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Dependent Capitalism, Westernization and Asian Values in Post-Socialism: the Paths of Central Europe and Viet Nam

Abstract

The collapse of the Soviet Empire and communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe has meant not only a systemic change to democracy and market capitalism, but also the formation of independent nation-states combined with a geopolitical reorientation to Western Europe. In this context, the wide-spread wish to return to Europe has had a polyvalent meaning.

The political dynamics of the Eastern enlargement of European integration is dependent not only on institutional enlargement mechanisms, but also on the varieties of capitalism in the given regions and countries, on geopolitical and economic interests as well as cultural orientations and collective identities in the “Old” Europe as well as in the Eastern European countries.

The transformation was interpreted by many analysts as an unexpected, almost total triumph of neo-liberalism, however in the context of economic crisis new questions started to emerge. For instance, it would be interesting to know how does the process of “economic” and “democratic” restructuring relate to the strategic issues facing the region. This question, as well as other ones relating to it can be answered by looking at the East European government’s failures in utilization of the austerity techniques developed by the euro zone to deal with the economic crisis.

Keywords: *post-socialism, dependent capitalism, Western / Asian values, European integration, varieties of capitalism, spaces of dependencies, foreign actors, path dependence*

The collapse of the Soviet Empire and communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe has meant not only a systemic change to democracy and market capitalism [Merkel, 1999], but also the formation of independent nation-states

combined with a geopolitical reorientation to Western Europe [Zielonka, 2001]. In this context, the wide-spread wish to return to Europe has had a polyvalent meaning.

Enabled through the collapse of communism and the wish of the post-communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe to return to Europe, the Eastern enlargement of the European Union emerged first and foremost as a continuation of a Western European elite project of extending European integration to the East.

In Germany as the relative winner of the Eastern enlargement, the elites propagate an expanding federal integration model, whereas in France and Britain as the relative losers the elites are more hesitant, following either a more statist idea of a deepened core Europe or a more intergovernmentalist idea of an enlarged Europe. By contrast, the elites in the smaller peripheral states favor the Eastern enlargement and particularly those adjacent to Central and Eastern Europe emphasize their neighborly mediating role between Western and Eastern Europe.

Most dependency theorists regard international capitalism as the motive force behind dependency relationships. Andre Gunder Frank, one of the earliest dependency theorists, is quite clear on this point:

...historical research demonstrates that contemporary underdevelopment is in large part the historical product of past and continuing economic and other relations between the satellite underdeveloped and the now developed metropolitan countries. Furthermore, these relations are an essential part of the capitalist system on a world scale as a whole (*Frank, 1992*).

According to this view, the capitalist system has enforced a rigid international division of labor which is responsible for the underdevelopment of many areas of the world. At the same time the underdevelopment of Eastern Europe is different from this simplicistic model. The underdevelopment of Eastern Europe partly bounded to the early modern wars in the region (Ottoman, Catholic-Protestant and Anti-Habsburg fights), partly to the centre-periphery relationships inside of contemporary empires. Combinations of those impacts should be different. In the 1990ies the leading opinion was focused on the decoupling-recoupling problem. In the 2000ies, and especially after 2008 the style of globalization was handled as the most serious factor of local underdevelopment.

The political dynamics of the Eastern enlargement of European integration is dependent not only on institutional enlargement mechanisms, but also on the varieties of capitalism in the given regions and countries, on geopolitical and economic interests as well as cultural orientations and collective identities – in the “Old” Europe as well as in the Eastern European accession – now already – new member countries.

The transformation was interpreted by many analysts as an unexpected, almost total triumph of neo-liberalism, however after 2008 in this respect new questions started to emerge.

Varieties of Capitalism

The original varieties of capitalism approach were developed with regard to the then western states and OECD members.

However, applying the *Varieties of Capitalism* (VoC) concept to post-communist countries raises some questions. The first of these relates to doubts about

whether the economic system that has been developed is capitalist at all. Lane and among others Bohle and Greskovits [Bohle, Greskovits, 2006] present a brief and transparent table focusing on the basic components of modern capitalism. Many of the criteria are similar to, if not the same as, the Copenhagen criteria set by the Treaty on European Union. Once a country has entered the EU, we could automatically consider it to be a state with modern capitalist institutions. In the 1990ties there were reasonable doubts as to whether several CIS or Balkan countries are able to fulfil the institutional requirements related to property rights, political stability or a system of law enforcing private ownership. The completing of Atlantic criteria of democracy is still a task here for most of future political regimes, but abilities to maintain the rule of law are not questioned even in this part of the region.

The transition to a market economy thus witnessed a mix of the two processes. On the one hand, new institutions (e.g. financial markets, business laws, etc.) had to be built from scratch; on the other, many existing institutions had to be transformed or integrated into the new political and economic system. The interaction between these two processes and their effect on capitalism is something that has not yet been clarified.

Concerning alternatives to Hall and Soskice's classification (2001), Bohle and Greskovits (2003) have published one of the most comprehensive and informative qualitative studies of the varieties of capitalism in post-communist Europe. They also included several ex-Soviet republics in their analysis. Others avoided the categorization of Hall and Soskice while, in considering questions of equity, forms of ownership, the efficiency of the economy, industry and expert structure, and others, proceeded to identify three groups of states. A valuable contribution to the analysis of Central European capitalism has been made by Matsuzato (2006). Linden (2002) has pointed out that these authors combine elements of the VoC approach with dependency theory to introduce their own approach — a third type of capitalism typical of Central and Eastern Europe: the dependent market economy.

One of the first scholars who applied the VoC approach to Central and Eastern Europe was Magnus Feldmann [Feldmann, 2006]. Feldmann compared Slovenia and Estonia, two very small and open economies facing severe international economic pressures.

Feldmann showed that Slovenia has developed economic institutions corresponding to Hall and Soskice's co-ordinated market economy type, while Estonia could be placed at the other end of the continuum, i.e. close to a liberal market economy.

Bohle and Greskovits [Bohle, Greskovits, 2006] broadened the sample of countries in question in their work, basing their analysis on countries' approaches to two opposing processes in the transition: the transformation of the economy from centrally-planned to market-oriented; and the level of social protection for citizens. Bohle and Greskovits argued that the eight new EU member states have developed a different pace and grade of institutionalization concerning these processes. Based on this, they identified three types of capitalism in central and Eastern Europe.

Neo-liberal capitalism has developed in the Baltic states, according to Bohle and Greskovits. The typical features of neo-liberal capitalism are very low

growth rates of industrial production, a low level of output of complex products, a strict fiscal policy and the lowest levels of social protection.

At the other end of the scale, there is the neo-corporatist type of capitalism in Slovenia, represented by a high level of social protection, a relatively high share of complex exports and a country which is ‘the least market-radical’ [Bohle, Greskovits, 2006: p. 462].

The Visegrad countries, according to the authors, lie somewhere in between and are labelled by them as ‘embedded neo-liberal’. Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia are more socially inclusive than the Baltic states.

Another composite indicator was constructed by Kopstein [Kopstein, 2000]. He took into consideration the business, labour market and financial market environments in OECD countries. The major shortcoming is that only the four Visegrad countries are included in the analysis, and thus it is impossible to compare it to the Baltic states of Slovenia. However, we can apply his composite index in analysis (particularly, together with Germany and the USA, as Hall and Soskice’s ‘ideal types’).

Several scholars have used different variables in their analyses and, thus, many of the indicators have become ‘standard’ in the VoC approach. Examples are union density; workplace representation; social protection expenditure; complex experts; collective bargaining coverage; centralization; etc. [Feldmann, 2006; Bohle, Greskovits, 2006; etc.].

If there exists post-communist capitalism, what systemic direction has it taken and can it approximate any established type of modern capitalism? On the basis of common academic knowledge about the inherited institutional characteristics of state socialism and taking into account the comprehensive analysis of different models of capitalism undertaken in the present paper, we can put the institutional systemic changes of the analyzed countries (f.i., Poland and Ukraine) on a wider comparative scale in order to compare their movement from state socialism to capitalism across the five major institutional domains, including product-market competition, the wage-labour nexus and labour-market institutions, the financial-intermediation sector and corporate governance, social protection, and the education sector (see table 1).

Table 1

Post-communist alternatives by institutional domains within movement from state socialism to capitalism

Pre-vious model	Alternatives by institutional domain: From less → to more radical reform change
	Product markets – regulated v. deregulated: Asian → Mediterranean → Soc-dem → Continent Europe → Market-based
	Labour markets – protected/coordinated v. flexible: Mediterranean → Continent Europe → Asian → Soc-dem → Market-based
	Finance – bank-based v. stock market-based: Backward → Mediterranean → Continent Europe → Asian → Soc-dem → Market-based
	Welfare – universal v. restricted/none: Integral welfare state → Continental corporatism → Latin subsidiarism → Zero-level of social protection
	Education – public with specific skills v. private with general skills: (1) Continent Europe → Soc-dem → Mediterranean → Asian → Market-based(2) Mediterranean → Asian → Market-based → Continent Europe → Soc-dem

Varieties of capitalism and the vietnamese path

For further comparative analysis of modernization in Central Europe and South/East Asia we try to have a further look at the varieties of capitalism approach in the Vietnam reform process. The economic performance of China and Vietnam over the past two decades challenges prevailing explanations of economic development. Since 1990, C&V along with Laos stand out as the three fastest growing economies in the world.

The C&V experience challenges basic assumptions of political economy and prevailing normative theories of development. Both C&V remain solidly authoritarian, and both are governed by entrenched single-party regimes that maintain a pervasive presence in economic governance.

Although the two countries have transitioned to market-based economies, traces of the institutionalism mechanisms that have been invoked so widely in explanations of high economic performance in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union are hardly evident. This combination of rapid economic growth and “dysfunctional” institutions has led Xu [Xu, 2011] to speak of “the China puzzle”.

Faced with these glaring anomalies, political scientists, economists, and other analysts of D&V have generated two sorts of explanations. The first may be aptly characterized as the economic advantages of backwardness. What we are witnessing in C&V is the rapid, extensive growth that is characteristic of the initial phases of industrialization.

By contrast, the second set of explanations proposes that C&V represent a novel model of political economic organization whose institutional foundations need to be studied and understood. A normative form of this new-model argument is the “Beijing consensus” perspective.

In recent years, an influential critique of this argument has emerged that goes as follows: although C&V’s particular combination of institutional features and high growth outcomes diverge from standard economic prescriptions, these countries’ institutional features have ultimately led to the development of distorted economies and are likely to handicap future growth.

It is worth reviewing the notion of the Beijing consensus and other characterizations of C&V’s political economies that have sought to underscore their distinctive features, including Sino-capitalism, state capitalism, capitalism with Chinese characteristics (Huang, 2008), and market Leninism.

The exact features of the new model that China exemplified and Vietnam apparently followed are hard to pin down. Many experts struggle to define it, writing that it “is flexible enough that it is barely classifiable as a doctrine”. Williamson (2012), who coined the term Washington consensus, attempted to add more meat to the discussion by summarizing the literature to distill the Chinese model into five components: (a) gradualist approach to reform choices; (b) willingness to experiment with policy choices; (c) export-led growth; (d) state capitalism or an explicit role for SOEs in production, where they are allowed favoured access to land and capital and dominate strategic industries or “the leading heights” of the economy; and (e) maintenance of an authoritarian regime during dramatic economic change. The final two ingredients have made the model especially attractive to authoritarian leaders (if not their citizens) around the developing

world (in addition, each of Williamson's dimensions can be operationalized with data drawn from public available sources).

Yet, by the time the 1990a began, the role of the Central Committee in each country was drastically different. In Vietnam, it was the most powerful institution in the country, responsible for not only policymaking but also leadership selection. In China, the Politburo (and especially the politburo Standing Committee) retained its role as the most powerful institution in the country.

Given the fact that a) the formal powers for the two central committees are roughly the same, b) provincial authorities became more important players, or were already important players in both countries during the 1980s, and c) Vietnam's reform happened later than China's reform, how did inner-party democracy (narrowly defined here as greater Central Committee power) expand dramatically in Vietnam and stagnate in China?

I believe two reasons stand out above all others: the Tiananmen incident in China (and lack of such an incident in Vietnam) and the deaths or retirement of powerful elders in Vietnam. In addition to these factors, I also explore two additional reasons which seem plausible but require further scholarly research to validate or deny. One is the fact that political culture under Ho Chi Minh and his successors was relatively more open than it was under Mao Zedong and his successors from the very beginning, making the end result.

The Vietnamese vision of socio-economic development between 2006 and 2010 can be said to be characterized by an overwhelming focus on the economic and a corresponding neglect of the social and the environment. The development plans see such an effusive use of economic terms, that references to the environment or societal goals can be considered as "nods": they need to be acknowledged but are not that urgent to command attention or a priority placement in the list of major development tasks [Tan, 2012].

Where industrialization is the light, the plan only lit path is that of economic reforms and increase in industrial production or productivity. The technocratic tendency further manifests itself through the numerical targets, in both their prevalence and their ambiguity.

Also, Tan [Tan, 2012] has previously suggested that its tautological use – industrial policy leads to industrialization, and to industrialize necessitates industrial policy – shows that industrialization is both a development goal and a theory of development in Vietnamese usage.

In 2010 Lee and Mathews published an important piece in Asia Pacific Economic Literature in which they argued that a so called Beijing – Seoul – Tokyo Consensus has been and will remain a good alternative.

Rather than deregulating and privatizing industries governmental authorities created favourable conditions for economic development, targeted certain industries and supported firms in their quest for finance, knowledge and human capital.

With respect to Japan Pempel [Pempel, 1998] wrote an illuminating study on the post-war success story until the mid 1990s. He characterized the Japanese model as embedded mercantilism. Pempel [Pempel, 1998: 49] defines mercantilism as the advancement of "macroeconomic interests of a nation-state through catch-up policies involving the protection and nurturance of domestic indus-

tries". "Embedded" here refers to the nesting of this mercantilism in the wider society.

The Liberal Democratic Party was able to achieve "macroeconomic success though ever more internationally competitive Japanese firms in high-value-added industries" [Pempel, 1998: 48] while simultaneously providing "side payments" to the weaker parts of the society: rice farmers, small-business sector, semi-peripheral and peripheral regions lacking high-growth industries, and increasingly industries in decline. Thus Japanese mercantilism was embedded in a coalitional framework to maintain the goodwill of weaker parts in the society. In contrast, Japanese mercantilism in the 1990s had started to disembed.

Embedded mercantilism differs from Evans' well-known concept of embedded autonomy. According to Evans the key characteristic of a developmental state is embedded autonomy: "Autonomy implies that the state can stand alone, above the fray and beyond the controlling reach of vested interests which would seek to capture the power of the state and turn that power to their very specific, short-term advantage". This differs with the emphasis on domestic coalitions in the embedded mercantilism approach, i.e. the state as a party within coalitions rather than an autonomous state. In this respect "major economic transactions in the successful East Asian cases had often been relation-based rather than rule-based".

The more positive outcomes in Japan and South Korea suggest that South-east Asian countries wishing to emulate elements of the East Asian varieties of capitalism should not simply look at the current Chinese growth spurts as a result of the narrow Beijing Consensus, but scrutinize the broader BeST Consensus and identify which institutional arrangements could be compatible to existing formal and informal institutions [Andriessse, 2008]. At the end of their article Lee and Mathews [Lee, Mathews, 2010] give one warning and point out two other important issues. First, they warn for the possibility of rent seeking behaviour. Indeed, in the previous decades many entrepreneurs and politicians in Southeast Asia have become rich by extracting rents from the public sector. Government intervention, then, does not lead to the enhancement of capabilities. Second, they admit that given the constraints imposed by WTO membership, countries nowadays might find it hard to "set capabilities enhancement in motion. For instance, vigorously protecting infant industries is not allowed anymore under the WTO regime. Instead, innovation policy should be the forward here such as focusing on national and regional innovation systems. Thailand has shown some success in this regard in the food processing, automotive and tourism industry. Third, Lee and Mathews argue that the BeST Consensus is also possible in truly democratic environments. Japan provides a good example.

Regarding Southeast Asia Fordist analyses have generated somewhat radical view. According to Andriessse, 2008 Malaysia and Philippines belong to the variant of Primitive Taylorism, which can be characterized by 'Taylorist labour processes with almost endless supply of labour, bloody exploitation, huge extraction of surplus value, coupled with the presence of dictatorial states and high social tension'. The preceding passage is certainly a strong exaggeration of contemporary capitalist systems in Southeast Asia. Andriessse, 2008 has shown dynamic economic interaction within East and Southeast Asia, increasing integration of

ASEAN countries concerning medium and high technological products, diaspora investments of ethnic Chinese into China and so on. In addition, Malaysia has not had an endless supply of labour. In 1990 foreign labour as percentage of the total labour force was 4%, but by 1995 it had already risen to 8%, not to mention a substantial number of undocumented illegal foreign workers at that time. In this respect perhaps 'we are at a critical juncture in economic geography. There are unprecedented opportunities for mainstream sociology of development to give up longstanding European-centric bias and develop theories that account for differences and differentiation in an era of accelerated globalization'.

Therefore, a relevant question that emerges is how, then, can institutional complementarities and comparative institutional advantages be analysed in semi-peripheral Southeast Asian countries? An approach which has been explicitly developed for southeast Asia and which could be considered as an Southeast Asian variety of capitalism (see the next section as well) is the embedded mercantilism approach (hereafter EM approach), originally designed by Pempel [Pempel, 1998] for the Japanese economy, Jayasuriya [Jayasuriya, 2004: 26] states that the approach of embedded mercantilism is in Southeast Asia generally characterized by:

- a segmentation between the export-oriented and domestic economic sectors, creating a dual political economy;
- an overlapping of these divisions with distinct sections of capital; and
- a set of public policies to ensure that side payments from the more efficient export sectors facilitate a broad set of alliances between the two segments of the economy.

Thus similar to Pempel's analysis of Japan Southeast Asian trajectories can be viewed along these three characteristics. Obviously, each national institutional system reflects trade-offs between various economic and political interests, but Jayasuriya has conceptualized these trade-offs nicely for Southeast Asian cases.

The second characteristic is concerned with overlapping between the export-oriented and domestic economic sectors. In this respect it is necessary to outline the role of government agencies. First, the public sector could cooperate with the private sector, possibly culminating in public-private partnerships. Williamson, 2012 claims that protective and supportive actions of the public sector are generally beneficial for economic growth, but have rarely been inclusive, e.g. in the case of trade unions, many working people and residents are often left out and hence there has been a lack of tripartite networks. In the Southeast Asian context, institutional relations between the public and the private sector are often attractive for rent seeking behaviour and forms of ersatz capitalism, i.e. taking advantage of governmental projects and marginal technological improvements rather than entrepreneurship based on new products, services, private consumption and innovation. Second, governmental authorities themselves could often be regarded as firms.

East European path dependence

Following the path-dependent tradition, this paper has viewed 'post-communist' or 'transition' capitalism as a generic term, that is, not as one socio-economic formation in transit towards one pure competitive market-based capitalism, but as capitalism in the becoming after the collapse of state socialism.

Broadly following the theory of institutional complementary and hierarchy, I have argued that each of the two post-communist capitalisms has generated a prevailing set of partially complementary and mutually supportive institutions. Yet, both of the two still incomplete variants of post-communist capitalism possess several institutional characteristics that appear to be incongruous with their overall institutional designs.

I have also established that none of the two East European capitalism under close scrutiny resembles any of the five major models of capitalism, which are said to exist in the 'First World' of industrially advanced countries, or in what currently has been more technically described as 'high-income OECD'.

Given the importance of a parsimonious scheme for the success of the Hall and Soskice model, new varieties should not be added without hesitation. In order to qualify the distinct variety of capitalism, three conditions have to be met: (1) the existence of an alternative over-all economic coordination mechanism closely related to (2) a relatively stable set of institutions based on marked institutional complementarities, that leads to (3) a set of specific comparative advantages (in relationship to CME and LME) and a superior economic performance over comparable, but less pure, socioeconomic systems. We address each of these conditions in turn to demonstrate that we can identify a third basic variety of capitalism that is emerging in ECE, although it is perhaps still too early to speak of the long-term stability of this variety and its ability to provide an equal alternative to CME-s and LMEs.

The common denominator of the third variety is the fundamental dependence of the ECE economies on investment decisions by transnational corporations and in cases of legitimation of the political system — international institutions. Though we accept that the CME and the LME models are embedded in the global economy, we will demonstrate that the DME-s are — in both quantitative as well as qualitative terms — more deeply dependent on foreign capital than any of the core CMEs and LMEs. We baptized the third variety "dependent market economy" because it is similar to the label "liberal dependent post-communist capitalism" coined by Lawrence King, it was inspired by earlier works on dependent development in Latin America.

We expect to observe an intrinsic interconnection between the education system, the system of corporate governance, the primary means for investment, and the innovation system. Given that FDI into this variety of capitalism pays off with rather low labour costs as well as with considerable tax breaks, TNCs will not be in favour of a generous public education system of or their own substantial investment into their labour force. In addition, they do not see the need to invest heavily into innovation-relevant skills, given that they prefer to transfer innovations into the region from abroad. Furthermore, the strongly individualized system of company-level industrial relations in the DME as well as a system of corporate governance strongly geared toward the corporate hierarchies of individual TNCs would hardly allow for the introduction of a CME-style system of vocational national (or at least sectoral) coordination within interfirm networks and associations.

There is no professional consensus regarding the extent to which foreign governments and international organizations may promote institutional development in weak states. Policies are transferred across nations and cultures in a num-

ber of ways and the effect of external involvement may depend on the modalities of transfer.

Foreign actors

The relationship between foreign actors and the transition countries may be defined in different ways. Two factors implicitly influencing the systematizations above may be of particular relevance: the extent of hierarchy and the degree of communication (see table 2).

Table 2

Factors implicitly influencing the systematizations

Degree of communication	Extent of hierarchy	
	High	Low
High	Paternalism	Collaboration
Low	Dominance	Disconnection

It is often assumed that a hierarchic relationship will not facilitate the implementation of foreign models: institutions can be a most imported, never exported, let alone imposed. Prominent observers hold that the EU's reluctance to recommend specific institutional solutions to accession countries may be dysfunctional in relation to the weak states of the Balkans and suggest that the EU should take on a much more proactive role and assume the responsibility for some of the institutional choices that prospective member states will be forced to make.

However, in periods of major ideological reorientations, it appears that the wholesale adoption of foreign blueprints –even unadjusted to local conditions – may be of considerable symbolic importance. At these junctures, governments may have to legitimize themselves through the establishment of direct policy links to developments in the outside world and, thus, demonstrate that they are moving away from the discredited legacies of the past.

In both paternalistic and collaborative relationships, there is close contact between exogenous actors and transition governments. However, the extent of hierarchy is markedly different. In a paternalistic relationship, the transition government is in a subordinate position vis-a-vis the external agent, whereas in a collaborative relation the parties are in principle equal. While dominant and disconnected relationships are both distinguished by low levels of interaction, there is a significant difference regarding the degree of hierarchy. In a dominant relation, the external agent imposes unilaterally and in a disconnected relationship the local party may one-sidedly reject or accept foreign models.

Dominant relationships, which mainly exist in colonies, occupier territories and protectorates, have frequently been seen in Eastern Europe. However, Foreign dominance has rarely provided a favourable basis for the establishment of sustainable domestic institutions. By and large, domestic elites – and, from time to time, local populations more generally – have dissociated themselves from and challenged institutional legacies left by external hegemons.

While policy transfers between Western states – for instance, through transnational issue networks – may be of a non-hierarchic nature, it is less obvi-

ous that this is the case with transfers across the East-West divide. Scholars argue that the hierarchic or coercive character of many forms of policy transfer remains unaccounted and even masked through the use of apolitical language like ‘diffusion’ and ‘sharing of knowledge’ and technical terms like ‘best practice’ and ‘power sharing’.

The logic of imitation implies that the ways in which new institutional patterns are introduced differ significantly from the processes of modernization in Western countries. While in the West economic and political institutions evolved incrementally over an extended period of time, in the East institutions modelled on Western patterns have been introduced by decree — almost from one day to another. This discrepancy in modes of institution building has led Claus Offe [Offe, 1991] to ask whether the ‘non-Western’ logic of implementation alters the content of what is being introduced, thus resulting in a notable variance between the “original” and the “imitation”. He himself suggests that the ‘instrumental shortcuts’ undertaken by post-communist governments may expose these new democracies and market systems to “dangers of opportunism, defection, erosion and opportunist subversion of the newly introduced rules.

In parts of Eastern Europe, not least in the Balkans, there is a long history of uncritical and arguable uninformed adoption of foreign governmental patterns. The independent states that during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were established on the territory of the collapsing Ottoman Empire attempted with varying degrees of intensity to substitute the previous Sultanistic system of government with models from Western Europe. For instance, in almost all Balkan states, the solutions of highly contentious constitutional issues were inspired by the Belgian constitution of 1831.

Although the complex relationships involved in cross national policy transfer hardly justify sweeping generalizations, it seems the some of the most noticeable and successful instances of such transfer may be found in paternalistic relationships.

Arguably, the combination of hierarchy and communication — a mixture with promises of making external influence both legitimate and efficient — may be a key to understanding the sustainability of Habsburg legal harmonization and the apparent success of EU’s East-ward expansion.

Vacuum in spaces of dependencies

The Eastern countries have aspired to fill the empty space created by the breakdown of the communist system by re-establishing ‘normal societies’ following Western norms and, thus, becoming accepted by the West as integral parts of the Western cultural sphere. Arguing that they had been isolated from Europe by the politics of the Cold War and rejecting the “Soviet tainted ‘Eastern’ association”, Czechoslovaks, Hungarians and Poles insisted they were part of Central Europe. According to the Czech sociologist, Michal Illner (cited in: [Ost, 2011]), the image was of a “lost child returning home”.

However, the weight of the evidence accumulated over the post-1989 period does not support the thesis that the transition countries are following the same path of development or sharing a common end station. The dominant pattern of post-socialism has been one of variation, not uniformity, and the ways in which

new institutional patterns have been introduced in the East differ significantly from the processes of modernization in the West. Thus, students of the transition process argue that:

- (a) Eastern countries have chosen distinct divergent models of government and devoted varying levels of attention to reform issues,
- (b) Eastern countries have often feigned rather than implemented Western standards, and
- (c) the choices of economic policies differ across Eastern Europe — in some countries, it is not an easily recognizable form of capitalism that is developing but flawed, deviant model.

The diversity of transitional paths and the discrepancy between Western institutional prototypes and Eastern imitations clearly show that transition processes and outcomes are not predetermined by external patterns. There are always two sides to international policy transfers: external and domestic. Transferring know-how and practices from one political and cultural setting to another is a demanding task. According to Wigell (2008), how the transplantation happens — through whom and to whom, under what circumstances and with what goals — determines not only the nature of what recipients actually get and how they respond but also the ultimate success or failure of policy transfer.

A post-communist country [Kornai, 1994, 1996] is not a tabula rasa that can be inscribed with foreign ideas. Such ideas will be ignored, interpreted or rejected as a consequence of local conditions. Given the big and deeply embedded differences between the ‘exporting’ and ‘importing’ countries, between foreign and domestic actors, it seems only natural that external models will meet with local resistance and that policies will retain distinctly national traits.

We have identified an economic model in East Central Europe that is stable and fairly successful — particularly when compared with most other transition economies. For the time being, this model leads to comparative advantages of parts of ECE economies in such sectors as automobiles and consumer electronics. The latter not only ignores the fundamental argument of the VOC approach (institutional complementarities), but also leads to the identification of superficial similarities that do not cover the basic functions of ECE, capitalism. Instead, we have constructed a third variety, based on the original categories supplied by the VOC approach. We have baptized this variety the “dependent market economy” since its overriding feature is the fundamental dependence on investment decisions by TNCs. Thus, the hierarchy between TNC headquarters and local subsidiaries replaces markets (LME) and associations (CME) as a typical coordination mechanism within these economies. Subsequently, we have identified a number of complementarities between these corporate governance features and the other major institutions of DMEs.

Arguably, this timing has heavily contributed to the extraordinarily dependent character of the ECE economies (when compared to other regions of the semi periphery), given the weakness of domestic bourgeoisies after the demise of communism. Therefore the ECE region is perfectly suited as an empirical illustration of the development of DME ideal type, as are Germany and the U.S., respectively, in cases of CME and LME. However, the specific heritage of the recent transition from communism makes it difficult to test ECE’s economic performance against

less pure cases of DME in other world regions; according to VOC logic, DME performance should be superior.

A second comparative perspective instigated by our theoretical development concerns the ongoing graduation of former semi peripheral economies, such as Ireland, into the core of the world economy. These countries have experienced sustained economic growth in the context of a prominent role for foreign TNCs. Will this graduation be possible for ECE as well? Given the extraordinarily high degree of external dependency in DMEs, our findings indicate a somewhat sceptical perspective.

Western owners in Eastern production systems

Western owners of Eastern production sites may well have a certain interest in the short- and medium-term viability of their investments in DMEs, but they have less incentive than domestic bourgeoisies to invest in the long-term sustainability of these economies. Instead, Western owners might relocate their production sites further to the East, driven by the competitive pressures of financial capitalism. At the same time, the current comparative advantages of ECE may gradually be eroded, given the decreasing value of the skill heritage acquired during communism and the absence of substantial investment into R and D and education that have been so crucial for the Irish case. Corresponding, the movement of DMEs towards CME or LME status does not look likely and the stability of DMEs might even be slowly undermined in the long run.

A third comparative perspective, however, stemming from the institutional features of many economies of the former Soviet Union states – in particular their high degree of rent-seeking activities – could lead to the conclusion that there may still be limitations to the East-ward relocation drive. These economies are marked by the prominent role of informal patronage networks and the overriding role of control over the access to raw goods – their most important economic assets. It is difficult to imagine that they could offer the same institutional complementarities that support the competitive position of the ECE economies, in spite of their considerable economic growth. In the logic of our argument one may therefore assume the existence of at least a fourth basic variety of capitalism – as fourth basic mode of social coordination and dominating the global periphery of Central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Larry Diamond, who applies a structural approach, operates with six different categories in his most recent analysis of post-communist regimes (from 2002), but like Schaedler and O'Donnell he also differentiates among four main groups of regime types. These groups are; democratic regimes, hybrid regimes that fulfil many democratic standards, hybrid regimes that fulfil few democratic standards, and closed authoritarian regimes (Diamond, 2002). Diamond asserts that all hybrid regimes are pseudo democratic, in the sense that their formal democratic institutions function efficiently to conceal the authoritarian nature of the regime (Diamond, 2002).

In his regime typology, Diamond differentiates between two democratic regime types (liberal democracy (common in the West), and electoral democracy), three forms of hybrid regimes (ambiguous regimes, competitive authoritarianism, and hegemonic authoritarianism) as well as one regime type containing closed, au-

thoritarian regimes (Diamond, 2002). In addition to the scores from Freedom House, Diamond also takes into account the perceived intentions and the power of the elites by incorporating the percentage shares as seats in parliament, presidential votes for the incumbent party at the previous election, as well as the time period the incumbent rulers have been in government, when operationalizing the various regime types into different categories (Diamond, 2002). His analysis is therefore more an attempt to classify the post-communist regimes based on the situation in 2002, than explaining why the various transitions that were initiated with the collapse of communism had developed like they did. However, the classification scheme that Diamond uses, seems like a good starting point, when aiming to understand and explain the political development in the post-communist states in Eastern Europe and Central Asia after the downfall of communism.

Actual typologies

Table 3

Post-communist Regimes (former Soviet Union), N= 26

Liberal democracy	Electoral democracy	Ambiguous regimes	Competitive Authoritarianism	Hegemonic Authoritarianism	Politically closed regimes
Czech Republic Hungary Poland Slovakia Slovenia Estonia Latvia Lithuania Bulgaria Croatia Romania	Moldova Albania	Armenia Georgia Macedonia Ukraine	Bosnia-Herzegovina Russia Belarus	Azerbaijan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Uzbekistan	Turkmenistan

After Diamond’s analysis in 2002 (see table 3), three more states have gained their independence within the post-communist region. Montenegro and Serbia became independent in 2006, and Kosovo gained independence in 2008. Unfortunately there is a great lack of data for Serbia-Montenegro (the state that previously incorporated all of these new independent regimes), and also for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thus, it is not feasible to incorporate these four countries in my analysis.

From some other perspectives, however, the wave of democratization through electoral revolutions since 1996 in the post-communist region is surprising (f.i., regarding correlations between such factors as leverages of power influence and high/low linkage see table 4). While electoral revolutions have not been confined to the post-communist world, as already noted, their frequency and rate of success in this part of the world is in fact unique by global standards. Thus, between 1996 and 2006, such revolutions have occurred in eight countries in the region, or 40% of all post-communist countries in which such revolutions might have occurred. What we have witnessed in the post-communist world,

therefore, is an unexpectedly successful diffusion of electoral revolutions – with success indicated not just by the ability of thee pivotal elections to produce a liberal political turn, but also by the impact of such election on subsequent democratic performance. Indeed, the only factor that has boosted Freedom House rankings in a democratic direction in this region are elections where illiberal leaders were replaced by their liberal counterparts – whether the occasion was a founding election or subsequent elections that took place in the context of the recent wave of electoral revolutions [Bunce, 2003].

Table 4

Correlations between leverages of power influence and high/low linkage

The Level	High Linkage	Low Linkage
High Leverage	Consistent and intense democratizing pressure	Intermittent and limited (“electoralist”) pressure
Low Leverage	Consistent but diffuse and indirect democratizing pressure	Weak external pressure; permissive international environment

Second, this region had already experienced a round of democratization from 1988 to 1992. This early wave testified to both the democratic potential of some states in this region as a result of both precommunist and communist legacies and the remarkable capacity of communism as a strikingly similar and nested domestic and regional system to promote the intra-regional diffusion of political change – whether during its heyday or at its end . By the mid-1990s, however, the “easy” democratic transitions in this region had already taken place, and neighbouring states – an easy majority of all the region’s regimes – faced moderate to severe obstacles to democratization [Bunce, 2003].

As noted above, there were many reasons to assume that the collapse of communism, communist states and the Soviet bloc, coupled with the remarkable divergence in the political and economic trajectories of the post-communist regimes following these changes, would have had the effect of weakening the regional impulse for cross-national diffusion of political change.

By our understanding, this profile describes virtually every country in the region where successful electoral revolutions have taken place (with Slovakia and Ukraine, however, stronger on the economic side, and Bulgaria and Romania, together with Slovakia, more democratic than the rest). In addition to the eight countries where there have been successful electoral revolutions, we would add to this list Albania and Armenia (which are far more homogeneous than the rest), Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Moldova, Kazakhstan (though Nazarbayev is relatively popular and less accommodating than in the past of opposition political activity).

The regime types were conceptualized as autocracies, hybrid regimes, flawed democracies, and liberal democracies. Differentiating between four main types of regimes appears to be relatively common within theories of democratization, as several scholars such as Diamond, Schaedler (2006), O’Donnell (1993), Wigell (2008) have all identified four main types of political regimes.

The development of those post-communist regimes that had either become democratic or had reverted to authoritarianism by 1994 was relatively well explained by the statistical analysis.

In 1994, a high level of modernization (economic development), a low level of corruption, and a favourable historical legacy (either a bureaucratic-authoritarian or a national-accommodative administrative system during communism) were significantly correlated with liberal democracies.

All of the flawed democracies except Bulgaria became liberal democracies during this time-span. Perhaps more important, this also seems to confirm the thesis that there has been a path-dependent political development in the post-communist region, as most of the independent variables that correlated strongly with liberal democracies in 2008 (and with both democratic regime types in 1994) also correlated strongly with each other. In addition, the opposite values on the majority of these independent variables strongly correlated with autocratic regimes in both of the two correlation analyses. In 2008, an Eastern geographical location, an unfavourable historical legacy (patrimonial or colonial peripheral administrative system during communism), the incumbent regime winning the first post-communist elections, slow economic reform, a high level of corruption, and weak legislatures, were significant conditions explaining the autocratic regimes.

The political development of the regimes that were hybrid in 1994 was poorly explained by the statistical analysis. By 2008, the only condition that helps explain why three of these hybrid regimes (Croatia, Romania, and Ukraine) had become democratic (flawed democracies), was the significant correlation that had emerged between a low level of social inequality and flawed democracies. With regard to the two former hybrid regimes that had reverted to authoritarianism by 2008 (Belarus and Russia), the only statistical indication of why this had happened is that they appear to have experienced higher levels of economic development than the 6 regimes that still remained hybrid in 2008, which contradicts the hypothesized relationship between modernisation and democratization.

Trends

Early in the post-communist transformation, local researchers focused almost exclusively on forces internal to the region. Yet this structural bias has since been augmented by a steadily growing interest in the external influences on the various political and economic transformations of the region. This literature describes a range of Western actions to promote change, though much of it still leaves unexplained how, if at all, the post-communist states take up these Western policies.

At the same time we presently lack a literature that can both explain external influences on institutions and connect these influences to broader debates in international relations and comparative politics. For solving that problem diffusion concept that nominally includes both external and internal variables. In diffusion processes, the prior adoption of a trait or practice in a population alters the probability of adoption for remaining non-adopters. A necessary complement to diffusion studies is a "coalitional approach" to external influence. In this approach, outside actors strive to influence the choices of existing domestic actors with whom they can be seen to form a kind of informal coalition. In order to persuade or induce reformers to undertake the reforms outsiders favor, outsiders must often seek to bolster marginal traditions. The coalitional approach thus emphasizes that outsiders may lengthen reformers' time horizons such that they are willing to trade off short term benefits against longer term benefits that may flow from better policies. Alternatively, by providing a larger audience for reformers

policies, connections to outsiders may underscore the normative value of reforms. That will influence the choices of return for fragmented neo-liberal policies and the reconstruction of their capacities- maybe without post-1989-type liberal parties. In addition to the coalitional approach just introduced, three other “modes” of help that Western outsiders could be offered, as well. These modes we call inspiration, subsidy, and substitution (Jacoby, 2005). Inspiration is the most traditional form of external help for institutional change, in which from outside to inside flow ideas about either the end state of particular institutional or policy reforms or ideas on how to execute such reforms. Subsidy covers a range of Western efforts to provide support to Substitution occurs when external actors promote specific reforms for which there is little constituency already in place. In the 1990ies democracy building programs and those promoting economic reform were usually integrated and had a cross-fertilizing effect. In the 2000ies, and especially after 2008 those two wings of reform are separated and their impacts are rapidly decreasing. In the 2010ies reform projects promoted by outsiders do not resonate with most domestic interest groups or clusters of state actors. More and more groups in the governing East European elites become hostile to reforms, suggested by the Western patronage of the 1989 transformation.

But how does this process of “economic” and “democratic” restructuring relate to the strategic issues facing the region? This final question can be answered best by looking at the East European government’s failures in utilization of the austerity techniques developed by the euro zone to deal with the economic crisis.

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