Transition as a Legacy

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Abstract:

Almost two decades after their transition to democracy it is no longer questioned whether the new EU member states of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are democratic in the minimalist, procedural sense. Academic attention has turned to analysing various pathways of democratic development in the region and the consolidation of democracy (CoD). CoD in the broadest sense investigates the stability and survival of democratic regimes.[1] In opposition to transitologists (which focuses on the regime question), CoD addresses the question of what kind of democracy is actually developing in various countries.[2] Next to institutional and behavioural factors cultural or attitudinal variables are increasingly considered in this context. Elite commitment to the existing democratic system is seen as a crucial component of CoD.[3]

Keywords:

Democracy, transition, CEE countries, EU acquis, EU accession, consensualism

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[1] G Munck, 'The Regime Question - Theory Building in Democracy Studies', World Politics, Vol.54, October 2001, p.130.

[2] P Schmitter / N Guilhot, 'From Transition to Consolidation: Extending the Concept of Democratization and the Practice of Democracy', in: M. Dobry (ed.), Democratic and Capitalist Transitions in Eastern Europe: Lessons for the Social Sciences, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000, p.132.

[3] J Higley / Gy Lengyel (eds.), Elites after State Socialism - Theory and Analysis, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

In spite of the increasing differentiation between CEE democracies one striking commonality appears to be the fact that virtually all ended up having an institutional set-up with a high number of "veto players" in decision-making, or something Arend Lijphart would call consensus democracy.[4] Most CEE systems are marked by the following factors: strongly proportional electoral systems, weak, short-lasting coalition governments, multi-party systems, rigid constitutions with a strong judicial review, independent Central Banks and an increasing degree of decentralisation. These features endow the democratic systems of these states with a high number of veto players and require much more negotiation and accommodation between participants in the political game than more majoritarian systems.

However, both domestic and external observers find little signs of accommodative and consensual patterns of elite interaction in the region reaching the standards of established Western consensus democracies.[5] Moreover, having successfully concluded EU accession some external incentives for enforcing consensualism on a narrower range of policies and institutions have diminished. Indeed, the first post-accession years saw a surge in electoral support for parties lacking commitment to both European integration and certain core values of liberal, Western style democracy (as seen in Poland or Slovakia). This included a startling revival of authoritarian, nationalistic, xenophobic, and illiberal ideas as well as a questioning of certain constitutionally enshrined key elements of consensus democracy and the EU *acquis* (such as minority representation in parliament) by some political leaders.

In many instances it seems that institutions cannot regulate political conflict the way they are expected to do and conflicts are carried out beyond boundaries of the established institutions. Elster, Offe and Preuss see democracy consolidated when the rules according to which political and but also concerning distributional conflicts are carried out are no longer object of conflict themselves.[6] According to this definition we cannot really talk about fully consolidated democracies in CEE: In some countries such as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia or Romania political elites appear to be more and more separated by unbridgeable cultural-ideological divides impacting day-to-day politics and a lack of agreement on the fuctioning of basic political institutions. Hungary, a so far seemingly stable democracy experienced a partial breakdown of routinized democratic politics in favour of partly violent street politics. Conflicts touching upon the legitimacy of basic democratic institutions (parliament, presidency, justice) and their rights have been seen in Hungary, Romania or Poland. Populist, polarizing policies seem to be increasingly adopted by political leaders in a number of countries. More generally, these observations shed doubt on the expectation that institutional convergence with mainstream European institutions would also lead to a convergence in elite political culture in terms of commitment and adaptation to the values of the new democratic system. This paper therefore focuses on some of the sources of the (lack of) commitment by political elites to the existing democratic set-up, in particular their limited ability to interact in a consensus-democratic institutional setting. Finally, some consequences shall be discussed.

In this regard, I view institutions and institutional changes as following both rationalist and sociological dynamics. This means that actors aim at efficiently pursuing certain pre-existing preferences in picking institutions and interacting through them (i.e. the "logic of consequentialism"), and they also act according to the logic of "appropriateness" (i.e. in their behaviour they adapt to collective norms of "what is right," which are embodied in institutions).[7] For the context of consensus democracy this means that institutional constraints, such as a high number of veto players in the democratic game, forces actors to some extent to co-operate, exchange information, and seek commonly acceptable solutions for pursuing their individual interests. On the other hand, institutional constraints themselves are not sufficient to consolidate consensus democracy. As Körösényi points out: a power-sharing consensus-democratic set-up does not create consensus by itself, but makes it more difficult, if not impossible, to govern in a majoritarian,

[4] In this place I will not discuss the merits and shortcomings of Lijphart's typology and just take the notion of consensus democracy and the concept of veto players as a broad characterization of CEE democracies. For a detailed critique of Lijphart and the application of his typology to CEE countries see M Spinner, Compulsory Consensus? The Sources of Elite Political Culture and the Consolidation of Central and East European Democracies, unpublished PhD thesis, Central European University Budapest, 2007.
[5] E.g. A Körösényi, Government and Politics in Hungary, Budapest: CEU Press, 1999, pp.292-5; R Tökés, 'Hungary: Elites and the Use and Abuse of Democratic Institutions', in: J Higley / Gy Lengyel (eds.), Elites after State Socialism - Theory and Analysis, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000 for the case of Hungary.
[6] J Elster, C Offe, U Preuss, Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies - Rebuilding the Ship at Sea, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.28.
[7] J March, J Olsen, 'The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life', American Political Science Review, Vol.78, No.3, Sept.1984, pp.734-749; J March, J Olsen, 'The logic of appropriateness', Centre for European Studies at the University of Oslo, ARENA Working Papers 04/09, Oslo, 2004.

confrontational style.[8] In fact, a consensus-democratic set-up with a high number of veto players actually offers actors the resources for both confrontational and co-operative strategies.[9]

Put differently, if the survival of a consensus-democratic system is only dependent on either continuously favourable output for all players or upon coercion, it is built upon shaky ground indeed. This is especially the case if democratic consolidation is to go along with the upheavals of economic reform or social change. Therefore, I do not regard mere instrumental support for the democratic system as a sufficient indicator for CoD. Instrumental support means that "actors follow the rules of the democratic game because they do not see a chance to, or advantage in, changing them".[10] Yet if actors are only to pursue predefined, egoistic interests, they might not regularly prefer co-operative strategies over confrontational ones in the context of a consensualist institutional set-up (i.e. a democracy with many inbuilt veto-players). Thus, next to mere instrumental support for consensus democracy, we should also pay attention to the normative foundations of consensus democratic institutions and their reflection in political culture. Consequently, the persistence of consensus democracy becomes more likely if political elites not only regard consensus democracy as serving their interests best but also come to embrace its underlying norms and values. Here are six dimensions of elite political culture, which express the "spirit of accommodation" of consensus democracy:

1. the centrality of compromise and consensus (opposed to free-for-all competition only)
2. politicians as keepers of the common good (and not just representatives of particular interests)
3. an emphasis on established procedures (as opposed to a focus on outputs only)
4. support for preserving the institutional status quo
5. respect towards "the other".[11]

In this paper I will discuss some hypotheses of why some of these dimensions are rather absent in CEE elite political cultures.

Around 1990, when the outcome of the transition processes was still unsure scholars theorized about various "modes of transition". They discussed the chances and pitfalls of installing democracy gradually or quickly, the various constellations between masses and elites, and between old and new leaders.[12] In the end, liberal democracies were rather quickly and successfully installed in all CEE countries. Later on, scholars of CoD turned to more long-term structural conditions as explanatory variables such as the level of economic development, the absence of deep-cutting cleavages, neighbourhood to other democratic countries etc.[13] Therefore, most students of democracy basically agree to Dankward Rustow's insight that the factors that keep a democracy stable may not be the ones that brought it into existence in the first place. Differently from that, I argue in this paper that also the dynamics of transition do leave a legacy and keep impacting upon the stability and future development of an existing democracy.

Historically, consensus democracies are to be found in a number of West European countries as opposed to majoritarian forms predominantly found in the English-speaking world or South America.[14] West European countries developed consensus

[8] A Körösényi, Government and Politics in Hungary, Budapest: CEU Press, 1999, p.293.
[9] T Börzel, 'Demokratien im Wandel der Europäisierung', in: J Katenhusen, W Lamping (eds.), Demokratien in Europa - Der Einfluß der europäischen Integration auf Institutionen und neue Kulturen des demokratischen Verfassungsstaates, Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2003, p.191; similarly Steiner et al. 2004.
[10] C Schneider, Patterns of Consolidated Democracies. Europe and Latin America Compared, PhD dissertation, European University Institute, Florence, 2004, pp.53-54.
[11] M Spinner, Compulsory Consensus? The Sources of Elite Political Culture and the Consolidation of Central and East European Democracies', PhD thesis, Budapest, Central European University, 2007, online: www.ceu.hu/polsci/theses.html.
[12] T Karl, 'Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America', Comparative Politics, Vol.23, No.1, Oct.1990, pp.1.-21. T Karl / P Schmitter, 'Modes of transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe', International Social Science Journal, No.128, May 1991, pp.269-284; O Encarnación, 'Do Political Pacts Freeze Democracy? Spanish and South American Lessons', West European Politics, Vol.28, No.1, January 2005; G Munck / C Skalnik Leff, 'Modes of Transition and Democratisation: South America and Eastern Europe in Comparative Perspective', in: L Anderson (ed.), Transitions to Democracy, New York: Columbia UP, 1999, pp.193-216; J Higley / Gy Lengyel (eds.), Elites after State Socialism - Theory and Analysis, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000; J Higley, J Pakulski and W Wesolowski (eds.), Postcommunist Elites and Democracy in Eastern Europe, London: Macmillan, 1998; S Huntington, The Third Wave - Democratization in the late twentieth century, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
[13] J Linz / A Stepan, Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996; A Schedler, 'What is Democratic Consolidation?', Journal of Democracy, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1998, pp. 91-107; L Diamond, Developing Democracy - Toward Consolidation, Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1999.
[14] A Lijphart, Patterns of Democracy -Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries, New Haven: Yale UP, 1999; J Colomer, 'Strategies and Outcomes in Eastern Europe', Journal of Democracy, Vol.6, No.2, 1995, pp. 74-85; H Kitschelt/ Z Mansfeldova/ R Markovski/ G Tóka, Post-Communist Party Systems - Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation, Cambridge, CUP, 1999, pp. 345-346; A Roberts, 'What Type of Democracy Is Emerging in Eastern Europe?', paper presented at the American Political Science Association annual meeting, September 2004.

democracy with a power-sharing institutional set-up and utilized coalescent, co-operative elite strategies as an answer to the threats of deep societal cleavages (e.g. religion, language, class). CEE countries ended up with power-sharing institutions due to the contingent dynamics of the transition process, though largely lacking the differentiated cleavage structures and not featuring particularly consensus-oriented elite practices. A high number of veto players in the political system became an outcome almost by default, and thus a point of convergence among the different countries of the region. Institutional designers deliberately chose to insert power-sharing elements instead of opting for majoritarian solutions in response to a high degree of uncertainty and political volatility, which soon became visible in the rapid proliferation of multiple parties and rather instable party systems. Consensus institutions in the East were the outcome of short-term contingencies as transition took place in an 'underdetermined political situation.'[15] In this context institutions were hardly the outcomes of endogenous structural or cultural conditions, but rather depended on contingent power constellations, individual agency, and exogenous factors (e.g. West European models).

Majoritarian solutions were preferred only by post-communist parties when they were clearly in a strong position assuming the popularity of their individual leaders.[16] Later these arrangements were often reverted once the former opposition came to power. Consensus solutions from the beginning were usually the result of a balance of power between the old elite and the opposition during transition. Cases with the dominance of opposition groups in the transition also mostly ended up with consensus set-ups as an insurance against a potential return of communists into power.

Also, the motivation to strengthen the rule of law supported the development of consensus institutions as it led to rather rigid constitutions and a strong judicial review in deliberate opposition to the communist dead-letter constitutions. Once installed, consensus systems also have the tendency to reinforce themselves due to their inherent brakes on constitutional change.[17] Finally (and quite importantly), the process of Europeanization with its focus on subsidiarity, minority representation, civil society involvement, regionalization, decentralisation and monetary stability constrained the choices of aspiring EU member states in CEE and supported the development of more consensual institutions. In fact, EU conditionality for accession put a particular focus on "getting the institutions right". The existence of prescribed formal institutions is, of course, much easier to ascertain and to monitor than their subsequent operation. Nevertheless, by this approach the EU seems to follow Lijphart's and others' somewhat optimistic assumption that the existence of a specific formal institutional set-up will transform political culture (as well as bureaucratic, business, and legal cultures).

CEE countries in their constitutional features thus increasingly resemble West European consensus democracies but lack the differentiated social landscape of Western European societies in the mid-20th century. Save for re-emerging ethnic cleavages in some countries, the post-communist social landscape is rather flat, unstructured, and de-mobilised.[18] Therefore, there are no deep cleavages posing an immediate danger to democratic stability which would require power-sharing approaches. Moreover, in the West European context, political leaders and parties can organize political conflict and still represent more or less stable and homogeneous groups of voters. This is much less true for the much more volatile and socially disconnected party systems in CEE.[19]

Consequently, one might wonder which factors might actually condition elites' support for consensus democracy if domestic pressure from below is absent. In terms of historical factors, pre-transition legacies are rather mixed and ambiguous in terms of carrying consensual elite political cultures in the region. Unlike the West European tradition, most CEE political elites do not have a long experience of successful, consensual cooperation in democratic settings.[20] Rather than bridging internal divisions through domestic demands one could argue that CEE

[15] P Schmitter / N Guilhot, 'From Transition to Consolidation: Extending the Concept of Democratization and the Practice of Democracy', in: M. Dobry (ed.), Democratic and Capitalist Transitions in Eastern Europe: Lessons for the Social Sciences, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000, p.134.
[16] H Kitschelt/ Z Mansfeldova/ R Markovski/ G Tóka, Post-Communist Party Systems - Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation, Cambridge, CUP, 1999, p.32.
[17] J Colomer, 'Strategies and Outcomes in Eastern Europe', Journal of Democracy, Vol.6, No.2, 1995, pp. 74-85; A Roberts, 'What Type of Democracy Is Emerging in Eastern Europe?', paper presented at the American Political Science Association annual meeting, September 2004.
[18] Zs Enyedi, 'The role of agency in cleavage formation', European Journal of Political Research, Vol.44, No.3, 2005, p.697.
[19] I van Biezen, 'On the theory and practice of party formation and adaptation in new democracies', European Journal of Political Research, Vol.44, 2005, pp.147-174; K Armingeon, 'Forms of government in post-communist countries', paper prepared for the ECPR Joint Workshops, Granada, Spain, April 2005.
[20] A Seleny, 'Old Political Rationalities and New Democracies - Compromise and Confrontation in Hungary and Poland', World Politics, Vol.51, July 1999, pp.481-519; H Kitschelt/ Z Mansfeldova/ R Markovski/ G Tóka, Post-Communist Party Systems - Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation, Cambridge, CUP, 1999.

elites, throughout the last century, were actually forced into mutual cooperation through external pressures by neighbouring great powers. Thus, exogenous factors rather than domestic developments enforced elite unity and covered deep divisions, if only temporarily and under non-democratic circumstances. Collaboration with Nazi Germany, Sovietization and later endeavours to appease Moscow against interfering with certain national variations of socialism not only determined the outlook of the respective political elites but surely had a lasting and formative impact on national collective memories until today.

The history of externally constrained or even imposed choices goes on with the countries' integration into the European Union or, more generally, CEE integration into global capitalism and international competition for access to markets and investment. Lack of adaptation to the European mainstream now threatens economic marginalization and replaces the threat of aggression from hegemonic neighbours as in the past. Unlike other small, capitalist economies such as the Netherlands or Denmark after the World War II, CEE countries are facing a much more narrowly constrained choice of institutions and policies which need to be employed in order to be accepted into the European or global capitalist mainstream. At the same time, they have much less opportunity to contribute to determine these policies on the supranational level.[21]

This makes it even more difficult to establish in how far institutional choices such as consensus democracy might not just be another external model which is somewhat ritualistically and opportunistically backed for lack of leeway. Geoffrey Pridham's claim that CEE political elites seemingly "hardly developed their own ideas about democratic development" or "were too busy" for elaborating alternative concepts therefore has to be seen in the light of the overriding priority of EU accession.[22] He concedes that EU accession resulted in removing institutional uncertainty following transition, but did not necessarily lead to a remaking of political culture or the dissemination and internalisation of the principles and norms underlying the new institutions.[23] Hughes, Sasse and Gordon argue that there was an underlying assumption that EU conditionality would have a "normative power"; that actors would be socialized into their underlying values, along with the power of hard economic incentives and bureaucratic leverage. However, investigating regionalization policy the authors show that the EU Commission was not so much concerned with the normative content of "capacity-building," but primarily with organizational and technical issues. The authors conclude that actually little socialization of (sub-national) elites had taken place and that Europeanization had much weaker effects than expected. They also find path dependent factors in domestic political settings to be more important than external conditionality. [24]

When it comes to explain the lack of adaptation to the existing consensus democratic system area specialists often advance deep historical, cultural explanations e.g. by pointing to "eternal" cultural cleavages. These explanations often imply a deterministic or tautological causality and have little explanatory power in themselves. However, I think we should not dismiss pre-democratic historical legacies at once but rather try to introduce them in systematic fashion. In this paper I claim that the dynamics of elite-driven transitions in 1989 still leave a mark on contemporary political culture and impede the development of a "spirit of accommodation". The relaxation of externally enforced elite unity with succssful EU accession these unsolved legacies have come to the fore again. In this regard I also try to propose a non-reductionist, non-tautological concept of political culture.

In order to operationalize the above-mentioned five dimensions of a consensus-oriented political culture our theoretical understanding of political culture needs to be clarified. In my dissertation I discuss extensively the advantages and disadvantages of the classical understanding of political culture in the tradition of Almond and Verba and based on my criticism propose a different conceptualization.[25] Most approaches to political culture use the socio-psychological, attitude-based approach. Basically, according to these approaches, individually internalised values in the form of attitudes contribute to shape people's behaviour by prescribing or prohibiting ways of action (without contextual factors). For political elites specific approaches along the lines of this model were developed in which politicians are seen as being influenced by an "operational code", i.e. certain cognitive predispositions, ideals about the world and profes-

[21] S Rose-Ackerman, From Elections to Democracy - Building Accountable Government in Hungary and Poland, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp.37-54.
[22] G Pridham, 'EU Accession and Democratisation in Central and Eastern Europe: Lessons from the Enlargement of 2004', in: R Di Quirico (ed.), Europeanization and Democratisation - Institutional Adaptation, Conditionality and Democratisation in the EU's Neighbour Countries, Florence: European Press Academic Publishing, 2005, pp.67-68.
[23] G Pridham, 2005, p.78.
[24] J Hughes, G Sasse, C Gordon, Europeanization and Regionalization in the EU's Enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe - The Myth of Conditionality, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
[25] G Almond & S Verba, The Civic Culture - Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations, Princeton UP, 1963.

sional values implicitly guide action.[26] Unlike the mass population, political leaders, according to the classical model of political culture, are claimed to hold more coherent beliefs which are more intensely held and relatively stable as compared to those of the general population.[27] According to Almond & Verba and their followers, an appropriate political culture in a modern democracy ("civic culture") is developed over time by becoming socialised into the system. Socio-economic background factors (e.g .origin, education) are seen to mediate this process. Thus, ultimately, according to this approach political elites in CEE democracies should over time become increasingly socialised into consensus democracy by practicing it, internalise its underlying values (as embodied in the above-mentioned five dimensions) and act accordingly.

My approach to political culture diverges from the above-outlined as it focuses on explicit rather than implicit values and orientations. Moreover, I do not regard political culture as reducible to individual attitudes. Thus, rather than inferring individually internalised attitudes I focus on collectively shared discourses among political leaders about the existing democratic system. By focusing on explicit discourses rather than implicit attitudes also the problem of honesty in reporting (e.g. as in traditional survey-based research) is circumvented. This problem is particularly evident with political elites, who may conceal their individual opinion behind rhetoric while being skilful at finding the right messages appealing to the public. Rather than expose their inner self, they know what kind of beliefs they *should* advocate (what is appropriate, expected, or seen as politically correct etc.) in a given context.

Thus, rather than a "strong" socialisation into the values of consensus democracy, i.e. internalisation and subsequent compliance with them, I will focus on expressions of a "weak" socialisation which means that actors must come to publicly acknowledge certain statements or claims as true (repeatedly and over time), but not necessarily alter their individual ways of cognition and private normative appraisal of these values. As a result, political culture is both constraining and enabling by informing or precluding certain kinds of action through the availability of certain discourses, which are both descriptive and prescriptive.[28] Therefore, in the given context of the discursive field, actors do make choices and act 'rationally'. Discourses define the boundaries of the possible; they contribute to shape expectations and create incentives.[29] As a consequence, political elites have to submit to a certain degree of consistency in applying these discourses when interacting among themselves or when competing for voters' support.[30] However, we cannot expect them to fully submit their behaviour to these expressed values.

The expectation of traditional approaches is that deeply internalised values should turn into conforming behaviour. The focus on discourses rather than attitudes relaxes the assumption that values only influence action as long as they are internalized and sincerely believed. Discourses shared in the social space have a power on their own to evoke cooperation and conflict, or to give a certain meaning to particular situations or actions.[31] For example, actors can "rhetorically entrap" or "shame" other actors by publicly exposing behaviour that contradicts the shared values of the community to which also the shamed actor has publicly committed. This way, actors who publicly pledge to certain ideals are either disciplined by other actors into conforming behaviour, or face possible electoral punishment and/or marginalization within the elites for "breaking the rules". For this to happen, neither the shamer nor the shamed need to have individually accepted and internalised the validity of the truth claims on which the shaming takes place. In fact, the shamer can use commonly upheld values in an instrumental way to advance his own interests, while the shamed has left the commonly declared values once they stood in the way of his egoistic interests.[32] Still, these values constrain and indirectly regulate behaviour.

Not only political leaders approach reality rhetorically by making use of these common discursive resources.[33] Yet, being the major actors in a coun-

[25] G Almond & S Verba, The Civic Culture - Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations, Princeton UP, 1963.
[26] R Putnam, The Beliefs of Politicians - Ideology, Conflict and Democracy in Britain and Ital', New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973; R Rohrschneider, Learning Democracy - Democratic and Economic Values in Unified Germany, Oxford UP, 1999.
[27] R Putnam, The Comparative Study of Political Elites, Eaglewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1976, p.116.
[28] C. Cruz, 'Identity and Persuasion - How Nations Remember Their Pasts and Make Their Futures', World Politics, Vol. 52, April 2000, p.278.
[29] C Cruz, 2000, p.279.
[30] S Neckel, 1995, p.665; C Cruz, Political Culture and Institutional Development in Costa Rica and Nicaragua - World Making in the Tropics, New York: Cambridge UP, 2005, p.29.
[31] A Seleny, 'The Foundations of Post-Socialist Legitimacy', in: A Braun, Z Barany (eds.), Dilemmas of Transition - The Hungarian Experience, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999, p.135.
[32] F Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union, International Organization, Vol.55, No.1., winter 2001, pp.47-80.
[32] F Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union, International Organization, Vol.55, No.1., winter 2001, pp.47-80.

try's political discourse, contrary to other types of elites (academics and artists, for instance), political elites are constantly required to publicly justify their actions in order to gain the support of their electorates and constituencies.[34] Similar to a "tool-kit," [35] actors apply particular discourses in order to legitimise certain institutional designs or actions, or in order to exclude other arguments from the "field of the imaginable". They engage in "normative scheming," as Consuelo Cruz calls it.[36] Thus, they are not fully determined by fixed value orientations, but do have a limited choice among a number of existing idioms. This concept of political culture does not require people to put faith in certain values or ideologies, but to *respect* them through their way of talking and behaving.[37]

Thus, we can conceptualize commitment to a set of certain values (e.g. those of consensus democracy) as a continuum leading from mere rhetorical "lip-service" to deeply internalized beliefs and a change in identity that incorporates these values. Depending on the position on this continuum, behaviour is constrained to a lower or higher degree or, in the unrealistic and extreme case of full internalisation, it is virtually fixed along the lines of these values. "Weakly" socialised actors rhetorically uphold the values of the community which, however, do not override or replace their egoistic material interests at all times. Moreover, as mentioned, this approach does not exclude the possibility that actors use community values in an instrumental way to pursue preferences in line with, but not necessarily inspired by, the standard of legitimacy.[38] Thus, this concept of political culture subscribes to the logic of appropriateness, but in a less rigid way by accepting that (weak) socialization into certain values does not necessitate a change of interests. Subsequent internalisation of these values through arguing, collective deliberation or individual reflection (or through psychological mechanisms such as cognitive dissonance) is nevertheless possible. In epistemological and methodological terms, however, strong socialization (with the full internalization of these values) can only be inferred. Explicit rhetorical commitment is much easier operationalized as we can investigate the extent to which a discourse is shared, but we cannot establish directly as to how deeply it is anchored in individual mind-sets. This we can only infer by relating pronounced values to real behaviour.

Separating implicit normative support for a given system from explicit respect for certain rules consequently leads to an ontologically different understanding of the consolidation of democracy, too. Consolidated democracy is not a material thing "out there"; it is not an object, but an inference, or even just an argument.[39] Andreas Schedler rightly points out that the notion of democratic consolidation resembles the concept of legitimacy. Legitimacy is not an *objective* feature of a system, but it is attributed to it by individuals on a *subjective* basis: no regime is intrinsically legitimate but it is *perceived or assigned* to be so. The same can be argued for democratic consolidation. As Max Weber spoke about belief in legitimacy (*Legitimitätsglaube*) consolidation means a "belief in stability" or an "expectation of persistence". It is expressed by domestic actors, or by external observers such as students of democratisation.[40] Linz and Stepan (i.e. two of the most prominent students of democratisation) view (attitudinal) consolidation of democracy as being achieved "when, even in the face of severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further change *must* emerge from within the parameters of the democratic game."[41] Instead, Schedler argues, the concept should rest on the claim that actors in the democratic game believe that "further change *will* emerge from within the parameters of the democratic game." [42]

For this, actors must share a similar understanding of the desirability of the existing system, and the legitimate way to operate it, i.e. a similar kind of commitment. Therefore, students of democracy in their judgement concerning democratic consolidation (i.e. their expectations concerning the persistence of the existing system) should rely not so much on exogenously imposed measurements, but on the "indicators" and yardsticks used by the actors themselves. Legitimacy, being a subjective attribution as

[33] C Cruz, 2000, p.275.
[34] M Marcussen, Thomas Risse, Daniela Engelmann-Martin, Hans Joachim Knopf and Klaus Roscher, 'Constructing Europe? The evolution of French, British and German nation state identities', Journal of European Public Policy, Vol.6, No.4 (Special Issue), 1999, pp.614-633.
35 A Swidler, 'Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies', American Sociological Review, Vol. 51, April 1986, pp. 273-286.
[36] C Cruz, Political Culture and Institutional Development in Costa Rica and Nicaragua - World Making in the Tropics, New York: Cambridge UP, 2005, p.6.
[37] J Schull, 1992, pp. 728-741.
[38] F Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union, International Organization, Vol.55, No.1., winter 2001, pp.62-77.
[39] A Schedler, 'Measuring Democratic Consolidation', Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 36, No. 1, 2001, p.67.
[40] A Schedler, 'How Should We Study Democratic Consolidation', Democratization, Vol.5, No.4, winter 1998, p.11; M Weber, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, (Economy and Society, English translation by G Roth and C Wittich, eds.), Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, p.37.
[41] J Linz / A Stepan, Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996, p.6.
[42] Schedler, 2001, p. 67.

mentioned above, is established "by showing that the decisions accomplish appropriate objectives or intentions, or by showing that they are made in appropriate ways".[43] A *habitus* shared by the political elite of a polity embodies this concept of appropriateness. Therefore, consensus democracy is consolidated if actors treat it as legitimate based on similar collective representations (in turn, reflecting the spirit of accommodation in their shared *habitus*). This *verstehende* perspective also avoids a normative bias for or against particular democratic systems through exogenously assigned, often arbitrary or highly demanding indicators of CoD.

Using the concept of *habitus* CoD then means that actors share similar conventions, interpretations and justifications for the existing democratic system employing a limited set of collective discourses. For the cases of consensus democratic settings this means that actors share common discourses based on the above-mentioned, interlinked five ideational dimensions of consensus democracy. In line with Bourdieu we could therefore define the stability and persistence of the democratic set-up of CoD as a the creation of a common-sense, self-evident "consensus on the meaning of the [democratic] practices […], the harmonization of agents' experiences and the constant reinforcement each of them receives from expression […] leading to durable dispositions to recognize and comply with the immanent demands".[44] Already Gaetano Mosca, one of the earliest elite theorists in social science, emphasises the need for a close correspondence between the political system and the so-called "political formula" (i.e. the moral and legal principles which are used to justify any political regime).[45] Similarly, Vilfredo Pareto argues that similar values define the identity of any elite.[46] Even Joseph Schumpeter (who is often credited with having defined a "minimalist" understanding of democracy based on peaceful elite circulation via elections) laid down a number of key preconditions for its proper functioning: a well-established political elite should be fit to govern, hold a professional code of conduct and a common fund of views. Members of parliament should exercise self-control and resist selfish temptations.[47]

Unlike other notions of CoD, this approach applies a descriptive rather than a prescriptive perspective. Thus, it does not imply a normative preference for the democratic *status quo* put in place by transition, the persistence of a particular kind of democracy (e.g. consensus democracy), or the stability of certain institutional arrangements as such. Rather, it tries to situate political culture in the historical context. Moreover, it aims at outlining some of the implications for the future of democracy based on the relationship between the institutional setting and elite commitment embodied in the *habitus* (as the latter "tries to create favourable conditions for its own survival").[48] According to Leonardo Morlino, political leaders, in the case of a mismatch between institutions and political culture, might consequently either opt for strategies of (institutional) adaptation or (behavioural) appropriateness.[49] Thus, explicit political culture is also offering a limited set of interpretations and options for "reasonable" political change. In case of widely shared discourses, it is more likely that endogenous political change will go along the lines prescribed by political elites' collective representations of democracy rather than in a different way.

So, how do collectively shared discourses develop in the first place, and how do they change? In order to be widely adopted, a discourse must draw on empirical experience of a given group. It must "make sense" or "ring true" (i.e. be based on the familiar). The same way as attitude-base political culture is not just a psychological syndrome, discursive political culture cannot be reduced to some kind of semiotic "superstructure" either. Thus, it cannot just be 'constructed' *ex nihilo,* but rather it has to be rooted in historical experience as reflected in collective memories. This limits the leeway for newly "invented traditions" or "imagined communities" by political entrepreneurs.[50]

Changing a dominant discourse is difficult and costly. This, however, does not exclude the possibility of behaviour outside of the rhetorical boundaries of the permissible. Yet this behaviour cannot be easily justified with the dominant discourse. It is viewed as being illegitimate, or it undermines a dominant discourse and thus the power of its advocates.

[43] J March, J Olsen, Rediscovering Institutions - The Organizational Basis of Politics, New York: Free Press, 1989, p.49.
[44] P Bourdieu, 1992, p.58.
[45] G Mosca, The Ruling Class, (ed. and rev. A Livingston), New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939, p. 71, quoted in R Putnam, The Beliefs of Politicians - Ideology, Conflict and Democracy in Britain and Italy', New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973, pp. 232-233.
[46] V Pareto, Allgemeine Soziologie (transl. by C Brinkmann), Tübingen, 1955.
[47] J Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1950, pp.290-295.
[48] P Bourdieu, 1992, p.61.
[49] L Morlino, Constitutional Design and Problems of Implementation in Southern and Eastern Europe, in: J Zielonka (ed.), Democratic Consolidation in Eastern Europe - Volume I: Institutional Engineering, New York: Oxford UP, 2001, pp.48-108.
[50] C Cruz, Political Culture and Institutional Development in Costa Rica and Nicaragua - World Making in the Tropics, New York: Cambridge UP, 2005, pp.29-32; E Hobsbawm / T Ranger, The Invention of Tradition, New York: Cambridge UP, 1992; B Anderson, Imagined Communities - Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, revised edition, London: Verso, 1991.

Therefore, consistency of discourses is an important criterion for validation next to its capability to draw on empirical evidence. Furthermore, the producers of "true discourses" (such as intellectuals, and political entrepreneurs in particular) are also subject to the truth claims of these community values. They cannot escape the logic of their own discourses without losing credibility and legitimacy within the polity.[51]

The 'life course' of a discourse (i.e. its persistence and reproduction over time), is often determined by exogenous factors: contingent circumstances, the social standing of its protagonists, resonance with the public influence the reproduction, or replacement of a collectively shared discourse.[52] Particularly "successful" discourses are those which resonate well with the public and which are convincingly "confirmed" by empirical experience. They might very well outlive their original promoters, and be further reproduced by future generations of politicians. Protagonists of a discourse might not even have experienced the initial historical impetus for the emergence of a certain discourse, but are still able to credibly reproduce it by referring to well known symbols and themes. This again stresses the relevance of the national collective memory (i.e. the way history is publicly remembered and the repertoire of discourses it offers to politicians).[53] An extreme example is the obvious success of populist politicians in some post-communist countries in presenting their nations as the eternal victims of greater powers. This is done by discursively relating current conflicts (e.g. the question of Kosovo's political status) to medieval history (e.g. the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389) in a way which obviously resonates convincingly with many voters (but not necessarily with external observers).[54]

Tabel 1

	Implicit political culture (operational code)	***Explicit political culture (collective representations of democracy)***
Units of analysis	Attitudes	Discourses
Level of analysis	Individual	Group
Extent of socialization	Strong (i.e. internalisation), "taken-for-grantedness"	Weak (i.e. explicit acceptance of values)
Ways of appropriation of culture	Social learning, individual reflection, collective deliberation, "logic of arguing"	Practice, discursive reproduction
Change	Gradual	1. Gradual (adoption of new practices) 2. Sudden (breakdown of *doxa* due to external crisis – historical juncture)
Relationship with behaviour	Impacts directly upon behaviour	Mutual constitution – legitimises behaviour, enables and constraints it
Conditions for persistence of democracy	Positive attitudes towards system, congruence between attitudes, behaviour and institutions	Embeddedness of institutions in *habitus* (shared interpretation and legitimation for practices)
Concept of CoD	Prescriptive	Descriptive
	Normative	Analytical
	Static (preservation of status quo)	Dynamic (allowing for change)
Epistemological perspective	Objective; expert knowledge	Intersubjective; "*verstehende*", participant knowledge
Predominant methodology	Survey research	Discourse analysis

According to Ann Swidler new systems of meaning develop during unsettled times. Thus, historical junctures and structural change requires people to reorganize their "cultural tool kit" in order to develop

[51] G Eyal, The Origins of Post-Communist Elites - From Prague Spring to the Break-Up of Czechoslovakia, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003, p.21.
[52] S Roßteutscher, 'Competing Narratives and the Social Construction of Reality - The GDR in Transition', German Politics, Vol.9, No.1, April 2000, p.63; Neckel, 1995, p.665.
[53] "Most of the time when I remember it is others who spur me on, their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs. […] There is no point in seeking where they [i.e. the memories, MS] are preserved in my brain or in some nook of my mind to which I alone have access: for they are recalled to me externally, and the groups of which I am part at any time give me the means to reconstruct them, upon condition, to be sure, that I turn towards them and adopt, at least for the moment, their way of thinking. It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; it is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that is capable of the act of recollection." M Halbwachs (ed. and transl. by L Coser), On Collective Memory, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp.38-39.
[54] Bar-Tal uses this example in a similar way to explain his (socio-psychological) model of societal beliefs (D Bar-Tal, Shared Beliefs in a Society, London: Sage, 2000, pp.xiv-xv.)

new ways of relating to their environment.[55] Moscovici calls these events "points of cleavage".[56] According to Consuelo Cruz, who applies and partly modifies Swidler's approach, endogenous change of discursive frames becomes possible by way of constant contestation (i.e. internal interpretive conflicts within one dominant frame) which then leads to historical junctures. Consequently, this opens the discursive field for other frames to compete with the dominant ones.[57] This contestation is mostly done by political entrepreneurs (i.e. the political elite) while most of the time most people are passive "users" of political culture. For political change to occur, political entrepreneurs must either advance their competing political visions and agendas within a dominant rhetorical frame, or alternatively "adjust reality" by changing the boundaries of the field of the permissible. According to Cruz, this happens simultaneously with a reconfiguration of power relations. Political conflict and political change is thus a struggle over meaning.[58] This struggle, according to Jan Kubik, also takes place by the deliberate, selective transmission of certain historical discourses while suppressing others.[59] Again, a key role is played by political elites. For the economic sphere, Yoshiko Herrera shows how the fluidity of political and economic categories during *perestroika* opened the way to heterodox challenges to the orthodox mainstream, Leninist discourse. New understandings of the economy, some of which local elites used to make demands for more autonomy, replaced the previous categories.[60] For the cases of CEE democracies I therefore hypothesize a lasting legacy of the historical juncture of the 1989/90 transition to democracy on (elite) political culture.

I differentiate between two ideal types of transition. The first type, which I call multilateral transition, is characterized by an equal distribution of contending factions in the transition process. Owing to this there is a stronger need to accommodate and negotiate a compromise, and a higher degree in elite continuity between old and new system. Transition is, therefore, more gradual, cautious and aiming for a balance between different groups. There is more emphasis on a legalist approach and "backward legitimacy" as Huntington calls it (i.e. changes are made through the established procedures of the undemocratic regime).[61] Moreover, there is less emphasis on explicit policy goals for which it is harder to find common ground. This makes the process rather lengthy; in the beginning it is more vulnerable to reversion and less certain in terms of its substantial objectives. Moreover, legal continuity appears to be a higher objective than popular legitimacy (i.e. there is a less clear "new beginning"). Thus, competing claims of historical legitimacy for the new democracy live on in the polity, and protagonists of the old regime remaining in the new polity are vulnerable to questioning of their legitimacy. [62]

The second transition type, unilateral transition, is characterized by the domination of the process by the opposition, who holds sway over politics for some time after the first free elections. There is less need and pressure to negotiate with the post-communists, who are weakened and/or soon marginalized. This constellation allows more leeway to the opposition to push through substantial policies, implementing far-reaching political and socio-economic changes (thus being closer to the *tabula rasa* approach). Transition is therefore rapid, has a set goal and appears rather irreversible from an early point in time. It also involves a higher degree of elite turnover. This way, the break with the past regime becomes more visible as the new regime seeks to build itself on a new legitimacy, not legal continuity. Thus, the winning former opposition also imposes a historical closure and a condemnation of the old regime.

According to the outlined model, which views critical junctures such as the transition period as

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[55] Swidler 278-279.
[56] S Moscovici (ed. by G Duveen), Social Representations - Explorations in Social Psychology, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000, p.8.
[57] Cruz, 2000.
[58] For the case of Spain see L Edles, Symbol and Ritual in the new Spain - The transition to democracy after Franco, Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
[59] J Kubik, 'Cultural Legacies of State Socialism: History Making and Cultural-Political Entrepreneurship in Postcommunist Poland and Russia', in: G Ekiert / S Hanson, Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe: Assessing the Legacy of Communist Rule, Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 319.
[60] Y Herrera, Imagined Economies - The Sources of Russian Regionalism, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005.
[61] S Huntington, The Third Wave - Democratization in the late twentieth century, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, p.141.
[62] H Arendt, On Revolution, Hamondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973; János Kis on "radical reformism", Jacek Kuron on "self-limitation", Adam Michnik on "new evolutionism" etc. (B Falk, The Dilemmas of Dissidence in East-Central Europe, Budapest: CEU Press, 2003.); J Kis, 'Between Reform and Revolution', East European Politics and Societies, Vol.12, No.2, s
Spring 1998, pp.300-383.
For a similar typology - differentiating three types of transition, i.e. transformation, replacement and transplacement see Huntington, 1991, pp.124-174. Huntington puts more emphasis on the major players and agents of change in the transition process, i.e. reformers and standpatters (WHAT'S A STANDPATTER?) in the old regime, as well as moderates and radicals in the opposition whereas my typology is more concerned with the overall dynamics of the process. In the end, his three types of transition (transformation, transplacement and replacements) are quite close to mine with an added intermediate type.

being crucial for offering political elites collective representations of democracy, we should expect to find some systematic differences through the impact of these basic differences in the transition process. Moreover, if these collective representations are durable and relevant we should expect to find at least parts of them in this noticeable constellation up to today. Therefore, the basic approaches to political change and the dominant ways of interaction in the two ideal types of transition are expected to have left their mark on collective representations of the new democracy. At least partly, they are expected to be reproduced until today. Following from that we can formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Political elites' collective representations in countries with the experience of unilateral transition promote a more competitive understanding of democratic practice than countries with a multilateral transition, where we expect to find a more consensus-oriented outlook in elite discourses on democracy in which compromise and consensus are presented as a value in itself.

This hypothesis rests on the premise that, during transition, political elites came to develop a kind of collective identity by reconfiguring their way of interaction according to the above-developed model of political culture. In the rather unstructured and empty public realm of collapsed communism new ways of organizing politics had to be found. Due to the described very different constellations between opposition and post-communists in the two ideal types of transition, very different practices and forms of interaction were newly developed (or were revived from earlier periods). In multi-lateral transitions, both opposition groups and former communists are more likely to have developed a common notion of responsibility for the new system. This required them to temporarily leave aside deep differences of opinion and to develop an inclusive, coalescent approach (if only until a basic agreement about the terms of regime change was found and the first free elections held). At later points the legacy of peaceful and co-operative political change would be revived in order to achieve further decisive reform steps (e.g. constitutional reform, economic adjustment etc.) even if only rhetorically, or ultimately unsuccessfully in terms of substantive results. In unilateral transitions we would expect this common identification with the system and consensual decisionmaking to be less strong (at least with those players who were marginalized from the process) and therefore to find less emphasis on consensus-seeking positions. Instead, differences between government and opposition were fully played out, and concluded with the opposition winning their way when establishing the new system.

Hypothesis 2: Formal and predictable procedures should have a much stronger weight in the elite political culture of countries with a multilateral transition. Politicians in countries with a more unilateral legacy of transition would rather emphasise the achievement of concrete policy results rather than valuing procedures for their own sake.

Through the experience of transition as a highly formalized and legalistic approach, politicians in countries of multilateral transition have at their hand discourses presenting democracy as embodied in predictable, formal procedures and balanced participation of all groups. New mechanisms of negotiation, accommodation, and inclusive decision-making had to be developed *before* substantive reforms were started. In countries with unilateral transition, regime change and later reforms had to be pushed through by some (opposition) groups against the uncompromising communists and without an inclusive negotiating process. The quick and irreversible achievement of precise goals stood in the foreground. These substantive goals (i.e. creating a liberal democracy and a market economy), which were mostly supported by a majority of the (mobilized) people, can be presented by them as being more important than particular procedures to reach these goals.

In unilateral transitions, while acting as a unified group in overcoming communist rule and preparing free elections, very soon competition started between increasingly differentiated parties which developed out of the former opposition while the (unreformed) post-communists would remain ostracised. In multilateral transitions, the post-communists remained strong political players and (after a few years) became a serious contender for power.[63]

Hypothesis 3: In societies with the legacy of unilateral transition, collective representations of democracy contrast quite strongly between the post-communists on the one side and parties developed out of former opposition groups on the other side. In this regard, they differ from the cases of multilateral transitions, where both sides have a common stake and share

[63] Kitschelt et al. point out that in democracies following "national-accommodative" communism the regime cleavage is less pronounced than in democracies after "bureaucratic authoritarianism". Assuming a strong connection between previous regime types and transition dynamics my hypotheses to some extent mirror Kitschelt's. However, my focus is slightly different as I am not concerned with comparing party systems but political culture and the way political elites relate to the democratic system (H Kitschelt/ Z Mansfeldova/ R Markovski/ G Tóka, Post-Communist Party Systems - Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation, Cambridge, CUP, 1999, p.306).

rather similar rhetorical frames concerning the system).

Countries with a legacy of unilateral transition should therefore feature a more competitive, outcome-oriented approach to politics which is presented as the ideal in elite discursive frames (at least from the side of the former opposition), as opposed to the consensual and more procedure-oriented approach of multilateral transitions. Collective representations of democracy might therefore also feature a very different role model for politicians.

Hypothesis 4: In countries of multilateral transition, political elites share a collective representation of politicians as playing the central role in the democratic process in being rather aloof of particularistic interests and collectively finding the best solution for the country, the "common good" (i.e. closer to the utilitarian model of democracy). Political elites in countries with unilateral transitions should present their own role as being representative of competing interests in the first place.

Political elites (with the legacy of multilateral transition) should thus find their collective representations of democracy embodied best in the consensus institutional set-up, whereas political elites from unilateral backgrounds might present the requirements of consensus institutions as being in the way of decisive, efficient and outcome-oriented politics.

Hypothesis 5: Political elites in societies with a unilateral transition background advocate changes to the political system more strongly/extensively than political elites from multilateral transitions.

Political elites from countries with multilateral transitions do not share a societal consensus on how to evaluate the past as opposed to those from countries with the legacy of a unilateral transition. The latter involved not only a "new beginning" in terms of political legitimacy, but also the (at least temporal) expulsion of the protagonists of the old regime, and generally a more forceful (sometimes imposed) "coming to terms with the past" resulting in a predominant condemnation and public de-legitimation of the old regime. Multilateral transitions allowed for the persistence of competing concepts of legitimacy of the new polity, or at least did not require actors to fully dissociate themselves from the communist (or any other previous) regime(s). Therefore, the absence of an (imposed) condemnation of the old regime(s) may lead to clashing definitions of legitimate leadership in countries with the legacy of multilateral transition, and consequently result in a lack of mutual acceptance and respect as legitimate players in the democratic system.

Hypothesis 6: Political elites in democracies developed out of multilateral transition will be found to be more explicitly aiming at demarcating themselves culturally and ideologically from political opponents than in unilateral transitions.

For the cases of Romania and Bulgaria one might have to introduce a third type of transition which started as a pre-emptive reform-attempt by the old elites with only moderate contributions from a weak opposition in the beginning. In my thesis I did not consider these cases but one can surely construct similar hypotheses for these cases. For example, one could hypothesize the continued absence of common understanding of historical legitimacy among the political leaders in these countries leading to a lack of respect for political opponents as in the cases of multilateral transitions. Yet, similarly as in cases of unilateral transitions one would not find consensus on the preservation of the institutional status quo.

From a theoretical perspective the observation of strongly non-consensual politics in CEE questions traditional understandings of political culture and its underlying factors. Mainstream political culture research in the tradition of Almond and Verba in general, and elite political culture in particular basically postulates a causality between institutions and political culture in the form of attitudes over time. This adaptation process is supposed to be mediated by socio-economic background factors such as age/generation, education or ethnic/geographic origin.[64] The assumption of an adaptation of political culture to institutions also seems to be reflected in many mainstream studies on CoD.[65]

[64] G Almond & S Verba, The Civic Culture - Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations, Princeton UP, 1963; L Pye / S Verba (eds.), Political Culture and Political Development, Princeton University Press, 1965; N Leites, The Operational Code of the Politburo, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951; A George, 'The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 13 No. 2, 1969, pp. 190-222; R Putnam, The Comparative Study of Political Elites, Eaglewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1976; D Easton, 'A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support', British Journal of Political Science, Vol.5, No.4, 1975, pp.435-457; R Putnam, The Beliefs of Politicians - Ideology, Conflict and Democracy in Britain and Italy', New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973; R Rose / W Mishler / C Haerpfer, Democracy and its Alternatives - Understanding Post-Communist Societies, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998; R Rohrschneider, Learning Democracy - Democratic and Economic Values in Unified Germany, Oxford UP, 1999; D Pollack / J Jacobs / O Müller / G Pickel (eds.), Political Culture in post-communist Europe, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003;

[65] J Linz / A Stepan, Problems of democratic transition and consolidation : southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996; L Diamond, Developing Democracy Toward Consolidation, Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1999; A Schedler, 'Measuring Democratic Consolidation', Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. 36, No. 1, 2001, pp. 67-68.

In my own research on Hungarian and East German MPs (with a West German control sample)[66] I employed content analysis of a representative sample of MPs' speeches over two parliamentary cycles. I took Hungary as the case closest to the ideal type of multilateral transition, East Germany as the case closest to the ideal type of unilateral transition (with the unification process even further speeding up transition). Coding for an either consensus or competitive positions in the mentioned five dimensions I found Hungarian MPs sharing an expressed preference for consensus as a practice (1). They present democratic politics predominantly as an undertaking which should aim at finding the common good rather than considering particular interests (2). They emphasise the value of formalised democratic procedures and the interplay between constitutional bodies (3) and basically present the current political and socio-economic system as the best possible solution denying the need for far-reaching changes (4). However, Hungarian MPs are not respectful towards each other, according to the last indicator (5).

East German MPs in turn (with the notable exception of the PDS) seem not to be designating a particular value to consensus solutions in politics (1). They present democratic politics as being about the competition of different interests with politicians representing them rather than the quest for the common good (2). They do not assign any particular value to formalized procedures (3), or the existing institutional status quo (4). Still, they are more respectful towards each other than Hungarian MPs. Only the PDS promotes a partially consensual outlook on democracy by emphasising procedures over outcomes (3) and, interestingly, by arguing for the perseverance of the status quo of the existing (West German) system (4). I found neither a development towards more consensus-orientation over time, nor a plausible relationship between consensualism and socio-economic or positional background variables (party membership, time in office etc). Neither did I find support for an explanation based on "deep" national political cultures in this regard since East and West Germany showed markedly different patterns. (The numerical differences in the five dimensions were actually much larger between East and West Germany, than between Hungary and West Germany). In short, explicit, rhetorical commitment of political elites to consensus democracy (without knowing how strongly it is internalised individually) in the two cases appears to follow more the logic of collective rather than individual socialization as expected by my approach. Consequently, a medium-term legacy-based explanation on the aggregate level as proposed in the discursive model of political culture appears much more reasonable.

The quantitative patterns established through content analysis of parliamentary speeches are further supported by a discourse analysis conducted with the transcripts of around 30 interviews with MPs from the two cases. Basically, neither type of transition offers a discursive repertoire fully supportive of consensus democracy. For the case of Hungary (and I would argue for cases of multilateral transition in general) due to the persistence of competing notions of historical legitimacy, political entrepreneurs are able to establish sharp cultural-ideological divisions and deprive each other of recognition as equal participants in the democratic game. East Germany, as a case closer to the ideal type of unilateral transition, experienced an abrupt, imposed regime change with the complete initial exclusion of the protagonists of the old regime. This marked a "new beginning" with little legal or historical continuity. As a consequence, East Germany was found to lack a common elite discourse with regards to the democratic system connecting the other parties with the post-communist PDS, as well as connecting East and West German MPs (even within the same parties).

Using Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* I then illustrate how these shared discourses might constrain or enable political behaviour by demarcating legitimate avenues for change and persistence and thus impact upon the persistence of the democratic system, i.e. the consolidation of democracy. Thus, for the Hungarian case I discuss how the expressed preference for consensualist decision-making delegitimizes and impedes fully legal majoritarian decisions, while on the other hand the lack of respect for "the other" undermines co-operation by rhetorically externalising political opponents from the system.

For the East German case, the rather anti-consensualist discourses of non-PDS MPs clash with the established traditions of West German "quasi-consociationalism". This way, East German MPs fail to develop a commonly shared supportive *habitus* for the existing system, with PDS MPs (in line with West German MPs) mostly supporting conservation or furthering of the consensualist system, and the other East German MPs arguing for change.

Following from this differentiated perspective, the conclusions about CoD must also be differentiated between the CEE countries. In countries with the legacy of a multilateral transition the absence of a

[66] I picked East and West German MPs from the Bundestag based on the geographical location of their constituency, not their origin or place of birth. Nevertheless, 95% of East German MPs and 100% of West German MPs were born and grew up in East and West Germany respectively.

comprehensive debate about the past makes the new polity vulnerable to potential usurpation by both left and right with mutually exclusive understandings of historical legitimacy. Unlike in unilateral transitions, there was no "new beginning" in the Arendtian sense (i.e. the building of the new polity on a clear break with the old regime). Next to a higher degree of personal continuity in politics there are, in these countries, a higher number of members of the old regime's political elites that have benefited from "spontaneous" or insider privatisation and moved from political into economic leadership positions.[67] This fact offers a target for attacks from the right against post-communist parties accusing the latter as illegitimately still profiting from their former position, or even as conspiring against the new system. As the old regime, or any previous regimes prior to communism, are not univocally delegitimized and can be taken up again by political entrepreneurs to promote alternative visions of modernization and democracy (e.g. corporatist-clerical and ethnocentric authoritarianism or some kind of reform socialism) in order to deny equal legitimacy to political opponents as demonstrated in the Hungarian case. This danger stands particularly high in the post-EU-accession context and the disaffection connected to it with some groups in society.

Thus, while promoting an otherwise consensus-oriented political culture and commitment to the institutional status quo, the lack of mutual respect and acceptance as equal players in the democratic game can severely undermine the daily working and the credibility of consensus democracy. The consolidation of democracy in the case of multilateral transitions therefore depends on the ability of political elites to mutually accept each other and engage in a constructive dialogue over the past.

If the confrontational style between the different parties in countries such as Hungary, Poland but also Romania continues, it will further undermine the working and the popular acceptance of the democratic system, in particular given the high expectations raised by political elites themselves. Political leaders from different parties or camps who do not accept each other as legitimate opponents but rather regard each other as enemies cannot make a consensus (and actually not even a majoritarian) democracy run well. Moreover, if democratic politics is presented as being based in defining the common good, in avoiding disagreement or conflict, and in assuming a morally superior, truthful position it becomes vulnerable to be overtaxed by disappointed expectations. This might be particularly the case if consensus democracy is associated with elitist, non-transparent and sometimes anti-participatory discourses and practises. A lack of pragmatism by political elites and a de-politicization of the masses are blamed for the failure of consensus or consociational democracy in the past (e.g. in the case of France).[68]

As Manfred Schmidt notes, consociationalism presupposes the existence of autonomous segments in society while consensualism furthers their development.[69] In this regard, the consolidation of consensus democracy in CEE appears problematic due to the conspicuous absence of well-defined and rather stable social groups. Therefore, political parties might engage in "cultural engineering" from above and try to achieve social embeddedness. As mentioned above, in the Hungarian case this is one of the strategies pursued by the right who lack organisational embeddedness more than the post-communist left. The left can still rely on relatively extensive local party organisations. Moreover, managers affiliated with the old regime enjoyed a head-start in the privatisation process, as well as a continuous presence in other organizations (media, trade unions etc.). Historically, the establishment of clear ideological boundaries has often increased political stability. Perhaps we are already observing new cleavages in the making as some authors argue that parties in countries such as Hungary and Poland attempt to turn political differences into primary ones.[70] This could result in two (or more) relatively stable camps which have their own definitions of basic values, modern society and the common good and in which voters only elect their camp's leaders (but also where consensus is required for the highest national offices and policies). As one MP put it: "Hungarian politicians are unable to compromise because they do not know their positions. When you do not have a position, a standpoint or a goal you are unable to compromise."[71] Therefore, consensus democracy might work better once political parties have developed clear-cut, stable socio-cultural profiles and at the same time have established the boundaries of acceptable discourse.

Cases with the legacy of unilateral transition are, in turn, are less vulnerable to competing concepts

[67] G Eyal, I Szelényi, E Townsend, *Making Capitalism Without Capitalists - Class Formation and Elite Struggles in Post-Communist Central Europe*, London: Verso, 1998; D Stark / L Bruszt , *Post-Socialist Pathways - Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
[68] A Lijphart, 'Consociational democracy', *World Politics*, Vol.21, No.2, 1969, pp.222-224.
[69] M Schmidt, *Demokratietheorien*, Opladen: Leske+Budrich, 3rd ed., 2000, p.340.
[70] Zs Enyedi, 'The role of agency in cleavage formation', *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol.44, No.3, 2005, pp.697-720
[71] MDF #2.

of democracy and modernization since the previous regime(s) alongside with its claim to historical legitimacy was fully discarded during the revolutionary transition to democracy. Also, a higher extent of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* was imposed upon society e.g. through far-reaching and systematic lustration campaigns, the opening of secret service and state archives, public commemorations, teaching at schools etc.[72] However, the initial exclusion of protagonists of the former regime and the imposition of the new system by the former opposition furthers a rather majoritarian democratic discourse, prevents all players from developing of a common stake in the system resulting in a lack of understanding for the worth of consensus-democratic arrangements.

In countries with the legacy of unilateral transition, political elites might therefore come to find their understanding of democracy to be better served by more competitive, majoritarian institutions. Thus, institutional adaptation towards diminishing the number of veto players might be a possibility to increase the acceptance of the system (e.g. as attempted by the two major Czech parties in the 1998 "opposition agreement").[73] This might increase their effectiveness and output-orientation, which is a major pillar of their political leaders' yardsticks for democratic legitimacy. At the same time destructive polarization (as in the cases of multilateral transitions) appears less likely. Therefore, there is also little reason to fear from more competition. In these polities, danger looms rather from the fringes of the political spectrum if consensus politics remains unchanged.

Conclusion

I am convinced this approach can be employed with some modifications to other CEE countries and the construction of another type of transition dynamics as mentioned above is feasible. Thus, similarly as in the cases of multilateral transitions the absence of a comprehensive break with the past still impedes mutual acceptance by different parties. At the same time, there appears to be a lack of agreement on preserving the existing set of institutions as in the cases of unilateral transitions.

However, there are also differences between the South East European countries and the Central and East European countries upon which I focused in my thesis. As Higley and Burton I would differentiate between the cases of Hungary, Poland and Slovenia (which basically upheld their elite settlements throughout the upheavals of post-transition politics), the Czech Republic and Slovakia (where political elites only converged in the late 1990s) and countries such as Romania, Bulgaria or Albania which are characterized as still lacking a lasting elite pact or full post-transition elite convergence.[74] In this regard, also elite political culture might still be more fluid and changeable. Also, for SEE countries the transition of 1989/90 was followed by other critical junctures such as the 1996 elections in Romania with the first electoral turnover of power which might have left lasting marks on political culture.

[72] *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has surely also taken place in countries such as Hungary and Poland yet with largely competing interpretations of the past and without a serious dialogue between the opposing camps. In Hungary different symbols have been used and even major national holidays are celebrated separately by left and right parties. Different versions of history have been promoted by various governments and were subsequently institutionalised through competing museums, memorials or historical institutes. Lustration and transparency about the old regime's archives has been initiated in a more selective and opportunistic fashion (e.g. the campaign by the Oleksy government in Poland in the early 1990s).

[73] A Roberts, 'Demythologising the Czech Opposition Agreement', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.55, No.8, December 2003, pp.1273-1303; M Novák, 'The Relevance of Small Parties - From a "General Framework" to the Czech Opposition Agreement', *Czech Sociological Review*, 2000, Vol.36, No.1, pp.27-47; S Saxonberg, 'A New Phase in Czech Politics', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.10, No.1, 1999, pp.96-111; J Higley, M Burton, *Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, pp.168-170.

[74] J Higley, M Burton, *Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006, pp.84-89, 168-173.