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Kuzio,Taras

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Comparative perspectives on Communist successor parties in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia

Taras Kuzio

Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa
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Abstract

The article builds on Ishiyama's (1998) seminal study of Communist successor parties [Ishiyama, J.T., 1998. Strange bedfellows: explaining political cooperation between communist successor parties and nationalists in Eastern Europe. Nations and Nationalism 4(1), 61—85] by providing the first comparative study of the fate of Communist successor parties in Eurasia and Central-Eastern Europe. The article outlines four paths undertaken by Communist parties in former Communist states: those countries that rapidly transformed Communist parties into center-left parties; countries that were slower at achieving this; countries with imperial legacies; and Eurasian autocracies. The fate of successor Communist parties is discussed within the parameters of previous regime type, political opposition in the Communist era and the nationality question.
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The different Communist party legacies in Central-Eastern Europe and the CIS have been the subject of few scholarly studies because scholars have rarely undertaken comparative studies in political processes between the outer and inner Soviet empires. The purpose of this analysis is to build on Ishiyama's (1998) and

other scholarly works an understanding for the trajectories of post-Communist successor parties. The collection brings together seven contributions, covering two rapidly reforming countries (Poland and Lithuania[1]), four reform laggards (Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia) and one reform laggard from the Commonwealth of Independent States, or CIS, Ukraine. This comparative introduction to the special issue surveys post-Communist party legacies and presents a new framework that reveals a wide variation across the standard geographic divide between the inner and outer Soviet empires. This article divides post-Communist states into four groups based upon political regime characteristics: Central-Eastern European democracies (rapid reformers), Central-Eastern European semi-democracies (reform laggards), Post-imperial pseudo-democracies/autocracies (reform obstructionists) and Eurasian autocracies (reform stiflers). This division of countries is drawn up through a survey and discussion of seven factors: the post-Communist transition, type of dominant nationalism, successor parties, the popularity of nationalist parties, attitudes towards national minorities, the strength of dissidents and the opposition in the Communist era and attitudes towards foreign policy orientations.

The weakness of comparative studies of the inner and outer Soviet empires is evident in the realm of dissent and opposition. Ukraine and Georgia had larger national-democratic opposition than any of the Central-Eastern European Semi-Democratic reform laggards, such as Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia or Croatia. Central-Eastern European Semi-Democratic reform laggards, Romania and Bulgaria, have more in common with the successful democratizers of the CIS, Ukraine and Georgia, than with the Central-Eastern European Democratic rapid reformers: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the three Baltic states. If a comparison is undertaken of the inner and outer empires that takes into account the positive influence of the EU membership 'carrot', and the lack of such an offer extended by the EU to any CIS state, Ukraine's and Georgia's democratic progress is remarkable. Bulgaria and Romania signed Europe Agreements with the EU in 1993 but began their real transitions only after EU membership was offered to them in 1999. During their first post-Communist decade Bulgaria's and Romania's transitions had been hijacked, as in Ukraine and Georgia, by post-Communist successor Socialist or "centrist" parties. The Romanian and Bulgarian successor Communist parties meaningfully evolved into center-left parties only in the 1ate 1990s, after their electoral defeat in 1996 and 1997. Bulgaria and Romania were recognized as market economies by the EU in 2002 and 2004, or 3 and 1 years respectively before Ukraine's recognition in 2005. Romania and Bulgaria became market economies after they had been granted EU membership, while Ukraine became a market economy in the absence of EU membership prospects.

The collapse of Communist party rule in Central-Eastern Europe did not lead to a uniform transition of ruling Communist parties into successor parties. There is

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[1] Hungary, the Czech Republic, Latvia and Estonia are also Central-Eastern European Democratic rapid reformers but they are not surveyed in the seven country case studies included in this special issue.

a wide variety of successor parties, both between the former USSR and Central-Eastern Europe and within Central-Eastern Europe. Within the CIS there is a greater uniformity than within Central-Eastern Europe in the types of successor parties that have evolved. Communist successor parties in the three Baltic states have evolved along the lines similar to Central-Eastern Europe rather than in other former Soviet republics. In another two former Soviet republics, Ukraine and Georgia, the evolution of Communist successor parties have straddled the divide between Central-Eastern Europe and the CIS. Five of the 15 Soviet republics, therefore, have characteristics that either closely follow the Central-Eastern pattern (the three Baltic states) or resemble it to a large degree (Ukraine and Georgia).

This article builds on Ishiyama's (1998) framework that divided 27 post-Communist states into Patrimonial, Bureaucratic-Authoritarian and National Consensus regimes. Patrimonial states had low levels of elite contestation and popular interest in politics, were infused with rational-bureaucratic professionalization and included a high degree of democratic centralism. Ishiyama (1998) incorporates Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and the remainder of the CIS within the Patrimonial group giving the group an unwieldy and wide variety of states, regime types and successor Communist parties. Russia and Serbia, both centers of multi-national states, have nevertheless different characteristics. Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine have some similarities while the group fails to include Georgia.

The Bureaucratic-Authoritarian group permitted some degree of elite contestation and interest articulation within a highly rational-bureaucratic institutional setting. The GDR, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are given by Ishiyama (1998) as examples of Bureaucratic-Authoritarian states. While the GDR and the Czech Republic have many similarities, Slovakia would present a problem to fit in this group. National Consensus post-Communist states, such as Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia and the three Baltic states, permitted a wide degree of elite contestation and interest articulation. While Poland, Hungary and Slovenia have much in common, the inclusion of Croatia and the three Baltic states within the National Consensus group is challenged in this article. Political opposition and dissent in Croatia and the Baltic states were inter-related, so far as national-democratic dissidents espoused support for human rights and positive resolution of the national question. The authoritarian Yugoslav regime was very different from the totalitarian Soviet system that embarked on an uneven process of liberalization during Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost* (1985–1991). Within the three Baltic states the transition of Lithuania's successor Communist party most closely resembled that of Poland and Hungary. Although Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were incorporated together into the USSR during World War II, they had different proportions of national minorities. In Lithuania, national minorities made up 16 percent of the population, primarily Poles and Russians, while Russian-speaking minorities comprised half of Latvia's and a third of Estonia's populations. Only Lithuania followed the remainder of the USSR in introducing inclusive citizenship requirements for its population, while Estonia and Latvia adopted ethnic citizenship requirements similar to those in place in Germany until 1999.

Within the National Consensus group, the most successful successor Communist party in Central-Eastern Europe is the Hungarian Socialist party (MSZP). The MSZP became the first successful Communist party to transform itself into a post-Communist European center-left party by drawing on the ideological flexibility of the Janos Kadar regime (1956—1989) and the large body of pro-reform intellectuals within the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party. These intellectuals and cadres provided the MSZP with the organizational skills, political expertise and intellectual resources to re-build a center-left successor party. With limited competition on the left the MSZP has dominated Hungary's political spectrum. In the absence of a national minority problem, Hungarian irredentism was not adopted by any mainstream political force. Hence, the MSZP has never sought an alliance with Hungary's marginal nationalist parties and has not, therefore, espoused nationalist slogans. "Since national minorities never posed a real threat to national unity, the regime never attempted to systematically assimilate them." (Chen, 2007, p. 178).

Previous regime type

As Ishiyama (1998) pointed out, previous regime type was undoubtedly a crucial factor in determining the type of successor Communist parties. The majority of former Communist parties in Central-Eastern Europe have transformed themselves into Socialist and Social-Democratic parties and all Central-Eastern European Communist parties are full members of the Socialist International. The only exception in the CIS is Ukraine whose Socialist party (SPU), a center-left successor party to the pre-1991 Communist party, joined the Socialist International in 2003. The SPU was established in the fall of 1991 after the Communist party of Ukraine (KPU) was banned following the collapse of the hard line putsch in Moscow in August 1991. The Social Democratic Party of Ukraine united (SDPUo) was refused membership of the Socialist International because of its ties to oligarchic groups. In other CIS states successor Communist parties have associate member status in the Socialist International.

The regime type clearly had a direct impact on the ability of Poland and Hungary to rapidly reform. In both countries, as Jasiewicz points out in his study of Poland for this special issue, the liberal Communist regime and mono-ethnic composition of the country permitted a rapid transition from Communist to Social-Democratic party. Clark and Praneviciute's contribution on Lithuania shows how its Communist party became the fastest example of a Communist party transforming itself into a Socialist party in the former USSR. In Czechoslovakia reform progressed faster in the Czech Republic. Nevertheless, the influence of the repressive post-1968 Communist regime led to the emergence of a hard-line successor Communist party in the Czech Republic and, as shown in the Rybar and Deegan-Krause's contribution, a slow evolution of the Communist party in Slovakia. The articles by Pop-Eleches and Spirova show how the popularity and repressive legacies of communism in Bulgaria and Romania imparted a path dependence that led to a very slow evolution from Communist to Social-Democratic parties. Only in the late 1990s did this transition result in significant internal changes in the Romanian and Bulgarian

successor Communist Parties. In Croatia, covered by Pickering and Baskin, the more liberal Yugoslav Communist regime failed to produce a rapid transition to a successor party due to the nationality question. With Croatia embroiled in a war of independence and dominated by nationalists until 1999 the left and liberals could only emerge as an alternative political force in the 2000 and subsequent elections.

The post-Soviet political landscape of the CIS was dominated by ruling parties composed of ideologically amorphous 'centrist' parties that have emerged as *'kryshy'* (criminal slang for political roofs) for big business, ruling elites and regional clans. Surviving Communist parties and center-left splinter successor parties, such as the SPU, were largely unsuccessful at winning electoral majorities in the first decade of post-Communism, despite an acute socio-economic crisis throughout the CIS. Moldova was the exception where the Communist party (PCRM) returned to power in 2001 and 2005 in free and fair elections giving it a parliamentary majority. Following the establishment of a parliamentary constitution the Communist majority was able to elect its leader as the country's president in 2001 and 2005.

Ishiyama's (1998) suggestion that economic crises was one causal factor in mobilizing popular support for the extreme left and right who together could enter into an unholy alliance has not been borne out in the CIS. Ukraine experienced one of the worst collapses in its economy in the former USSR and only resumed economic growth in 2000. Despite the acute socio-economic crisis in 1989–1999 the KPU, a new party legalized in 1993,[2] failed to win the presidency in the 1994 or 1999 elections and never obtained a parliamentary majority. The KPU obtained its highest portion of parliamentary seats in the 1998–2002 parliament with 120 (out of 450) seats but then entered into a period of rapid decline. Chen (2007, p. 213) points out that there is no hard and fast rule on the impact of economic downturns on successor Communist party support or even that of the role of nationalism in these successor parties. With one of the worst economic downturns of the 15 Soviet republics, Ukraine's KPU never won power while extreme right nationalists failed to gain any support at the ballot box. Post-Communist nationalism can grow both during economic downturns as well as during periods of high economic growth, as in Russia since 2000 and in China.

Ishiyama (1998) erroneously includes Belarus as an example of a country where the extreme left and right have cooperated in a Communist-nationalist alliance. The Alyaksandr Lukashenka regime has many attributes that are neo-Soviet but what distinguishes it from other post-Communist states is the absence of a ruling party of power. The regime is built on a highly personalized Sultanistic paternalism where parties have been superfluous. The autocratic Lukashenka regime has not followed the patterns established in other CIS states where the former Communist senior *nomenklatura* have established "centrist" ruling parties into which they have cajoled the ruling

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[2] The KPU was not legalized as a successor party to the Communist Party in Ukraine that was banned in August 1991 because to have done so would have permitted the KPU to lay claim to state property controlled by the Communist Party until its ban. KPU property was nationalized by the Ukrainian state after the ban. Ukraine therefore has de jure no successor Communist Party. The new KPU was registered in October 1993.

elites into joining. Belarus has two successor Communist parties: the Party of Belarusian Communists (PKB) which is allied with the anti-Lukashenka opposition and the loyal pro-Lukashenka Communist Party of Belarus (KPB). Both successor parties align with different types of nationalist groups and parties, the PKB with the pro-Western (civic nationalist) opposition and the KPB with pan-Slavic Russophile parties and the Lukashenka regime.

In Ukraine Zimmer and Haran traced the growth of "centrist" parties in the post-Soviet period. The SPU aligned itself with Our Ukraine and the Yulia Tymoshenko bloc during the anti-regime protests of 2002—2003 and also in the 2004 elections and Orange Revolution. The KPU and pan-Slavic groups supported the Kuchma regime's candidate, Prime Minister and Party of Regions leader, Viktor Yanukovych.

Russia provides a good example of failed parties of power during its democratic experiment in the 1990s. The creation of a highly successful party of power only took place after an authoritarian regime was established under Vladimir Putin who was elected President in March 2000 (after becoming acting president on December 31, 1999). During Borys Yeltsin's decade-long presidency (1990—1999) two attempts at establishing parties of power, Russia's Choice and Our Home is Russia, failed. A post-Communist alliance of the extreme right and left proved possible in Russia, as it did in Serbia and Romania. The Communist party (KPRF) and other extreme left and extreme right nationalist parties were able to successfully draw on the organizational skills of the Soviet era Communist party. Unlike in Serbia, also the center of a multi-national Yugoslav state, Russia's successor Communist parties were hampered in their development by the lack of a Russian Communist party throughout the USSR's 70 year history, except for 1990—1991. The Russian SFSR had no republican institutions of its own until after it declared sovereignty in June 1990, only 18 months before the USSR disintegrated. Within Yugoslavia the Socialist Republic of Serbia had its own Communist party (that transmuted into the Socialist Party), secret police (UDBA), Academy of Sciences and Young Communist League (Kuzio, 2007).

Putin has been far more successful in establishing a ruling party of power within an autocratic regime, first through the Unity party that came to power in 2000 and then through Unified Russia created from the merger of Unity and Yuriy Luzhkov's and Yevgenny Primakov's Fatherland-All Russia Party. Prime Minister Putin was elected head of Unified Russia in April 2008. Similar 'centrist' ruling parties of power were successfully created in other autocratic CIS states, such as in Azerbaijan and in Central Asia. Attempts to establish ruling parties of power failed in semi-democratic Russia under Yeltsin (Russia's Choice, Our Home is Russia), Ukraine's competitive authoritarian regime (People's Democratic Party [NDP], For a United Ukraine) under Leonid Kuchma and Georgia's failed state (Union of Citizens of Georgia) under Eduard Shevardnadze.

Nationality question

Nationalism is not necessarily antithetical to liberal democracies and market economies and although Western democracies are routinely mislabeled as "civic" in reality a pure civic state is a myth (Kuzio, 2002). Liberal democratic universalism has

developed within bounded national states that included one or more ethno cultural cores. Civic nationalism is therefore central to the cohesiveness of liberal democracies.

Four types of nationalism have emerged in post-Communist Europe − civic, ethnic, Soviet and great power − of which only civic nationalism has supported democratic transitions and Euro-Atlantic integration. The type of nationalism that eventually emerged in the transition from Communism drew on the Leninist era and the pre-Communist past. Russia, Serbia and Romania experienced the greatest fusion of Communism and nationalism and great power and ethnic nationalism has therefore remained popular in the post-Communist era in all three countries (Chen, 2007). In Belarus, a far stronger Soviet type nationalism has ruled the country since 1994, the year Lukashenka was elected in a free election, in competition with a weaker pro-Western Belarusian civic nationalism (Leshchenko, 2004). Great power Russian, ethnic and Soviet nationalisms are incompatible with liberal democracies and in countries where these nationalisms have become dominant the resultant regimes have become authoritarian. These regimes, particularly in the CIS (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan), support integration within the CIS, instead of Euro-Atlantic integration. Ukraine and Georgia prioritized Euro-Atlantic integration, downplayed CIS integration and led the GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) pro-Western regional group. Ukraine's successor parties on the left and in the center, as Zimmer and Haran in this special issue show, have not followed the evolution of former Communist parties in Central-Eastern Europe towards support for Euro-Atlantic integration. Ukraine is the only country to seek NATO membership where the left is opposed to this goal. In other aspirant NATO members, such as Spain, Romania and Bulgaria, the left's initial opposition evolved into support for NATO membership.[3]

The more the Communist regime attempted to transform Leninism into an integral component of a country's national identity, the greater there would be difficulties in establishing a post-Leninist liberal democracy (Chen, 2007). Of Chen's (2007) four country case studies, he found the greatest fusion of Leninism and nationalism to have taken place in Russia where there was a profound dominance of illiberal nationalism. Russia's relationship to the USSR was different to that between Serbia and Yugoslavia in that Russia never possessed republican institutions (except for a brief period in 1990−1991) and Russian and Soviet identities were, therefore, closely inter-woven. In addition, the Russian SFSR, unlike Serbia, never possessed a nation-state prior to entering a multi-national state. The USSR was the homeland for ethnic Russians while non-Russians had two loyalties: the USSR and republics where they were the titular ethnic group. Throughout the 1990s great power nationalism in Russia spread from the extreme left and right to the democratic spectrum and during Putin's presidency it became a ruling ideology assisted by a revival of Soviet political culture. Chen (2007, 92) concluded that: "successful liberal nationalism in Russia remains a remote scenario." In the first half of the

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[3] Initially anti-NATO Spanish Socialist Xavier Solana went on to become NATO General Secretary.

1990s the Communist party of Russia aligned itself with the National Salvation Front red-brown coalition. Under Putin Unified Russia has built alliances with extreme left and right nationalists in the Liberal Democratic party and *Rodina* (Motherland).

Outside Russia, similar extreme left-right coalitions only appeared in Romania between the Social Democrats and the Greater Romania Party (PRM) and the Party of Romanian National Unity (PUNR) and in Serbia between the Socialist and Radical parties. The extreme left in the non-Russian republics of the CIS continued to remain as unreformed Marxist parties loyal to the USSR. The two exceptions in Central-Eastern Europe were in the Czech Republic and Germany where it is an outgrowth of the GDR's legacy. Following the departure of 95 percent of its pre-1991 membership, the new post-1993 KPU remained an ossified neo-Stalinist party. Of the Soviet successor Communist parties only the KPRF integrated nationalism with Leninism to espouse a great power Soviet Russian nationalism.

Romania is an additional case study employed by Chen (2007) to analyze the close fusion of Leninism and nationalism. The integration of nationalism and Leninism is discussed in Spirova and Pop-Eleches studies of Bulgaria and Romania. Romania's unflinching "national Stalinism" co-opted intellectuals and the Orthodox Church and blocked both the emergence of a reform wing within the Communist party and an anti-Communist opposition. Nationalism in Russia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria supported the Communist regime, a factor that limited the emergence of pro-Western national democratic (civic nationalist) alternatives. In Romania, "nationalism could not play a role in the criticism of the regime as it did in other Communist countries, since by the mid-1970s the nationalist discourse was entirely monopolised by the regime itself." (Petrescu, 2004, p. 154). "National Stalinism" did not recognize the legitimacy of Hungarian minority rights which were increasingly subject to "the obliteration of minority identities and the assimilation of ethnic minorities into one socialist nation" (Chen, 2003, p. 192). In the 1990s in Romania the successor Communist party was intolerant of the opposition, instigated violence by coal miners against the non-Communist opposition and aligned itself with the extreme right. Conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism and anti-Western and anti-Hungarian xenophobia in Romania had resembled conspiracy theories that were commonplace in Russia and both had historical and Leninist roots. Support at 33 percent in the 2000 presidential elections for Greater Romania Party leader Corneliu V. Tudor ensured that he entered the second round and the 20 percent of the vote for the Greater Romania Party was only surpassed on the extreme right in post-Communist Europe and Eurasia by the support given by Serbian voters to the Radical Party. Nationalism in Romania became so central to the Communist party under Ceausescu that it ultimately undermined it (Chen, 2003, p. 190, 2007, p. 149).

In Bulgaria the growth of nationalism within the Communist party, "was part of the adaptation of the power elite to the first serious signs of the de-legitimisation of Communism. Nationalism was a strategy of self-justification" (Petrova, 2004, p. 179). In the 1980s Communist party policies directed against the Turkish minority forced many Bulgarian Turks to emigrate to Turkey and for those who opted to stay to change their names. As Spirova shows, during the 1990s the successor Socialist

party continued to play on anti-Turkish ethnic nationalism but this failed to generate popular mass mobilization. The exception is the recent phenomenon of the anti-Turkish National Union Attack (NSA) coalition's success in the 2005 elections that drew nationalist voters away from the Socialist party. The success of the NSA showed the degree to which nationalist sentiment had coalesced within the Bulgarian successor Communist party as much as it had in Communist successor parties in Romania, Serbia and Russia.

The Liberal Democratic Party (the Belarusian branch of the infamous Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) and the Slavic Assembly have always aligned themselves with President Lukashenka's neo-Soviet regime that gave Ishiyama (1998) the basis to argue that the extreme left and right cooperated in Belarus. In reality the situation is more nuanced. The Belarusian nationalist right resembles what Ishiyama (1998) describes as the anti-Russian nationalist wing of Ukrainian politics, because Belarusian nationalists remain in opposition to the Lukashenka regime. Belarusian and Ukrainian pan-Slavists have aligned themselves with the extreme left and other pro-Russian politicians but pro-Western nationalists see Lukashenka's support for the union with Russia as a threat to Belarusian national independence. Shulman (2005) and Leshchenko (2004, 2008) point to two competing nationalisms in Ukraine and Belarus: "ethnic Slavic" in Ukraine and "Soviet" in Belarus pitted against "ethnic Ukrainian" and "Western nationalism" in Ukraine and Belarus respectively. Shulman and Leshchenko concluded that the "ethnic Ukrainian" and "Western nationalism" in Belarus supports domestic reform and pro-Western foreign policy orientations, while ethnic Slavic and Soviet nationalisms in Ukraine and Belarus respectively do not support democratic transitions or Euro-Atlantic integration. Arel's (2008) study of the inter-relationship between nationalism and the Orange Revolution concluded that the road to democracy in Ukraine had become successful, "due to the strength of its nationalism." Arel (2008) wrote that: "nationalism produced the Orange Revolution" because civil society is stronger in regions with a more consolidated national identity and because "Ukrainian nationalism" has a far clearer vision of its goals. Kuzio (2006) believes that the Orange Revolution represented the triumph of civic nationalism in Ukraine.

In Hungary there was a "rapid and almost painless" transition from Communist to Socialist successor party where the Socialist party did not draw on nationalism. Chen (2007) credits this to the weak fusion of Leninism and nationalism in Hungary, the popularity of the Kadar regime and the presence of a strong reformist wing within the Hungarian Communist party. Although considered one of the three fast reformers in Central-Eastern Europe, the Czech Republic was unique in continuing to have a successful Communist party in the post-Communist era: the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM). Historically the Communist party had roots in the urban industrial centers of the Czech lands that differentiated it from the weak support for Communist parties imposed on rural Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria by Soviet occupying armies towards the end of World War II. This historic legacy of Communism in the Czech lands has been reflected in the high vote traditionally given to the KSCM. At 110,000 the KSCM's membership is nearly the same as that of the KPU (150,000), a country with a five times larger population. The

KSCM continues to be electorally successful, receiving 18.5 and 12.8 percent of the vote respectively in the 2002 and 2006 Czech elections, and reaching second place in the 2004 European Parliamentary elections. The Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) had a long history stretching back into the late nineteenth century and has no ties to the Leninist era Communist party other than that it was forcibly merged with the Communist party in 1948. The CSSD was re-established in 1993 and has been more popular than the KSCM with support of 30−32 percent during the 2002 and 2006 elections. The Czech Republic is, therefore, unique in having an electorally successful Social Democratic party that is not a successor Communist party.

While hard-line successor Communist parties are in decline in the former USSR, they remain resilient in the Czech Republic and are in the ascendency in Germany. In addition to the Czech Republic, Germany also has a popular hard-line successor Communist party. *Die Linke* (The Left), was formed in 2007 through a merger of the Party of Democratic Socialism (the successor party to the Socialist Unity Party that ruled the GDR from 1949 to 1990) and Labor and Social Justice − The Electoral Alternative (WASG), a splinter group from the German Social Democrats (SPD). *Die Linke* is the third largest political party in Germany in terms of members and the fourth largest party in the Bundestag. With an ideology that lies to the left of the SPD and is hostile to NATO and EU membership, it is a threat to the SPD's post-war domination of the left-wing of the German political spectrum. *Die Linke*'s growing popularity is a reaction to the SPD's evolution towards the political center and the charisma of its leader, former senior SPD leader Oskar Lafontaine. In the European Parliament, *Die Linke* and the KSCM are members of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left political group with *Die Linke* the largest party in the group.

Post-Communist transitions in Yugoslavia have been dominated by nationalist parties that have either emerged as new political parties in the early 1990s, as in Croatia, or worked through successor Communist parties, as in Serbia. During the Communist era the nationalist opposition was not widespread in Yugoslavia outside of Croatia, Slovenia and among Kosovar Albanians. Macedonian national identity had been nurtured within Yugoslavia to deny Serbs and Bulgarians their traditional claims on Macedonians as ''Southern Serbs'' or ''Western Bulgarians'' respectively and Macedonians were therefore largely loyal Yugoslavs. Montenegro, like Belarus, remained divided in its national identity between one portion that believes it is ''Serb'' and another that believes it is a different people. As Pickering points out, Croatia was different from Central-Eastern Europe where nationalism had either been co-opted by the Communist regime or separatism was surprisingly dormant, as in Slovakia (Wolchik, 2007). This made the opposition in Croatia similar to that of the national democratic oppositions in Ukraine, Georgia and the three Baltic republics. Nationalism inevitably rose to the surface in Slovenia and Croatia in the early 1990s, leading the way in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Slovenian nationalism had few national minorities to target (unlike the majority of other Yugoslav republics) in its mono-ethnic state and nationalism rapidly evolved into a civic variant. Croatian ethic nationalism resembled that in Georgia under President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in the early 1990s, where civil wars led to frozen conflicts won by

Serbian or Abkhaz and South Ossetian minorities respectively. Croatia was able to forcibly resolve its frozen conflict with its Serbian minority by militarily defeating the Serbs and driving the minority out as a result of which Croatia became a mono-ethnic state. Georgia's two frozen conflicts were supported openly by Russia until 2007 who, following the August 2008 conflict in South Ossetia, recognised them as independent states. The 2000 Croatian elections and 2003 Georgian Rose Revolutions brought pro-Western oppositions to power by mobilizing voters by drawing on civic nationalism amongst other factors.

Within Serbia the legacy of Leninism and nationalism is closer to that of Russia, Romania and Bulgaria, but nevertheless has important nuances. Serbian support for preserving the Yugoslav state was more important than agitating for increased republican sovereignty because Yugoslavia was the only manner in which to preserve the unity of Serbs living across different republics. Josip Tito's base of support came from Serbs living outside Serbia in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serbian nationalism, like its Russian counterpart in the USSR, therefore sought to preserve the Yugoslav state against Croatian, Slovene and Kosovar Albanian demands for greater sovereignty (Radan and Pavkovic, 1997; Miller, 1997; Pawlowitch, 2002). During the 1990s in Croatia and Serbia democratic opposition parties found it difficult to criticize the policies of ruling nationalists (whether the Croatian Democratic Union [HDZ] in Croatia or the Socialist Party of Serbia [SPS] in Serbia) because to do so would have led to charges of lack of patriotism at a time of domestic and inter-state conflict that was framed by ruling nationalist or nationalist-socialist parties in terms of the survival of the state. During the 1990s the New Democratic party (renamed Liberals of Serbia) and Vuk Draskovic's Serbian National Renewal (SPO) collaborated with the SPS in government and the SPO refused to join the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition during the 2000 Serbian elections where Slobodan Milosevic was removed from power.

Pre-Soviet Social Democratic traditions that could be drawn upon are largely absent from the majority of former Soviet republics with the exception of the three Baltic states, Ukraine and Georgia. In Ukraine a Socialist and Social Democratic tradition emerged in both Russian and Austro-Hungarian ruled Ukraine in the nineteenth century and center-left parties dominated the 1917–1921 independent Ukrainian governments (except for the 1918 Conservative Hetmanate). Four "successor" parties to the Communist party in Ukraine (KPU, SPU, Peasant party and Progressive Socialist party) polled a combined 40 percent of the vote in three elections held between 1994 and 2002 and controlled the leadership of the 1994–1998 parliament. Of the two main successor parties the post-1993 KPU, with its base of support in industrialized Eastern Ukraine, polled the most votes reaching its highest support in the 2002 elections when it obtained 20 percent of the vote. The SPU, drawing its support from Western and Central Ukraine, was unable to establish itself as the main leftist successor to the Soviet era Communist party in Ukraine and its highest voter support was 7 percent in the 2002 elections. Only in the 2006 elections did the SPU overtake the KPU but this proved short-lived until pre-term elections the following year when voters punished the SPU for defecting in July 2006 from the Orange camp to join a parliamentary coalition with the Party of Regions and the

KPU. The SPU's base of support in rural and small town Western and Central Ukraine resembled that of the Romanian Communist successor party whose base of support also remained rural.

Scholars should, therefore, carefully specify the type of nationalism that has emerged in post-Communist states: civic, ethnic, Soviet or great power. Nationalism *per se* is not antithetical to democratic transitions; indeed, civic nationalism has assisted rapid reform in Central-Eastern Europe. In Central-Eastern Europe the Communist legacy of nationalism fused with Leninism has slowed reforms and led to the emergence of extreme right parties that have allied themselves to successor Communist parties.

Political opposition

No scholarly study has compared and contrasted dissent and opposition in the USSR with that in Communist Central-Eastern Europe. Studies of dissent and opposition in Central-Eastern Europe tend to focus on successful opposition movements, as in the Visegrad-3: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. In the majority of Central-Eastern European countries there was little or no dissent and opposition, a factor which has led to a scarcity of counter-elites in the post-Communist era. Where counter elites emerged following the collapse of Communism in 1989—1990, they traditionally occupied the liberal and center-right niches of political spectrums and were important in preventing the monopolization of power by a post-Communist successor party. In Romania and Bulgaria the weakness of counter elites postponed the coming to power by non-Communist forces until 1996 and 1997 respectively that, having achieved power, proved to be ineffectual.

In Bulgaria and Romania opposition to the Communist regime was to all intents and purposes non-existent until the 1980s (Petrescu, 2004, p. 145). In Romania: "the opposition never posed a genuine threat for the regime. Up to the very end of Communist rule, it remained a small-scale phenomenon, comprising isolated nuclei and poorly structured groups" (Petrescu, 2004, p. 153). An opposition only emerged in Bulgaria in the Gorbachev era because the Communist regime in Bulgaria was, "strongly legitimate, for socio-economic, political, geopolitical, and cultural reasons" (Petrova, 2004, p. 178). The Bulgarian Communist party was not seen as an agent of Soviet imperialism but rather, "as a defender of national sovereignty" (Petrova, 2004, p. 178). Turkey (and to a lesser extent Greece and Yugoslavia) were Bulgaria's negative "Others", not Russia or the USSR. Communist support for Bulgarian national myths (including treating Macedonians as wayward Bulgarians) provided it with a degree of legitimacy and: "rendered dissent more difficult, more marginal, and more persecuted" (Petrova, 2004, p. 179). Economic discontent only surfaced in the 1980s in Bulgaria as it did in other Communist states. Bulgaria was unswervingly loyal to the USSR and, as Spirova has shown, beyond the Communist party's change of its name to the Socialist party did little to change its ideology until after being defeated in the 1997 elections.

The weakness of the opposition in Bulgaria and Romania created difficulties for the emergence of counter-elites in these two states in the post-Communist era.

Within the Romanian Communist party there was no reformist wing and there had been no liberalization prior to the 1989 revolution (Tismaneanu, 1999). This made the Romanian Communist party more ideologically orthodox than its Bulgarian or Ukrainian counterparts. A Democratic Platform broke away from the Communist party in Ukraine in 1989, transmuting into the pro-reform Party of Democratic Revival of Ukraine in the 1990s. Following the 1989 collapse of Communist rule in Central-Eastern Europe the former Communist party (or its informal networks) won power in the first free elections in Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine. Senior former Communists in Romania were elected with 85 percent (Ion Iliescu) and in Ukraine with 62 percent (Leonid Kravchuk) of the vote in the first post-Communist presidential elections. In second place, Ukrainian Popular Movement (Rukh) leader Vyacheslav Chornovil won twice as many votes (23 percent) as the Romanian National Liberal Party leader Radu Campeanu (11 percent). Iliescu and the successor Communist Party's Front for National Salvation, that transmuted into the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR), and the PSD (Social Democratic Party) dominated the majority of Romania's transition from the 1989 revolution to membership of the EU in 2007. Unstable non-Communist coalitions came to power in 1996 (Democratic Convention [CDR]) and in 2004 (Truth and Justice Alliance [ADA]) with the latter victory drawing on Ukraine in a ''mini Orange Revolution'' (Ciobanu, 2007, p. 1440). Larger support for reform in Romania's Transylvania which backed the 1989 Romanian revolution and in Ukraine's Galicia which propelled Ukraine's drive to independence and the Orange Revolution was a product of historic association with the Austro-Hungarian empire (Roper and Fesnic, 2003). The instability of the Truth and Justice Alliance (composed of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania, Democratic, National Liberal and Humanist [Conservative] Parties) resembled that of unstable Orange coalitions following Yushchenko's 2005 election and Ukraine's 2006 and 2007 parliamentary elections, both won by Orange parties, and 2008 pre-term election. The Ceausescu legacy made Romania's transition the most difficult in Central-Eastern Europe outside Yugoslavia and, ''reforms were largely undertaken under the pressure of the EU deadline …'' (Ciobanu, 2007, p. 1442; Pridham, 2007). No similar EU membership 'carrot' has been made available to Ukraine or Georgia.

Until the 2001 elections the BSP and Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) won different elections in a period of great instability in Bulgaria. As a broad anti-Communist coalition the SDS resembled popular fronts in the former USSR, such as Rukh or Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc. The non-left opposition only came to power in 1996 in Romania (Romanian Democratic Convention or CDR) and in 1997 in Bulgaria (SDS). In Romania the CDR's performance was ''rather ineffectual'' (Pridham, 2007, p. 240). The 1997 protests and electoral defeat of the BSP by a wide margin (22 percent to the SDS's 52 percent) came as a particularly profound shock to Bulgaria's successor Communist party. The loss of power in 1996–1997, forced the successor Communist parties in Bulgaria and Romania to move from status quo policies towards social democracy, acceptance of the market economy and support for Euro-Atlantic integration. Such transformation of successor parties on Ukraine's left have largely not taken place with only the SPU moving some way towards acceptance of a market economy.

Hungary and the Czech Republic, traditionally seen as fast reformers together with Poland in the Visegrad Group, both had weak oppositions. In Hungary the leftist opposition was loyal and argued for reform within the Communist system. The Hungarian Communist regime permitted the inculcation of a passive acceptance of the status quo among its population in exchange for consumerism. The Czech republic had a "weak and fragmented democratic opposition" (Glenn, 2001, p. 130) and there was little in the way of alternatives to the Communist regime. By 1989 the Charter 77 movement had only 1886 signatories (Tuma, 2004). It refused to support organized political activity and was repressed until the 1989 Velvet Revolution. The Helsinki Groups established in the former USSR (with the Ukrainian and Lithuanian groups the largest in membership) never viewed themselves as opposition groups but instead as monitors of the upholding of human rights and international commitments by Communist regimes. In Czechoslovakia reform Communism had died in the 1968 Prague Spring after which some 200,000 individuals were purged from the Communist party and other state structures. In 1989 Civic Forum therefore had few counter elites available as negotiating partners within the Communist regime and a united opposition only emerged during and after the Velvet Revolution. Charter 77 had little support in the Slovak republic and during the Velvet Revolution the Public Against Violence was established as the Slovak equivalent of Civic Forum. Slovakia would have to wait until 1998 for its "Bratislava Spring" when a democratic coalition won power (Butora, 2007); nevertheless, it was not until the 2002 elections, "that Slovakia's nationalist-authoritarian experiment is effectively over" (Krause Deegan, 2003, p. 65). Between 1991 and 2002 Vladimir Meciar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) won the highest number of votes in Slovakia.

In Croatia, as in some of the non-Russian Soviet republics, dissenters pursued democratic and national questions, such as defending language, culture and republican sovereignty (Spehnjak, 2004, p. 191). Reform Communists, including the Liberal Marxist Praxis group, did exist within the Croatian League of Communists and Croatia underwent its "spring" liberalization in 1966–1974 during the same period as Czechoslovakia and Ukraine. The stagnation and repression that followed Croatia's "Spring" in 1974 was comparable to that following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and removal of Ukraine's Communist party leader, Petro Shelest, in 1972. Croatia and Ukraine were the targets of extensive security service intelligence work by the Yugoslav and Soviet secret services respectively because of the sensitivity of their separatist nationalism to the continued viability of the Yugoslav and Soviet multi-national states. Nevertheless, repression of Ukrainian nationalists was more severe in the totalitarian USSR than that of Croatian nationalists in authoritarian Yugoslavia.

In Ukraine nationalist parties akin to those in Croatia never acquired electoral popularity. Franjo Tudman's center-right HDZ dominated the country's politics from the disintegration of Yugoslavia and Croatian independence in the early 1990s until his death in 1999 and its election defeat the following year. The HDZ returned to power in 2003 as a mainstream center-right party that mirrored the evolution of pro-fascist forces in Spain into the center-right Popular Alliance (later Peoples Party)

after the death of Francisco Franco in 1976. The successor to the Croatian branch of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the Social Democratic Party (SPH), was unable to win elections until entering government in an opposition coalition in 2000 with the presidency going to the small populist Peoples Party (HNS). As the successor Communist party, the SPH was unable to come to power until after the conclusion of conflict with Serbia, the death of Tudman, decline in popularity of the HDZ and a popular electoral mobilization that targeted corruption and abuse of office by a ruling party that had been in power for the last decade (Ottaway, 2003). In Serbia the successor to the Serbian section of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the SPS, merged with the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Serbia. The SPS contested elections in coalitions with the Yugoslav Left, a party led by Milošević's wife, and the nationalist Radical Party. The SPS dominated politics until the 2000 democratic revolution that brought the unwieldy DOS coalition to power, Milosević's arrest a year later and his transfer to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Since the 2003 elections the Radical Party has attracted many former SPS voters to win a third of the vote in the 2003, 2007 and 2008 elections and its leader, Vojislav Seselj, obtaining 48 percent support in the 2008 presidential elections. In 2007 the Party of Serbian Unity led by murdered war lord Zeljko Raznatovic ('Arkan') merged with the SRS.

Within the seven Soviet republics where civil society and dissent existed (Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Armenia and Georgia) there was a clear division between liberal dissenters in Russia and national democratic, that is, seeking *both* national and democratic rights, oppositions in the Baltic states, Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia. Russian nationalists seeking the independence of the Russian SFSR from the USSR were in a minority and Russian liberal dissidents instead sought the democratization of the USSR[4] (Motyl, 1990, pp. 161–173). The lack of Russian separatism in the USSR mirrored that of the weakness of Serbian separatist nationalism in Yugoslavia (Slovakia was an unusual exception of low support for separatism in Czechoslovakia). Russian nationalist dissidents who sought to preserve the USSR in the same manner as their Serbian counterparts in Yugoslavia were either co-opted by the Soviet regime or a small minority went into opposition to the Soviet regime because the Soviet state was not seen by them as 'Russian' enough. The non-existence of a national democratic constituency in Russia was evident in two ways. First, the Russian SFSR was the only Soviet republic not to declare independence from the USSR after the failed August 1991 *coup d'état*.[5] Second, the post-Communist leadership of Russia ignored nation building and focused on a democratic and market economic transition while ignoring the forging of a civic national identity for the independent Russian state. Russia did not follow Ukraine in launching a "quadruple transition" of state and nation building, democratic and economic reform (Kuzio, 2001) and it was left to Putin to focus on Russian nation building but within an autocratic regime by drawing on great power (rather than civic) nationalism.

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[4] Russian dissidents Andrei Amalrik and Vladimir Bukovsky were some of the lone Russian dissident advocates of Russian independence and the disintegration of the USSR. (Amalrik, 1970).

[5] Russia's annual 'Independence Day' is based on its June 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty.

As the two articles by Clark and Praneviciute, and Zimmer and Haran show, Lithuania and Ukraine diverged in the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods when Lithuania's Communist party evolved along similar lines as Poland's United Workers Party. Counter elites in Ukraine were instrumental in dividing the Communist party in Ukraine in the last years of the USSR into three wings: democratic platform, "sovereign" (national) and "imperial" Communists. Only the first two groups supported sovereignty and independence (Kuzio, 2000, 2007). Ukraine's counter elites had to wait until the 2004 Orange Revolution before they could come to power when Yushchenko was elected (Wilson, 2005). In Lithuania the Communist party rapidly transformed itself into a Social Democratic party supporting Lithuania's independence, a transition to a market economy and Euro-Atlantic integration. Ukraine's transition was hijacked by post-Communist ideologically vacuous "centrist" parties created by former senior Communist party *nomenklatura*. The transitions in Romania and Bulgaria were also hijacked but by Communist successor parties. During the 1990s former senior Ukrainian communist *nomenklatura* transformed their pre-1991 political power into economic power and then back into vacuous "centrist" parties following the 1998 parliamentary elections. The ideological disintegration of Communist ideology during the Leonid Brezhnev's "era of stagnation" became evident when only 5 percent (150,000 out of 3.5 million) of Ukraine's pre-1991 Communists re-joined the post-1993 KPU. In Georgia counter elites came to power in two waves: ethnic nationalist in 1991 and national democratic during the 2003 Rose Revolution, leaving an 11 year interregnum where Georgia was ruled by former Georgian Communist First Secretary and Soviet Foreign Affairs Minister Shevardnazde through a similar ideologically vacuous "centrist" party.

Poland stands out as unique in terms of the mass opposition that emerged in 1980–1981 led by the Solidarity movement. A mass underground civil society and opposition movement that continued to function and evolve under martial law (1981–1983) and Communist rule until the 1989 round-table negotiations and victory of Solidarity in elections held that year. Poland was doubly unique in experiencing the only example of widespread cooperation of the intelligentsia and the workers after 1976 when KOR (Committee in Defence of Workers) was formed that gave the opposition a mass base. No other Central-Eastern European country approached Poland's level of mass opposition. The widespread opposition provided Poland with large counter-elite that could take power early and lead the country's transition from Communism. A large Polish counter-elite ensured a pacted transition between regime and "constructive opposition" moderates (Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik and others) who demanded the legalization of Solidarity, a transition to a market economy and free elections. The hardliner radical nationalists and anti-Communist oppositionists in the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN), Fighting Solidarity and Young Poland opposed negotiations with the Communist regime (Glenn, 2001, p. 70–101).

There are four reasons why Poland was unique in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia. First, the rise of Solidarity was built on earlier waves of worker and intellectual opposition to the Communist regime in 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976 (Ackerman and Duvall, 2000). Second, Communism in Poland was never seen as indigenous but rather as a system that had been implanted from abroad by Poland's

historic enemy, backward Russia. Hence, the Polish Communist regime found it difficult to achieve popular legitimacy which was seen as a threat to Polish sovereignty (Zarycki, 2004; Prizel, 1998, p. 130).

Third, Soviet leader Jozef Stalin included in the 1945 Yalta agreement a forced resolution of Poland's historically difficult relationship with its neighbors and national minorities. Attitudes towards Poland's occupying powers had divided Poles in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with two political thinkers and leaders stressing the German threat (Roman Dmowski) or the threat from Russia (Jozef Pilsudski). The Polish successor Communist party was especially popular in the "recovered territories" taken from Germany in the north and west of Poland (Szczerbiak, 2003, p. 73). Following World War II these political divisions eventually disappeared after the German threat was resolved following the 1970 and 1990 Polish–German treaties that recognized the post-1945 border. Polish Communist leader, Wladyslaw Gomulka, unsuccessfully attempted to synthesize Leninism and Dmowski's national democratic ideology whereby Germany, "was Poland's natural enemy and hence Russia was Poland's natural ally" (Curp, 2001, p. 588). As a near mono-ethnic state, nationalism in post-war Poland no longer had internal "enemies" (with the exception of regime sponsored anti-Semitism in 1968) and irredentism was no longer a possibility (Snyder, 1998, p. 5). The leading Polish émigré journal *Kultura* and the Solidarity opposition and successor movements and parties in the 1980s called for rapprochement with Poland's Eastern neighbors (Kuzio, 1987). Post-war Polish nationalism accepted Ukrainian independence,[6] normalized relations with Germany and recognized current borders (Prizel, 1998, p. 105). National minorities in inter-war Poland made up a third of the population and attempts at assimilating them had led to heightened anti-Polish nationalism among the German and Ukrainian minorities (Brubaker, 1996).

Fourth, in comparison to other Communist regimes the Polish Catholic Church had never been suppressed and retained a great deal of autonomy through organizations such as Pax and the journals *Wiez* and *Znak*. The election of a Polish Pope in 1979 only served to strengthen the anti-Communist opposition by adding religion to the already potent mix of worker and intellectual opposition in Poland. "During the time of martial law the Roman Catholic Church served as a shelter for the various fragmented dissenting groups" (Sonntag, 2004, p. 18).

Six factors transformed the Polish opposition into a mass movement and provided a wide base for the emergence of counter elites. These six factors taken together did not exist in other Communist Central-Eastern European or Eurasian countries.

First, no other Central-Eastern European or Eurasian country had a similar history of uprisings against Communist rule. The GDR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia had uprisings in 1953, 1956 and 1968 respectively, but these were brutally crushed by foreign forces that were either stationed inside the country or brought in from outside. In Western Ukraine and the three Baltic state's anti-Communist partisans seeking

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[6] In the inter-war period Ukrainians and Belarusians in Poland were still seen as ethnographic raw material available for assimilation into the Polish nation.

independence fought Soviet rule until the late 1940s and early 1950s but thereafter, with some exceptions, dissenters used non-violent methods.

Second, a cross-party consensus on Russia and the USSR as the "Other" existed only in Poland, the three Baltic states, Romania, Hungary and Western Ukraine. In Czechoslovakia the country's traditional Russophile orientation was only dented after the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion. In Bulgaria traditional russophilism remained in place until the end of Communist rule and continued into the 1990s until the Socialist Party lost the 1997 elections. Romania and Hungary adopted diametrically opposite strategies in their domestic and foreign policies. Romania sought foreign policy independence while the regime pursued a rigid national-Stalinism at home. Hungary maintained a foreign policy loyalty to the USSR while being permitted domestic ideological flexibility.

Third, aside from Poland a robust civil society and opposition was present in only a small number of Central-Eastern European states and dissent barely existed in the Slovak region of Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Romania and Bulgaria. Dissent and opposition was not widespread in Yugoslavia outside of Croatia and Slovenia. Civil society and dissent in the former USSR was limited to seven of the 15 Soviet republics: Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and the three Baltic states while the five Central Asian republics, Belarus, Moldova and Azerbaijan remained largely placid. Alexeyeva's (1985) monumental study of Soviet dissent includes chapters on Russia, Ukraine, the three Baltic states, Georgia and Armenia. Of the Soviet republics with national democratic dissident movements, Lithuania and Ukraine produced the largest proportion of prisoners of conscience that were larger in size and diversity than the fractured or non-existent opposition groups in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

Fourth, an alliance between workers and intellectuals never emerged outside of Poland (Petrescu, 2004, p. 153). Attempts at establishing cooperative ties between dissidents and fledgling independent trade unions emulating Poland's KOR were attempted in the USSR, including the most ambitious in Ukraine's Donetsk, but they largely failed (Teague, 1988).

Fifth is religion. Catholic and Protestant Churches played more important roles in nurturing opposition movements than Orthodox Churches. In contrast to Poland, Lithuania and Western Ukraine, where Catholic religious dissent was an important element in their opposition movements, religious dissent was absent from Bulgaria and Romania where the Orthodox Church accommodated itself to the regime and did not protest against repression (Turcescu, 2000). Protestant Churches in the GDR, Estonia and Latvia and Catholic Churches in Poland, Lithuania, Western Ukraine, Hungary and Croatia provided either an underground nexus for the opposition where the Church was banned (as in the USSR) or an autonomous space outside Communist control in Central-Eastern Europe where the Church was legal but nevertheless state controlled (Spehnjak, 2004, p. 186). In Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia the Orthodox Church was co-opted by the state and Orthodox religious nationalism merged with that of the ruling regimes national Communism.

Sixth, national minorities played an important role in supporting democratization in Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria (Mihailescu, 2008). In Latvia and Estonia

non-titular minorities had little influence during both countries' transitions due to the ethnic citizenship legislation in place. In Lithuania national minorities were smaller in number and eventually supported the country's Euro-Atlantic integration. Hungarian minority coalitions in Slovakia (Coexistence movement, Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement and the Hungarian Civic Party) and Romania (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania [UDMR]) and the Turkish minority coalition in Bulgaria (Movement for Rights and Freedoms [DPS]) supported parliamentary coalitions with pro-Western reformers. In Georgia national minorities largely live outside Tbilisi's control in two enclaves (Abkhazia and South Ossetia) as de facto Russian protectorates. In Ukraine the Russian ethnic minority and Russian-speaking Ukrainians, who together dominated Eastern and Southern Ukraine, have traditionally voted for the left or "centrist" parties in the 1990s or the Party of Regions in 2006 and 2007 and they were less supportive than Ukrainianophones of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration. Low popular support for NATO membership in Russophone Eastern and Southern Ukraine is a serious obstacle for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration.

Conclusion

This article has built on Ishiyama's (1998) framework of the transformation of Central-Eastern European and Eurasian Communist parties into successor parties and argues that this transformation has followed four different trajectories (see Appendix A). The diversity is a product of pre-Communist historical legacies, the nature of the Communist regime, the type of nationalism and presence of national minorities, the presence of an anti-regime opposition under Communism and the influence of the EU in offering membership inducements that has encouraged democratization. Communist parties successfully transmuted into center-left parties in the rapid reformers of Central-Eastern Europe, with the exception of the Czech Republic and former GDR. Communist parties eventually transmuted into successful center-left parties in the Central-Eastern European Semi-Democratic reform laggards but they failed to establish themselves as a popular political force in Ukraine and Georgia. Throughout the CIS pre-1991 Communist parties have remained ideologically orthodox while the majority of senior former Communist *nomenklatura* officials have created vacuous "centrist" parties to represent their regional, clan and new business interests. In Russia the KPRF has fused nationalism and Communism into a great power nationalism but this failed to generate electoral majorities or presidents. In Russia, Serbia and Romania, Communist successor parties have aligned themselves with the extreme right that have led to electoral victories. In all three countries, nationalism and Leninism were fused during the Communist era that led to high popularity for extreme right nationalist parties and nationalist presidential candidates in the post-communist era. Where civic nationalism dominated post-Communist transitions, rather than ethnic, Soviet, and great power nationalisms, successful democratization and Euro-Atlantic integration was the outcome. Ethnic, Soviet and great power nationalisms generated ethnic conflict and post-conflict stagnation and autocratic regimes.

Appendix A. Diversity of successor Communist parties in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia

Table A.1

Seven factors	Central-Eastern European democracies (rapid reformers): Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, 3 Baltic states	Central-Eastern European semi-democracies (reform laggards): Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, Albania, Ukraine, Georgia	Post-Imperial pseudo-democracies/autocracies (reform obstructionists): Russia, Serbia	Eurasian Autocracies (Reform Stiflers): Belarus, Armenia, Azerbaijan, 5 Central Asia states
Transition	Democratic and national transitions simultaneous	Double national and democratic transition	Hijacked transition by oligarchs and nationalist-socialists	Limited transition
Nationalism	Dominance of civic nationalism	Nationalism co-opted by communist regime in Romania and Bulgaria. Evolution from ethnic to civic nationalism	Nationalism co-opted by communist regime. Ethnic and great power nationalism remains more popular than civic nationalism	Statist nationalism dominant, except Soviet nationalism in Belarus
Successor Party	Rapid transmutation of Communist to Socialist Party	Transmutation of Communist to Socialist Parties	Unreformed Communist Party (Russia) and Socialist Party (Serbia). Dominance of 'centrist' parties in Russia	Unreformed Communist Parties and dominance of 'centrist' parties
Nationalist parties	Nationalist successor parties weak	Successful nationalist successor parties in Romania, Slovakia and Croatia	Successful nationalist successor parties	Nationalist successor parties weak
National minorities	National minorities absent except in three Baltic states. Absence of anti-minority policies	Anti-national minority policies introduced in Croatia, Hungary, Romania, and Georgia	Anti-national minority policies in Yugoslavia and Russia's Chechnya region	National minorities not targeted
Dissidents and opposition	Large anti-regime dissident and opposition movements, except in Hungary	Weak or no dissidents and counter elites, except where demands for national and democratic rights are united in Croatia, Ukraine and Georgia	Liberal dissidents do not call for Russian or Serbian secession from the USSR and Yugoslavia	Weak or non-existent opposition movements
Foreign policy	Strongest and earliest evolution of communist successor parties to pro-NATO and EU positions	Long evolution by successor parties to pro-NATO positions	Preference for integration in the CIS and disinterest in NATO and the EU (Russia) and support for integration into the EU (Serbia)	Preference for integration in the CIS and disinterest in NATO and the EU

Appendix B. Acronyms of political parties

Party of Belarusian Communists (PKB)
Communist Party of Belarus (KPB)
Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), Bulgaria
National Union Attack (NSA), Bulgaria
Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), Bulgaria
Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM), Czech Republic
Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD)
Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)
Communist Party of Moldova (PCRM)
KOR (Committee in Defence of Workers), Poland
Polish United Workers Party (PZPR)
National Salvation Front (FSN)
Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR)
PSD (Social Democratic Party), Romania
Democratic Convention [CDR], Romania
Greater Romanian Party (PRM)
Truth and Justice Alliance [ADA], Romania
Romanian Party of National Unity (PUNR)
Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF)
Serbian National Renewal (SPO)
Serbian Radical Party (SRS)
Serbian Socialist Party (SPS)
Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)
Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU),
Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU),
People's Democratic Party (NDP), Ukraine
Peasant Party, Ukraine
Progressive Socialist Party, Ukraine

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