Översikter och meddelanden

Europe Safe for Democracy? – The Council of Europe and Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe

> It is all very nice to have new constitutions, to have new legal systems, new institutions, but if you have the people who still believe in the old-fashioned way then it will be an empty box. One of the most democratic constitutions was the Stalinist constitution of 1936.
> Jean-Louis Laurens, Counsellor for Paneuropean Co-operation Programmes, Directorate of Political Affairs

Introduction

In this essay we focus upon one aspect of the democratization processes in Central and Eastern Europe, viz., the activities of the Council of Europe. We have chosen this topic since it has been the focus of very little academic research. Most analyses of international organizations in the post-communist democratization processes have concentrated on other organizations, e.g., the European Community, the OECD (and its PHARE-programme) or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Quite obviously, those organizations have been chosen because of their great financial resources and alleged power, compared to the Council of Europe. Our article should not be seen as an effort to underplay the role other organizations can and do play in supporting democracy and the transition to market economy. In fact, we make no effort to compare the relative importance of various international actors in the democratization process.

From time to time, the Council of Europe has been given high attention in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The firm stand of the organization on democracy and human rights issues has given the Council of Europe a certain amount of good will among the new politicians in these countries. They have been eager to become members of the European "democratic community". We therefore find the role of the Council of Europe interesting, without wishing to exaggerate its power or influence in any way.

Our article is based on official documents of the Council of Europe and on interviews made in Strasbourg. It is notoriously difficult to evaluate the effects of the Council's assistance programmes. To do this, one would have to visit several countries and collect information on all stages of the implementation process. Moreover, the full effects of these programmes cannot be assessed for several years.

For these reasons, our ambition is quite modest. In the first part of our article we give an account of the various activities of the Council of Europe concerning the democratization processes in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In the second part we proceed to discuss how the West can assist these countries in their democratization processes, and the scope for the Council of Europe to provide parts of this assistance. We will then touch upon two more general problems; our analysis can shed some light on the capacity of an international organization to adapt to dramatic changes in its environment. We also discuss, more generally, the role of international actors in stimulating a domestic democratization process.

The Council of Europe and Democracy – a brief background[1]

Since the Council of Europe was formed in 1949, the three pillars of the organization have

been: pluralist democracy, human rights and the rule of law. To perceive the Council of Europe as only a "human rights organization", as many people do, is therefore a too limited view. The Statute of the Council says, that in order to be accepted as a member of the Council, the state must be committed to individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law – a demand which is unusual among international organizations, but similar to those of the European Community.[2]

This requirement can be a resource in the work of the organization, since similarity, in this sense, among member-states may well make co-operation more easy, or less difficult. Also, membership of the Council is seen, by governments and by observers, as a kind of "rubber stamp" of approval of the political regime in a particular country. This stamp may be a necessary, although not sufficient, asset for a country wishing to join other organizations, notably the EC (Nowotny 1990, 60). And failure to get, or loss of, this "rubber stamp" may cause concern within an authoritarian regime. Not to be recognized as a democracy is a high price to pay in today's Europe.

Looking at the past, and the way these rules have been interpreted, the Statute has been taken seriously, in this respect. Countries ruled by authoritarian regimes have not been accepted as members. Two examples are Portugal which was not welcomed until 1976 and Spain which got her membership one year later, when their old regimes had given way to parliamentary democracies (Pridham 1991b, 223). Greece and Turkey have, at various times, had problems with the Council of Europe, or the other way around. After a military junta had taken power in Greece in 1967, a critical report from the Council on the regime (ibid., 216) made her withdraw from the Council in December 1969, the very night before expulsion was going to be discussed (Verney & Couloumbis 1991, 109). When democracy was restored in 1974, Greece applied for new membership and this was accepted in September the same year (ibid., 117). Turkey, where the military on several occasions has taken power, has also been criticized by the Council. Between 1980 and 1986 her membership of the Parliamentary Assembly was suspended (Pridham 1991b, 223; Karaosmanoglu 1991, 162). This positive evaluation of the Council of Europe, regarding its application of the democracy rules, is shared by Pridham, who compares how various international organizations reacted towards the authoritarian regimes of Southern Europe: "Broadly speaking, the EC and the Council of Europe (notably over human rights) had applied principles of political democracy rather than NATO and EFTA (seeing itself essentially as a free-trading association)." (Pridham 1991a, 14-15) At least for Turkey, there are indications that membership of the Council of Europe does matter, and that sanctions from the Council may therefore be of at least some importance: "[M]embership of the Council of Europe is the best expression of Europe's recognition of Turkey as a modern Western democracy." (Karaosmanoglu 1991, 162)

Relations between the Council of Europe and Central and Eastern Europe before 1989

> You must understand, we are an intergovernmental organization. So we cannot go behind the scene. Of course, we had contacts and we had networks but it is more difficult. We are not Amnesty International.
> Jean-Louis Laurens

If the strict rules about democracy, human rights and the rule of law have often been a trump card of the Council, they have at the same time made any major enlargement of the organization unthinkable. Thus, during the first forty years, the name of the organization, the European Council, was rather a misnomer, since those countries of Central and Eastern Europe which were members of the Warsaw Pact, as well as Yugoslavia and Albania, could not become members of the Council. The reason for this was not, of course, these countries' military affiliation with the Soviet Union (i.e.,

among WP members),[3] nor a reflection of Milan Kundera's (and others') doubts whether the Soviet Union was or should be part of Europe, but precisely these countries' lack of pluralist democracy as well as their neglect, or different conception, of human rights.

Official contacts between the Council of Europe and representatives of these countries were not very frequent before the dramatic changes of 1989. As one official of the Secretariat put it: "the Council of Europe was a dirty organization for the other side". In the 1970's some efforts were made to find areas of possible co-operation in what was thought to be less controversial areas, but at some point this was always blocked by Moscow. After Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power in the Soviet Union in 1985, however, the general policy of the organization was to be open to contacts and co-operation with the states of Central and Eastern Europe where there were common interests, provided that this would contribute to the reform process. Some initiatives were also taken by the Council of Europe, e.g., a special meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Council in January 1985 to discuss East-West relations, followed by semi-official visits of the then Secretary General, Mr Oreja, of the Council of Europe to Hungary (June 1987) and Poland (March 1988).[4] During such visits, there were also opportunities to meet representatives of various opposition groups. Some of the parliamentarians who participate in the sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly also had contacts with members of the opposition in Central and Eastern Europe, but the Council of Europe, as an organization, could not have official contacts with such individuals or groups.

Changes in Central and Eastern Europe and Responses from the Council of Europe[5]

One event, signalling an opening, was the speech delivered by the Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on July 6th 1989, which, according to officials of the Council, was "very constructive". But the importance of his speech was soon overtaken by the swift political changes in Central and Eastern Europe later that year. New possibilities opened for closer relations between the Council of Europe and the states of Central and Eastern Europe, at first, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia when walls tumbled and iron curtains were raised.

The activities of the Council of Europe directed towards the Central and East European states can be divided into three main areas:

i) awareness-raising, information and dialogue,

ii) "assistance and co-operation" (here the so-called Demosthenes Programme is the most important), and

iii) "integration", gradually bringing these states into the programmes and activities of the Council of Europe, finally granting them full membership).[6]

These three areas, in the order mentioned, reflect a gradually growing development towards democracy and, at the same time, closer links to the Council of Europe. The idea is both to assist in building democracies and to help these countries to become members of the Council of Europe. Dialogue was established, e.g., when the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General visited the capitals of eight states in Central and Eastern Europe during a tour in March 1990. The information activities consist mainly of building information and documentation units in Central and Eastern Europe covering the Council of Europe and Human Rights. The second area, co-operation, i.e., assistance to become democracies, by the standards of the Council of Europe, will here be given most space.

Co-operation – the Demosthenes Programme

In the end of 1989, the Council started planning for the so-called Demosthenes Programme aiming at providing legislative and

administrative assistance to the Central and East European countries, and this was decided upon at a session in Lisbon in March 1990. From the budget of the Council, and via voluntary contributions, 13 million FF were reserved for this purpose during 1990. For 1991 the amount rose to more than 22 million FF.[7] Obviously, this is not a lot of money if one, for instance, compares with the so-called PHARE-programme of the OECD countries (or G24), co-ordinated by the European Commission. In this programme, 500 million ecu were allocated to help the Central and East European countries, and this was increased in 1991 and 1992 to 850 million ecu and 1 billion ecu, respectively (Pinder 1991a, 30-31).[8] Because of the strict budget, the programme of the Council of Europe must be focused on other, less expensive, projects.

The Demosthenes Programme was partly modelled on the Council's experience of assisting Portugal in its consolidation of democracy after the revolution there in 1975. Many of the problems in Central and Eastern Europe, e.g., these countries' former isolation from Western Europe, are seen as similar to the problems which Portugal faced in the late 1970's. But of course, there are also fundamental differences, not least in their economic systems and their present economic situation.[9] The programme directed towards Portugal is seen as successful by the officials of the Council, and therefore similar methods are used in the co-operation with Eastern Europe, although on a larger scale.

As already mentioned, the programme has two purposes: one is "to strengthen the reform movement towards genuine democracy in [Central and Eastern Europe]" and the second purpose is "to facilitate their smooth and progressive integration in the circles and institutions of European co-operation".[10] Priority is therefore given to the three pillars of the Council: pluralist democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Gradually other issues have also been dealt with under the Demosthenes Programme, e.g., media, social affairs, education, environmental protection and legal co-operation. These are areas where the Council of Europe has been working for several years, so networks of people and organizations who are experts in these fields already exist. These can be seen as one of the Council's important resources.

When it comes to the way the programme is implemented, the initiative must come from the democratizing state and not from the Council of Europe. The reasons given for this are, first of all a wish not to enforce anything and, secondly, an effort to diminish the risk of duplication. The concrete activities consist of workshops, seminars, traineeships, study visits and so on, either on a bilateral or a multilateral basis. When the programme started in 1990, only Hungary, Poland and Czecho-Slovakia were participating, but later on Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Albania, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were also included. Since October 1991, however, all co-operation with Yugoslavia has been suspended.[11]

When the Council is approached by a country asking for assistance, or more euphemistically co-operation, in a field, the Council may put together a group of experts from various countries who are able to give advice on, and present various solutions to, that particular problem. The experts are selected in a way so that their advice suits the conditions of the country. So far, most of the activities have taken place in the form of short meetings, and most of the allocated money has been spent on flight tickets and hotel bills for the experts. In other words, they have been working for free, or someone else, often national governments, has paid for their work. This has made it possible to get more done than one might have expected, considering the limited financial resources.

Co-operation – Demo-Droit

One part of the Demosthenes Programme deals with legislation and the transformation of the legal systems of new, and future, member states, and this programme is called Demo-Droit. Assistance is given both in the drafting of new constitutions and other laws and in their implementation. The countries which in

the beginning of 1992 were taking part in this programme were Hungary, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In the beginning of 1990, a special commission was organized, as a satellite organ to the Council of Europe, to help countries in altering or drafting new constitutions. This commission is known as the Venice Commission or, more formally, as the European Commission for Democracy through Law, and it consists of experts on constitutional law, administrative law and international law. Assistance has been given to, among others, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Estonia, Latvia and Russia. Hungary turned to the Commission for help in drafting its law on minorities. According to an official who took part in meetings with the Romanian representatives, it is hard to prove that the assistance given by the Venice Commission influenced the Romanian constitution. Rather, the Romanians knew what they wanted, and the Commission was approached in order to provide a kind of "alibi". On the other hand, nothing in the constitution could be criticized, the way it was drafted. How it is implemented is another question, according to the same official. Bulgaria and the Baltic states seem to have been more prepared to have a dialogue.

Another type of assistance, as already mentioned, is to help in the implementation of the new laws. Here, study trips, seminars and so on are organized for all kinds of personnel in the legal system, e.g., judges, police-men, lawyers and prison staff. In this field, too, there is some experience from assistance to Portugal in the late 1970's.

Integration

The Council quickly responded to the changes in Central and Eastern Europe by inventing a new status "special guest status" and by granting this to some of the countries of the former Soviet bloc. Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia, as well as the Soviet Union, got special guest status on June 8th 1989 and in 1990 Czecho-Slovakia and Bulgaria got special guest status on May 7th and July 2nd, respectively. Romania, however, had to wait until February 1st 1991 until it was given special guest status. A main idea seems to have been that assistance and co-operation could start, when a country had been given the special guest status. When it comes to full membership a prerequisite was that free elections had been held in the country. Therefore Poland had to wait until November 1991 since her elections in 1989 were only semi-free, while Hungary became a member already in November 1990, Czecho-Slovakia in February 1991,[12] and Bulgaria in May, 1992 (e.g., RFE/RL Research Report No 20, 21, 1992).

NGOs

> In some countries it is more important to co-operate with NGOs than with the government. I cannot be more precise on that, but (laughter) you may imagine what I mean.
> Jean-Louis Laurens

The Council of Europe does not only co-operate with governments and parliaments but also with what is sometimes referred to as "civil society". Since the early 1950's, a network of Non Governmental Organizations which co-operate with the Council of Europe in various fields, e.g., human rights, has been created. About 350 of these have obtained consultative status with the Council of Europe. This network was useful for the Council when establishing links with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, since NGOs already had contacts with various groups in these countries, something which the Council of Europe had been hindered from, due to its status as an Intergovernmental Organization. Starting in 1990, the Council of Europe has invited representatives of various NGOs from Central and Eastern Europe to Strasbourg during the sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly. Here, the NGOs with consultative status were asked to suggest whom to invite. Meetings have also been organized, as part of the Demosthenes Programme, in Poland and Hungary on various topics related to the activities

of NGOs. In Budapest there was a conference in May 1991 on the role of parliaments and NGOs in the democratic process, where "there was a very hot discussion, because the parliamentarians consider they are the only representatives of the sovereign will of the people. And they see a possible competition from NGOs, something which is not very good for their own conception of democracy."[13]

Analysis

Purposes – democratization and integration

Even from a short and incomplete overview like this, some interesting observations can be made about the role of the Council of Europe in supporting the democratization processes in Central and Eastern Europe. We shall first discuss two specific questions, namely what kind of help the West can give to the countries in Central and Eastern Europe to assist them in their democratization process and, secondly, the possibilities of the Council of Europe to provide this.

As we have seen, the purposes of the assistance to, or the co-operation with the states in Central and Eastern Europe are democratization and integration. The idea is that these states should become democracies and, eventually, members of the Council of Europe. This goes back to the Statute of the Council of Europe, and its strict demands concerning the political regime of a member state. Here, it may thus be justified to talk about co-operation, instead of assistance, since it is not only a matter of helping poor cousins but rather of making them full members of the family.

But what does the West, in general, and more specifically the Council of Europe have to offer the democratizing states? Here we agree with Rollo (1990, 100-101) that "the first thing that Western countries can do is to admit that they have no special wisdom about the process of transition. The problem of substituting democracy and a market-based economic system for a totalitarian one has not been faced anywhere before." Being a native speaker of a language does not necessarily make you a qualified language teacher, nor does living in a democracy make you an expert on *transitions* to democracy. A similar uncertainty, by the way, is seen in the field of economics, where economists from the West, despite all their rigorous theories and econometric models, show a great deal of disagreement on the necessary reforms to be taken in order to make the difficult transition from a planned economy to a mixed market-economy.

Particularly, the drafting of new democratic constitutions raises several important questions. What electoral system should be chosen? When is proportionality better than a majority system? What powers should be given to the chief of state? When is a parliamentary system better than a (semi-) presidential one? Could a system of power-sharing prevent the risk of political polarization and breakdown of the system? On these and other questions concerning the proper constitution there is no agreement among political scientists (cf. e.g., Linz 1990a; Lipset 1990; Horowitz 1990; Linz 1990b; Lijphart 1991; Horowitz 1991).

What we can learn from this, once we have admitted our lack of expertise, is to show a certain degree of modesty when it comes to providing answers, and also, as pointed out by officials of the Council, the necessity of allowing the countries to make mistakes. Here, maybe, lies one strength of the guidance and assistance offered by the Council of Europe. It does not have any prestigious German or French or American or Swedish model to defend and to export. The advice the Council can give, instead, is a mixture of West European experience of how a democracy does and does not work. Certainly, this mixture of advice may sometimes be contradictory, but on the other hand, there are important differences among the new democracies themselves, so this should not necessarily be seen as something negative.

Yet, there are some things the West can do. It knows "about some of the components and objectives of change. [On the political side,

priority should be given to:] institution-building, party-building, advice on constitutional reforms and voting systems; and help with reforming central and local bureaucracy and introducing modern public-sector management methods." (Rollo 1990, 100-101)

All the things Rollo mentions as possible "export products" of the West have been provided by the Council of Europe, either via its General Secretariat or through its Parliamentary Assembly. Institution-building, advice on constitutional reform, reforming the bureaucracy at various levels and modern management methods are all parts of the Demosthenes Programme. And we believe that the way the Parliamentary Assembly integrates the new political parties, and helps them adapt to international party co-operation, can really be seen as one way of strengthening these parties. It seems as if the Council has made a virtue out of necessity and decided to concentrate on certain key areas, above all to transfer knowledge, rules and attitudes, thought to be necessary for a functioning democracy.

The Council of Europe adapted rather fast to the changes in Central and Eastern Europe. It might even be said that the breakdown of communist rule had a vitalizing effect. The opportunity was taken, dialogue established. The creation of the special guest status provided opportunities for contact with the post-communist states.

The assistance programmes have developed at low costs, with as little bureaucracy as possible, and utilizing contacts with member countries, professional experts, and NGOs.

One particular strength of the Council of Europe seems to be its networks of experts and NGOs in various fields, particularly in the field of human rights. This provides the organization with expertise, and probably makes it a "linking-pin organization"[14] in this field. Two organizations may be given as examples of this kind of close co-operation. One is the International Institute of Human Rights (also known as the René Cassin Institute) based in Strasbourg with which the Council of Europe co-operates on various human rights issues. Another institute is the recently founded International Institute for Democracy, the activities of which include training courses for staff members of Central and East European parliaments. NGOs were also important for the Council since they were more free to contact people or organizations, something which the Council could not do, due to its inter-governmental status.

Last but not least, the contacts with NGOs seem to be a good, although of course not the only, way to assist in the democratization process. As Catarina Kinnvall and Anders Uhlin (1993) have shown there is a high correlation between membership in International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and either democracy or liberalization of an authoritarian regime. Although it may be difficult to talk about causes and effects, it seems plausible that when a state ruled by an authoritarian regime is exposed to the contacts with NGOs, this may promote a democratization process. Probably such exposure is also beneficial during the consolidation phase of democracy (cf. Diamond 1991, 38-39, 51-55).

Yet, even a brief look at the resources allocated for the Demosthenes Programme makes one thing clear: the Council of Europe cannot be seen as the *deus ex machina* bringing the East European transitions to a happy end. The sheer size of the task excludes such a role for the organization. What is needed is a change of mentality among whole populations, and that, for obvious reasons, goes far above the small budget of the Council of Europe. Its role in the drama must rather be the one of the audience, that gives applause when it likes what it sees, and whistles when the actors perform badly, while hoping that the performance they attend will not turn out to be a tragedy.

A second problem, besides the small resources, is the difficulty to evaluate the programmes. Often we will not know whether it was all worthwhile until many years have passed. To give but one example, when can one say that a constitution or a law on minorities is working? Or that it is the best possible? And how do we evaluate the effects of a seminar which taught the East Europeans

that the West European models could not be applied in their countries?

The risk of duplication or, in other words, lack of co-ordination with other donors or organizations active in the field is obvious, but seems hard to avoid, despite efforts to co-ordinate. As Mr Laurens said: "The problem with co-ordination is that everyone wants to co-ordinate but nobody wants to be co-ordinated." Yet, the approach chosen by the Council, to let the recipient countries take the initiative, seems to reduce the risk. What the Council of Europe can offer is a mixture of several countries', successful and less successful, efforts to deal with that difficult way of making politics called democracy. Writing about the European Community, John Pinder (1991b, 9) claims that there is an unbalance between the economic and the political assistance given to Central and Eastern Europe:

> While much thought and substantial money have been devoted to facilitate the transition to market economies, surprisingly little effort has been given by the Community and the West to assisting the process of creating stable pluralist democracies [---] In short, both the formal structures of democratic government and the infrastructure of civil society have to be developed.

If his observation is correct, and we believe it is, then the Council of Europe, which can be seen as a bank of experience and expertise on some very central issue-areas of a modern democracy, is important. Whether the states want to make use of that expertise or not must be their decision.

Our conclusion is that the Council of Europe has the expertise and the contacts it needs to give advice on fundamental questions related to the functioning of a modern welfare democracy. It seems likely, though, that the demand will by far exceed the supply.

International organizations in a turbulent environment

Leaving the assistance programme and widening the perspective a little, we would like just to touch upon two more general issues illustrated by this case. The first is the possibilities of an international organization to adapt to dramatic changes in its environment. The second is the role of international actors in stimulating a domestic democratization process.

The dramatic changes in Central and Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union have serious implications for the European, and global, political system at large, not least for the international organizations of that system. Many of these organizations, e.g., the United Nations, the NATO and the Council of Europe are products of the Second World War and the Cold War. In a new international political context, Darwin's "survival of the fittest" may not be too far from reality. In other words, the new situation puts enormous pressure on these organizations to integrate new members, to develop new procedures, (finding a good Byelorussian-Hungarian interpreter is, in this context, only a minor problem!) and to find their profile among the ever growing number of international organizations.

This can be clearly seen in Europe where organizations such as the European Community, the Council of Europe, the CSCE, NATO and the West European Union try to find areas where they can dominate the field. If this "struggle" is a reality, where can the Council have a voice? Eva Nowotny (1990, 61), speculating on this, mentions human rights, European parliamentarism and codification and standardization of European law as some possible areas. We do have some doubts about the role the Council will play in European parliamentarism, if we envisage an expansion of the European Community, but we think she is quite right about human rights and legal affairs. Human rights have also been suggested as a "Council-area" by Barry Buzan (1990, 158), and comparing the "penetrating capacity" of various (part-)European organizations, Geoffrey Pridham (1991a, 213) also claims that "the Council of Europe can act as a channel for international opinion pressures." It seems, then, as if the Council of Europe might continue to play a role even if the European Community were to grow by five or eight new

members, especially if we recall the importance attached to membership of the Council of Europe as a first step towards membership of the European Community which, to quote Adrian Hyde-Price (1991, 11), "is the real prize to which they all aspire". To us, therefore, the survival of the Council of Europe seems to be best secured in a close co-operation with the European Community and with strong concentration on the two important areas of human rights and some aspects of legal affairs, where the Council has both the experience and the expertise.

International actors and democratization processes – some concluding reflections[15]

Finally, what about the role of international actors in a democratization process? In his seminal work on transition theory Laurence Whitehead claims that in the cases studied in the project *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* "internal forces were of primary importance in determining the course and outcome of the transition attempt, and international factors played only a secondary role".[16] But he also admits that this may be due to the countries studied or the historical period. "Within postwar Czechoslovakia the internal forces may well have been as favorable for a democratic transition as within most of the countries considered here, but the geopolitical location was adverse." (Whitehead 1986, 4) Considering the general importance of domestic actors (notably the changed policy of the Soviet Union) for the Central and East European transitions, it may well be worth considering the role of international organizations as well. In an article from 1984 Samuel Huntington (1984, 207), although generally sceptic about the prospects for democratization in Central and Eastern Europe, mentions the positive role played by "governments and political parties of the European Community [... in encouraging] the emergence of democratic institutions in Spain and Portugal, and the desire of those two countries plus Greece to join the community provided an additional incentive for them to become democratic." Similar observations have been made by Pridham (1991b), Whitehead (1991, 59-60) and Giuseppe di Palma (1990, 187).

Nevertheless, international aspects seem to be of greater importance for the Central and East European transitions. The activities of international actors – states, political parties, international organizations as the EC, the CSCE and the IMF – are easily observed.

There seem to be several reasons for this. Four differences seem particularly important for our discussion.[17] First, the breakdown of communist rule is of course directly related to a change in the international political system. It was facilitated by the détente between the USA and the USSR. Now the bipolar structure of the Cold War is giving way to something else.

Second, the fast diffusion of breakdown of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the breakdown of authoritarian rule in various countries in other parts of the world, points to the importance of international factors. Rosenau (1992) points to the importance of the global internationalization, the development of media technology, and the increasing economic interdependence. This also means that the number of countries involved is larger than in the democratization of Southern Europe in the 1970's. If we include all the republics of the Soviet Union, more than 25 countries in Central and Eastern Europe have left communist rule, and more than half of these have embarked on the road towards democracy. The number of countries might still grow, due to ethnic groups trying to establish new states.

Third, for several reasons the post-communist states can be seen as especially susceptible for international action. a) Many of these states, particularly in the former Soviet Union, have a complete lack of democratic experience. b) The economy in these countries is in bad shape; they need assistance for transformation into a capitalist system, and they also in many cases need acute assistance to prevent economic breakdown and destitution. c) The post-communist states need to "come in from the cold", i.e., to gain international recognition

in a situation where their former raison d'être has collapsed. d) They also need a new system of international security, since the former bipolar system has ceased to exist.

Fourth, although the breakdown of communist rule in many instances was a very swift process, the creation of a full-fledged democracy seems to be an arduous and time-consuming process. The democratization process is indeed endangered in several of the post-communist states. There are several reasons for this, which can here only be hinted upon: the lack of democratic traditions, the severe economic difficulties, the strong interethnic conflicts, the fact that many political leaders of the new states come from the old nomenklatura, and the risk of political polarization. This leaves room for assistance, as well as for pressure. The role of international actors thus seems greater during the process of consolidation than during the breakdown of communist rule.

This implies that in Central and Eastern Europe, international actors will probably be more important during the consolidation of democracy, than during the actual transition phase. The transition from communism was very swift, and there was simply no time for international actors to react.[18] The transition to democracy seems indeed to be a lengthy process. Our hypothesis seems to get some support from Laurence Whitehead's observation (1991, 52):

> [A]lthough during the transition phase it may be reasonable to concentrate on the parts played by various political actors, the most important of whom will typically be domestic, during the consolidation phase more long-term structural constraints become more determinant; these will often embody some combination of domestic and international elements.

Clearly, international organizations, IGOs or INGOs, sometimes do influence democratization processes, just as they are themselves affected by, and have to adapt to, "external" changes due to domestic regime transitions. So far, assistance provided by the Council of Europe does seem to push the process in the right direction. But the strength of that push is not only difficult, but impossible, to evaluate at this stage.

Sadly, perhaps, we must also remember that whether or not someone is prepared to listen, is his or her own decision. It is very difficult to force people to "democratize" and to comply with the rules of the game if they do not want to. Especially so for a relatively weak organization (no military power and a small budget) such as the Council of Europe. Ultimately, therefore, it depends what is at stake, whether or not the new democracies will accept assistance and learn from the West European experience, and quite clearly there are enormous differences between the countries in this regard. Yugoslavia shows that sometimes good intentions, expertise and a wish from abroad to assist are not enough. Asked about the symbolic importance attached to membership of the Council of Europe Mr Schumann replied: "Yes, but you see, that is good for a certain time, but if they have nothing to eat or if they have no social future, then all symbolism and all nice words about democracy and human rights are not taken any longer." To these perils we may have to add the sometimes shattering force of suppressed nationalism.

Tomas Niklasson – Anders Sannerstedt

Notes

1. When no references are given, facts and figures are taken from interviews with senior officials from the General Secretariat of the Council of Europe. These interviews were made during our common research visit to the Council of Europe in February 1992. Financial support for Tomas Niklasson was provided by Stiftelsen Lars Hiertas Minne and Jacob Letterstedts resestipendiefond of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, and for Anders Sannerstedt by The Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and the Social Sciences; for this we here express our gratitude. We would also like to thank the diplomats and the staff at the Permanent Swedish Delegation to the Coun-

cil of Europe for their kind assistance before and during our visit to Strasbourg.

2. Article 237 of the Rome Treaty, as well as the Birkelbach Report of the Political Committee of the European Parliament from 1962

3. In the Statute of the Council, it is explicitly stated that the Council must not deal with military issues.

4. *State of relations between the Council of Europe and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe*. Document published by the Council of Europe, May 1991

5. An excellent survey of the changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 is given in de Nevers 1990. Cf. Niklasson, Tomas, "The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1988-89: Interactions between Domestic Change and Foreign Policy" in Klingemann, Pridham & Vanhanen (eds), *Democratization in Eastern Europe*, (forthcoming)

6. Council of Europe. Co-operation and Assistance Programmes for the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Information Paper SG/INF (91) 1, 9 January 1991.

7. Nilsson 1991, 463. Cf. *Co-operation and Assistance Programmes with Central and Eastern European Countries – Annual Report for 1991*, Council of Europe, SG/INF (91) 4, 3

8. PHARE stands for Poland and Hungary: aid for economic reconstruction, although probably in French. Later on, however, other countries were included.

9. Further differences, as mentioned by Jerzy J. Wiatr in an IPSA-paper (1991, 9-11), are: emerging sharp class divisions, Right-wing forces gain power, ethnic conflicts and a different international context. See also Pridham 1991b, 4

10. *Council of Europe Co-operation and Assistance Programmes for Countries of Central and Eastern Europe*, Council of Europe, SG/INF (91) 2, 3

11. This was the situation in the beginning of February 1992.

12. *State of relations between the Council of Europe and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe*. Document published by the Council of Europe, May 1991, and *Council of Europe Co-operation and Assistance Programmes for Countries of Central and Eastern Europe*, Council of Europe document, SG/INF (91) 2

13. Jean-Louis Laurens, interview.

14. Referring to Aldrich & Whetten, Christer Jönsson (1986, 42) describes linking-pin organizations as "the nodes through which a network is loosely joined".

15. Comparing the United Nations and Amnesty International, Katrin Westberg (1992) discusses the methods used by international organizations working for human rights in democracy. In her paper she emphasises that information seems to be an important resource for international organizations.

16. Whitehead, Laurence, 1986, 4. More recently, after the transitions in Central and Eastern Europe, Laurence Whitehead has become even more careful about diminishing the role of international actors, as the same time as he points out the difficulties involved in making clear distinctions between domestic and external actors (Whitehead 1991, 45, 52-58).

17. Other differences could have been mentioned, e.g., the different character of the authoritarian regimes.

18. Whether or not international organizations also played a role in the "pre-transition phase", i.e., during the breakdown of the authoritarian regimes, is a large and complicated question which will not be discussed here.

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Mr Erik Harremoes, Director of Legal Affairs

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Mr Klaus Schumann, Head of External Relations Division

Ms Dina Shelton, International Institute of Human Rights

Ms Enie Waechter, Executive Director, International Institute for Democracy

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Kan statsvetare ta ställning i politik?

Det är gott om samhällsvetare som frejdigt tar ställning i politiska frågor, främst ekonomer men också statsvetare. Och ändå hör man då och då den gamla maximen från 50-talet att statskunskap är en vetenskap *om* politik, inte *i* politik. Och jag har vänner som med engagemang läser John Rawls, Brian Barry och Ronald Dworkin och trots det försäkrar att de är "värdenihilister". Den ekvationen tycks inte riktigt gå ihop. Det kan kanske vara mödan värt att ägna saken några rader.

Jag har diskuterat frågan om statsvetenskap och politik i två böcker, *Den uppenbara lösningen* (1977) och *Forskningsanknytning genom disputation* (1991). Eftersom jag knappast kan göra anspråk på att där ha sagt någonting originellt, verkar det kanske självupptaget i överkant att i första hand referera till dem. Men praktiska skäl väger tyngre än den olägenheten. Läsaren kan finna fullständigare referenser i notapparaten till de två böckerna.

När värdenihilismen och liknande teorier en gång presenterades kontrasterades omdömen i värdefrågor mot påståenden i sakfrågor. De senare, tänkte man sig, har utsikt att uppfylla vetenskapens objektivitetskrav därför att de kan ges en säker grund i observationer av verkligheten. Något motsvarande fundament finns inte för värdeomdömen. De är i sista hand uttryck för viljeyttringar eller känslor eller andra subjektiva omständigheter, så såg man saken (*Forskningsanknytning* 107 ff).

En inflytelserik riktning inom vetenskapsfilosofin utgick från att påståenden i sakfrågor måste falla tillbaka på sinnesintryck som inte kan vara föremål för tvivel (se t ex Ayer 1972). Sinnesintrycken buntar vi ihop till data, data till generaliseringar och generaliseringar till teorier som vi kan utnyttja för prognoser. Vetenskapsteorins uppgift är att formulera reglerna för de logiska operationer som leder från sinnesintryck till teori (*Forskningsanknytning* 37 f).