

"Reading *Democracy in a Russian Mirror* is like listening in on a salon with a dozen or so distinguished thinkers from Russia and the West as they explore the implications of Russia's post-communist evolution for democratic theory. Although a common thread runs through the conversation – whether democracy presupposes a competent state – the contributors sometimes branch off to address related questions: How democratic in fact are Western democracies? Are Western concepts of democracy universal? Has Putin in fact strengthened Russian statehood? The volume is testimony to the difficulty, and necessity, of finding a common language to discuss the meaning of democracy."

– Thomas F. Remington, Emory University

"In a series of linked essays, *Democracy in a Russian Mirror* reflects on Russia's lessons for democracy and powerfully demonstrates the value of democratic theory in explaining contemporary Russian politics. This engaging and distinctive work will surely garner a wide audience among scholars of comparative politics and of democratic transitions, as well as among political theorists studying democratic institutions."

– Melissa Schwartzberg, New York University

Adam Przeworski is the Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Politics at New York University.

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
www.cambridge.org



PRZEWORSKI

Democracy in a Russian Mirror

CAMBRIDGE

Democracy in a Russian Mirror

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN THE THEORY OF DEMOCRACY

EDITED BY

Adam Przeworski

Democracy in a Russian Mirror

What can we learn about democracy from the experience of post-Soviet Russia? What can we learn about the prospects for democracy in Russia from the experience of "really existing democracies"? Must some "prerequisites," cultural or material, be fulfilled for democracy to become possible? This book examines the current state of and prospects for democracy in Russia, posing several challenges to our understanding of democracy. Thirteen contributors expand the debate over these questions, offering a variety of insights, interpretations, and conclusions vital to understanding the conditions of emergence and survival of successful democracies.

Adam Przeworski is the Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Politics at New York University. He previously taught at the University of Chicago, where he was the Martin A. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor. Przeworski is the recipient of the 1985 Socialist Review Book Award, the 1998 Gregory M. Luebbert Article Award, the 2001 Woodrow Wilson Prize, the 2010 Lawrence Longley Award, and the 2010 Johan Skytte Prize. He has been a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 1991.

Cambridge Studies in the Theory of Democracy

General Editor

Adam Przeworski, New York University

Other Books in the Series

Robert Barros, *Constitutionalism and Dictatorship: Pinochet, the Junta, and the 1980 Constitution*

Jon Elster, ed., *Deliberative Democracy*

Roberto Gargarella, *Constitutionalism in the Americas, 1776-1860*

José María Maravall and Adam Przeworski, eds., *Democracy and the Rule of Law*

José María Maravall and Ignacia Sánchez-Cuenca, *Controlling Governments: Voters, Institutions, and Accountability*

Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government*

Adam Przeworski, Susan Stokes, and Bernard Manin, eds., *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*

Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*

Melissa Schwartzberg, *Democracy and Legal Change*

Melissa Schwartzberg, *Counting the Many: The Origins and Limits of Supermajority Rule*

Democracy in a Russian Mirror

Edited by
ADAM PRZEWORSKI
New York University

 CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107053397

© Adam Przeworski 2015

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2015

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Democracy in a Russian mirror / edited by Adam Przeworski, New York University.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-05339-7 (hardback)

1. Democracy – Russia (Federation) 2. Russia (Federation) – Politics and government – 1991– 3. Democracy – Russia. 4. Russia – Politics and government. I. Przeworski, Adam.

DK510.76.D46 2015

320.947–dc23 2014044908

ISBN 978-1-107-05339-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Contributors</i>	<i>page xiii</i>
Introduction	i
PART I RUSSIA	
1 Peculiarities of Russian Politics <i>Andranik Migranyan</i>	7
1.1 <i>The Law of the Pendulum</i>	7
1.2 <i>On Elections</i>	9
1.3 <i>On Sovereign Democracy</i>	13
1.4 <i>A Response to My Critics</i>	25
2 Imitating Democracy, Feigning Capacity <i>Stephen Holmes</i>	30
2.1 <i>Introduction</i>	30
2.2 <i>A Procrustian Dichotomy</i>	31
2.3 <i>Two Incarnations, One System</i>	33
2.4 <i>The Great Disconnect</i>	40
2.5 <i>Why Steal Elections?</i>	45
2.6 <i>Shock-Absorber Parties</i>	50
2.7 <i>Democracy and Its Preconditions</i>	54
2.8 <i>Detached and Disjointed</i>	56
3 Russian Perspectives on Democracy, Political Emancipation, and Integrity <i>Mikhail Ilyin</i>	58
3.1 <i>Introduction</i>	58
3.2 <i>Primeval Democracy</i>	60
3.3 <i>Authority versus People</i>	63

3.4	<i>Sovereignty of the People</i>	68
3.5	<i>Democracy of the Soviets</i>	70
3.6	<i>Perestroika: More Democracy, More Socialism</i>	73
3.7	<i>Crippled Democracy</i>	74
3.8	<i>Sovereign Democracy</i>	75
3.9	<i>Some Tentative Conclusions</i>	77
4	<i>Color Revolutions and Russia</i>	78
	<i>Valery Solovei</i>	
4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	78
4.2	<i>Were There Any Revolutions?</i>	79
4.3	<i>Causes of the Revolutions</i>	81
4.4	<i>Revolutionary Results</i>	84
4.5	<i>Following Nicholas I</i>	86
4.6	<i>Why Not Russia or When Russia?</i>	88
4.7	<i>Conclusions</i>	92
PART II DEMOCRACY IN A RUSSIAN MIRROR		
5	<i>Judging Democracy as Form of Government for Given Territories: Utopia or Apologetics?</i>	97
	<i>John Dunn</i>	
5.1	<i>Democratic Authority as Repudiation of Self-Authorization</i>	97
5.2	<i>Agenda</i>	99
5.3	<i>Method</i>	100
5.4	<i>Elections</i>	101
5.5	<i>Russian Particularities and Universal Dilemmas</i>	108
6	<i>Democracy: Ancient and Modern, Good and Bad</i>	110
	<i>Pasquale Pasquino</i>	
6.1	<i>Introduction</i>	110
6.2	<i>Athens</i>	112
6.3	<i>The Thomist Conceptual Revolution</i>	113
6.4	<i>What Is Good and What Is Bad about Modern Democracy (Elections)</i>	117
6.5	<i>Lessons from Russia</i>	126
7	<i>The Role of Elections in Democracy</i>	130
	<i>Boris Makarenko</i>	
7.1	<i>Why Are Elections Important?</i>	130
7.1.1	<i>Not Limited to Competition...</i>	130
7.1.2	<i>Why Elections?</i>	133
7.1.3	<i>How Much Competition?</i>	135
7.2	<i>Functions of Competitive Elections</i>	136
7.2.1	<i>Instituting and Consolidating Democracy</i>	136
7.2.2	<i>Legitimizing Winners and Losers</i>	137

7.2.3	<i>Shaping Competition and Political Regime</i>	138
7.2.4	<i>Shaping the Style of Politics</i>	140
7.3	<i>Platforms or Personalities? What Is Being Voted For?</i>	141
7.4	<i>Free and Fair: How to Smell a Rat</i>	143
7.5	<i>Conclusions</i>	145
8	<i>Elections and the Challenge of More Democracy</i>	147
	<i>José María Maravall</i>	
8.1	<i>A Defense of Electoral Democracy</i>	147
8.2	<i>Fears about Democratic Elections: The Russian Experience</i>	149
8.3	<i>Shortcomings of Electoral Democracies</i>	151
8.3.1	<i>Asymmetries of Information</i>	152
8.3.2	<i>The Predictability of Incumbents</i>	155
8.3.3	<i>Conflict over Divided Power</i>	157
8.3.4	<i>Bending the Rules of Competition</i>	159
8.3.5	<i>The Usurpation of the Voice of the People</i>	162
8.4	<i>Are Democracies a Threat?</i>	164
8.4.1	<i>Are Elected Governments Less Able to Promote Economic Growth?</i>	165
8.4.2	<i>Are Elected Governments Less Able to Promote Socioeconomic Equality?</i>	167
8.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	169
9	<i>Democracy between Elections</i>	173
	<i>Ian Shapiro</i>	
9.1	<i>Introduction</i>	173
9.2	<i>"Loyal" Opposition</i>	174
9.3	<i>Interest Groups</i>	177
9.4	<i>Civil Society</i>	180
10	<i>General Settings, Regional and National Factors, and the Concept of Non-Western Democracy</i>	184
	<i>Alexei D. Voskressenski</i>	
10.1	<i>Introduction</i>	184
10.2	<i>Applied Political Analysis in the East and the West: General Parameters and Specific Factors</i>	186
10.3	<i>The Spatial and Analytical System of Coordinates</i>	192
10.4	<i>Comparative Analysis of the Special Factors of Non-Western Political Systems and Processes: General Principles, Regional Factors, and Models of Democracy</i>	194
10.5	<i>The Concept of Non-Western Democracy</i>	199
10.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	208

	Contents	
11 "Non-Western Democracy" in the West	212	
Adam Przeworski	212	
11.1 Introduction	215	
11.2 The "West"	215	
11.2.1 Introduction	215	
11.2.2 Harmony of Interests	217	
11.2.3 Fear of Divisions	218	
11.2.4 Opposition as Obstruction	220	
11.2.5 Conclusion	220	
11.3 On the Political Use of "Traditions"		
PART III PATHS OF POLITICAL CHANGE	229	
12 Instituting Political Change	229	
John Ferejohn	229	
12.1 Introduction	233	
12.2 What's Good and Bad about Democracy	236	
12.3 Building Democracy in Real Time	238	
12.4 Two Model Democracies	244	
12.5 Discussion: Posttransition Politics	247	
13 Political Institutions and Political Order(s)		
Adam Przeworski	247	
13.1 Introduction	248	
13.2 Political Institutions and Political Conflicts	248	
13.2.1 Preliminaries	249	
13.2.2 Structuring Conflicts	251	
13.2.3 Incentives to Participate and to Obey	258	
13.2.4 Not All Is the Same	262	
13.3 Different Orders	264	
13.4 Regime Dynamics	266	
13.5 Conclusions		
14 How Do Transitions to Democracy Get Stuck, and Where?	268	
Boris Makarenko and Andrei Melville	268	
14.1 The Problem		
14.2 Preconditions versus Policies in the Study of Democracy and Democratization	270	
14.3 Why and How Democratizations Fail	273	
14.4 Preconditions and Policies in the Outcome of Transition: Favorable or Unfavorable?	279	
14.5 How Policy Choices Worked	283	
14.5.1 Central Asia	287	
14.5.2 Transcaucasia	288	
14.5.3 Eastern Europe	293	
14.6 Conclusions		

Afterword: Open Issues and Disagreements	298
Introduction	298
Open Issues	299
The State and Democracy	299
Regime Stability and Reforms from Above	301
The Future of Democracy	304
References	307
Name Index	333
Subject Index	335

Contributors

John Dunn is a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and Emeritus Professor of Political Theory at Cambridge. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, an Academician of the Academy of the Social Sciences, and a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His most recent book is *Setting the People Free/Democracy: A History* (2005–6).

John Ferejohn is the Samuel Tilden Professor of Law at New York University and Professor of Political Science Emeritus at Stanford University. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Science and of the National Academy of Sciences and was a recipient of an honorary doctorate in the social sciences from Yale University in 2007. He is the author of *Pork Barrel Politics* (1974) and a coauthor of *The Personal Vote* (1987) and *A Republic of Statutes* (2010).

Stephen Holmes is Walter E. Meyer Professor of Law at New York University School of Law. Former editor of the *East European Constitutional Review*, Holmes has written numerous essays on the disappointments of liberalization and democratization after Communism.

Mikhail Ilyin is professor of political science and vice-dean of the Faculty of Politics at the National Research University–Higher School of Economics in Moscow and the head of the Centre for Advanced Research Methods in Humanities of the Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He also teaches comparative politics at MGIMO University in Moscow and at Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad. With Andrei Melville, he coauthored *Political Atlas of the Modern World: An Experiment in Multidimensional Statistical Analysis of Political Systems of Modern States* (2010). Ilyin is a vice president of the International Political Science Association.

Boris Makarenko is the chairman of the board of the Center for Political Technologies, an independent Moscow-based think tank, and director of internal policy at the Institute of Contemporary Development. Author of two books and more than fifty articles, he recently coauthored *Russia in the 21 Century: The Image of Desired Tomorrow* (2010).

José María Maravall is professor of sociology at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and an Honorary Fellow of St. Antony's College, Oxford. He is a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was the Spanish minister of education and science between 1982 and 1988. His recent books are (as coeditor with I. Sanchez Cuenca) *Controlling Governments: Voters, Institutions, and Accountability* (2008) and *La Confrontación Política* (2008).

Andrei Melville is professor of political science and dean of the Faculty of Politics at the National Research University–Higher School of Economics in Moscow. He is author and coauthor of ten books, most recently *Political Atlas of the Modern World: An Experiment in Multidimensional Statistical Analysis of Political Systems of Modern States* (with Mikhail Ilyin, 2010).

Andranik Migranyan is the director of the Institute on Democracy and Cooperation, a Russian nongovernmental organization based in New York City, and a member of the Russian Public Chamber. He was previously a professor at the Institute of International Relations, MGIMO University, Moscow, and a member of the Russian Presidential Council.

Pasquale Pasquino is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique EHESS, Paris, and Distinguished Professor in Politics and Law at New York University. He is the author or the editor of five books and a hundred articles about European constitutional and political theory and history. His recent publications include *La controverse sur "le gardien de la Constitution" et la justice constitutionnelle. Kelsen contre Schmitt* (coedited with Olivier Beaud, 2007) and *How Constitutional Courts Make Decisions* (coedited with B. Randazzo, 2009).

Adam Przeworski is the Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Politics at New York University. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he is the recipient of the 1996 Gregory Luebbert Prize, the 2001 Woodrow Wilson Prize, the 2010 Lawrence Longley Award, and the 2010 Johan Skytte Prize. He recently published *Democracy and the Limits of Self-Government* (2010).

Ian Shapiro is Sterling Professor of Political Science and Henry R. Luce Director of the MacMillan Center for International Studies at Yale University. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Philosophical Society. His recent books include *Death by a Thousand*

Cuts: The Fight over Inherited Wealth (with Michael Gratz) and *Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy against Global Terror*.

Valery Solovei is a professor at Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University). He is author and coauthor of five books, including, published in the United States, *Russia's Communists at the Crossroads* (with Joan Urban). His latest book, *Failed Revolution* (2009), was awarded the National Prize for "The Best Books and Publishing."

Alexei D. Voskressenski is dean of the School of Political Affairs and professor of comparative politics and Asian studies, MGIMO University (Moscow). He is the author, coauthor, and editor of fifty books (the latest is *The East and Politics: Political Systems, Political Cultures, Political Process* [2011]), of which twelve are monographs, including *Russia and China: A Theory of Interstate Relations* (2003) and *Political Systems and Models of Democracy in the East* (2007). He also edits a Russian journal, *Comparative Politics*.

How Do Transitions to Democracy Get Stuck, and Where?

Boris Makarenko and Andrei Melville

14.1 THE PROBLEM

As we all may still remember, the early 1990s was a unique period of almost universal "democratic optimism." Indeed, this was an apogee of the "third wave" of democratization. In the political discourse, there was near dominance of a linear, kind of "vectorial" perception of global political trends: from the breakdown of various forms of autocracy to liberal democracy and market economy. It was as if, with the collapse of Communism, only one universal political goal and one anticipated political end result of global dynamic remained on the agenda – liberal democracy and free market economy.

There seemed to be only one dominant political trajectory of democratization that should be pursued by all nations of the world: Karl Marx "upside down," or Communist Manifesto per contra: all nations sooner or later will become liberal democracies – some earlier, others later.

The world was perceived as flexible and "plastic" – you can "craft" (not "breed"!) democracy (Di Palma 1991) as you know "the" proper institutional design and can master appropriate political engineering. Democracy was perceived as a universal value and model with a specific invariant (though maybe not the concrete form) that would fit all nations despite all their differences in history, culture, levels of development, and so on (Sen 1999).

However, twenty years since then, the world looks very different. As if after a global political "big bang," we can see and experience an incredible multiplicity of political trajectories – kinds of "receding political galaxies" rushing in all possible directions and defying traditional regime typologies. Hopes or illusions about one single, uniform vector of global political development – from authoritarianism to democracy – are practically forgotten.

There is much talk nowadays about the "democratic rollback" (Diamond 2008a), "authoritarian diffusion" (Ambrosio 2010), "democratic stagnation,"

"postdemocracy" (Crouch 2003), threats of degeneration into ochlocracy, and "audience democracy" (Manin 1997). Democratic accomplishments of previous decades are considered as "lexical victories" of democracy (Dunn 2010). Democracy itself is no longer perceived by many as a universal value and model ready for replication. The argument in favor of "national models" of democracy often serves to justify nondemocratic practices.

Are there indeed grounds for "democratic pessimism"? There is hardly a simple yes or no answer. Some countries explicitly strived to build democracies and succeeded, others hardly had democratization in mind, and if and then its leaders talked about democracy, it was only done to please their Western partners. In between these two extremes, we find various models of transformation with controversial or "hybrid" results. A very preliminary "audit" of the results of the "third wave" reveals a great variety of political regimes – remaining unaffected by this "wave" and as well resulting from it. On one pole of the global spectrum of political regimes, we may place established "old" democracies and consolidated "new" liberal democracies which joined the democratic club. The list of the new "full members" varies from one typology to another (Freedom House, Polity IV, Tatu Vanhanen's ID, The Economist' ID, BTI, etc.) but in any case is not overwhelming – just a few of all those who started "the race" are there.

Overall results of the regime transformations of the previous two and a half decades should not be underestimated. After it we can see two continents, Europe and the Americas, inhabited by democracies, with a few enclaves remaining (Belarus, Haiti, arguably Russia and Venezuela) and numerous "flawed democracies." New democracies emerged in Asia and even in Africa; in fact only the Arab world remains impregnable to democratization (Diamond 2010). But right in front of our eyes, people rebelled against dictatorship and scored a number of successes so far, though it brought about a new threat of Islamic fundamentalism. The main battlefields are non-Arab and non-Soviet parts of Asia and Africa, and the CIS.

Autocratic nondemocratizers form the core of the club of "really existing nondemocracies," which comprises a large variety of typologically different regimes (Snyder 2006; Brooker 2009; Levitsky and Way 2010; Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Gandhi 2008; Charron and Lapuente 2011) – from the rubbles of totalitarian/posttotalitarian systems to still effectively ruling monarchies, personalistic dictatorships, theocracies and ethnocracies, military regimes, and failed states that may look like autocracies but in fact do not master effective rule at all.

In between the two poles, we may want to place an incredible "nebula" of intermediary regime types that in fact did experience some kind of transition and transformation – however, not toward the expected democratic goal but in some other directions. They did not come anywhere close to becoming even flawed democracies. The questions of where those transformations are leading and do or do they not constitute an inevitable phase on the long and winding

road to would-be democratization remain unanswered by comparative political science and yet have to be conceptualized (a great task for comparative politics!). Among those we may mention an impressive diversity of "democracies with adjectives" as well as "autocracies with adjectives" – "illiberal democracies" (Zakaria 1997), "hybrid regimes" (Diamond 2002), "electoral authoritarianism" (Schedler 2006), "competitive authoritarianism" (Levitsky and Way 2002), and so on.

Very close to "old" autocratic nondemocratizers we may place "new" autocracies of different types, which in essence are particular subproducts of multidimensional political transformations of the last decades. Among those are new "elected monarchies" and "hereditary presidencies," "clannish" regimes, and so on. Some of them may superficially look like not being in transition at all, but in fact this is not the case. They either got stuck in the transition process or finally drifted back to the authoritarian pole, thus creating new types of autocracies, or got transformed into these new types of autocracies almost directly out of more conventional authoritarian regime types (this political trajectory primarily refers to some of the post-Soviet transformations).

How to explain such a great variety of regime-change outcomes of the last decades? Why did some countries attempt to democratize and others did not? Why did so many transitions fail to develop into democratization? Which factors did play a decisive role in particular regime outcomes – absence or inadequate "objective" ("structural") preconditions for democracy and democratization or "subjective" policies and "actor-related" factors, like "ill will," personal ambitions or perceptions, vested interests, mistakes of actors involved in the transformation processes, and so on?

In other words, which factors are responsible for transitions that got stuck, deviated from the expected "route," or just failed – absent adequate preconditions for democracy or with inadequate particular policies of the key political actors?

14.2 PRECONDITIONS VERSUS POLICIES IN THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION

On the basis of existing literature, one may single out two "big" paradigms in democracy and democratization studies – one focuses on preconditions for democracy, another on particular policies and decisions (e.g., Mahoney and Snyder 1995). According to the first approach, democracy emerges "organically" out of a set of particular preconditions (prerequisites): "Democracy emerges successfully only as a capstone to other social and economic achievements" (Kaplan 1997, 60). This approach is particularly relevant to the analysis of the first and second "waves" of democratization, that is, the emergence of democratic polities since the end of the eighteenth century until the period after the second World War, when democracy appeared not so much as a

goal but rather as some sort of organic and collateral result of "objective" socioeconomic transformations (Moore 1966; Rustow 1970).

Even an elementary inventory of all approaches to the analysis of structural preconditions of democracy may become almost endless. However, for the sake of further discussion, we would like to mention at least some major ones.

Undoubtedly, the dominant theme within this context is the level of socioeconomic development with the primary focus on GDP per capita (with all the variations). From Lipset (1959) to Przeworski et al. (2000), there are myriad studies related to the issue, and the literature is almost insurmountable. However, despite some continuing debates over particular details (e.g., Epstein et al. 2006), there seems to be at least a basic consensus – there is a positive relationship between economic growth and democracy and democratization which though is not deterministic, i.e. transition to democracy may actually start at different levels of economic development but the higher GDP per capita – the higher chances for democracy to succeed and not to get reversed into autocracy.¹

Since Rustow (1970), another idea widely accepted in the literature is the thesis that national identity and effective state (stateness) are basic preconditions for democracy (Tilly 2007; Fukuyama 2007; Mansfield and Snyder 2007; Moller and Skaaning 2011). Political culture of the "civic" type is also acknowledged as another important condition for democracy to endure (arguments from Almond and Verba 1965 to Inglehart and Welzel 2005, Fish 2009, and others).

Among other preconditions of democracy, the literature stresses the absence of irreconcilable social, ethnic, religious, and so on, ruptures and cleavages (Chiot 2009), a "non-réntier" economy, that is, "resource curse" arguments (Ross 2001; Treisman 2010); particular religious traditions, that is, arguments in favor of Protestantism and against Islam; ambiguities about Orthodoxy, Confucianism, and Buddhism; and almost complete silence about Judaism (Fish 2002; Diamond 2010). Some other authors would stress international influences, including proximity to established democracies, role of colonial heritage, quality of institutions, and even the role of climate and an average level of the national IQ (Vanhanen 2009).

One should note that almost all of these structural factors (in any combination) are considered, especially in recent literature, as important but not predetermining causes of democracy and democratization. "Initial conditions do significantly affect the survival chances of democratic regimes. Low per capita income, high levels of inequality, high rates of poverty jeopardize the prospects of democratization. Yet these relationships are not deterministic" (Kapstein and Converse 2008, 61–62).

Other structural factors that may complicate democratization (and in any case seriously influence the political mentality of actors) are type of economy and society in which traditional structures and traditional values (as defined,

for example, by Inglehart-Welzel mapping of the world values) remain predominant. Type of economy matters in other aspects, such as degree of dependence on raw material exports ("resource curse"), degree of departure from traditional society; and degree of government (ruling elite) control over the economy and development of private enterprise. The "oil factor" was interpreted by Huntington (1991) as "no representation without taxation" – lack of pressure or stimuli for introducing pluralism in regimes endowed with high export revenues may want further explication. Concentration of economic resources and wealth (particularly export revenues and international aid) in the hands of the ruling class, underdevelopment of private enterprise, and high corruption are all factors impeding democratization.

Another group of structural obstacles to democratization has to do with types of cleavages in the society. Antagonistic types of such cleavages include "conventional" forms, such as ethnic, confessional, or separatist (which is hardly more than geographical incarnation of the same). However, we ought to consider more nuanced forms of cleavages, such as standoffs between secular and religious segments: "milder" European forms of these are wonderfully described in the four basic case studies in Lijphart's (1977) "Democracy in Plural Societies"; nowadays the potential "suspects" are Moslem, primarily Arab societies (Diamond 2010), or selected post-Communist states, primarily Russia, where the post-Communist regime faced a threat of antagonistic Communist restoration.

An alternative – policy-oriented – approach refers predominantly to transitions of the "third wave" and is based on the assumption that democracy can be "crafted," or "engineered," through appropriate strategies and tactical choices: "There are no preconditions for democracy, other than a willingness on the part of a nation's elite to attempt to govern by democratic means" (Diamond 2003). The major themes of this approach are the following:

In the first place are the role of actor's interactions ("games"), such as configuration of major "players," types of "exit" from authoritarianism, attitudes toward the opposition (including violence), competition, replacement of elites, rotation of power, conduct and quality of elections, and so on (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996; Colomer 2000). Another theme frequently discussed in such contexts is the impact of particular institutional designs for new democracies (presidential – parliamentary, proportional – majoritarian, etc.). Finally, and this becomes one of the key points in recent research on "derailed" and/or failed transitions, is existence or absence of effective institutional constraints on the executive, restricting the chances for abusive rule (irrespective of a particular institutional design) (Fish 2006; Fish and Wittenberg 2009).

Of course, one should not exaggerate the opposition and the seeming incompatibility of these two approaches. "Objective" structures are largely reproduced through "subjective" actions and policies, while chosen procedures have their specific historical, socioeconomic, political, and so on, grounds.

As Przeworski commented on one of the crucial components of the policy-centered approach: "More than elections are needed for elections to be held" (Przeworski 1999, 24). In the words of Linz (2007, 136),

there is little doubt that structural factors – political, economic, social, and cultural – are of particular relevance in understanding the process of consolidation and the tasks of democrats in that process. Since many of those structural conditions cannot be changed in the short run, we have to focus more on those amenable to political engineering. . . . The renewed attention paid to the social economic conditions, favorable or unfavorable to democracy, on which our knowledge is quite solid, is significant. However, we cannot exclude the possibility of transcending those conditioning factors through political leadership and political engineering

We should also acknowledge the importance of understanding particular "really existing democracies" (as well as "not yet democracies") through specific "genetic" lenses – not as an attained state but as a process, which is especially relevant to the analysis of "new" democracies and their trajectories. Different polities may find themselves at different stages of their evolutionary development and may face different challenges and tasks. Some may enjoy centuries of gradual and "organic" democratic development, while others just a couple of decades or even years. The latter may simultaneously face incredible challenges of state building and national integration. We believe, however, that history should hardly be regarded as an excuse for evading difficult tasks of democracy building.

Anyway, these two approaches – the first stressing the role of preconditions for democracy and the second underlining the role of policy choices and actions of political actors – present us with alternative explanations of the emergence of democracy. The first one appears to pertain to cases of democratic polities since the end of the eighteenth century until the 1960s, where democratization was a fruit of "organic growth" of endogenous factors and actors. The second approach is dominant in the recent mainstream literature on democratizations of the last decades and seems to better fit the cases normally described as the "third wave." Now let us look at the issue of preconditions and policies as possible predictors and explanations of the stuck or failed democratizations.

14.3 WHY AND HOW DEMOCRATIZATIONS FAIL

Can structural approach alone predict or explain the fate of democratic transitions? Indeed, on the basis of existing knowledge about "objective" preconditions of democracy, one may argue that some (if not many) nations may lack those today to effectively become (or to be made) democracies.² For example, recent research data seem to confirm the argument that low levels of socioeconomic development correlate positively with unsuccessful transitions to democracy – as well as reliance on oil exports ("resource curse"), predominance of Islam (and Muslim population), and weak traditions of independent stateness

and national identity (Fish and Wittenberg 2009). However, as these authors (and others) demonstrate, structural preconditions alone (or their absence, on the other side) cannot adequately predict the outcome of transition – whether it will lead to consolidated or defective democracy, to some kind of hybrid regime, or to new autocracy. Hypothetically, there may be a “prohibiting threshold” of unfavorable structural preconditions that would render any policy options futile, but it still awaits its empirical study and further conceptualization. The resulting argument is that it is crucially important to concentrate on policy factors to explain successes and failures of democratization.

Furthermore, a recent large-*N* study of 142 countries over the period 1972–2000 by Teorell and Hadenius (2007) to a large extent confirms these general conclusions: higher socioeconomic levels of development do not adequately predict democratization but may prevent authoritarian detours – this finding is similar to Przeworski et al. (2000); abundance of natural resources, oil in particular, has an antidemocratic effect as well as Islam as a dominant religion. Overall, these conclusions lend “strong support to the anti-structural, actor-oriented, ‘no preconditions’-approach to democratization” (Teorell and Hadenius 2007, 69).

The role of other “objective” preconditions and their impact (or lack thereof) upon trajectories of political transformations of the last decades requires further detailed analysis, though at least one conclusion is quite appropriate: stuck and failed democratizations need to be understood largely within the context of “subjective” political decisions and actions. This does not mean to ignore the impact of “structures” at all; however, it does imply a definitive shift in the analytical focus.

Indeed, a growing body of literature focuses on the role of procedural (actor-oriented) factors in explaining successful and failed outcomes of attempts to democratize. Some would blame the actors themselves – “chief executives may bury democratization by engaging in despotic action” (Fish and Wittenberg 2009, 258). Others would stress the perils of excessively strong executive power (Linz 1990; Fish 2004) and the absence of effective institutional constraints on executive power (Kapstein and Converse 2008). Political impacts of particular institutional designs on transition outcomes continue to be debated with somewhat mixed results, however leaning toward the conclusion in favor of positive relationship between parliamentary systems and sustainability of new democracies. Also, analysis of a variety of country-specific (particularly post-Communist) case studies seems to demonstrate that a *de facto* preservation (“mimicry”) of the old elites with their vested interests and patterns of power reproduction may be one of important causes of inhibition of democratization and sliding into nondemocratic outcomes.

Other potential obstacles to democratization are unsolved problems of state and nation building, often characteristic of post-Communist countries. In most “old” democracies, the path of political development followed the same sequence: first, modern European states emerged in wars and violence

(Tilly 1990), and only then democratization occurred, that is, the formation of sound and efficient state institutions preceded the emergence of democratic procedures. This historic trend is often used nowadays as an argument against “hasty” democratization and advocates the following sequencing: strong statehood (or “vertical of power” in Russian political slang) comes before a democratic regime, implying that democratization without sound and efficient institutions would precipitate disorder and chaos (Fukuyama 2004; Polterovich and Popov 2006; Fukuyama 2007; Mansfield and Snyder 2007).

The argument, albeit strong, is not convincing. True, “democracy is a form of governance of a modern state. Thus, without a state no modern democracy is possible” (Linz and Stepan 1996, 17). The real issue, however, is that “a state” is not an abstraction, but in each case a particular form of statehood and political regimes. Different states may have different sets of priorities and perform its functions in different ways. It implies that we need further elaboration on the notion of state as a prerequisite of democracy.³

Is the reference to European historic experience sufficient to extrapolate this sequencing to the entire global context of today? Multidimensional and multidirectional logic of political development necessitates a more nuanced analysis of such sequencing. We can find numerous theoretical and empirical evidence that state-building and democratization can develop in parallel and mutually reinforcing manner. Rose and Shin (2001) and also Elster et al. (1998) analyzing the Central and Eastern Europe experience confirm the feasibility of “[re]building the ship of state at sea”, that is, constructing democratic institutions from scratch in the transition countries of the “third wave.” Bratton and Chang (2006), on the basis of empirical analysis of regime changes in several African states in transition, conclude that state building and democratization are intertwined. Carbone and Memoli (2012) come to a similar conclusion on a broader sample.

What remains unclear is the height of a “minimal threshold” of state capacity that allows democratization to unveil, because it is by definition impossible in “failed states.” The literature raises this question but does not provide an answer or evidence based on empirical studies (Capelli 2008; Fortin 2012).

Neither do we have sufficient clarification on the desirable strategies of key actors in the conditions of deficit of efficient and high quality institutions, a typical situation in the countries in transition. Grzymala-Busse and Luong (2015), basing on comparative analysis of post-Communist transformations, distinguish between two alternative strategies: the first concentrates on the interests of “early winners,” who benefitted from privatization of public assets; they strive to preserve the status quo and minimize competition; the second strategy tends to “protect the losers,” that is, safeguard genuine political and economic competition, under which the “early losers” get a chance of “revenge” under democratic procedures. They effectively elaborate on the arguments of Hellman (1998) about “winners who take all.” In a sense, Hellman challenges the so-called J-curve logic, which asserts that the main obstacle in the way of reforms

in societies in transition is the imminent deterioration of socioeconomic situation in early stages of transition: the reforms undermine economic and political stability, begetting resistance of "early losers" (first and foremost, the "new poor" from various social strata). The problem, therefore, is how to avoid the inevitable descent into the "valley of transition" (the seminal expression from Przeworski 1991 or the "valley of tears" Schmitter 2005) and how to reach the peak of reforms which would improve the situation for all groups of society in transition. Hellman's arguments state that the "early winners" have no motivation to continue reforms, once they ensure access to economic rent under "bad" state institutions. Notably, this is a strong argument against advocates of "desirable authoritarianism" in early stages of transition, which presumably facilitates economic and other reforms. It might have been true of 1980s when the transitions constituted a transfer from agrarian to industrial societies (South Korea, Taiwan, etc.), but it has never been true of contemporary transitions from industrial to postindustrial, innovative, high-tech societies.

We would go further and extrapolate this logic from economic to political rent. Such an extrapolation is of particular importance when we look at post-Communist societies we discuss later: at the starting point of transition these countries had no market economy; due to that, in many of them, power and property relations were intertwined, that is, political rent was superimposed over economic. In the "stuck" transitions (or in authoritarian relapses) in the post-Communist world, winning elites ensured the "king of the hill" positions and ensured extraction of political and economic rent. These elites effectively lack any motive or interest to build quality institutions of governance and democratic practices. The institutes they built are "bad" (corrupt, nontransparent, inefficient), yet for their purposes such institutions are "good," because they perform exactly the functions for which they were created and solidify the "institutional trap" (Gelman 2010). As a result, the state is "seized," sometimes by force (Volkov 2002), and a "big" though "weak" from an institutional point of view state prevails (Petrov 2011). The main motive that drives resistance to further reforms and fixing the stability of status quo is economic and political rent rather than safeguards of property and economic and political competition; effectively, such a regime becomes an obstacle to democratization.

Figure 14.1 illustrates this problem. It demonstrates that the real impediment to reforms is caused not by "early losers" from whom presumably the regime that is growing "reluctantly" or almost "benignly" authoritarian wants to insulate itself, but rather by "early winners" who do their utmost to halt further reforms or devalue its substance and reduce it to an imitation. We further modify Hellman's "winners' curve": his model implies primarily economic rent; we add the factor of political rent, that is, the attempted preservation of political status quo and reduction of political competition, because political rent is equivalent to monopoly of power and constitutes a precondition for extraction of economic rent.

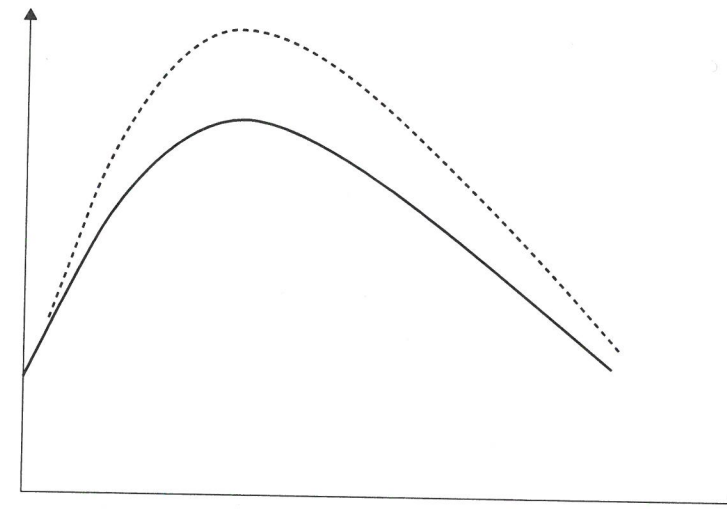


FIGURE 14.1.

The graph displays the "king of the hill" position of those elite groups in post-Communist countries that successfully ensured for themselves political and economic rent, and therefore lack any motive to improve the quality of institutions or political competition (the vertical axis demonstrates levels of extraction of political and economic rent, the horizontal axis, dynamics of quality of institutions). The battle cry of such elites is stability and status quo. They fear to lose their privileged position. Political rent in such a situation becomes a precondition and a sine qua non for the extraction of economic rent. The dotted curve demonstrates exaggerated fears of privileged elites: their fear that increased competition in politics and the economy will precipitate not only loss of the "seized privileges" and status, but even criminal prosecution (which really occurred in selected post-Communist and other countries). The graph shows that the dotted "curve of fears" at any given moment raises higher than the actual level of extraction, higher even than the peak of "king of the hill" situation. Even in a hypothetical case of "downhill" movement, that is, a shift toward greater political and economic competition, the level of fears of winning elites for their personal fate and property remains higher anyway. Incidentally, this conclusion is nothing more than a variation of a classic problem raised at earlier stages of transitological studies as applied to Latin American countries and known as the "torturer's dilemma" (Huntington 1991).

It brings us to an inevitable question: what if anything can stimulate the winning elites, the "kings of the hill" to start reforms that (in case of growing competition) will endanger their status and deprive them at least of a part of "seized" assets? In fact, circumstances may differ. The first scenario is a split in the camp of winners, or emergence of a reformist wing (another immortal theme in transitological literature). Second is the rise of new and

relatively strong elite groups distinct from the early winners and desirous to build new efficient and better quality institutions and economic order. Third is a growing pressure "from below" (primarily in the context of so-called peaceful rallies) that the "kings of the hill" cannot afford to ignore. To borrow from O'Donnell's description of the evolution of bureaucratic authoritarianism (O'Donnell 1973), the "cost of repression" may prove to be higher than the "cost of toleration" and stimulate change. However, the opposite reaction is also possible: the regime may choose to increase repression and transfer from "moderate" to "tough" authoritarianism. The fourth factor is external pressure, not so much an outright pressure from foreign states or international organizations, from which the "stuck" post-Communist regimes have erected powerful "sovereign" ramparts, but rather the broader context of globalization of economic processes and "transnationalization" of politics and information flow). This factor also includes conditions and limitations imposed by the logic of participation in international economic and political institutions and information exchanges (such as competitiveness in global markets). These issues go beyond the scope of the current article, but demanding more research both for academic and practical purposes.

Based on the preceding discussion, we contribute to this debate with an attempt to analyze the role and impact of preconditions and policies, that is, major structural and procedural factors upon the outcome of unsuccessful, derailed transitions to democracy of the last two decades. Our primary sample consists of twenty-nine post-Communist countries, including Mongolia, all of which during this period pursued different transformation trajectories leading to different regime outcomes.

By all categorizations and expert opinions, Czech Republic and Slovenia led the list, with Hungary, Slovakia, and the three Baltic states running up (not without reservations). Very close to this privileged group, different ratings place those other "really existing" new democracies which for various reasons did not yet fully succeed in consolidation and/or still exhibit certain "birth marks," particular flaws and defects which prevent them from being in the "first league" – here we find Romania, Bulgaria, Mongolia, most of constituent republics of former Yugoslavia (except Slovenia), and among the ex-Soviet states, Ukraine and Moldova. This "second league" seems to encompass most of those who may not be "perfect" but still are more or less successful democratizers of the "third wave." They seem to be on the "right track."

On the other extreme, we find "new nondemocracies," with varying degrees and flavors of authoritarian rule, some resembling "traditional authoritarianism," others waiting to be defined in yet uninvented conceptual frameworks. This list includes Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

In between, we find unconventional "hybrids," which are probably best defined as "stuck in transition," with incomplete democratization and

persisting or newly emerged authoritarian trends: Russia, Armenia, Georgia, and Kyrgyz Republic.

We are mostly interested in cases that did not result in the emergence of consolidated new democracies but drifted into the so-called gray zone (Carothers 2002) or regressed into new types of autocracies.

14.4 PRECONDITIONS AND POLICIES IN THE OUTCOME OF TRANSITION: FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE?

On the basis of available data and existing literature, we may assume that structural preconditions of democracy did not play a decisive role during the breakdown of Communism and the start of post-communist transformations; however, in certain important respects they either facilitated or impeded transitions to democracy. In fact, if we look at factors that in the existing literature are considered to be preconditions for democracy, none of the post-Communist states was characterized by extremely unfavorable combination precluding success of democratization (though obviously some were better disposed to it than others): even poorer states were not in dire condition; ethnic or other primordial strives led to a state-ruining civil only in one case (Tajikistan), neither external actors nor the "domestic" military imposed overtly authoritarian patterns. Islam, where present, was neither predominant nor fundamentalist or "political" (again, Tajikistan is an exception). Moreover, economic structures were destined to undergo changes from centrally planned segments of the Soviet/Communist "bureaucratic market" to independent market-based economies, and political structures had to develop into independent statehood, hence they were anything but stagnant or immobile (which is sometimes seen as a structural obstacle to democratization).

Contrariwise, policy-related factors (strategic and tactical decisions, institutional choices, politics of the executive, relations between the old and new elites, role of the civil society, conduct of elections, etc.) were critical in determining the political outcomes of particular transformations. In certain cases, decisions of major political actors contributed crucially to the success of transitions to democracy, in others it made them stuck or led to new forms of authoritarian rule. The role of the chosen policies is critical in determining the general trajectory of political transformation, while the democratic consolidation requires at least a minimum of structural prerequisites of democracy.

Thus, to explain the stark differences in the outcomes of post-Communist transformation more than two decades after its launch, we ought to look at agency-driven factors, that is, why, how, and to what extent political actors and societies contributed to its democratization or precluded it. The correlation between favorable and unfavorable structural preconditions will certainly be found but will fail to provide a universal explanation: who could have predicted at the beginning of the transformation that agrarian Moldova and

semi-nomadic Mongolia will advance further on the path of democratization than Kazakhstan or Belarus?

The easiest part of the analysis is the Western segment of the post-Soviet space (including the Balkans) where both preconditions and chosen policies were favorable to democratization. Structurally all of Central European countries were predisposed to democratization. As they went through "shock therapy" or milder versions of structural adjustments of the economy and reoriented their economies to the EU space, their level and type of economy became compatible with the rest of Europe. Its peripheral role in the European market and lower levels of development (only the best of them are on par with the poorer economies of the EU) begets numerous problems in the political domain, particularly in the years of global economic crisis, yet the scope of these difficulties is insufficient to jeopardize the democratic nature of its politics. All of them enjoy proximity to EU countries (by land and/or sea). Neither of these economies suffers from the "oil curse" or from overconcentration of economic assets in one sector (presumably, the presence of such sector may become a power base for the incumbent rulers unwilling to share control over it with challengers). Cultural heritage was European and Christian (in all three major confessions are Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy) in most countries. Ethnic differences were either limited or were put under control by the elites everywhere, except several republics of former Yugoslavia, yet, with the exception of Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are still struggling to build their statehood, even those ex-Yugoslav states that went through serious civil wars and losses of territorial integrity (primarily Serbia and Croatia) are safely on the path of democratization at the end of the second decade of its post-Communist transformation.

Yet, if we mark the differences mentioned in this brief description, we ought to notice that some of the countries of this domain had relatively small "structural" obstacles: Czech Republic and Slovakia whose divorce was "velvet," Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, and the three Baltic states (with a footnote about the still noninclusive character of democratic politics in Latvia and Estonia) constituted an almost flawless success story of democratization. As for other western and south western states (except the northwestern "corner" of Slovenia), its success in democratization was by no means predetermined: lower levels of economic development and weaker industrial sectors (everywhere), a higher degree of ethnic tensions (Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, Bosnia), even civil wars. Yet, with certain lags and higher "transaction costs," all these countries attained considerable progress in democratization, which has either made them democracies or at least made the trend irreversible. Making this observation, we do not attempt to evaluate the quality of democracy in Central European and Balkan states: it would suffice to quote Konstanty Gebert of Warsaw's *Gazeta Wyborcza*, who noted that Central Europeans "learned the vocabulary of democracy but did not yet master its grammar."⁴

Preconditions and policies are considered in our analysis as two independent variables. The third independent variable includes particular regime outcomes of post-Communist transitions of the "third wave" (with the focus on the earlier mentioned twenty-nine post-Communist cases). We operationalize this third variable on the basis of the Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy 2010:⁵

1. "Full democracies": Czech Republic
2. "Flawed democracies": Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, Mongolia
3. "Hybrid regimes": Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Russia, Armenia and Kyrgyz Republic
4. "Authoritarian regimes": Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan⁶

In this setting, the dependent variable is the impact of preconditions and policies on the outcomes of post-Communist regime change.

In line with the existing literature and available data, we assume that preconditions and policies may be favorable or unfavorable for democratization and democracy. We focus on GDP per capita (PPP) and HDI (of the UNDP) as two parameters that define potentially favorable and unfavorable impacts of preconditions on transformation trajectories. Policy-related factors may also provide favorable or unfavorable effects in terms of regime outcomes. In particular, there is ample anecdotal evidence that the arbitrary rule of poorly constrained – constitutionally and institutionally – post-Communist (especially post-Soviet) executives is a "kiss of death" for aspiring new democracies. This will be considered as one parameter of the favorable/unfavorable impact of the policy variable. Replacement/preservation of old elites in power (albeit in new decorations) is another parameter of this variable. Many other factors influenced the pace, scenario and/or outcomes of transformation: territorial integrity or separatist or civil wars, degree of antagonistic cleavages within the societies, intensity of external influence, patterns of power transfer, and so on.

Some preliminary judgments are in place. First, high levels of socioeconomic development are important factors but not predictive causes in determining the direction of transition. A majority of more or less successful post-Communist transitors ("full democracies" and "flawed democracies" in the Economist ID classification) departed from Communism with a fairly high (PPP) – on the average more than 5,000 USD⁷ – and pretty high levels of HDI.⁸ However, important data contradicts possible generalizations – among democracies (although "flawed"), we find Mongolia and Moldova with fairly lower levels of GDP at the start (Mongolia, 1,556, and Moldova, 2,776) and HDI (in both cases, average). On the contrary, Russia as a "hybrid regime" today started transition with quite favorable "structural" conditions: GDP 8,941 and a high

level of HDI. "Authoritarian" Kazakhstan and Belarus started their transitions with somewhat lower but comparable structural preconditions: Kazakhstan, 4,684 GDP, and Belarus, 4,746, both with high levels of HDI. However, these favorable preconditions did not help. This means that we need to look for other alternative explanations beyond the "objective" factors.

At the same time, we can plausibly argue in favor of the structural factors as important conditions for democratic consolidation – "full democracies" (Czech Republic and Slovenia) departed from impressively higher levels of GDP (11,208 and 11,827, respectively) and high HDI levels. Objective preconditions at the start could only contribute to the mastery and success of appropriate political engineering.

We also may conclude that, judging from our sample and variables, the unfavorable preconditions in certain situations can be overcome by particular policy decisions, chosen strategies, and tactics.

This leads us to the conclusion of crucial importance of the policy factors – political choices and decisions. In fact, in very significant cases, favorable preconditions did not lead at all to successful transitions to democracy. On the contrary, agency was decisive. And vice versa – absence of favorable "objective" conditions was compensated by particular "subjective" decisions.

Several general observations pertaining to policy-related factors also deserve to be noted at this point, as follows.

The pivotal policy factor in many post-Communist countries was a near-consensus of elites about the overall goal of "joining Europe": elites of these countries were not crafting democracy per se, they were crafting the European character of their polities, transplanting to their national soil values, institutional arrangements, norms, and practices of "old Europe." Larry Diamond's "nothing except will" notion does not apply to these cases: as we noted earlier, with all the differences, preconditions were not extremely antagonistic to democratization. Even where "structure" was unfavorable, "agency" undertook consistent efforts to overcome the obstacles to close the distance separating these polities from Western (or EU) standards. Policies toward ethnic minorities and/or deliberate suppression of any attempt to revive territorial claims are a most obvious example of "deliberate Westernization." A reverse side of this policy factor is the role of Western advisors or consultants, who were welcome to provide advice not only on economic reforms (in this department, Western consultancy played an important part in most post-Communist countries) but also on political designs. In some cases, these "foreign advisors" were in fact members of the diaspora who returned from Sweden, Canada, and other Western states to help their native countries clean the rubbish of Communism.

The last point hints to another factor that seriously divided the post-Communist space on the borderlines of the Soviet Union of 1939. East of that border the reign of Communism lasted one generation (twenty years) longer than in the Western part, and by the time of the collapse of Communism, there were practically no survivors who remembered from their personal experiences

"life before Communism" and could spread oral histories or provide advice and psychological encouragement "to do the right things" to the reformers. To sum up the first two points, "going West" in the Western part of the post-Communist world constituted not a "general slogan" but a business plan backed up by know-how. On the Eastern side, only Moldova (as shown later) made deliberate (not quite efficient) efforts to adopt European institutions and practices.

Finally, the third general observation concerns the choice of institutional design of statehood. The Western (in terms of 1939 borders) part chose parliamentary or premier-presidential models of state institutions (Shugart and Carey 1992), which, according to the common wisdom of comparative politics, is better suited for democratizing states because it disperses power, prevents authoritarian personalistic trends, encourages participation, and so on (Linz 1990; Shugart and Carey 1992; Fish 2006). Significantly, it was the 1990s set of transformations that forced many of these authors to revisit and redefine their approaches, with the added wisdom of closer attention to details of institutional arrangements and practices of interaction (as described in Elgie 2005). The Eastern part chose presidential or presidential/parliamentary models. In the same vein, a proportional (or mixed) electoral system encourages power sharing and compromise in politics and helps avoid "winner takes all" situations (Lijphart 1999), for example, those implied in the Hellman's J-curve, both in terms of political and economic rent. The impact is shown in Table 14.1. However, while the choice of institutional design is certainly an "agency" factor, it does not mean that political elites (or leaders) are completely free in such choice. In CIS states a preference for a "strong president" model determined not only by traditional inclination of the public to personalized leadership but also by such factors as persistence of antagonistic divides in the society (Russia) or the task of building from scratch national states, which urged for a charismatic (if available) "father of the nation."

14.5 HOW POLICY CHOICES WORKED

14.5.1 Central Asia

We will start the overview of transformations from the subregion where preconditions for democracy were by any account less favorable than in other parts of the post-Communist world, namely, Central Asia (Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan). These "prerequisites of non-democracy" included the lowest level of socioeconomic development: GDP at the start of transition in Kyrgyz Republic, 1,678; in Azerbaijan, 3,472; in Tajikistan, 2,080; in Uzbekistan, 1,457; and in Turkmenistan, 2,656; only Kazakhstan was higher with 4,684, and all the countries had very average levels of HDI, with extremely high disparities between well-to-do urban and extremely underdeveloped infrastructure in rural areas.

TABLE 14.1. *Correlation between Political Regimes, Electoral Systems, and Democratization*

Regime type	Electoral system			Total
	Proportional	Mixed	Majoritarian	
Parliamentary	4 democracies: Czech R, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia	3 democracies: Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia	0 democracies	7
	0 hybrid regimes	1 hybrid regime: Albania	0 hybrid regimes	1
	0 authoritarian	0 authoritarian	0 authoritarian	0
Premier/ presidential	7 democracies: Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia	1 democracy: Macedonia	1 democracy: Mongolia	9
	0 hybrid regimes	0 hybrid regimes	0 hybrid regimes	0
	0 authoritarian	0 authoritarian	0 authoritarian	0
Presidential/ parliamentary	1 democracy: Moldova	0 democracies	1 democracy: Ukraine	2
Presidential	0 democracies	0 democracies	0 democracies	0
	0 hybrid regimes	1 hybrid regime Kyrgyzstan	0 hybrid regimes	1
	0 authoritarian	2 authoritarian Azerbaijan, Tajikistan	3 authoritarian Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan	5
Total	12	11	5	28

Notes: Political regime categorization, based on Shugart and Carey (1992), describes initial institutional choices of early 1990s; categorization into democracies or nondemocracies is based on the Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy 2010. Significantly, of the two democracies in regimes with a strong president, Moldova became a parliamentary republic in 2000, and Ukraine several times changed electoral system (fully proportional now) and had a premier-presidential regime in 2006–10.

Ethnic factor deserves a "stereoscopic" evaluation. All these countries had sizable Caucasian (mostly Eastern Slavs) minorities (almost half of the population in Kazakhstan), and the urban (and better educated) Slav population particularly in capitals was particularly large. On one hand, it could have worked as a "liberalizing" factor. On the other hand, it was perceived by the indigenous elite as a threat to pro-Russian irredentism and a possible obstacle for nation building. Minorities of other nations were present almost everywhere (particularly in Uzbekistan) but did not play any major role (except sporadic cases of violence at periods of unrest, such as a "pogrom" of ethnic minorities in recent riots in Kyrgyzstan).

The Islamic factor was also controversial. On one hand, seventy years of secular rule implied that Islam was not deeply rooted, and ruling elites were predominantly secular. On the other hand, fundamentalist terrorist insurgents have always been a "hypothetical threat" for Fergana Valley (goes through Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan).

More important and directly affecting the political transformations was the factor of the traditional (premodern) structure of the society, which does not contribute to democratization. This factor embraces rural overpopulation, clientelist relations at the grassroots level, and the "clannish" structure of the society. Combined with Islamic cultural tradition, it produces the effect described by Ernest Gellner (1994) as "statehood imposed on the city by tribal unions." Tajikistan's civil war between various regional clans (superimposed over secular/Islamic divide), Kazakhstan's three tribal unions (*hordes* or *jüz*), and a standoff between "north" and "south" in Kyrgyzstan are the most salient examples of societal structures shaping national politics.

Another precondition for "nondemocracy" is the "oil curse." Describing an economically underdeveloped area, it's hard to say whether abundance of fossil fuel is a blessing or a curse. Two Central Asian states that do not have it, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, remain the poorest among post-Soviet states, with per capita GDP PPP hardly exceeding USD 2000 (143 and 139 place in 2009 IMF hierarchy⁹); such poverty seriously hampers not only economic but also political development. The "abundance" of the remaining three is relative (because of difference in the size of both population and mineral wealth): Uzbekistan is 131st, Turkmenistan 104th, but Kazakhstan makes it to the 70th position in the same hierarchy.

In such a situation, policy decisions had to deal with an overly unfavorable configuration of structural factors. The ruling elites were primarily concerned with building national statehood, which included myths building and ensuring the predominance of the indigenous population, particularly members of the ruler's "clan" (however defined) in the political domain. The choice of presidential models with minimal or zero checks and balances, and weak or nonexistent multipartism seemed to be predetermined. The official discourse combined the idea of "democracy," either as a mere declaration or with endless adjectives about a "national model," need to "breed the tradition," and so on. It ought to be noted that in Central Asia (with the exception of Tajikistan), elites saw the least degree of rotation (compared to all other parts of the post-Communist world): even now the ruling class largely consists of vintage Soviet elites and their immediate successors.

Two Central Asian states, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, never "played" with the idea of democratization in any serious way, never had a multiparty system, and in the case of Turkmenistan, never even a proper parliament. Kyrgyzstan was long considered as the most liberal of Central Asian states, and president Akaev had an image of a democratizer; Kazakhstan had a certain degree of pluralism in elections and was keen on building a positive image in

the West; Tajikistan succeeded in ending the civil war with a national accord sharing power with the opposition (and that pluralism in a very curtailed form exists in the country even now).

However, the overall trend of policy factors has to be evaluated as negative to democratization. Ruling elites seemed to be preoccupied with fears of not just losing the majority but even facing any serious challenge, which presumably could have destabilized the situation. Those fears included (in any given combination) challenge from the Islamic radicals (which presumably could have gained support in backward rural areas on condition of free competition), competition with the better educated urban Russian (Eastern Slav) population, and fear of populism in a highly stratified society, but more importantly, challenge from clans and groupings other than the ruling elite.

It is to this end that Central Asian states (with the exception of Uzbekistan) went through numerous referenda changing their constitutions and prolonging term of office for their presidents (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are still ruled by the last Communist republican bosses), reforming parliaments and changing electoral systems – often under pretexts of promoting democracy – but never failing to further strengthen the presidential power. The late Turkmen leader Niyazov received a lifetime presidency (which ended with his death in 2006). Deliberate institutional arrangements were coupled with tight control over independent media and the Internet community and excessive use of “administrative resources,” that is, manipulation of elections. As a result, not only did power in Central Asian states become consolidated but the very notion of political pluralism was reduced drastically.

The only exception to this general trend is Kyrgyzstan. Fearing the expansion of color revolutions, President Akaev excessively controlled parliamentary elections in 2005 and, as a result, faced a coup d'état known as the “tulip revolution”: the new leadership was a *de facto* coalition of northern and southern clans, which, for a couple of years, practiced a shared-power model; with time, however, new president Bakiev concentrated power and resources to such an extent that opposition (which included figures not only from the “north” but also from his own “south”) rebelled and overthrew Bakiev – interestingly, it happened shortly after the president proclaimed the idea of “consultative democracy” under which opposition consults and argues with the government but does not compete for power. The transitional administration of Kyrgyzstan crafted a new constitution containing power-sharing arrangements – a second attempt in recent Kyrgyz history. Elections in October 2010 produced a fragmented parliament and a three-party government coalition that assumed power at the end of 2010. One other exception, maybe hypothetical, is cautious change in the trend for broadening pluralism in Kazakhstan which has so far proved viable.

Summing up, we may conclude that in Central Asia, the “structural” conditions were most unfavorable for democracy. However, policies of the authorities did little to change this reality and, on the contrary, further aggravated

prospects for democratization. It is not easy for an outside observer to measure the degree of exaggeration in the “fears of pluralism” shared by all the Central Asian ruling elites. One thing that is clear is that practically no progress was made in building conflict-resolution mechanisms within the political class (Kyrgyzstan probably being an exception, but until recently not a very efficient one). At least in “less unfavorable” contexts, a greater degree of pluralism, a more liberal style of politics, appears to have been a realistic possibility, and that alone could have started to produce a less unfavorable set of preconditions.

This model seems to contain an extremely dense correlation of negative structural prerequisites with policies mostly working against democratization. In other geographic domains, we may expect to meet milder versions of inadequate preconditions and greater diversity of policy strategies.

14.5.2 Transcaucasia

The three states of Transcaucasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) have a mixed set of structural preconditions.

Of social-economic conditions, the crucial factor was neither level of economic development nor HDI (lower than the average for the sample anyway) but the devastation of the wars all the three states endured in the early 1990s. Georgia and Azerbaijan lost parts of their territory to separatists, and the trauma of the loss and influx of refugees provided additional difficulties for democratization. Of course, such splits had the by-product of a more ethnically homogeneous nation, but unlike the case of Moldova discussed later, we have no reasonable tools to measure its effects on political development. Armenia as a result of warfare received an unrecognized ally, self-proclaimed Nagorny Karabakh, yet the effect of the war was a predominance of Karabakh war veterans (both from the enclave and Armenia proper) in national politics. With all these differences, Armenia and Georgia had to go through dire economic conditions, and Azerbaijan faced the problem of agrarian overpopulation. Economically motivated out-migration of all the three countries was and remains a major problem.

The Christian background of Georgia and Armenia and its rapprochement with the West served as positive factors for democratization; Azerbaijan built a close relationship with Turkey and also sought rapprochement with the West for the sake of modernizing the country.

The influence of Islam in Shiite Azerbaijan was relatively lower than in Central Asia (at least in the sense of fundamentalist activities), same as the impact of traditional society, but these two factors were nevertheless present in the country's politics. Azerbaijan is also the only of the three states that experiences the “oil curse” in politics but is perhaps a blessing for economic development.

In these circumstances, Georgia and Armenia were predisposed to pursue more pluralistic policies, but unlike the Western part of the post-Communist

world, "Westernization" of domestic politics was only a general concept, often derailed by power struggles. Azeri politics, by contrast, had a smaller "Westernization" dimension, yet all the three countries did not escape violent changes of power: ouster of presidents Gamsakhurdia of Georgia and Mutalibov and Elchibei of Azerbaijan (plus an attempted coup in 1995), a color revolution that dethroned Georgia's Shevardnadze, an "almost coup" in 1998 in Armenia when the first president Ter-Petrosyan was forced to resign under pressure, and the gunning down of several top Armenian leaders (including a "strongman" prime minister and former presidential candidate and speaker) in parliament in 1999. In Armenia (1996 and 2008) and Georgia (2008), crowds protested against results of presidential elections, and the quality of all elections was strongly criticized by international observers (who, however, in general certified its results).

Paradoxically, the mass action and color revolution (not the coups) may indicate that the regimes in Armenia and Georgia are not consolidated authoritarian. Pluralism exists in parliaments; lawmakers deliberately amended constitutions to broaden the powers of parliaments. The defeat of the president's party in parliamentary elections in Georgia in October 2012 and constitutional amendments (become effective in 2013) that de facto turn Georgia into a premier-presidential republic will effectively amount to the first change of power through elections in the nation's history. Contrariwise, Azerbaijan consistently tightened the legislation pertaining to elections and parties and retains a strong presidency that was transferred by dying president Geidar Aliev to his son Ilham in 2003. Although the latter is approximating "milder" versions of Central Asian authoritarianism, the first two countries are rated as "hybrid regimes." In this particular case, "hybrid" can be interpreted as "good intentions" of the policy makers intertwined with an adversarial style of politics and inability of the elites to develop and respect "rules of the game" that may help to entrench political pluralism.

14.5.3 Eastern Europe

The four Eastern European post-Soviet states (Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine) from the structural point of view seemed to be better disposed toward democratization, and in fact, Ukraine and Moldova developed into "flawed" or electoral democracies.

On the socioeconomic side, these were the best developed parts of the Soviet Union (excluding Baltics) in all respects, including industrial diversification, living standards, education, urbanization, and so on. Except Moldova (least developed of the four), they were (and still are) well ahead of southeastern Europe, which has turned democratic. The reverse side of the economic development is a much higher weight of power-property relations in the behavior of political elites. In Russia, unlike the other three states, "oil (rather, "oil & gas") curse" was working in full strength; paradoxically, Ukraine and Belarus

developed a form of "diet oil curse": the transit of Russian fossils to Europe through their territory developed into a major economic sector.

Culturally, they were predominantly European and Christian (mostly Orthodox). A significant part (living in the Volga basin) of the sizable Islamic segment of the Russian population was "modernized," while the North Caucasus republics still constituted largely traditional societies where Islam experiences pressure from radical fundamentalist trends competing with "traditional" Islam and intertwined with the persistence of traditional "clannish" structures.

In terms of ethnic fragmentation, Belarus is relatively homogenous: relations between ethnic Russians and Belorussians never posed a problem. In Ukraine, tensions with the Crimean Tatar minority were limited in scope, and Russian-Ukrainian ethnic relations, far from perfect, were sorted put in the political domain, contributing to a deeper "East-West" divide described in the next paragraph. Moldova lost its territorial integrity as Transnistria (with a higher share of an Eastern Slav population) seceded after a short war. However, for Moldova, this secession meant not only a national trauma but also a higher degree of homogeneity, which made the domestic politics less adversarial.

Another structural factor that affected transitions in all the four countries, though in unique configurations, is the issue of national identity. Moldova is still struggling to define to what extent the Moldavian nation is similar or different from the Romanian, and at the same time living with Eastern Slav, Turkic, and Bulgarian minorities. The divide between Eastern and Western Ukraine in terms of the nation's proximity to Russia or the West retains the utmost significance in national politics (and, in our consideration, provides for "objective pluralism" in the Ukrainian society, which facilitated democratization). In Belarus, the "Western vector" of transformation was probably the weakest of European post-Communist states, and so was the feeling of distinct national identity (pro-Western nationalists remained a marginalized minority). Finally, Russia, the metropolis of the former empire, was the only post-Soviet country where post-Communist development was not perceived as "national renaissance," but on the contrary, was viewed by many as a national catastrophe.

In addition to that, Russia had the unique burden of a superpower, and a huge nuclear arsenal – a factor that seriously increased risks of any chaotization and indirectly increased authoritarian trends in the mentality of political elites.

Therefore, the "identity" factor played differently in these four countries, boosting the democratization intentions in Moldova and Ukraine and hampering them in Belarus (unequivocally) and Russia (with reservations).

In Belarus, we may get stuck in a chicken-and-egg dilemma: whether it was weakness of the feeling of identity that led the national elite to refrain from privatization and other structural reforms, or whether the egoism of elites drove it to "freezing" the situation and deliberately opposing economic, social, and political reforms – and with time, side effects of Russian oil prosperity and

economic growth reinforced the entrenched Byelorussian regime (which, like in Central Asia, saw quite little rotation). Constitutional reform drastically weakening the parliament, unchecked presidential power, absolutely puppet party system, repressions against opponents (in Belarus they do send losing presidential candidates to jail), manipulation of elections – all that likens the Belorussian regime to those of Central Asia: though the structural factors were significantly more favorable, agency deliberately preserved and reproduced nonpluralistic and antiliberal institutional arrangements.

Moldova is probably the opposite example: agrarian rather than industrial, much lower in living standards (GDP per capita in 1992, 2,776; in 1994, 1,261; and only 2,975 in 2008), but also the only ex-USSR republic that was deliberately modeling its development after the West, more precisely, following the example of neighboring and ethnically close Romania. Whereas in Europe, Romania was long perceived as an outsider of transformation processes, for Moldova, it was a model and target of “Westernization.” Even now PPP in Moldova is 4.5 times lower than in Belarus (it’s by far the poorest democracy in Europe). Privatization in the country was belated, it remains agrarian, and a large part of its population works in Europe and Russia. Settlement of conflict with separatist Transnistria is *de facto* frozen. Yet, the political regime encouraged pluralism at all stages of the country’s development: defeat of the incumbent president under the presidential-parliamentary republic; the constitutional reform of 2000 that changed the country into a parliamentary republic proved controversial and conducive to an overwhelming majority of the Communist Party. However, the regime remained pluralistic and reasonably liberal, and the Communists had to give power away after they lost parliamentary elections in 2009. The example of Moldova signifies that the proper and consistent choice of specific policies can democratize a country with poor and underdeveloped economies, but at the same time confirms that democracy alone does not bring solutions to economic problems. Having gone through three indecisive elections between April 2009 and November 2010, and been deadlocked over election of a president by parliament for two and a half years (until March 2012) and reaching viable power-sharing arrangements, Moldova demonstrates both successes and failures of democratization driven by policy factors.

Ukraine’s success in democratization came in the second decade of post-Communist development after what seemed to be an inefficient presidency with attempted concentration of power. However, the origins of Ukrainian democratization ought to be sought in the 1990s: societal pluralism inherent in the “East-West” divide (described earlier) was coupled with the fragmentation of economic interest groups, often referred to as “regional clans” but having nothing but the name in common with primordial clans and tribes of Central Asia. Ukraine’s original regime was presidential-parliamentary, providing for a certain autonomy of parliament; all that created a “history of success” for

Ukrainian pluralism, which recorded the first defeat of an incumbent president in CIS history. In 2000, by referendum, the Ukrainian president won the right to broaden presidential powers but never dared to implement this power (another important policy factor). It is this pluralism that led Ukraine through the “Orange revolution” and constitutional transition to a premier-presidential republic. Democratic experience acquired in 2004–5 did not bring to the country economic prosperity, nor even democratic stabilization (despite that power changed hands in three out of four presidential elections), but it helped Ukraine develop relatively free and fair elections and first lessons in power sharing and conflict resolution. Unlike Moldova, where the policies of the elites were deliberately crafting pluralism, Ukrainian elites were forced to learn and habituate themselves to coexistence and rules of competition. Which of the two models will prove more sustainable remains to be seen, particularly as Ukraine returned in 2010 to its pre-2006 presidential-parliamentary constitution.

Presumably, such “crafting” permitted the Moldovan elite to sustain the democratic nature of the regime throughout a protracted political crisis. Contrariwise, in Ukraine, Victor Yanukovich (the loser in the 2004 “Orange revolution”), who won the 2010 presidential elections, enforced cancellation of constitutional amendments envisaging sharing of power between president and premier, crafted a loyal majority in the Rada, and forced through a prison term for his main political opponent, ex-premier Julia Timoshenko. Such a straightforward concentration of power provoked a new round of political crisis in Ukraine and strained its relations with the European Union. Parliamentary elections in October 2012 (which for the fourth time in Ukraine’s history changed the electoral system from fully proportional to mixed) did not bring any significant changes in the configuration of political forces. It implies that only the future will answer the question on whether Ukraine’s democratization is reversed infinitely or the new crisis of power will force the Ukrainian elites to adhere to new pluralistic solutions.

The case of Russia is probably the most problematic of the four East European states. Endowed with greater wealth and generally favorable structural preconditions, Russia lived through a threat of disintegration, the attempted secession of Chechnya, and a protracted war and terrorist threats (not extinct even in 2010). Though rotation of elites in Russia was quite significant, and new business elites contributed to formation of the current political class, it is in Russia more than in any other post-Soviet state that members of old Soviet military and security elite joined the new political establishment, and their conservative mentality is still a major factor determining Russian politics.

Therefore, by general predisposition, retrospectively, we may assume that in terms of policy factors, the “Belorussian scenario” was more probable for Russia than the “Ukrainian” and “Moldovan,” except for one other subjective factor: the central role of the new Russian political elite in defeating Communism in the heart of its empire, and the consequent antagonistic split in the elite and

the nation. Pluralism of Russian politics in the 1990s did not constitute democracy, but it helped to overcome antagonism with the ancient regime elites and lay the foundations of a market economy. Presidential-parliamentary republic seemed to be an appropriate institutional arrangement: stronger oppositional parliament would have blocked the reforms; an even stronger presidency would have made the regime almost "Belorussian."

The reverse tide of the next decade can be explained by a combination of both preconditions and policies: rebuilding the state capacity (which was inevitable after the legitimacy crisis of 1990s), a drastic increase in oil revenues, and persisting phantom pains of lost empire and fears of competition for power and property in a country that went through a controversial privatization of enormous economic assets. These new developments de facto meant that a new, much more negative configuration of structural factors emerged in Russia in the beginning of the current century. What further aggravated the antidemocratizing trend was the resentment of "color revolutions": the reaction of the Russian ruling elite exaggerated both the involvement of the West in those events in "Russia's backyard" and fears of possible replication of the same events on Russian soil.

Obviously, democratization attempts in Russia had to be more cautious and evolutionary than in other European post-Soviet states, and the concern of Russian political elites over preserving stability and minimizing risks is also quite understandable: both the initial degree of antagonism (symbolized by the shelling of rebel parliament in October 1993) and the fear of chaotization in a nuclear superpower are sufficient to explain the unwillingness of the Russian elites to take risks. However, the degree of pluralism was reduced over the last ten years quite significantly; entry barriers to the market of political completion have grown significantly; quality of electoral procedures receives more and more criticisms. Until recently, this trend seemed almost irreversible, until the agenda of modernization put forward by President Medvedev gave way to a moderate liberal trend and public discussion of the role of politics in this complex process.

The set of preconditions in Russia was too complex and therefore too unique to serve as an example or ground for generalizations. One lesson, however, can be drawn from the Russian experience: negative preconditions may emerge and aggravate over the course of transformation, and the list of such negative developments include not only economic failures, but, on the contrary, economic growth based on the "oil curse." Russian elites were forced to play by pluralistic rules and seek accommodation when the nation was divided against itself and the transitional economy was in ruins. When the division was overcome and the economy started an assertive growth, the need for reluctant pluralism exhausted itself, and policies became a function of preconditions: the way Russian prime minister Putin put it, "transitional economy is being serviced by transitional political system" (*The Kommersant*, August 30, 2010).

14.6 CONCLUSIONS

Does this analysis provide us with any new knowledge about factors that facilitate or hamper democratization or in any other way influence the fate of transformations in today's world? The answer is probably positive but certainly not deterministic.

If we look at the level of socioeconomic development as the most obvious and most objective precondition, we will find quite few nondemocracies among countries enjoying above the world's average PPP (USD 10,725, according to IMF 2010). Most of them are "resource-cursed" authoritarian regimes of the Gulf and other oil-producing states; also above the level are hybrid regimes of Venezuela, Russia (as we argued, "oil & gas cursed"), Belarus (as we argued, suffering from the "diet oil curse"), and Turkey. This observation leads us to several conclusions:

1. However we define the results of transformations of the late twentieth to early twenty-first centuries, it has made democracy prevailing in the "affluent" parts of the world, albeit with serious reservations, and transgressing the traditional domain of Judeo-Christian civilization. In the post-Communist sample, all countries living above that standard and not "cursed by oil" turned into democracies of varying degrees of perfection (Belarus being an arguable exception).

2. "Resource curse" (in most cases, synonymous with "oil curse") is by far the most important variable explaining why affluent nations stay shy of democratization. As the Democracy Index 2010 testifies, introduction of oil exports as a dummy variable in correlation between democracy level and per capita income doubles the explanatory power of the regression (from one-third to 60 percent). Analytically, effects of the "resource curse" were discussed many times (Huntington 1991; Ross 2001; Diamond 2003; Polterovich et al. 2008; Treisman 2010); we would like to add only one nuance: in transforming societies, the "resource curse" often predetermines policy choices. It not only provides the rulers with resources to sustain security apparatus and redistribute wealth but, significantly, it enables them to avert or postpone change in any sense of the word: it entrenches the incumbent elite, allows building narrow distributive coalitions, to care less about efficiency of governance, and gives vitality to preexisting practices (archaic, traditional, authoritarian). Consequently, elites in these states are motivated to concentrate power rather than encourage its sharing and create mechanisms for compromise: their dominating power is difficult to challenge. In the post-Communist world, no major oil producer scored a success in democratization.

3. Poorer countries in the modern world have a chance not only to democratize but to survive as democracies. In the post-Communist sample, we can find only one, though arguable case when poverty affected a transformation process that potentially could have developed into democratization: Kyrgyzstan (and only in combination with other factors). Moldova and Mongolia, Macedonia,

and Montenegro progressed considerably toward democracy. However, the cases of such democratizations require a more detailed factor-by-factor analysis to explain its success or failure, for example, to compare and contrast sets of preconditions and "history of policies" in those "less-than-affluent" countries, on one hand, and "hybrid cases" with comparable income levels like Georgia and Armenia, on the other.

4. As for other "conventional" preconditions, the post-Communist world adds important nuances to the established wisdom. "Stateness," defined in terms of territorial integrity and national unity undoubtedly remains a crucial factor but should not be taken as the absolute. Even outbursts of ethnic violence, loss of parts of territory and populace, feelings of national catastrophe (temporary or permanent), do not close the door for democratization, as demonstrated by Croatia, Moldova, and Serbia, not to mention less evident cases. If the policies of the elite are strongly motivated to attain "Europeanization," if the "hot phase of conflict" is curbed and cleavages between majorities and minorities (ethnic and/or confessional) are brought under control, in some cases (Moldova, Croatia) societies become less heterogeneous, and it all helps to pave a road to democratization (having paid a heavy price for it). However, where "incomplete stateness" overlapped with other negative preconditions, and/or elites' determination to democratize was absent or weak, no democratization was possible. Extreme poverty (by Eurasian standards) reproduces acute social conflicts (like in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan); "besieged fortress mentality" like in Georgia and Armenia, or exaggerated memories of a weakened state, like in Russia, legitimize authoritarian trends and preclude formation of policies conducive to democratization.

5. If we try to add to these major preconditions other factors, such as political culture or elites' rotation, the equation will acquire too many variables to allow meaningful analytic solutions. What it implies for comparative political science is the following:

5.1. The general trend in transformations, whether or not it leads to democratization, is a relative decrease of importance of objective preconditions and an increase of discretion for policy factors. This trend is by no means absolute: overlapping negative preconditions may add up to a critical mass prohibiting democratization or making it stuck; "oil curse" may persist infinitely in selected societies. "Agents of change" can "craft" democracies only when the set of preconditions is predominantly favorable, like in most Central European countries described here; however, it broadens the field for the process of "breeding."

5.2. The overview of political transformations in post-Communist countries demonstrates the role of policy factor in transformations. Democratization advances in cases where elites, willingly or sometimes unwillingly, select institutional arrangements and develop practices that prove conducive to higher and better institutionalized pluralism, conflict resolution, and public participation. Such policy choices may be initially dictated by "external factors" such

as attempted drift toward "Europe," but with time they take roots and acquire momentum. Success stories of "victory of policy over structure" are Moldova and Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro, and possibly Romania and Bulgaria. This list seems to be long enough to constitute a trend.

5.3. In other cases, elites choose policies precluding development of pluralism and remain hostile to liberalism. Such choice is always made deliberately and willingly to preserve control over the spoils of "resource curse," monopoly of power, and/or fear of social unrest. Sometimes, however, these choices are presented as "reluctant" and are laced with proclamations of "national ways" to democracy. These cases are best characterized as "stuck in transition": stalemate may be broken either by a collapse of social model (in poorer societies) or the change in elites under the influence of generational or external factors, requiring a separate analysis.

5.4. Having mentioned once the need for nuanced case-by-case analysis, we can point out one specific dimension of analysis immensely relevant to the further progress of all post-Communist countries. Unlike the rest of the world, they started their transformations from almost zero point in the development of market economies. The post-Communist world already gave examples of democracy emerging parallel to appearance or reappearance of "a bourgeois" (to remember the famous maxim of Barrington Moore Jr. [1966], "no bourgeois, no democracy"). Central and Southeastern Europe not only built market-based democracies but proved them sustainable: although hit with effects of the 2008–10 crisis, these countries survived it without serious damage to its democratic institutions and practices, contrary to many other European democracies (as suggested by the Economist Democracy Index 2010). But this "bourgeois" will continue to develop even in nondemocracies. The recent decade saw the dramatic rise of authoritarian economic growth in China, a role model for many nondemocratic countries in the Third World that looks like a global challenger to democracy as the "only game in town." Patterns of economic growth in "oil-cursed" countries like Russia, Kazakhstan, or Azerbaijan bring little evidence of rising demand for modernization. In fact, recent studies of the new middle class in Russia (Grigoriev et al. 2010) show that the contemporary Russian "bourgeois" is developing both pro-democratic and pro-authoritarian demands – the former brought about by modernization, the latter by fear of chaos or "revenge" from the new underprivileged classes in case of democratization.

These conclusions are in no way final. Transformation is not over in many post-Communist countries. Structures of all economies, even in nondemocratic countries, are changing, and the overall trend is pro-market. Even nondemocratic rulers have to imitate democratic procedures and hold elections. Democratic values and liberal practices are introducing themselves to post-Soviet citizens though false mirrors of authoritarian regimes. On the other hand, quality of democracy and governance in the established "democratic domain"

is back on the agenda after the crisis of 2008–10. The challenge of Chinese model of development and lingering disappointment of the limits of 1990–2010 democratization will dominate the discourse about democracy in the foreseeable future. Yet, we are entering the next round of debates armed with better knowledge of general trends and feeling a need for a more nuanced study of the interplay of preconditions and policies in each transforming society.

Notes

1. Some authors, however, argue that the type of political regime is largely irrelevant for prospects of economic growth – what matters is the quality of institutions, democratic (individualistic) or autocratic (collectivist). I.e., democratization carried out in a poor rule of law environment often leads to economic downfall. And vice versa – developing countries with authoritarian (to various degrees) regimes that preserved institutional continuity based on some types of “Asian values” (East Asia, Middle East and North Africa, India, etc.) have better conditions for growth than regions where traditional institutions were largely destroyed like in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Former Soviet Union, and so on (Popov 2009; Popov 2010). We may want, nonetheless, to pay attention to counterarguments as well: other research indicates a correlation between successful radical economic reforms eventually leading to growth and competitiveness of political regimes rather than the quality of institutions (Hellman 1998). We will show that poor quality of political and economic institutions (such as property rights, rule of law, genuine political and economic competition, participation, etc.) constitutes one of the main obstacles to reforms, deadlocking the transition and provoking a slide toward new forms of authoritarian rule.
2. Vanhanen (2009) argues that whatever the agency is doing or is prepared to do, “structural” limits of democratization (climate and national IQ) exist that leave no chance for particular countries to successfully democratize.
3. We take note of a clarification made by Hadenius (2001): today not every state can be viewed as a prerequisite of democracy or a condition of democratization, but only an “interactive state” that develops ties with the civil society and responds to its demands.
4. As heard by one of the authors in Gebert’s presentation at a seminar in Tallinn, Estonia, in 1998.
5. This index is chosen for its relative simplicity and transparency, as well as higher precision and diversification of country scores (as compared, for example, with Freedom House ratings). Correlation of this index with other measurement, such as Bertelsmann Foundation “Democracy Status” subindex of its Transformation Index, is quite high. In 2011, the index, Ukraine was downgraded to the “hybrid regimes” category, and Russia to “authoritarian regimes,” but in both cases, they became “the best” ranking in the respective categories; therefore, we preferred to analyze these two countries within the categories to which they belonged for several previous ratings.
6. This sample lacks one important category of various nondemocratic political regimes which – for different structural and procedural reasons – during the period of the “third wave” did not attempt any transitions at all. One may argue that

nondemocratizers continued to pursue their autocratic paths because they were either “too poor” or “too rich” and because there was either “too much order” or “no order at all.”

7. According the WB data and in the decreasing of the Economist ID ranking: Czech Republic, 11,208; Slovenia, 10,740; Estonia, 5,010; Hungary, 8,373; Lithuania, 8,774; Slovakia, 7,570; Poland, 5,473; Latvia, 7,097; Romania, 5,316; Croatia, 9,530; Bulgaria, 5,490; Ukraine, 5,620; Macedonia, 5,567.
8. According to UNDP: Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Macedonia – high levels of HDI at the start of transition.
9. World Economic Outlook Database, April 2010, International Monetary Fund. Accessed on April 21, 2010.

CPSIA information can be obtained at www.ICGtesting.com
Printed in the USA
BVOW02*1242260615
406066BV00001B/1/P

