EVOLUTION OF MULTI PARTY SYSTEM IN POLAND

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled *EVOLUTION OF MULTI PARTY SYSTEM IN POLAND* submitted by **Manoj Purohit**, Centre for Russia, Central Asia and East European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067, India. For the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy**, is his own and has not been submiited so far, for any other Degree or Diploma of any University.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evalution.

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Supervisor

PROF. SHAMS-UD-DIN
Chairperson

To
My Parents
&
Mou,
with love

CONTENTS

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Manoj Purohit

PREFACE

The communist party has always connoted two features, first the vanguard of the working class, and second, the monopoly exercise of the power of the state. The first is the Core of Lenninist Doctrine: but the second has been a practice dating from the post revolutionary regime. These two aspects were not usually from the post revolutionary regime. These two aspects were not usually adequately distinguished: but both have now been abandoned. The disintegration of USSR was preceded by a wave of pro-democratic movements in the East European countries. The changes in Poland took place in the wider context of the decline of communism in Eastern Europe. Poland has always been something of a maverick in the Eastern block. In 1989 it again lived to that reputation. Its ruling party, the Polish United Workers Party or PZPR became the first in Eastern Europe to come to terms with the erosion of its power. In an act that was as dramatic as it was unprecedented, the party gave up its hallowed "leading role"- that is, its monopoly on power and agreed, at first de facto and eventually de jure, to reconstitute itself as a "loyal opposition" within a genuine if nascent parliamentary system.

In the case of Poland it was the prior existence of a mass social movement, in the form of Solidarity, that effectively broke communist rule in the country nearly ten years before it was finally swept away throughout Eastern Europe as a whole. This had a major influence on political processs of post-communist change, the emergence of new parties and, the institutionalisation of the new political order.

Processes of party development were, nevertheless by no means limited to Solidarity supporters and forces associated with the free trade union. Party formation was, indeed, initially a relatively slow process but gathered pace after the passage of relevant legislation in August 1990. Party growth proliferated throughout 1991, prior to the first free general election and the process continued throughout 1992 and 1993 as the fragmented parliament provided litle by way of example to encourage processes of institutional consolidation that might counter the fluidity that prevailed on the Polish political stage. By mid-1993 the number of political parties registered was well above 200. Only a small number had any real political significance. Though the holding of a second parliamentary election in September 1993, further, provides a valuable opportunity to chart the development of different parties or groups of parties in terms of their institutionalisation and evolving role in Poland's political system.

In the 1995 presidential elections, Lech Walesa, the founder of the Solidarity trade union suffered a narrow defeat at the hands of former communist Aleksander Kwasniewski.

The study acquires importance in the context of the changed political landscape in Eastern Europe in the post-Soviet, post-Cold war era. What conditions in post-Communist affect the rise of competitive political parties capable of providing significant options to the electorate is the essential question that has to be answered. Poland was the first of the East European countries to break with the Communist

power monopoly and this created its own set of problems. It was also the first to implement a radical programme of economic reform and take a range of measures to establish a market economy. Moreover, the unique experience of the Solidarity movement and the problematic course of party development in Poland make this study even more significant.

The present study proposes to make an analysis of the economic political changes that had taken place in post-Communist Poland. It would also study the causes and consequences of the transition of Communist Poland into a democratic, pro-market, pluralist nation. The Political Economy of transition process in Poland and factors responsible for transition, political pluralism and fragmentation of party system in the initial phase of transition and the institutionalization of a relatively stable political order would be studied.

The first chapter gives the theoretical framework of transition process and the factors responsible for transition. The second chapter gives a historical account of the rise of solidarity movement and its role in bringing about the collapse of hegenomic communist rule in Poland. It also analyse the semi-competitive parliamentry election of 1989 and the fully competitive elections of 1991, 1993, 1997 and the Presidential Elections of 1995.

In the third chapter it gives a historical account of the political development in the post-communist Poland and the theortical framework of party system with its role in Political Development of Poland. The last chapter, which is the conclusion,

deals with the processes in post communist Poland. It also tries to analyse the hegemonic, polarized, fragmented and pluralist phases in the consolidation of party systems in post communist Poland.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Political Economy of transition process in Poland and factors responsible for transition

The collapse of Socialism in the countries of Eastern Europe and USSR is a major turning point in the history of our country. Questions confronting society two decades back are no longer seen as relevant. Socialism as an ideology of political mobilization is found to be incapable of playing this role at least in its previous forms. When we consider the case of Poland the collapse of socialism in the transition to market economy didn't appear as happenstance. In fact the crisis of the socialist path of development was reflected in the countinous social upheavals that Poland went through.

With the death of Stalin in 1953 the attempted rapid Stalinization of Poland (1948-53) lost momentum and eventually even saw a partial reversal with the society remaining a defacto mixed economy. Agriculture remained largely in private hands and diverse milieus of urban petty entrepreneurs preserved. Developmental strategies behind the Gomulka and Gierek periods (1956-70 and 1971-80 respectively) envisioned a steady transformation towards the ideal of the mature Socialist Society involving the emergence of a well developed industrial system.[1]

The worker's and the food riots in December 1970 brought down the

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[1]   Zubek Voytek and Gentleman Judith, "Economic Crisis and pluralism in Poland and Mexico", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.109, No.2, 1994, p.337.

Gomulka regime and with it the original post stalinist development programme. By the mid 1960s, the economy had stagnated and political pressure had began to rise.

Therefor in order to understand the transition process we have to analyse how the Socialist path of development reached to a dead end. My analysis of the process will be primarily theoretical and focussing more on economic and political aspects of the many economists and political scientist who tried to theorise the socialist system in Eastern Europe. Janos Kornai, stands out as someone who come up with an innovative model of how the Socialist economy functions an in a seris of publications, he sketched out the development traiectory of a typical socialist economy. He was considering an economy where all means of production were publicly owned and all allocation of resources took place on the basis of a Central Plan which was implemented on a non-market basis. Thus, there would be a Central Plan Authority (CPA) and a given number of firms. The CPA would fix targets for output for various goods and plan out the investment norms for each firm. Each firm in turn, was required to carry out the demands of the central plan as efficiently as possible. Such a system was also predicted. On the existence of continuous full employment. Since all firms was publicly owned, they were backed up by the state and every firm were such that the state will always be available to bail it out in the event of the firm facing any problem including bankruptcy.

By this mainly the absence of an upper limit on the ability of the firm to carry out investment decisions, which Kornai called "Investment Hunger" envisaged

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a phenomenon of acute excess demand for investment goods as well as labour. There was continuous shortage in the economy which fed upon itself and induced wide spread inefficiency. So much so that a firm's decisions were not dependent on the volume of profits earned. This inefficiency manifested itself in the form of labour indiscipline, slow down in technological progress, excess capacity and so on.

The entire system was bureaucratised top down in structure. The forgoing sterlised picture has been discussed in greater detail by Prabhat Pattnaik (1988 to 1989). In that article, P. Pattnaik argued that Kornai solution to the problem of lack of accountability of firms namely; allowing firms to function as independent entities in a market would lead to either accelerating inflation or unemployment. He himself postulated that a restructuring of central planning but accompanied by greater democratization which coul enable non-market forms of discipline like public opinion to bear upon the functioning of firms. Kornai himself shifted from the above mentioned market socialist position saying that, only private ownership and liability is capable of ensuring the discipline necessary for efficient economic functioning, similarly some amount of unemployment is always required for ensuring labour discipline. Such a position turns back to Kalecki (1943) where he discussed why unemployment is necessary within a capitalist system. Kornai's position therefore amounted to saying that the only viable path of development open to any economy was only a capitalist path.

The actual trajectory of Poland's development upto 1989 reflects a

continuous attempt by the communist party to fashion out a viable development strategy. There were important social factors too but for the present study we shall be focussing on the economic aspect.

Like in all other European countries Poland too went in for progressive introduction of market relations within the centrally planned economy. However, this did not yield the desired efforts and infact the existing problem got compounded and the economic development of Poland on a socialist basis had become impossible.

The Socialist counterpart of this economic crisis manifested itself in alienation of the working class from the entire socialist project. So much so the Solidarity union managed to rally large sections of the workers to the working class state. The bureaucratisation that came to characterise central planning left no vote for workers to participate in decision making. The socialist path of development if it is to be viable can only be based on such a participative work process that constitutes an alternative to capitalist form of work discipline mainly unemployment.

Since Poland was committed to provide full employment there was widespread lack of work discipline. The state tried to combat it through administrative means and this only heightened the feeling that the Communist party which was heither to claiming the ruling on behalf of the workers was actually ruling over the workers.

Complimentary to this social dislocation was a process of acute political differentiation within the Communist party. A strong section of opinion arose within the Communist party articulating the need for political forms that confirmed to the desired economic structure. This amounted to saying that as markets began to be given more and more space in the economy, the political space should also be opened up to different political opinions including and upto other political parties besides the communist party.

This line of reasoning needs to be developed because the eventual change over in 1989 was actually led by a section of the Communist party itself. Our stylised overview of this aspect has to be flashed out.

Any analysis of transition in Eastern Europe will be incomplete if the international aspects are not adequately brought in. To start with, the aim to capture external market through a major export drive accompanied by import liberalization, led to a situation of domestic unemployment and an encouraging stagnant exports.

The East European experience should warn us against current propoganda being carried out in the name of free trade that political strategic factors have no role in international economic relation as per the political aspects are concerned. The countries of the west especially the USA had a major role in sustaining dissent in Poland and helping the dissidents articulate themselves into a consent opposition capable of overthrowing the socialist system. The details of such involvements are well known.

The weakness inherent in the socialist society and its inability to articulate a distinct social ethic left it defenseless against the onslaught of "Western Culture". This problem was compounded by the social crisis that was engulfing Poland at that time where in the polish people in their quest for alternatives ended up assimilating a one sided picture of western society and more particularly about the likelihood of its application in Poland if only they went in for capitalism.

The experience of transition to a market economy in Poland has been a long and torturous process. Any analytical study of this process will have to draw parallels with the general study of transition to capitalism that various economies-developed and developing have undergone. So for instance, the transition process in Japan as opposed to India or Malaysia or Nigeria need to be seen in their particular historical context. The question at hand is given the background of colonialism and the currently persisting inequal world economic system. Can a transition to a developed market economy be possible under the present circumstances in a country that is only beginning the process of developing capitalism.

The answers to such questions necessitates a look into how transition to capitalism has actually transpired across the world. Irfan Habib (1995) in an interesting study has developed Karl Marx's idea that the transition to a coherent capitalism was possible in the countries like Britain because among other things it could ensure a continuos primitive accumulation of capital through colonial

explotation. The subsequent development of France. Germany, USA and so on, was possible as they were able to link themselves to this system of colonial exploitation under favourable circumstances that is not becoming colonised themselves. Such process has been widely documented and analysed. The case of Japan while being distinct in certain respect followed this general pattern.[2]

In the 20th century transition of a developing country into a mature market economy has never been a general phenomena. Various developing countries have persisted in some sort of underdeveloped status encompassing various forms of pre-capitalist relations like feudalism etc. Those countries which has progressed on a capitalist path have done so by linking themselves in various ways with the world capitalist system. In this regard see Prabhat Pattnaik's 1997 study and his remarks in "East Asian Strategies". So while one is considering a formerly socialist economy with underdeveloped private property relations going in for a transition to a market economy (market economy here is used interchangeably with capitalist economy) the international contexts with which such development is taking place is also an important factor which determines the outcome of such a process.

Let us take up from where Kornai's left it. In a centrally planned economy because of the existence of a soft budget constraint firms become inefficient and this leads to overall stagnation. As advocated by Kornai in his later writings only a hardening of the firm's budget constraints can ensure a efficient economic

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[2]   Martin Myant "Transforming Socialist Economies: The Case of Poland and Czechoslovakia", Pub. Edward Elqar Publishing Limited, England, 1993, pp.81-107.

functioning. However, even if we accept these arguments the functioning of capitalist economy with various forms of monopoly will lead to inefficient resource allocation. Such is a conclusion which one will draw from conventional welfare economies but our analysis cannot be constrained by the narrow parameters of welfare economics. When one is considering the transition from a socialist economy to market economy. One is simultaneously talking about how institutions can be built where in the market will be able to function on a self sustaining basis.

This process as history has shown is a long one and as Marx has correctly pointed out the first stage is one of primitive accumulation of capital which refers to all those processes which ensure a meaningful separation or a process of separation of society into "Capitalists" and "Workers".

The privatization process in Poland through the various schemes irrespective of the stated intention of the policy makers has resulted in this process of class differentiation. Policy makers in Russia have been quite candid in this regard saying that the Russian state capitalists required that a class of property owners envisaged at the earliest. "Unfortunately" such a process is marked by extreme movements in the development of the national economy. Since it is happening within a context of world capitalism that has already consolidated itself, all those opportunities (colonialism) open to the currently advanced countries which were not open to Poland. Not only that the United States and the G7 countries in general are in a position to decisively influence the nature and pattern of Poland's development

when American policy makers or consultants in Eastern Europe were accounting in an indifferent performance of post reformed Poland compare to the present conditions in Poland to the wild west of 19th century USA. They are missing the crucial international context.[3] Any judgement on the success or failure of reforms in Poland can only be undertaken when one has examined what was historically possible.

Given the sum total of existing economic and political conditions which can be summarised as follows:

a)   A fledgling private sector that has acquired ownership over significant parts of the economy but lacks the necessary "experience" or "where withold" to develop productivity.

b)   A foreign capital that enjoys privileges that is disappropriate with its contributions to the economic development. Here foreign capital should be understood as both productive capital as well as finance capital.

It is well known that in a world where finance capital has been globalised and one where the domestic economy is subject to IMF world conditionalities the level of domestic activities depend essentially of a state of confidence of foreign investors i.e. finance capital[4]

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[3]   John Mettale, "Post Communist Eastern Europe: Privatization and the Second fundamental theorm" ed. Iliacnes Zloch Christy, Cheltenham, UK, 1998, pp.69-96.

[4]   Prabhat Pattnaik- "Phan vs market in the Contemprory World," 1995.

Indeed the very process of Polish development has witnessed a continuous struggle to retain the confidence of foreign investors. Such a struggle has not only shaped the policy counters of Poland but also fashioned the political institutions that post-reformist Poland has evolved.

Its is well known that investors confidence is dependant on "a continued adhering of reforms" which is furthered when there are infrequent changes in government for instance a presidential form of government with fixed terms of 6 or 7 years is always preferable to a parliamentary system with uncertain coalition and so on. The debate on the form of government in present day India has also been conducted in this background. We leave out of consideration of the activities of the plethora of "experts" from the developed countries who arrived in Poland to advise then on the transition process. The experience of Polish economy during transitions can be summarised as follows.

The initial period saw a decline in output and employment. The subsequent period has not seen any great growth with some improvement. Annual GDP increased between 1992 and 1997 and reached US$135.7 billion in 1997.

Inflation remained high with annual rates of 30% in 1994 and declining them on the share of private sector in GDP was account 60% in 1995-96 and there were further commitments in the constitution of May 1997 for further privatisation.[5] The foreign debt problem remained acute but concession from foreign creditors have

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[5]   Ken Morita and Kazuo Zaiki, "A comparative analysis of privatization: A Chinese way and a Polish way, ed. Lliance Zloch-Christy",Cheltenham, UK, 1997, p. 97-106.

helped to case the situation some what of the total labour force approximately 36%

in industry and allied activities, 27% in agriculture and allied activities and 37% in

services. The unemployment rate was high in early 1990s at around 18% but by

1996 had fallen to 13.6%.

All these are official data though there are reasons to suspect the particular

magnitudes. The general directions has been as indicated by these figures.

Transition to the Market Economy: The Role of Multiparty System

When socialism collapsed in 1989 there was a wide ranging opinion, though

not consensus, that a more market based alternative should be made available.

While different political formations including a large sections with the communist

party (PUWP) agreed on the need for introducing private property relations

allowing entry of foreign capital and for ending one party rule, the divergence

between them regarding the extent to which such changes should so remained. Such

divergences can be understood as proximately reflecting the differential

understanding that different social classes had on the prospects of transition.

It goes without saying that the experience of Poland with capitalism has been

very mixed and the positive economic prospects have not materialised to the

required extent. However no single party or political formation of any consequence

has ever articulated a political policy perspective different from the mainstream one.

One can therefore say that though there is a multiparty system, there is a consensus

or rather convergence of interests among the established political parties on the

necessity of transition. Of course, there are sections which offers transition, but such forces do not command significant public support. Moreover the particular circumstances within which the polish economy has got integrated into the world capitalist system has ensured that foreign capital and its representatives are allowed a decisive say on how policy is shaped in Poland.

However the multiparty system that exists in Poland, through articulating only on different views on transition, acts as an effective instrument to observe discontent generated by the policies of one party in power. Therefore such discontent is not allowed to become articulated into an opposition to the transition process itself. This aspect however is not as "simplistic" as it is made out to be. The possibility of coherent or organised opposition to the transition emerging in the future cannot be ruled out a priori. At the same time, it can be claimed that the absence of a multiparty system can only hasten the creation of an anti transition force.

From a different angle the development of democratic institutions in post reform Poland, when viewed as a positive process in relation to the pre-1989 situation, requires consolidation of the multi party system. It needs to be noted that the multiparty system in Poland is primarily divided into two major formations one is the alliance of the democratic left (SLD) and other is the polish peasant party (PSL)-reflecting the trends in advanced countries of the west.

The prospects of strengthening formal democratic institutions are bright but

will effective political choice be possible within the existing multiparty system is a question that only experience can answer. Often the absence of real choice within a multiparty system leads to voter cynicism, low turn out and phenomenan such as the political business cycles. The consequences of such functioning are only apparent in the longrun.

It is only 10 years since the transition began. But already many important questions regarding Poland's future have had to be tackled, the latest being Poland's accession to the European Union. The consolidation of democratic institutions other than the multiparty system, and allied with it, like the media, the educational system, local bodies and so on need to emerge as decisive players. In the post reform Poland the media has found itself a key player in shaping opinions and articulating different view points. The media however is not independent of the social process. In particular the dominant sections in the media (print and electronic) have tended to reflect the afore mentioned consensus on transition.

Similarly other segments of civil society have also tended to reflect this consensus.

As Poland enters the 21st century many crucial problems remain. Till now, Poland has failed to achieve rates of growth sufficient to enable the vast majority of its people to unambiguously benefit from transition. The economy of Poland has tended to resemble a middle level developing country's economy under going the structural adjustment programme. Secondly the political system is also in a flux

with continuous conflicts among political formations reflecting the lack of adequate correspondence between the economic realities and feasible social options.

Any progress is about the future of Poland cannot be independent of a definite view about what is feasible in Poland today. Many commentators give unequivocal support to the specific features of the transition process that we see. But fail to see that the possibilities of success depend on a number of factors like the health of the world economy, the state of International relations and so on, many of which evolved independently of the polish society. Poland however, whatever be its future record, will be an important test case of transition to capitalism and the quest for social alternatives have still continued and the change in perception required is to understand first that present and past economic and social problems stem from common source, a dualistic or fragmented perception of reality. However, simply "wishing for abundance" rather than "scarcity" as suggested by "new age" proponents will not solve the economic problem. One direction is suggested by the systems theory whereby the economy is viewed as an interdependent system coexisting with ecology and society. In concrete terms, this change in perception means altering not only the means but the ends.

Therefore I can say that the shift from central plan to market in Poland is historically important and relevant. Its far reaching significance for individuals, countries and the global economy is well recognized.

Perhaps the main lesson learnt from the experiences of transition process in

how little is understood of the process of systematic economic transformation and the factors that explain apparent success or failure. Simplistic formulae such as stabilization-first and shock therapy, mass privatisation, comprehensive technical and conditional external assistance cannot fully explain the wide variation in performance by Eastern Europe to date. Given the extreme fragmentation and instability of its party system, one would expect empirical findings from Poland to confirm well to the prevailing view that what are the factors responsible for transition process in Poland and as well as the political economy of transition process in Poland.

CHAPTER II

Political Pluralism and Fragmentation of Party System

The transition from single party system to constitutional pluralism was neither swift nor smooth. The phenomenal mass upsurge in what came to be known as Eastern Europe in the post war period was something imprecedented and -unexpected it has come like an avalanche involving millions upon millions of people breaking all barriers physical, constitutional, legal and social.

The massive political convulsions in Eastern Europe that has been unleashed by the theoretical changes in the notion of socialism in the Soviet Union, the transition from state Socialism to a democratic order based on a multiparty system, a market mechanism in which prices are decided by supply and demand, a multilevel ownership system and rule of law has, however proved to be the most difficult.

Since January 1990, elections have been held in all the six countries including Poland. The grand movements in Poland have produced charismatic leader Lech Walesa on whom the country's political development has come to depend heavily. Walesa on the other hand did not accept any government position. Though the solidarity dominates the government in Warssaw.

The format agreed upon for June 1989 elections involved a transitional form that lay between the totally pre-arranged and controlled model of elections practiced during the period of the party's hegemonic rule and the elections that were

supposed to be entirely unrestricted and democratic.

At the time of round table negotiations solidarity did not seriously bargain for the holding of completely free elections since it was not prepared to accept the possible consequence of such elections, i.e. the formation of its own government. Therefore it is needed to know the causes and consequences of the rise of the solidarity movement.

The Rise of Solidarity

Poland's solidarity was one of the largest social movements in the history of Poland. For about sixteen months following its birth in 1980, it dramatically altered the face and temper of Poland[1] Because of its size and popularity it threatened the very foundations of Communist rule in Poland.

Strikes commenced in warsaw in June 1980 following a poor harvest and meat price rises and rapidly spread across the country. The MKS (Inter factory strike committee) was formed on 16 August with nineteen delegates representing 388 enterprises.

Between 17 and 23 August the Lenin Shipyard and the whole country continued to mobilise. On vital middle range cadre would turn a premature accent to power into a disastrous fiasco-which ultimately resulted the parliamentary election which represents a clear moral and political victory for the restored solidarity movement. By the fall of 1989, poles had established the first non-

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[1]   Mason David S., "Solidarity as a New Social Movement", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 104, No. 1, 1989.

communist government in the region since the 1940s and by January 1990, the Polish United worker's party ceased to exit. New political elite that emerged from the solidarity movement led the country towards liberal democracy and a market economy.

Solidarity was unique in its unusual combination of values: democracy, equality, socialism and participation. While solidarity's program did not once use the term socialism. It strongly supported most socialist principles.[2] But the party still controlled the apparatus of oppression. So a new crackdown was still possible in principle.

The polish communist leadership saw that its only way out lay in some form of co-operation with the opposition. But the opposition was content to wait until pressure forced the PZPR (Polish United Worker's Party) to engage in serious talks described as round table talks. It was the party's tenth plenum in December 1988 and January 1989 endorsed a fundamental ideological breakthrough the acceptance of political pluralism. Tadeusz Mazowiecki (who later served as the solidarity's first Prime Minister) observed that the party's agreement to hold elections was not a gift given by the rulers to the ruled. It was forced by the requirements of Poland's economic, political,and international situation.

Poland is faced with seemingly irreconciliable choices in the wake of the communist implosion. Ideological choices may be clearly discerned; political

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[2]   Mason David, "Solidarity and Socialism" in Jack Bielasiak and Maurice Simon. eds., *Polish Politics: Edge of Abyss,* New York: Praequer, 1984, pp. 118-137.

choices may at best be inferred; the transition from one party dictatorship to constitutional pluralism was neither swift nor smooth.

Politics has become professionalized since 1989. There are no Lathe operators, surface miners, or state farm workers in parliament as during the communist period-only elected politicians. In the early 1990s political parties splintered frequently. Just as afted they entered into electoral pacts with other parties in order to capture votes. They adopted different names when contesting elections and their elected members formed clubs with even different names, once they entred parliament.

Elections

Elections to the Sejm (Lower house of parliament) in June 1989 were to be "competitive but not confrontational", as agreed at the round table. The turnout for the first round of these historic elections was just 62.7 percent of eligible voters. The unintended consequences of the 1989 elections installation of solidarity government by September over shadowed the planned result of political pluralism and power sharing.

The 1989 Elections

Preparations for the elections to be held in two rounds staring two months after the conclusion of the agreement (on June 4th and 8th) moved ahead swiftly. The effectiveness and strength of solidarity's resources were relatively formidable

in comparison to what the party had at its disposal.[3] The citizen's committees

spread across the nation from the original "citizen committee by Lech Walesa"

Served as the political and electoral arm of the movement and in an effective co-

operative effort between their central and local levels. They selected a well defined

and disciplined set of solidarity candidates that came to be known as "Lech's team".

The catholic church proved to be a major campaign resource both as a

spiritual and a moral supporter of solidarity's ideological platform. Solidarity

campaign was supported by a very complex national mass media system as well as

by the international mass media.

The Election Result

The result of the first round of the elections on 4th June reflected that the

electoral process was of a broadly plebiscitary nature and the opportunity to vote

against the candidates of the ruling coalition was in most cases firmly taken.[4] The

overwhelming majority of sejm seats accessible to solidarity candidates were also

taken by them on the first round.

In the first round of elections of the 460 seats in the sejm only 165 had been

filled on the first ballot of these 160 had been taken by solidarity candidates.

Solidarity had also taken 92 of the 100 senate seats on the first ballot. Another

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[3]   Zubek Voytek, "The Threshodl of Poland's Transition: 1989 Electoral champaign as the last act of a United solidarity", *Studies in comparative communism*, Vol. XXIV, No. 4, December 1991, pp. 368.

[4]   Lewis Paul, "Non Competitive Elections and Regime Change: Poland 1989", *Parliament Affairs*, Vol. 43, No. 1, January 1990, p. 96.

aspect of the first round was that only two of 35 uncontested candidates on the national list of the ruling coalition managed to gain the 50% of the votes necessary to get elected.

One can understand the two major aspects of the first electoral round: correspondingly low level of support for establishment candidates (to the extent that only 5 gained the 80% of the vote necessary to gain a sejm seat on the first ballot). Combined with a widespread positive attempt to block the passage to the sejm of the great majority of those on the national list of coalition notables and secondly the striking level of support for solidarity candidates wherever they presented themselves.[5] During the campaign for the run-off elections. Solidarity's participation was very limited. On the other hand, several leading candidates of the official coalition were required to compete against each other in the runoffs. Solidarity clearly advised its supporters to choose those candidates of PZPR coalition who were more compatible with the goals of the movement. Thus, solidarity became a powerful arbiter for the coalition candidates (particular of the minor parties) and its recommendation was crucial for most of those who prevailed in the run offs.

After the second round senate emerged as a wholly independent. Non party chamber, with 99 solidarity members and one Henryk Stokhosa a private businessman. In the sejm, solidarity clearly swept all the 161 (35%) seats for which

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5 Ibid., p. 97.
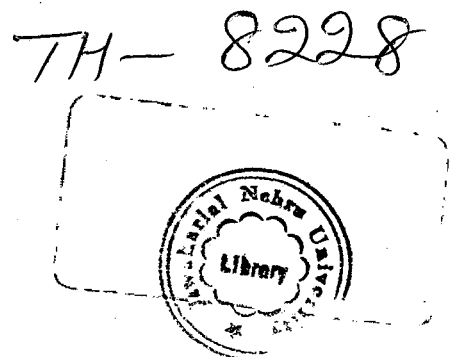
it was allowed to compete freely. The ruling coalition won a total of 276 seats distributed among the three parties. PZPR won 173 (38%) seats. The United peasant party got 76 (17%) seats and the democratic party won 27 (6%) seats. Ten seats went to PAX eight to the christian social association and fire to the polish social catholic union.

The immediate prospects from this form of multi-party democracy is that the future institutionalization of the solidarity movement would be very likely to bring out its own polarization. Thus the transition toward an alliance with solidarity held great promise for the subservient parties potentially. They would be able to feed upon the intrinsic divisions within solidarity and transform themselves into solidly class based party.[6]

The breakdown of the ruling coalition proceeded swiftly and a discernible change in the electorate's attitude took place before the first presidential elections were held in November 1990. Approval of the government. Sejm and senate fell from 85 to 55 percent. The proportion of respondents asserting that living standards were bad increased from 65 to 80 percent. Therefore it results with the first public collaborative effort between solidarity and its new partners. Occurred during the presidential election of the only pre-agreed to candidate, the top communist leader Wojciech Jaruzelski, in a well planned and executed manoeuvre by the new coalition. Jaruzelski was elected the President by the narrowest margin of one vote.

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[6] Zubek voytek and Gentleman Indith, "Economic Crisis and Pheoralism in Poland and Mexico", Vol. 9, No. 2, 1994, p. 350.

In the following month, the new coalition prevented the communist Prime Minister designate, Czeslaw Kiszozak from forming a cabinet and instead challenged with its own proposal for a coalition government. On 7 August 1989. Lech Walesa argued against the idea of a Kiszozak government for perpetuating the conservative tradition of one party rule. He floated the idea of a coalition or the only grouping capable of resolving Poland's accelerating economic and political crisis.[7]

On August 18th President Jaruzelsk asked Tadeusz Mazowiecki (a highly respected Journalist and catholic intellectual) to become the Prime Minister and form a government. This coalition government was composued of a deputy- Prime Minister from each party with an additional 11 posts for solidarity. 3 for PZPR, 3 for UPP and 2 for the D.P.

The Mazowiecki government's decision to plunge immediately into a market economy, substantially lowered the purchasing power of large segments of the society. Such hardships, however did not improve the PZPR's chances for rebuilding its social constituency. By contrast the society blamed its predicament upon the failed policies of the communists and enthusiastically supported the first solidarity government.[8]

This becomes the prior base of the formation of Social Democracy of the

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[7] Lewis paul, No. 3, p. 103.

[8] Zubek Voytgek and Gentleman Indith n.s, p. 352.

Republic of Poland (SDRP) because the PZPR began to disintegrate rapidly and to prevent its complete disappearance, its reformist factions decided to reconstitute the party, as a social democratic party, hoping to find more popular support. The PZPR's XI congress in Jan. 1990, however, inflicted a final humiliation. With the clear instigation of solidarity leaders who were interested in dealing with a co-operative Social Democratic party, Tudeusz Liszbach, Waksa's personal friend and top PZPR header, formed a second, splinter Social Democratic party, Union of Social Decomcracy of the Republic of Poland (USRP) that substantially weakened the first.

The movement toward political and economic pluralism and political liberalization in Poland derived from the economic crisis-driven decision taken by the political elites to embrace the only remaining feasible option that could reignite economic development. The legitimation of private initiative as the engine of growth incomplete? The onset of chronic economic crisis and the accumulated failures of political elites clearly stirred the actions of burgeoning opposition groups and opened new windows of opportunity for their development. At the same time, while the political transition was shaped in important ways by the political energies of opposition forces, the judgements made by beleaguered political elites played a critical role in the movements toward pluralism.[9]

The linkage between the economic reform project and the political initiative

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[9]   Ibid, p. 359.

undertaken was evident in the pattern followed by elites in affording increased political space to opposition forces. In Poland, it may be argued that solidarity would have potentially remained deeply underground and the political elite not undertaken to resolve the economic impasse. It was not until the political requirement of the economic transformation became clear that political elites in Poland undertook their political reassessments. As they confronted a series of economic crises. The communist party retained impressive political capabilities throughout the series of economic crises that confronted and continued to command a powerful political apparatus. The political shift stemmed from the reasoning within ruling circles that political liberalization would constitute a necessary corollary to that process.

The solidarity government gained the strength and legitimacy after its success in the local elections of 27 May 1990. A total of 51, 987 councillors were elected for almost 2,400 local councils. The communists i.e. the SDRP could win a total of less than one percent of the vote. The solidarity groups won 47.5% with an unknown numbers of additional supporters from among the unaffiliated.[10]

As discussed earlier that the movement is breaking under the strains of inner contradictions and Lech Walesa himself has become the most vehement critic of the government led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki. So despite this victory by the solidarity citizens's committee and its allies a split occurred within the solidarity movement,

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[10]   Stoar Richard F., "Transition in Poland", *Current History*, Vol. 89, NO. 551, p. 402.

resulting in a struggle for power. This was, perhaps, precipitated by the establishment of a center alliance (p.c.) which had issued a declaration on 12 May 1990 in warsaw. This declaration signed by about 100 individuals launched the campaign to make the Lech Walesa the next President of Poland. An election would require the expulsion or resignation of the current President, General Jaruzelski, who had been elected to serve until 1995. The p.c. also called for speeding up political reforms for the new parliament to adopt a completely new constitution, for the removal of remaining communists from the government and for shock privatisation.

Later Michnik and Henzyk Wujee, a long time solidarity loyalist recently fired by Wales as secretary of the National Citizen's Committee, have now joined a New movement called "Citizens Movement for Democratic action (ROAD)" ROAD was formed in July by about 100 pro government intellectuals. They supported the Prime Minister mazowiecki for the presidency. ROAD consisted of many of the intellectuals who advised Wales during the early years of solidarity.

Whadyshaw Frasynink, the long time leader of solidarity in lower Silesia with Bujak were once regarded as Walesa's potential heirs but have distanced themselves from him in recent months complaning of his autocratic style. The new group is scheduled to hold a founding congress later in July and has demanded new presidential election this year.

The campaign for the 1990 presidential elections accentuated the differences

within solidarity and the conflict between Walesa and the intellectuals. Both Mazowiecki's and Walesa's campaigns were supported by the centre-right coalitions. ROAD has closely allied itself with the right wing party of the intelligentsia, "The forum of the Democratic Right". Moreover, each side welcomed support by socialist groups Walesa by Tadeusz Fiszbach's Union of Social Democracy and Mazoweicki by Jan Jozef. Lipski's polish socialist party. Thus the ideological and political differences between both camps were a sham.[11]

The campaign by both sides was characterised by mediocrity, lack of imagination and rhetorics. A month before the election, nearly a quarter of the electorate remained uncommitted and unconvinced by either Walesa or Mazowiecki.

In short, the smashing of the old solidarity elite, along with the political inexperience of many new party leaders and parliamentary deputies who appeared on the scene in the early 1990s, allowed Walesa to bully friends and foes alike. After 1993, however, the pluralist elite emerging in the parliament had lowed their skills and were prepared to meet Walesa's challenge.[12]

The result of the 1990 Presidential election gave Mazowiecki 18 percent of the vote made up almost entirely of hard core intelligentsia and middle class followers. Walesa captured a disappointing 40 percent while the candidates of the

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[11] Zubek Voytek, "Walesa's leadership and Poland's Transition", *Problem of Communism*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 1-2.

[12] Raymoned Taras, "Voters, Parties and Leaders", *Transition to Democracy in Poland*, ed, Richard. F. Starr.

United left and the divided peasantry gained 9.2 per cent and 7.2 percent

respectively Tyminski stopped and humiliated all political quarters by drawing 23

percent of the vote and become the challenger to Walesa.

In the second round, Tyminski won 25.75 percent of the vote and Walesa

captured 74.25 percent of the vote. Moreover, 34 percent of first round Tyminski

supporters abstained in the second round. Context that they had registered an

antiestablishment protest once. Waksa thus received a mandate to serve as President

securing nearly three quarters of the vote cast. Ultimately in a compromise between

the parliament and the president and within the parliament it was formally decided

to hold elections on 27 October 1991.

The presidential election of 1990 marked the demise of united solidarity and

the beginning of a more chaotic post solidarity epoch. In the transitional parliament

the solidarity elite engaged in a fierce family feud that in the end fore the grand

movement asunder. Solidarity's parliamentary caucus (OKP) was quickly divided

into a whole range of so called post solidarity parties. The emergent party system

was further upset by the proliferation of new parties and organizations that had no

tradition, no apparatus and no identification programme.[13]

Parliamentary Election of 1991

The next step in legitimizing Poland's democratic system was election of the

parliament in October 1991 that would be untainted by compromises reached with

[13] Ka-Lak Cltan Kenneth, "Poland at the Cross Roads: The 1993 General Election", *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.47, no.1, 1995, p.124.

the Communists. Rules Governing elections for the Senate or upper chamber were simple compared to those for the Sejm. Similar to the United States voters would choose two senators by plurality in each of the country's 47 provinces and three each from the densely populated metropolitan areas of Warsaw and Katowice for a total of 100 seats.

The electoral law was designed to give representation to even the smallest parties. Since no minimum threshold was established for securing sejm seats. Although the party system had been fragmenting anyway as the solidarity camp splintered, the law institutionalized this fragmentation. The new electoral law encouraged small groupings to field Candidates. It provided impetus to those reluctant to merge with like minded groups as it was believed to favour small parties.[14]

Three major issues shaped party programs at the time of 1991 elections.

1. The drastic program of economic reform (sometimes called 'big bang' approach sometimes 'shock therapy' which entailed rapid privatisation and price liberalization.

2. The role of the catholic church in society in particular its commitment to religious instruction in school and opposition to abortion.

3. The scope and nature of decommunization. Lustration or the exposing of former communists political exclusion (whether to include the post-

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[14] Millard Frances, "The polish parliamentary elections of October 1991", *Soviet Studies*, vol.44, no.5, p.840.

communist SLD).

The major contending parties can be divided into three groups:

1.   The heirs of solidarity: Apart from the solidarity which contested the election

to ensure trade union representation in parliament. The heirs of solidarity include

the political parties which had been taking shape as a result of splits in the

solidarity movement previously held together by the presence of a common

communist enemy.

The Democratic Union (DU) began as an electoral alliance in support of then

Prime Minister Mazowiecki's presidential Candidney in 1990. In the run up to the

parliamentary elections the DU appeared the most consistently popular political

party with opinion polls showing 15-20 % popularity among the electorate.

The christian nationa Union (ZCHN) was a right wing nationalist, a clerical

party. The party's leader Professor Wieshaw Chrzanowski, was the Minister of

Justice in the Bielecki government. The ZCHN was the major force behind the

catholic Election action (WAK).

The Congress of Liberal Democrat (KLD) was virtually unknown, till its

leader Bielecki became the Prime Minister in January 1991. The tiny party had

originally emerged from the entrepreneurial wing of solidarity in Gdansk. It

expanded quickly, attacking elements from other political groups. Both UD and

KLD are liberal in their political and economic values, though the economic

Laissez-faire liberalism of the KLD is stronger and faith in the market greater.[15]

A fifth major grouping was that of solidarity peasant movement. It entered the election as the peasant accord, an alliance of two small solidarity peasant parties and elements of Trade Union Rural Solidarity.

The centrism was broadly of center-right pro-capitalist and Christian Democratic orientation. Its origin last with the growing split within solidarity. It was initially concerned as a caution supporting Walesa's presidential candidacy. Mi Centrum's leader, Jaroslaw Kaezynski was the head of presidential chancellary.

In addition, a large number of other, smaller groupings had also emerged from solidarity's womb. These included the party of Christian Democrats and the Social democratic group. Labour solidarity.

2.   The successor parties

These are the political parties which have descended as heir to the communist party and its junior partners.

The polish peasant party (PSL) resulted from the merger in May 1990 of the successor to the Communist Satellite party and second PSL returned exile in London-Roman Bartoszeze became its leader and its presidential candidate in 1990, winning 7.2 percent of the vote. By spring 1991 the peasants were the most disaffected of the population. This universal disillusion provided a strong incentive for co-operation. As a result two electoral alliances were forced that of the peasant

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[15]   Ibid., p.842.

accord (PL) of the solidarity movement and that of the PSL programmatic alliance also including the Union of Rural youth and the Network of Rural cities. The PSL remained by far the largest political party in Poland with a membership of some 12500.

The Social Democracy of the republic of Poland ($ DRP) heir to the PZPR preferred to seek allies for the parliamentary elections in which it participated as an unit of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) varying at local levels this was an alliance of parties and social organizations previously enjoying communist patronage including the trade union.

Other political parties

The polish political scene also provided a mosaic of other political parties. Some had been excluded from the parliamentary arena through solidarity's domination of the opposition in 1989, others had emerged subsequently. Some were known as "couch parties" because their members could sit together on a single setter. Others, however, enjoyed some sort of national visibility often because of prominent leaders. They also possessed more clear-cut ideological basis.[16] The Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN) under Leszek Moczulski, was aggressively anti-communist in its stance.

The radical liberal union of political realism led to Janusz Korwin. The polish friend of Beer Party (PPPP). The centrist Christian Democratic Labour party

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[16] Ibid., p.844.

which formed an electoral alliance of 'christian democracy' were the other groups which suffered a lack of clear identity.

The 1991 election results (Table 1.1) demonstrated no overwhelming support for any one political field. Neither decommunization nor anti-clericalism became the key campaign issue. Neither blanket rejection of nor full support for the economic reform program guaranteed a party electoral success. In returning a splintered parliament. The electoral compelled political leaders to build elaborate coalitions in order to govern.

The most important lesson of the 1991 election was the need to revise the electoral law in order to create a stronger party system.

Table 1: Polish Parliamentary Election Results, 27 October, 1991

	Percentage	Sepur (N=460)	Senate (N=100)
Democratic Union (UD)	12.3	62	21
Alliance ofthe Democratic Left (SLD)	12.0	60	4
Catholic Election Action (WAK)			
Center Accord (PC)	8.7	49	9
Polish peasant party (PSL)	8.7	44	9
confederation for an Independent	8.7	48	8
Poland (KPN)	7.5	46	4
Liberal Democratic Congress (KOL)			
Peasant Accord (PL) Solidarity	7.5	37	6
Friends of Beer Party (PPP)	5.5	28	7
10 other parties	5.1	27	12
	3.3	16	0
	11.9	43	20

Turnout was 41 percent

Source: Frances Millard, "The Polish Parliamentary Elections of 1991", Soviet studies 44, No.5 (1992), pp.846-47.

The Election Results and Political parties

The national average turnout was 43.2% for polling. Fragmentation is still

evident after excluding those with a single seat. 15 parties or coalitions of parties.

One trade union and three regional groupings in the Sejm and nine parties and one

trade union in the senate have got representation.

The shape of the senate, both in number of parties represented and in their

order of magnitude was different from that of the seats followed by solidarity (see

table 1) of the regional parties only the German minority gained a seat, but

independents and locals did well.

Table 2 Parliamentary Election Results 19 September, 1993

	Percentage	Sejun N=60	Senate N=100
Alliance of the democratic left (SLD)	20.6	171	34
Polish peasant party (PSL)	15.3	15.3	36
Democratic Union (UD)	10.7	74	4
Union of Labour (UP)	7.2	41	2
Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN)	5.6	22	0
Non-party bloc for reform (BBWR) German minority ·	5.4	16	2
Fatherland alliance (ojczyzna)	0.6	4	1
Solidarnosi ("s")	6.4	0	1
Center Accord (PC)	4.6	0	9
Liberal Democratic Congress (KDL)	4.5	0 ·	1
Others	3.8	0	1
	14.8	2	7

Turnout was 51 percent
Source: Glowny Urzad Statystyczny, Maly Rocznik statistics 1994 (Warsaw: GUS, 1994) 67-8.

Comparing with the parliamentary election of 1991, 1993 and 1997 we can

analyse the developments of different political formation with their agenda and the

building of party system in Poland (see table 2 and 3).

Table 3: Parliamentary Election Result 21 September 1997

	Percentage	Sejm N=460	Senate N=100
Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) Alliance of the democratic left (SLD)	33.8	201	51
Freedom Union (UW)	27.1	164	28
Polish peasant party (PSL)	13.4	60	8
Movement for reconstruction (ROP)	7.3	27	3
Union of Labor (UP) Pensioners Party (KPUR)	5.6	6	5
Union of Real politics (UPR) German Minority	4.7	0	0
Independents and other parties	2.2	0	0
	2.0	0	0
	0.6	2	0
	3.3	0	5

Turnout was **48** percent
Source: Rzeczpospolita (25-26 September 1997)

In the parliamentary election of 1993 a total of 391 seats were to be

contested in multimember constituencies, while 63 others were to be distributed to

parties receiving more than 7 percent of the national vote.

The SLD victory in 1993 (Table 2) came as no suprise given the changed

electoral how that disproportionately rewarded the top vote getting parties and the

changed mood of the electorate, which had grown disillusioned with what walusa

had called "the war at the top" within solidarity ranks for its party, the ex-communists had completed a remarkable comeback nationwide and in specific groups. Support for the SLD increased from 3 percent in 1990 presidential election to 19 percent in parliamentary elections of 1991 to 34 percent in 1993. Within the SLD alliance 61 deputies belonged to the former communists trade union. The national trade union accord.

Zbigview Brzezinski, former National Security Adviser to the President Jimmy Carter elaborated on the reasons for the ex-communists victory while giving credit to SLD better organisation, he contended that its leaders were never held accountable for their communist past. The victory of the left was highly contingent on the pain many citizens suffered during the tradition to a market economy.[17]

The presidential election campanign began shortly after the parliamentary elections of 1993. The official three month campaign saw a dramatic resurgence in Walesa's popularity. Walesa no longer appeared rash and inarticulate but thoughtful and sensible.[18]

In the first round Kwasvieski (35 percent) and Walesa (33 percent) garnered about two third of the all votes cost (table 4) left of center candidates trailed far behind. It is worth considering whether splintering within the non-communist left

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[17] John Gibson and Anna Gelecka, "Economic influences on the Political support for market reform in post communist transitions: Some evidence from the 1993 polish parliamentary elections", *Europe Asia Studies*, 47, no.5 (July 1995), pp.765-85.

[18] Ibid., p.787.

allowed Kasniewski to squeeze into the run off and become the representative of the

social democratic orientation of the polish electorate than, say, Kuron.

Going into the second round, then, Walesa had both the political momentum

and the expectation of capturing most of the votes of eliminated candidates. During

the two week interval between rounds, Kwasniewski sought to attract Zielinski

voters while Walesa tried to make all votes cost for his former solidarity associates

- Kuron's 5 percent, Olszewski's 7 percent, Gronkiewicz-waltz's 3 percent and 4

percent for minor candidates his own.

Table 4: Presidential Election Results, 5 and 19 November, 1995

First round (5 November: Turnout of 65 percent)

	Votes	Votes cast percentage	Electorate percentage
Alexander Kwasniewski (SLD) Lech walesa (Now Party) Jacek Kuron (UW) Jan Olszewski (RdR) Waldemar Pawhak (PSL) Tabeusz Zielinski)	6,274,670 5,917,328 1,646,946 1,225,453 770,419 631,432	35.1 33.1 9.2 6.7 4.3 3.5	22.3 21.0 5.9 4.4 2.8 2.2

Second round (19 November: Turnout of 68 percent)

	Votes	Votes cast Percentage	Electorate percentage
Alexander Kwasniewski Lech Walesa	9,704,439 9,058,176	51.7 48.3	34.6 32.3

Source: Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Poland" in political data yearbook 1996, special issue
of European Journal of political research 30, nos.3-4, (1996), p.533.

One final observation on the 1995 presidential election campaign concerns the impact of the system of election on the outcome. There is no question that direct presidential elections are supported by an overwhelming number of citizens. But for one political observer, Radishawa Gortat, direct elections have proven disfunctional in Poland: "If parliamentary elections contribute to the crystallization of the party system general presidential election cause fragmentation of existing parties and hinder the emergence of a structured party system. She argued that the system of direct elections was partial: "This method is not unbaised politically. It strengthens the successor to the former communist party and weakens parties emerging from the split of the former apposition movement."

In explaining why such a recently formed alliance (It was not a political party though efforts were undertaken in 1997 to turn it into one) was able to win the September 1997 election. It is enough to recall the 1993 elections right of center parties had captured close to two-third of the popular votes then bat obtained only one third of parliamentary seats all these parties had to do to defeat the ex-communists.

Indeed in 1997 the SLD actually increased its share of the vote by 6.5 percent which reflected positively on the performances of president Kwasniewski and prime minister Cimoszewicz. But the SLD coalition partner the PSL, was decimated, losing 105 seats. The 1997 electoral victory by a conservative bloc was tempered therefore, by its need to come to terms with neoliberal and secular

elements.

The victory of Solidarity Election Action (AWS) signified the stabilization and muturation of Poland's fragmented political system. In many ways it reflected the growing institutionalization of Poland's political fragmentation. The political fragmentation had not led to the dreaded political chaos. Governments with complex and shifting coalitions of small parties behind them proved capable of discharging their basic administrative duties and a balanced and predictable political equilibrium had gradually crystallized. Moreover, the fragmental system proved capable of absorbing or co-opting these political movements that originally were the threatening to stability.[19]

The routinization of politics in Poland signified that the political initiative rests in the hands of parties and the electorate.

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[19] Zubek Voytek, "The fragmentation of Poland's political party system", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.26, no.1, March 1993, pp.69-70.

CHAPTER III

The Emerging Multi-party System and its Role in the Political Development of Poland

"The Communist Party has always connoted two features, first the vanguard of the working class, and second, the monopoly exercise of the power of the state. The first is the core of Leninist doctrine: but the second has been a practice dating from the post revolutionary regime. These two aspects were not usually adequately distinguished: but both have now been abandoned."[1]

Modern representative democracy has brought about party system as an indispensable factor in every political society and Poland is faced with seemingly irreconeible choices in the wake of the communist implosion. Ideological choices may be clearly discerned; political choices may at best be inferred; but there are no political parties to represent those options in a real sense since no party system in yet is place.

The task in the domain of politics may be superficially stated as a shift from dictatorship to democracy. It recalls two major experiences in European politics - the first is the transition from an ancient regime to democratic politics as occurred in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Russia this was undertaken in 1906-17, which is one reason why Russian commentators ceaselessly compare their present situation with that era of reform. The other is the post fascist restructuring

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[1] Madhavan K. Palat, *Ideological Choices in Post-Soviet Russia*, p.17.

of European politics, especially after the second world war, in Germany, Italy, in part France, most of Eastern Europe and finally in the seventies, in Spain and Portugal.

In the economic sphere, a planned economy must give way to the market, not the other way round. All European experience and theoretical argumentation has focused on how the anarchy and the limitations of unplanned market operations could be regulated and ordered to the needs of the state and end the distributive justice while preserving the innovative dynamism of capitalism. This fact lays stress on the maximization of political participation by involving upon the members of a political elite to take the people at large into confidence either for the sake of observing the myth that 'voice of the people is the voice of God' or to justify the very legitimacy of their popular leadership and authority

Theoretical framework of Multi-party System

Democracy as Finer observes, 'rests in the hope and doubts, upon the party system' A study of party system is however beset with one difficulty. A political party "is notoriously difficult to define accurately".[2] It "is not always easy to differentiate it from a faction, or interest group, or a parliamentary group which may have a life of its own, independent and electoral opinion or from a political movement which may temporarily transcend a number of parties or groups."[3]

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[2]   Curtis, Michael, *Comparative Government and Politics*, New York: Harper and Row, 1968, p.136.

[3]   Ibid., p.139.

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According to Duverger, "a party is a community with a particular structure".

Burke defined a party as a group of men who had agreed upon a principle by which the national interest might be served. A political party emerges whenever the activities of a political system reach a certain degree of complexity, as whenever the notion of political power comes to include the idea that the mass public must participate or be controlled. According to Edmund Burke, a political party "is a body of men united for promoting the national interest on some particular principle in which they are all agreed".[4]

Sigmund Newmann defines a political party as "the articulate organization of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with the control of governmental power and who compete for popular support, with another group or groups holding divergent views. As such it is the great intermediary which links social forces and ideologies to official governmental institutions and relates them to political action within the larger political community."[5]

The emergence of political parties is a useful institutional INDEX of a level of political development and its emergence is related to the modernization process Durverger differentiates between internally created parties and externally cheated pactice. An internally created party is one that emerges gradually from the activities

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[4]   Burke E., *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontent*, p.16.

[5]   Neumann Sigmund, "Towards a Comparative Study of Political Parties", in Newmann (ed.) *Modern Political Parties: Approaches to Comparative Politics*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1956, p.403.

of the legislators themselves. As the need for creating Legislative blocs and of assuring the re-election of members of these blocs is increasingly felt, political organization at the local level or in the electoral constituency occurs where the local organization and the local parliamentary connection is established as the result of initiative exercised by those who are already in the legislative or who hold national public office, political parties are said to be created internally.

Externally created parties are those that emerge outside the legislature and invariably involve some challenge to the ruling group and a demand for representation. Such parties are invariably associated with an expanded suffrage, strongly articulated secular or religious ideologies, and in most of the developing areas, nationalistic and antic-colonial movements.[6] Parties that emerged in post-Communist countries are also externally created. Such parties may receive their original organizational impetus from such varied sources as trade unions, co-operates, university students, intellectuals, religious oganisations, and veteran associations.

According to Duverger, externally created parties tend to be more centralized than those that are internally created, more ideologically coherent and disciplined, less subject to influence from the legislative contingents of the parties, and generally less willing to ascribe major importance to be deferential toward

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[6]   J. Lapalombara and M. Weiner (eds.) *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, p.10.

parliament.[7] This may not be applicable to the political parties that emerged in post-Communist countries. It is not merely that the externally created parties are more ideological, more disciplined, or more aggressive in making demands on the system. It is also that, largely as a result of the circumstances under which they arose, they have frequently not developed a vested interest in existing political and in most instances social or economic institutions.

While some scholars have stressed the importance of parliament and the expansion of the suffrage as a critical variable in the emergence of parties, others have stressed the role of ideology. Thus the emergence of parliaments, adult suffrage, and parties themselves is related to the gradual emergence of democratic ideologies.[8] Insofar as the emergence of parties, or political organizations or movements which antedate parties is concerned, a wide variety of ideologies have in fact served as vehicles for their justification. Indeed some parties were created as the instrumentalities of counter ideologies, in sharp disagreement with dominant political values. This is true in the case of Solidarity Movement of 1980-81 and the post-Solidarity parties that emerged in post-Communist Poland.

Political parties often grow out of crisis situations. Under some circumstances they are the creatures of a systemic political crisis, while in other circumstances their emergence itself creates a crisis for the system. The way in

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[7]   Duverger Maurice, *Political Parties*, New York, 1955, p.24.

[8]   Lapalombara and Weiner (eds.), n.7, p.12.

which political elites cope with such crises may determine the kind of political system which develops. Such historical crises not only often provide the context in which political parties first emerge but also tend to be a critical factor in determining what pattern of evolution parties later take. They are often historical turning points in political systems. New institutions are created that persist long after the factors which precipitated their creation have disappeared; and memories are established in the minds of those who participated or perceived the events that have subsequent effects on political behaviour.

Nations have experienced many internal political crises during the period in which political parties were being formed. Of these the most salient in their impact on party formation are the crises of legitimacy, integration, and participation.

The legitimacy crisis has been more central to the early formation of parties when the existing structure of authorities failed to cope with the crisis itself and a political upheaval ensued. When governmental leadership fails to cope adequately with a crisis in legitimacy, a crisis in participation may occur and with it the creation of parties concerned with establishing local organizations or some measure of local support. Where the legitimacy crisis is adequately resolved - where parliaments are established and the power of the monarchy diminished, or colonial regimes establish a measure of self-government acceptable to the indigenous elite - then the "parties" formed may not involve a broader public and may be more appropriately conceived of as incipient parties.

A crisis in integration has also provided the milieu in which political parties have first emerged. While in some places the crises of legitimacy and integration have often been accompanied by the creation of political parties - and particularly of incipient political parties - the earliest parties in most countries have typically been associated with the "crisis of participation". The first crisis of participation which occurs before parties have been established and where the target of participation efforts is a non-party elite involves a subjective change in the relationship between the individual and authority. Once a number of subjects cease, for whatever reason, to accept the authority of their rulers, then closed political system are placed under stress and except in very rare instances cannot remain closed. A rejection of existing authority as wholly legitimate will result in individuals grouping together to change the rules of the system so that they can gain a share in the control of the state apparatus. The earliest participation crisis may thus involve a crisis in legitimacy.[9] The creation of parties in post-Communist countries after the fall of Communist regime can also be attributed to the crisis of participation and legitimacy.

Parties emerge in political systems when those who seek to win or maintain political power are required to seek support from the larger public. Such a development occurs under at least two circumstances. A change may already have taken place in the attitudes of subjects or citizens towards authority. Individuals in

⁹   J. Lapalombara and M. Weiner (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, p.18.

the society may believe that they have the right to influence the exercise of power. In the second circumstance, a section of the dominant political elite or an aspiring elite may seek to win public support so as to win or maintain power even though the public does not actively participate in political life. A non-participant population may thus be aroused into politics.

The study of parties is rather confined to a description of characteristics obtaining in each particular party, its relations to government, its recruitment and leadership, its objectives and programmes, and its electoral performance.[10]

Maurice Duverger has given a general theory of parties which can embrace the phenomenon of parties in different political systems. According to Duverger, "a party is a community with a particular structure". To quote Duverger, "The protozoa of former periods have been succeeded by the twentieth century party with its complicated, and differentiated organism."[11]

Duverger distinguishes parties in terms of direct and indirect structure and in terms of whether the basic organizational unit is a caucus, a branch, a cell, or a militia-type unit.

Parties with direct structure are those whose members or affiliates are related directly - that is a party which has individuals as members. Indirect parties are those which are built upon other social formations as their basic component units.

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[10] Apter David, *Comparative Politics: A Reader*, New York: The Free Press, 1963, p.328.

[11] Duverger Maurice, *Political Parties*, London: University Paperbacks, 1964, p.15.

The individual comes to his party membership or affiliation by virtue of his membership in a non-party agency.

Parties made up of loose caucuses loosely tied together into a larger formation constitute one characteristic kind of party and represent an organizational stage in the development of most parties. Duverger notes that this type of party is admirably suited to middle-class politics as it minimises collective action.

The party whose main organizational unit is the branch is characteristic of democratic socialist parties. The branch party would be having a centralised party structure with its basic units being distributed geographically in space. The branch is more formal and an agency of more general purpose than the caucus.

The cell-based party has been developed by adherents to Communist doctrine. The main difference between a cell and a branch or caucus is that the cell is organised around the job or profession and is very small and conspiratorial in its mode of operation.[12] It is well suited for revolutionary purposes and not suited for wining electoral contests.

In the miltia-based type of party, the members are an elite, they were distinct insignia, a uniform or a coloured shirt, and they drill and march. The militia-type unit finds main use in practising a kind of a quasi-legitimate violence in pursuit of its members' or leaders' purposes.

According to Duverger, none of these parties can be found in reality. Parties

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[12]   McDonald Neil A., "Party Perspectives: A Survey of Writings" in Eckstein and Apter (eds.), *Comparative Politics: A Reader*, New York: The Free Press, 1963, p.348.

in actual formation will always have mixed structures.

Sartori includes the following kinds of parties in a study of the party system.[13]

1. Witness parties, those uninterested in maximising votes,

2. ideological parties, those interested in votes primarily through indoctrination.

3. responsible parties, which do not submit policies to maximising votes,

4. responsive parties, for which winning elections or maximising votes take priority, and

5. purely demagogic, irresponsible parties, which are only vote maximisers.

In the view of Michael Curtis, "Essentially party signifies a group of people who hold certain political beliefs in common or who are prepared to support the party candidates, work together for electoral victory, attain and maintain political power."[14] Political parties are specialised associations whose purpose is to secure power within a corporate group for their leaders in order to attain ideal or material advantages. They may spring up within trade unions, corporations, universities, parliaments or the state itself - in which latter case they are political parties. Parties are thus specialised associations and become more complex, organised and

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[13] Sartori Giovanni, *Party and Party System: A Framework for Analysis*, London: Cambridge University Press, vol.I, p.327.

[14] Curtis Michael, *Comparative Government and Politics*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962, p.21.

bureaucratic as a society approaches the modern type."[15] The central object of a

political organization is to capture power either singly or in collaboration with

others. It is this goal of attaining political power that distinguishes political parties

from other groups in the political system, although the distinction is rather blurred

at times, especially in regard to pressure groups."[16]

Party Systems

The term party system is generally used to refer to a party complex

composed of all parties that are closely related one to other or to a common entity,

such as a given state. It may also be used to refer to a single party in all of its

regularized and patterned relations. System tends to be used to designate social

formations characterised by a high degree of regularity and complexity and a low

degree of formality in the interaction pattern."[17] Each national state has its own

party system and it is possible to classify and compare countries by the types of

party systems they posses. The most obvious distinction rests upon the number of

parties in each country. In addition to a number-based classification, party systems

can also be classified into totalitarian and non-totalitarian, constitutional and

unconstitutional, democratic and undemocratic and class-based or ideologically

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[15]   Brown Bernard E., *New Directions in Comparative Politics*, Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962, p.21.

[16]   A.R. Ball, *Modern Politics and Government*, London: Macmillan, 1978, p.102.

[17]   Neil A. MacDonald, "Party Perspectives; A Study of Writings" in Harry Eckstein and David After (eds.), *Comparative Parties: A Reader*, New York: The Free Press, 1963, p.348.

based.[18]

Duverger's Classification

Duverger had formulated a simple classification of single-, bi- and multi-party systems and thereby sought to place all the party systems of the world in one of the three relevant categories.

A single party system "is characterised by the party in power either dominating all other groups, trying to absorb the political opposition, or in the extreme case suppressing all opposition groups which are regarded as counter-revolutionary or subversive of the regime as forces dividing the national will.[19] A bi-party system may be said to exist where there are only two parties sufficiently strong to take part in the struggle for power. There may be other parties, but the alteration of power remains between the two major ones.

A multi-party system is one in which no party is able to obtain majority in the legislative entitling it to form government. According to Duverger's analysis, multiparty systems arise either from splits or overlapping in a natural two-way division. A split may come within either bourgeois or socialist parties and may be encouraged by the electoral system. Splitting creates a centrist position which is highly unstable because the centre position represents a tentative and compromised position only for one person.

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[18]   ibid.

[19]   Curtis, Michael, *Comparative Government and Politics*, New York: Harper and Row, 1968, p.165.

Overlapping comes about as a result of a non-coinciding dualism in a society. For example, if a society is divided into two classes and two sections, but classes and sections do not coincide, there is a strong tendency for four parties to rise.[20]

Duverger distinguishes two kinds of multiparty systems. The first type came into existence because the existing parties would not accommodate the emerging views of the socialists. Thus there was no alternative political choice for an increasingly popular point of view. Under the second type the agrarian interests find a congenial party home in neither the socialist-labour nor in the bourgeois-type party. Thus the agrarians create their own party.

Sartori's Classification

Giovanni Sartori[21] has given a much more diverse classification of party systems covering several sub-varieties within the one party system. He differentiated the two party and multi-party systems on the basis of 'pluralism' and 'atomism'.

According to Sartori, the single party system is one where political competition between political parties is either non-existent, or is not very effective. The single party model may be said to have three main varieties. It is monopolistic when political power is wielded by one party alone and no other party is permitted

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[20] Neil A. McDonald, n.18.

[21] Sartori Giovanni, *Parties and Party Systems: A Frame-work for Analysis*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 222.

to exist at all. Such a party system exhibits three sub-varieties. It is totalitarian and has the rubric of 'dictatorship' when the degree of coercion is very high; policies adopted by it are highly destructive to the opponents; only official ideology is sacrosanct; no autonomy to other groups is sanctioned and the element of arbitrariness is unbounded and unpredictable.

It is authoritarian when the criteria of ideology is weak and non-totalistic; degree of coercion is medium and some autonomy is available to different groups. It is pragmatic when the hold of ideology is very feeble, even irrelevant; degree of coercion is quite low; sub-group independence is also allowed; and the element of arbitrariness is limited.

While the totalitarian and authoritarian parties are assumed to reflect different ideological intensities, the one party pragmatic represents that end of the continuance at which an ideological mentality gives way to a pragmatic mentality. Totalitarianism and authoritarianism appear as different points of an ideological scale whose lowest point is called: pragmatism.

Another variety of the single party system is its hegemonic position where the existence of other parties is allowed but only one party counts more than all the other parties. The other parties live like its 'satellites' or subordinate entities without posing any challenge to its hold. The hegemonic party "neither allows for a formal nor a de facto competition for power. Other parties are permitted to exist, but as second class, licensed parties; for they are not permitted to compete with the

hegemonic party in antagonistic terms and on an equal basis. Not only does alternation not occur, in fact it cannot occur, since the possibility of a rotation in power is not even envisaged. The implication is that the hegemonic party will remain in power whether it is liked or not."[22] The case of hegemonic party has two sub-varieties-ideological and pragmatic. In the ideological hegemonic party system the ruling party is committed to a particular ideology like the erstwhile Communist Party of Poland. It is pragmatic when the ruling party has no such commitment like in the case of the Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico.[23]

Another variety of the single party system is the predominant party system where a power configuration exists in which one party governs alone without being subjected to alteration as long as it continues to win absolute majority in the elections.

According to Sartori, a bi-party system is one where the existence of third parties does not prevent the two major parties from governing alone and, therefore, coalitions are unnecessary. It involves these important conditions: two parties are in a position to compete for the absolute majority of seats; one of the two parties actually succeeds in winning a sufficient parliamentary majority and this party is willing to govern alone; and alteration or rotation in power remains a credible expectation.[24]

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[22] Ibid., p. 223.

[23] Ibid., p. 230.

[24] Ibid., p. 188.

Sartori's bi-party and multi-party systems embody the characteristic of 'polarised pluralism'. In a case of polarised pluralism, different parties exist and operate including those relevant anti-system ones that may go to the extent of undermining the legitimacy of the regime. There exists bilateral and multilateral opposition and counter-opposition with the result that interaction may be biangular, triangular or quadrangular. The system is multipolar in that its competitive mechanism hinges on a centre that must face both a left and a right. In this way, centre party that attempts to outdo the parties located at its right and left will contribute, more than anything else, to a crescendo of escalation and extremisation. The degrees of ideological distance may be discovered between different parties. Cleavages are likely to be very deep, consensus is low and that the legitimacy of the political system is widely questioned. Centrifugal drives prevail over the centripetal ones. Ideological patterning may also be visualised. Politics contain parties that disagree not only on policies but also and more importantly, on principles and fundamentals. Irresponsible opposition, governmental instability and shifting coalitions are a feature of the political system.[25]

Sartori propounds a case of extreme pluralism which is the hallmark of an 'atomised' party system. A multi-party system having a highly fragmented character leads to the existence of highly fluid party politics. Here no party is in a position to cast a noticeable effect on the other. An atomised party is fragmented leader by

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[25] Ibid., p. 132.

leader, with very small groups revolving around each other. As such, it "had no significant factional articulation beyond the face value of all that characterises a political party."[26]

In the final analysis, it can be argued that no neat and water-tight classification of the party systems can be presented for the obvious reason that political developments take place so quickly that they disturb the conclusions of a serious study.

Political Development

Political parties of a nation make a profound impact on various aspects of political development. Political developments implies among other things a measure of political participation by a large number of people who do not belong to the dominant political elite. Political development also implies a political complexity which requires a high degree of organization.[27]

The impact of political parties is profound on the following problems of development: national integration, political participation, legitimacy and the management of conflict. Parties and party systems are not only the product of their environment but also instruments of organized human action for affecting that environment.[28]

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[26] Ibid., p. 75.

[27] Lapalombara, J. and Weiner, M. (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, pp. 4-5.

[28] Ibid., p. 400.

The independent influence of parties on their environment is clearly revealed in the study of political participation. Movements or demands for political participation are a characteristic feature of political development. Authoritarian governments, by achieving large-scale economic growth while preventing any massive political participation, demonstrate that there is nothing inevitable about the expansion of political participation. But increased urbanisation, the growth of mass communications, the spread of education, economic crisis and the loss of legitimacy of the leadership appear to be accompanied by an increased desire for some forms of political participations; and the amount of force needed by an authoritarian regime for maintaining control over its population is often in direct proportion to the development of this crisis. The response of party government to the desire for participation wavers between repression, mobilisation, limited admission and full admission into the party system.

Repression

The emergence of party systems does not in itself guarantee that governing elites under party systems will welcome expanded political participation. Three sets of factors may be associated with tendencies towards repression. The first is the system of values held by the dominant elite that exists where the party system materializes. If additional participation is viewed as a threat to the maintenance of these values, a heavy incidence of resistance to additional participation occurs. The second factor involves the degree of consensus in the society concerning the place

which the maintenance of a representative system itself would have in a hierarchical system of values. Where the idea of representative government is accorded low priority, as compared to the other values held by the elite, their would be considerable reluctance to accept demands for participation. The third factor is purely psychological. It involves the hypothesis that new elites operating under a party system find it difficult to share with new claimants the political powers they themselves have been able to wrest from preexisting systems.

Mobilization

One party governments typically handle the demand for political participation dificultly from parties in a competitive system. The one party leadership is concerned with affecting the political attitudes and behaviour of the population as a whole and uses the instrument of the party along with the state's repressive power and a controlled mass media, to achieve this goal. It is equally concerned with providing the appearances of participation without at the same time giving up the control of power generally associated with admitting additional actors into the political system. The regime may be concerned with developing a subjective sense of participation while actually preventing the populace from affecting public policy, administration, or the selection of those who will govern.[29]

Limited Admission

Governments may permit social groups to organize their own parties but

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[29] Ibid., p. 403.

deny them access to national power and restrict their participation in the system. Frequently parties are permitted to organize after a period of government repression, but it is clear that under no circumstances will the government allow them to assume power even if they win elections.

Full Admission into the Party System

In this case the dominant elite may grant individuals and groups demanding political participation, the rights of full participation either through existing parties or through newly formed parties. This is the typical response among well established democracies. In all cases where full participation is permitted, additional participation is not perceived as a serious threat to system maintenance or that the commitment to participation itself is so overriding as to supersede any concern for threats to the system or to highly held values of the dominant elite.

The manner of the resolution of the crisis of participation influences the nature of the parties and of the party systems that emerge. If the impetus to participate comes from a social class, such as the industrial workers or agricultural peasants, and it is opposed or repressed, class-based parties emerge. If the demand for participation is geographically based, or reflects a desire for previously denied participation on the part of a religious or ethnic minority, the failure to gradually absorb leaders of such groups into the prevailing system will almost certainly give rise to political parties that reflect these narrow impulses to organization. Moreover, the organization of one party with a relatively narrow base often leads to

organizational countermeasures and a proliferation of parties.

Political parties also provide legitimacy to the governing authority in the political system. The early phase of a new party system is always a period of uncertainty and instability because it involves new patterns of political participation. Political systems without parties and those with a multiplicity of parties have been among the least successful in establishing a sense of legitimacy.[30] During the early phases of party development it is common for preexisting political groups to continue to exercise a considerable emotional hold on large sections of the populace.

The task of establishing a sense of legitimacy for a competitive party system is complicated by the general lack of cohesion found in most newly established party governments. However, with all these difficulties, parties have been an important and on the whole successful instrument for establishing legitimate national authority. One useful way of observing the legitimacy of a system is to observe the succession process. The succession process is a useful checkpoint for looking at the question of legitimacy because when power is transferred, individuals within the system are forced to decide whether their loyalties are confined to those who, upto that point, have exercised authority or to the system of government.

The first test of the system often takes place when power is transferred from one leader to another within the same political party. the problem of transferring

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[30] Fed R. von der Mehden, *Politics of the Developing Relations,* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964, p. 65.

authority from charismatic to non-charismatic leaders, or the problem of learning how to exercise power without charisma, depends very much upon the establishment of accepted procedures within the governing party.

The transference of power from one party to another, especially the first such transfer that occurs within a party system, is often the critical testing point for the legitimacy of the system. This is evident in the case of East European countries where the hegemonic Communist Party system has given way to competitive multiparty system.

Parties try to resolve the crisis of national integration. National integration implies primarily the amalgamation of disparate social, economic, religious, ethnic and geographic elements into a single nation state. It also means the regularization of structures and processes whereby the discrete elements in a given national territory are brought into meaningful participation in the political system. In one-party authoritarian states, the government generally justifies the suppression of tribal, religious, and regional parties on the grounds that their very existence continues a threat to the nation's territorial integrity. And in competitive as well as in authoritarian party systems, the governing party tends to evoke national symbols so as to facilitate the development of a sense of national loyalty.

The possibilities of the emergence of a single unifying party which reaches into all sections of the country depend upon the nature and extent of cleavage within the social system. Where a great number of cleavages such as religious differences,

ethnic fragmentation, hostility between traditional and modernizing groups, conflict between urban and rural centres, and opposing ideologies exist, without the mitigating element of overlapping and cross-cutting cleavages, then it is particularly dificult for any one party to recruit on the basis of appeals that cut across the country. Frequently political parties associated with such fragmented cultures have no intention of facilitating integration but aim instead at reinforcing the subcultures with which they are identified.

The essence of politics and the instrumental value of parties is the management of conflict, that is the ability of a political system to manage constantly shifting demands that are made on it. Parties are also an instrument for political socialization. The party is used as an instrument for effecting attitudinal and behavioral changes within a society especially so during the early phases of political development when they are among the few institutions concerned with affecting political attitudes. Thus political parties, operating either in an open competitive environment or as the single party of a one-party system, can find solutions to the central problems of political development confronting most of the nations.

With this theoretical framework of parties and party system in the background, the present study would proceed forward to discuss the transformation of the authoritarian hegemonic party system to a multi-party system that is considered as a central component of a post-communist democratic order in Poland. By we can briefly deal with the evolution of party system in modern Poland as well

the political developments that have taken place in Communist Poland.

Political Development of Poland

"The massive political convulsions in Eastern Europe that has been unleashed by the theoretical changes in the notion of socialism in the Soviet Union and the new thinking on International relations under Mikhail Gorbachev, leading to the rapid collapse of state socialism in the region in 1989, and a move to build a new order based on market and democracy mark the end of an epoch in European and global history".[31]

Roman catholicism played a very important role in polish history and serves as a cornerstone of polish identity. During the early part of the communist period the polish government tried to limit the influence of the Roman Catholic church. Religious practices were restricted and a number of priests were imprisoned. While in the case of Poland and Slovakia, Roman Catholic church gave some protection against state power and provided a sanctuary for the dissidents and in the GDR the protestant churches played a similar role.

These two traditions within the broader framework of East European Experience makes it inevitable that the northern tier of Poland, Hungry and Czechoslovakia would find it easier than the Southern Balkan region to build democratic and pluralist institutions. Stability too would be more in the north than in the south.

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[31] Sujit Datta, Problem of Ideology, Democracy, World Focus 127-128, July-August 1990, p. 6.

The embattled elite was neither able to stem the labor action that escalated in the first half of 1980 nor did it display the internal cohesion needed to prevent the social fusion that created Solidarity in August 1980. Moreover, during the solidarity period, the elite became so engulfed in combating the solidarity challenge that no coherent programs of economic rescue were undertaken. As a result, the economy and the standard of living further deteriorated. It was only with the imposition of martial law on 13 December 1981 that the political deadlock was temporarily broken as Solidarity was forcibly outlawed and its leaders arrested.

The attempted political restoration under martial law was the last desperate gamble of Poland's political elite to revitalize the hegemonic party system. However, the party's efforts to reclaim its hegemonic political role carried with it a trap; the removal of the opposition from the legal political scene once again placed sole responsibility for economic renewal on the shoulders of the elite. While only a bold economic initiative could conceivably address the system's profound economic malaise, the creation of a coherent, feasible program for reform proved to be a major stumbling block. Prospects for success appeared even bleaker when seen in the light of half-hearted attempts at bureaucratic restructuring undertaken in the first half of the 1980s, the results of which offered little encouragement. The confidence of the Polish elite and its resolve to restore the hegemonic party system were shaken not only by the failure to create and pursue a plan for successful economic recovery but also by international factors, including U.S. economic

sanctions. Most important, however, was the steady pressure from the Western European leading community and governments demanding a program of reform based upon political liberalization and economic decentralization.

The gravity of the situation was compounded by the restlessness of the workers, who in a massive wave of strikes in the spring of 1989, shook the vary foundations of the system. Unwilling to contain the action which the use of brute force, the desperate elite turned to Lech Walesa and other leaders of the still-illegal Solidarity for help. Although Walesa's and Solidarity's intervention managed to quell the strikes, the elite found that it had to pay a heavy price for this co-operation. The promise to enter into negotiations with Solidarity's leadership. To strengthen its hand before the opening of the path-breaking negotiations, the elite needed some quick successes on the economic front.

The policy answer to this dilemma was the emergence of the Rakowski government in the fall of 1988. Soon after becoming prime minister, Mieczyslaw Rakowski extended repeated apologies to Polands' petty-entrepreneurial milieus.

Beyond the lofty pronouncements and half-hearted deeds on the petty-entrepreneurial front, the Rakowski regime was unable to design a decisive plan to reform the socialist sector of the economy; hence, its mandate rapidly eroded. The emergence of the Rakowski government provided only a temporary delay in fulfilling the promise to negotiate with Solidarity. However, since the Rakowski government was unable to rally the society around a new program of economic

reform, in winter 1989, the whole system faced a dramatic crossroad. If the elite were to renege on its promise to negotiate, then a subsequent wave of strikes and civil actions would paralyze the economy and propel it into chaos. Although the elite still retained the capacity to impose its political will upon the society, it also clearly understood that any exercise of the use of force could provide no economic solution whatsoever, and in fact would be likely to spur further economic deterioration. Instead, the party opted to accept a program of political pluralization to provide a means for resolving the economic crisis and decided to commence negotiations with the opposition.

The growth of political consciousness and activism in Poland seems to proceed along familiar lines. As various social groups struggle for recognition and discover the political weapons available in a democracy. They begin to lobby for particular legislative action or an administrative decision. Not unlike that in the United States, polish society is divided along economic, ideological and geographical lines. The old divisions of country, city, Intelligentsia-working class have been replaced by a struggle for presence in the public arena. This struggle brings into the political process new and hither to unknown players.[32] The intelligentsia continues to evolve into a professional class, and its role as spokesman for society continues to decline.

This overview of political development in Poland indicates that although

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[32] Ewa M. Thompson, "The Political Defination of Social Groups, (ed) Richard F.Stuar, 1998, p. 89.

these new institutions may not have lived up to every one's expectations, they nevertheless began to alter old pattern of power, both at local and central levels. They fostered the development of political culture and produced what did not exist before a climate conducive for civic participation. These are not completed tasks but they are significant achievements and contributions to democratic consolidation, and they should be recognized as such.

CONCLUSION

As in any democracy, Poland's electorate, political parties and leaders have shaped the country's institutions, processes and policies. Working together, these political actors advanced a new constitutional order in 1997 that would put the finishing touch on the transition from communism many important questions especially those related to economies and political pluralism remain to be resolved.

Changes were the result of an accelerated process of political evolution, where issues related to transition were relatively quickly replaced by issues involving business as usual. There is no reason for electoral behaviour, the party system, and the character of leadership to depart so markedly from what it is new in a decade's time. To be sure, leadership is the biggest wildcard and susceptible to the most sudden change. In periods of crisis, voters and parties tend to respond to rather than make strong leaders. But the routinization of polities in Poland signifies that the political initiative rests in the hands of parties and the electorate. Therefore in order to understand the transition process and the shift from central plan to market in Poland is historically important and relevant.

Poland however, whatever be its future record, will be an important test case of transition to capitalism and the quest for social alternatives have still continued and the change in perception required is to understand first that present and past economic problems stem from a common source, a dualistic or fragmented perceptions of reality. However, simply "wishing for adundance" rather than

"scancity" as suggested by "new age" proponents will next solve the economic problem. One direction is suggested by systems theory whereby the economy is viewed as an interdependent system coexisting with ecology and society. In concrete terms this change in perception means altering not only the means but the ends.

The problem in the post-communist world in general and Poland in particular is that the linkage between citizens and decision makers is weak due to the absence of strong intermediary institutions of all types, including parties in political society.[1]

The collapse of communist regime in 1989 was a fast move to multi-party system from single party. Therefore Poland did not have the sufficient time to gradually develop parties and party systems. Instead of patiently building party strength the political parties in Poland had to suddenly contest elections with little practice, organization or political skill.

The volatility of the party system in post-communist Poland, particularly in the first few years, was due to the proliferation of numerous political parties. This situation was due to the widely open and over extended political opportunity structure brought about by the collapse of the Communist regime. This overextension rendered the linkage between political parties and the electorate or potential constituencies weak and ineffective. One reason for this position could be the high degree of uncertainty associated with the economic, social, and political

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[1] J. Biehasiak, "Development of party systems in East-Central Europe". Communist and Post Communist Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1997, p. 24.

transition from Communist towards the market and democracy. Interests in the transition are indeterminate, and serve poorly as the basis of collective identity and social position. Outcomes of economic and political changes are highly contingent, making even more difficult the individual evaluation of political programs and individual associations with parties. The absence of a well-defined socio-economic base results in a failure to produce the cleavages necessary to form strong group identities as vehicles for party politics.

We are inclined to regard Poland as representing a hard test of the tabula rasa hypothesis. Given the extreme fragmentation and instability of its party system, one would expect empirical findings from Poland to confirm well to the prevailing view that electorates of the new democracies lacked or had weak political identities, electoral choice was undetermined by social structure, and political identities were weakly related to political orientations, but there is the unique impact of the communist legacy on certain aspects of mass level political behaviour but the strengthening of party system in Poland requires the grounding of political parties in an organizational capacity that forges established links to mass membership. Democratic stability is dependent on such institutionalization and not merely on substantial alignments along social cleavages or policy preferences. For that reason, greater attention to organizational strength and institutional maturity is required in the characterization of party system in Poland.

The path to democracy is a process built on the experience of the past. The

conditions contributing to the collapse of the hegemonic party system dominated by the ruling communist parties and the extent to political opposition help to define the extractive mode and the emergence of a polarised party system constituted along the poles of communistnist and democratic support. This political bifurcation was more a reflection of the past thàn the future and thus gave way to a fragmented party system characterized by numerous political parties competing along several dimensions of societal conflict. The unregimented, even chaotic, nature of such political interaction was gradually reduced through political mechanism and socio-economic changes, leading to the pluralization of the party system. These conditions create the potential to form a stable, self-sustaining party environment along well-defined axes of completion, culminating in a polyarchial party system.

The hegemonic party system was a significant element in structuring the process of party evolution after the collapse of real socialism. It shaped the substantive cleavage in the emerging system along the inherited regime- society division, setting aside for the time being other political interests and aspiring political parties. Moreover, it gave an institutional frame to the new political phase.

In the case of Poland the first election did not resolve the political dilemmas faced by the new democracy. The main axis of the political competition did not address sufficiently the emerging problems and issues of the transition towards marketization and democratization. Under the circumstances, the polarised political system had to give way to new political cleavages and new political parties.

There were two primary sources for the multiplicity of political actors in the fragmented political system. The first was due to the disintegration of the umbrella movements. The second come from the wave of new political parties that emerged to test the electoral waters. Fragmentation was the natural response to the continuing confusion produced by changes in the economic and social environment. For example, if Poland, had a nation wide threshold of 4 percent for its 1991 elections, only 9 parties would have made it to the sejm instead of 29. This resulted in the rapid fragmentation of the political space in Poland. The new political parties that emerged had a low level of institutionalization lacking both a membership base and an organizational infrastructure that would be used to political advantage.

In the second wave of elections and after Poland's political scenario shows the pluralization of the party structures by reducing the number of legitimate contenders for power and defining more visibly the principal cleavages in society.

As in any democracy, Poland's electorate, political parties and leaders have shaped the country's institutions, processes and policies. Stable democracy after all is about choice, a choice offered through a political society defined by meaningful options. But the routinization of politics in Poland signifies that the political initiative rests in the hands of parties and the electorate.

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