# Contents

*List of Abbreviations* viii

*Preface* x

1 The Continuity of Second Reality 1

**Part I** **29**

2 The Continuity of Transition 31

3 The Continuity of Historical Antagonism 57

4 The Continuity of Backwardness 83

**Part II** **109**

5 The Continuity of the Image of the West 113

6 The Continuity of the Image of Solidarity 139

7 The Continuity of the Image of 1989 163

8 The Continuity of Expecting Discontinuities 188

*Notes* 205

*Bibliography* 232

*Index* 250

# 1
# The Continuity of Second Reality

This book deals with continuities in Poland's transition. A book on continuities may be a surprise to the reader familiar with the social science literature on Eastern Europe. Politics and societies in Eastern Europe are nowadays primarily associated with political and social change on a broad scale. The strong impact of change is reflected in different domains of the social science literature. Accordingly, the demise of the communist system has induced research on conceptual alternatives for a new system (Hankiss, 1990; Beyme, 1993; Merkel, 1994; Offe, 1997; Holmes, 1997a). The emergence of individual autonomy and the liberation from a closed system have stimulated works on civil and open society (Keane, 1988; Ash, 1990; Dahrendorf, 1990; Ekiert, 1994; Gellner, 1994). Changes in the regime of Eastern Europe became a major and controversial study of object of transitology and its sub-discipline, consolidology (Linz and Stepan, 1996b; Schmitter and Karl, 1994, 1995; Offe, 1996; 1997; Elster *et al.*, 1998; Holmes, 1997b). In this vein, scholars were recommended to shift their thinking 'from the heady excitement and underdetermination of the transition from autocracy (. . .) to the prosaic routine and overdetermination of consolidated democracy'.[1]

On the whole, starting from the early 1990s, scholars have shifted their attention from examining the foundations of communism to the study of transitions, and have come to emphasize political uncertainty, changing contingencies, structural indeterminacy, and the significance of elite choices (Ekiert, 1996:323–4). The assumption on discontinuity was perhaps most fashionably expressed in the thesis of the end of history (Fukuyama, 1992), a point with which around 1989 'nearly all of Eastern Europe agrees'.[2] In this vein, conceptual givens in the literature on consolidation of democracy

work with premises such as the 'finished transition to democracy' (Linz and Stepan, 1996a:15). More generally, and embracing both transition and consolidation, democratization is supposed

> to describe the overall process of regime change to completion, i.e. from the end of the previous authoritarian regime to the stabilization and rooting of new democracies (. . .) This principal objective of consolidation is for the risks and uncertainties typical of transition to be gradually reduced to the point where failure in democratization becomes highly improbable.[3]

On the other hand, the end of communism has not brought about a definitive cut in terms of systemic particularities. Thus, scholars such as François Furet have suggested that 1989 is not aptly grasped by the term 'revolution', because contrary to the French revolution, communism did not leave institutional or ideological principles, nor a historical heritage. 1989 produced no new idea, no new leaders, no real parties, no new society, nor a new economy (Furet, 1995:8–9). Other scholars stressed the importance of the 'old' situation, arguing for a vacuum or the institutional void in the period of transition (Jowitt, 1992). In this vein, post-communism seems to be better understood as the rejection of the communist power system than as a clear-cut adoption of an alternative system (Holmes, 1997a:13). Compared to the rupture-point in 1945, the record of change and continuity seems to be a mixed one at best (Offe, 1997).

## Discontinuities and continuities in Poland's transition

The round-table pact and the founding elections of June 1989 are arguably the foremost events that discontinued communist political power (Geremek, 1991, Skórzyński, 1995; Osiatyński, 1996). The round-table pact and the semi-free elections largely dismantled the institutional framework of pre-1989 Poland, thus grounding their uncontested significance as the cradle of Polish post-1989 order. There is a general consensus that 'independent and democratic Poland was born during the Round Table negotiations'.[4] Throughout Eastern Europe the political events of 1989 were equivalent to a systemic disruption which entailed a variety of ideological and institutional discontinuities.

In the wake of these founding events, the first non-communist government in the Eastern bloc opened up the way to the

democratization of political and social life. An impressive record of discontinuities has come to pervade institutional politics ever since. Polish post-1989 politics has seen the emergence of a new party system, three parliamentary elections in 1991, 1993, and 1997, as well as the peaceful change of political power in 1993 (from post-Solidarity to post-communist) and in 1997 (from post-communist to the coalition of Solidarity Electoral Action and Freedom Union). After the first years of Solidarity governments, a second wave of reforms as of 1997 has set out to accomplish privatization and the decentralization of administrative units. Furthermore, the regime change in 1989 helped to implement the legitimacy of government, the rule of law, and the freedom of the press. Gradually, the conviction gained ground that traditional Polish dichotomies such as state *vs*. society or communist regime *vs*. Solidarity opposition lost their explanatory power for Poland in the 1990s. As new socio-economic cleavages were supposed to become dominant (Wnuk-Lipiński, 1996; Frybes and Michel, 1996), the consolidation of Polish democracy has become a leading paradigm (Wnuk-Lipiński, 1996; Ziemer, 1998).

A comparably remarkable record of restructuring and transformation has been achieved in the economy. Following timid and politically steered market reforms in the 1970s and 1980s, only the economic shock-therapy of the first Solidarity government in 1989 launched massive economic change (Winiecki, 1992; Sachs, 1994; Slay, 1994; Balcerowicz, 1995). The politics of liberalization, stabilization, an expanding private ownership, and the stopping of arbitrary wage policies were the order of the day. After initial hardship, Poland has become the leading economy in the region, enjoying the highest rates of economic growth, steadily declining inflation rates, and an expansive private sector, which produces up to 60 per cent of its GNP. Such trends are accompanied by substantive changes of property rights and by an increase in foreign investment and consumption. Forecasts for 1999 ranked Poland first in terms of economic strength and rule of law, and runner-up to Hungary and Slovenia, which lead the list of 27 post-communist countries.[5] The reverse side of economic liberalization only confirms the general trend of discontinuities. Economic reforms have largely dismantled the social safety net. Unemployment, poverty, social and economic hardship have hit large parts of the population, and have widened generational and regional disparities.

By the same token, the collapse of communism discontinued the

ideological pillars of pre-1989 politics and society. Models of democratic reform and transitions had been harboured inside Polish oppositional thought throughout the 1970s and 1980s. At the end of the 1980s Western-type models of political and economic reform replaced nearly half a century of Marxist-Leninist-type centralism and command politics in the economy. As the Marxist-Leninist model failed, the oppositional strategy of anti-politics became superseded, and liberalism as the guiding principle for economic reform and for civil society made remarkable headway.

> The unmistakable sign of an opening up towards liberalism (which before 1989 was almost non-existent on the East European political scene) was the growing popularity of the two main ideas. The idea of the autonomy of the individuals taken as the starting point of politics (anti-politics in this case), and the idea of civil society as a sphere of activity independent from the state and undertaken spontaneously by individual subjects, who among themselves establish new relationships and agreements and, consequently, create new forms of public life.[6]

Conversely, this ideological shift is accompanied by the disintegration of Catholicism as a dominant 'Polish ideology' (Gowin, 1996).

The scope of discontinuities is perhaps most remarkable in Poland's new foreign policy options that put an end to almost two centuries of international dependence (Prizel and Michta, 1995). After achieving anew full sovereignty in the wake of the concomitant breakdown of the Soviet Union and organizations such as the CMEA and the Warsaw Pact, Polish politics was free to choose its way and orientation in the new post-communist Europe. The magic formula 'return to Europe' embodied the turn towards integration into the West, as was reflected in the increase of political contacts, economic trade and co-operation with EU-countries. Inversely, former communist countries lost in political and economic importance. In the mean time, the association in 1993 with the European Union and the start of negotiations for EU-enlargment in 1998 have marked substantial steps towards the end of Poland's historical limbo position of the last two centuries. Poland's integration into NATO in spring 1999 is the most emblematic step towards the accomplishment of this discontinuity.

This overview suggests that the central characteristics of pre-1989 Poland's political system, legal norms, social and economic conditions,

and ideological orientation have to a large extent been discontinued. If measured by what has been normal for the country during the last 200 years, 'it is now commonplace to observe that Poland has become a "normal country"' (Ash 1996). Since 1989 Poland has been free, sovereign, and prosperous; Germany is its best ally in the West, and there is no immediate threat from Russia. There is good reason to reckon that Poland has not been so well placed since the second half of the sixteenth century. Accordingly, 'Poland's transition from normal abnormality to abnormal normality is already a fantastic achievement.'[7]

In the initial effervescence of institutional discontinuities, the issue of continuities kept a low profile. The awareness of continuities in politics resurfaced with the return of post-communist parties to power in 1993. The reappropriation of political control through ex-communist parties was referred to as a second version of the Polish Peoples' Republic, or summed up by 're-communization with a human face'.[8] But cleavage lines throughout the 1990s suggest that Polish politics have been considerably influenced by the heritage of its own past. In 1989, Poland was to draw a thick line under the past and to dispense with large-scale de-communization (Holmes, S., 1994). Yet, political attitudes towards the past keep being stamped by pre-1989 history and tend to reproduce pre-1989 political cleavages which focus anew on the historical antagonism between the post-communist and post-Solidarity camps (Smolar, 1996b; Roszkowski, 1997). Politics of memory and problems of coping with the nation's own past and with accountabilities for communist crimes have been haunting Polish politics and public opinion ever since the early 1990s (Ash, 1998). The quest to assign responsibilities for communist crimes and for the past in general has led to widespread claims for a settlement with the past.[9] As the record of the communist past remains highly contested, Polish history exerts an extraordinary power on collective political mentalities (Grajewski, 1996; Kersten, 1996; Szacki, 1996; Roszkowski, 1997; Ash, 1998; Grabowski, 1998). There are strong indicators that conflict lines of Polish politics will follow those of historical division lines in the future too (Marciniak, 1996; Kwiecień, 1996).

Continuities are perhaps most striking where they are least expected, namely in the economy. On the one hand, the deep intertwining between former political and new economic elites led to the emergence of political capitalism (Staniszkis, 1991b). On the other hand, changes such as the dismantling of state ownership or

of the patronage stage were not on the agenda of the round table (Bauman, 1994:21). Furthermore, long-term continuities in Polish economy, such as growth fatigue and pervasive weakness of the state, impede the enforcement of property rights and any effective co-ordination of a market economy. 'Thus, while both these systems, economic and political, have been undergoing change, the mechanism causing growth fatigue in all those years has remained the same' (Poznański, 1996:246). Before the economic recovery of 1994 onwards the Polish economy went through several crises. The deterioration of the national economy during 1990–1 was of a size comparable to that of the 1979–82 crisis. The national product declined sharply in 1990 and again, by less, in 1991, then stabilized in 1992, pushing the real national output below the 1975 level (Poznański, 1996:264). On the other hand, the increase of social poverty and of unemployment led to a 'genuine revolution in the distribution of national income which resembles almost to a text-book illustration of marxist accumulation of richness at one pole and pauperization of the majority of society at the other pole' (Kowalik, 1995:238).

While the official politics of real socialism disintegrated after 1989, the shadow society as its antithesis has survived in various forms. In the mid-1990s people had more confidence in informal ties based on circles of relatives and close friends (or officials who could be bribed) than in the anonymous world of institutions, legal norms, and complicated mechanisms like those of democratic politics (Narojek, 1991; Smolar, 1996c:36; Kolarska-Bobińska, 1994). Furthermore, the revolution of 1989 was accompanied by low psychological involvement and political apathy, and led to a demobilization of the masses and the elites (Mason *et al.*, 1991; Smolar 1996c). Confidence and trust in public institutions has remained low and distrust in political parties and the state high (Sztompka, 1996). Splits both through moral dividing lines and a dividing line of memories are as marked as are ideological divisions on how to achieve political and constitutional consensus (Grabowska, 1997).

Given the evidence above, continuities seem to be highly interlinked with discontinuities. It is arguable at least, whether Poland's transition can be analyzed as primarily ruled by discontinuities. In any case, a considerable set of continuities in political and social life points to the need to examine them in depth. This mixed record of continuities and discontinuities is reflected in assessments of reform politics which are frequently presented in terms of 'the glass half

full or the glass half empty' (Gomułka, 1993; Rosati, 1993; Holmes, 1997c). While some approaches try to analyze Poland in the light of the consolidation of democracy (Wnuk-Lipiński, 1995, 1996; Frybes and Michel, 1996; Ziemer, 1998), others have provided pertinent analyses of the afterlife of communism (Kolarska-Bobińska, 1994; Holmes, 1997c; Smolar, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Kojder, 1998). On the grounds of evidence at face value one cannot, however, guess whether there is any linkage between change and continuities or whether there is the paradox of continuity in change (Poznański, 1996). 'But there is a sense of "old wine, new bottles" as one looks at the landscape of increasing alienation and disillusionment, voter apathy, and distance between the leaders and the led in post-communist Poland' (Curry and Fajfer, 1996:245).

## Transition and contingency

To understand the complex nature of the discontinuities and continuities in Poland's transition, I suggest a reassessment of some given assumptions on transition and contingency in politics. Guided by common methodological reasoning, most studies on change in East European politics and societies are dominated by a dyadic opposition contrasting one systemic variable with another. Scholars tend to draw comparisons between communism and post-communism, between authoritarian order and democracy, or between a closed and an open society. In this vein, early treatises on transitions dealt with 'transitions from' a particular political system, mostly from authoritarian rule. In one of the first conceptual attempts to grasp recent phenomena of change from authoritarian to democratic regimes, 'transition' was defined as the 'interval between one political regime and another' (O'Donnell *et al.*, 1986:6). The concept's nature as a shift or a switch is conspicuous. 'Democratic transition and consolidation involve the movement from a non-democratic to a democratic regime.'[10] Furthermore, transition was understood as being

> delimited, on the one side, by the launching of the process of dissolution of an authoritarian regime and, on the other, by the installation of some form of democracy, the return to some form of authoritarian rule, or the emergence of a revolutionary alternative.[11]

Processual categories were not abandoned, though, as transitions were qualified by the path of transition dependent on the prior-regime type (Linz and Stepan, 1996b:38–65). Yet the problem is the identification of transition paths with political systems such as suggested by the typology of democratic, authoritarian, totalitarian, post-totalitarian and sultanistic regimes. It is not surprising that the suggested transition path, i.e. an inherently processual category, turns out to be one of opposed structures or systems. The concept of transition initiation implies the start of transition and thus fits a dyadic conception.

> Transitions initiated by an uprising of civil society, by the sudden collapse of the nondemocratic regime, by an armed revolution, or by a nonhierarchically led military coup all tend toward situations in which the instruments of rule will be assumed by an interim or provisional government.[12]

This two-step move towards a finished transition is most explicit in the assumption that Eastern Europe is the most recent example of 'waves of democratization'.[13] In the wake of the democratizations in Western Europe after 1945 and Southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, this third or fourth wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991; Beyme, 1994:85) was defined as a 'group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occurs within a specified period'.[14] Moreover, in any of the four waves of democratization the two-step move – that of the collapse and rebuilding of systems – seems to be as tightly connected as in the case of Eastern Europe.[15]

Standard approaches in the social sciences thus lack a conceptual framework which would allow for a consideration of 'transition from' and 'transition to', and that, in addition, would account for the 'old' and the 'new'. Perhaps the most conspicuous attempt to define the scope of uncertainty between two systems was the claim about a 'genesis-environment' that took hold of Eastern Europe (Jowitt, 1992:262–68). East European societies were seen as left 'without institutions and without a system' (Bunce and Csanádi, 1993). By contrast to Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis, Jowitt considered his Genesis image to be 'more accurate and helpful in assigning meaning and attempting to influence the type of world we are entering'.[16]

Given the boost in institution-building in post-1989, and its unclear theoretical status, uncertainty seems to be too vague a concept. On

the other hand, a framework of analysis must not be determinating. In this vein, it seems more adequate to acknowledge the importance of path dependence, according to which 'it is in the ruins that these societies will find the materials with which to build a new order; therefore, differences in how the pieces fell apart will have consequences for how political and economic institutions can be reconstructed in the current period'.[17] Unsatisfied with transition as a dualist 'from- to' concept, David Stark claimed that East Central Europe was undergoing a plurality of transitions in a dual sense. He argued for the need to 'disaggregate "the transition", perhaps even dispense with it as a concept, and undertake the difficult research work of understanding how changes in the different countries and in the different domains have very different temporalities'.[18] While this approach made a plea for considering the specificities of the starting-point, its main focus was to dispense entirely with the concept of transition. Stark argued that 'in place of transition (with the emphasis on destination) we analyze transformations (with the emphasis on actual processes) in which the introduction of new elements takes place most typically in combination with adaptations, rearrangements, permutations, and reconfigurations of already existing institutional forms'.[19]

Despite its sensitivity towards the dissolution of communist order, the concept of path dependence does not go beyond the common thinking in two steps, those of deconstruction and reconstruction. This two-step move becomes apparent as 'the true strength of the concept of path dependence . . . is precisely its analytic power in explaining outcomes where strategic actors are deliberately searching for departures from long-established routines and attempting to restructure the rules of the games'.[20] As a result, path-dependence proffers merely the duality of breach (departure from long-established routines) and outcome.

Responding to the demise of communism, the emerging transition literature emphasized the establishment of new rules, the transition to a new form of political and social organization. Despite the specification of sequences that distinguish between transition and consolidation (Schmitter and Karl 1994; Bos, 1994), the dominant trend in the social science literature conceives of transition as concerned with the shift from one state to the other. While the former was concerned with the destabilization of autocratic orders and possible exit routes from it, the latter addressed the stabilizing factors that would sustain the new order. At any rate, the passage

from the old to the new order hinges on two limit-points: the starting condition, and the endpoint to which transition will lead. Thus, the concept of transition itself is heavily rooted in the state 'to', and does not pay enough attention to the state 'from'.

On the whole, the year 1989 appears as a seemingly objective and imposing point of measure of change. Any approaches to continuity and discontinuities pivot on the axis of the year 1989 and its consequences. In Poland and elsewhere in the region, 1989 complies with the requirements of a standard definition in political science that attributes to transition the quality of a starting-point which is characterized by rupture, by a breach of the former order. 'The transition generally starts with a particularly dramatic event (. . .) as a culmination of a series of events. Such an event often results in the public and official commitment of the authoritarian rulers to hold free elections and to revert power to the electorate by a specified deadline.'[21]

This application of a dyadic pattern to Eastern Europe is only partly due to the nature of the conceptual pool in transition literature.[22] Given the long and pervasive division of East and West before 1989, such a dichotomy seems comprehensible, and the desire to replace a failed system with a more successful one seems only natural. Furthermore, to conceive of transitions as a shift from one system to another complies with the tradition in the thinking about social and political change which has been ruled by an essentially dyadic structure: it is interested in the point of departure and in the point of destination of a process. Thus, the tradition of Western thought has usually answered questions of the coherence of societies by emphasizing a state of disorder, the old situation, whose results were detrimental to living and which thus had to be somehow reversed and substituted by a new order (Dahrendorf, 1959:157ff.). In a similar vein, such a dichotomy was inherent in Western sovietology, whose mainstream assumption of systemic dichotomy was reinforced by political and military stalemates. Systemic confrontation contributed to a dyadic pattern of Eastern communism and Western democracies, making a black-and-white scheme the common outlook. The dichotomy in the pool of social science literature is telling in this respect: on the one hand, the theories of the collapse of communist power (Holmes, 1997a:23–62); on the other hand, the burgeoning literature on transition, consolidation or transformation. Rarely, if ever, are these strands of literature interlinked.

As a result of such dyadic thinking, contingency in politics is essentially located in the transitional period which starts off with the breakdown of communism in 1989. If one were to spell out a principle of 'transitology', as Schmitter and Karl named the first branch of research, it could well be 'uncertainty'.[23] For the new branch of 'consolidology' that is concerned with the consolidation of democracy, 'stability' became the catchword (Schmitter and Karl, 1994). Despite this gradual shift from uncertainty of transitions towards the modalities of consolidation, the analysis of variables of contingency in politics is essentially coterminous with 1989. Such a dyadic approach to contingency must associate the end of communism primarily with discontinuities. In order to contain contingency, the systemic change from a centrally planned economy or a monoparty political order to a democratic and capitalist order is analyzed under the heading of rationally designed institution-building. Similarly, approaches that have underscored the high contingency of a new world disorder (Jowitt, 1992) do not escape dyadic thinking either, since they assume the emergence of uncertainty or disorder as a consequence of the end of communist stability.

Standard approaches to contingency in research on Eastern Europe are biased as they work with the assumption that the shape and impact of contingency are decided by its systemic outcome. Claus Offe defined the core problem of the political and economic modernization of former socialist societies as rooted in a lack of noncontingent givens which would be suitable fixed parameters of the politics of reform. 'Precisely because the system is at such a deadlock, everything becomes contingent, and nothing can self-evidently remain as it is.'[24] The absence of a fixed set of trustworthy or at least uncontested social facts and binding institutions forces the reform politicians to some gigantic bootstrapping act. Due to the collapse of communism as system, contingent outcomes must be located in the post-1989 period. While contingency is primarily assumed for the transition phase after the rupture-point, pre-1989 is not treated as a period of high contingency.

This book sets out to elaborate a theoretical framework that problematizes the dyadic structures of transition theory and approaches to contingency in the Eastern European context. It is keen to extend the problem of contingency of political and societal order to pre-1989. The central endeavour of this book is to examine non-contingent givens in the transitory pre-1989 situation and to link them analytically to post-1989. I will elaborate a set of

continuities that may elucidate the transitory character of both pre-1989 and post-1989 Polish politics. Such an assumption is sustained by the self-definition of communist regimes as transitional (Kersten, 1991; Sakwa, 1995; Szakolczai, 1996; 1998; Horváth 1997, 1998).

Transitology took its cue from Machiavelli's definition of uncertainty.

> The difficulties encountered in attaining power arise partly from the new institutions and laws they are forced to introduce in order to establish their power and make it secure. And it should be realized that taking the initiative in introducing a new form of government is very difficult and dangerous, and unlikely to succeed. The reason is that all those who profit from the old order will be opposed to the innovator, whereas all those who might benefit from the new order are, at best, tepid supporters of him.[25]

Modern transitology has translated this claim into an antagonism of two systems. Such a viewpoint is mainly induced by a focus on the *virtù* of elites whose action is able to transform an old system into a new one. The fundamental experience of dissolution of order, so central to Machiavelli's work, plays a minor role. Experiences such as the long-term decay of political order and corruption, the cyclical nature of constitutions, or the opposed humours in a prolonged crisis as analyzed in parts of the Discourses and the Florentine Histories, therefore, have been neglected by the transition literature.

Looking at the Polish pre-1989 political order, it is at least arguable whether the antagonism of two systems as put forward by transitology complies with Machiavelli's concept. If the state 'from' is assumed to be stable, any analysis of change and continuity must remain linear or evolutionary. A closer look at the instability of pre-1989 Polish politics suggests the cyclical nature of Polish post-war history (Ascherson, 1981; Curry *et al.*, 1996).

> The sequence varies little in its broad outline. It begins with the arrival of a shining new government, promising radical economic changes and liberal political reforms. Gradually this ruling group is affected by political decay until it degenerates into the same sort of stifling autocracy which it replaced, a clique out of touch with the needs and wishes of the Polish people Economic dis-

> content finally touches off a working-class revolt. This leads more or less directly to the fall of the political leadership and its replacement by a new team – in its turn flourishing promises of reform and responsiveness to public opinion. A cycle has ended. The next begins as this new leading clique, after a few months in which the newspapers are free and sausage is plentiful, is slowly drawn into the same process of degeneration.[26]

Transitoriness and uncertainty in Poland are here extended into the realm of the pre-1989 order. Systemic coherence and profitability for the incumbents are questioned far before the systemic breakdown in 1989.

> Not only was it not a totalitarian system; it was also not even a viable system. Upheavals, even when they were neither mass actions nor successful, were never really brought under control and ended. No communist leader felt strong enough to do away with its opponents. Nor was any leader capable of marshaling enough resources to make the system really work to either control or satisfy the population. Economics, domestic politics, foreign policy, and the processes of social change were so intertwined that Poland could only rock on for thirty years from one half-solved set of problems to the next and back again.[27]

If one sees pre-1989 Polish politics in the light of a breakdown of order, an understanding of the modalities of discontinuities and continuities in Poland can be gained only if the socio-genesis of pre-1989 order is linked to that of post-1989. So far, social science research tends to give insufficient attention to the conditions of how the old order dissolved. Increasingly, studies want to understand 'not so much the breakdown of the old order, but the problematic emergence of the new'.[28] To my knowledge, only a limited number of studies have been dedicated to in-depth analyses of communist societies, acknowledging their fragility and transitoriness (Staniszkis, 1991; 1994a; Engler, 1992; Horváth and Szakolczai 1992; Sakwa, 1995; Szakolczai, 1996; 1998; Horváth, 1997; 1998; Wydra, 1999). Such a focus on the conditions or modalities of dissolving orders was developed in history[29] and historical sociology (Huizinga, 1939; Sewell, 1996; Szakolczai 1996, 1998). Arpád Szakolczai (1996) claimed to shift attention from the second limit-point to the first. He advocated that 'emphasis should be placed

on the manner in which a society enters a stage of transition, on the *modality* of the dislocation, the collapse, the *dissolution* of the previous *order* of things'.[30] Thus, the post-1989 condition is not examined by ex-post assumptions of how things should be set together, but rather by the conditions under which the former order dissolved.

If one conceives of pre-1989 as a period of transitoriness and cyclical crises, manifest tendencies of discontinuity inside the communist order must be given more theoretical significance than they have received so far. The dyadic structure of systemic antagonisms hinges on the assumption that 1989 was the rupture-point. Moreover, practical considerations in the agenda of academic research tend to favour analyses of the modalities of the new post-1989 order, discarding the old or reducing them to mere preliminaries. An investigation of continuities needs to re-evaluate the assumed rupture-point of 1989. Thus, the first question to ask of the problem of continuities in transition regards the pivotal moment of 1989. While there is no precise date or period at which to locate the outset of this transitory condition, this book argues that transition is not centred around the focal point of 1989. There is good reason to assume that the demise of communism in Poland, despite being 'by far the most dramatic of the crises that punctuated communist rule there . . . was not the beginning or the end of Poland's transformation process'.[31] Second, and tightly linked to the first point, there must be a shift from the objective-institutional level to the subjective-experiential level.

Summing up, the conception of post-1989 as a highly contingent period as opposed to an essentially stable pre-1989 period is inherent in the methodological apparatus of the bulk of the transition literature. The dyadic approach to transition is reinforced by the dyadic conception of modernization *vs*. totalitarian approaches. Such concepts hardly provide the tools to examine the paradox of continuities in a period of profound discontinuities. I will set out to develop a conceptual tool that permits analysis of continuities through the second reality of expecting discontinuities.

## Second reality before and after 1989

If the Soviet system was ideocratic in character[32] – with the single Marxist–Leninist ideology as fundamental to political life and not open to legitimate challenge – East Central European countries were

less ideocratic. Several ruptures of social and political order testified to the fragility of countries such as Poland, Hungary, or Czechoslovakia (Simecka, 1984; Arnason, 1993; Holmes, 1997a). It was in East Central Europe and Yugoslavia that the legitimation crisis rendered the communist regimes most fragile, and where individual autonomy, civil society, and anti-politics developed best. 'In Czechoslovakia, during the Prague Spring, or in Poland during the Solidarity period, at least an incipient and imperfect parallel society began to emerge.'[33] This fragility of political and social order crystallized in concepts such as the second society, second polity, or parallel politics (Skilling, 1989 Hankiss, 1990). 'During the period of normalization which followed in the two countries, a system of more or less co-ordinated structures developed which, at least in embryo, represented a "second polity" or independent society at a lower level of development.'[34] Autonomy and spaces of freedom allowed for an independent sphere where people met and established associations within the second society. The emergence of a second society in Poland expressed the increasing conflicts between the communist regime and society and official politics. Similar to the dualism of civil society *vs.* state (Arato, 1981; Keane, 1988), second polities, economies, and cultures were seen as effects of the regime's failure to make society comply with official politics. In this regard, independent organizations, alternative structures, and autonomous activities in some East European societies such as Poland, Hungary, or Yugoslavia showed fledgling attributes of a second polity which, to a certain extent, was detached from the system or partly worked against or outside it.

Second or independent societies were conceived in their institutional dimensions and their systemic results.[35] Less attention was given to the relational aspect with regard to models or images that provided the intellectual and emotional sources on which second realities were built up. Dissidence and opposition grew larger throughout time and engaged the communist regimes in their endeavours to make up for the precariousness of their legitimacy and authority. After initial compliance,[36] the elites and the common people in Eastern European societies, and especially in Poland, became gradually drawn towards imagined, different Western lifestyles. Not only the opposition but also the regime shifted between the first and a second reality. The building of a second Poland under Gierek was about remodelling the national symbolic domain. The regime strove to improve the Polish self-image and cultivate national pride.

'In the 1970s, the propagation of the official ideology in all major domains of public discourse – that is, visual imagery, rhetoric and ceremonial – was constantly amplified.'[37] On the whole, the political, economic, and social reality in pre-1989 Poland was widely associated with cycles of crises (Ascherson, 1981:26; Landau and Roszkowski, 1995:239–254). The frequency of conflict in Polish postwar society was equated with a permanent revolution (Curry and Fajfer, 1996). In pre-1989 Poland, the outcome of politics was contingent, due to the expectations of political discontinuity which remained a steady concern for both the authorities and the opposition.

Given that the authorities in their struggle for legitimacy made extensive use of national and patriotic imagery, I suggest extending the concept of the 'second society' in order to make it useful for an analysis of post-1989 Poland. The long-term dichotomy between foreign repressive systems and society have made the recourse to alternative modes of organization a guiding theme in Poland's history since the late eighteenth century. 'A real authentic, non-illusory Poland only existed where a group of citizens met and took their own decisions. The most spectacular "self-organizations" were of course the national conspiracies themselves . . . Their mere existence as genuine Polish centres of debate and decision was revolutionary . . . Where such a band of people gathered together, a small space appeared which in this nationalist perspective could reasonably be named "Poland".'[38] Not by chance, the overall aim of the Polish Solidarity opposition was the subjectivization of society. The second reality almost became the primary reality for a short moment, when in late 1980 'Solidarity was simply Poland'.[39] Second reality referred not only to the questioning of authorities in society but also to private life, where norms were rejected (Wedel, 1988). The experience and the perception of realities was so different that one could even think of writing two different histories of the PRL (Szacki, 1996:68–74). A political history would account for the development of the Polish political system, while a history of its society would tell how people lived under the pressure of the regime but were mainly busy with their small affairs. Such a distinction would not follow a black-and-white dichotomy, but should be understood as a 'second life' (Szacki, 1996:74).

To maintain the appeal of a second reality is impossible without the conviction that there is a mode of being more worthwhile to be lived in than the actual reality one lives in.[40] Similarly, in Hungary, a 'double' or 'split consciousness' was a common phenomenon

in the 1950s and early 1960s (Hankiss, 1990:97). The subjugation of the subject into a self-imposed different reality was still gripping Polish society in the late 1970s. In the concrete life-world of the people, national and patriotic romanticism linked with religious belief were crucial aspects in the pursuit of a second political and social reality. The essence of communist systems was not massive physical constraint, but rather, an opening-up towards the West, given in small doses. A second economy can hardly exist without inflow of economic goods from outside and a fascination for the richness of Western market economies. The image of democracy[41] was essentially double-edged, as it originally referred to the systemic enemy, but increasingly shifted towards universal humanitarian values, individual and political liberty, and a fully-fledged opposition movement such as Solidarity in Poland. As a consequence, the prolonged collapse of communism left these countries caught up in a situation of the irreality of the real (Engler, 1992:80–2). Such a situation bears resemblance to processes of substitution.[42] Following upon this, 'the power of the authorities relied upon the desire of the governed to leave the social community temporarily, and upon the principle to do nothing that could counteract the fulfillment of this desire'.[43]

On these grounds, I suggest detaching the concept of second reality from a functional meaning in the service of the antagonism of state *vs.* society. In a situation of the menacing dissolution of order, second realities should be regarded as subjective-emotional expressions of the desire to leave an unwanted or unsatisfactory situation. In this regard, the mixed record of continuities and discontinuities in Poland's transition makes a strong case for the assumption that, in many accounts, post-1989 Poland remains pervaded by the irreality of the real. At face value, the achievement of political and individual liberty coupled with democratic legitimacy ended the second reality of a split consciousness. In this vein, the guiding postulates of dissident movements, such as the claim for living in dignity, living in truth, or anti-politics set out to create spaces which were free of a double reality. One can, however, also argue that the period of transition is the lapse of time necessary to fill the gap between reality and mentalities (Frybes and Michel, 1996b:74–5). This regards not only Poland's return to Europe and the adoption of Western models of institutions and norms, but is also about detachment from the reality of habits and mentalities that had developed throughout a period of unstable and contested

normative, ethical, and institutional order. In this regard, the pluralization and liberalization of public and political life in post-1989 Poland does not necessarily coincide with a subjective perception of such a process. It is, as it were, a question of whether the glass is half full or half empty.

The economic and social gains from political liberty, moreover, have been restricted to certain segments of Polish society only. It was reckoned that the third republic was a one-third society, pointing to those who profited from the new order and who actively participated in shaping it. Another third, mainly retired people and those living in the countryside or structurally weak regions, bear the burden, and the last third is still undecided which attitude to take.[44] Under the impact of rising 'citizens' movements' in Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 1990s, Claus Offe warned that 'the initial "atomized" state of the post-totalitarian society would not be somehow overcome, but rather reproduced and reinforced'.[45] Juxtaposing this assessment to the picture given by Aleksander Smolar for the mid-nineties, the parallels are striking. 'One gets the paradoxical impression that society today is no less – indeed, perhaps even more – atomized than it was in the final, years of communism.'[46] Similarly, the theme of the invisibility of the authorities and the weakness of the state in East Central Europe has been pervasive since the end of communism.

> By now, millions of people have lost, or fear that they may lose, their traditional roles and positions in the sphere of production and distribution. They have lost their way in the labyrinths of social and industrial relationships, which are in the midst of a chaotic transformation. People do not know any more, or yet, what are the rules of the games, what are their duties and rights, what they have to do for what, what is the cost and reward of what. There is no authority to tell, there are no values to refer to.[47]

It might be objected that a separation of two realities in post-1989 Poland cannot go beyond the standard distinction between state and society. Such a viewpoint, however, ignores the fact that second or double realities can maintain their appeal despite institutional ruptures. I would maintain that the second reality exerts considerable power.[48] Persistent images of national salvation, the myth of enchanted politics or the antagonism between (post-)communists and anti-communists indicate the continuity of myths and

beliefs despite a revolutionary break in institutional politics.[49] In moments of crisis, elites may be subjectively convinced that they are guided by reason, while objective reality may distort this subjective perception (Pareto, 1968:93ff.). As Jerzy Szacki argued, 'our society to a considerable degree consists of people whose biographies are not stamped by any profound disruptions. Neither was the founding of the PRL for them the end of the world nor was its breakdown the beginning of the world'.[50] Indeed, for many Poles the year 1989 did not signify an experience of change. After the return from more than 40 years of exile, the former Radio Free Europe director Jan Nowak-Jeziorański asked a member of staff in a Polish hospital when, to her mind, Poland really obtained its liberty. She replied that it was probably under Gierek (in the 1970s), because from that moment one could freely travel abroad. As Nowak-Jeziorański commented: 'In that moment I understood that for her and me the year 1989 (. . .) was lived on a different level, and that in current Poland a part of society thinks like me, and a part like her.'[51]

The impact of second reality in post-1989 politics is reflected in the radical but widely unsuccessful desire for large-scale changes. In both pre- and post-1989 Poland second realities or meta-realities (Ekes, 1994; Michel and Frybes, 1996b; Kowalski, 1997) are difficult to escape. In order to identify the continuities in Poland's transition I propose to reframe some fundamental theoretical and methodological assumptions that have guided social science research on Eastern Europe. In methodological terms, this means reconsidering the dichotomy that confronts pre-1989 with post-1989 and which also pervades the discussion of second reality.

The theoretical dichotomy of systemic oppositions, such as autocracy *vs*. democracy, or state socialism *vs*. the market, lines up with the established dichotomies in methodological approaches. One such methodological dualism contrasts the tradition of area studies (such as Sovietology) with that of democratization studies. Consequently, post-1989 Eastern Europe is often squeezed into a two-tier scheme of interpretative accounts. On the one hand, political developments in Eastern Europe should be analyzed as primarily dependent on linear heritages from the past. On the other hand, the emphasis is put on the autonomy of political actors in a situation of uncertainty. In offering a dual choice in the research agenda, Philippe Schmitter asked which represented the better strategy, and he favoured the second one.

> Should the scholars of post-communist transitions rely primarily on the unique cultural, structural or behavioral features inherited from the "marxist-leninist-stalinist" past in their effort to understand what the outcomes of these momentous transformations will be? Or, should they focus on a more generic set of issues and utilize primarily non-area-specific concepts that presume a less historically constrained range of choices and hence a greater autonomy for actors?[52]

By the same token, current scientific discourse on Eastern Europe has revived an old cleavage. Change and progress in democratization and marketization are mainly associated with modernization theories, while pathologies and continuities are mainly summarized under the totalitarian paradigm.[53] This dualism does not seem appropriate in identifying the inherent linkage between discontinuities and continuities. Rather frequently, institutional changes do not correspond to the expectations of important collective groups. While the social sciences have predominantly focused on the discontinuities at the objective institutional reality, the subjective reality of individuals and collective groups arguably appears to be at odds with the rapid changes in the institutional framework of politics, economy, and society (Sakwa, 1995). The two levels can be made explicit by comparing post-1989 with post-1945 Eastern Europe and Russia. In this regard, sociological and political analysis in the early 1950s coined the concept 'totalitarianism'. The classical analyses focused on the institutional and ideological principles of Soviet-type systems. While modernization and convergence approaches came to dominate the social sciences in the 1970s, 'totalitarianism' had shifted in meaning throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. While violent repression and coercion decreased (Paczkowski, 1997), the reality of the totalitarian lie in common life prevailed among Eastern European intellectuals (Rupnik, 1988).

Given the changes of concepts and contexts, this book surmises that a study of continuities must step back from dyadic thinking. This corresponds to the lack of a clear-cut separation of the first and second societies. Elemér Hankiss has pointed out that most of the second sphere was characterized by the absence of first society rather than by the positive working of the opposite principles. 'This twilight existence of alternative world-views in the second social consciousness had little in common with the open articulation of well-developed, autonomous world-views.'[54] On these grounds, the

second or alternative society in Eastern Europe remains essentially an indeterminate sphere of a hypothetical nature.

> The 'second society' failed to develop into an autonomous sphere of social existence, into an alternative society governed by organizational principles different from those of the first society. It was a no man's land, where the governing principles and the rules of play of the first society did not work, but the principles and rules of a different type of social existence had hardly emerged. They had not clustered into a more or less consistent new configuration.[55]

As the above examples show, dyadic methodologies can hardly pay heed to the mixed and often confusing record of discontinuities and continuities in Poland's transition. In an attempt to theorize the East European transition, Arpád Szakolczai (1998) has argued that much of modern thought, from the heights of philosophy down to the mundane details of politics, is dominated by the number 'two'. While philosophy as well as current economics and politics uses dyadic opposition between two sides as the central tool for analysis, he has advocated a shift to a three-tier scheme of explanation.

In this vein, historical and sociological research on Eastern Europe has offered some models of triadic approaches. In his groundbreaking essay on the three historical regions of Europe, Jenö Szücs (1988) argued that East Central Europe is a unique formation in between the Western and the Eastern model. Through the crisis at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the career of Western absolutism led to the subordination of society to the state. On the other side, the East nationalized society. In between the two poles of a Western and an Eastern model, a third region emerged.[56] Another three-tier scheme of explanation equated the rise of democracy in Eastern Europe to a civilizing process by applying Norbert Elias's figurational approach (Wydra, 1999). Elias repeatedly stressed the importance of networks of interdependence and reciprocity for the understanding of processes in society. Methodologically, relations between collective groups in societies or between societies cannot be analyzed without taking into account the disposition of collective groups and their mutual relationships (Elias, 1978; 1991). Furthermore, in his study on the national conflicts in Yugoslavia, Rogers Brubaker (1996:55–76) convincingly showed the triadic nexus

in the war between Serbia and Croatia. What is commonly presented as a dyadic conflict actually hinged on a triadic relational nexus of reciprocal perceptions and images between national minorities, nationalizing states, and external national homelands.[57]

Triadic frameworks that focus on structures must be complemented by a three-tier scheme to conceive of the process of change. In her work on processual analysis the legal anthropologist Sally Falk Moore distinguished between 'processes of regularization' and 'processes of situational adjustment'. While the first process is ruled by a 'philosophy' of determination,[58] the second one concerns indeterminacy. Processes of 'situational adjustment'

> are those by means of which people arrange their immediate situations (and/or express their feelings and conceptions) by exploiting the indeterminacies in the situation, or by generating such indeterminacies, or by reinterpreting or redefining the rules or relationships. These strategies continuously reinject elements of indeterminacy into social negotiations, making active use of them and making absolute ordering the more impossible. These processes introduce or maintain the element of plasticity in social arrangements.[59]

## Two realities of continuity

While explanations of triadic kind have been provided for historical dynamics, there is good reason to assume that Poland's pre-1989 instability was ruled by processes of situational adjustment. Moreover, in Poland and in other countries in the region, the appeal of myths and utopias is fundamental to an understanding of contingency in politics. As I will argue throughout this book, the processes of normalization in pre- and post-1989 Poland can be read as situational adjustments hinging on a vision of social and political utopia. In this vein, second realities materialized as political realities.[60]

In order to extricate continuities of second realities one must distinguish between different levels of analysis. Taking up a conceptual device introduced by David Easton, one can distinguish three hierarchical levels which make any political system operative (Offe, 1997:32f.). At the most fundamental level, a 'decision' is taken as to who 'we' are, that is, on identity, citizenship and territorial, as well as on social and cultural, boundaries of the state. At the second level, rules, procedures and rights must be established which

together make up the constitution or the institutional framework of the 'regime'. The highest level, within the parameters of the two previous premises, includes processes and decisions – in terms of both political power and economic resources. This three-tiered model clearly suggests links of upward determination: the 'normal politics' that is going on at the third level is embedded in identitites and constitution.

As identities break down and passions rise, the significance of human nature in politics increases. Throughout pre-1989 but, in particular, in an environment of the collapse of habitual beliefs, hopelessness, and the irreality of the real, Polish politics were characterized by low predictability and a lack of far-sightedness. This permanent uncertainty of stable reference-points for political and economic order had a serious impact on the convictions of elites (Horváth, 1998). Drawing on the importance of second realities, the methodological framework in this book will stress not the hard variables that dominate transitology, but the soft variables such as those relating to culture, mentality, and collective consciousness and subconsciousness.[61]

I thus propose to study Poland's transition based on the continuity of second realities which draws on political passions (Furet, 1995; Tocqueville, 1988; Horváth, 1997;1998). Tocqueville emphasized two principal passions that prevailed in the French revolution: first, the hatred of inequality and the desire to destroy old-fashioned institutions in order to build a society according to humanity's yearning for equality; second, the desire to live not only as equals but also in liberty (Tocqueville, 1988:296). The theme of equality in Poland's transition has commonly been under-estimated, as the end of communism highlighted the importance of liberty. Yet both political passions shared an inherently utopian character. The egalitarian goal as the driving force of communist modernization was farcical and illusionary (Arnason, 1993; Furet, 1995). Similarly, liberty has temporarily lost its bearings in post-1989 Poland (Gross, 1994; Szacki, 1995). While the theme of equality in terms of social justice has indeed lost its bearings,[62] equality has played a crucial role in the forging of communities for a social contract for national salvation. The peaceful consensus at the round table, and the enthusiastic return to Europe, have thus continued the most pervasive theme in Polish politics and society since the nineteenth century.[63]

To explore the qualities of the revolutionary passions of equality and liberty, the pillars of contingency in Poland's transition are

treated in an anthropological spirit. The dissolution of political order must be treated as the dissolution of the body politic. As Reinhart Koselleck showed in his groundbreaking study *Critique and Crisis* (1988), the Enlightenment as the century of critique and moral progress came to ignore crisis as the central concept. Yet Rousseau grasped its diagnostic content by postulating crisis as a dissolution of order leading to anarchy (Koselleck, 1988:134–140). While Rousseau innovates by fully applying the medical implications of the *corps politique*, this medical understanding of the state as body politic is already inherent in Machiavelli. Machiavelli's use of humours was embedded in a long tradition of the use of medical analogies in classical and medieval political philosophy (Parel, 1992:102ff.). Not by chance, arguably the most controversial policies in the Polish post-1989 transition, such as the economic shock-therapy and the politics of lustration, were taken from medical language or referred to ritual purification.

After 1989, all over Eastern Europe the importance of national identities, ethnic traditions, and universal economic models has been on the rise. It was argued that 'these attempts at inventing traditions, exemplary models, and dogmas are hardly promising, as the element of arbitrariness is evident with which the political movements and elites choose these allegedly "prepolitical" fundamental truths and proclaim them as their program.'[64] Dyadic perspectives that are interested in change or transition from one system to another must assume that newly arising reference-points are not uncontested social facts, but that in the system everything becomes contingent, and nothing can self-evidently remain as it is (Offe, 1992:882).

This book conceptualizes continuities in Poland's transition by drawing on non-contingent givens which essentially belong to the second reality. The second reality of pre-political passions will be elaborated in six different types of continuities. To assume that post-1989 Eastern Europe dispenses with non-contingent givens means to under-estimate relational figurations, such as the historical interdependencies between East and West. Similarly, it would downplay the conflict between communist regimes and opposition movements on behalf of images of normality. To grasp these non-contingencies in a methodological framework one needs to step back from approaches such as political economy, democratic theory and systems theory. I surmise that these non-contingencies are not institutionally stable principles, but have an essentially utopian

quality. The resurgence of irrational reference-points in the guise of 'prepolitical fundamental truths' in the process of establishing political order disturbs social scientists. Passions and emotions are at odds with contractual or consensual reordering of things. To unravel this paradox, this book has opted for a new methodological framework that focuses on the pre-political quality of the fundamental reference-points in post-1989 Poland and Eastern Europe.

Given the dyadic impasse of standard approaches, my methodological approach is based on a three-tier scheme. In order to examine the starting-point of transition, I will make use of the works of Arnold van Gennep (1960) and Victor Turner (1969; 1974; 1985; 1987; 1992). Van Gennep developed a scheme of rites of passage, while Turner conceptualized the in-between stage as a liminal phase, a threshold situation. As I will argue throughout the book, Polish politics were stamped throughout pre- and post-1989 by various threshold situations. In most cases, these situations were moments of nationwide communities, as will be exemplified by the Solidarity community in 1980 and the round-table community in 1989. In order to grasp the continuity of cleavage-patterns, I will rely on René Girard's theory of mimetic conflict (Girard, 1965; 1977; 1987; 1988; 1989; 1990; 1994). Based on broad studies on the epistemology of Western literature, myths, and the biblical texts, his work is concerned with the basis of cultural, social, and political order. The central argument holds that in moments of disruptions in cultural and social order, the reciprocity of desires creates conflicts. Such a relational approach to conflict in politics assumes that antagonists in a situation of crisis pursue utopian projects which can essentially be regarded as mirror images. A third conceptual tool aims to examine the role of Solidarity elites for the modernization of politics and the economy as a way to leave behind the state of backwardness. By applying Bruno Latour's concept of action at distance, I will examine the modalities of the imitation of models in Poland's transition. I will argue that Polish political elites resembled disoriented explorers of utopian islands.

To study the modalities of continuities in Poland's transition by connecting the hypotheses of Turner and Girard seems to be contradictory. Rites of passage may come closest to integration theories of society, while an approach to imitation based on reciprocal appropriative mimesis suggests a coercive and violence-based vision of conflict in society. Turner's conception highlights the creation of a spiritual unity in an existential community and thus conceives

of it as a consensus-based reordering of social, cultural, or political order. Girard's approach to imitation breaks with the long tradition of mimesis as representative (Girard, 1987). While imitation is a fundamental mechanism of learning in human life, it becomes most acute in situations of crisis, when it becomes appropriative. In a mimetic perspective, desires are by definition endless, but the availability of desired objects is limited by definition as well. The pursuit of utopian projects is assumed to be reciprocal, while the shortage of desired objects makes it impossible to satisfy all desires and thus may lead to potentially violent conflicts. As their application to the Polish case will show, both these theories are not only compatible, but gain full power only in their conjunction. William Sewell's in-depth analysis of the attack on the Bastille as a historical event brought together the emotional and rational-normative foundations of the French revolution.[65] Linking the idea of a social contract to large-scale crowd violence, it shows convincingly how a liminal period may produce and sustain conflicting states such as emotional unity and common feelings in moments of *communitas*, and may trigger the mimetic ravages of crowd violence (Sewell, 1996:864–871).

As I will argue throughout the book, dependence on second realities has entailed the repetitively changing allegiances of political elites. The autonomy of political actors, assumed as crucial in most approaches to political order in transition, is thus contested by a relational triadic framework. The passions of equality and liberty are examined in terms of short-term communities and pervasive utopias that guided pre- and post-1989 Poland. The core principles in the continuity of second reality are pre-political passions that are constitutive for the anti-structure of *communitas*, the mimetic conflict of historical antagonisms, and the backwardness of elites. Hence, the approach taken in this book does not offer an analysis of Poland's transition towards a clear-cut political system, but elaborates analytical categories in order to show how Poland's post-1989 politics has been pervaded by non-contingent continuities. A comparison with Easton's scheme suggests that the continuities are fundamentally located at the first level of normal politics, while they strongly influence the second and the third level. Continuities in Poland's permanent transition are not visible at face value and can only be extracted by looking at the second reality of images, myths and mentalities.

The first reality has produced a variety of discontinuities, while

continuities persist in the second reality. In the first part of this book, I am going to examine pre-1989 politics with an expectation of political discontinuities in the second reality. I will argue that permanent instability hinged upon the passions of equality and liberty as crises and conflicts were driven by social and national communities as well as by widespread tendencies for political utopias. In the second part of this book, second realities are conceptualized as guided by the ideological and institutional impact of images that are temporarily weakened but recurrently become essential reference-points for Polish politics and society. This continuity of non-contingent second realities provides the crucial link between Poland's permanent transition before and after 1989.

# Index

## Subject Index

antagonism(s)
  between East and West, 67
  between state and society, 50
  historical, 5, 51–2, 168
  replica of, 53, 71
antagonists
  weakness of, 43, 70
anti-politics, 3, 40, 51, 116
anti-structure, 25–6, 42–3, 54, 69, 145, 148, 166, 168
  of *communitas*, 148
  of the round-table community, 25, 148
  of a societal community, 167
  of permanent liminality, 69

backwardness, 22, 74, 77–8, 105, 127
  leap out of, 81
  continuity of, 74–95
  state of, 22
Balcerowicz-plan, 111
Bielecki government, 118

capitalism
  logic of, 101–2, 110, 114
Catholic Church, 28–9, 70, 72, 116, 130–2, 134, 137, 145, 157
  heritage of the, 113
Catholic Electoral Action, 138
Centre Alliance (PC), 140
Christian National Alliance (ZChN), 138, 200
civil society, 69–70, 116
Civic Parliamentary Club (OKP), 135, 142
Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR), 36
*communitas,* 22–3, 48, 133, 173
  continuation of, 166
  moments of, 148, 167
  existential, 44
  experience(s) of, 42–4, 139, 149, 163
  liminal experience of, 48
  normative, 164
  round-table, 44–8
  Solidarity, 43–4, 138, 140, 143, 145, 173
  spirit of, 148
  in 1980, 44, 163
  of 1989, 148
community
  anti-structural, 49
  August, 164–5
  Gdańsk, 125
  imaginary, 69
  national, 43, 58
  of a third Solidarity, 148
  recurrent appeal to, 166
  underground polity as a, 43
  with Western Europe, 98, 106, 113, 115
Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), 46, 200
conflict
  *see also* mimetic conflict
  Girard's theory of, 62
  identity-based, 51–2, 76
  ideological, 51–2, 76
  interest-based, 52
  political, 50–3
consciousness
  double, 15
  utopian, 55, 193
consolidology, 1, 10, 172–3
contingency
  in politics, 9–10, 20, 28
  in Poland's transition, 21
continuity
  of a gap between the first and second reality, 161
  of backwardness, 74–95
  of distance, 95

of expecting discontinuities, 169–83
of historical antagonisms, 26, 50–73
of permanent liminality, 48–9
of second realities, 1–24, 171, 181
of the image of 1989, 147–68
of the image of Solidarity, 125–46
of the image of the West, 101–24
of transition, 27–49
of utopian images, 54–61
triadic approach to, 19–20, 175
two realities of, 20
constitution-making, 166
convergence
of elites, 43
of political antagonists at the round table, 46

de-communization, 5, 147, 152–4, 170
democracy, 109–10
image of, 15
logics of, 101, 109, 114
of the gentry, 58
democratization, 1–2, 109
waves of, 7
de-nazification, 155
desire(s)
for identity, 56
for utopia, 57
mimetic, 62–4
reciprocity of, 22, 62
to return to the start, 163–8
discontinuity, 2–6
expecting, 13, 149, 168–83
*see also* habitus and second reality
expectation of, 123, 126, 145, 157
dissolution of order, 11, 15, 42
distance(s), 74–95
action at a, 87–95, 133
between East and West, 75, 121
between elites and the people, 82
from Western modernity, 90
objective-institutional, 75, 77, 80, 95
of Poland's economy, 81
reducing, 78–87
second reality of, 95
subjective perception of, 75, 77, 95
two realities of, 75
distrust
culture of, 153
society of, 162
double-bind, 59, 67, 175–6
circularity of, 181–2
emotional, 174
situation with Russia, 112
with past images, 205
with the image of the West, 104
dyadic
opposition of systemic variables, 6–7, 17
methodologies, 17, 19
thinking, 9
dyadic approach
to social and political change, 21
to Eastern communism and Western democracies, 9
to contingency, 10, 28
to the image of the West, 103
to systemic antagonisms, 12, 41, 53
to conflict and conflict resolution, 61
to imitation, 63
to utopia, 56

economic reform
myth of, 56
referendum on, 188
economic shock therapy, 21, 111, 166
elite(s)
absence of, 84
backwardness of, 167, 170
communist, 79
demobilization of, 117
immaturity of, 164
liminal condition of, 87
political, 84–7, 94–5
double isolation of, 90–92
habitus of, 87
societal, 85
Solidarity, 81, 91

equality, 114
  desire of, 123
  in a liminal society, 99
  utopian image of, 108
eliteless society, 95
elections
  semi-free, 132, 135
  founding, 2

fusion principle, 83
Freedom Union, 3, 116, 160, 199, 205

genesis-environment, 7
Gdańsk
  Accords, 44, 128, 141
  August of, 43
  community, 125
  workers' revolt in, 43, 57
guilt, 176
  perception of moral, 153
  (unanimous) attribution of, 153, 156

habitus, 129
  of expecting discontinuities, 173–4, 180–3
  *see also* permanent transition
habitus-formation, 129

identity(ies)
  formation, 104, 129
  in Polish politics, 68
  malleability of, 160, 171, 177
identity-creating processes, 49
identification
  with a catch-all model, 92
  with distant elsewhere, 86
  with islands of the past, 94
  with liberty and equality, 149
  with second realities, 181
  with Solidarity, 134
  with the community of 1980, 144
  with the image of Solidarity, 142
  with the West, 115, 121
identity politics, 26, 68, 77, 97, 121–2, 137, 173
image(s)
  of 1989, 97–9, 147–68
  of *communitas*, 173, 177
  of democracy, 15
  of Solidarity, 91, 97–9, 125–46, 173
  of the West, 87, 97–9, 101–24, 174
imitation, 62–3, 151
  as action at a distance, 93–4
  dyadic approach to, 63
  in East European transitions, 62
  of models, 22, 102
  of utopia, 26
  of Western models, 105
  the Bolshevik experiment as, 193
irreality of the real, 15, 20, 84
islands of the past, 93
institutional change
  liminal character of, 73
inter-individual psychology, 63

Jaruzelski regime, 31, 45, 56, 128

lesson-drawing, 87
liberalism in Poland, 76, 116
liberty, 109, 114, 116
  expectations of, 99
  utopian image of, 108
  desire of, 123
liminal
  conditions, 26, 34, 37, 42–3, 49, 56, 73, 81, 94, 103, 105, 109, 128, 136, 162–4, 183
  phase, 22
  underground period of Solidarity, 45, 126
liminality, 33–5, 38, 40, 87, 89, 97, 127, 164
  post-1945, 107
  of Solidarity, 137
  permanent, 35–41, 48, 60, 69, 89, 163, 168, 170, 189
  state of, 54, 59, 66, 78, 113
lustration
  *see* politics of lustration

market
  socialist, 111
  double-edged meaning of the, 111
  mobilization of the, 112
  economy, 101

martial law, 30, 70, 79, 125, 128, 201
Mazowiecki government, 134, 142, 202
Mazowiecki camp, 135
mimesis, 62–3, 152
  appropriative 62–3
mimetic conflict, 22, 63–4, 66, 69–70, 72, 89, 97, 120, 127, 137, 140–2, 145, 170, 183
  continuity of, 71
  as a non-contingent reality, 71–3
  between communists and the opposition, 64
  over Solidarity's heritage, 127
  over the identity of Solidarity, 97, 137
  theory of, 22
mimetic desire, 62–4
mimetic engagement, 113, 148
mimetic images, 65, 67, 69, 71, 143, 193
mimetic theory, 62
mirror image(s), 22, 26, 32, 64, 142
  relationship, 44
  between communists and
  anti-communists, 42–6
  in Eastern Europe, 101
modernization, 82–3, 86–7
  elite-initiated, 87
  approaches, 18, 54, 74
  of politics and economy, 54
  of post-1989 Poland, 80
Movement for Poland's Reconstruction (ROP), 138, 157, 167
myth(s)
  of Solidarity, 50, 126, 129, 146, 148
  of political unity, 50
  of national and moral unit, 50
  of economic reform, 56
  of the market, 110, 199
  of the general strike, 125
  of enchanted politics, 148
  of the Polish nation, 148
  of (the unity of) Solidarity, 126–7, 146, 183

national romanticism, 59
national road to socialism, 108
new evolutionism, 70, 139, 193–4
non-contingent given(s), 10, 22, 25, 48, 71–2, 95, 122, 145, 168, 173
Non-Party Bloc for the Support of Reforms (BBWR), 157
normalization, 56
  vicious circle of, 162–3
normal politics, 169–70

Olszewski government, 118, 150

passions
  of equality, 20–1, 98–9, 174
  of liberty, 20–1, 98–9, 174
  political, 171
past
  distancing from the polluting, 147
  heritage from the, 17
  legacies of the, 174
  recapturing of the, 149, 168
  return of the, 65
  settlement with the, 5
path dependence, 8, 174–6
Polish dichotomies, 3
Polish drama, 154, 207
  cathartic moment in the, 154
  reversal of the, 161
Polish inferiority complex, 105
Polish October, 56, 155
Polish Social Democracy (SdRP), 159
political accountability, 151, 155
political capitalism, 5, 39, 81, 111–12
political conflict in pre-1989 Poland, 50, 59
political mentalities, 5, 41
political psychology of collective fear, 104
politics of lustration, 21, 70, 149–56

politics of memory, 5, 70, 73, 177
politics of permanent reform, 157–63, 177
power
  of the weak, 37
  of the powerless, 44
Poznań riots, 56, 192

reality
  first, 14, 29
  double
  *see* second reality
  meta-, 17, 148
  objective-institutional, 18, 29, 75, 80
  subjective, 18
Rakowski government, 111, 199
return
  to normality, 148, 169–70
  to Europe, 4, 16, 95, 101, 108, 119, 121, 177
  to the start, 163–8
reversal of roles, 159, 161
round-table, 71, 138
  community, 22, 25, 51, 65, 70, 73, 95, 98, 135, 145, 148, 156, 159, 164–5, 168
  experience as an event, 47–8
  pact, 2, 25, 27, 33, 47, 112
  negotiations, 133
rites of passage, 22, 33
ritual of change, 157–63

second Poland, 14, 25, 49, 62, 68, 70, 79, 108–9, 122, 168
second reality, 14, 20, 22–3, 56–7, 59, 61, 71–2, 79, 86, 97–9, 114, 122, 126–7, 132, 136, 145, 148, 171–2
  before and after 1989, 13–20
  continuity of, 23, 34
  desire to be in a, 197
  institutionalization of, 30, 34, 44
  of distance, 86, 95
  of expecting discontinuities, 13
  of mimetic images, 71
  of national and political community, 62, 143
  of the image of the West, 103
  utopian appeal of, 56
second economy, 15, 108
second polity, 13
second society, 13–14, 18, 69, 185
separation processes, 29–35, 38
situational adjustment, 43
  processes of, 19
Solidarity
  as a mirror image of the communist system, 32
  as a socio-economic class, 129
  as a cultural-political class, 130
  backwardness of, 132, 140
  civic committees, 164
  collective identity of, 128
  community in 1980, 22, 25, 65, 70, 175
  dissident unions, 46
  double bind with Solidarity's image, 72
  double bind with the communist regime, 67, 70
  double power in, 138–9
  Electoral Action, 2–3, 98, 138, 144–5, 148, 164, 167, 173, 175, 201
  eschatological relativism, 58
  ethic of non-violence, 130
  ethos of, 173
  Fighting, 127, 141
  government(s), 3, 33, 117–18, 135, 145, 164
  'identity card' of, 132
  identity crisis of, 30, 144
  identity of, 30, 45, 136, 188
  I-image of, 131
  image of
  *see* image(s)
  life conduct in, 130
  mentality of, 53, 61, 200
  movement, 27–8
  myth of, 50, 126, 146
  National Congress, 202
  opposition, 3, 14, 27, 30, 46, 112, 133
  reasoning of, 58
  realistic adaptation, 58
  relegalization of, 132–5
  revolution, 62, 122

second National Congress, 144, 202–3
symmetrical differentiation, 144–5
unity of, 125
we-image of, 131
Working Group, 141
Solidarity I and II, 131, 141, 152, 202
as doubles, 134, 136
as twins, 143
Solidarity 80, 127, 141–2
spirit
of 1789, 165
of 1989, 165, 167
of Solidarity, 30
stab-in-the-back-legend, 156
'start from scratch', 176–78
stimulus diffusion, 78
subjectivization of society, 14, 29, 44, 65, 69, 137

thick line, 5, 154, 156
policy, 95, 147
threshold situation, 22, 25, 37, 171
transition, 6–13, 27–8, 171–4
1989 as the starting-point of, 33
as a two-steps move, 7–8
as permanent liminality, 35–42, 48–9
continuity of
*see* continuity
cyclical character of Poland's, 171
'from', 7
initiation of, 7, 9, 27, 158
lack of beginning and end of, 161
permanent, 29, 35, 97, 103, 162
pre- and post-1989 normality as a, 172
as a habitus of expecting discontinuities, 173–4
state of, 162
'to', 7
to communism, 65, 90, 112
to democracy, 27–8, 76, 182
totalitarian
lie, 191
transitional justice, 155
transitology, 1, 9–11, 27
transitoriness
of communist societies, 12
of the Polish economy, 38
permanent state of, 104
triadic
framework, 19
scheme, 63

underground
liminal experience of the
Solidarity, 30, 125–6, 128–9
undifferentiation, 72, 139
utopia(s), 20, 42, 60, 65
and violence, 60
as mimetic images, 68
as second reality, 56
belief in, 41–2, 57
decline of, 54–5
desires for, 57
imitation of, 26
islands of, 92, 95
of a new social contract, 167
of national salvation and unity, 164
political, 58
reciprocity of, 56, 59, 62
withdrawal of, 55
utopian
images, 54, 61, 65, 94, 136
consciousness, 55, 193
nowhere of the rupture-point of 1989, 156

violence, 59–60
Visegrad triangle, 120

Wałęsa camp, 202
war(s) at the top, 70, 97, 126, 135, 145
we-image(s), 125, 129, 131
we-they dichotomy, 51, 125
West
catching up with the, 72, 75, 102, 106, 172, 175
community with the, 89, 106, 113, 119, 123
disappointed love with the, 123

Eastern Europe's dependence on the, 78
image of the
*see* image(s)
Poland's disenchantment with the, 77
superiority of the, 75
withdrawal
from rituals, 31, 188
of the state, 31
Western models, 101, 121

## Index of Persons

Agh, Attila, 200
Anderson, Benedict, 207
Antall, József, 123

Balcerowicz, Leszek, 92, 135, 199
Bateson, Gregory, 144, 205
Bauman, Zygmunt, 33–5, 78
Bibó, István, 86, 105
Brubaker, Rogers, 19
Buber, Martin, 47
Bujak, Zbigniew, 130, 139–40
Buzek, Jerzy, 157

Cassirer, Ernst, 186–7
Ceauşescu, Nicolae, 156
Chamberlain, Neville, 90
Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, 165

Dahrendorf, Ralf, 102
Davies, Norman, 90, 92
Derrida, Jacques, 203
Drakulić, Slavenka, 196
Dziewulski, Jerzy, 152

Easton, David, 20, 23
Ekes, Janusz, 84
Ekiert, Grzegorz, 27, 30, 127, 199
Elias, Norbert, 19, 104, 129, 173, 208
Elster, Jon, 205

Falk Moore, Sally, 19, 163
Feher, Ferenc, 75, 101–2
Fukuyama, Francis, 8
Furet, François, 2

Geremek, Bronisław, 135, 140, 202, 205
Gierek, Edward, 14, 17, 38, 43, 56–7, 61, 68, 70, 79, 108–9, 122, 163
Girard, René, 22–3, 62, 141–4, 193, 205–6
Gombrowicz, Witold, 60
Gomułka, Stanisław, 36, 38, 43, 56–7, 61, 70, 163
Goodwyn, Lawrence, 130
Graczyk, Roman, 191
Gross, Jan T., 137, 186

Hall, Aleksander, 202
Hankiss, Elemér, 18, 185
Hável, Václav, 44, 121, 189
Herling-Grudziński, Gustaw, 155, 161
Hodysz, Adam, 160
Holmes, Leslie, 162–3, 171, 179
Holzer, Jerzy, 71
Horváth, Agnes, 190
Humer, Adam, 204
Huizinga, Johan, 185

Jankowicz, A. D., 88
Jankowski, Maciej, 142
Jarry, Alfred, 40
Jaruzelski, Wojciech, 27, 47, 56, 151, 160, 165
John Paul II, Pope, 43, 130, 165
*see also* Wojtyła, Karol
Jowitt, Ken, 8
Judt, Tony, 93
Jurczyk, Marian, 141–2

Karl, Terry Lynn, 9
Kearney, Richard, 67
Kersten, Krystyna, 41
Kiszczak, Czesław, 46, 131
Konrád, György, 121
Kołłataj, Hugo, 40
Kołakowski, Leszek, 112
Koselleck, Reinhart, 21

Kowalski, Sergiusz, 58, 64
Kubik, Jan, 38, 130, 190
Kuklinski, Ryszard, 160
Kundera, Milan, 121
Kuroń, Jacek, 36, 38, 43, 46, 83, 91, 151, 157, 165, 201–2
Kwaśniewski, Aleksander, 52, 150, 159–60, 165

Laba, Roman, 130
Latour, Bruno, 22, 88–9, 112
Lenin, Wladimir I., 193
Linz, Juan, 41, 48, 55

Mach, Bogdan, 204
Machiavelli, Niccolò, 10–11, 21, 62, 172, 181
Macierewicz, Antoni, 150
Mannheim, Karl, 92
Marciniak, Piotr, 166
Mazowiecki, Tadeusz, 132, 135, 140, 142, 147
Meciar, Vladimír, 177
Miłosz, Czesław, 66, 123, 185
Miller, Leszek, 160
Michnik, Adam, 27, 32, 37, 46–7, 59, 65, 71, 84, 121, 131, 133, 135–6, 139–40, 142, 147, 149, 151, 154, 165, 194, 202–3
Miodowicz, Alfred, 131
Moczulski, Leszek, 46
Modzelewski, Karol, 36, 151
More, Thomas, 174, 196
Mosca, Gaetano, 84
Mrożek, Sławomir, 113

Narutowicz, Gabriel, 154
Nelson, Daniel, 117
Nowak-Jeziorański, Jan, 17

Offe, Claus, 10, 16, 51, 72, 76–7, 120, 151, 170, 181
Oleksy, Józef, 150–1, 153, 161
Olszewski, Jan, 138, 150, 157, 167
Osiatyński, Wiktor, 45, 167

Pałubicki, Janusz, 128
Pareto, Vilfredo, 84–5, 94, 161
Poznański, Kazimierz, 38, 198
Przemyk, Grzegorz, 204

Rákosi, Mátyás, 56, 186
Rakowski, Mieczysław, 111
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 21

Sawicki, Jerzy, 155
Schmitter, Philippe, 9, 17
Sewell, William, 23, 47
Smolar, Aleksander, 16
Staniszkis, Jadwiga, 32, 47, 102
Stark, David, 8
Stelmachowski, Andrzej, 132
Stepan, Alfred, 41, 55
Suchocka, Hanna, 144
Szacki, Jerzy, 17, 65, 158
Szakolczai, Arpád, 12, 19, 35, 39
Sztompka, Piotr, 152, 162
Szücs, Jenö, 19, 105, 112
Świtały, Kazimierz, 151
Syryjczyk, Tadeusz, 83

Tarde, Gabriel, 93
Tocqueville, Alexis de, 20, 62, 167, 186
Turner, Victor, 22, 33–4, 36, 39, 43, 46–7, 63, 163–5, 190
Tymiński, Stanisław, 135

Urban, Jerzy, 46

Van Gennep, Arnold, 22, 33

Wałęsa, Lech, 46, 52, 80, 115, 130–1, 133–5, 138–40, 145, 150, 152, 157, 160, 164–5, 202–3
Weber, Max, 93, 129, 201
Weil, Simone, 69
Wielowieyski, Andrzej, 132
Wierzbicki, Piotr, 202
Wojtyła, Karol, 113
*see also* John Paul II, Pope

Zacharski, Marian, 160
Żeromski, Stefan, 154
Zinoviev, Alexander, 185
Zieliński, 110