoning trade gap. A new fund was created which absorbed parts of the profits made by CODELCO while copper prices were high so that they could



bolster government revenue during more lean times. In 1991, the second stage of Foxley's programme saw tariffs lowered to boost competition, help given to the struggling peso to control inflation and various pro-active measures to boost exports. Foxley's policies proved largely successful. The economy continued to grow but at a more sustainable rate. Inflation was halved in three years and levels of FDI doubled. In 1991, the balance of trade returned to a surplus.

The policies to promote manageable growth were matched by a range of efforts to ease Chile's 'social debt'. In July 1990, a new state planning office, MIDEPLAN, was created with responsibility for co-ordinating policy on housing, education and health. A separate department, FOSIS, was set up with an annual budget of over \$3 billion to work with local community groups and train people to run micro-enterprises. Job creation schemes helped generate over half a million new jobs between 1989 and 1993 while a housing scheme saw 100,000 units built per year. Under Aylwin and Foxley, the minimum wage rose by a third and unemployment halved. In a poll taken in Santiago poblaciones in July 1991, 95% of people surveyed said that the government was doing well and two-thirds thought that their personal situation was improving.<sup>477</sup>

The Frei administration continued to balance growth with equity. The President demonstrated his willingness to woo business support by inviting one hundred top executives to his inauguration in March 1993. But levels of social spending remained high, increasing at an average of 5% per year between 1993 and 1999. By the end of the decade, education spending alone was double its 1990 level, worth 7% of GDP. Levels of poverty fell from 27.5% of the population in 1994 to just over 20% in 1998. Overall though, privatisation and

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<sup>477</sup> Quoted in Petras and Leira (1994).

liberalisation had a higher priority under Frei than the Aylwin administration. Between 1993 and 1999, Chile's transport infrastructure and water utilities as well as parts of CODELCO were privatised. By 1997, all exchange restrictions affecting trade in goods and capital outflows had been eliminated. The government continued to encourage exports. By 1999, Chile was the world's largest producer of copper with the industry worth \$7.3 billion per year, around 40% of exports. The project to diversify led to a large expansion in a number of sectors: by 2000, Chile provided around 15% of the international fruit market, including 40% of the northern hemisphere's winter supplies, while the forestry industry was worth \$1.5 billion a year.

Under Ricardo Lagos, Chile formalised its position as global investors' favourite Latin American country: inflation dropped to just over 3%, FDI reached nearly \$10 billion per year, up from \$1 billion in 1990, a liberalisation of capital markets and a wave of utility privatisations bolstered the administration's neo-liberal credentials. Bilateral trade agreements were signed with the US, the EU and South Korea. In 2002, Chile was voted by JP Morgan as the second best developing market for investment and by PWC as the second most transparent country in the world to do business. According to the World Economic Forum, Chile was the most competitive and least corrupt country in Latin America.<sup>478</sup> The country was also given an A- investment rating by Standard and Poor, the highest in Latin America.

But despite these plaudits, Chile faces some significant long-term problems: bureaucracy remains cumbersome; the country is top heavy in managers and weak in key technical staff;

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<sup>478</sup> Transparency International put Chile in eighteenth place on their worldwide corruption index, alongside Ireland, ahead of Germany and just behind the USA.

inequality remains high; debt stands at over 50% of GDP and unemployment hovers around 10%. The relative weakness of the region, the near collapse of Argentina and the lowest copper prices for fifteen years dented growth in 2002 as GDP dropped to 1.8%. In 2001, 60% of Chileans thought that the economic situation was bad or very bad, up from 30% in 1995; only 5% said it was good.<sup>479</sup> But despite these travails, most analysts remain convinced that Chile is a 'good house in a bad neighbourhood'.<sup>480</sup>

### *Labour relations*

The government's labour policies since 1989 have been formalised within its overall framework of pacts and acuerdos. Initially, the government prompted unions and business to come together in bilateral talks – the acuerdos marcos or model agreements. In January 1990, this joint group published its 'Reference Mark', establishing a broad framework for future talks centred around acceptance of the market economy but with improved social provisions for workers. For their part, the government, now including six union leaders, forced labour legislation through parliament which upped the powers of unions, reduced limitations of the right to strike, provided compensation against dismissal and extended collective bargaining. But even under this legislation, employers retained the upper hand: 85% of the workforce were outside the scope of the new regulations, including those who worked in construction, the maritime industry and public services.

During 1990, the joint group of workers and business representatives established a number of technical commissions to look at key areas of importance: the minimum wage, social benefits, union organisation, contracts and so on. But little progress was made either in these

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<sup>479</sup> See *The Economist*. "The Latinobarometro poll." 28 July 2001, pp. 51-52.

<sup>480</sup> EIU country profile (2002).

talks or in parliament as business interests stalled further reform of the labour code.

Disillusioned with the lack of progress, a number of unions including copper workers, nurses and teachers went on strike. The government attempted to arbitrate between the two camps, instituting a tripartite commission to look at ways of moving the talks forward. However, in 1992, a younger, more radical leadership took over the main business lobby, the Confederación de la Producción y del Comercio (CPC), breaking off formal talks with the government and unions, while blocking attempts by the Aylwin administration to force through further reform in congress. As a result, in 1994, the CUT suspended talks with both the CPC and the government and began a wave of protest marches.

During the mid-late 1990s, it became clear that the unions could not match the influence of their business rivals. In 1995, a new package of labour reforms was again blocked in congress by a coalition of the right and business interests. Employers began to negotiate 'convenios' with non-union workers, awarding them higher pay and better conditions than union members. Massive inequalities between private and public health workers, paralleled in education and social security sharpened the polarisation between differing sectors. In 1996, Arturo Martínez, a prominent socialist, took over the leadership of the CUT. Martínez initiated a policy of mobilisation and mass protest which was accentuated by his communist successor, Eitel Maraga, after 1998. Increasingly, workers turned to strikes, both legal and illegal. In 1998, one and a half million days were lost to strikes, ten times the level of 1990.

The story of Chile's labour relations since 1989 is emblematic of the country's economic power relations as a whole. On the one hand, Chile's minimum wage, after a large rise in June 2000, is among the highest in the world. A million new jobs were created during the 1990s. Yet, for all the efforts of Ricardo Lagos and his administration, big business remains

the dominant economic authority in the country. Although the overall number and membership of unions grew in absolute terms during the 1990s, the percentage of the workforce covered remained broadly similar: 12.7% in 1998 compared to 11.5% in 1989. Only a little over 7% of the employed labour force were covered by collective bargaining agreements in 1998 compared to nearly 10% in 1991. In contrast, in 1998, the private sector provided three-quarters of the total investment and assets of the country. Time and again, business interests have trumped those of Chilean workers during the 1990s.

### *Summary*

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the economy in Chile: over two-thirds of Chileans think that improving the economy is more important than improving democracy. For most Chileans, the economy is the life blood of the country: it's collapse precipitated the downfall of the Allende regime and provided the seeds for the protestas in the early 1980s; it was the main issue on which the military fought for its survival and by which revisionists continue to evoke fond memories of the military period. It is therefore little surprise that the economy has played such a pivotal role in the transition to democracy, providing a clear symbol of the divergent interests and struggles between business, labour and government.

### *Social-ideological relations*

Chile is traumatised like an abused child that is always expecting the next blow. The right is afraid of losing its privileges, the left fears the possibility of another coup and the horrific repression of the past, the government fears the military and a polarisation that would bring unrest and instability. The rest of the people fear the truth...the heritage of Pinochet is a nation in fear.<sup>481</sup>

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<sup>481</sup> Isabel Allende writing in the *New York Times*, 17 January 1998, p. 27.

Under the dictatorship, those networks and sites of collective identity which were the bedrock of the left and of political agency in general were systematically removed: unions were crushed, political parties banned and rural organisations outlawed. In place of these older forms of solidarity emerged a diverse array of informal, uncoordinated groups: human rights organisations, neighbourhood associations, women's collectives and peasant federations. These social movements became the principal agents of change during the mass protests of the early and mid 1980s. However, their failure to attract concerted middle class backing saw them fail to oust the regime by popular rebellion. Instead, elites carved up the spoils between them. When democracy returned, social movements suffered the same fate as the working classes who have been the traditional agents of revolutionary change – they became the first victims of the new order.

### *The TRC and the Pinochet case*

Drawing its lead from a number of other Latin American countries, Chile set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to report on human rights atrocities committed under the dictatorship. Truth was intended to provide what Reed Brody calls 'transitional justice', the balancing of an ideal form of justice with the political realism needed to weave a path through the shaky ground of a transitional period. An array of symbols also marked the shift from authoritarianism to freedom, most notably the public acknowledgment of victims through public monuments and the media. But it was only with the arrest of the former dictator, General Pinochet, in 1998 that Chile began to revisit the military period in an open, thorough and effective way.

The TRC, or Rettig Commission, was set up in April 1990 with three overall goals: to gather information and clarify the truth about the most grave violations of human rights committed

under the dictatorship; to recommend ways to satisfy demands from victims for justice; and to 'create indispensable conditions for achieving true national reconciliation'. The commission was not an investigating body, it only contained the powers to gather information and interview both victims and perpetrators. It was made up of eight members ranging from Pinochistas to opposition activists. Over a nine month period, the commissioners travelled around the country gathering information on human rights abuses, interviewing victims and compiling a definitive list of those who had been murdered.

In February 1991, the commission's 2,000 page report was published. It found that over 2,000 people had been murdered under the dictatorship: half had no political affiliation and 60% were less than thirty years old. It accused the Pinochet regime of a 'systematic policy of extermination', recommending that, as the majority of human rights crimes had been committed by 'agents of the state', the state had the responsibility to recognise liability and compensate the families of the victims.<sup>482</sup> The report also recommended setting up a foundation to archive material, assist relatives and continue the search for bodies of the disappeared. Commissioners called for over 200 cases to be reopened and the act of withholding information to be made a criminal offence. On 4 March 1991, President Aylwin presented the report to the nation, saying,

I cannot forgive for another. Forgiveness is not imposed by decree... When agents of the state were those who caused so much suffering and the relevant organs of the state could not or did not know how to avoid and prevent it, nor was there the necessary social reaction to impede it, the state and the entire society are responsible, whether by action or omission. It is Chilean society that is indebted to the victims of human rights violations.<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>482</sup> Reparations provided an initial payment of \$3,000 followed by monthly stipends of \$400 per month. These payments were granted to just over 2,000 people.

<sup>483</sup> Quoted in Brown (1991: 18).

But the report was not the success its proponents had hoped for. Throughout the 1990s, the discovery of mass graves at Pisagua, Copiapó, Calama and elsewhere heightened public clamour for more far reaching action against the perpetrators of human rights violations. 69% of Chileans believed that the report did not contain the whole truth about what happened under the dictatorship, 53% said that it did not provide justice and only 6% agreed that it had resolved Chile's human rights problems. While 43% said that the report helped reconciliation, 40% thought that it had made things worse. The murder of Jaime Guzmán and other terrorist reprisal attacks forced the Rettig report off the front pages. Although the report was broadly accepted by the air force, navy and the carabineros, Pinochet firmly rejected its findings on behalf of the army, claiming that it was biased and had failed to understand that Chile had been in a condition of internal war. He alleged,

The army of Chile solemnly declares that it will not accept being placed on trial for having saved the freedom and sovereignty of the homeland at the insistence of the civilian population. Even less will it tolerate this when, among those who attempt to elevate themselves through moral judgements of other men, are those who were principally responsible for the tragedy experienced. The military regime re-established peace and returned political leadership to civilians in a country already free and reconciled.<sup>484</sup>

Throughout the 1990s, this failure by some members of the old regime to acknowledge their part in the worst aspects of the dictatorship remained an important block on the consolidation of democracy in Chile. The government had to placate those who called for stronger action against the old regime while guarding against the possibility of military aggression. However, on 16 October 1998, General Pinochet was arrested while convalescing after an operation on

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<sup>484</sup> Quoted in Brown (1991: 33).



a herniated disk at a private hospital in London.<sup>485</sup> Judge Baltasar Garzón, a Spanish judge, applied for the General's arrest as part of his ongoing investigations into Operation Condor, the network through which the intelligence services of numerous Latin American dictatorships had co-operated during the 1970s and 1980s. Garzón, working with Juan Garcés, a former aid to Salvador Allende, petitioned British courts to extradite Pinochet to Spain to face trial for genocide, murder, torture, hostage-taking and conspiracy to commit these crimes. Within weeks, six more European governments had also forwarded their interest in extraditing Pinochet.

Over the next seventeen months, a welter of hearings saw various British courts determine that the General could not be deemed immune from prosecution as the charges against him were too grave. Three High Court decisions finally accepted that Pinochet could be extradited to Spain but only for crimes committed after 8 December 1988, the date by which Britain, Chile and Spain had all ratified the International Convention against Torture. Under pressure from the Chilean and Spanish governments, the British Home Secretary, Jack Straw, agreed to an independent medical appraisal of Pinochet's health. The eighty-two year old former dictator, who suffered from diabetes and wore a pacemaker, was adjudged by the report to be 'sufficiently mentally incapacitated to be unable to take part in a trial and understand what is happening'.<sup>486</sup> In March 2000, Straw released the former president on compassionate grounds and put him on a flight back to Chile.

During Pinochet's confinement in the UK, the Chilean government adamantly defended the former dictator, arguing that Pinochet enjoyed immunity from prosecution as a former head

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<sup>485</sup> The name of the hospital was 'The London Clinic'; ironically, one of the CNI's secret torture facilities in Santiago was dubbed 'La Clínica Londres'.

<sup>486</sup> Quoted in Davis (2000: 17).

of state and senator for life. The government paid for all of Pinochet's legal fees, amounting to \$4 million of tax payers' money, ostensibly for two reasons: firstly, that the arrest and attempted extradition of Pinochet by two former colonial powers with a sketchy human rights record of their own was an infringement on Chilean sovereignty; second, that if Pinochet should be tried, convicted and eventually die in a foreign jail, he could become a martyr to the authoritarian right. The government therefore organised numerous meetings between the foreign ministers of Chile, Britain and Spain in an attempt to find a diplomatic route out of the impasse and applied consistent pressure on the British government to release Pinochet so that he could be dealt with by the Chilean authorities.

But as the case rumbled on, it developed a logic of its own, acting as a catalyst for social change within Chile: six generals and numerous other officers were indicted for human rights abuses; a new group, La Funa, began to out unpunished torturers; clashes between pro-Pinochet and anti-Pinochet demonstrators took place in full public view, occasionally with violent consequences.<sup>487</sup> In a poll taken in December 1998, 64% of Chileans acknowledged that Pinochet had committed crimes during his rule and 57% said that he should stand trial for them. The former head of the CNI, General Humberto Gordon, was indicted and charged with murder. In August 1999, a roundtable (*mesa de diálogo*) was convened between the armed forces and human rights representatives in an attempt to reach an accord over the disappeared.<sup>488</sup> In May 2000, the military publicly admitted the existence of disappearances for the first time. The media began to publish stories outlining Pinochet's personal involvement with political assassinations, including that of Orlando Letelier.

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<sup>487</sup> On 11 September 1999, the anniversary of the coup, two demonstrators were killed in clashes between the two rival camps and police.

<sup>488</sup> In early 2003, air force chief Patricio Ríos was forced to resign over his handling of the disappeared.

The Chilean judiciary also began to rediscover its independence. A poll published in March 1991 found that 72% of Chileans thought that the judiciary had performed poorly during the dictatorship. Even after the restoration of democracy, the courts appeared ill able to foreswear their allegiance to the old regime. In 1994, the Supreme Court closed the case on Carmelo Soria, a Spanish diplomat murdered by CNI agents, despite the confession of those responsible; in 1995 a student leader, Arturo Barrios, was jailed for daring to state publicly that General Pinochet should be put on trial for human rights violations; even as late as 1997, Supreme Court justices requested that lower courts resolve any outstanding human rights cases speedily and in full regard to the amnesty law introduced by the dictatorship in 1980.<sup>489</sup> But after Pinochet's arrest, a Santiago judge, Juan Guzmán Tapia, accepted more than a hundred suits from relatives of the disappeared against Pinochet arguing that, in instances where no bodies had been discovered, a case could be made for 'perpetual kidnapping'. The military had always hidden behind an amnesty law which forbade any investigation into human rights abuses committed before the state of emergency, first declared by the junta immediately after the coup, was lifted in 1978. But in July 1999, the Supreme Court accepted that five officers who had taken part in the infamous Caravan of Death journey in 1974 had no right to amnesty as no bodies had been found.<sup>490</sup>

In March 2000, Pinochet arrived back in Chile, leaping from his wheelchair to embrace his high ranking welcoming committee. But the general was met by a stream of vitriol from politicians, public and many sections of the media. In May 2000, the Santiago Appeal Court lifted Pinochet's senatorial immunity, a decision ratified by the Supreme Court in August. In

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<sup>489</sup> For more on these cases, see Dorfman (2002).

<sup>490</sup> The Caravan of Death was a two day journey taken by a group of officers under the command of General Sergio Arellano Stark by helicopter to four locations around Chile. The group was ordered to 'inspect and harmonise judicial standards' in the aftermath of the coup. In reality, they murdered seventy-five political prisoners. Stark, as Officer Delegate of the General Pinochet, reported directly to the president. For more on this, see Verdugo (2001).

December, he was formally indicted for homicide and kidnapping. In January 2001, Chilean doctors agreed that Pinochet showed signs of dementia and he was placed under virtual house arrest. In June, the Santiago Appeal Court agreed that Pinochet was mentally unfit to stand trial. The next year the Supreme Court suspended proceedings against Pinochet permanently and the former dictator resigned as a senator for life.

### *Religion*

Under the dictatorship, the Catholic church provided what Philip Oxhorn calls a 'protective umbrella' for civil society organisations, acting as a legitimating force for opposition to the regime.<sup>491</sup> Indeed, as I outlined in the first section of this chapter, religion was a key source, perhaps the most importance basis, of resistance to the dictatorship. But since the return to democracy, the church has once more become a trusted pillar of the conservative establishment. The Vicaría de Solidaridad was closed down 1992. Instead of human rights and abuses of power, church leaders today are more concerned with blocking any modernisation of Chile's archaic divorce and abortion laws.

In the first few years after the return of democracy, the church appeared to be maintaining its focus on the 'social debt' and its role as governmental critic in chief. The Rettig Report was condemned by the church for being too soft on human rights abusers and the Aylwin government was also reproached by church leaders for an insufficient focus on poverty alleviation and income redistribution. But, on the whole, new church leaders appointed by the Vatican were more conservative than their predecessors. Although a 1991 poll showed that 55% of Catholics supported the legalisation of divorce, the church continued to oppose any change in the rather curious Chilean law which allowed for the 'technical' annulment of a

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<sup>491</sup> For more on this, see Oxhorn (1995).

marriage on payment of a one-off fee of \$360, a route taken by around 8,000 couples each year.<sup>492</sup> Church opposition helped to squash two divorce bills in 1991 and a proposed referendum on the issue in 1994. On abortion, the church again chose to swim against the tide of public opinion. Although 76% of Chileans think that abortion should be permitted if the mothers life is in danger and 50% if she has been raped, the church, led by the new Archbishop of Santiago, Monsignor Orviedo, refuses to countenance any 'relativism in sexual morality'.<sup>493</sup> In 1997, Catholic leaders refused to carry a government advertisement about AIDS on their media outlets.

It is therefore little surprise that Chileans have begun to lose faith in the Catholic church, choosing to move in significant numbers to new, often Evangelical, churches.<sup>494</sup> The church has failed to help either the government speed up reforms or challenge the military to formally step aside. Their new social morality play is in stark contrast to the more liberal attitudes of modern Chile. Since 1989, the church has become a less trusted and more distant feature of the social fabric of the nation.

### *Gender*

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Chilean politics was dominated by 'acuerdos de caballeros' (gentlemen's agreements). Although women were well represented at local levels of the political system, few broke through into national politics. Under the dictatorship, propaganda centred on the 'proper' role of women as mothers and carers responsible for ensuring domestic harmony.<sup>495</sup> In 1987, women's earnings were just 71% of men's while

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<sup>492</sup> Couples had to 'prove' that there had been errors on their marriage papers, for example an incorrect address.

<sup>493</sup> For more on this, see Fleet and Smith (1997).

<sup>494</sup> Over 20% of Chileans now belong to 'new' churches.

<sup>495</sup> During the fifteen years of the dictatorship, there were only two female members of the cabinet.

three quarters of people using PEM were women.<sup>496</sup> Many women were temporary workers (temporeras), forced into low paying, poorly protected jobs like fruit picking and packing. In one of the final acts of the dictatorship, the military outlawed therapeutic terminations, legal in Chile since 1931. The military also changed the rules for running the main state based women's organisation, the Centros de Madres, making its head the wife of the head of the armed forces rather than as tradition dictated, the wife of the president.

Faced with such a history of formal discrimination, women mobilised frequently during the twentieth century to fight for the vote, education rights and formal incorporation into political, economic and social structures. During the military period, the dismantling of political parties shifted the locus of political organisation from national elites to local, grassroots movements. Women worked at the forefront of community, neighbourhood and human rights groups, developing a form of 'popular feminism' which saw them take on responsibility for families' welfare and income. The main feminist slogan during the military period was 'democracia en el país y en la casa' (democracy in the country and at home).

Numerous feminist organisations worked both within and outside formal political associations to ensure that the post-authoritarian settlement would be gender aware. In 1983, the Feminist Movement published a manifesto calling for the 'full emancipation of Chilean women'. In 1986, women's organisations formed a key part of the Asamblea de la Civilidad. During the transition itself, an umbrella group, the Concertación de Mujeres por la Democracia, lobbied for a woman's ministry, political quotas and labour rights under the banner 'soy mujer, tengo derechos' (I am a woman, I have rights).

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<sup>496</sup> From Caistor (1998).

However, there was real dissonance between the demands of the Concertación de Mujeres for formal representation in the new institutions and the focus on civil society and social legislation favoured by grassroots organisations. As a result, the women's movement as a whole lacked focus and coherence. The lobby did succeed in convincing the PPD and the Socialists to adopt quotas for internal party positions: 20% and 25% respectively. But the failure of political parties to accept quotas for national elections meant that few women were elected to the first democratic congress: just seven MPs, constituting 5.8% of the total were women. However, some key demands of the Concertación de Mujeres were met: the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women was ratified; equal rights amendments were made to the constitution; and bills were passed to eliminate sexism in education and the workplace.

In 1991, President Aylwin set up SERNAM, a women's ministry inside the Ministry of Planning whose head, Soledad Alvear Valenzuela, was a cabinet member.<sup>497</sup> SERNAM's broad remit was to 'put an end to decades of discrimination in social, economic, political, cultural and family areas'. More specifically, it ran campaigns, for example on domestic violence; piloted projects through its regional offices, like one supporting female head of households; and lobbied for legal reform, such as equal opportunity legislation. SERNAM certainly achieved a great deal during the 1990s. As a formal arm of government, the department enjoys enviable influence and resources. However, its incorporation into the state machinery can be a weakness as the department is unable to criticise government policy openly and can be somewhat removed from 'politics on the ground'. SERNAM has failed to lobby sufficiently on key issues like divorce or reproductive legislation which would bring it into conflict with both the government and powerful interest groups like the church. It has

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<sup>497</sup> Aylwin also appointed three female under-secretaries and four women as regional governors.

also been accused of weakening grassroots organisations and NGOs, albeit unintentionally, by co-opting staff and taking over limited funding opportunities.

In the 1993 elections, although just under 10% of Concertación candidates were women, only nine female deputies (8%) and no senators at all were elected. However, President Frei did appoint two women to his cabinet, including Soledad Alvear as Justice Minister.<sup>498</sup>

Nevertheless, at national level, legislation to introduce quotas was again blocked. In 1997, although about 20% of the electoral candidates were women, only two female senators were elected alongside thirteen deputies, about 10% of the total. Women constituted 19% of PPD deputies, 8% of the Socialist members, 16% of RN representative and 5% of PDC members. However, the UDI had no female candidates and therefore no women representatives at all.<sup>499</sup> President Lagos appointed five women to his cabinet – Soledad Alvear became Minister of Foreign Affairs. Overall, women currently constitute 30% of all deputy ministers and nearly a third of regional bosses but only just over 10% of deputies and 5% of senators. In 2003, two women – the Defence Minister Michelle Bachelet and Alvear – were the best regarded politicians in the country.<sup>500</sup>

Despite this struggle to achieve formal political representation, women campaigners did achieve some notable successes during the 1990s. Research in the early 1990s by SERNAM showed that a third of lower class women in Santiago had experienced some form of physical violence. In 1994, after much wrangling, a Domestic Violence Bill was finally passed in congress, although opponents did manage to withdraw a clause on sexual violence. Over the

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<sup>498</sup> Later in his term, Frei appointed one more woman to his cabinet.

<sup>499</sup> In 1998, there were less women in parliament than in 1973.

<sup>500</sup> 68% of respondents to a national poll had a positive or very positive assessment of Bachelet. The figure for Alvear was 65%.



next two years, reports of domestic violence to the police rose by 25%. Also in 1994, the Abandonment and Family Support Bill saw levels of support for a deserted partner and their children rise substantially. Gendered adultery legislation was outlawed. The following year, Chile signed up to an Interamerican convention – Belem do Pará – committed to eradicating all forms of violence against women. An all woman radio station, Radio Tierra, was set up, mostly backed by overseas funding. In 1999, a Paternity Law made men equally responsible for children born out of wedlock. By the end of the decade, a range of labour legislation had improved the rights of part-time and temporary workers, of particular importance to women. A ban on pregnant teenagers attending school was lifted and sex education openly introduced into the national curriculum for the first time. By 2000, women occupied over a third of the intermediate managerial positions in the state bureaucracy. In 2001, the first woman – María Antonia Morales Villagrán – was appointed to the supreme court.

However, despite the advances made during the 1990s, women are far from achieving true equality in Chile. In 1998, the UN placed Chile 61<sup>st</sup> in its Gender Empowerment Measurement, significantly behind other Latin American counties like Costa Rica and Mexico. Women still earn less than a quarter of earned income in the country. Important legislation on divorce and reproductive rights has been consistently defeated by an unholy alliance of right wing senators, the church and the conservative media. The new visibility of gender issues, while welcome, has masked the sluggish pace of reform. Women are well represented at a local level: a third of the Socialists' governing council and a quarter of the PPD's political commission are women; a third of the leadership of local Juntas de Vecinos are women; the PPD now has a quota of 40% for internal decision making positions. But women have failed to make a substantial breakthrough into national politics, too often characterised by macho posturing and cronyism. Acuerdos de caballeros have returned as 'lo

político'. As a result, the women's movement is almost entirely reliant on government largesse. It may be that a future right wing administration will be less convinced of the needs for a gendered dimension to policy making than the current government.

### *Summary*

Since 1989, Chilean elites have consistently placed order and consensus above challenge and conflict. The result is a country which has subsumed its past behind a veneer of normality. But the denial of the past and of Chile's deep, profound cleavages comes at a considerable price – a moral crisis rooted in the social fabric of the country, a crisis which Alexandra de Brito labels 'a condition of social autism'.<sup>501</sup> Social capital, reliant on informal sectors and religious bodies under the dictatorship, has been weakened by the return of democracy. In 2001, only 15% of Chileans said that they trusted other people.<sup>502</sup> Laws inherited from the military dictatorship, including *desacato*, a contempt of authority act, continue to play a prominent role in Chile's social relations.<sup>503</sup> Publications like the on-line magazine *El Mostrador* and *Clinic*, a satirical bi-weekly, demonstrate a new wave of more critical publications but on the whole, the media remains a central pillar of the conservative establishment. It is little surprise that the cry of the left is 'avanzar sin transar' (advance without compromise).<sup>504</sup> Only when Chile's deep divisions have been publicly acknowledged and openly debated can wounds begin to heal and the nation start to construct a common future. The arrest of General Pinochet and the subsequent national angst this provoked may be the first, tentative step along this path.

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<sup>501</sup> De Brito (1997).

<sup>502</sup> See *The Economist*. "The Latinobarometro poll." 28 July 2001, pp. 51-52.

<sup>503</sup> For example, *desacato* was used in 1999 to ban a book on judicial corruption. The author was eventually forced to seek political asylum in the USA.

<sup>504</sup> During the 1990s, one campaigner, Carmen Soria, whose father was tortured and killed by the dictatorship, went so far as to launch a suit in the Inter-American Court administered by the Organisation of American States against the Chilean government for the 'denial of justice'. Soria was offered \$1 million and a commemorative statue of her father by the government but she turned this down, preferring to take her case to court.

## Conclusion

When there's never been an acknowledgement from the armed forces of any wrongdoing, when the civilian government demands no such recognition, when both the right and the left trumpet Chile as the model of the future, when torturers and assassins are exempted from prosecutions, then anything said to the contrary must be a lie.<sup>505</sup>

Max Weber described context as an 'iron cage around social action'. Nowhere is there more stark an illustration of Weber's conceptualisation than Chile. As I have illustrated in this chapter, Chile since 1989 has been the site of both rupture and continuity. But on the whole, the iron cage of context has held off attempts to fundamentally alter Chile's principal power relations. Instead, changes that have occurred have been grafted onto the old order rather than marking out substantially new ground. Chile can be described neither as an example of revolutionary change nor as one of negotiated revolution.

Brian Loveman persuasively argues that the shallowness of Chilean democracy and the persistent intrusion of the military into Chile's political life is in keeping with the country's traditions.<sup>506</sup> Certainly, the fuerza of the military dictatorship and the protected elite democracy which characterises contemporary Chile are as much a part of the nation's history as any fanciful notion of two centuries of enlightened razón. The lesson both from Chile's past and its present is that real conflicts and social cleavages can't be emasculated behind a wall of consensus. But that is not to deride the significant changes which have taken place since 1989: establishment of the rule of law, the onset of competitive elections, the creation of broadly accountable institutions and widescale respect for civil rights. These are

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<sup>505</sup> Cooper (2001: 107)

<sup>506</sup> For more on this, see Loveman (2001).

considerable, important steps forward from Pinochet's era of authoritarian dictatorship. All democracies are imperfect to some degree. It may be that the arrest of General Pinochet finally begins to rid Chileans from the suffocating weight of their forced equanimity. That part of the story is yet to truly unfold.

## Chapter 6:

### Negotiated Revolution

It is incredible how many systems of morality and politics have been successively found, forgotten, rediscovered, forgotten again, only to reappear later, always charming and surprising the world as if they were new, and bearing witness, not to the fecundity of the human spirit but to the ignorance of men.<sup>507</sup>

Heeding Alexis de Tocqueville's warning on the 'ignorance of men', this chapter does not make any particular claim of 'newness'. Rather, it looks backwards as well as forwards, illustrating the relative *novelty* of the concept of negotiated revolution through comparison, both theoretical and empirical, with the great revolutions of the modern era. At all times, I use the case studies employed in this thesis to challenge my theoretical assertions. The Chilean case, in particular, is used as a counterfactual to test my principal argument – that, as the only examples of relatively peaceful yet revolutionary transformations between autocracies and market democracies, negotiated revolutions have distinct and profound consequences both for the international system in general, and for those states facing similar contexts and pressures in particular.

My starting point is a simple enough claim – within any particular epoch, the core features, norms and structures of international relations are dominated by a 'great revolution'.<sup>508</sup> Just as the French Revolution ushered in a long century of conflict between nascent democracies and ancien regimes, so the Russian Revolution shaped seventy years of struggle between

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<sup>507</sup> Tocqueville quoted in Wight, Porter and Wight (eds.) (1991: 5).

<sup>508</sup> For more on this, see Sztompka (1993).

liberal capitalism and state socialism. In like fashion, the Chinese Revolution exemplified the uprising of the developing world against the old imperial powers and the Iranian revolution symbolised the ascent of a cocktail of anti-modernism and self-determination which became the defining features of international relations at the turn of the millennium.

By saying this, I do not mean to deny the heterogeneity of world politics nor reduce homogeneity merely to processes of revolution.<sup>509</sup> I am fully aware that, during the cold war for example, the world was made up of militaristic, authoritarian states in South East Asia and Latin America, religious regimes exemplified by the Islamic Republics in the Middle East, family based fiefdoms such as Brunei, Qatar and Saudi Arabia as well as liberal capitalist and socialist states. But despite this variation, the key conflicts in world politics throughout the last century can be seen through the prism afforded by great revolutions. The musings of international organisations, the foreign policies of states and the core norms of international relations were all constituted to some extent in reference to the overarching structural relations of the epoch. These structural relations, in turn, were drawn from the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Chinese Revolution and the Iranian Revolution. These revolutions provided big picture alternatives to market democracy which resonated far beyond their borders. As such, they stand as modular revolutions which were derived from and at once set the broad parameters for world politics during this era.<sup>510</sup>

The previous five chapters have gone some way to delineating a place amidst this pantheon for what I call 'negotiated revolutions'. In this chapter, I will both explore in more detail the

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<sup>509</sup> For more on the homogeneity of world politics, see Buzan and Little (2000) and Halliday (1999).

<sup>510</sup> There are, of course, alternative 'big picture' views of the twentieth century as a battle between authoritarianism and liberalism, imperialism and self-determination. But my view is that, even these conflicts are, to some degree, subsumed within the greater structural setting afforded by 'great revolutions'.

core features of these processes and also make the case for seeing them as contemporary ‘great revolutions’. To that end, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first section is a survey of the five key characteristics which make up negotiated revolutions. The second extends these arguments, making the case for seeing negotiated revolutions as both the product and the producers of contemporary world politics, thereby central to any discussion of the possibility for radical change in the modern era.

### **Negotiated revolution**

Many theorists contend that revolutions, or at least ‘great revolutions’, pass through a series of stages. As I described in chapter two, Crane Brinton bases his analysis of revolutionary anatomy on the path of the French Revolution from an initial period of moderacy to the ‘Terror’ of the Jacobins and the ‘Thermidor’ of July 1794.<sup>511</sup> Krejčí, in turn, argues that revolutions pass through a number of stages: onset, compression, explosion, oscillation, expansion, tightening, reversal, restoration and consolidation.<sup>512</sup> In numerous texts, Fred Halliday refers to the modularity of revolutionary outcomes as constituting: a period of grace, domestic radicalism, accommodation and instability.<sup>513</sup>

In chapter two, I explored the myriad of reasons why we cannot extrapolate from one great revolution to another without recourse to contingency and particularity. If history tells us anything, it is to be careful about employing terms like generality and necessity. Yet, there is little doubt that ‘modern revolutions’, the type ushered in by the French Revolution a little over two centuries ago, do share some generic features: causes rooted in systemic crisis; the development of a condition of multiple sovereignty; a call to arms based on a utopian vision;

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<sup>511</sup> For a fuller discussion of Brinton’s approach to revolution, see pp. 77-78 and Brinton (1965).

<sup>512</sup> For more on this, see Krejčí (1994).

<sup>513</sup> See, for example, Halliday (1994).

a takeover of state institutions; the attempt to export revolution internationally; counter-revolution; and the growth of stronger, more bureaucratic, often tyrannical states.

As I show below, negotiated revolutions move away from this type of, albeit loose classification, in five main ways. From a suspicion of revolution which frequently led to counter-revolution, the international, both in terms of structure and agency, actively welcomes the insurgent states. The utopian vision which often resulted in extremism is exchanged for a revolutionary ideology rooted in longer term principles of freedom, a return to normalcy and a desire to catch up with other states. A violent conflict between rival forces is replaced by the acceptance of mutual dependency, the undesirability of ongoing civil conflict and a greater role for structural, latent forms of violence. From a fight to the finish comes a process in which the old regime and revolutionaries together negotiate the destruction of the old order and the birth of a new nation. Rather than the creation of a stronger, more bureaucratic state, a relatively weak state emerges both in terms of despotic authority and infrastructural capacity, hemmed in by independent actors, both national and international. As such, negotiated revolutions are tangible signs of an imminent modularity in world politics in which radical change is based around negotiation rather than violence; citizenship rather than subjection; and liberation rather than utopia.

### ***From Burke to Paine***

Revolutions are intricately bound up with the international. First, they are, to an extent, reliant on international context. During the cold war, for example, a relatively impermeable operating environment tended to foreclose opportunities for revolutionary change. Any disruption to the status quo was considered, usually by both blocs, as a hazardous disruption to the global constellation of forces. In this way, the United States favoured authoritarian



strongmen, most noticeably in the Americas, even at the cost of democratically elected heads of state. For their part, the Soviet Union rarely intervened to help even apparent allies in the developing world, at least at nothing like the level of assistance offered by, for example, Fidel Castro in Cuba. Over the past two centuries, international statesmen and diplomats whatever their overt political stripes have tended to view revolutions with Burkean suspicion, often backed up by active support for counter revolutionary measures. Order, time and again, has trumped justice.

However, the end of the Cold War engendered an opening up of this closed international order and many of the negative connotations associated with revolutionary change. The apparent ‘triumph’ of market democracy and the collapse of a viable alternative system acted as a spur for radicalism around the world. As long as revolutionaries framed their story as one of a return to normalcy (Chile), emancipation from the Soviet yoke (the Czech Republic) or as liberation from a system whose time had long since past (South Africa), as long as they agreed to abide by a series of neo-liberal reforms and signed up to a welter of international institutions and normative frameworks, so the great powers welcomed what had previously been outcast states into the community of nations. Burkean suspicion was supplanted by an almost Paine-like enthusiasm. Just cause was given a rare opportunity for realisation.

As the case studies in this thesis make clear, international assistance varied from the normative (the recognition of the legitimacy of the revolutionary struggle) to the material (aid packages, election monitors and so on). The revolutionary transformations in the Czech Republic and South Africa succeeded because of the structural opening afforded by the end of the cold war and the active support of international agencies – state departments, key individuals and global institutions alike. In Chile, the international played a major role in the

transition, witnessed for example by the democratisation of neighbouring states, the pressure put on the junta by the US government to accept the result of the plebiscite and through its partial funding of the 'No' campaign. But this support stopped some way short of actively welcoming a revolutionary transformation which could upset the Chilean economy and potentially destabilise the region. As a result, the end of the Pinochet era in Chile was met by a whimper next to the wholesale celebrations around the world which marked the collapse of communism in the Czech Republic and the end of apartheid in South Africa.

### *From utopia to normalcy*

In negotiated revolutions, revolutionaries deliberately eschew the blind obedience to a particular ideology which legitimised the excesses of many revolutions in the past. In this way, they avoid the patterns of domestic and international terror, counter revolution, autarchy and war that have characterised previous revolutions. Instead, negotiated revolutions embrace the norms, rules and operating procedures of advanced market democracies. They seek to build a new order without the despotic coercive control exerted by their predecessors but one that institutes popular legitimacy by the formation of constitutions and free elections, the liberalisation of economic relations and the establishment of a free press.

Again, it is important to note the differences between Chile, South Africa and the Czech Republic. It was only when the opposition in Chile renounced ideology altogether and proceeded through elite pacts that the movement gained the trust of both business elites and key sections of the wider public. In the other two cases, although revolutionaries moved away from any concept of total victory, ideals were never removed from the revolution itself. Nelson Mandela powerfully evoked principles of peaceful change, liberation and freedom. For his part, Václav Havel consistently framed his actions, along with those of the

revolutionary movement in general, as embodiments of his concept of 'living in truth'. At all times, revolutionaries in South Africa and the Czech Republic paid overt homage to ideals in a way that Chilean leaders expressly disavowed.

But perhaps the best means of assessing the novel role of ideology in negotiated revolutions is by examining the ways in which they deal with the injustices of the old order. All revolutions require some mechanism for moving from old to new, a means of establishing the authority and legitimacy of the incoming regime while providing an outlet for people's sense of outrage and thirst for revenge. In the past, these needs were satiated through a mixture of firing squads, guillotines, show trials, gulags and purges. But negotiated revolutions, founded on principles of restorative rather than punitive or retributive justice, institute an innovative set of arrangements for dealing with these issues – truth commissions.<sup>514</sup>

The character and outcomes of truth commissions closely reflect the nature of both the polity and the particular society within which they take place. Each of the three processes I look at in this thesis – South Africa, Chile and the Czech Republic – tell their own distinct tale: secretive and repressed in Chile, kept firmly behind closed doors by an old guard determined to cling onto power; messy and violent in South Africa, a perambulating Pandora's box held in full gaze of a disorientated public; uncertain and limited in the Czech Republic, where the main body of evidence were police files held over from the communist era. There is therefore no single route map for societies escaping from, or seeking to escape from, entrenched conflict. In South Africa, a truth commission has been a valuable symbolic tool representing

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<sup>514</sup> This is not to say that truth commissions originate with negotiated revolutions. In fact, they first appeared during the 1980s in Latin America as a means of hearing from, and compensating, families of those who had 'disappeared' under military dictatorships. As they have developed, truth commissions have become far more complex, reaching their apogee, at least to date, in South Africa.

the birth of a new nation; in Chile, it was only the arrest of the former dictator which moved the transition on apace; in the Czech Republic, a flawed law has failed to provide a sense of resolution between an autocratic past and a democratic future.

But what these processes share is a commitment to the generation of a foundational narrative for a new nation out of which a collective rather than a disjointed history can emerge. As such, they fulfil the age old need to provide an outlet for the victims of the old regime, a moment when innocent people get the chance to tell stories which would otherwise go unheard, a weapon of the weak turned back against seemingly almighty oppressors. But at the same time, they perform this task in a novel fashion – by trading truth for punishment. For all their flaws, TRCs therefore represent central elements in the ideological differentiation of negotiated revolutions from past examples of revolutionary change. They are one element of the attempt to reconcile what were apparently intractable differences. As such, TRCs are a crucial step in the argument which states that real conflicts and social cleavages cannot, nor should they be, emasculated behind a façade of consensus but that conflict by civil war, firing squad or show trial is disastrous for a nation's future well being. For that reason and that reason alone, they represent the distinctiveness of negotiated revolutions from the modern revolutions of the past two centuries or so.

### ***From festivals of violence to festivals of hope***

In the modern era, revolutions have been seen as festivals of violence, fights to the finish in which one side vanquishes the other, an ultimate victory in which a new order is immediately instituted while the ashes of the old are still burning. Of course, history tells a somewhat different story: the 1789 Revolution ushered in two decades or more of domestic strife in France as well as almost constant war abroad; the Bolshevik Revolution was followed by a

four year long civil war in which foreign armies and their proxies fought fiercely with the Red Army; the two stage Chinese Revolution was separated by a battle for domestic hegemony which lasted for three decades. Even after these revolutions, the new regimes struggled to impose their authority on their wider societies, hence Robespierre's Terror, Stalin's purges and Mao's Great Leap Forward, all attempts to shore up revolutionary regimes from opposition both at home and abroad, real and imagined.<sup>515</sup>

Negotiated revolutions offer a radically different conceptualisation of violence than past examples of revolution. First, overt violence is contained – both sides seek a settlement of previously irreconcilable differences without recourse to coercive power, although as I pointed out in each case study, these conflicts featured varying degrees of overt violence leading up to the revolutionary denouement itself. Second, again as I have made clear throughout the thesis, violence tends to appear in latent, structural form rather than as an explicit policy tool. In this way, negotiated revolutions avoid the extreme levels of violence, both domestic and international, which have plagued so many revolutions in the modern era.

Of course, there is no necessary or inexorable link between this lack of overt violence and negotiated revolution. Many revolutionaries and members of the old regime in South Africa and the Czech Republic would have been content to continue fighting in the hope of ultimate victory. Miroslav Ransdorf, Deputy Chairman of the Czech Communist Party, remains convinced that if the communist regime in the Czech Republic had not lost its nerve, they could have restored order through the use of force. One current member of the South African government told me with a certain degree of regret that the struggle had not afforded him the

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<sup>515</sup> The proclivity of revolutionary regimes to domestic tyranny is evidenced today by Fidel Castro's regular crackdowns on domestic dissent in Cuba.

chance to drive a tank victoriously through the streets of Pretoria. One only has to look at the heated debates which dominated the pages of the *African Communist* during the late 1980s and early 1990s and at the levels of violence which continue to plague South Africa today to realise the centrality of violence to that negotiated revolution.

The crucial point is that, if a negotiated revolution is to succeed, both sides must renounce violence as a legitimate policy tool. As the old regime tends to retain control of the coercive apparatus longer than any other means of authority, this decision is primarily the preserve of the old guard. Hence the concern over the night of October 5<sup>th</sup> that the Chilean junta might not accept the result of the plebiscite, the relief among leaders of the general strike in the Czech Republic that the army was not called in to restore order and the uncertainty among leading ANC cadres that the armed forces would play a neutral role either during the negotiating process or the 1994 elections in South Africa. In each case, the role of the coercive apparatus was critical but uncertain. In each case, leaders chose not to use the force available to them.

The lack of a recourse to armed conflict by old regime elites in Chile, South Africa and the Czech Republic contrasts starkly with the decision by the Chinese politburo to employ the army against student protesters in Tianamen Square in June 1989, a policy which helped to successfully defuse large scale opposition to the regime over the subsequent decade. It is now well known that in East Germany, Erich Honecker came perilously close to deploying the armed forces against protesters, until he was persuaded otherwise by Mikhail Gorbachev among others. In Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu's elite force, the Securitate, failed to defend the leadership against a determined uprising. Neither China nor Romania experienced negotiated revolutions, yet East Germany did. In each case, it was a conjunction of elite

action, domestic opposition and external forces, both structural and agential, which determined the immediate path of the insurrection.

These examples serve up two key lessons. First, violence and revolution are tied together contingently rather than by necessity. Second, revolutions do not follow settled, inexorable paths. They are critical junctures which may lead in any one of a number of directions. At all times, revolutions are a complex interplay between changing structural conditions and collective action. One element that differentiates negotiated revolutions from past revolutions is that, once the revolutionary situation is in place, actors from both sides of the barricades choose roundtables rather than guillotines.

### ***From guillotines to roundtables***

The great revolutions of the modern era are all marked by a particular event, an icon which comes to embody the very essence of the revolutionary struggle itself. The storming of the Bastille, the raid on the Winter Palace and the Long March undertaken by the remnants of Mao's army are all revolutionary moments par excellence, mementos of social action which symbolise the might of the revolutionary struggle and the relative weakness of the old regime. Negotiated revolutions do not lack for these great moments. The daily demonstrations in Wenceslas Square and the release of Nelson Mandela aptly indicate the emotive appeal of these transformations in a way which was so manifestly lacking in Chile. Yet while the central motif of past revolutions has been explicitly associated with armed rebellion, negotiated revolutions take on a somewhat different tilt – the power of the masses to be sure, but not that of the mob. Rather, the control of fervour and the dignity of protests rise above the social context defined by the old regime. Key to this success is the process of negotiation between old and new elites.

As I argued earlier in the thesis, revolutions must be relatively quick in order to differentiate them from processes of transition and longer term evolutionary change. This does not rule out some degree of variation – after all, the whirlwind of talks held in three short weeks in the Czech Republic seems light years away from the tortuous three years of stop-start negotiations in South Africa. But what unites these cases with past revolutions is that the outcomes were neither inevitable nor miraculous, neither the necessary consequence of particular structural alignments nor the intended, rational consequence of people's individual's actions. As the chapters on each case study made clear, each process was marked by uncertainty and flux, moments when the outcomes were unclear and the path to peaceful resolution unlikely. As such, the processes of negotiated revolutions serve as powerful examples of the dynamic interplay between structure and agency, necessity and contingency, cause and outcome.

Again, a counter example helps to clarify this point. In the early 1990s, Burma, now Myanmar, appeared to contain all the necessary ingredients for a negotiated transformation. The end of the cold war removed the last vestiges of international support, or at least toleration, for the military junta. The regime ruled over an inherently unstable, corrupt, devalued political order; the economy was in a parlous state; and the atomised social order shut off the elite in Rangoon from the views of the general public. Opposition coalesced around a popular leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who represented a viable alternative, boasted considerable domestic and international legitimacy, and possessed the necessary resources by which to challenge the authority of the military regime.



Yet despite temporarily forcing reforms including the onset of roundtable talks, the opposition failed to oust or even significantly dent the authority of the military regime. In a way reminiscent of how the military junta in Chile successfully saw off opposition protests in the early 1980s, Burma's generals kept a firm grip on power. Despite displaying the right credentials, neither a transition nor transformation has taken place in Myanmar over the last decade. This failure serves as a warning to those who ignore the intricacies of revolutionary processes and who postulate from the lofty heights afforded by hindsight on the inevitability of historical processes which, on close inspection, reveal a logic quite removed from their suppositions. Revolutions, negotiated or otherwise, do not come, nor are they made. Instead, they are an intricate conjunction of historical context, social conditions and collective action.

### *From tyranny to weakness*

In the past, the causes, events and outcomes of revolutions were closely bound up with the state. First, the revolutionary situation emerged out of a crisis rooted in the state. Defeat in war, economic collapse and the like served to fatally destabilise the old regime. Second, revolutionary events were largely ordered around a fight for control of the state. Third, the revolution was considered to be over in the short term when one side seized control of key state apparatus. Finally, in the long term, in order to shore up their regime from opposition both at home and abroad, revolutionaries built vast state bureaucracies and armies, exerting domestic authority through rigorous mechanisms of surveillance and control. As a result, post-revolutionary states possessed a double strength. In Michael Mann's terms, they enjoyed both a considerable infrastructural capacity and a despotic potency, strengths which more often than not spilled over into tyranny.<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> For more on this, see Mann (1990).

This pattern is not one repeated by negotiated revolutions. Like past revolutions, negotiated revolutions stem from systemic crisis in which the declining legitimacy of the old regime is of cardinal importance. But at no point does the old regime collapse. There is no process to mirror the French defeat in the Seven Years War, the Russian trauma over defeat to Japan in 1905 and the horrors exerted by the First World War, or the Japanese invasion of Manchuria for the Chinese. These events fatally undermined the old regime, providing key staging posts in the slide towards crisis. But in negotiated revolutions, both the old regime and belligerents approached the negotiating table from positions of mutual dependence. Neither side in the Czech Republic or South Africa, nor for that matter in Chile, had any hope of outright victory. It was the weakness of both sides which compelled them to negotiation.

The process of the revolutions themselves is also some way removed from the fight over the state common to past revolutions. Negotiators deal with a set of issues far beyond the scope of past revolutionaries: the make up of transitional bodies, the electoral process, the role of a constitutional convention and so on. Again, the example of Chile is a reminder of the relative partiality of that process next to the more wholesale processes which took place in South Africa and the Czech Republic. In Chile, debate was restricted within parameters prescribed by the old regime's Leyes de Organicos. Root and branch constitutional change was put off, remaining out of the reach of reformers throughout the subsequent decade. In contrast, negotiators in South Africa and the Czech Republic were able to achieve far reaching changes as the first step to establishing a new order.

The outcomes of negotiated revolutions also fall some way short of the tyranny which marred revolutionary states in the past. First, because they seek to catch up with other democracies and insert themselves into modernity, negotiated revolutionaries sign up to a welter of

international treaties, institutions and regimes which restrict their freedom of manoeuvre, particularly over fiscal policy. Second, the negotiations themselves circumscribe the potential for radical change, witnessed for example by the sunset clauses and power sharing agreements which formed a central part of the negotiations in South Africa. Third, because they face neither substantial domestic nor external opposition, revolutionaries have no need to build up mass armies or extend coercive control around the country. In fact, in all three cases, incoming governments sought to contain rather than expand the authority of their armed forces and security apparatuses. Finally, revolutionaries have no desire to export their revolution abroad. In fact, they offer no proselytising vision but that offered by the dominant constituents of world politics themselves:

- a commitment to democratic political relations defined by a written, liberal constitution; regular, free elections competed over by a range of political parties; the separation of the state from the security apparatus and the military; and an internationalist perspective which demands an active role in relevant international institutions and organisations.
- a programme of liberalisation and privatisation which opens up the domestic market to foreign competition, establishes an independent financial sector and maintains trade policies in keeping with prevailing international regimes.
- a relatively open social and ideological environment featuring a free media and education system; equality of race, gender and religion enshrined in law; and the institution of a means of reconciling past injustices.

## Whither revolution?

One of the thorniest theoretical debates in International Relations, indeed a debate which draws its cue from a core fissure within political theory itself, takes place around the concepts of order and justice.<sup>517</sup> For realists and pluralists working either within or outside the English School, order is a rare and therefore prized commodity in the anarchic international environment. As such, it must be prior to justice. As Hedley Bull opines, without order, stability and security, there can be no justice.<sup>518</sup> For Bull, order is a foundational task to be underwritten by the management system of the great powers. However, Bull was well aware of the normative perils associated with his argument – that it allowed powerful states to legitimately take actions premised around the maintenance of order but which potentially ran counter to the principle of justice. Maintaining the status quo, Bull realised, meant on occasion quashing even just movements for change, particularly in the developing world. Bull's magnum opus, *The Anarchical Society*, contains numerous references to this dilemma, detailing his desire to find ways of reconciling what, to all extents and purposes, appears to be a zero sum game.

Later in his career, Bull began to develop an argument in which justice could play a more prominent role in world politics.<sup>519</sup> But it was the work of one of Bull's students, John Vincent, which marked the advent of a solidarist camp who sought to find a firmer basis for the realisation of normative concerns in IR.<sup>520</sup> Vincent based his argument around the recognition of universal values, such as human rights, which ran counter to Westphalian principles of sovereignty and self-determination, in turn the basis for international order. In

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<sup>517</sup> The debate between order and justice has been seen, for example by Chris Brown, in terms of a more general dispute between communitarians and cosmopolitans. For more on this, see Brown (1992 and 2001). For attempts to go beyond the cosmopolitan/communitarian impasse, see Cochran (1999) and Hutchings (1999).

<sup>518</sup> See Bull (1977).

<sup>519</sup> See, for example, Bull (1983).

<sup>520</sup> See Vincent (1986).

cases where human rights were being grossly infringed, Vincent argued, states had a duty to intervene in order to protect citizens, even from their own governments.<sup>521</sup>

Over the last fifteen years or so, Vincent's argument has been extended and refined by an array of scholars, among them Charles Beitz, Brian Barry and Andrew Linklater. For these cosmopolitans and critical theorists, people are human beings imbued with inalienable rights before they are citizens or subjects of a state.<sup>522</sup> Key to the development of a world society which both recognises and protects these fundamental rights is the recognition of a shared moral universe. Justice can and must take precedence over a fiction of order which in reality only serves to carve up world politics in the interests of the powerful.

Negotiated revolutions offer a way of reconciling these apparently disparate schools of thought. As I highlighted earlier in this chapter, the novel role of the international in aiding and abetting negotiated revolutions potentially allows for both order and justice to be realised. First, order is maintained because states which undergo negotiated revolutions agree to abide by the core principles of the international system, join international organisations and strengthen market democracy. Second, justice is satiated through recognition of the just cause offered by particular movements and the help given to their realisation. In this way, the apparently zero sum game of order *or* justice is replaced by the one based around order *and* justice. Negotiated revolutions both pave the way towards a more secure future and provide a normative framework for the relatively peaceful accommodation of age old differences.

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<sup>521</sup> Of course it is difficult to determine either which rights are to be universal or what constitutes violations of them. For a comprehensive series of essays around these themes, see Dunne and Wheeler (eds.) (1999).

<sup>522</sup> See Beitz (1999), Barry (1989) and Linklater (1998).

This point again illustrates the fundamental differences between negotiated revolutions and revolutions of the past two centuries. Yet both are rooted in the same fundamental context – modernity. Modernity is a conjunctural process with dramatically uneven outcomes. While citizens of what Robert Cooper calls the ‘post-modern world’ enjoy what seems to be a perpetual peace, around a billion people, or one in six of the world’s population, live in countries mired in civil war or at high risk from falling into such conflict.<sup>523</sup> Neither of these worlds is without its problems. In advanced market democracies, uncertainty, social dislocation and the difficulties associated with managing freedom all present their difficulties for policy makers.<sup>524</sup> In Cooper’s ‘pre-modern’ world, poverty, disease and ever increasing inequalities generate fractures which all too often spill over into open conflict.

At its heart, therefore, modernity appears to be an inherently contradictory process, one marked by greater affluence but also rising inequality, secularisation but also fundamentalism, global forms of governance alongside a drive to localism.<sup>525</sup> As numerous authors, among them Stuart Hall and Anthony Giddens, point out, modernity has fashioned a world without certainties, one in which people must get by without either the absolute values or the social institutions which sustained order in the past.<sup>526</sup> The question is, given the incongruity and uncertainty which characterises modernity, what is the future shape of world politics likely to be? Which of the prophets of modernity – Marx, Kant, Weber or Hobbes – should we put our faith in or is Nietzsche perhaps a better guide to a world devoid of absolutes? What, if any, is the future of revolutions in all this?<sup>527</sup>

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<sup>523</sup> Robert Cooper (2000). Paul Collier, ‘How to stem civil wars: It’s the economy stupid’, *International Herald Tribune*, 21 May 2003, p. 13.

<sup>524</sup> For more on this, see Mulgan (1997).

<sup>525</sup> For more on the double nature of modernity and globalisation, see Clark (1997 and 1999).

<sup>526</sup> For more on this, see Hall, Held and McGrew (eds.) (1992) and Giddens (1999).

<sup>527</sup> This question is considered at some length in Foran (ed.) (2003). See also two pertinent, if somewhat conservative, articles by Snyder (1999) and Nodia (2000).

Of course, there are no finite answers to the first two of these questions. Karl Popper famously quipped that ‘the social sciences have not yet as yet found their Galileo’.<sup>528</sup> Social scientists engage in prediction, a process Popper saw as more akin to prophecy or sophistry, only at their peril and it is neither the role of this thesis nor my goal more generally to muse over the future shape of world politics like a modern day soothsayer. But I can at least take a stand on the role of revolutions, or at least the part played by negotiated revolutions, in these processes. Principally, negotiated revolutions demonstrate the possibility of semi-peripheral states inserting themselves in modernity and ‘catching up’ with the West in a way which would have been recognisable to Trotsky a century or so ago. By strengthening the legitimacy of market democracy both as an aspirational project and as a tangible goal, negotiated revolutions have had a constitutive impact on global politics over the past fifteen years or so.

But negotiated revolutions also challenge some of the very foundations of contemporary world politics. Negotiated revolutions aptly demonstrate the follies of a fundamentalist belief in the good of the market (rising inequality and unemployment) and the dangers which come from failing to support nascent social and political institutions (an increase in extremism, corruption, a legitimacy gap between elites and civil society). Heeding these lessons is critical if international agencies are to deal more effectively with societies facing similar pressures and going through comparable processes in years to come.

Above all else, it is clear that the management system of contemporary world politics, whether that be the bequest of an imperial power or hegemon, a coalition of great powers or

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<sup>528</sup> Popper (1957: 1).

multilateral centres of governance, need to take ongoing pressures for radical change seriously. The example of South Africa, one of the most remarkable testimonies to the politics of the possible of this or any other age, reminds us of what can be achieved through human agency. Even in the most inhospitable of domestic environments, belligerents convened a common future based on mutual respect for what appeared to be inalienable differences. Not everything in South Africa has changed – nor as I pointed out earlier in the thesis has it done so in previous revolutions. But in South Africa, a radically new order has undoubtedly been instituted which bears little resemblance to its predecessor.

Given the right global context, the spur of international agency and the will of domestic actors, it is not inconceivable to imagine such a case elsewhere. In Burma, Cuba and other such societies, authoritarian regimes hold an unsustainable grip on their publics. If the events of 1989-1994 tell us anything, it is that even the most apparently unyielding of systems is inherently unstable. Human agency, the true locomotive of world historical change, retains a persistent capacity to surprise. Given the relatively open structural conditions of the age, the extreme problems facing states around the world and the human proclivity for change, it seems farcical to suggest that there has been a final reveille of alternatives, that we really have reached the end of history. Rather, the question surely is to determine in which ways change will rear its head – as the pitched battle and firing squads common to times of yore or as the round tables and negotiated settlements which offer an alternative path out of seemingly intractable conflicts.

The key lesson from negotiated revolutions is that the right blend of structure and agency, both domestic and international, can yield remarkable results and generate tangible improvements in both the quality of life of people in particular states and international



relations more broadly conceived. Agency can make a difference. What is not in doubt is that change, and radical change, will continue to be a central feature of world politics. What is in question is our capacity both to make and manage this change. E.H. Carr, writing in 1939, outlined the central elements of what he called a 'realistic utopia' – a story of peaceful change rooted in the conditions of the age but which carried with it the possibility for progress in the years ahead.<sup>529</sup> The story offered by negotiated revolution is one in keeping with Carr's vision of a 'realistic utopia'. Over upcoming years, we will see whether this story is one which successfully marries idealism with realism, thereby avoiding the perils offered by an overly optimistic, naïve altruism on the one hand and the crudeness of a raw struggle for power on the other. That is both the question and the challenge to come.

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<sup>529</sup> Unfortunately, Carr's vision of a world in which 'British policy must take into account the welfare of Lille or Dusseldorf or Lodz as well as the welfare of Oldham or Jarrow' looks unrealistic even today, sixty-five years after it was first proposed. Carr (1939: 219).

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