

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

**EVALUATING THE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY  
IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPE:  
THE CASE OF POLAND**

by

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**ABSTRACT**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
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**EVALUATING THE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY IN POST-  
COMMUNIST SOCIETY: POLAND AS A CASE STUDY**

**By Richard Ian Samuels**

This thesis sets out to evaluate public support for young democracies in post-communist society. It studies the challenge that recent regional patterns of democratic support place on the explanatory power of various approaches. The main part of the thesis is an empirical investigation utilising a structured survey of 698 students and backed up by information from a word association test and a free writing exercise. The findings are that the appeal of democracy is emotive, but that support is difficult to separate from a rational explanation. The rational explanation is less in terms of an appreciation for a democratic method of government and more in terms of various economic factors and beliefs. More specifically, democracy is associated with greater rewards than under the past system because of the direction of economic change. It is also suggested that democratic support is related to a protective support buffer which has resulted from an understanding that democracy is still able to provide levels of state protection.

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## *Abbreviations*

<b>AWS</b>	Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność (Solidarity Election Action)
<b>CBOS</b>	Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej (Centre for Public Opinion Research)
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ISP</b>	Instytut Spraw Publicznych (Institute of Public Affairs)
<b>KOR</b>	Komitet Obrony Robotników (Workers' Defence Committee)
<b>LJO</b>	Lektorat Języków Obcych (Department of Foreign Languages)
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>NDB</b>	New Democracies Barometer
<b>OSCE</b>	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PZPR</b>	Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers' Party)
<b>ROP</b>	Ruch Odbudowy Polski (Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland)
<b>SLD</b>	Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (Social Democratic Party)
<b>UMK</b>	Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika (University of Nicholas Copernicus)
<b>UW</b>	Unia Wolności (Freedom Party)

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# *Chapter One*

## *Background to the Research*

### *1.1 The international context*

The political phenomenon of our age has been the global shift towards pluralistic systems of democratic government. This shift applies to post-war Western Europe, Southern Europe during the 1970s, Latin America during the 1980s and, most recently, in Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, much of both Africa and Asia are part of this wave of democratisation.<sup>2</sup> The result is that the fundamental power relations between citizen and state are changing.

Along with the optimism behind the global shift towards practising democracies come warnings about the fragility of young democracies and their ultimate survival. To create and stabilise a democratic system of government depends on many inter-related factors. The most widely mentioned are the condition of the economy, the international environment and the culture amongst the political elite.<sup>3</sup> Yet, it is the ordinary citizens who will eventually determine the system's success or failure. In a political system empowering the citizenry, it is the ordinary citizen who must accept the democratic game or the game itself will be defeated.<sup>4</sup>

History has taught us hard lessons about the willingness of citizens to accept new democracies. The most striking of these lessons was the breakdown of the inter-war democracies and, accordingly, the fading of the Wilsonian optimism that citizens would learn to appreciate the fairness of democracy. In an environment of socio-economic hardship, the alien characteristics of practising democracies failed to gain any significant appeal. The consequence was the return to more familiar authoritarian systems of government.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, indications are that today both regional and international circumstances are more favourable towards the 'selling' of a democratic system. In a much-changed world, the dynamics of support need not be related to historical patterns, especially when recognising that democratisation today is characterised by in-coming waves of enthusiasm. The shift towards democratic politics

has not occurred independent of citizens' demands. Rather, it has occurred in parallel with their demands. We live in an age of the symbol of the collapsed Berlin Wall, when democracy has become the desired goal of so many political players and citizens alike.<sup>6</sup>

## ***1.2 Research direction and aims***

### ***1.2.1 Democratic support in post-communist Europe***

The broad objective of this research is to provide an explanatory picture of support for the young democratic regimes in post-communist Europe.<sup>7</sup> Democratic support across post-communist Europe is of particular interest because support has been sustained in challenging political and economic conditions. Without a strong tradition of democracy across the region and with considerable political and economic difficulties, post-communist Europe offers lessons on the understanding of democratic support. However, from the onset I acknowledge the limits to global generalisations. The global pattern towards democratisation does not provide one shared experience,<sup>8</sup> and democracy has regularly arrived to either stabilise or die within a regional context.<sup>9</sup>

In Chapter 2 I discuss the challenge that recent global patterns of democratic support place on the explanatory power of various approaches. The discussion leads into an examination of support patterns and explanations in the case of post-communist Europe (See Chapter 3). These two chapters are of interest in their own right because they provide both a review and a discussion on democratic support explanations up to the present time. In this thesis they are primarily designed to provide a background to the current issues of interest that are examined in my own empirical study on democratic support. Below I explain the context of my study; then I explain the line of inquiry that I have used in order to provide a broad explanatory picture of democratic support.

### ***1.2.2 The usage of a case study***

The main component of this research has been my study of Polish students at the University of Nicholas Copernicus (UMK) in Toruń. In Chapter 4 I provide the

background to democratic support in Poland and explain how my own case study applies to the wider picture of democratic support in Poland. Of course, the weakness of any case study is that a targeted sample group binds the researcher to a specific time and place. My empirical investigation was conducted in a period of relative economic optimism in Poland during the autumn of 1997 and spring of 1998. The research involved sampling university students, the majority of which were from Central Poland. Consequently, I was not choosing a grouping of people that could necessarily be said to represent post-communist Europe, Central Eastern Europe or Poland. From a cultural and instrumental perspective, university students are of particular interest for explaining why democracy appeals in today's global environment. From a cultural perspective it can be argued that the young and educated are a grouping that has grown up both accustomed to democratic norms and sympathetic to democratic values.<sup>10</sup> From an instrumental perspective it can be argued that the university community has much to gain from the direction of political and economic change in Poland.<sup>11</sup>

The main reason for conducting a case study was that it allowed me to make a detailed investigation into the broad explanatory picture of democratic support. The personal advantage of access allowed me to conduct a comprehensive empirical study which incorporated qualitative techniques for investigation with quantitative techniques for verification. In terms of the qualitative techniques, I was able to ascertain the features behind the appeal of democracy. Then I used quantitative techniques to test the democratic support significance of points of interest. The empirical design is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

### ***1.2.3 Specific issues under evaluation***

Below I explain the specific issues that were under investigation in the empirical study. These are presented in a sequence which follows the logic of the study.

*The importance to democratic support of the explanatory approaches:*

First my empirical study investigated the importance to democratic support of the explanatory approaches (See Chapter 6). More specifically:

- ‘Issue 1’ is concerned with the affection-based explanation of support (See Part 6.2). I ascertained the extent of the moral appeal of democracy and whether the foundations to that moral appeal are founded on the rejection of the past ‘communist’ regime.
- In ‘Issue 2’ I investigated the instrumental explanation (See Part 6.3). I tested the strength of the relationship between democratic support and perceptions of the effectiveness of the current democratic regime. The results indicate whether an affection-based explanation is independent from an instrumental explanation.

*Democracy as a method of government:*

Second my empirical study investigated the perspective of academics such as Richard Rose that democratic support depends on the belief in democracy as a method of government (See Chapter 7). More specifically:

- In ‘Issue 3’ I investigated Kolarska-Bobińska’s suggestion that a political hope factor can explain democratic support (See Part 7.2). Can support be related to a hope in what the current democracy ‘will become’?
- ‘Issue 4’ is concerned with the importance of public participation and empowerment to the support explanation (See Part 7.3). I examined the extent to which the appeal of the current democracy is founded on an association with public participation (See Part 7.3.3). Perceptions of a participatory political system do not necessarily lead to support. For effective power, the political elite must be sensitive/responsive to public participation. Hence, I investigated perceptions of the sensitivity of the political elite (See Part 7.3.4). Also, effective power may not be a significant value behind democratic support. Therefore, I also tested whether the belief in public empowerment statistically relates to democratic support (See Part 7.3.5).
- In ‘Issue 5’ I investigated whether democratic support has been founded on a widespread belief in the competitive pluralistic power structure (See Part 7.4).

*Democracy for the economic direction:*

A third aspect of my empirical study explored the suggestion by Whitefield and Evans that democratic support depends on a belief in the economic direction of change (See Chapter 8). In ‘Issue 6’ I investigated the strength of the association between economic liberalisation and democracy and tested the support significance of economic beliefs.

*Democracy for the associated socio-economic environment:*

A fourth aspect of my empirical study investigated the widespread belief in the political field that democratic support depends on the socio-economic environment (See Chapter 9). More specifically:

- In ‘Issue 7’ I explored the socio-economic environment that is associated with the current democracy (See Part 9.1). This incorporated an interest in both the material and liberal environment, as well as an interest in wider associations with lifestyle.
- In ‘Issue 8’ I tested the support significance of social and economic factors (See Part 9.2). The testing of specific social and economic variables largely served the purpose of ascertaining the support significance of factors of interest induced from ‘Issue 7’.

*Causal path:*

Finally, in ‘Issue 9’ my empirical study brings together statistical variables of interest to explain how factors collectively relate to democratic support (See Chapter 10). Using multivariate analysis I investigated how political beliefs, economic beliefs, socio-economic circumstances and economic expectations inter-relate with democratic support. Of particular importance was to test whether democratic support is ‘directly’ or ‘indirectly’ related to the belief in the economic direction of change.

### **1.3     *The concept of democratic support***

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to discussing the concept of democratic support which I define as ‘a preference for democratic government over alternatives’.

### *1.3.1 The notion of democratic support*

#### *The cognitive meaning:*

Political support can be divided into cognitive support and its behavioural manifestations, or what Easton terms covert and overt support.<sup>12</sup> Importantly, my research does not refer to the notion of support in respect to the behavioural manifestations. Rather, the support in question refers to cognition. The advantage of limiting the definition of support to ‘cognition’ is that the notion can be transferred into a manageable measurement. However, from the onset I should mention that certain political scientists in the field have protested at the notion of a single cognitive definition and attempted to widen the working concept to include the behavioural manifestations. Most notably, Doh Shin divides democratic support measurements into components that include the level of behavioural commitment.<sup>13</sup> Shin’s work is an important contribution to the field of democratic support. Yet, as in any qualitative measurement, there is the danger of scattering multiple notions of democratic support and, therefore, losing the advantages of a standardised working measurement.

#### *The comparative meaning:*

Because of my intention to adopt a broad definition of cognitive support, I chose to work within Easton’s definition of support as a ‘political orientation’. More specifically, political support is “...an attitude by which a person orients himself to an object either favourably or unfavourably...”.<sup>14</sup> Importantly, favouritism occurs within a comparative framework of ‘preference’. The notion of support for the democratic object becomes a preference for the democratic object over alternatives.

The comparative component to the definition distinguishes democratic support from isolated attitudes towards democracy. Isolated attitudes to democratic procedures and institutions may fuel favouritism and, as a consequence, they will be used to ‘explain’ democratic support. Such isolated attitudes most commonly incorporate measurements of satisfaction, confidence and/or trust of democratic institutions and procedures. However, democratic support is a separate ‘comparative’ attitude that is influenced by attitudes towards ‘alternative’ regime types as well as by isolated attitudes towards democracy.

*Support for the democratic system:*

The support object in question is the institutions and procedures that collectively make up a democratic system of government. So, by using the concept of ‘democratic’ support, I distinguish support for a specific regime type from support for political players/governments. Democratic support implies an orientation towards the rules of the game as distinct from an orientation towards specific actors and institutions of the moment. Of course, positive attitudes towards a specific set of elite may influence democratic support. Hence, such attitudes can be used to ‘explain’ democratic support, noting that the relationship is open to debate because of the varied abilities of citizens to distinguish the regime type from the ruling authorities/governments.<sup>15</sup> Yet, democratic support is a separate attitude that refers to a specific regime type.

Also of importance is that democratic support is an attitude to the ‘practice’ of a democratic method of government. Therefore, democratic support is separate from an ideological orientation towards a specific form of decision making. A sociological approach might presume that democratic principles will ‘cause’ a preference for democracy’s practical realisation, but an ideological preference is conceptually distinct from a preference for the practice of democracy.

*Support as a separate concept from ‘appeal’:*

Isolated attitudes towards the political system and ideological orientations can be ‘appealing’ features of democracy. As ‘appealing’ features they can influence democratic support and, hence, can be important in the explanation of support. Democratic support is however a separate concept that means a ‘preference for the democratic system over alternatives’.

This distinction between the ‘appeal of democracy’ and ‘democratic support’ is important with respect to my empirical design. My empirical design incorporates a study of positive attitudes. Yet, the appeal is not simplistically synonymous with support. Rather, an exploration into the appeal of democracy leads to a further study into the variables that relate to the democratic preference.

*Support as a separate concept from 'legitimacy':*

The notion of democratic support is closely related to the concept of democratic legitimacy. Linz defines democratic legitimacy as the belief that a broad democratic regime is "...better than any others that might be established".<sup>16</sup> However, I avoid working within the notion of legitimacy because the terminology is loaded in ideological baggage. Regime legitimacy has become synonymous with an 'ideal' kind of normative commitment with a presumption that legitimacy protects from fluctuating allegiances at times of dissatisfaction.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, 'support' is a more flexible term that has been developed by Easton and others to incorporate the influence of on-going factors on regime preference. As such, the notion of support more adequately incorporates the variety of explanations under evaluation in this research.

### **1.3.2 Defining the democratic system of government**

I now turn to the thorny notion of how to define 'democracy' as a system of government. Democracy in this research refers to the procedures and institutions that form a particular method of government. Therefore, the definition of a democratic system refers to a form of decision making as opposed to a 'liberal' environment. The two have however become so inter-related that any understanding of democratic support unavoidably requires consideration of the liberal environment and civic society. As a consequence, I include a short analysis in part 1.3.3 of the relationship between democracy and the liberal environment.

The philosopher M. Bunge has recently written, "beware of ideological labels, for most of them have become obsolete and perform a persuasive function rather than an analytical one. Just think of the words 'patriotism', 'national security', 'liberty', 'democracy', or 'socialism'."<sup>18</sup> Despite being both overused and over-abused, a broad consensus can still be reached on the method of government that characterises a 'real' democracy.

A democratic form of government depends on the role of the citizen in the state decision-making process. Democracy is a system of state decision-making which, in its 'purest' form, is a government composed of all citizens directly.<sup>19</sup> However, such a 'pure' form of direct power by the citizenry has evolved in practice to include systems

based on indirect power. For Schumpeter, the label of democracy applies when a citizenry has the power to elect the ruling elite.<sup>20</sup> Under delegating powers, the purpose of democracy is to sustain good management by periodically choosing the best people from competing sets of elite. Similarly, though without the ‘pluralistic’ component, Marx envisaged a pyramid structure of elected delegates. These delegates would be selected by the community to serve districts and towns that would, in turn, select a national delegation.<sup>21</sup> Other scholars stress the idea of decision makers reflecting the will of a participating citizenry. In a typical recent definition, Ranney and Kendall stress the need for citizens to have equal and effective opportunities for participation and for the political actors to be attentive to public demands.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the idea of democracy as a participatory form of government has expanded in recent decades as a result of concerns that state politics is becoming increasingly distant and remote from ordinary life.<sup>23</sup>

So, a democratic system of government must incorporate the institutions and procedures that provide certain opportunities for political participation by those who wish to be active. Public participation by itself, however, does not result in democracy. Rather, democracy is an identifiable method of government that links public participation with a specific kind of power relationship ‘within’ the state. In large part, this identification derives from an understanding of what is falsely labelled as democratic. Plenty of so-called democracies in recent history have allowed participation of various kinds. Yet, they have not incorporated a system of government in which the participation effectively encourages the political actors to either manage efficiently or stand attentive to public demands. Rather, political actors have monopolised power under the justification of defending ‘one’ national/ideological interest.<sup>24</sup> Under such a monopoly of power, governments have become notorious for ‘insensitivity’. At times of widespread unpopularity, some sets of ruling elite have shown themselves to be unwilling to reflect public demands by relinquishing power.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, ‘real’ democracy becomes identified by features that safeguard against concentrations of power within the state structure.

Identifying ‘real’ democracy through the features that safeguard against excess power points to a definition of democracy that targets ‘what autocracy is not’. Sartori has a loose ex adverso definition of democracy arguing that democracy is not “...in one

word, autocracy". Rather, in a democracy "power is scattered, limited, controlled, and exercised in rotations; where as in an autocracy power is concentrated, uncontrolled, indefinite, and unlimited".<sup>26</sup> This definition offers a comparative concept that is particularly appealing with respect to democratising regimes where the memories of alternative forms of government prevail. Yet, the definition stresses the idea and not the specific features of a democratic method of government.

A 'real' democratic system is composed of institutions and procedures that provide effective participation and the necessary safeguards that protect against a concentration of power. It needs to provide the following features:

- The opportunity for active participation through periodic free and equal direct elections to important positions of public office. It must also provide the public with opportunities for active participation at the grassroots of political organisations.
- A pluralistic organisation of power through the existence of a multiple number of parties competing for power. Furthermore, real democracy must avoid high concentrations of power by dividing powers between certain levels of regional/local self-government and/or, as Montesquieu envisaged, by separating powers at a given level.<sup>27</sup>

A 'real' democratic system exists only when these political features are present.

### **1.3.3 *The liberal condition***

As already mentioned, the democratic support under analysis refers to support for a 'concrete' method of government, not notions of liberty. Nevertheless, democracy as a method of government has evolved from a tradition that incorporates the idea of liberty. Democracy itself has become labelled as 'liberal' democracy through incorporating the ideas of a private sphere of life.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the spread of 'democracy' across the globe has become synonymous with the spread of 'liberalism' with liberties associated with the rights of the citizen under 'democratic' constitutions.

By 'liberty' I refer to the 'absence of state intervention/regulation', or what Isaiah Berlin refers to as 'negative' liberty.<sup>29</sup> Logically, the scope of liberty is endless, but it can be categorised into two groups. 'Civil' liberties are those, such as the

freedom of speech, press, assembly and petition, that have been classically documented in the First Amendment to the US Constitution. In contrast, other liberties are grouped together in terms of their 'economic' identity. An appropriate example is the rights to ownership and economic activity under Articles 20, 21 and 22 of the Polish constitution of 1997.<sup>30</sup>

The ideas relating democracy to liberalism derive from the Enlightenment belief that rational man is able to govern himself. Under the resulting paradox of possessing a state when presuming that man can govern himself, political theorists wrestled with ideas of controlling the very government that would place limits on personal autonomy. John Locke in particular fostered ideas of a political community/society that 'should be' granted rights over the property of lives, liberties or estates.<sup>31</sup> I use the words 'should be' because the early understanding of liberalism was related to the moral dimension of inalienable rights of man as opposed to the later utilitarian/maximiser justifications. I am not however so much interested in the ideas on why liberalism 'should be' related to democracy but in the argued inter-dependency between liberalism and democracy.

#### *Democratic forms of government as a pre-condition of liberty:*

On the 'weaker' side of the inter-dependency is the idea that a democratic form of government is necessary if liberty is to be preserved. Popular elections and representative bodies in classical theory are treated as necessary to protect against tyranny and oppression. The logic is based on the presumption that the 'reasoning' citizen recognises that it is in his/her interest to limit levels of state intervention. Yet the logic of this relationship is open to attack because it has proven too simplistic. Though representative organs have appeared more likely than others to curtail government abuses, they also lead to pressures encouraging state intervention.<sup>32</sup> These pressures are particularly prevalent in the economic sphere. As the early socialists had correctly observed, there is no valuing of economic liberties from the state by people who barely have a loaf of bread to consume. More recently, Berlin's critique of classical liberalism questions the value of "...freedom to those who cannot make use of it".<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, as the past two centuries has illustrated, it is very commonly in

man's own interest to prefer increased intervention for the purpose of redistributing the material inequalities that result from economic liberalism.<sup>34</sup>

*Liberalism as a pre-condition for a democratic method of government:*

The other side of the inter-dependency is less problematic. Certain freedoms are recognised as necessary to maintain democracy. Tocqueville argued that a civil society is to be preserved under a practising democracy because, without the independent power base to a society, democracy is too easily open to centralisation and, subsequently, an abuse of power.<sup>35</sup> The logic of the relationship is that freedoms of speech and association are necessary so as to maintain democratic accountability. It can also be argued that basic economic freedoms are a necessary condition of democracy. In the Jeffersonian tradition, private property is recognised as providing the citizens with a source of livelihood and autonomy preventing the government from being oppressive.

Empirical evidence supports the need for freedoms to preserve a democratic order. Dahl has pointed out that throughout history an institutional democracy is more likely to both emerge and survive under the conditions of political liberty.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, in respect to the economic sphere, Dahl observes that "It is an arresting fact that today in every country governed by polyarchy the means of production are for the most part owned privately".<sup>37</sup> So, findings point towards basic liberties as a necessary component of democracy, even though the extent of those freedoms is wide open for debate.

*The danger from the inter-relationship*

The logical result of this relationship between democracy and liberalism is problematic. Democracy may need a liberal environment to survive, but democracy also empowers a citizenry who commonly demand the erosion of that liberal environment, and if that liberal environment erodes, so too does democracy. There are a large number of scholars, both of the right and left wing, who share the fear that encroachment by the state threatens democracy. From the neo-liberal perspective

reflected in the writings of Hayek, the concern is largely over economic regulation.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, for Habermas the concern is over bureaucratic rationality.<sup>39</sup>

When applied to the particular case of post-communist Europe, these concerns take on a further intensity in their implications. The problem when applied to post-communist democracies has been how to de-communise the state when a strong bureaucracy and economic insecurities hold back the process of liberalisation (See Chapter 3). In post-communist Europe, the question is not about 'how to prevent bureaucratic encroachment', rather the question is about 'how to relieve society of existing state domination' and, accordingly, about how to head towards a more substantive democracy.<sup>40</sup>

Important to this thesis is the lay person's understanding of the relationship between liberalism and democracy. For citizens globally, democratic forms of government may be associated with free elections and multiple parties, but the very existence of such a method of government has also become synonymous with a liberal environment.<sup>41</sup> Democracy means much more than free elections and multiple parties. Its very existence becomes associated with the curtailment of government abuse as well as such things as the economic hardships which can result from the free market.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> Huntington describes the widespread pattern towards democratisation in terms of 'waves'. He regards the first wave as beginning in the early nineteenth century and leading to 30 democratic countries by 1920. With renewed authoritarianism the number of democratic countries receded to about a dozen by 1920. The second wave was after the Second World War. Similarly, the number peaked to approximately 30 countries and then receded in many of the young democracies. Finally, the third wave arrived in Southern Europe in the 1970s. S. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> To date, the number of countries with relatively open, fair and competitive elections has reached well over 60. This global shift towards democratisation has eroded the significance of the perspective that the Third World is condemned to backwardness because of socio-economic circumstances. Rather, a new generation of comparativists and international relationists have emerged to discuss the 'constraints' to democratisation rather than factors that 'determine' failure. The theoretical shift against a deterministic approach is discussed in detail in G. Almond, "Review Article: the International-national Connection," *British Journal of Political Science*, 19:2 (1989) 237-59 and G. Pridham on "The International Dimension of Democratisation: Theory, Practise and Inter-regional Comparisons," in G. Pridham, E. Herring and G. Sanford (eds.), *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Of interest are the ideas of Francis Fukuyama who argues that democracy is destined to succeed. Fukuyama reasons that the success of 'liberal democracy' is related to both systemic efficiency and the final 'struggle for recognition' which relates back to the ideas of Hegel. See F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Avon Books, 1992. Fukuyama's 'deterministic' perspective is strongly questioned, not least because the argument is founded on the presumption of the organisational superiority of liberal democracies.

<sup>4</sup> The most obvious power that the citizenry can use to remove a democratic regime is the 'negative' power to vote for a set of elite who propose to erode/remove democracy. The widespread popularity of non-democratic political parties was a characteristic of the inter-war years and led to the destruction of the young democracies of Central Europe. The dilemma in such cases is whether to preserve a democratic order through 'undemocratically' banning the anti-democratic parties from office. A recent example has been in Algeria where the openly anti-democratic Islamic Fundamentalists were banned from office despite electoral victories.

<sup>5</sup> The phenomenon of alien styled democracies returning to more familiar authoritarian systems was repeated in the post-colonial experience. Across much of Africa and Asia young democracies slid into systems of populist dictatorships. The problems for the development of young democracies across post-colonial populations is discussed in L. Diamond, J. J. Linz and S. M. Lipset (eds.), *Democracy in Developing Countries*, London: Admentine, 1989.

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<sup>6</sup> The global trend towards favouring democratisation is discussed in T. Karl and P. C. Schmitter, "Democratization around the globe: Opportunities and Risk," pp.43-62 in M. T. Klare and D. C. Thomas (eds.), *World Security*, New York: St. Martin Press, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> I define the region of post-communist Europe as the Central and Eastern European countries that were within the broad Soviet sphere of influence in the period after the Second World War.

<sup>8</sup> Democratisation in post-communist Europe has resulted in a far more intense transitional experience in comparison to democratisation in South America. This is largely because of the added difficulty of de-communisation and economic restructuring. As Held and McGrew have suggested, we are advised "to draw a distinction between globalisation and regionalisation as distinct processes." See D. Held and A. McGrew, "Globalisation and the Liberal Democratic State," *Government and Opposition*, 28:2 (1993) p.261.

<sup>9</sup> Many would agree that the economic differences significantly improve and/or worsen the chances of successful democratisation. In post-communist Europe democratisation accompanied with economic transition was interpreted as endangering the support base (See Chapter 3). However, at the same time the process of democratising post-communist Europe can also be argued to have benefited from the associations of removing socialism and possible future membership of EU.

<sup>10</sup> Young citizens are largely socialised outside the norms of the previous communist regime. Also, the educated youth are a group that is argued to be most effected by a post-material value change towards favouring democracy. With respect to the latter, Ziolkowski argues that, despite the prevalent 'materialism' in Polish society, there is the continued presence of post-material 'democratic' values. M. Ziolkowski, "On the Diversity of the Present: Suspended between Tradition, the Legacy of Socialism, Modernity and Postmodernity," *Polish Sociological Review*, 121:1 (1998) 21-43.

<sup>11</sup> The higher the level of education, the better the opportunities available to the Polish citizen to take advantage of the recent political and economic changes. It is also argued by Rychard that high levels of education provide an understand of the changes taking place in Poland which results in an ability to adapt to changing economic circumstances. The psychological advantage of being better equipped to adapt to changing circumstances is discussed as 'cultural capital' in A. Rychard, "Beyond Gains and Losses: In Search of Winning Losers," *Social Research*, 63:2 (1996) 465-485.

<sup>12</sup> Covert support implies a cognitive orientation, whereas overt support implies a behavioural conviction to the preservation of democracy. D. Easton, *A System Analysis of Political Life*, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1965.

<sup>13</sup> Shin divides a single support measurement into four components: democratic preference, democratic understanding, democratic usefulness and behavioural disposition. D. C. Shin, "The Quality of Mass Support for Democratisation," *Social Indicators Research*, 35:3, (1995) 239-253.

<sup>14</sup> D. Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science*, 5:4 (1975) p.436.

<sup>15</sup> There is considerable controversy over the ability of citizens to distinguish between 'politician' and 'political system'. At the heart of this controversy is the validity of David Easton's division of political

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support into two types. These types are 'diffuse support' for a regime type and 'specific support' for the players themselves. D. Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science*, 5:4 (1975) pp.435-457. Easton's two types of support are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>16</sup> J. Linz, "Legitimacy of Democracy and the Socio-economic System," p.65 in M. Dogan (ed.), *Comparing Pluralist Democracies*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1989.

<sup>17</sup> Legitimacy as a concept is weighed down by centuries of usage. Legitimacy has been amongst us since the ancient Greeks as a reference to the 'legal' supremacy of the state over society. The meaning expanded as a result of the erosion of the old sacred rights of the monarchy. It became associated with the social-contract theories of the Middle ages that were concerned with the margin of error before unpopular policy turned to protest. However, it was not until the challenge to 'traditional' rulers and regimes in revolutionary France that legitimacy became recognised as a social condition necessary for the survival of a regime.

<sup>18</sup> M. A. Bunge, *Social Science Under Debate*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, p.156.

<sup>19</sup> The 'pure' Athenian understanding of democracy was related to a direct form of 'majority rule'. See S. Everson (ed.), *Aristotle: The Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. Of course, in the Athenian conceptualisation of democracy, 'majority rule' related to the majority of 'citizens' and excluded the slaves and women who made up the majority of the population. Only the male property owning class with the title of 'citizen' possessed political power, a situation that had become interpreted as 'undemocratic' by the twentieth century. Robert Dahl does however point out that democracy has never truly incorporated majority rule. Rather, democracy has always incorporated rule by the few, hence his coining of the phrase 'polyarchy' to describe 'democracy'. R. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

<sup>20</sup> Schumpeter's model of limited democracy is based on the interpretation that the provision of power to citizens is of value only for the purpose of 'delegating' those that govern. The 'limited' delegating function is interpreted as valuable because competitive elections are argued to motivate better performance by political elite. J. A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1942.

<sup>21</sup> Marx focused most of his intellectual energies on a critique of the existing order rather than on the creation of an alternative model of democracy. An intricate part of the critique was that a pluralistic form of democracy merely served to preserve the class structure by distributing power across the bourgeoisie. An important point to remember with Marx is that he was writing at a period when ownership determined suffrage. In this context, a Marxian styled delegative democracy might have been a 'more' democratic alternative than the political systems in existence in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century Marx's critique of democracy was weakened as suffrage was extended. A broad overview of democracy as envisaged by Marx is provided in J. E. Elliot, *Marx and Engels on Economics, Politics and Society*, Santa Monica: Goodyear, 1981.

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<sup>22</sup> Rannay and Kendall's definition is a typical definition of our age in respect to the stress on the importance of both meaningful participation and responsiveness to such input from the political elite. It is a sophisticated definition of democracy on the importance of both internal efficacy (input) to be matched by external efficacy (willingness of the political elite to respond to such input). A. Ranney and W. Kendall, "Principles for a Model of Democracy," in C. Cnudde and D. Neubauer (eds.), *Empirical Democratic Theory*, Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969.

<sup>23</sup> The recent interest in 'democratising' democracy has taken various shapes and forms. There has been an emphasis on power relationships beyond the traditional domain of the state. One perspective from the left is that no 'real' democracy can exist without the removal of gross socio-economic inequalities. C. Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation: A Critique of Liberal Theory*, Cambridge: Policy Press, 1985. A wider variety of alternative democratic models is discussed in D. Held (ed.), *New Forms of Democracy*, London: Sage, 1986. In response to shifting power relations under the process of globalisation, David Held provides an updated cosmopolitan model in D. Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995.

<sup>24</sup> The most appropriate example of a single interest being represented in so-called democracies is the domination of communist parties across much of the world. Structurally, these so-called democracies have commonly been open to grassroots participation at the bottom and multiple interest representation at the top. For instance, Poland not only had a representative parliament but multiple parties operating within the structure (See Part 4.1.2). However, the First Secretaries of the communist parties remained at the centre of an authoritarian decision making procedure. Held rejects the description of a political system dominated by one-party as a 'real' democracy in D. Held, *Models of Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987.

<sup>25</sup> Public frustrations at the inability to remove 'unpopular' populist regimes included the experience of communist Europe. Indeed, for this research, the popularity of the Solidarity movement in the 1980s is probably the most obvious example of resistance against an unpopular communist regime (See Part 4.1.2).

<sup>26</sup> G. Sartori, "What Democracy is Not," p.26 in C. Cnudde and D. Neubauer (eds.), *Empirical Democratic Theory*, Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969.

<sup>27</sup> Montesquieu argued for the separation of powers between the legislative and executive bodies as a means of preventing a heavy concentration of power within the state structure. M. Richter, *The Political Theory of Montesquieu*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

<sup>28</sup> Held argues that the proper meaning of democracy must acknowledge 'liberal' democracy. D. Held, *Models of Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987. Also, Sartori's ex-adverso definition of democracy incorporates the idea of power as 'limited'.

<sup>29</sup> Berlin contrasts 'negative' liberty with 'positive' liberty. Whereas negative liberty is 'absence from state interference', positive liberty is 'the ability to act on the space provided by the state'. This distinction allows Berlin to argue that the value of 'negative' liberty is in its positive manifestations. I.

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Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in M. Sandel (ed.), *Liberalism and its Critics*, Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1984.

<sup>30</sup> The Articles are in Chapter 1 of the 1997 'Constitution of Poland'. They are cited on the internet at '<http://www.uni-woerzburg.de/law/p1000000.htm>'. Of importance to recognise is that a constitutional safeguarding of economic liberties is not the same as an existing market economy.

<sup>31</sup> A great Whig of his day, John Locke also stressed the importance of religious toleration and on separating the roles of State and Church. J. Horton and S. Mendus, *John Locke: A Letter Concerning Toleration*, London: Routledge, 1991. The liberal democracy of Locke is explained further in A. J. Simmons, *The Lockean Theory of Rights*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

<sup>32</sup> The conflict between democracy and liberalism was recognised in Tocqueville's concern over the 'excesses of freedom'. See in D. Copp (ed.), *The Idea of Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. More recently concerns are expressed by theorists proposing 'government overload'. These theories grew from concern in the 1970s with democracy suffering at the hands of 'excessive' public demands. The classic work on the crisis of democracy is M. J. Crozier, S. P. Huntington and J. Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy*, New York: New York University Press, 1975.

<sup>33</sup> I. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," p.17 in M. Sandel (ed.), *Liberalism and its Critics*, Oxford: Basic Blackwell, 1984.

<sup>34</sup> The economic role of the state has significantly increased in the twentieth century for reasons that relate to citizens' wants as much as to the self interest of abusive regimes. In parallel with the increased political clout of the less economically privileged groups, political pressures built up to improve the ordinary man's lot through the 'redistributing' organ of the state.

<sup>35</sup> Tocqueville was concerned that democracy would die without an independent power base existing in wider (non-political) society. This was based on concern over the argument that the state centralises itself when civil society is weak. The situation of post-revolutionary France became the classic example of such a scenario. The political thought of Tocqueville is explained in J. Lively, *The Social and Political Thought of Alexis de Tocqueville*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.

<sup>36</sup> R. Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.108. The argument is also used to explain the success of democracy in ancient Athens where only proprietors had ever counted as 'citizens'.

<sup>38</sup> Hayek argues that the dominant interventionist and constructivist temper has resulted in an unnoticed loss of liberty (a road to serfdom). But, just as critical to his critique of an over-bloated state has been his economic argument that forecasted the inevitable failure of state planning. F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1944.

<sup>39</sup> Habermas leads the debate on concerns over 'technocratic consciousness'. He opposes the rationalisation of instrumental action and the resulting growth of productive forces and technological control. The arguments are discussed in R. C. Holub, *Jürgen Habermas: Critic in the Public Sphere*, London: Routledge, 1991. For Habermas's classic work, see J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, London: Heinemann, 1973.

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<sup>40</sup> Dahrendorf stresses the need for a long process towards ‘substantive’ democracy before the new order can be labelled as consolidated. A large part of his thinking is that societies stuck half way between the old and the new are characterised by dislocation and disorientation which is fertile soil “...in which fascism thrives.” R. Dahrendorf, *Reflections of the Revolution in Europe*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1990, p.106. Of interest is surveys conducted by the organisation ‘Freedom House’ which documents the ‘level’ of democratisation through ‘levels of freedom’. Whereas a number of 120 or so countries may claim to be democratic, Freedom House lowers that sum to approximately 85. These figures are documented on the internet at the following address: ‘<http://www.freedomhouse.org/ratings/index.htm>’.

<sup>41</sup> Citizens throughout much of the world tend to associate the existence of a democracy with the features of liberalism. In post-communist countries, this tendency is well documented and only to be expected when recognising that institutional democracy has coincided with both political and economic freedoms. For instance, with the exception of Hungary, more than half of all populations across post-communist Europe associated democracy with freedom above all else. See J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996). The association is evident well beyond post-communist Europe. For instance, Ottemoeller found that perceptions of democracy amongst Ugandans were dominated by ‘freedoms’. D. Ottemoeller, “Popular Perceptions of Democracy: Elections and Attitudes in Uganda,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 31:1 (1998) 98-124.

## *Chapter Two*

### *The Field of Democratic Support Explanations*

#### *2.1 Types of support explanation*

Democratic support can be understood through either a ‘cognitive dimension’ or through a ‘focus of explanation’. The cognitive dimension explains ‘when’ and ‘how’ a person’s support orientation is formed. It is divided between the affection-based and evaluation-based approaches. In short, an affection-based approach takes the sociological perspective that support is founded on an ingrained affection towards the objects and/or ideas of democracy (See Part 2.2). In contrast, an evaluation-based approach takes the rational perspective that support is founded on on-going evaluations of the political, social and/or economic situation (See Part 2.3). The cognitive dimension also explains the ‘strength’ of support. A mind-set results in a culturally rooted commitment that is not easily eroded across a population. In contrast, support founded on an on-going evaluation results in a weaker commitment that is open to erosion. The cognitive dimension is applicable to all types of political support, but does not explain the specific characteristics of democratic support.

It is the alternative type, the ‘focus of explanation’, that gives democratic support its specific character. I divide this focus of explanation between supporting democracy ‘for what it is’, ‘for what successive governments do’ and/or ‘for the associated social/economic environment’ (See Figure 2A for a visual representation of the ‘focus’). Rogowski broadly reflects these divisions in his taxonomy of democratic support explanations. His categorising includes a focus on ‘participation’ for what democracy is, ‘effectiveness’ for what successive governments do and ‘fair treatment’ for the associated socio-economic realities.<sup>1</sup>

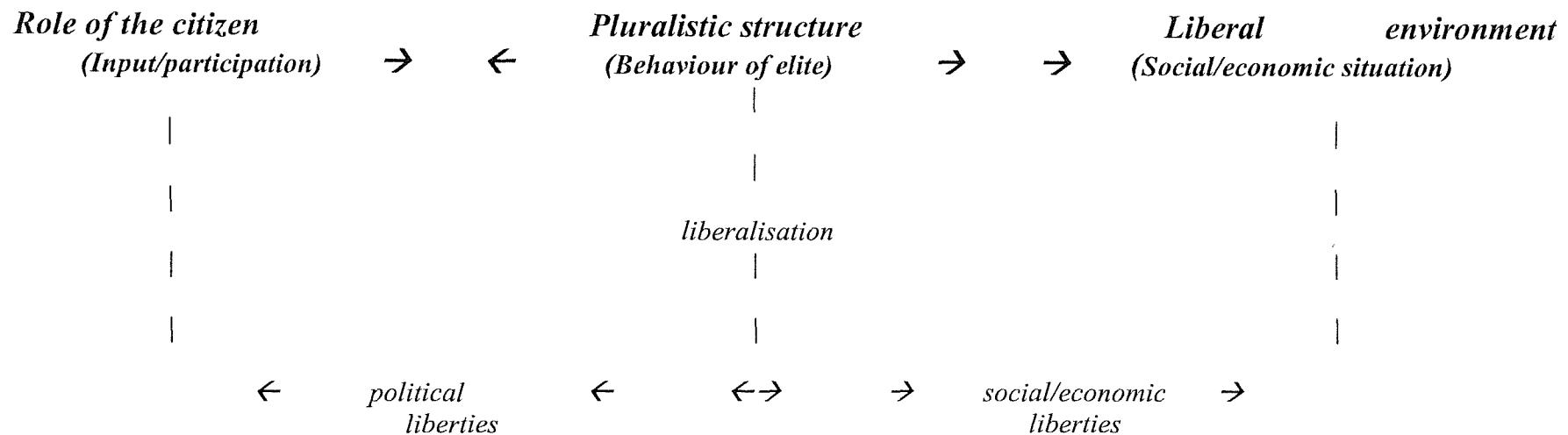
There has been a broad fusion between these types of explanation. Most important has been a fusion through Easton’s two types of support. Diffuse support is a mindset focused on what a regime type actually is. In contrast, specific support is an evaluating mind focused on what successive governments actually do/bring. Such a

Figure 2A *Focus of Explanation:*

The focus of explanation is based on the following logic:

- First, there are three basic parts to the focus of explanation. These are with respect to the citizens' relationship with the state, the state/government itself and, lastly, the socio-economic environment.
- Second, the three basic parts to the focus of explanation are inter-related through their logical relationships. Logically the relationships are in the direction of the environment, noting that any political system is not logically in existence for its own sake but as an instrument for chosen 'ends'. Of course, people are not always logical in their evaluations, but as a model for categorisation, I presume that there is a broad understanding of the relationships. I present the logical relationship in respect to the applied case of post-communist Europe where the direction of output is in the direction of 'liberalisation'.

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distinction between two types of regime support has the obvious advantage of simplicity and, also, of recognising a relationship between support types.<sup>2</sup>

In the following discussion I revise this field of democratic support explanations. I also discuss the challenge that recent global patterns of democratic support place on the dominant explanatory approaches. The discussion leads into the issues considered in Chapter 3 that examine what has been learned from the case of post-communist Europe.

## 2.2 *The sociological perspective*

Democratic support is produced through the process of socialisation that gives societies their basic patterns of political beliefs. The process arises when we ‘familiarise’ ourselves with political norms and, also, when we ‘learn’ about political ideas from social agents passing down beliefs, attitudes and perceptions. Socialisation occurs when we collect our associations, acquiring our basic attitudes, values, identities and orientations.<sup>3</sup> This in itself is not open to question. What is open to question is the basic premise that an identifiable set of social values and norms is necessary for sustaining democratic support. I divide the following overview of the sociological approach into two parts. Firstly, I view the basic notion of a democratic culture and identify its problems. Then I evaluate the affection-based theories.

### 2.2.1 *Democratic culture*

The idea that democratic commitment and stability depends on specific social traits dates back to the ancient world. Indeed, much of the modern understanding of a democratic culture is rooted in Aristotle’s presumption that both moderation and interpersonal trust are social characteristics that are compatible with democracy.<sup>4</sup> The quality of moderating political expectations is presumed to be an important social trait for the survival of democracy because, as already mentioned, democracy requires social acceptance. Similarly, the need for toleration in defeat is also stressed. As Linz and Stepan write: “a democratic government should enjoy legitimacy even amongst those who constitute its opposition”.<sup>5</sup> For this to be the case, citizens must possess ‘trust’ in

one another, a characteristic recently expressed by Robert Putman in terms of ‘social capital’.<sup>6</sup> However, these traits are not unanimously agreed upon. In The Civic Culture, Almond and Verba propose that a democratic culture requires levels of distrust because a citizenry is healthy “if citizens are to maintain some control over the political elite....”<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, such traits tell us nothing about the cultural features that lead to democratic support.

Logically, an important cultural feature that leads to democratic support is the widespread demand to control and participate in the political process,<sup>8</sup> but the levels of participation through democratic processes is no indication of the popularity of democracy. Recent history is littered with cases showing that political participation in democratic regimes is motivated by a desire to ‘remove’ such regimes. Instances vary from the cases from South American ‘revolutionary’ movements to the widespread supportive action on behalf of the post-war ‘revolutionary’ communist parties of France and Italy.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, following the argument of public restraint, Aristotle argued long ago that a politically passive citizenry was most compatible with democratic survival.

A further problem in the identification of cultural traits sympathetic to democracy is how to converge a widespread appreciation of collective empowerment with the rights of the individual. A respect for democracy logically derives from the egalitarian value of respecting the political voice of the masses. However, accepting the will of the majority is not compatible with accepting the liberties that have become associated with democracy. After all, liberty was valued because it calmed ‘minority’ fears of tyrannical (mob) rule.

Despite such problems, a democratic culture is loosely characterised by a culture of moderation, tolerance and trust that co-exists with a restrained will to participate. A willingness to accept the voice of the majority must also co-exist with a willingness to accept the private space/property of others.<sup>10</sup> All political cultures end up sharing some of these characteristics, so the level of cultural congruence depends on which characteristics the researcher wishes to investigate. Furthermore, the traits commonly contradict one another. Most obviously, the egalitarian values relating to the rights of the majority have historically been in direct conflict with economic liberties. Nevertheless, despite these weaknesses, a widespread belief prevails that

certain social traits encourage the sale of democracy and ultimate survival of democratic regimes.

### *2.2.2 Affection for the democratic object*

#### *Theory:*

The sociological perspective is largely dependent on theories stressing the importance of affection for ‘familiar’ symbols from early childhood. To the atomisation theorists, the foundations of support are built on the trust of familiar democratic institutions deriving from a sense of identity and, especially, community.<sup>11</sup> Other writers relate democratic support to ‘compatible’ norms embedded in a society. For instance, Eckstein stresses the importance of direct personal experience with authority so that mass support can only be enjoyed “...if its authority pattern is congruent with the other authority patterns of the society of which it is a part”.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Verba empirically illustrates the difficulty in getting a group to comply with unfamiliar power relations.<sup>13</sup>

#### *Evidence:*

Empirical evidence shows that the importance to democratic support of familiar symbols and norms is open to considerable criticism. Familiar symbols and norms are not always liked, and thus can lead to a rejection of the established democracy. The extreme opponents of the Weimar Republic were largely young citizens who had been socialised in an environment of pluralistic politics.<sup>14</sup> Of course, the Weimar Republic was still young, therefore there had been little time to build up any widespread social affection towards its procedures and institutions. Yet, a rejection has also occurred in more established democracies such as Chile.

The affection-based theories relate an ‘absence’ of democratic support to a lack of familiarity with the practice of democracy. So, when applied to young democracies the presumption is that a normative commitment is absent and must be built up. As such, these affection-based theories would suggest an adverse support factor for an incoming regime<sup>15</sup> and, accordingly, have been used to explain the failure to stabilise

‘young’ democracies. In particular, the approach became used to explain the failure of the young inter-war democracies such as Germany and Italy as opposed to the established democracies.

Undoubtedly the introduction of ‘alien’ political characteristics can be ‘disturbing’ and, therefore, erode support. Hix has empirically supported Dahl’s hypothesis that young democracies are less likely to endure in cultures not accustomed to the rigours of a competitive (pluralistic) style of politics,<sup>16</sup> but the presumption is problematic. As Przeworski et al. also point out, the historical absence of democracy need not impede democratic development but provide a fresh impetus for its popularity and ultimate success.<sup>17</sup>

The weakness of these affection-based theories has become most evident in the post-war period. In the German and Japanese post-war democracies, the challenge was whether the populations could accept such different systems across such short periods of time. Basically, people proved themselves to be more politically flexible than the ‘familiarity’ theories could allow. Moreover, the perspective has been further battered under the weight of the third wave of democratisation that incorporates both successes and failures across peoples of such diverse political experience. At the very least, a heritage of democratic norms and social structures is not a necessary condition of support for young democracies.

### ***2.2.3 Affection for the democratic idea***

#### *Theory:*

In contrast to the theories targeting the importance of familiarity, further sociological theories stress the importance of ‘learned’ affection. For instance, Easton and Dennis have stressed the importance of learned affection deriving from a culturally based exchange of information. For them, learning to value a specific type of political system derives from agents transferring belief systems.<sup>18</sup> As such, the cultural congruence which is stressed is not one of familiarity but, rather, of a political system which coincides with the ideas ingrained in a society.

*Evidence:*

Can democratic support be founded on an ideological congruence? One obvious criticism is that citizens have all too commonly shown little interest and, accordingly, little understanding of democratic ideas.<sup>19</sup> However, even if the ideas may not be well understood, a strength of affection may be founded on a looser ‘moral’ sentiment.<sup>20</sup>

The ideological/moral approach has been fuelled by arguments of culture change, which are used to explain the growth of support for democracy. Most important are theories that have stressed economic development as a source for encouraging a democratic culture. Lipset argues that democratic support has increased as a result of wider access to education, which accompanies economic development/modernisation.<sup>21</sup> Under this argument there is the ‘debatable’ presumption that education encourages positive attitudes towards democracy. In the spirit of the political activities led by the ‘affluent’ youth in the sixties, other theories were led to propose culture shifts in democratic values. For Crozier, the shift that took place resulted from the decline of traditional institutions promoting ‘respect for authority’.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, Inglehart argues that the move against authoritarian values has been the result of a shift towards post-material values.<sup>23</sup>

All of these explanations presume that the conditions that result from economic development lead to a rejection of an authoritarian method of government in favour of a more democratic model of government. What is the evidence for such ‘development’ based theories? Statistically, economic development contributes to the popularity and ultimate survival of an existing democratic regime.<sup>24</sup> The very premise that support depends on such development can however be challenged by widespread democratic support that exists across societies lacking the features of a developed and affluent society (of which India is probably the most prominent example). Moreover, the oil-rich states of the Middle East and Singapore further contradict the very logic of the relationship, since socio-economic development under authoritarian rule has not bred widespread democratic demands. It seems that there are limits to such development-based arguments

Democratic support need not depend on development-based arguments of culture change. We now live in a world of mass communications that spreads

democratic ideas ‘indiscriminately’.<sup>25</sup> Through mass communications, democratic ideas can spread with relative ease to ‘poor/undeveloped’ parts of the world. Indeed, such an occurrence can lean towards an argument that democracy has greater ideological and moral impact in ‘poorer’ countries where hardship leads to a rejection of authoritarian regimes. After all, it is often in authoritarian regimes where there is economic hardship that there is a social move towards democracy. This contrasts with authoritarian regimes in oil rich countries in which there is no move towards democracy.

## 2.3 *The rational perspective*

The rational perspective cannot reject the concept of a socialised support base. The assumption with this perspective is that the socialised support base is not fixed but flexible according to re-evaluations throughout an individual’s lifetime.<sup>26</sup> The rational perspective is also based on the assumption that democracy is understood as an instrument for achieving desired ends.<sup>27</sup> So, the popularity of democracy fluctuates with attitudes towards the effectiveness of democracy.<sup>28</sup> Below I review this perspective by classifying the theories according to the ‘focus of explanation’.

### 2.3.1 *The social and economic focus of explanation*

*Theory:*

The rational perspective has traditionally been interested in identifying the significant social and/or economic factors that ‘determine’ support. The assumption is that certain kinds of social and/or economic conditions cause the citizen to accept or reject the effectiveness of an existing regime. Identifying these factors depends on the somewhat challenging task of interpreting human motivation.

Generally, human beings seek to avoid absolute deprivation. At the very least, the logical deduction is that people wish to avoid a regime type associated with the pain of war or poverty. Deprivation is also conceived in relative terms. Relative deprivation depends on a reference point that leads to frustrations. For Runciman, this reference point is in terms of class.<sup>29</sup> Runciman stresses the erosive impact on support of

inequalities deriving from the separation of labour. Davies stresses the importance of past experience.<sup>30</sup> Tied to a broader theory of revolution, he argues that support erodes when conditions experienced in the past are being under-achieved in the present.

*Evidence:*

Deprivation tends to erode support. Few deny the relationship between economic crisis and an increased threat to democratic survival.<sup>31</sup> However, no basic socio-economic law has been developed that adequately explains democratic support. Even in terms of absolute deprivation, there is no fixed rule showing that people reject a regime type associated with war or poverty, especially when the war or poverty is 'blamed' on external factors.<sup>32</sup> In data from over 84 countries Przeworski et al. found little evidence to suggest that the success of democracy was related to income inequality.<sup>33</sup> As the case of post-communist Europe will illustrate, support can be sustained where the sense of both 'absolute' and 'relative' deprivation has worsened. As a consequence, the shift in the focus of explanation has been away from such environmental pre-conditions and towards the importance of 'performance' related factors.

The socio-economic theories have traditionally been dominated by 'deprivation' explanations that are interested in explaining an 'erosion' of support. The theories have tended to avoid human motivations that involve seeking alternative 'pleasure' modes of life. One exception is Ted Gurr who stresses the support importance of exposure to new modes of life.<sup>34</sup> An important component of my empirical work is to identify how democratic support relates to a new style of living. Of particular importance to post-communist Europe has been that future expectations seem to be used as a reference point for such living.

### **2.3.2 *Performance evaluations***

*Theory:*

Performance-based theories focus on the importance of the citizens' evaluations of whether the performance of the political elite is 'satisfactory'. Such performance

based theories were founded on demand-based arguments with their roots in Schumpeter's rational approach inherited from economic theory.<sup>35</sup> Support becomes related to the ability to satisfy demand and is, as a consequence, related to the ability of the authorities to satisfy those demands through government output.

Transferring economic logic to the arena of political support has suffered from two theoretical assumptions. The first assumption is that people must have identifiable demands. The second is that people must have the interest to judge the success of government output in satisfying those demands. Problematically, people all too regularly lack any identifiable demands, and, even when those demands are present, people commonly lack the political interest to build the knowledge with which to estimate the success of government output in satisfying the demands.<sup>36</sup>

The 'performance' focus of explanation has not subsided but rather been modified to incorporate less specific 'demand-supply' based assumptions. Easton proposes that specific action is less important to support than the "...perceptions of the behaviour of the authorities in the aggregate...".<sup>37</sup> Of particular interest has been a debate on the importance of broader 'feelings' of being well governed. Muller describes three types of performance open to interpretation. This includes an 'instrumental' interpretation of policy preference, an 'expressive' interpretation of reassuring behaviour and an 'extraneous' interpretation of likeable behaviour.<sup>38</sup> Alternatively, Weil attempts to transcend the significance of the political players and argue that performance perceptions are related to the importance of the structure of the opposition.<sup>39</sup> Critical to Weil's explanation of the relationship is that more proportional electoral systems create a closer and, therefore, more satisfactory link between party and voter. Indeed, Weil's approach to performance evaluations introduces the importance of the 'form of democracy' (under further empirical investigation through the work of Anderson and Guillory<sup>40</sup>).

#### *Evidence:*

The 'performance' focus of explanation assumes that democratic support is closely related to the level of satisfaction with the performance of those who hold public office.<sup>41</sup> Such an assumption led to the intensity of concerns over the 'crisis of governability' during the 1970s.<sup>42</sup> The performance approach has however suffered

from the paradox that support is so regularly sustained independent of the level of dissatisfaction with the authorities. Across the established democracies support is stable despite low levels of trust and confidence in the authorities.<sup>43</sup> Democratic support was (and still is) sustained independent of any ‘crisis of governability’. Hence, the performance arguments have required refinements. Most notably, dissatisfaction with the authorities has been interpreted as having a long-term rather than instantaneous influence on support for a regime type.<sup>44</sup>

## ***2.4 The fusion of the sociological and rational perspectives***

### *Theory:*

The stability of democratic support in the established democracies has been explained by recognising that performance evaluations co-exist with culturally ingrained ‘affection’ towards democratic institutions and procedures. Such a perspective incorporates a fusion between the sociological and rational perspectives under the assumption that support is influenced by both affection-based and evaluative modes of understanding.<sup>45</sup> For Lipset, legitimacy is to be eroded or built up through perceptions of effectiveness.<sup>46</sup> The fusion is most commonly expressed through the relationship between Easton’s two types of support (diffuse and specific support). Under Easton’s model, the dynamics of diffuse support for the regime type depend on changes to specific support for the authorities.<sup>47</sup> Though this co-existence between two types of support need not be accepted, the basic logic of depths of support that are consistently open to change remains strong. This distinction is commonly used to explain why support for established democracies has historically not been eroded as a result of dissatisfaction with authorities.<sup>48</sup> In Easton and Dennis’s wording, socially ingrained affection towards the regime type provides a “... reservoir of diffuse support upon which the system can automatically draw both in normal times... and in special periods of stress...”<sup>49</sup>

*Evidence:*

Despite the obvious appeal of a fusion between the two polarised approaches, recent support patterns contradict the theoretical assumptions. Patterns show that democratic support is sustained in times of prolonged political dissatisfaction even where affection-based support is presumed to be weak. Data from Spain and, more recently, from post-communist Europe illustrate that these patterns are recorded across populations who did not have the time to build up reservoirs of affection for the practice.<sup>50</sup> Of course, reservoirs of affection for young democracies might stand on ideological/moral foundations alone, but democratic support cannot be sustained for a long period on an affection that is unrelated to an understanding of ‘objective’ reality. This is particularly so given the ideological disinterest of many people.

## 2.5 *The push-pull perspective*

The perspectives examined have been shown to have empirical weaknesses. They also assume that democratic support depends on an understanding of democracy in isolation from alternative methods of government. Isolated evaluations of democracy may go so far towards a support explanation, but democratic support is a comparative concept that refers to preference over alternative regime types. As such, the support explanation requires something of what Easton describes as a push-pull perspective in which regime types compete for popularity.<sup>51</sup> Under this push-pull perspective the perceptions of the alternative methods of government are as important to democratic support as perceptions of democracy per se.

The comparison of alternative methods of government is logically of most importance to those citizens who have recent memories of authoritarian regimes (The work of Richard Rose on post-communist Europe is discussed in Chapter 3). In an age of mass communications however, citizens from countries with long established systems of government can barely avoid ‘comparing’ their own political and/or socio-economic realities to ‘others’. With all kinds of dissatisfaction with the practices of even long established democracies, there is a strong argument that today’s democratic support is founded on a rejection of alternatives. Regime type ‘A’ (democracy) may not be great, but it is better than regime type ‘B’ (the authoritarian alternative). What

follows is a discussion on the explanations of democratic support in post-communist Europe in which this push-pull perspective is an important component.

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### Notes and references:

<sup>1</sup> Rogowski's taxonomy of support explanations divide theories into five headings: experience of participation, effectiveness of regimes, perceptions of fair treatment, subconscious/symbolic elements (relating to a deep-seated affection) and the social division of labour. R. Rogowski, "Political Support for Regimes: A theoretical inventory and critique," in A. Kornberg and H. Clarke (eds.), *Political Support in Canada: The Crisis Years*, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1983.

<sup>2</sup> D. Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Bramson relates the affection-based arguments to nineteenth century sociologists who believed regime support to be synonymous with what had been learned in early socialisation and not its 'actualities'. L. Bramson, *The Political Context of Sociology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961.

<sup>4</sup> Through similar reasoning, Tocqueville presumed in the eighteenth century that American political culture was compatible with democracy. Responding to concerns about the tyranny of the majority, Tocqueville related the success of American democracy to its customs of 'restraint'. A. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, London: Oxford University Press, 1946.

<sup>5</sup> J. Linz and A. Stepan, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978, p.16.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Putman has argued that there is a there is a need for social capital to make democracy work through, amongst other characteristics, a social network operating within an inter-human 'trust'. R. D. Putman, *Making Democracy Work: Civil Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Of interest is work by Edberg in which he has applied Putman's theory to the problems of making democracy work in post-communist Europe. M. Edberg, "Putman's Social Capital Theory goes East: A Case Study of Western Ukraine and L'viv," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52:2 (2000) 295-318.

<sup>7</sup> G. A. Almond and S. Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 488. Almond and Verba argue that democracy is most stable when there is a balance of both affection and instrumental evaluation amongst the public.

<sup>8</sup> The idea that support is the product of participation is rooted in Rousseau's *Social Contract*. For Rousseau, support naturally results from the social experience of living in a participating Republic. J. J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, London: Dent, 1968.

<sup>9</sup> The importance of 'participation' to democratic support is conceptually distinct from the importance of 'perceived sensitivity of elite' (the difference between 'internal' and 'external' efficacy). There is not firm evidence to indicate that democratic support depends on levels of participation (a matter of internal efficacy). Kornberg, Clarke and LeDuc found that Canadians who participated in the democratic process in the 1970s were less likely to show support for the practising regime. A. Kornberg, H. Clarke and L LeDuc, "Some Correlates of Regime Support in Canada," *British Journal of Political Science*, 8 (1978) 199-216. In contrast, Almond and Verba showed in *The Civic Culture* that democratic support can be related to the perceived sensitivity of elite to citizens' interests (a matter of external efficacy).

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<sup>10</sup> Liberal values have become incorporated into the characteristics of a democratic culture. In particular, a democratic culture incorporates the widespread belief in freedom of thought and independence of the press. Without these beliefs, society would produce no significant opposition to a monopolisation of information exchange by specific governments. Moreover, since Tocqueville there has been a strong argument that democratic culture requires a public who 'respect' private ownership. Toqueville stresses the importance to democratic support of a free farmer society as opposed to a peasant society. The idea is that a free farmer society is more receptive to democracy because of the relative equality of wealth and limited level of state coercion.

<sup>11</sup> The label 'atomisation' reflects concerns that a decline of community and solidarity in mass societies leads to weakened identities and affections. The argued result is a loss of social insulation from political elite which threatens society with what Kornhauser described as a "pseudo-authority in the form of the charismatic leader and pseudo-community in the form of the totalitarian party". W. Kornhauser, *Politics of Mass Society*, London: Routledge and Degan Paul, 1960, p.16. Of particular interest is the work of Hannah Arendt and her argument that a 'false' politics results from modern culture. See P. Hansen, *Hannah Arendt, Politics, History and Civilisation*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> J. Eckstein, *Division and Cohesion in Democracy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, p. 234.

<sup>13</sup> Of particular interest are the Iowa experiments which showed the difficulty that people can have in accepting 'alien' power relations. S. Verba, *Small Groups and Political Behaviour*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961.

<sup>14</sup> H. Gerth, "The Nazi Party: Its leadership and Composition," *American Journal of Sociology*, 45 (1940) 517-41.

<sup>15</sup> Rogowski explains "that a simple test of all these theories can be imagined, i.e. none of them could admit that a radically new regime could readily gain support". R. Rogowski, "Political Support for Regimes: A Theoretical Inventory and Critique," p. 20 in A. Kornberg and H. Clarke, *Political Support in Canada: The Crisis Years*, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1983.

<sup>16</sup> R. Hix, "History and Democracy Revisited," *Comparative Politics*, 27:1 (1994) 91-105.

<sup>17</sup> Using the example of Chile, Przeworski et al. point out that subversion against established democratic regimes is common. A. Przeworski, M. Alvarez, J. A. Cheibub and R. Limongi "What Makes Democracies Endure?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7:1 (1996) 39-55.

<sup>18</sup> D. Easton and J. Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms: Political Efficacy," in C. Cnudde and D. Neubauer (ed.), *Empirical Democratic Theory*. Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969.

<sup>19</sup> Populations with a high degree of literacy and participation also commonly lack an understanding of issues related to the state. See, for instance, classic research reported by Converse on the theoretical naivety of Americans. P. H. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in D. E. Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*, New York: Free Press, 1964.

<sup>20</sup> Democratic legitimacy has moral roots in the ancient Greeks' idea of 'civic virtue'. Today such moral foundations arguably manifest themselves through the egalitarian teachings of Christianity. Fuchs' work

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on political support in contemporary Germany contrasts the instrumental foundations of political support from the importance of morality on regime support. Fuchs is discussed in G. Meyer, "Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies: Concepts and Problems," in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>21</sup> S. M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Development," *American Political Science Review*, 53:1 (1959) 69-105. Lipset's approach feeds off the Wilsonian belief that education would promote the superiority of democracy, later refined in the ideas of Finer who believed that the forces of education would overcome the anti-democratic 'evil'. H. Finer, *Theory and Practice of Modern Government*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932.

<sup>22</sup> Crozier is concerned with the consequences of a decline in traditional symbols of authority, especially in respect to the authority of Church and State. M. Crozier, S. Huntington and J. Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy*, New York: New York University Press, 1975.

<sup>23</sup> Inglehart's theory is based on a political interpretation of Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs'. Central to Inglehart's thesis is that economic development in industrial societies has led to a greater public interest in effective political expression. Much of Inglehart's evidence is centred on the political movements in Western states from the late 1960s. The empirical evidence does not support the theory that activism amongst the so-called post-materialists has significantly reduced since the outburst of activism in the late 1960s. R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: The Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.

<sup>24</sup> The life expectancy of a young democracy is less for countries that are poor. Przeworski et al. illustrate this trend with democracies whose citizenry earn less than \$1,000 per annum. A. Przeworski, M. Alvarez, J. A. Cheibub and R. Limongi "What Makes Democracies Endure?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7:1 (1996) 39-55. Similarly, coups were found to be less likely when economies are growing. J. B. Londregan and K. T. Poole, "Poverty, The Coup Trap, and the Seizure of the Executive Power," *World Politics*, 42, (1990) 151-183.

<sup>25</sup> I am arguing that 'learned' affection can include the influence of mass/global communications.

<sup>26</sup> Amongst others, the sociologist W. Gamson shows that 'affect' is not necessarily fixed, but changeable according to adult experience. W. A. Gamson, "Reputation and Resources in Community Politics," *American Journal of Sociology*, 72:2 (1996) 121-131.

<sup>27</sup> The 'instrument' that I mean is the 'instrument' of democracy rather than human 'instrumental' motivations that are associated with the valuing of the immediate, the material and the self. This mirrors the definition of Rogowski who rejects that the rational dimension of support explanations necessarily mean 'logical'. Rather, Rogowski understands rational support as a support type founded on an understanding of the political object 'as a means to an end'. R. Rogowski, *Rational Legitimacy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.

<sup>28</sup> Of interest from a psychological perspective is Almond and Verba's proposition that democracy is most stable when there is a balance of both affection and instrumental evaluations. Most significantly, limits to affection are positive for democratic survival "if citizens are to maintain some control over

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political elite...". See G. A. Almond and S. Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, p.488.

<sup>29</sup> W. G. Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.

<sup>30</sup> J. C. Davies, "Towards a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review*, 27:1 (1962) 5-19. Davies forms a model of regime support that depends on satisfying 'expectations'. In this model, people cannot tolerate 'frustrated' expectations. So, as long as expectations remain low, then support remains safe. However, there is danger when expectations are higher than improving economic conditions. Then, there is an intolerable gap between what people want and what they get. For Davies, revolutions arise from a period of improving economic conditions that raise expectations followed by a sharp economic collapse/failure to satisfy those expectations.

<sup>31</sup> Numerous pieces of research show that economic crisis is one of the most potent threats to democratic consolidation. With respect to Latin America, see L. Diamond and J. Linz, "Introduction: Politics, Democracy and Society in Latin America," in L. Diamond, L. Linz and S. Lipset (eds.), *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1989. Similarly, Huntington and Przeworski et al. found that the level of economic development improves the probability of democratic consolidation. S. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1991 and A. Przeworski, M. Alvarez, J. A. Cheibub and R. Limongi "What Makes Democracies Endure?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7:1 (1996) 39-55.

<sup>32</sup> Support for regimes during wartime is commonly sustained when accompanied with propaganda designed to bolster support for the actions of existing authorities. Emotive passions can be whipped up against an identified 'enemy'. However, the success of propaganda in the long-term is open to debate. Hardship might be tolerated in extra-ordinary periods, including in transitional periods. Yet, in the long-term the 'instrumental' presumption is that the population must be relieved from hardship if support is to be sustained.

<sup>33</sup> Despite finding that the level of income inequality does not alter the probability of democratic success, Przeworski et al. do find that "...democracy is much more likely to survive in countries where income inequality is declining over time." A. Przeworski, M. Alvarez, J. A. Cheibub and R. Limongi "What Makes Democracies Endure?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7:1 (1996), p. 43.

<sup>34</sup> T. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

<sup>35</sup> Based on classic economic theory, Schumpeter argues that political support in a democracy is based on the delivery of state services. J. A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1942. In Schumpeter's model, citizens' demands must meet state output. Accordingly, there is the danger that too high promises frustrate demands and lead to a loss of regime support. For a similar economic model that was designed to explain electoral support, see A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, New York: Harper, 1957.

<sup>36</sup> Wahlke criticises the assumption that citizens relate demand to the output of authorities. Amongst other reasons, he states that "few citizens entertain interests that clearly represent policy demand or policy expectations or wishes and desires that are readily convertible into them". J. Wahlke, "Policy

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Demands and System Support: The Role of the Represented," *British Journal of Political Science*, 1:3 (1971), p. 274.

<sup>37</sup> D. Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science*, 5:4 (1975) p.441.

<sup>38</sup> E. N. Muller, "The Representation of Citizens by Political Authorities: Consequences for Regime Support," *American Political Science Review*, 64 (1970) 1149-1166.

<sup>39</sup> Weil empirically tests his model and shows that a weak structure of opposition relates to a decline of confidence in leadership (the structure of the opposition relates to party systems and government coalitions). F. D. Weil, "The Sources and Structure of Legitimation in Western Democracies: A Consolidated Model Tested with Times-series Data in Six Countries since World War II," *American Sociological Review*, 54 (1989) 682-706.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson and Guillory also show that the type of electoral system relates to how citizens perceive the functioning of democratic institutions. They argue that the type of electoral system is a stronger influence than current political performance. J. C. Anderson and C. A. Guillory "Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-national Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems", *American Political Science Review*, 91:1 (1997) 66-81.

<sup>41</sup> Muller and Jukam relate democratic support to both 'incumbent evaluations' and 'policy output evaluations'. E. N. Muller and T. O. Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," *American Political Science Review*, 71:4 (1977) 1561-1595.

<sup>42</sup> The concerns over the crisis of governability during the 1970s were reflected in both right and left wing theories. Government overload theorists believed that the democratic state was being overburdened by public expectations. In contrast, cultural theorists proposed that the public demanded greater political power than what was being provided by the democratic process. At the heart of the shared concerns was the well-documented decline in the confidence of post-war Western democracies that was interpreted as threatening the very foundations of democratic legitimacy. See S. M. Lipset and W. Schneider, "The Decline of Confidence in American Institutions," *Political Science Quarterly*, 98:3 (1983) 379-402. Also see M. Dogan, "Erosion of Confidence in Advanced Democracies," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 32:3 (1997) 3-29.

<sup>43</sup> Only in France and Italy did anything like a crisis emerge. See M. Kease, "The Crisis of Authority: Myth and Reality," in Rose (ed.), *Challenge to Governance*, Beverley Hills: Sage, 1980. For the lack of a relationship between support and political dissatisfaction in respect to Germany, see S. E. Finkel, E. N. Muller and M. A. Seligson, "Economic Crisis, Incumbent Performance and Regime Support: A Comparison of Longitudinal Data from West Germany and Costa Rica," *British Journal of Political Science*, 19:3 (1989) 329-351.

<sup>44</sup> What has resulted is a watering down of concerns about the consequences of political dissatisfaction. As Dogan argues, legitimacy has broadly been sustained despite the widespread loss of confidence in leadership. M. Dogan, "Erosion of Confidence in Advanced Democracies," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 32:3 (1997) 3-29.

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<sup>45</sup> The fusion between affection-based and rational-based explanations is arguably both welcome and predictable. After all, greater understanding of the physiology of the brain allows us to recognise that evaluation occurring within the cortex is not independent of emotion felt from within the brain stem. Rather, they are in constant inter-action.

<sup>46</sup> Lipset has stressed that there is an important distinction and, yet, there is still an inter-relationship between the ‘legitimacy’ of a regime type and the perception of its ‘effectiveness’.

<sup>47</sup> A prolonged fall in belief for the on-going authorities (fall in specific support) erodes the affection-based trust of the political system (fall in diffuse support). Alternatively, a prolonged period in which the belief in the on-going authorities is enhanced (rise in specific support) strengthens the affection-based trust of the political system (rise in diffuse support). See D. Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, New York: Wiley and Sons, 1965.

<sup>48</sup> When explaining support patterns for critical periods in history such as during the inter-war period, the inter-action between two types of support is of particular appeal. For instance, Lipset uses the inter-war democracies to illustrate a fusion between ‘legitimacy’ and ‘effectiveness’. The puzzle in the failure of the ‘young’ democracies to sustain support during the inter-war period can be related to a ‘weak’ kind of legitimacy/diffuse support that existed for the young democratic regimes. In contrast, a stronger support base existed for the ‘established’ democracies. Therefore, when faced with the Great Depression in the aftermath of war, there was a deeper ‘reservoir’ of support. The same logic is commonly applied to current democracies. In particular, considerable attention is devoted to the importance of sustaining performance perceptions in young democracies because of the assumption that support for young democracies is ‘shallow/weak’. See L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999.

<sup>49</sup> D. Easton and J. Dennis, “The Child’s Acquisition of Regime Norms,” p. 324 in C. Cnudde and D. Neubauer (eds.), *Empirical Democratic Theory*, Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969.

<sup>50</sup> The empirical separation of dissatisfaction from the notion of support for a young democracy has been written about in some detail by Montero et al. Using the case of Spain, Montero et al. show how “evaluations of the performance of the political system and governing elite have oscillated considerably over time”. But, such oscillations have not been reflected in shifts in the democratic preference. Rather, support has remained consistently strong. J. Montero, R. Gunther and M. Torcal, “Democracy in Spain: Legitimacy, Discontent, and Disaffection,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 32:3 (1997) 124-160. In Chapter 3 I illustrate similar patterns in the case of post-communist Europe.

<sup>51</sup> The push-pull perspective is distinct from a ‘preservationist’ framework of explanation, noting that the preservationist framework treats democracy as an isolated regime type. The push-pull approach is explained further in D. Easton, “Theoretical Approaches to Political Support,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 9:3 (1976) 431-448.

## *Chapter Three*

### *Learning from Post-communist Europe*

#### *3.1 Democratic support in context*

##### *The early concerns:*

In post-communist Europe there was a wave of initial enthusiasm about the introduction of democracy, but in reality democratic regimes were never going to arrive without difficulty. The consolidation of a free and pluralistic democracy has proven elusive, especially with respect to the more eastern countries.<sup>1</sup> Also, the democratic option could not sustain popularity based on an initial enthusiasm. The enthusiasm from the honeymoon period had to be accompanied with a build up of belief in the democratic ‘option’, and dark forecasts cast doubt on whether this was possible.<sup>2</sup>

Societies throughout the region were without an ingrained affection for the ‘practice’ of democracy. Support was presumed to be shallow rather than diffuse, with societies not accustomed to democratic norms. There had been a tendency for communist forms of government outwardly to replicate familiar forms of representative democracy, most notably by providing parliamentary elections (See Part 4.1.2 for the case of Poland). Despite the elections, citizens across the region were accustomed to the pretence of one-party unity rather than the rigours of a multi-party democracy. Democracy arrived as an ‘alien’ form of pluralistic politics, which led to the need for the young democratic regimes to ‘prove their worth’.<sup>3</sup>

The need to prove their worth applies to most ‘new’ democratic regimes. What fed the dark forecasts with respect to post-communist Europe was that the young democratic regimes would need to prove their worth amid the unavoidable socio-economic difficulties that would result from necessary economic reform. The fear was particularly pronounced because of the holistic conceptualising of the political and economic spheres.<sup>4</sup> Almost half a century of communism had blurred the boundaries between the state and the economy. The concern was that democratic support would

quite simply collapse under the weight of socio-economic discontent. As Kornai stressed, in the long-term the transformation from central planning to international market forces may enhance perceptions of political performance, but in the short-term socio-economic difficulties existed to intensify political tensions and, accordingly, threaten support.<sup>5</sup> The widespread concern was that there would be a re-imposition of political authority resulting from poorly equipped economies unable to cope with the rigours of international competition.<sup>6</sup>

Table 3A below shows the economic indicators for the region and indicates how the initial shock of economic reform sent economies across the region spinning into economic decline and high unemployment. They also show that most of these economies have been slow to pick up following the initial difficulties of reform. One exception is Poland which, despite an impressive growth rate, has consistently suffered from high unemployment.

*Table 3A Economic Indicators for the Region:*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
GDP (% change)											
Poland	-11.6	-7.0	2.6	3.8	5.2	7.0	6.0	6.8	4.8	4.1	4.1
Romania	-5.6	-12.9	-8.8	1.5	3.9	7.1	3.9	-6.9	-5.4	-3.2	1.6
Bulgaria	-9.1	-11.7	-7.3	-1.5	1.8	2.9	-10.1	-7.0	3.5	2.4	na
Czech	-1.2	-11.5	-3.3	0.1	2.2	5.9	4.8	-1.0	-2.2	-0.2	3.1
Hungary	-3.5	-11.9	-3.1	-0.6	2.9	1.5	1.3	4.6	4.9	4.5	5.3
Slovakia	-2.5	-14.6	-6.5	-3.7	4.9	6.7	6.2	6.2	4.4	1.9	2.2
<b>CEE mean</b>	<b>-5.6</b>	<b>-11.6</b>	<b>-4.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Russia	-3.0	-5.0	-14.5	-8.7	-12.7	-4.1	-4.9	0.9	-4.6	3.2	7.6
Ukraine	13.0	-8.7	-9.9	-14.2	-22.9	-12.2	-10	-3.2	-1.7	-0.4	6.0

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Unemployment (end-year, %)											
Poland	6.3	11.8	13.6	16.4	16.0	14.9	13.2	10.3	10.4	13.0	15.0
Romania	0.4	3.0	8.2	10.4	10.9	9.5	6.6	8.9	10.4	11.8	10.5
Bulgaria	1.7	11.1	15.3	16.4	12.8	11.1	12.5	13.7	12.2	16.0	17.9
Czech	0.8	4.1	2.6	3.5	3.2	2.9	3.5	5.2	7.5	9.4	8.8
Hungary	1.9	7.4	12.3	12.1	10.4	11.7	11.4	11.0	9.6	9.6	8.7
Slovakia	0.8	0.0	4.8	12.2	14.8	13.1	12.8	12.5	15.6	19.2	17.9
<b>CEE mean</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>13.1</b>
Russia	na	0.0	4.8	5.3	7.1	8.3	9.9	11.2	13.3	12.2	10.2
Ukraine	na	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	1.3	2.3	3.7	4.3	4.2

Source: Business Central Review, *Economic Indicators: European Database*, '<http://www.centralscience.com>' (2001).

#### *The political repercussions and the stability of democratic support:*

Predictably, the difficulties that resulted from economic change have had strong political repercussions. First, the difficulties led to significant changes in leadership. The return of the ex-communists across Lithuania in 1992, Poland in 1993 and both Hungary and Bulgaria in 1994 is an example of the region's reaction against those associated with introducing painful economic reforms.<sup>7</sup> Second, the difficulties influenced a widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of the young democratic regimes. The strength of the relationship between dissatisfaction with democracy and unfavourable economic conditions is easily illustrated. In Russia satisfaction with democracy was in a trough of 19% in 1991 when those who viewed the current economic conditions as 'favourable' was only 18%.<sup>8</sup> This negative mood in the early 1990s reflected a period of economic decline and growing unemployment in Russia (See Table 3A). At the other extreme, satisfaction with democracy in the Czech Republic peaked at 52% in 1996 at a time when those who viewed the current

economic conditions as 'favourable' also peaked at 54%. This positive mood reflected high growth rates in the Czech Republic during the middle of the 1990s (See Table 3A).

Certainly political factors as well as the above mentioned economic factors have had an influence on dissatisfaction with the functioning democracies (See Parts 7.3.1 and 7.4.1 for the case of Poland). Citizens need to grow accustomed to the alien form of competitive politics. There is also a deep-seated distrust of the behaviour of political representatives across the post-communist region.<sup>9</sup> However, as Tóka has written, "...it is the popular evaluation of the socio-economic processes which is far the most important determinant of political dissatisfaction".<sup>10</sup> Distrust of the political elite is also a disturbing feature across established democracies with Czechs and Hungarians in 1991 being no more distrustful of their political elite than French and British.<sup>11</sup> Yet, it is amongst those who have experienced the economic difficulties in post-communist Europe that dissatisfaction with democracy has become most pronounced. In 1992 all EU countries with the exception of Italy were more satisfied than post-communist European countries with the way that their democracies functioned. Only 19% of Poles and 22% of Hungarians were satisfied, which contrasted sharply with 51% of French, 59% of Britons, 70% of Danes and 77% of Germans.<sup>12</sup>

*Table 3B Commitment to the introduction of democracy over alternatives:*

	Support	Oppose	N
Poland	49%	12%	1,729
Romania	81%	10%	1,620
Bulgaria	56%	21%	1,924
Hungary	54%	13%	1,310
Russia	49%	21%	2,026
Ukraine	40%	20%	2,537

Source: Evans et al. from an ESRC commissioned survey conducted in the summer of 1993 (grant no. Y 309 25 3025).

The widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of the young democracies has not paralleled a collapse in democratic support. Table 3B illustrates the normative commitment in the early 1990s to the introduction of democracy across post-communist Europe. The data shows a general pattern across the post-communist region. In all but one of the countries analysed approximately half of those sampled 'favoured' the introduction of democracy with considerably less than one quarter 'opposing' democracy, noting that the remainder were 'uncertain'. The exception was Romania where the vast majority of those sampled supported democracy as the alternative to the despised Ceausescu regime.

*Table 3C On-going support for current (democratic) systems across the region:*

	1991	1993	1995	1998	Change
(% believing that the existing regime is best)					
Poland	52	69	76	66	14
Romania	69	60	62	66	-3
Bulgaria	64	59	66	58	-6
Czech	71	78	77	56	-15
Hungary	57	51	48	53	-4
Slovakia	50	52	61	50	0
<b>CEE mean</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>-1</b>
Russia	na	35	29	37	2
Ukraine	na	25	32	22	-3

Source: R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

The data in Table 3B is a record at one point in time and tells us little of the dynamics of support over the decade. For the dynamics, I turn to the longitudinal data recorded in the New Democracies Barometer. Table 3C shows that support

fluctuations across the region that occurred between 1991 and 1998. Most dramatically, in Poland democratic support has risen from 52% following the initial shock of Balcerowicz's reforms to 66% in 1998 (See Part 4.1.3 for the context of the reforms). In contrast, in the Czech Republic democratic support has fallen from 71% at the high of the honeymoon period to 56% in 1998. Yet, the extent of the fluctuations across the region should not be over-exaggerated. With the notable exceptions of both Ukraine and Russia, where support was low from the onset,<sup>13</sup> support for the existing democratic systems has rarely fallen below half of the sampled populations. Such figures illustrate that democratic support has remained relatively stable across Central Eastern Europe. The fears that socio-economic hardship and political dissatisfaction would erode democratic support have largely been unrealised.<sup>14</sup>

Data from additional studies provide evidence of the system of beliefs and expand the understanding of support characteristics. First, belief in the 'future' of the (democratic) system has remained consistently high. The mean percentage of Central Eastern Europeans who approved of the future regime reached a high of 81% in 1991 whilst never falling below 71%.<sup>15</sup> Second, there has been no meaningful pattern towards favouring a non-democratic alternative. With the exception of Ukraine and Russia, alternatives to democracy have remained unpopular throughout the 1990s.<sup>16</sup>

### ***3.2 Explaining democratic support in post-communist Europe***

What follows is a discussion on the approaches used to explain democratic support in post-communist Europe. Explanations have mainly been based on a rational perspective because, without being accustomed to democratic norms, support is interpreted as 'shallow'. The rational perspective is itself problematic because support patterns have transcended economic difficulties and political dissatisfaction. Therefore, before focusing on rational explanations, I discuss the importance of the sociologically-based arguments that support depends on the ideas associated with democracy.

#### ***3.2.1 Ideas associated with democracy***

It has often been suggested that the popularity of democracy in post-communist Europe has been based on a widespread affection for 'Western' styled democratic

states. Ghia Nodia writes that Western styled democracy has "...become fashionable. ...Nobody can wait to be 'ready' for democracy".<sup>17</sup> Such a fashion has also been related to far deeper cultural factors. Norman Davies argues that a deep-seated Central European perception is that 'West is best'.<sup>18</sup> As one of the heroes said in the Polish 1980's cult movie 'Sex Mission' when reaching the surface of the earth after escaping from an evil underground empire, 'We go west, there is no civilisation east'. Certainly affection for 'Western' styled democracy was evident in the emotional high of the honeymoon periods, but more than Western associations is necessary to sustain support. As Meyer points out, any support that is based on comparison with the past regime is only temporary.<sup>19</sup> In the long-term, an affective support-base requires more than the emotive high of becoming 'Western'.

From a further sociological viewpoint democratic support has been sustained because of the widespread affection for ideas associated with democracy and their moral undercurrents. Such affection has been related to traditional Christian values that characterise most of post-communist Europe. Unavoidable is the fact that, "most Christian countries are democratic, while most others are not, with Muslim ones having the least statistical chance".<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the viewpoint includes arguments on culture change in the latter half of the twentieth century. Amongst others, 'Inglehart and Sieměńska' and 'Gibson and Duch' have indicated that post-material value orientations have affected the late communist societies similarly to the way that they have affected Western societies.<sup>21</sup> Certainly the ideas of political empowerment attracted considerable affection during the communist period. Demands for public empowerment regularly accompanied the protests that called for a rejection of communism (most evidently in the Prague Spring in 1968 and the Polish Solidarity Movement of the early 1980s).<sup>22</sup> Such demands led the likes of Havel to argue that these were the signs of a suppressed democratic people living under a totalitarian state.<sup>23</sup>

The support significance of culture change has however been open to considerable challenge. The idea of political empowerment rests on the premise that citizens are enthusiastic or, at the very least, interested in participating in the decision-making process. This premise has weakened with the political demobilisation of civil societies following transition and the prevalence of widespread 'apathy'.<sup>24</sup> Poland has

provided a good example of this weakness because the activism in the 1980s seemingly died in the face of success (See Part 7.3.1). The result has been a cultural argument that has itself shifted from the existence of a democratic people and towards the existence of passive people. Accordingly, there was a very real disappointment amongst academics including Havel as the attention shifted towards the legacy of communist mentality and the need to build societies up from the grassroots. Just as damaging to the cultural perspective has been the results of research conducted by Whitehead and Evans who show that democratic support relates to only a narrow range of political attitudes and values. Targeting a comparison between Czechs and Slovaks, they find that the significance of attitudes towards tolerance, censorship and participation is broadly subordinate to a more rational approach. For Whitehead and Evans, the higher levels of democratic support in Czech reflect "...that country's greater success in making the transition."<sup>25</sup>

### ***3.2.2 A rational belief in democracy***

*The importance to support of the past 'communist' regime:*

In a region accustomed to living under multiple systemic types, it is argued that "...a realist approach is very apt for analysing how people in post-communist societies evaluate governance...".<sup>26</sup> Richard Rose applies what he describes as the Churchill hypothesis to explain the sustained level of democratic support across the region. Democracy is being recognised as "...the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time".<sup>27</sup> This reflects Timothy Garton-Ash's claim that "...people are unfamiliar with, and therefore sometimes distrustful of, the forms and habits of democracy." Yet, they are all too familiar with the "habits of dictatorship".<sup>28</sup> Citizens evaluate democracy positively not because it is ideal but because it remains preferable to the memory of the past 'communist' alternative.<sup>29</sup> For Rose, new regimes are more likely to be supported "for what they are not and for what they do not do".<sup>30</sup>

Rose and Mishler suggest that 'fear' of the past regime relates to a belief in the democratic option.<sup>31</sup> Romania provides the classic example because negative attitudes

towards the despised Ceausescu regime influenced a widespread belief in the democratic option (See Table 3B showing that 81% were committed to introducing democracy over alternatives). Despite considerable economic hardship, the Romanian people have statistically been one of the strongest supporters of democracy in the post-communist region. The importance of past experience does however contain contradictions. Most obviously, despite the prolonged hostility of Poles against their past regime, in 1993 only 49% were committed to introducing democracy (See Table 3B). Furthermore, a support explanation that focuses on the past regime can offer only one side of the same coin, and a side that fades along with citizens' memories.<sup>32</sup> On the other side of the coin is the focus on democracy which explains why it is preferred to communist and non-communist alternatives. The rest of this section discusses the 'democratic' focus of explanation.

*Democracy as a form of government:*

Is support for democracy sustained because people rationalise the advantages of a pluralistic government? Approximately a decade after political transition, there is a presumption that democratic politics is being understood and appreciated 'for what it is'.<sup>33</sup> Even in the case of Ukraine and Russia where democracy has been least popular, Gibson argues that supportive attitudes derive from the intrinsic benefits of the political system as opposed to immediate systemic experience. In particular, support is related to a belief in pluralistic power arrangements.<sup>34</sup> Yet, how can democratic support relate to an appreciation of the political benefits when there is widespread dissatisfaction with the functioning of the young democracies?

Encouraging the perception of efficiency in an alien 'pluralistic' form of government is not easy. Rather, there is a tendency for young democracies to appear both chaotic and disordered following the facade of unity under authoritarian systems. Instead, a pluralistic democracy tends to sell itself through perceptions of efficacy, both in terms of opportunities for participation (internal efficacy) and responsiveness of elite to participation (external efficacy). Whitefield and Evans have found a relationship between democratic support and the perceived usefulness of voting,<sup>35</sup> but even the argument that democratic support derives from perceptions of efficacy faces fundamental problems. As previously mentioned, citizens across the region have

shown a lack of enthusiasm/interest in becoming politically activated within a civic community. There is also a widespread belief that the political elite are not willing to be responsive; this belief is commonly used to explain the shortage of political activity. Widespread distrust should not be treated as ‘irrational’. In the young democracies the political elite must learn to pay attention to public needs and demands. This requires limiting their choice of decision making which is commonly difficult for them to accept.<sup>36</sup> In respect to post-communist Europe, criticism of the limited ‘delegative’ democracies in Ukraine and Russia is commonly used as an explanation for the weaker support foundations in these countries.<sup>37</sup> The same criticism has also been made against other post-communist countries with a more favourable environment. Relating to both public passivity and elite insensitivity, Comisso states that the ‘procedural democracies’ of Central Eastern Europe have ‘disappointingly’ failed to lead to a more substantive democracy.<sup>38</sup>

Despite widespread criticism of insensitive governments across the region, do citizens sustain a belief that democracy will develop into a better form of government? Approximately a decade following the introduction of democratic procedures and institutions, the appeal of pluralistic practice may appear limited. Yet, there is reason why people should feel ‘optimistic’ about the development of their democracies. Not least, all of the countries are under international pressure to avoid a more collectivist, nationalist or paternalistic ‘sham’ democracy.<sup>39</sup>

#### *Democracy for the sake of freedom:*

An important selling point of democracy has unquestionably been the attraction in the idea of deciding about the future of one’s own life, to be free to travel, to write, to speak etc. In Rose’s words, the appeal of democracy has been “for what it is not doing”.<sup>40</sup> The support influence from the appeal of individual freedoms is potentially great when recognising that democracy has become synonymous with basic civil liberties. In a 12-nation study of post-communist Europe from the early 1990s, democracy as a concept was most commonly associated with basic individual liberties. The percentage who associated democracy with above all freedom totalled 64% in Czech, 64% in Poland and 54% in Romania. In contrast, the notions of participation, social welfare and rights rarely collected more than 10% of the associations across

specific populations.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Miller et al. and Gibson have found that individual freedoms in post-Soviet societies are related to the popularity of existing democracies.<sup>42</sup>

There are however fundamental limits to the support significance of individual freedoms. First, associations with democracy are more complex than the previously mentioned data suggests. In the same 12-nation study, respondents were also asked to approximate the strength of the relationship between democracy and its various meanings. The data showed that democracy was understood in terms of multiparty system as much as political liberties, and economic conceptualisations of democracy were common.<sup>43</sup> Second, the appeal of individual freedoms is limited to those members of society who have the most to gain through such freedoms of opinion, action and movement. It is an appeal felt most strongly by young and educated members of society, and it is arguably difficult to separate from economic factors. After all, the individual liberties are of limited value without the resources with which to enjoy them.

### *3.2.3 The importance of economic factors*

*The prevalence of a 'hope factor':*

I have already indicated in Part 3.1 that support for democracy does not significantly reflect existing economic conditions. There is a link between satisfaction with democracy and economic satisfaction, but democratic support is not the same as democratic satisfaction. Yet, the economic focus of explanation is not to be rejected. After all, it has been found that democracy is more commonly associated with 'wealth' than 'control over government'.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, in terms of support correlates, evidence has firmly pointed to the importance of an economic 'hope factor'. A study from 1993 found that the strongest influences on regime support were 'the evaluation of the direction of the economy' and 'perceptions of improving living standards over the next five years'.<sup>45</sup>

Theories explaining democratic support across the region have commonly focused on the importance of the future as a critical reference point. A demand-based

approach is adopted by Przeworski who built a model predicting that political support would depend on the degree to which economic experience departed from ‘expectations’.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Offe argues that support across Central Eastern Europe depends on the level of tension that results from relative deprivation. Offe’s explanation is based on a model by Hirschman from the early 1980s.<sup>47</sup> An analogy of a traffic jam in a tunnel is used in the analysis. ‘Waiting’ drivers may find that their situation ‘comparatively’ deteriorates, but the important issue is at what point that patience ‘breaks’ with those speeding in the fast lane. Inevitably there is a point at which feelings of irritation and frustration lead the drivers in the blocked lane to pull out and begin to block the fast lane. Indeed, reflecting the concerns of Przeworski, the blocking of the fast lane becomes an analogy of the leaning back towards state reliance with a consequent cost to both economic and political development.<sup>48</sup>

These are strong models that provide us with an important understanding of the political forces at work across the region. However, can they actually explain democratic support when many of those frustrated individuals in the slow lane ‘still’ support democracy? Arguably they can, but only when accompanied with a wider economic belief that the direction of change is the best way for personal betterment.

#### *The importance of economic beliefs:*

What has been the impact of people’s economic beliefs on democratic support? Economic liberty and democracy have largely been packaged together<sup>49</sup> fuelling fears that economic liberalisation would have a dangerously erosive influence on democratic support. Kitschelt expressed early concerns that the resistance to economic liberalism would manifest itself in terms of anti-democratic sentiment. He proposed a political model in which a ‘capitalist based’ rejection of democracy would find a political channel through anti-democratic political parties. As such, both political and economic transition would be threatened.<sup>50</sup> The structural fears of Kitschelt have however not been realised. The anti-democrats did not find political identities in ‘anti’ transition-based parties.<sup>51</sup> Also, as documented in Table 3C, there was no significant loss of support for democracy.

Kitschelt’s ‘unrealised’ concern has damped the importance of the relationship between democratic support and economic beliefs. Yet, of interest is the

relationship between support for marketisation and support for democracy that is found by Whitefield and Evans.<sup>52</sup> Democratic supporters were far more likely than anti-democrats to support the free market. Moreover, using multivariate analysis it was found that “When support for marketisation is controlled for, there is very little link between economic experience and support for democracy”.<sup>53</sup> So, the implication is that economic beliefs relate to democratic support independent of economic conditions.

The relationship between democratic support and marketisation must be put into context. First, important exceptions exist. Democratic forces have been understood by some liberals as blocking necessary economic reform which has, accordingly, turned them against democracy (See Part 8.2.1 for the case of Poland). Second, there is a relativity in the usage of ‘liberal’ terminology. Szacki identifies a distinctly limited public understanding of liberalism that is based on the experienced rejection of the ‘extremities’ of the alternative, somewhat reflecting Rose’s perspective of support being based on what democracy ‘does not do’. In terms of Polish society, Szacki argues that ‘liberalism’ applies to opinions and actions whose almost only point in common with classical liberalism is that they are at variance with some opinions and actions which are certainly not liberal.<sup>54</sup>

### **3.3 *Conclusions***

The main lesson to be learned from the case of post-communist Europe is that support for young democracies need not be vulnerable to existing political and economic conditions. Despite the extensive difficulties that have confronted post-communist Europe, democratic support has been ‘surprisingly’ stable. In this chapter I have viewed the arguments that might explain the stable support figures. In short, support can be explained by a widespread affection for democratic ideas, by a rational belief in democracy as a political system and/or by economic factors. All of these explanatory perspectives have their strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of my empirical study is to investigate these explanations of support.

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### Notes and references:

<sup>1</sup> As the 1990s have shown, democratic consolidation can be elusive. Despite the basic pluralistic structures of democracy being in place, there remains considerable concern over the development of a wider civil community and, in particular, an ‘independent’ press in both Russia and Ukraine. In the case of Belarus, there has been blatant erosion of the democratising processes since Lukashenko became President in 1994. Also, in the problematic case of the ethnically divided Balkans, the democratic option has proven difficult to realise. Nevertheless, there are encouraging signs with democracy taking shape across some of the countries where democracy has proven to be elusive. Most notably, the process of democratisation has recently been bolstered in Croatia since Tudjman’s death and Serbia/Yugoslavia since the uprising against Milosovic’s regime. The variation in the transition process across parts of post-communist Europe is discussed in C. Offe, *Varieties of Transition: The East European and East German Experience*, Oxford: Polity Press, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Honeymoon periods’ describe the period of optimism that results from the removal of unwanted regimes. But, as the name suggests, honeymoon periods are founded on a short-term emotional high that decay over time. The concerns were about what would happen to democratic support following the honeymoon period. G. Toka, “Political Support in East-Central Europe,” in H. Klingermann and D. Fuch, *Citizens and the State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> An important problem in building democratic support in countries not used to democratic politics is that citizens accustomed to the ‘simplicity’ of authoritarian decision making commonly perceive pluralistic democracy as disordered (See Chapter 7 with respect to Poland). Furthermore, perceptions of disorder and inefficiency need not necessarily be inaccurate across post-communist Europe. As Welsh argues, there was a very real danger that young multiparty political systems across the region would become highly inefficient. H. A. Welsh, “Political Transition Processes in Central and Eastern Europe,” *Comparative Politics*, 26:4 (1994) 379-392.

<sup>4</sup> An account of how economic reforms are understood as inter-acting between political and economic issues is provided in Chapter 4 in A. Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

<sup>5</sup> J. Kornai, *The Socialist Economy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> Amongst others, Barry Clark argued that the resulting crisis from adapting to international markets would provide ‘fertile ground for authoritarian solutions’. B. B. Clark, “Political-Economy, Democracy and Eastern Europe,” *International Journal of Social Economics*, 19:7 (1992) 259-272.

<sup>7</sup> Duch has shown that levels of economic chaos across post-communist Europe statistically relate to incumbents getting punished. R. M. Duch, “Economic Chaos and the fragility of Democratic Transitions in Former Communist Regimes,” *Journal of Politics*, 57:1 (1995) 121-158.

<sup>8</sup> Data is recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

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<sup>9</sup> The widespread public distrust of democratic institutions across post-communist Europe reflects the widespread perception of an elite insensitive to citizens' interests. As with satisfaction, a minority believe that 'those in power care about what ordinary people think' and 'don't take advantage of ordinary people'. Also, in the early 1990s, the percentage across the region that believed that elected officials 'do not' lose touch with people was as small as 7% in Poland and 9% in Slovakia. The data is recorded in G. Tóka, *Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in East Central Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 279 (1997).

<sup>10</sup> G. Tóka, "Who is satisfied with democracy?" p.264 in A. Bozóki, *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Italians have stood out as the least trusting with only 16% in 1991 disagreeing with the view that 'those in power try to take advantage of ordinary people'. This contrasted with 46% in Czech Republic, 35% in Hungary, 38% in France and 31% in Britain. Similarly, only 14% of Italians agreed that 'elected officials care what ordinary people think'. In contrast, 35% of Czechs, 34% of Hungarians, 28% of French and 36% of British agreed that 'electoral officials care what ordinary people think'.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ukraine and Russia have both stood out as having a weaker democratic support base than other post-communist countries in Europe (See Tables 3B and 3C). Russians and Ukrainians have been more attracted than their European neighbours by their past communist regimes. In both countries, the ranking of how communist government works has been consistently more positive than the ranking on how their democratic governments currently work. As late as 1998 82% of sampled Ukrainians believed that the former communist regime worked 'best'. Data is recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> Further evidence showing that political dissatisfaction has not significantly manifested itself in terms of the rejection of democracy can be found in P. Waldron-Moore, "Eastern Europe at the Crossroads of Democratic Transition – Evaluating Support for Democratic Institutions, Satisfaction with Democratic Government, and Consolidation of Democratic Regimes," *Comparative Political Studies*, 32:1 (1999) 32-62. The distinction between 'satisfaction' and 'support' has commonly been stressed by Richard Rose. His main argument is that, despite widespread dissatisfaction, realistic alternatives to democracy do not exist. See, for instance, R. Rose and W. Mishler, *What are the Alternatives to Democracy in Post-communist Societies?*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 252 (1995).

<sup>15</sup> R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998), p.31.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. The mean percentage of Central Eastern Europeans who believe it better to return to the former communist regime has fluctuated between 15% and 20% in the 1990s. With the exceptions of Ukraine and Russia, the percentage has never surpassed 30% in any of the researched populations. For a discussion on public attitudes towards past communism, see G. Partos, "Who's Afraid of Post-Communism?" *The World Today* (February 1995) 28-32. For a more comprehensive discussion, see R.

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Rose, W. Mishler and C. Haerpfer, *Democracy and its Alternatives*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998. There is greater sympathy towards the broader notion of having a strong leader to replace the multiparty parliamentary democracies. Indeed, the mean percentage amongst Central Eastern Europeans who believe it better to have a strong leader peaked at 38% in 1992. But, important to recognise is that the mean has fallen over the decade. By 1992 only 22% of those sampled in Central Eastern Europe preferred a strong leader.

<sup>17</sup> G. Nodia, "How Different are Post-communist Transitions?" *Journal of Democracy* 7:4 (1996) p.20.

<sup>18</sup> N. Davies, "West Best," *Oxford Today*, 9:2 (1997).

<sup>19</sup> G. Meyer, "Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies: Concepts and Problems," p.32 in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>20</sup> G. Nodia, "How different are post-communist transitions?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7:4 (1996) p.21. The linkage to religion has its Weberian roots in the idea of a Christianised European culture characterised by the values of tolerance and equality.

<sup>21</sup> Data indicating a post-material value shift in Poland in the 1980s is recorded in R. Inglehart and R. Siemeńska, "Changing Values and Political Dissatisfaction in Poland and the West - A comparative Analysis," *Government and Opposition*, 23:4 (1988) 440-457. Similar findings were found in the former Soviet Republic. See J. L. Gibson and R. Duch, "Postmaterialism and the emerging Soviet Democracy," *Political Research Quarterly*, 47:1 (1994) 5-39.

<sup>22</sup> As Montias points out, economic discontent consistently involved 'secondary' empowerment demands. J. Montias, "Economic Conditions and Political Instability in Communist Countries," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 13:4 (1980) 283-299.

<sup>23</sup> The belief that political societies throughout communist period were 'bursting to escape from the bottle' was widespread in academic circles. See V. Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," *International Journal of Politics*, 15:3 (1985) 11-221. Also see J. Rothschild, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989 and T. Garton-Ash, *We the People*, London: Granta Books, 1989.

<sup>24</sup> Bernhard identifies four factors that explain the weakening of civil society. These explanations are the demobilisation of insurgent civil society, decapitation through success, post-totalitarian mentality and social transformation/dislocation. M. Bernhard, "Civic Society After the First Transition," *Communist and Post-communist Studies* 29:3 (1996) 309-330. In the 1990s, the totalitarian mind-set has become an increasingly important cultural explanation and is explained in depth in G. Vainshtein, "Totalitarian Public Consciousness in a Post-totalitarian Society: The Russian Case in the General Context of Post-communist Developments," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:3 (1994) 247-259.

<sup>25</sup> S. Whitefield and G. Evans, "Political Culture versus Rational Choice: Explaining Responses to Transition in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," *British Journal of Political Science*, 29:1 (1999) 129-154.

<sup>26</sup> R. Rose, "Where are Post-communist Countries Going?" *Journal of Democracy* 8:3 (1997) p. 98.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.98. Churchill was implying that democracy was the lesser evil when compared to authoritarian alternatives.

<sup>28</sup> T. Garton-Ash, *History of the Present*, Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, 1999, p.43.

<sup>29</sup> Largely reflecting the importance of the past, Rose divides democratic supporters into reactionaries, sceptics and compliants. The model is in R. Rose and W. Mishler, *Reacting to Regime Change in Eastern Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 210 (1993).

<sup>30</sup> R. Rose and W. Mishler, "Trajectories of Fear and Hope: Support for Democracy in Post-communist Europe," *Comparative Political Studies*, 28:4 (1996) p.560.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pp.553-581.

<sup>32</sup> A belief in democracy based on a rejection of the past regime must necessarily weaken over time as memories fade. As an example, the percentage of Romanians who support the future democratic regime has fallen from 86% in 1991 to 74% in 1998. This data is recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998), p.31.

<sup>33</sup> A general assumption is that citizens from the European post-communist democracies are increasingly capable of distinguishing democracy as a political system rather than in terms of the authorities who operate within the system. The system-incumbent distinction that is made by citizens is discussed in R. M. Duch, "Economic Chaos and the Fragility of Democratic Transitions in Former Communist Regimes," *Journal of Politics*, 57:1 (1995) 121-158.

<sup>34</sup> Gibson argues that attitudes toward democratic institutions and processes are not simply a function of the desire to have a more productive economy. Rather, democracy is being valued for its intrinsic benefits. J. L. Gibson, "Political and Economic Markets: Changes in the Connections Between Attitudes Towards Political Democracy and a Market Economy within the Mass Culture of Russia and Ukraine," *Journal of Politics*, 58:4 (1996) 954-984.

<sup>35</sup> S. Whitefield and G. Evans, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment – Support for Democracy in Transitional Societies," *British Journal of Political Science*, 25:4 (1995) 485-514. There is also an interesting relationship between democratic satisfaction and levels of party identification. Relating to Weil's argument on the importance of the 'form of opposition', Anderson shows that satisfaction is related to the proportionality of the electoral system. However, the problem with the relationship is that it refers only to 'satisfaction' with democracy, not democratic support. C. J. Anderson, "Parties, Party Systems and Satisfaction with Democratic Performance in the New Europe, *Political Studies*," 46:3 (1998) 572-588.

<sup>36</sup> O'Donnell argues that there is a global pattern of young democratic governments ignoring representative functions. G. O'Donnell, "Illusions about Democratisation," *Journal of Democracy*, 7:2 (1996) 34-51.

<sup>37</sup> Kubicek discusses the limited 'delegative' democracy in Russia and the Ukraine in P. Kubicek, "Delegative Democracy in Russia and the Ukraine," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 423-441.

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<sup>38</sup> E. Comisso, "Is the Glass Half Full or Half Empty? Reflections on Five Years of Competitive Politics in Eastern Europe," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 30:1 (1997) 1-22.

<sup>39</sup> Krol emphasises the importance of the 'East' having to live up to the 'West' to prevent more collectivist, nationalist or paternalistic sham democracies. M. Krol, "Where East Meets West," *Journal of Democracy*, 6:1 (January 1995) 37-43.

<sup>40</sup> Rose relates people's trust in 'democratic institutions' to their evaluations of whether those institutions can secure individual liberty. R. Rose, *Trust, Distrust and Scepticism about Institutions of Civil Society*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 252 (1995). The importance that Rose attaches to people's valuing of freedoms is evident in R. Rose, *Freedom as a Fundamental Value*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 242 (1995).

<sup>41</sup> Data is documented in J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996). Note that one exception was Hungary in which only 28% related democracy to freedom. The probable reason is that following the 1956 uprising freedoms were not excessively infringed in communist Hungary.

<sup>42</sup> Gibson specifically argues that democratic support is related to a public belief in a 'dissenting media'. See J. L. Gibson, "Political and Economic Markets: Changes in the Connections Between Attitudes Towards Political Democracy and a Market Economy within the Mass Culture of Russia and Ukraine," *Journal of Politics*, 58:4 (1996) 954-984. Also see A. Miller, V. Hesli and W. M. Reisinger, "Conceptions of Democracy Among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies," *British Journal of Political Science*, 27:2 (1997) 157-189.

<sup>43</sup> J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996). There is considerable variation across different nationalities. For instance, the Romanians were significantly more likely to associate democracy with better economic conditions than with political liberties, a multiparty system and rights before the law. More specifically, in Romania the measured relationship with democracy was 1.26 with respect to 'better economic conditions', 1.65 with respect to 'political liberties', 1.64 with respect to a 'multiparty system' and 1.8 with respect to 'rights before the law' (scales being based on a system in which 1 is 'a strong relationship' and 4 is 'no relationship'). This was in stark contrast to many other populations. For instance, in the Czech Republic the measured relationship with democracy was 1.97 with respect to 'better economic conditions'.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. The statement that democracy was associated with 'wealth' more than 'participation' is based on an aggregate of data recorded from all twelve states that were examined.

<sup>45</sup> R. Rose and W. Mishler, "Trajectories of Fear and Hope-Support for Democracy in Post-communist Europe," *Comparative Political Studies*, 28:4 (1996) 553-581.

<sup>46</sup> Przeworski bases his model on citizens having limited knowledge but high expectations. A. Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991

<sup>47</sup> C. Offe, "Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe," *Social Research* 58:4 (1991) 865-892. For the original model, see A. O. Hirschman,

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*Essays in Trespassing: Economics in Politics and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

<sup>48</sup> Using the case of Poland, Przeworski argues that the source of the problem is in unemployment rather than inflation because it is unemployment which is the ‘intolerable’ feature. A. Przeworski, “Public Support for Economic Reforms in Poland,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 29:5 (1996) 520-543.

<sup>49</sup> The broad conceptual confusion of the Poles in the early 1990s is illustrated in T. Tyszka and J. Sokołowska, “Perceptions and Judgements of the Economic System,” *Journal of Economic Psychology* 13:3 (1992) 421-448.

<sup>50</sup> H. Kitschelt, “The Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe” *Politics and Society* 20:7 (1992) 7-50.

<sup>51</sup> Party identification became multi-dimensional. The emerging multi-dimensional components to party identification is examined in R. M. Duch, “The Electoral Connection and Democratic Consolidation,” *Electoral Studies*, 17:2 (1989) 149-174. Russia is something of an exception, but even in Russia the anti-democratic party manifestations are split between Zhirinovski’s nationalist party and Zyuganov’s communist party.

<sup>52</sup> S. Whitefield and G. Evans, “The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment – Support for Democracy in Transitional Societies,” *British Journal of Political Science*, 25:4 (1995) 485-514.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p.485.

<sup>54</sup> J. Szacki, “A Revival of Liberalism in Poland,” *Social Research*, 57:2 (1990) 463-491. Szacki’s point is that the post-communist understanding of liberalism is not so much as Western observers would understand by a liberal environment. Rather, the understanding relates to a necessary amount of ‘liberalisation’ so as to be able to remove the negative components of an autocratic environment.

## *Chapter Four*

### *The Case of Poland*

#### *Framework to the Chapter:*

This chapter provides the background to the subject of democratic support in Poland and explains how my own case study applies to the wider picture of democratic support in that country. In Part 4.1 I view the political history of Poland in order to trace the development of the democratic tradition and relate this history to current democratic support patterns. Then in Part 4.2 I explain the context of my own case study and explain its suitability for a study of Polish attitudes. The explanations for democratic support in Poland are not presented here, instead they appear at the start of each of the relevant empirical investigations.

#### **4.1     *The political history of Poland***

##### **4.1.1   *Polish history lessons***

###### *From 'Golden Age' to partition:*

The political history of Poland has resulted in a unique tradition of individualistic democracy contrasting with over a century of lost independence. A democratic tradition evolved from the political freedoms and powers of the gentry (*szlachta*) with its origins set as early as 1422 when the Polish gentry obtained negative rights from the King. Similar to the British Magna Carta, the concession gave assurance that the gentry's rights to private property, private households and personal immunity would not be violated. In 1493 a parliamentary system was created in which the gentry significantly increased their role in the ruling of the state. Important to the system was the famous law of Nihil Novi which prevented the King from introducing changes to the established system without the agreement of parliament. The result was

that constitutional and civic freedoms in sixteenth-century Poland were unsurpassed elsewhere in Europe.

The legal framework reflected a political culture that valued both individualism and political empowerment. The vast majority of the population were however excluded from the empowered class; the gentry barely surpassing 10% of the population. Nevertheless, unlike most of Europe during the Middle Ages, the gentry included both the great magnates and, also, the so-called ‘noble proletariat’ who were commonly as poor as the peasantry.<sup>1</sup> The economic proximity between the noble class and the peasantry became even closer following the impoverishment resulting from partition in the late eighteenth century. Impoverishment, it has been argued, allowed the ‘nobility’ to spread their political ideas and mentality into the wider Polish society.<sup>2</sup>

The political climate of partition was very different to that which had existed previously and, accordingly, the political culture was itself changing. Under a century of partition by the three encircling empires, the Polish political culture became associated with aspirations to national self-determination. In keeping with the nationalist sentiment of the period, the ideas of independence became part of an ethical right related to historical heritage.<sup>3</sup> What distinguished the political character of the Poles was the ability to create a ‘counter-community’ against Russian rule, and such behaviour was later to manifest itself against rule from both Nazi and Communist hegemony. As early as the period of Russian tyranny following the 1830 November Uprising, the goal of self-determination became shrouded in the myth of permanent rebellion getting stronger and stronger until the victory of independence was achieved. In symbolism, the on-going fight was ‘for your freedom and ours’ (za wolność wasza i naszą). Unfortunately, as is often stated by academics and by lay Poles, a political culture of counter-community is not a helpful characteristic once independent statehood is achieved.

#### *Independence and democracy during the inter-war years:*

The aspiration for national independence survived the displacement of ‘romanticism’ by ‘positivism’. Independence did not arrive as a result of a Polish uprising but, rather, from the demise of the ruling empires during World War 1 and the willingness to endorse self-determination by the victors.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the new

regime was characterised by a politically fragmented and unstable parliamentary democracy. Part of the political difficulties derived from ethnic conflict that had resulted from absorbing ‘other’ ethnic minorities with their own nationalist agenda. Most dramatically, in December 1922 a Polish nationalist murdered the newly elected president, Gabriel Narutowicz. The reason for the murder was that the nationalists believed Narutowicz’s victory had depended on votes from non-ethnic Poles. The political conflict, in fact, derived from more than ethnic disagreements. Poles may have possessed a shared identity, but within that identity was sharp ideological divisions combined with social fragmentation and the economic difficulties of the inter-war period.<sup>5</sup> As the assassination illustrated all too well, Poland had inherited a political culture of conflict from the years of partition.

In this situation the Polish war hero General Piłsudski staged a military coup in May 1926 to strengthen the role of the executive over that of parliament. The existing democratic structures were not dismantled, but Piłsudski set up a separate regime called Sanacja (purification) which effectively exercised political control. Sanacja was broadly accepted across the population because of the widespread concern over the inability of a divisive parliamentary system to cope with the deep problems of the day and, also, because of the General’s personal popularity as a nationalist hero.<sup>6</sup> What is not certain is the public mood following the General’s death in 1935 when the repressive tendencies of the regime intensified with political trials and imprisonment becoming commonplace. The public mood by the 1930s was pre-occupied with economic difficulties and, furthermore, by the emerging threat from Nazi Germany. The experience of the Polish inter-war democracy may not have been positive, but its erosion was of limited consequence as the threats from both west and east became all too real.

#### **4.1.2 *The communist experience***

*A regime built on weak legitimacy:*

There is a shortage of authentically recorded data on regime support throughout much of the Soviet backed communist period. Consequently, caution should be applied

to the presumption that the regime had ‘always’ suffered from a weak support base. As Krystyna Kersten warns, “...today one can see a tendency to create a new legend of the Catholic nation that struggled against the Communists for forty-five years”.<sup>7</sup> A strong role for the state in the form of revolutionary socialism was in fact an attractive option to replace the pre-war hardship and hunger.<sup>8</sup> Revolutionary socialism offered very real opportunities for social advancement in a society which had lost much of its upper and middle classes during Nazi occupation. There is however an alternative view, namely that Poland was the Soviet bloc’s ‘weakest link’ because nationalist sentiment made Poland the most difficult country to control.<sup>9</sup>

The problem for the ruling PZPR (Polish United Workers’ Party) was that those controlling power were understood by the population to be firmly situated in the Kremlin. Consequently, in Poland a certain level of sensitivity was practised from the onset. Most notably, the early period of Stalinisation was not characterised by the familiar pattern of terror. Nevertheless, Poles were to experience certain aspects of Stalinisation in the forms of censorship, collectivisation of agriculture and control of the Catholic Church, which led to an alienating of the regime from those with nationalist sentiment. The result from the cumulating of dissatisfaction was a massive public reaction which resulted in the Polish ‘October’.

Following the Polish ‘October’, the regime of Gomułka became focused on trying to win ‘nationalist’ hearts at the cost of totalitarian control.<sup>10</sup> A civil space was provided for the petty bourgeoisie, the farmers and the Catholic Church. Also, the interest in spreading Soviet socialist values was softened with various selections of Western films, plays, publications and music being available. The result was an enrichment of intellectual and cultural life, but the attempts at winning hearts through a softening of the regime was counter-productive. First, by leaving a civic space the regime was also allowing the preservation of structures in which to maintain a separate identity from the state. The communist state’s acceptance of co-existence with the Catholic Church was highly significant in social terms because of the Church’s role in preserving a cultural sense of separateness from the regime. Second, an independent Church allowed what Adam Michnik argued was “...a key source of encouragement of those who seek to broaden liberties”.<sup>11</sup> Third, the principles of communism were not

significantly sold to the public so there was little ‘ideological’ legitimacy on which to fall back on when both political and economic frustrations set in.

*The political and economic wiring:*

Politically, Poles may have experienced a gradualist line under communism with certain levels of freedom sustained, but citizens were excluded from any meaningful impact on public life.<sup>12</sup> The exclusion was to become increasingly significant. By the 1970s attitudes began to shift towards preferring a greater political role for the citizenry.<sup>13</sup> The shift in attitudes was accompanied by open demands for greater empowerment. Under the force of public demands, interest articulation was given an effective vent for authentic public expression through the creation of ‘corporatist’ structures such as Workers’ Defence Committee (KOR). Allowing the vent simultaneously provided the organisational structure for the creation of the Solidarity movement.

Concern with the political situation was reinforced by parallel concerns over the condition of the economy. Under Stalinisation the communist government had imposed a Soviet style economic system of heavy industrial development and military production at a cost to real wages. Only after Stalin’s death in 1953 did real wages begin to rise as the emphasis on heavy industry and armaments was reduced. Nevertheless, the basic principles of central planning and administration remained and by the late 1960s real wages were rising by under 2% annually, far less than in most other communist countries.<sup>14</sup>

With public unrest, Gomułka was replaced as party leader with Gierek in 1970. His goal was to stimulate the economy through a policy of massive investment, funded by foreign loans. Rapid economic growth was achieved in the early 1970s with a consumer boom and public attitudes towards the regime were temporarily more favourable. The so-called ‘golden age of communism’ was short lived. Economic developments in the 1970s may have turned Poland into a dynamic and well educated society that Lepak describes as resulting in the ‘maturation’ of Poland.<sup>15</sup> But, the success of Gierek’s economic policy depended on being able to quickly pay off the public dept through earnings resulting from the production of quality goods for foreign

export. With Polish products uncompetitive in a world market hit by oil price increases and recession, it was increasingly difficult to achieve this goal.

Despite the propaganda, the economic consequences of the mounting dept were increasingly felt.<sup>16</sup> The regime's attempt to gain control over the situation through relaxing price controls ran into worker opposition in 1976. The regime was looking fallible without the necessary legitimacy to get whole-hearted co-operation. In 1978 national income fell by 2.3%. Attempts to raise prices in 1980 hit a wall of sustained strike action, ultimately leading to the greatest upheaval in the history of communism in the form of the Solidarity movement.<sup>17</sup> Gierek had little chance of long-term survival as a leader, but more worrying to those who wished to preserve the existing order was that by 1981 the ruling party's own ranks had mutinied. For the second time in the century, a Polish general believed that, for the sake of Poland, he had no choice but to intervene.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Poland during the 1980s:*

The military's seizure of power in 1981 served the purpose of subordinating Solidarity and reducing the power of a deeply divided ruling party. An important justification for military intervention was that it signalled a change from the failed patterns of the past. To a large extent, the justification of change was nothing new to the ears of the Poles. After all, the communist system in Poland had never been cohesive but, rather, in regular periods of alteration. There was however a meaningful shift towards accepting more 'Western' styled political and economic models.

In political terms, the 1980s marked the decline of a deeply fractionalised communist party. With military men exerting considerable influence, there was greater tolerance of political activism and acceptance of a 'limited' programme of political reform. Applying the tradition of a parliamentary democracy, the existing Sejm was opened up to 'other' parties. The referendum was widely used and both Constitutional Tribunals and a civil rights ombudsman were put in place, but despite providing a much more favourable institutional framework for democratisation the changes were largely cosmetic. Without the voice of Solidarity in the political process and with candidature for parliament firmly controlled by the party leadership, power at the top remained unchallenged.<sup>19</sup>

The economic aims in the 1980s were for broad stabilisation and, increasingly, for a restructuring of the command economy through a wider endorsement of a competitive market. The restructuring of the economy resulted in the legal and illegal private sector being allowed to grow. The state did only relinquish limited control over the economy, and it did this for the sake of introducing ‘some’ market competition.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, stabilisation proved difficult to achieve. Unable to attract further investment because of the existing level of foreign debt, national income continued to decline in the first year of military rule in 1981 to a level that was approximately one quarter lower than in 1978. Despite the governments’ effort to avoid a further deterioration of living standards, citizens were feeling the decline with Poland’s infrastructure increasingly suffering from chronic under-investment.

The ‘new’ order won little affection. Rather, the ‘new’ order was recognised primarily as another set of ‘new’ compromises by which to preserve the significance of the ‘old’ regime with its familiar ‘old’ connections. Indeed, into the 1980s, the disaffection was so broadly spread across society that the regime existed on little more than shreds of legitimacy. The weak legitimacy of the authorities provided them with little room for manoeuvre which, in turn, tended to encourage excessive caution in decision making. The justification for such caution was confirmed in 1989 when the government decided to respond decisively to a period of persistent economic crisis. In a climate of falling production and creeping inflation, the Rakowski government decided to create greater market equilibrium by liberalising prices. The result was that the cost of agricultural products rose by 78% in August alone.<sup>21</sup> What followed was a predictable intensification of on-going public protest and the decision amongst the ruling elite to seek legitimacy through accepting the incorporation of Solidarity into a ‘democratic’ decision making framework.

The Round Table Agreement was originally envisaged as a four-year power-sharing transition period towards pluralistic democracy and marketisation. However, the power-sharing period collapsed because of two extraordinary phenomena. First, the PZPR suffered a spectacular defeat in the first ‘free’ (though only partial) parliamentary elections in June 1989. The Civic Committee which was standing in opposition to the government coalition won 99 from 100 Senate seats and all of the 161 Sejm seats that were available to it. This time the public had voiced more than discontent. The

elections were an overwhelming rejection of the old order and an assertion of Solidarity's right to run the country. Second, by the end of 1989 the collapse of the communist system throughout most of the Eastern bloc countries was complete. So, by early 1990 the fresh Solidarity government under Mazowiecki was able to move from power-sharing to the dismantling of the communist system.

#### ***4.1.3 The Building of a New Order***

##### *The democratic foundations:*

Unlike much of the post-communist world, Poland approached democratisation with a democratic heritage already in place. Despite communist hegemony, the regime had coexisted with democratic institutions. An inheritance from the inter-war years was the institutional framework of the courts and the Sejm and during the 1980s the State and Constitutional Tribunals and an Ombudsman had been set up. Furthermore, the various political factions broadly agreed with the direction of democratisation. Yet, the development of a stable democratic system proved more difficult than most had predicted with bitter disputes over the kind of democratic constitution that Poland should have.

There were deep disputes on the issue of the systemic arrangements within which the existing institutions and bodies would operate. The disputes were largely centred on concern about creating a divisive parliamentary system that would share the similar ineffectiveness and loss of popularity as that of Poland's inter-war democracy. Most vocal in his concerns was the Solidarity hero Lech Wałęsa. Wałęsa called for a Presidential democracy styled on the Fifth French Republic. Fuelled by the divisive and bitter political conflicts that were emerging in the Sejm in the early 1990s, Wałęsa argued against an assembly dominated system. The result was an erosion of public confidence in the representative institutions and accusations that, as the first elected President, Wałęsa was harbouring covert ambitions. Similar disagreements existed over the best electoral system and party system for Poland. Proportional representation without any electoral threshold was chosen for the 1991 Parliamentary elections, but a fragmented party system resulted in the winning party gaining only 12% of the vote.

Such fragmentation was neither good for the functioning of the Sejm or its public image, so an electoral threshold was introduced in the early 1990s to simplify the party system.

The widespread public rejection of the communist order did not in fact necessarily equate with any widespread demand for democracy. As Mira Marody stressed in 1991, there was a rejection of the past without any clear sense of where the country was going.<sup>22</sup> Certainly the Solidarity movement carried legitimacy. Andrzej Rychard even described the Poles as having a ‘lover’s attitude’ towards the transitional Solidarity government, characterised by enormous emotive confidence.<sup>23</sup> That confidence however had little to do with creating any specific ‘new’ order. As Rychard acknowledged, support for the new democratic order requires ‘building up’<sup>24</sup> and, despite the democratic heritage, Polish attitudes towards pluralistic democracy were ambivalent. On the optimistic side was the belief that the parliamentary heritage reflected a democratic individualism deeply ingrained in the Polish mind-set. On the pessimistic side, a large part of the population were orientated towards supporting a strong and populist/nationalist leader and were hostile to the divisive character of the young Polish democracy (See Chapter 7 for an expansion of these arguments). Furthermore, in the early 1990s the economic shock was only to add to the political tensions with the young democracy.

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#### *The economic ‘shock’:*

The strength of public support for the removal of the communist order played a critical part in directing economic policy during the transition period. The Solidarity-led government was supposed to provide necessary legitimacy during the socio-economic difficulties resulting from stabilising the currency and reforming the economy. Under ‘shock therapy’, Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz freed price controls in late 1989 with the purpose of bringing growing hyperinflation under control. In the short-term such therapy was a bitter pill to swallow, and was followed by plummeting standards of living resulting from a level of inflation which approached almost 600% in 1990 (See Table 4A). Furthermore, accompanying the policy of currency stabilisation was a push towards greater marketisation. The immediate effect was the closure and slimming down of state businesses. Without the purchasing power

and a lack of credit for investment, there was no significant expansion of the private sector. As a consequence, as illustrated in Table 4A, unemployment soared to over 16% by 1993.<sup>25</sup>

*Table 4A Economic Indicators in Poland Since 1990:*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
<b>Nominal GDP</b>											
(\$bn)	59.0	78.0	84.3	86.0	92.7	126.4	143	143.1	157.3	155.4	na
GDP											
(% change)	-11.6	-7.0	2.6	3.8	5.2	7.0	6.0	6.8	4.8	4.1	na
<b>Unemployment</b>											
(end year, %)	6.3	11.8	13.6	16.4	16.0	14.9	13.2	10.3	10.4	13.0	15.0
<b>Average</b>											
monthly wage	na	na	213	215.7	231.3	285.5	328.8	324.9	355.2	429.9	na
<b>Inflation</b>											
(%)	585.8	70.3	43.0	35.3	32.2	27.8	19.9	14.9	11.8	7.3	10.1
<b>Exports</b>											
(\$bn)	15.8	12.8	14.0	13.6	17.2	22.9	24.4	25.8	30.1	26.4	31.7
<b>Imports</b>											
(\$bn)	12.3	12.7	13.5	15.9	21.6	29.0	37.1	42.3	43.8	40.8	48.9
<b>Foreign direct</b>											
<b>investment</b>											
stock (\$bn)	0.1	0.4	1.4	2.3	3.8	7.8	11.5	14.6	22.5	28.0	na

Source: Business Central Review, *European Indicators: European Database*, ‘<http://www.centreurope.com>’ (2001).

The few who grew rich were those who could take advantage of the extraordinary conditions of the transitional phase. For the vast majority, the transitional period was a time of difficult adjustment. As Di Palma writes in a general context, “the very choice of economic liberalisation brings the need for economic sacrifices – unpalatable and, for most, difficult to make”.<sup>26</sup> During communism citizens may not

have been particularly contented, but at least private space (the family) was able to be warm and intimate under the limited but very real level of material and psychological security provided by the state. To a certain extent, Polish society was well trained to ride the hardship. Relating to Stefan Nowak's stress on the importance of przjaciele (close friends), it is worth emphasising the importance of tight social bonding within Polish society that served to alleviate individual hardship.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Poles were hit particularly hard by the 'shock therapy' with satisfaction at the economic situation of households hitting a low of 17% in the aftermath of the changes.<sup>28</sup> Despite an economic upturn from 1992 that affected the wider population, political repercussions were inevitable.

*The political repercussions:*

As early as 1990 the reaction to the shock therapy was instrumental in bringing down the Mazowiecki government. Meanwhile, apathy was setting in, with turnout at elections falling to a mere 43% in the Parliamentary contest of October 1991. But, the most dramatic repercussion was the impact on Solidarity. With the communist system dissolved, Solidarity began to split into confrontational fractions under responses to economic liberalisation. Mazowiecki's liberal-minded camp decided to organise itself into the Democratic Union. In contrast the unionists under Marian Krzaklewski developed an attitude that employee interests were not served under any of the existing political parties. The result of this division was that the 1993 parliamentary elections became characterised by the successful return of the reformed communists in the form of a revitalised SLD (Social Democratic Party).<sup>29</sup>

*Table 4B      The level of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in Poland:*

	Nov 93	May 95	Nov 96	Oct 97	May 98
Satisfied	36%	24%	44%	40%	41%
Dissatisfied	52%	67%	47%	50%	46%
Difficult to say	12%	9%	9%	10%	13%

Source: CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

The socio-economic discontent not only impacted upon the leadership, for as in other post-communist European countries, the discontent also influenced wider attitudes of political dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy. In 1993 36% explained their dissatisfaction with democracy directly in terms of economic factors (falling to 24% by 1996).<sup>30</sup> Moreover, much of the economic influence on dissatisfaction has been indirect.<sup>31</sup> By 1998 21% of the 'losers' from the economic transition were satisfied with democracy which contrasts with 71% of the 'winners'.<sup>32</sup> Yet, the economic factors behind dissatisfaction with democracy can only be taken so far. Despite a rate of economic growth unsurpassed elsewhere in the region, it is the Poles who have regularly shown themselves as being the most dissatisfied with their functioning democracy.<sup>33</sup> In Poland the dissatisfaction has become something of an ingrained problem which has continued well beyond the economic upturn. Table 4B shows that, despite considerable fluctuations throughout the 1990s, satisfaction has never extended to half of the population.

*Sustaining a belief in the democratic direction:*

As in other post-communist European countries, the high level of dissatisfaction with the functioning democracy is not significantly reflected in democratic support. Whereas the levels of satisfaction have been low and sporadic, the levels of support have been relatively high and consistent (compare Table 4B with Table 4C). Democratic support has risen from 52% in 1992 to a relatively stable ratio since 1997 of approximately two thirds of the population.

*Table 4C The pattern of democratic support in Poland:*

	Oct 92	June 93	May 95	Oct 97	March 99
Best	52%	62%	67%	63%	64%
Not best	15%	11%	17%	16%	19%
Difficult to say	33%	27%	16%	21%	17%

Source: CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999.

A prolonged dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy does not therefore significantly erode the belief in democracy as the best method of government. Nor does evidence suggest that dissatisfaction disturbs democratic support in the short-term. In May 1995 during a bitterly fought Presidential contest, satisfaction was at a low of 24% when democratic support peaked at 67%. This is not to claim that dissatisfaction has no influence on beliefs in democracy. For instance, when dissatisfaction was at its peak during the 1995 Presidential conflict, the number of citizens believing that non-democracies can 'sometimes' be more desirable also peaked at 47%.<sup>34</sup> Yet, there is clearly no strong relationship between satisfaction with the functioning democracy and democratic support.

Some attention needs to be paid to the significant minority of the population who are not supportive of democracy; those who do not state a belief in democracy as 'best'. Importantly, a feature of these respondents is that most are 'undecided'. They do not therefore reject the belief in democracy as a better form of government. Much of their reluctance to endorse an alternative to democracy derives from a rejection of the 'communist' experience. For instance, by 1997 only 8% of those sampled believed that restoring the past 'communist' regime was better than the existing status quo.<sup>35</sup> Of course, 'communism' is not the only alternative to the democratic regime.

The ratio of the 'undecided' has gradually decreased as attitudes towards democracy are formed (See Table 4C). What are the emerging preferences of this previously 'undecided' group? The support dynamics that are prevalent have been characterised by an important swing towards supporting democracy. Between 1992 and 1999 the percentage of the population who believe democracy to be best has increased from 52% to 64% of the population sampled. Such figures indicate that democratic support is broadly consolidating itself across the population, a trend supported by data that shows the widespread belief in the future of the democratic regime.<sup>36</sup> However, the consolidation should not be exaggerated. Accompanying the high level of dissatisfaction is a rising percentage of the population who believe that democracy is 'not the best method of government'. The increase has been from 15% in 1992 to 19% in 1999. In another survey from 1999, 66% of Poles supported the continued existence of democracy and 18% supported its removal.<sup>37</sup>

## 4.2 *The context of the case study*

### 4.2.1 *A favourable sample group*

In the empirical investigation I sampled a group of young people from a specific university in Poland. As a consequence, the sample group was not a representative sample of the Polish nation. Below I identify the broad characteristics of the sample group. More specific characteristics of the sample group are discussed in later chapters.

98% of those who responded in the quantitative part of the research were between the ages of 18 and 23 (See Appendix C). As a young age grouping, the expectation was that the sample group would possess less supportive attitudes towards the communist past. Yet youth have been found to be not more supportive of democracy than their elder counterparts. In 1999 it was found in a survey that 66% of youth aged between 18 and 24 supported democracy compared with 68% of those aged between 25 and 44. Furthermore, youth were 'less certain' compared to all age cohorts except for those aged 65 or above. 12% of those aged between 18 and 24 were 'certain' that democracy was best which contrasted with 19% of those aged between 35 and 44.<sup>38</sup> However, the lesser certainty of Polish youth should not be interpreted as an indication that young people possess less positive attitudes towards democracy than their elders. Rather, youth require time to consolidate attitudes and, in any case, the difference is to some extent marginal.<sup>39</sup> Overall, Polish youth show a similar level of support to other age groups.<sup>40</sup>

Similarity in the level of support is not the same across groups that are divided on the basis of education. As with other post-communist countries, education in Poland is an important support variable. In 1999 75% of students were found to be supporters of democracy which contrasted with the national average of 64%.<sup>41</sup> Those with higher education were found to be the most supportive of all. In 1999 74% of those with higher education were found to be supporters of democracy which contrasted with 53% of those with only primary education.<sup>42</sup> There is additional evidence which indicates that those with higher education are generally most supportive of political transition. In 1994 respondents in a CBOS survey were asked whether changing the political system five years previously had been of value. 82% with higher education had believed that

political change had been of value, which contrasted with 72% with further education, 56% with vocational training and 47% with only primary education.<sup>43</sup> Part of the reason for the variation is related to ‘uncertainty’. Only 6% of those with higher education were ‘uncertain’ about whether the political system had been worth changing which contrasted with 19% of those with only primary education. Education is an important support factor with the higher educated being significantly more likely to believe in a democratic method of government (See Part 6.1 for the support data from my own research).

#### *4.2.2 The national mood at the time of the investigation*

The empirical investigation on which this thesis is based was conducted at a specific point in time; between October 1997 and April 1998 (See Part 5.2 for a methodological discussion on the dates). The national mood at the time of the investigation was relatively upbeat. It was after the period of shock therapy and before the economic downturn at the end of the 1990s. As shown in Table 4A, between 1995 and 1997 the national economy grew at an annual rate of between 6% and 7%, and the population was feeling the advantages.<sup>44</sup> By 1997 unemployment had fallen from a high of 16.4% in 1993 to approximately 10%. In the public mood index, the number of ‘optimists’ rose from a 16% lead over pessimists in October to a 21% lead over ‘pessimists’ in November. Reflecting this optimism, 26% of the population anticipated an economic improvement in contrast with 17% who anticipated a worsening situation.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to the economic conditions, the public mood was generally optimistic in respect to the direction of political alliances. Poland received a formal invitation to join NATO in November 1997 and assumed the chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Also, in the Fall of 1997 preparations started for EU accession negotiations with the formal invitation being made on December 13, the anniversary of the introduction of martial law. Support for NATO and the EU does require putting into context. Though the vast majority of citizens supported membership of NATO,<sup>46</sup> attitudes towards joining the EU were more complex. Despite considerable effort being made by, amongst others,

the Catholic Church to encourage a positive feeling towards the EU,<sup>47</sup> a large part of the population were growing increasingly cautious, even fearful of membership. Prior to invitation, the EU had the attraction of being associated with a ‘rich man’s club’.<sup>48</sup> However, under the emerging realisation of the consequences of membership, concerns were creeping in over loss of sovereignty and, in particular, loss of livelihood. As Kolarska-Bobińska said in March 1998, “Europe was at one time an unattainable dream for us,” and as the “dream is becoming a reality, concrete issues have surfaced.”<sup>49</sup> At the centre of the concern was the cost of entering a highly competitive open market. Not only did the workers in the old large-scale state enterprises begin to fear the consequences of membership but also those involved in small Polish businesses. Not surprisingly, it has been the farmers who have consistently been the least supportive of membership. In May 1998 only one in four farmers were recorded as supporting membership.<sup>50</sup> Concerns were growing, but the majority remained believers in Polish membership. Despite a declining support base, an ISP poll in February 1998 found that 64% were for accession with only 9% against accession.<sup>51</sup>

This period was also characterised by a comparatively positive mood towards the political situation in Poland. As the data in Table 4B shows, satisfaction with the functioning democracy was ‘relatively’ high at 40% in 1997. The reasons for this satisfaction are partly related to the economic and political factors previously mentioned, but for a more complete explanation it is necessary to consider certain political changes that took place in the 1990s. The middle of the 1990s had been a period of considerable dissatisfaction with the functioning democracy. Not only did the bitterness of the Presidential conflict lead to a fall in levels of satisfaction with democracy, but its aftermath led to a disappearance of the ‘new right’ with the SLD controlling both the Sejm and the Presidency. It appeared that the introduction of democracy had led to little more than a reorganisation of the old elite. However, an important reorganisation of the Centre Right took place after the defeat through the formation of the ROP (Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland) and, more important, of the AWS coalition (Solidarity Election Action). The AWS was set up by Solidarity’s trade union leader Krzaklewski. Classically anticommunist, the AWS arrived with nationalist sentiment espousing protection from excessive liberalisation. Though no natural friend of the more ‘liberal’ minded educated youth, by 1997 the

AWS's ability to hold together allowed the liberal UW to re-emerge as a partner in power. In September 1997 AWS won 33.8% of the votes in the parliamentary elections resulting in the formation of a coalition government with UW.<sup>52</sup>

If with little other consequence to the understanding of democracy, the victory of the centre right served to remind citizens of the 'rotational' character of democratic government. Victory also served to lift public perceptions of democratic institutions and actors. In December 1997, citizens who were satisfied with their political institutions outnumbered those who were dissatisfied. 10% were more satisfied with the Sejm, 6% were more satisfied with the Senate and 15% were more satisfied with the new government. Moreover, Jerzy Buzek as the 'new' prime minister was backed by 59%. Buzek was an untested leader at the time, but his popularity reflected a period of broad political optimism in which President Kwaśniewski's ratings were also reaching an unprecedented high.<sup>53</sup>

#### *4.2.3 The regional context*

##### *A mainly central-western grouping:*

University students from UMK are primarily from the central-western region of Środkowozachodni in which Toruń is situated. 62% of the total number of students from UMK in 1996-97 came from Środkowozachodni.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, over half of the students from Środkowozachodni came directly from the district of Toruńskie (32.1% of the total student population).<sup>55</sup> With this concentration from one region, in order to appreciate the significance of the findings of this research it is necessary to understand the characteristics of the region. There were at the time of the empirical research certain issues of local interest, but these were not of great importance compared with national issues. It will be shown that there is good evidence that the central-western region is an 'average' Polish region, and therefore an acceptable one to study to obtain representative views.

*Political and economic characteristics of the region:*

Those living within the central-western region of Środkowozachodni are broadly average with respect to levels of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and levels of democratic support. With respect to satisfaction, in 1997 39% of those living within the region of Środkowozachodni were satisfied with the functioning of democracy. This figure stands between the two regional extremes of the east (Wschodni) where only 33% were satisfied and the south-west (Południowo-zachodni) where 47% were satisfied.<sup>56</sup> With respect to support figures, 65% of those from the central-west were supporters of democracy in 1998. This figure stands between the two regional extremes of the east (Wschodni) where only 55% were democratic supporters and the north-west (Południowo-zachodni) where 69% were supporters.<sup>57</sup>

*Table 4D Economic Indicators for Central-Western Poland:*

	Regional value	Polish mean
<b>Macro-economic indicators</b>		
GDP from 1995 (in '000,000 zlotys)	42,099	41,243
Registered employment rate	85%	85%
Private sector, % working population	66%	62%
<b>Standard of living</b>		
Consumer goods, % with all 3: TV, VCR, car	43%	36%
Monthly disposable income/head, zlotys	435	449
<b>Socio-economic security</b>		
Job is secure, %	54%	57%
Area where I live is calm and safe, %	74%	72%
<b>Future outlook</b>		
Believe situation is going in right direction, %	41%	41%
Expect living standard better next year, %	20%	21%

Source: University of Strathclyde, *Economic Indicators: Polish Regional Database*, '<http://www.cspp.strath.ac.uk/Pol-econcomp>' (2001).

The central-western region is also rather average with respect to economic factors (See Table 4D). Deviations from the national average are inevitable, but they are small. In terms of standard of living, those from the central-west possess more consumer items whilst possessing less disposable income than the national average, but the difference is marginal. For a regional comparison, in January 1998 42% of those from the central-western region did not have enough money to buy necessary clothes and shoes. This figure stands between the two extremes of 59% from the west (Zachodni) and 33% from the relatively affluent south-west (Południowo-zachodni).<sup>58</sup> The central-western region is even more 'average' with respect to the future outlook. In January 1998 50% of those from the central-western region described themselves as either worried or very worried about their financial situation. This figure stands firmly between the two extremes of 38% from the south-west (Południowo-zachodni) and 57% from the more rural east (Wschodni).<sup>59</sup>

#### *Local concerns and the decentralisation debate:*

In the town of Toruń a set of strikes during the period of the case study epitomised workers' concerns over the direction of economic liberalisation. One well publicised strike was in the meat company 'Tormies' over the intentions of the private owners NFI.<sup>60</sup> Another strike which attracted much attention was at the textile factory Elana S.A. employing approximately 5,000 workers.<sup>61</sup> In addition, in 1998 there was an intensification of political action against low pay by those working within the medical services. Though widening into a national campaign that included a hunger strike, the original strikes and demonstrations by the anaesthetists began in the mid-western town of Brodnica.<sup>62</sup> Such action rarely had a direct impact on the lives of those university students sampled in this empirical research. Nor were many of the students especially hoping for jobs within those professions affected by the strikes. Yet, the well publicised strike action would not have given the students an artificially rosy picture of the economic circumstances at the period of this survey. The same can be said to be true of the political situation.

The political event which dominated both local and regional concerns was the restructuring of regional government. Nationally there was unquestionable support for the restructuring with only 27% in April 1998 wanting to leave the existing

administrative division in place.<sup>63</sup> In the Kujawsko-pomorskie region a conflict arose on the boundaries and, especially, on who should have regional capital within those boundaries (Kujawsko-pomorskie mainly incorporates the districts of Toruńskie, Bydgoskie and Włocławskie). The concerns were two fold. In Toruń concerns were centred on neighbouring Bydgoszcz becoming capital. The common perspective was that Bydgoszcz had been taking investment away from Toruń since Bydgoszcz had become regional capital in the mid 1970s.<sup>64</sup> Statistical research conducted by Gazeta Wyborcza recorded 73.3% of those from Toruń preferring the inclusion of 'distant' Gdańsk into the regional government (primarily to offset a concentration of power in Bydgoszcz).<sup>65</sup> In contrast, citizens of Bydgoszcz reacted to the restructuring of the region because of fears that their city would lose its privileged status to Gdańsk. In the poll from Gazeta Wyborcza, 99% of citizens from Bydgoszcz were against the inclusion of Gdańsk.<sup>66</sup> Opposition from Bydgoszcz led to 3,000 residents protesting in Warsaw on April 1.

To a certain extent the controversy over regional government served to reinforce the familiar perception of an elite insensitive to citizens' interests. As Janusz Czapiński argued, the main cause of the dissatisfaction was the lack of discourse with the local community. "Before drawing the new maps in their Warsaw offices, government officials should have asked the interested parties what they thought of the reform".<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, as with the economic concerns across the region, these political concerns were secondary to the broader national mood.

#### *Summary:*

In this chapter the history of Poland has been scanned in order to trace the development of the democratic tradition. In addition, relevant characteristics of the central-western region have been scanned in an attempt to determine the suitability of the region for a study of Polish attitudes. The conclusion was reached that the central-west was a more or less average region of Poland. There were at the time of the empirical research certain issues of local interest, but those were not of great importance. More important than local issues were national issues, and at the time of the investigation the national mood was relatively upbeat. The study was conducted after the period of shock therapy and before the economic downturn at the end of the

1990s. The period was also characterised by a comparatively positive mood towards the political situation in Poland.

The review of the history of democratic support in Poland has pointed to one feature of my empirical research in which the results cannot be generalised to the whole of Polish society. It has been shown that the higher educated are more likely to believe in a democratic method of government than the rest of society. My sample group of the highly educated cannot therefore be treated as a representation of the whole Polish nation.

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*Notes and references:*

<sup>1</sup> Political equality was a strong principle held by the gentry. A popular song of the period was read as ‘the nobleman on his little plot of land is the equal of the Palatine’ (szlachcic na zagrodzie równy wojewodzie). A. Walicki, “The Three Traditions in Polish Patriotism” in S. Gomułka and A. Polonsky (eds), *Polish Paradoxes*, London: Routledge, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Poland is commonly described as having a culture which shows, in Janusz Źarnowski’s words “... a surprising continuity”. See Janusz Źarnowski, “The Evolution of Polish Society Since 1918,” *East European Quarterly*, 24:2 (1990) 227-235. Even if the extent of this continuity is to be debated, few could deny that historical symbols such as parliament have become ingrained into Polish national consciousness. The importance of tradition is emphasised in the work of Norman Davies. As a historian mainly writing prior to the transition of 1989, his work has tended to stress a continuation of the ‘Polish spirit’ against the People’s Republic. See N. Davies, *God’s Playground: A History of Poland (Volume II)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

<sup>3</sup> During the early period of occupation, nationalist aspirations inspired by romantic writers such as Adam Mickiewicz became ingrained in Polish culture. The recent manifestations of nationalism are analysed in Walicki. Walicki’s work applies to the ethical component of nationalist sentiment during the transitional period. A. Walicki, “The Three Traditions in Polish Patriotism” in S. Gomułka and A. Polonsky (eds), *Polish Paradoxes*, London: Routledge, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> The occupying empires had temporarily collapsed. The Russian Empire had collapsed by 1917 following the years of civil war. Austro-Hungary and Germany had been defeated in the First World War. Defeat had left territorial voids in Central and Eastern Europe which the Americans wanted to fill with peoples who sought national self-determination.

<sup>5</sup> The conflicting political and economic divisions in the inter-war period were always going to make the job of governing a newly born country difficult. Making the situation more difficult was the introduction of a Republic with a weak executive. A weak parliamentary system was installed as a result of Piłsudski’s ‘minority’ nationalists attempting to restrict the political role of Piłsudski’s ‘majority’ socialists. See G. Kolankiewicz and P. G. Lewis, *Poland: Politics, Economics and Society*, London: Pinter, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> Following his release from prison, General Piłsudski had gained popular acclaim in November 1918 by constituting the modern Polish state. In 1919 he won further acclaim when he engaged himself in successful military operations against Russia over undetermined territory in current Ukraine.

<sup>7</sup> The quote by Krystyna Kersten is in G. Ekiert, “Rebellious Poles: Political Crises and Popular Protest Under State Socialism, 1945-89,” *Politics and Societies*, 11:2 (1997) p.299.

<sup>8</sup> The importance to people of a state adopting a strong role in the economic restructuring of the country should not be underestimated. Amongst others, Gulczyński stresses the ideological proximity to the paternalistic role of the state under communism. M. Gulczyński, ‘System Change in Poland: A

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Historical-Philosophical Perspective Approach' in G. Sanford (ed.), *Democratisation in Poland. 1988-90*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

<sup>9</sup> Stalin himself perceived Poland as the most difficult nation to tame. The opinion is reflected by academics. For a recent example, see G. Sanford, "Communism's weakest link – Democratic capitalism's greatest challenge: Poland" in G. Pridham, E. Herring and G. Sanford (eds.), *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1994.

<sup>10</sup> In some respects, the shift against totalitarian politics can be recognised as a shift in policy following an awareness that the regime could never legitimise itself under Stalinist policies. As such, the reduction of Stalin styled totalitarianism was motivated by the wider interest of securing the authoritarian party-state. See G. Fletcher, "Against the Stream" in T. Aczel (ed.), *Ten Years After*, London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1966. Related to this idea is Brzezinski's argument that the resulting compromise was part of the larger Soviet recognition that the totalitarian revolution had run its course and that it was time to respect diverging national beliefs. Z. K. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

<sup>11</sup> A. Michnik, *Letters from Prison*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987, p.145.

<sup>12</sup> Pakułski has since described the private space but lack of political involvement as a social pact between state and citizen. He describes the pact as a pact of 'conditional tolerance' between state and society which allowed citizens to pursue private ends in exchange for withdrawal from public life. J. Pakułski, "Legitimacy and Mass Compliance: Reflections on Max Weber and Soviet-type Societies, *British Journal of Political Science*," 16:1 (1986) 35-56.

<sup>13</sup> Nowak found that younger Poles were significantly more likely than their parents to support an increase in 'liberties' and 'public empowerment'. S. Nowak, "Values and Attitudes of the Polish People," *Scientific American*, 245:1 (1981) 23-32.

<sup>14</sup> Statistics documented in G. Kolankiewicz and P. G. Lewis, *Poland: Politics, Economics and Society*, London: Pinter, 1988. Also see P. G. Lewis, "Saints and Demons: Communism, Post-communism and Political Evolution in Poland, *Journal of Communist Studies*, 8:1 (1992) 41.

<sup>15</sup> K. Lepak, *Prelude to Solidarity: Poland and the Politics of the Gierek Regime*, New York: Columbia, 1988.

<sup>16</sup> The success of government propaganda depended on comparing Polish reality to an exaggerated image of the crime ridden and grossly unequal ways of Western styled capitalism. As Feher has argued, communism generally sold itself in terms of paternalism. F. Feher, "Paternalism as a Mode of Legitimisation in Soviet-type Societies," in T. H. Rigby and F. Feher (ed.), *Political Legitimacy in Communist States*, London: The Macmillan Press, 1982. However, this goal was largely incompatible with the economic and travel links to the non-communist world that had been stepped up under Gierek. Poles were not so insulated from basic truths as their communist neighbours. Rather, citizens were able to compare their own 'unfavourable' situation to those of Western neighbours. That 'unfavourable' situation included queuing, corruption and, maybe most important, the need to adapt. This adapting took

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on characteristics such as social networking, merchant tourism and the hoarding of products for bartering. However much the adapting may have prepared Poles for the dynamism of a modern day liberal economy, it had not been a welcome feature of the past system. See Chapter 5 in J. Clark and A. Wildavski, *The Moral Collapse of Communism*, San Francisco: ICS Press, 1990.

<sup>17</sup> The Solidarity movement has been described as a ‘revolutionary movement’ because of the extent of mass involvement that included members of the PZPR, but the movement lacked a far-reaching plan and revolutionary zeal, later becoming described as a ‘self-limiting revolution’. J. Holzer, “Solidarity’s Adventures in Wonderland,” in S. Gomułka and A. Polonski (eds.), *Polish Paradoxes*, London: Routledge, 1990.

<sup>18</sup> There is little doubt that General Jaruzelski declared martial law with a certain reluctance. At the very least, he was concerned with eroding legitimacy yet further. Jaruzelski is said to have refused to use regular troops against strikers and demonstrators in both 1976 and 1979. See P. Lewis (ed.), *Eastern Europe: Political Crisis and Legitimacy*, Worcester: Billing Sons Ltd, 1984.

<sup>19</sup> Despite the cosmetics of a multiparty parliamentary system, there was a ‘minimal parliament’. D. M. Olson and M. D. Simon, “The Institutional Development of a Minimal Parliament: The Case of the Polish Sejm,” in D. Nelson and S. White (eds.), *Communist Legislatures in a Comparative Perspective*, London: Macmillan, 1982.

<sup>20</sup> Though market reform is associated with the post-Solidarity period, the regime’s commitment to public ownership had never been strong in comparison to other ‘communist’ regimes. This was most evident through the regime’s acceptance since the middle of the 1950s of small scale ‘private’ farms. Furthermore, as Poznanski argues, the seeds of economic transition had began as early as the early 1970s under Gierek. See K. Poznanski, *Poland’s Protracted Transition: Institutional Change and Economic Growth 1970-1994*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>21</sup> Data recorded in P. G. Lewis, “Saints and Demons: Communism, Post-communism and Political Evolution in Poland, *Journal of Communist Studies*, 8:1 (1992) 41.

<sup>22</sup> M. Marody, “The Political Attitudes of Polish Society in the period of Systemic Transition,” *Praxis International*, 11:2 (1991) 227-239.

<sup>23</sup> A. Rychard “Politics and Society after the breakthrough: the sources and threats to political legitimacy” in G. Sanford (ed.), *Democratisation in Poland. 1988-90*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992.

<sup>24</sup> Rychard also presumes that democratic support cannot survive on an affective high. Rather, what is required is a rational commitment to democratic norms.

<sup>25</sup> The support logic of ‘shock therapy’ was that the population would have a high rate of tolerance to socio-economic hardship whilst the ‘new order’ was in its honeymoon period. The seeds would then be sown for prosperity in the long-term and, accordingly, broad systemic support.

<sup>26</sup> G. Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992, p.79.

<sup>27</sup> J. R. Wedel, *The Unplanned Society*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. Wedel argues that such bonding allows Polish society to adapt to circumstances in times of economic hardship. The consequence is that the bonding acts as a social buffer against the insecurities of economic hardship.

<sup>28</sup> Data documented in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer, 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>29</sup> An analysis of the results from the 1993 parliamentary elections showed that voting behaviour was in part related to personal economic circumstances. Other factors that related to voting behaviour were attitudes towards the past regime and religious factors. D. V. Powers and J. H. Cox, "Echoes from the Past: The Relationship between Satisfaction with Economic Reforms and Voting Behaviour in Poland," *American Political Science Review*, 91:3 (1997) 617-633.

<sup>30</sup> CBOS, "Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce," BS/14/14/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>31</sup> An example of the indirect effect of economic hardship on dissatisfaction is that those who blame dissatisfaction on the political factor of 'chaos/disorder' are also significantly more likely to be economic 'losers' from transition. 36% of the losers perceived democracy as chaotic/disordered which contrasted with only 9% of the winners. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> In 1993 the number of Poles who expressed 'satisfaction' with the functioning of democracy was only 19% which compared to 47% of Czechs. The extent of public dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy in Poland in comparison to 'other' Central Eastern European populations is shown in R. Rose and G. Tóka, *Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in East Central Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 279 (1997).

<sup>34</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw (1999).

<sup>35</sup> R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998). In comparison, 29% of sampled Bulgarians and 43% of sampled Ukrainians preferred to restore the communist past.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. In Poland, as elsewhere in the region, the approval for the existing democracy has consistently been lower than the approval for what it will become in the future.

<sup>37</sup> CBOS, "Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce" BS/71/71/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>38</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>39</sup> In 1996 35% of youths between 16 and 18 were unable to say whether democracy was the best form of government. This contrasted with 16% of adults. CBOS, "Młodzież o Polityce i Demokracji," BS/141/139/96 Warsaw, 1996.

<sup>40</sup> 34% of those aged 65 and older were unable to make a judgement on support. This contrasted with only 12% of those aged between 18 and 24. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99 Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> CBOS, "Konflikty Stare Czy Nowe?" BS/72/63/94, Warsaw, 1994.

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<sup>44</sup> A certain level of controversy exists as to the timing of when the economic upturn was felt in wide population. As early as 1992 Sachs was justifying the logic of 'shock therapy' by writing that 82% of respondents in an opinion polls maintained that their family's economic situation was the same or better than 5 years before. J. Sachs, "The Economic Transformation of Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland, *Economics of Planning*," 25:1 (1992) 5-20. However, the empirical work to which the Sachs based his claim has been rejected because of the wording of the questioning which Cielecka and Gibson argue 'reversed' the meaning. See A. Cielecka and J. Gibson, "Poles Evaluations of the Benefits of the Polish Economic Transformation," *Economics of Planning*, 29:2 (1996) 131-137. I must agree that Sachs was indeed misled when acknowledging that CBOS reports in 1991 showed that as much as 76% believed their material situation to be 'unsatisfactory'. Nevertheless, by the late 1990s, there was little doubt that, for most, the situation had changed for the better. Indeed, by 1998, approximately half of the population had become satisfied with what it could purchase. See R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer, 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>45</sup> The data is from the Pentor-Voice Public Mood Index and is documented in The Warsaw Voice, *Good Start for Buzek*, December 14, 1997, No. 50 (477).

<sup>46</sup> Despite broad support, a survey conducted in May 1998 showed that every one in five citizens were indifferent towards NATO membership and 7% outwardly opposed membership. The data is reported in *Rzeczpospolita*, "Młodzi i Zamożni Lubią Unię," May 30, 1998.

<sup>47</sup> In 1997 Polish bishops and Cardinal Glemp committed themselves to spreading positive knowledge and feelings about the EU. This followed an agreement in which the promise of support from the Polish Catholic Church was reciprocated with a promise from EU to promote ethical values in the process of integration. Reported in The Warsaw Voice, "Seeing the Light," November 16, 1997. The importance of the Church in promoting positive attitudes towards the EU should not be underestimated because, as a symbol of strong national identity, the Church has the power to dampen fears about loss of sovereignty.

<sup>48</sup> Support for membership of EU tended to fluctuate along with the condition of the economy. Support fell under the economic hardship of the early 1990s and rose steadily from 1993 as the economy picked up. Support figures are documented in The Warsaw Voice, "Poles Display Cold Feet," March 29, 1998.

<sup>49</sup> The quote is recorded in The Warsaw Voice, "Poles Display Cold Feet," March 29, 1998.

<sup>50</sup> Reported in *Rzeczpospolita*, *Młodzi i Zamożni Lubią Unię*, May 30, 1998. Concerns led to farmers' and workers' anti integration demonstrations in the Spring of 1998 with EU flags burned during a march by the workers at the Ursus tractor plant. The workers accused the political parties, primarily UW, of anti-Polish and anti-national policies. Reported in The Warsaw Voice, "Warsaw's Spring of Protests," April 12, 1998.

<sup>51</sup> The percentage supporting accession was beginning to fall in late 1997. 64% supported accession in February 1998 that contrasted with 72% supporting accession in a CBOS poll from April 1997. The data is documented in The Warsaw Voice, "Poles Display Cold Feet," March 29, 1998.

<sup>52</sup> Figures are documented in The Warsaw Voice, "Solidarity Wins - Now Who Will be Premier," September 28, 1997.

<sup>53</sup> Figures are documented in The Warsaw Voice, *Good Start for Buzek*, December 14, 1997.

<sup>54</sup> The mid-western region (Środkowozachodni) includes the districts of Bydgoskie, Kaliskie, Konińskie, Kęszyńskie, Pilskie, Poznańskie, Toruńskie and Włocławskie.

<sup>55</sup> The data is documented in D. Szymańska, E. Grzelak-Kostulskia and B. Hołowiecka, *Pochodzenie Przestrzenne Studentów Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika w Toruniu*, Instytut Geografii: Toruń, 1997. The figures have changed little over the last four years. In 1999-2000 53.5% of students came from the territory of Kujawsko-pomorskie (noting that territories of Toruńskie, Bydgoskie and Włocławskie collectively comprised of the more recently defined territory of 'Kujawsko-pomorskie'). The data is kindly provided by Mrs. Daniela Szymańska from the Institute of Geography at UMK. Data on the distribution of students in the 1997-98 academic year (the year in which my research was conducted) was not available because the appropriate research had not been conducted by staff at the university in that year. The registry of the university would not release data to me on the grounds of confidentiality.

<sup>56</sup> CBOS, "Społeczny Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97 Warsaw, 1997. The data reflects regional differences on the issue of whether or not those who live in a region believe that democracy is disordered and chaotic. 24% of those living with the region of Środkowozachodni believed democracy to be disordered and chaotic. This figure stands between the two extremes of the east (Wschodni) where 32% believed democracy to be disordered and chaotic and the north (Połnocny) where only 18% believed democracy to be disordered and chaotic.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> CBOS, "Aspiracje Materiałne Polskich Rodzin," BS/4/4/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>59</sup> CBOS, "Polskie Rodziny – Poczucie Bezpieczeństwa Materiałnego i Zagrożenia Biedą," BS/87/87/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>60</sup> NFI were publicly proposing to demolish the factory with the intention to build a more modern structure. However, distrust of the owners' intentions was high with the strikes leading to both the occupation of the factory and a hunger strike. The situation is documented in detail in several articles in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Toruń, Bydgoszcz, Włocławek, Piła) on April 8, 1998.

<sup>61</sup> The workers' underlining fear was that the factory, employing approximately 5,000 workers, would need to be shut down. There was a potential buyer in the form of 'Texmaco Polysindo', but there was little trust in the intentions of this multinational. Reported in Nowości, "Pakiet bez Kokosów," February 3, 1998.

<sup>62</sup> Nowości, "Dzień bez Narkozy," February 27, 1998.

<sup>63</sup> 27% wanted to preserve the existing administrative system, 13% remained indifferent and 8% possessed no opinion. All others supported change. This means that the majority were in favour of replacing the system. *Rzeczpospolita*, "Poparcia dla 17 Województw," May 30, 1998.

<sup>64</sup> The widespread belief in Toruń was that Bydgoszcz would be the beneficiary of most of the investment. This belief is expressed in numerous articles from the local newspaper Nowości. For

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instance, see *Nowości*, “*Być albo nie Być*,” February 26, 1998. In response the newspaper even organised its own campaign to make Toruń regional capital. See *Nowości*, “*Księga Czeka*,” February 16, 1998.

<sup>65</sup> Data is documented in various articles in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Toruń, Bydgoszcz, Włocławek, Piła), on February 9, 1998.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> The quote is recorded in *The Warsaw Voice*, “*Warsaw's Spring of Protests*,” April 12, 1998.

## *Chapter Five*

### *The Empirical Design*

#### *5.1 A case study; its strengths and weaknesses*

##### *Limits to the level of representation:*

My research set out to provide a broad explanatory picture of democratic support. The use of a case study had the advantage of allowing the research to be comprehensive. It did have its limitations. As discussed in the last chapter, the sample group was not representative of any particular population other than students at university in Poland. The educated youth of Poland do not represent the national population, and those being researched were only representing the university population at a specific point in time. These limits to representation are unavoidable in a specific case study because such studies bind the research in time as well as place. As Robert Stake has emphasised, the case study is about generating knowledge of the particular issues intrinsic to the case itself.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as Stake himself acknowledges, cases can be chosen and studied because they are instrumentally useful in furthering the understanding of a particular problem for ‘theoretical elaboration’ and ‘analytical generalisation’. Important to this empirical study are the wider implications in the findings.

##### *Advantages in the choice of case study:*

The choice of Poland for the location of a case study had the advantage that Poland has a long and solid tradition in sociological studies.<sup>2</sup> Such a tradition allowed me the opportunity to incorporate existing theoretical and empirical work into the investigation. The choice of using Polish university students was made because of the relationship between the researcher and those being researched. To discuss the importance of the social researcher’s relationship with the grouping under evaluation is not always necessary, but for this research such a discussion is useful because of what I

believe to have been the advantage of proximity between myself and those being researched. This advantage of proximity was in terms of being a ‘familiarised outsider’ which provided both an ‘epistemological advantage’ and the ‘advantage of accessibility’.

*The epistemological advantage:*

In today’s academic climate, social scientists broadly acknowledge that the role of the neutral observer is unattainable. We as social researchers understand the world through a social prism which involves prejudice that has built up throughout a lifetime. Prejudice results in the interpreter’s attitude being actively re-constructive rather than passive.

Should the implications of subjectivity lead to the researcher accepting the creative process as a ‘naturalistic’ observer or push the researcher towards the ‘ideal’ of neutrality? Polanji argues that research no way resembles detached objectivity, and that we are better to value the idea of tacit integration which builds tacit knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Along the same line of argument, Gadamer claims that the discoverer of knowledge does not stand ‘apart and unaffected’.<sup>4</sup> Having spent most of my life since 1993 in Poland, I have built up a familiarity with the country and, more specifically, with the social grouping of university students under evaluation. Therefore, I believe myself to understand certain subtleties of those who were the subjects of the study.

With the ‘naturalistic’ observer there is the danger that a period of interaction with the population under evaluation will result in a researcher being laden with biased pre-suppositions.<sup>5</sup> The ‘naturalistic’ observer is still of value in that he/she is able to empathise with those being researched, but the outsider possesses greater neutrality. As with Weber’s classic perspective, social scientists may be prejudiced, but the idea of a disinterested, dispassionate observer is still worth seeking. I therefore attach value to being able to approach the case study as a familiarised ‘outsider’.

*The advantage of accessibility:*

The reason for choosing the specific study of university students was because, as a teacher at the University of Nicholas Copernicus (UMK) in the town of Toruń, I was able to take advantage of direct accessibility. Accessibility was particularly

important because of the intention to conduct comprehensive research. I was better able to obtain the views of the student population through my contact with them in lectures and classes and, therefore, avoid the need to use those who wished to volunteer in their free time. I believe that avoiding the usage of 'volunteers' was important because volunteers would have been a more socially active/interested group that would have provided a distorted representation of the sample group.

The avoidance of 'volunteers' enters the grey area of research ethics. I did allow all students in each class to choose whether or not they wished to participate, hence the research was conducted under 'informed consent'.<sup>6</sup> A small percentage in the classes chose not to participate, but the vast majority were willing to do so. In terms of the kind of consent, I might be accused of creating a sense of 'obligation'. Most of the research was conducted during normal teaching hours with the respondents being aware that I was myself a teacher at the university. Yet, most did participate with a sense of 'enthusiasm', possibly because the experiment was perceived by the students as more interesting than 'normal' activities conducted during 'ordinary' teaching hours.

## 5.2 *Methodological framework*

### *The fusion of research methods:*

The methodological framework fuses qualitative with quantitative research methods. The qualitative approach has been viewed as being in conflict with the quantitative approach. Rather than view the social world as part of objectively identifiable forces, the qualitative approach sets out to view a dynamic social world in which agents construct reality. As Filstead writes, the qualitative approach "perceives social life as the shared creativity of individuals."<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the conflict between the two approaches has weakened in recent decades with a move towards convergence. Reichardt and Cook stress multiple advantages in fusing the approaches. One method-type builds upon the other to provide a "depth of perception, or a binocular vision".<sup>8</sup> Also advantageous is the process of triangulation in which "... two separate stores of knowledge and experience can cross-fertilise".<sup>9</sup> What follows is a description of the related logic of my methodological fusion.

*The qualitative component:*

The usage of qualitative methods of research served the purpose of investigating the appeal of democracy.<sup>10</sup> The investigation incorporated the process of discovering/exploring broad patterns of positive and negative attitudes towards democracy.<sup>11</sup> More specifically, these findings had to incorporate both the simplicity and complexity of understanding as well as the emotions on which the appeal is based. I used two separate qualitative exercises, both designed to collect 'open feedback'. One served the purpose of investigating 'emotions' towards the symbol of democracy and the other of investigating the 'understanding' of the existing democracy (See Parts 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 respectively).

The advantage with the qualitative component to the research was that the data came directly from the subjective thoughts and feelings of those being researched. Of course, there is the possibility that the researcher had an influence on the recorded data and/or on its final interpretations, but the qualitative data provided an insight into the mind of those being researched. The same would not have been true if the method of investigation was only through a 'fixed question format' that had been determined by the researcher.

*Verification through the quantitative survey:*

Investigating the appeal of democracy does not 'explain' democratic support as a preference for the democratic regime over alternatives. Identifying factors of appeal may offer clues to the explanation of support. Indeed, these clues are the reason for studying the appeal of democracy. Yet, identifying factors of appeal is not the same as identifying support explanations. To become support explanations the factors of appeal require statistical verification that 'shows' their significance as underlining motivational factors behind democratic support.

The methodological design included the use of quantitative research with the purpose of statistically testing variables of interest. This involved collecting and analysing a specific questionnaire completed by 698 respondents (See Part 5.4). In effect, this second stage became part of a process of triangulation in which statistical data served to test factors of interest that had been illuminated in the qualitative

research.<sup>12</sup> In Figure 5A, I illustrate how the methodology applied to a process of both 'investigation' and 'verification'.<sup>13</sup>

*The period of the two research stages:*

The qualitative component to the research was conducted in the autumn of 1997 between 27<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> December. This was followed by a period of interpretation of the result of the qualitative research which led to the questionnaire design. The period of interpretation was of particular importance because the questionnaire was partly designed to test the support significance of points of interest from the qualitative work (See Figure 5A). The quantitative work was conducted in the spring of 1998 between 4<sup>th</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> April.

### **5.3     *The qualitative component***

#### **5.3.1     *The sample group***

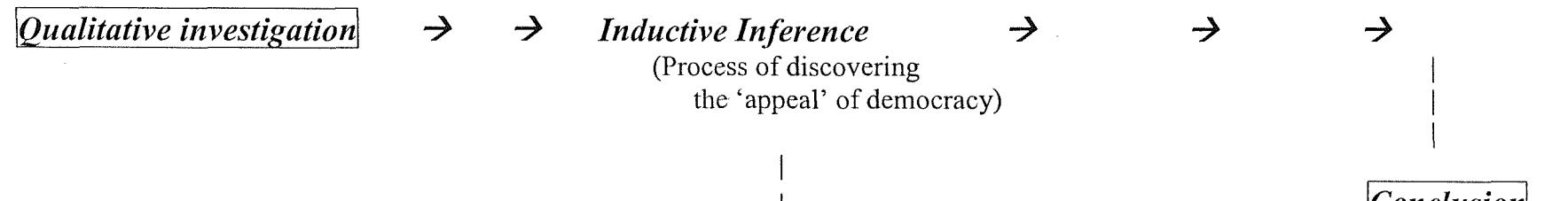
For the qualitative part of the research, I chose a 'convenience' sampling of students. A total of 347 students were used in the qualitative exercises, 189 of which were used in the 'word association test' and 158 of which were used in the 'free writing exercise'. The relatively high number of responses for qualitative work was achieved by targeting groups of students in a number of classes. Those who participated were students attending classes in the Faculty of Humanities. I worked in co-operation with colleagues who allowed me to occupy their teaching hours for conducting the qualitative research.

There is a danger of sampling a group not representative of the 'larger' student population because those involved were 'only' from the Humanities. One noticeable difference is that the Humanities have a significantly higher percentage of females than in other faculties. This distortion in representation must be offset against the advantage of avoiding volunteers wishing to participate in their free time. Moreover, the qualitative research was largely serving the purpose of exploration rather than verification, and so avoiding distortions of representation at this stage was not of considerable concern.

Figure 5A

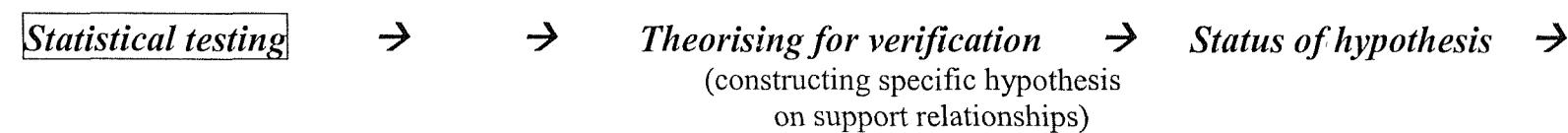
The triangulation process:

*Part 1*



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*Part 2*



### 5.3.2 *Concerns over tacit power*

#### *Making use of written responses:*

The tacit power of the researcher is of concern in qualitative research, so how was I to collect data on the appeal of democracy without influencing the groups? Group interviewing was a possible technique to use, but I was concerned with the level of detachment that I as a foreign teacher would achieve. I feared that the social relationship between interviewer and interviewee would invite misleading responses. As a foreign teacher, there could have been a tendency in face-to-face contact to modify responses. In some situations face to face contact could invite an entertaining challenge for the students; they would identify the interviewer with 'Western' and, therefore, 'democratic' ideas. On balance I decided to reject interactive communication. Instead I chose two techniques which demanded privately written responses which detached the respondent from the researcher.<sup>14</sup> Privately written responses also had the advantage of collecting data from those respondents who would be 'muted' in-group discussions, as group interviews are unavoidably guided by the most active participants.

#### *The power of interpretation:*

Using written responses was not without problems. Maybe the most important of these problems was that written responses were recorded without a communicative process of clarifying meanings or expanding on points of specific interest. The former concern over clarifying meanings was of particular concern. For the purpose of clarification, therefore, I decided to introduce brief group conversation sessions following the collection of data from the word association test (See Part 5.3.3). For the most part, the meanings required both a re-cognition and re-construction. Such a creative role for the researcher is open to criticism as an example of tacit power, but that very need to contextualise the meanings required a basic understanding of the sampling group, in turn justifying my choice of researching a familiar group. Rather than use the creative process as a criticism, I recognise the process as one of 'cautious' discovery.

### 5.3.3 *The word association test*

#### *Choice of test:*

Miller et al. wrote that “because democracy is a complex, potentially multi-dimensional concept it is important that the researcher measure the most salient and relevant aspects of this concept”.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, a test was conducted with the purpose of ascertaining associations with the ‘symbol’ of democracy. Such an aim was similar to the comprehensive research discussed by Simon which found out what people think that democracy means as a concept.<sup>16</sup> This ‘conceptual’ approach targets the ‘literal’ understanding of democracy. I was also interested in extracting an emotive understanding of democracy. A research technique conducted by Pammett interested me because it asked (Russian) respondents to state ‘what comes to mind when the word democracy is spoken’.<sup>17</sup> My technique was very much a reflection of Pammett’s question, but in written format. The written format that I chose was a ‘word association test’ designed to collect literal and emotive responses to democracy as a word-symbol.<sup>18</sup> I decided to introduce a comparative analysis by investigating associations with the word-symbol ‘communism’.

#### *The specific task:*

Students were asked to write down no more than two associations to a list of ten separate nouns. Despite those being researched knowing that they were participating in an experiment, the ‘nouns’ of interest for the research were ‘not’ known specifically as the nouns of interest by the subjects.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, I ordered the presentation of the nouns so as to both ‘separate’ and ‘hide’ the nouns of significance. The logic in the ordering of the list is explained in greater detail in Appendix A. I also felt it important to conduct an extensive pilot study for the purpose of finding out about the best practical technique to use. Experiences from the pilot study were used to ‘fine tune’ the conditions in which the test was conducted. Most significantly, the ‘fine tuning’ involved learning how best to induce ‘affective’ responses. It was decided that the test would induce the best responses if the following practises were followed:

- First, I decided to introduce the task to the students by stressing that they should feel free to express themselves through the usage of adjectives ‘if they so desired’.

Also, I stressed that the names of the participants were not going to be recorded so as to dampen any inhibitions.

- Second, I decided to introduce a time limit so as to achieve a ‘spontaneity’ in the responses. No longer than four minutes would be allowed to complete the whole task. With the time limitation, the participants usually chose to provide one rather than two associations with each word. From the 189 respondents, I collected a total of 221 associations with the word-symbol ‘democracy’ and 231 associations with the word-symbol ‘communism’. 18 respondents did not make any association with ‘democracy’ and 10 respondents did not make any association with ‘communism’.

#### *Concern about ambiguous responses and the inclusion of discussions:*

The word association test deliberately set out to record short responses and, therefore, ambiguous responses were inevitable. To lessen the danger of inaccurately coding the responses, I conducted short discussions directly with each class once they had completed the test. These discussions were in no way designed to function as ‘group interviews’, rather they served the purpose of clarifying meaning so that responses could be accurately coded. The discussions also provided valuable feedback for my analysis of the data recorded in the free writing exercise.

#### **5.3.4 The free writing exercise**

##### *Choice of test:*

I accompanied the word association test with a free writing exercise. The free writing exercise served the purpose of ascertaining the ‘understanding’ of the current democracy in Poland. Despite a heritage that dates back as far as Znaniecki, such an exercise is not common.<sup>20</sup> I chose to use a free writing exercise so that the students could let their personal thoughts run free. Students were allowed ‘discretion’ with which to express themselves and, as with the word association test, a non-interactive environment was created so as to avoid the influence from the researcher and other students.

*Leaving an ‘open focus’:*

I chose not to direct the students along the theme of ‘democracy in Poland’. Instead I presented students with the subject of ‘Poland in the Nineties’ with the purpose of guiding responses to the subject under analysis. The value of leaving a largely ‘open focus’ was to collect data which was ‘natural’ to the students’ focus of interest. Students wrote about the subject of the current democracy both directly in terms of its ideas and practise and, also, indirectly in terms of the social and economic environment.

*Concern over the number of responses:*

There was a concern at the beginning of the empirical stage of the research that students would not be willing to participate because of the ‘demanding’ nature of the exercise. These concerns however were largely unrealised with only 21 from 179 students deciding against participation. I believe that the main reason why participation was high was because of the ‘free focus’ of the task in which students gave their own personal responses to the subject of ‘Poland in the 1990s’ rather than a specific focus on the subject of democracy. I believe that the students would have left in droves if I had asked them to directly write about democracy. The open focus did however result in students commonly avoiding a ‘political dimension’ to their writing. Of the 700 pages of written material collected, the overwhelming majority did not refer to democracy. Indeed, of the 158 essays collected, I incorporated only 61 responses directly into the analysis. Much useful material could be inferred from the responses, but the limited number of responses means that caution must be exercised in the interpretation of the results.

### **5.3.5 Summary of the qualitative techniques**

Both of the qualitative exercises had weaknesses. The weakness of the word association test was the coding, and the weakness of the free writing exercise was the limited number of relevant responses. Against these individual weaknesses could be offset the advantage of using two ‘complementary’ techniques. Whereas the word-association test recorded spontaneous responses to the word-symbol of democracy, the

free-writing exercise recorded contemplative responses to the current democracy. The result was to achieve depth in the investigation on the appeal of democracy.

### **5.3.5 Points on coding and language**

*The process of coding:*

The process of coding was not fixed according to a single model. Rather, the coding involved something of a grounded scheme in which I worked to refine categories. Certain categories required sub-categorising. This was part of an on going process of breaking primary categories down into manageable sub-categories. In Figure 5B I document the categories, noting that I based them on the familiar coding used by, amongst others, Jose Montero.<sup>21</sup>

*Figure 5B Categories for the qualitative data:*

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#### *1. Emotions/Attitudes*

Moral affection	(good/legal/fair/equal - bad/illegal/unfair/unequal)
Wider affection	('what we like' - 'what we don't like')
Comparative	(better - worse)
Time	(past – present –future)
Sub	(completeness – incompleteness 'of democracy')
Sub	(falseness 'of democracy')

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#### *2. Role of the citizen/nation*

National power	(collective 'national' empowerment/independence)
Role of the citizen	(input/participation, i.e. external efficacy)
Sub	(limited 'delegative' system)
Sub	('representative' system)
Sub	(wider 'participatory' system)

---

### 3. Pluralistic structure

Stability of structure (strength – weakness in pluralism)

---

### 4. Behaviour of authorities

Responsiveness	(responsiveness to public input, i.e. external efficacy)
Type of interaction	(co-operative vs. divisive behaviour)
Quality	(decision making skills)

---

### 5. Output

Results of policy	(success - failure of policy)
Direction of policy	(liberalisation vs. state interference)

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### 6. Freedoms/autonomy

Expression	(freedom of opinion/action)
Sub	(freedom of information/press)
Movement	(freedom to travel)
Association	(freedom to form social groups – religious freedoms)
Economic	(property/enterprise - capitalism)
Autonomy	(self-determination as a collective result of freedoms)

---

### 7. Social and economic situation

Material situation	(prosperity vs. poverty - equality vs. inequality)
Opportunity	(changes to opportunities/prospects)
Values	(community vs. individual – material vs. spiritual)
Social order	(obedience to authority vs. crime)

---

### *Usage of the English language:*

Responses in both qualitative exercises were in the English language. So, what of potential errors of understanding and self-expression? Firstly, no misunderstandings existed in respect to the way that the subjects interpreted the terminology of the political and economic systems. ‘Democracy’ and ‘Communism’ are the words ‘Demokracja’ and ‘Komunizm’ in the Polish language. More problematically, were the subjects responding with words which accurately expressed what they intended to express? The main defence against this argument is that all subjects were students within the Humanities who, at various periods during their studies, had studied in the English Department. As a consequence, the students were highly competent at expressing the intended meanings through their word-choice. Where on rare occasions ambiguity was present, the responses were removed from the interpretations. Also, as already mentioned, the qualitative research was undertaken with the aim of ‘investigation’. This was not the same as the ‘questionnaire’ design which was with the aim of testing support relationships. Accordingly, the questionnaire was conducted in the Polish language so as to avoid concerns over language.

### **5.4 The quantitative component (a questionnaire design)**

As already mentioned, the questionnaire served the purpose of statistically testing the relationships between democratic support and various factors of interest. The specific questions used and answers recorded in the questionnaire are documented in Appendix C. What follows is a summary of details of the sample group used for this part of the investigation and of the specific questionnaire design.

#### **5.4.1 The sample group**

My target was a sample of approximately 700 students. In total 698 questionnaires were collected. The high number of respondents was necessary to decrease the sampling error. Furthermore, the stratification needed to be more representative of the student population because in this part of the research the questionnaire served the purpose of verification. As a consequence, a stratification according to university department was used.<sup>22</sup>

The access to the array of students from across various departments was achieved through the help of the Department of Foreign Languages (LJO or Lektorat for short). The Lektorat was an ideal centre for conducting the quantitative research because all students from all departments must necessarily attend language courses at the centre. Furthermore, it was relatively easy to control the stratification because the classes in the Lektorat are arranged according to department. In Table 5A I show the specific number and percentage of students that were sampled from across the various departments.

*Table 5A      Distribution of students according to department:*

	Count	Table %
Economics	105	15.0%
Law	125	17.9%
Languages	23	3.3%
Maths	37	5.3%
History	51	7.3%
Art	33	4.7%
Physics	38	5.4%
Polish	62	8.9%
Biology	36	5.2%
Pedagogics	72	10.3%
Geography	42	6.0%
Chemistry	74	10.6%

My means of accessing the students in the class was through the co-operation of various teachers. Generally speaking, teachers were happy to co-operate, especially because I demanded their absence from the class. With the teachers absent the students felt more 'at ease' in deciding whether or not to participate. Most students were not only willing to participate, but 'enthusiastic' because of what they believed to be a soft option from normal class.

### 5.4.2 *The support measurement*

*Applying my support measurement to existing measurements:*

The standard definition of democratic support may broadly be expressed as ‘a preference for a democratic system over alternatives’. The specific support measurements do however vary. What follows is a description of the relevant support measurements that have been used by others when analysing post-communist Europe. They refer to the support measurements recorded by:

- Evans and Whitefield.
- The ‘New Democracies Barometer’ (NDB) recorded by the Paul Lazarsfeld Society.
- The support measurements recorded by Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej (CBOS) with respect to Poland.

I will give details of these different measures and explain how my measures mirror each of them.

Evans et al. measured support through evaluating the normative commitment to democratic transition. The question was: “How do you feel about the aim of introducing democracy, in which parties compete in government? Are you a ...strong supporter, supporter, opponent, strong opponent, neither supporter or opponent?”<sup>23</sup> This question stands out in two specific respects. First, the choice of possible answers provide items that are based on a five point scaling system designed to measure the strength of commitment. Second, the support measurement asks whether the citizen favours the transforming of the passing ‘communist’ regime into a democratic alternative. As such, the question targets societies undergoing transition in which the ‘alternative’ order to democracy is the passing order.<sup>24</sup> This is a weakness in the measurement because the ‘alternative’ to democracy targets only the communist past. There are non-communist authoritarian alternatives to democracy which need to be considered in a more complete support measurement.<sup>25</sup>

As part of an on-going longitudinal study, the support measurement recorded in the New Democracies Barometer (NDB) does not suffer from the same weakness. The NDB measurement is accompanied with a further measurement recording support for

the former communist regime, but the democratic support measurement is based on ascertaining whether the democratic system of government is better than ‘all’ alternatives. More specifically, the measurement asks ‘whether the current system of governing with free elections and many parties is best’.<sup>26</sup> The NDB measurement does have a weakness. For statistical purposes the respondents are asked to give a score ranging from +100 to –100 on whether the democratic system is best. This numerical measurement is open to the criticism of being indefinite. The weight that one person attaches to a specific number can hardly be treated as equal to the weight attached by another person.<sup>27</sup>

The CBOS measurement of democratic support is not prone to either of the discussed weaknesses. First, the question format contrasts democracy with ‘all’ non-democratic systems and not only with ‘past’ communism. The measurement is ascertained by asking: ‘Do you agree that democracy has an advantage over alternative types of government?’<sup>28</sup> Second, the measurement recorded by CBOS is not numerical. Instead it offers concrete categories that indicate levels of agreement or disagreement with the given statement. The CBOS measurement can however be criticised on the two aspects of the question format. First, the question describes the political object under analysis directly in terms of ‘democracy’ which is dangerous because ‘democracy’ is a politically loaded term. As in the NDB measurement, it is best to avoid the naked term and describe the political object under analysis in terms of its basic ‘recognisable’ components. Second, the question can be criticised for being misleading because it asks whether democracy has an ‘advantage’ over alternatives. The question intends to ask whether democracy ‘generally’ has more advantages than disadvantages, but the question can also be interpreted as asking whether democracy has ‘advantages’ that accompany ‘disadvantages’.

My own support measurement was designed to mirror the most appropriate features of these three support measurements rather than replicate one specific measurement. First, the support question was designed to measure a preference for democracy over ‘all’ alternatives, and not only ‘communism’. Second, the support question was designed to avoid the usage of the word ‘democracy’ because it is a politically loaded term. These two aims were achieved by asking whether ‘a political system with free elections and many parties is best’. Third, the choice of answers was

ordinal through the usage of a word-format rather than falling into the ambiguities of a numerical scaling system. My measurement recorded levels of agreement with the support statement through a five point scaling system. More specifically, the scaling system separated those who believe that democracy is 'certainly best', 'rather better', 'rather not better', 'certainly not best' and those who 'didn't know' (See Q12.1 in Appendix C for the complete question and answers).

*The categories in the support measurements:*

As Figure 5C shows, the five point scaling system was for purpose of analysis divided into three groups: believers in democracy, non-believers in democracy and those that were undecided about democracy. The first group of believers were supporters of democracy and were themselves divided between 'strong' and 'weak' supporters in democracy. The second group of non-believers were the non-supporters of democracy and were divided between 'strong' and 'weak' non-supporters of democracy. The third group of respondents who were unable to state a belief were categorised as 'undecided'.

*Figure 5C The groupings from the democratic support measurement:*

Believers in democracy (supporters)	a. Definitely best (strong supporter)
	b. Rather better (weak supporter)
Non-believers in democracy (non-supporters)	c. Rather not better (weak non-supporter)
	d. Definitely not best (strong non-supporter)
Undecided	e. Don't know (uncertain)

The democratic support measurement was accompanied with a further measurement of support for an authoritarian system (See Q12.2 in Appendix C). A parallel support measurement for an authoritarian alternative is used in both NDB and CBOS measurements. The particular question was designed to give me the opportunity to investigate the authoritarian orientations of the 'non-believers' in democracy and those that were 'undecided' (See Figure 5D). Therefore, the respondents who were of interest in respect to the authoritarian measurement were limited to those that answered either c, d or e in the democratic support measurement. The results in Appendix C show that the total number in these three classifications was only 143 out of the 698 respondents.

*Figure 5D The groupings from the authoritarian support measurement:*

Non-believers in democracy and the undecided (c, d and e)	- Believers in authoritarianism
	a. definitely best
	b. rather better
	- Non-believers in authoritarianism
	c. rather not better
	d. definitely not best
	e. don't know (uncertain)

#### **5.4.3 The independent variables**

##### *Choice of independent variables:*

In any questionnaire design, the respondent is trapped in that he/she can only test a limited set of variables. How should the selection of such variables be made? Any questionnaire ought to cover the general social and economic variables of interest

in the field. The testing of a wide and more experimental selection of variables depends on the hypotheses of the researcher's interests. As already discussed, I formed my own hypotheses based on the interpretations from the open feedback in the qualitative part of the study. Below I list the independent variables that were tested:

- General social variables including gender, age, size of hometown population and religious orientation (See Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 in Appendix C).
- General wealth variables including 'current family wealth' and the direction of change in the family's 'purchasing power' over the past ten years (See Q7, Q8 and Q9 in Appendix C). The situation of the family was targeted because, as students, the respondents were presumed to be financially dependent on the family.
- Economic benefits including experience of 'foreign travel' and experience of 'entertainment' (See Q5 and Q6 in Appendix C).
- Perceived impact of change on Poland and the future work situation (See Q10, Q11.1 and Q11.2 in Appendix C). The future work situation includes 'future income' and 'future work security'.
- Perceived effectiveness of the current (democratic) regime with respect to 'the economy' and 'law and order' (See Q16.1 and Q16.2 in Appendix C).
- Economic beliefs with respect to 'ownership beliefs' and 'preferred levels of state expenditure' (See Q13 and Q14 in Appendix C).
- Political beliefs with respect to 'preferred distribution of public power across society' (See Q15 in Appendix C).

*Scaling and wording of independent variables:*

Except for a few factual variables, I used a five point scaling system. The resulting multi-dimensionality served several purposes. It provided consistency in question formatting which allowed the items to 'hang together'.<sup>29</sup> The usage of a Likert scale of 'five' points also provided the advantage of having a central 'neutral' position for attitudes and opinions recorded.<sup>30</sup>

The questions that I asked commonly demanded responses to quite general issues such as the perceived effectiveness of democracy and economic beliefs. This was a potential problem because of the danger that the generality of responses would

lead to vagueness.<sup>31</sup> To avoid this danger the general themes were regularly divided into separate parts. For instance, the perceived ‘effectiveness of democracy’ was divided between effectiveness with respect to ‘the economy’ and effectiveness with respect to ‘law and order’. Also, economic beliefs were divided between ‘ownership beliefs’ and ‘preferred levels of state intervention’. A further difficulty raised was that certain questions required the respondent to predict future situations. These questions would not be easy to answer but should have been well within the cognitive abilities of the university students.

In general considerable emphasis was placed in the questionnaire design on creating a simple pattern in both the language and structure of the questions.

#### **5.4.4 Statistical analysis**

In any questionnaire design, the scaling system must be structured so that recorded data can be statistically analysed. This means that the respondent’s choice of answers is limited, but it does mean that the resulting data provides the necessary information for testing the relationships of interest.

Measuring the support relationships was a critical component of this research. With respect to the statistical analysis, calculating the chi-square illustrated the significance of the support relationships and calculating the correlation coefficients illustrated the strength of those relationships. The analysis of the relationships deliberately avoided regression equations as a means of understanding the directional relationship between variables. This was because I decided that the ordinal scaling system used in the questionnaire did not provide the range of answers that were necessary to give the regression equation any significant meaning. Instead, through the usage of multivariate analysis, I analysed the independence of the support relationships. The multivariate analysis provided knowledge on the path of the support relationships and, accordingly, provided a wide explanatory picture of democratic support (See Chapter 10 for the multivariate analysis).

## 5.5 *The structure of analysis*

The complete set of data for each of the separate components of the research is documented in the appendices. Rather than analyse explanations for democratic support in the order of the separate research methods, I present the analysis in a logical sequence. This logical sequence of explanation is outlined in the introduction. In the next five chapters I investigate the nine separate issues. I start in Chapter 6 with an investigation of the importance to democratic support of the explanatory approaches. The next four chapters target the focus of explanation. In Chapter 7 I investigate the support significance of factors related to the belief in democracy as a method of government. Then in Chapter 8 I investigate the support significance of economic factors related to the belief in what democracy is doing/not doing, and in Chapter 9 I investigate the support significance of social and economic associations. Finally, in Chapter 10 I use multivariate analysis to explain ‘how’ the various factors of support importance relate to democratic support.

The structure of my analysis is such that I begin each of the nine issues under investigation with a discussion on the Polish context. I discuss the existing theoretical work and the empirical work on Poland with the purpose of identifying and leading me into the research questions. In effect, these introductory discussions to each of the issues operate as partial overviews of democratic support explanations in Poland.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> R. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research*, London: Sage Publications, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> During the communist period, Polish governments were reluctant to make results public in Poland. Nevertheless, the tradition of sociological research in Poland is deep. For a summary of research conducted in the late 1970s, see G. Mink, "Polls, Pollsters, Public Opinion and Political Power in Poland in the Late 1970s," *Telos*, 47 (1981) 125-132.

<sup>3</sup> M. Polanji, *The Tacit Dimension*, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago, 1967. Important to Polanji's thought is the justification of personalisation in the building of knowledge.

<sup>4</sup> H. M. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London: Sheed and Ward, 1975. Bourdieu argues along the same line of argument in P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory and Practise*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

<sup>5</sup> Bleicher argues against anti-objectivism being taken too far in J. Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as Method, Philosophy and Critique*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.

<sup>6</sup> As Reeve points out, informed consent is ethically more significant when danger is involved. Nevertheless, even when there is an absence of danger, most scientists recognise the ethical responsibility to receive consent from those being researched. C. C. Reeves, *Quantitative Research for the Behavioural Sciences*, New York: Wiley, 1992, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> W. J. Filstead, "Qualitative Methods: A Needed Perspective in Evaluation research," p. 35 in T. Cook and J. S. Reichardt (ed.), *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluation Research*, London: Sage Publications, 1979. The epistemological position has tended to accentuate the cultural relativism of Polanji and Kuhn.

<sup>8</sup> T. Cook and J. S. Reichardt (ed.), *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluation Research*, London: Sage Publications, 1979, p. 23.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> By 'investigation', I mean the process of 'discovery' as opposed to the 'testing' of existing theory. The element of discovery in qualitative research is discussed in M. Grene (ed.), *Knowing and Being: Essays by Michael Polanji*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969.

<sup>11</sup> I follow a more traditional understanding of analysing qualitative data based on the perspective that what is obtained is a break down of the whole into its constituent units, and that the researcher reassembles those parts into understanding the patterns within the 'general' whole.

<sup>12</sup> I use triangulation as a method of checking inference using multiple methods. The assumption is that, by using multiple methods, triangulation can offer a complete picture through both illumination and, simultaneously, validation. Such a perspective is explained further in N. K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*, London: Butterworth, 1970.

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<sup>13</sup> Hammersley and Atkinson have pointed out the danger of adopting a naively optimistic view from data recorded through a process of triangulation. M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, *Ethnology: Principles in Practise*, London: Tavistock, 1983, pp.199-200.

<sup>14</sup> The usage of written material is not commonly used in qualitative research methods. Nevertheless, written material is used for certain purposes and is discussed in I. Hodder, "The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture," in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications, 1994.

<sup>15</sup> Miller A, Hesli V and W. M. Reisinger, Conceptions of Democracy Among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies, *British Journal of Political Science*, 27:2 (1997) 157-190, p.159.

<sup>16</sup> Both open-ended and closed-end responses to the concept of democracy were recorded. J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996). Also, Miller et al. target what respondents across post-Soviet societies understand by the meaning of democracy. Miller A, Hesli V and W. M. Reisinger, Conceptions of Democracy Among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies, *British Journal of Political Science*, 27:2 (1997) 157-190.

<sup>17</sup> J. H. Pammett, "Elections and Democracy in Russia," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 32:1 (1999) 45-60.

<sup>18</sup> I am interested in ascertaining the emotive associations with the symbol of democracy. Following a basically Freudian line of inquiry, the test serves to extract non-analytical emotive responses rather than the discussed 'definition' approach.

<sup>19</sup> My research was not covert, but I was interested in following Reeves' perspective that "...a participant who knows too much of the details of the research might not behave in a natural way." C. C. Reeves, *Quantitative Research for the Behavioural Sciences*, New York: Wiley, 1992, p.43.

<sup>20</sup> Similar methods to the 'free writing exercise' are found in humanist methodology. In particular, the autobiographical ideas of Florian Znaniecki are used as a tool by which to decipher the meanings that people attach to objects. For a more comprehensive understanding of his perspective, see A. Kwilecki and B. Czarnocki (ed.), *The Humanist Sociology of Florian Znaniecki: Polish Period 1920-1939*, Warsaw-Poznan: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1989.

<sup>21</sup> The familiar coding is explained from pages 19 to 22 in J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996).

<sup>22</sup> The stratification was proportioned according to the broad size of the department. Of importance was proportioning the size of the department according to the number of full time students. This was because some departments, most notably 'Law' and 'Economics', contain a disproportionately large number of part-time students, of which many have already graduated from 'other' departments.

<sup>23</sup> The question is quoted in S. Whitefield and G. Evans, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic Commitment - Support for Democracy in Transitional Societies," *British Journal of Political Science*, 25:4 (1995) p.488.

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<sup>24</sup> The understanding of the authoritarian alternative evolves in people's minds according to existing political conditions. When applied to the case of societies under democratic transition, the 'alternative' order is largely perceived in terms of the 'passing' order. However, as the democratic alternative becomes increasingly consolidated, the understanding adjusts to a more loosely defined authoritarian alternative.

<sup>25</sup> Across Central-Eastern Europe the percentage who prefer a strong leader is well in excess of the percentage who prefer to restore a communist regime. For instance, in 1995 16% of Czechs preferred a strong leader which contrasted with only 7% of them preferring the restoration of a communist regime. Similarly, in the same year 35% of Poles preferred a strong leader which contrasted with only 18% of them preferring the restoration of a communist regime. See R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>26</sup> The measurements for the New Democracies Barometers recorded by the Paul Lazarsfeld Society are documented in publications from The Centre of Public Policy at the University of Strathclyde. For a summary of the longitudinal data recorded throughout the 1990s, see R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>27</sup> What concerned me in the usage of numerical scaling is that it necessarily presumes that we all interpret the intensity of numbers 'the same'. For instance, the actual difference between a given number of 30 and a given number of 70 is 40, but the quantity of 40 has no context. Of course, the word-usage can also be criticised for presuming that we all interpret words the same, but the advantage with words is that they have more concrete meanings than ordinal numbers.

<sup>28</sup> Plenty of CBOS reports since 1990 show the support measurement. For a summary of the longitudinal data recorded throughout the 1990s, see CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>29</sup> Allowing items to hang together is recognised as an invaluable means of creating an ordered system of scaling. The issue is further discussed in P. H. Rossi and S. L. Nock (ed.), *Measuring Social Judgements*, Sage Publications: London, 1982.

<sup>30</sup> The advantage of a neutral point in a scaling system is explained in R. Likert, *A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes*, Archive of Psychology, Columbia University Press, 1932.

<sup>31</sup> Payne describes simplicity as a virtue, noting that improperly worded questions are the most frequently mentioned criticism of question designs. According to Payne, questions and statements should be tight and words should be direct without being ambiguous through the usage of abstract concepts. S. L. Payne, *The Art of Asking Questions*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1951.

## *Chapter Six*

### *Democratic Support and the Broad Explanatory Approaches*

#### *Framework to the Chapter*

In this chapter I examine the importance to democratic support of the broad explanatory approaches. In Part 6.2 I analyse the affection for democracy as a word-symbol. Then in Part 6.3 I ascertain whether an affection-based explanation can be treated as separate from an instrumental explanation. This investigation provides a framework to the more specialised investigations in the chapters that follow. However, prior to any of this explanatory analysis, I give details of the support figures found in the survey.

#### *6.1 Support figures from the survey*

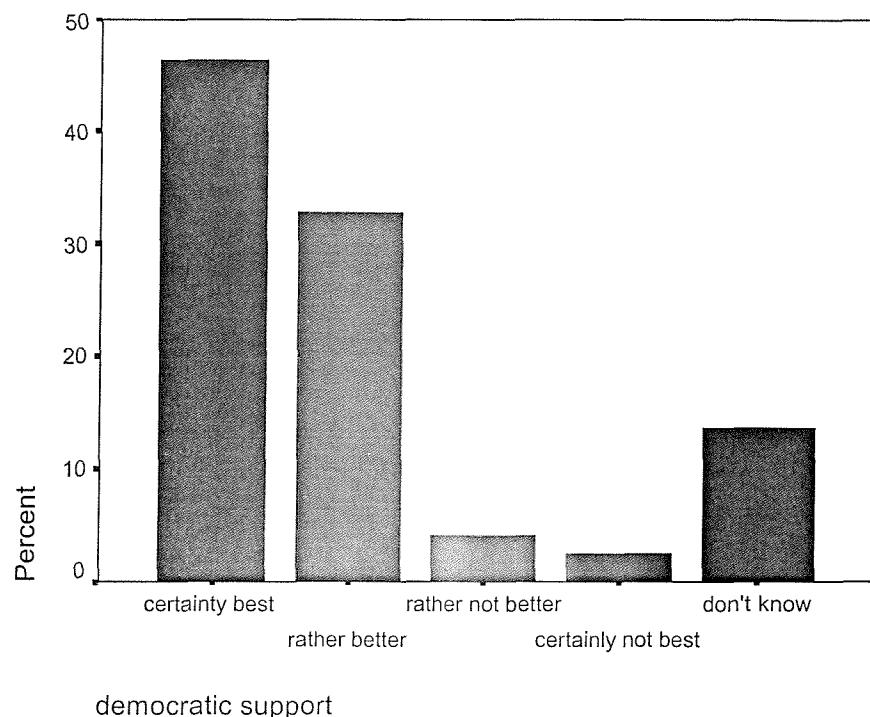
##### *6.1.1 A democratic orientation*

Figure 6A and Table 6A show the support for democracy found in the quantitative investigation. Of the 697 students who responded to the question on support, 79.5% were 'supporters' of democracy. This percentage of supporters can be compared with a national average of 63% from a CBOS survey conducted in December 1997.<sup>1</sup> The data suggests therefore that the group sampled is more favourable to democracy than is an average cross section of Polish society.

Despite the sample group being largely supportive of democracy, there was a significant level of doubt.<sup>2</sup> 53.5% of the total number of respondents were not certain that democracy was best, i.e. not strong supporters. 33% were weak supporters in that they believed democracy to be 'rather better' than alternatives, and 13.8% were 'uncertain' in that they did not know whether democracy is best. The remaining 6.8%

from that percentage were actual non-supporters, i.e. believed that democracy is either 'rather not better' or 'certainly not best'.

*Figure 6A Support for democracy from the survey:*



*Table 6A Support for democracy from the survey:*

		Count	Table %
democratic support	certainty best	324	46.5%
	rather better	230	33.0%
	rather not better	29	4.2%
	certainly not best	18	2.6%
	don't know	96	13.8%

N = 697

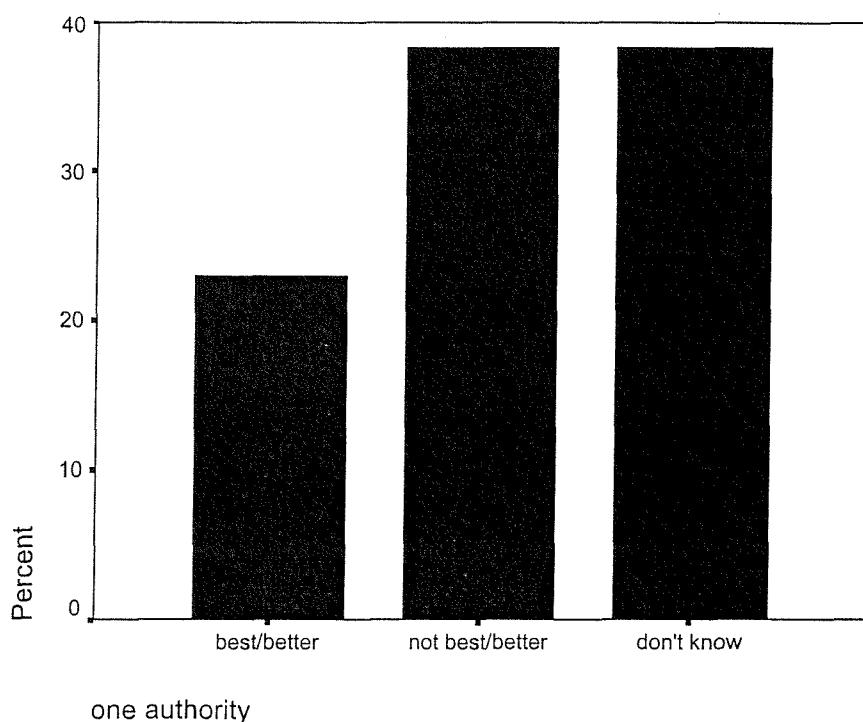
### 6.1.2 *The authoritarian orientation*

Figure 6B and Table 6B show that the level of doubt about democracy does not result in an endorsement of an authoritarian alternative. Of the 143 respondents who



did not state a belief in democracy (including 'don't knows'), under one in four believed in the superiority of an authoritarian system of government. Therefore, less than 5% of all respondents supported an authoritarian alternative with over 15% supporting neither a democratic nor an authoritarian method of government.

*Figure 6B Support for authoritarianism amongst those that did not state a belief in democracy:*



*Table 6B Support for authoritarianism amongst the 'non-supporters' and the 'undecided' about democracy:*

		Count	Table %
belief in one authority	best/better	33	23.1%
	not best/better	55	38.5%
	don't know	55	38.5%

N = 143

The reluctance to endorse an authoritarian method of government was largely to have been expected.<sup>3</sup> As with Polish society in general, those that rejected the superiority of both methods of government outnumbered those that supported an authoritarian method of government.<sup>4</sup> The conclusion that can be drawn is that the sampled group of students may have favoured democracy more than was general in society, but the group shared the same social characteristic of doubt that includes a reluctance to endorse an authoritarian alternative.

## 6.2 Issue 1 – The affection-based explanation

### 6.2.1 Democracy as of ‘right’ related to Poland

Poland, probably more than anywhere else across post-communist Europe, is associated with the argument for the ‘right’ of democracy. The argument is based on the presumption of a deep-rooted ‘principledness’ in Polish society manifesting itself in political terms.<sup>5</sup> At the transfer of power in 1989, it was the Solidarity government that had carried the flag of ‘correctness’. Furthermore, Solidarity embraced democracy as the culturally and morally ‘correct’ form of government for a new Poland.

On what is described as the ‘credo’ of democracy, Stanisław Filipowicz writes that “in Poland, after the year 1989, the democratic solution has been defended with not too much theorising. Certain notions such as *normalcy* or *the rule of law* have become word-symbols representing an absolute truth, they confer a very strong legitimacy.”<sup>6</sup> Democracy is treated by citizens “as a kind of absolute revealed truth...” to which “no critic is admissible”.<sup>7</sup> With a deeply sub-conscious and almost ‘quasi-religious bent’, it is argued that the current democracy carries the weight of legitimacy over alternatives. However, has the new democratic order’s ‘right to be’ not followed a similar fate to that of Solidarity’s moral authority under the burden of transition? Arguably the moral explanation of democratic support should not be taken too far.

### 6.2.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)

The investigation served two aims, both of which required an interpretation of responses from the word association test:

- The first aim was to ascertain the extent of moral affection for democracy. This was achieved by examining the frequency of the moral associations with the word-symbol of democracy.
- The second aim was to ascertain whether the foundations to that moral appeal were comparative. This was achieved by comparing/contrasting the feelings for the word-symbol of democracy with the feelings for the word-symbol of communism.

### ***6.2.3 Results and interpretations***

#### *Moral based affection for democracy:*

The word-symbol of democracy attracted considerable moral affection. Sixty one responses out of a total of two hundred and twenty one were of a moral nature, a ratio of more than one in four of all responses. The moral content was reflected by the use of the words ‘goodness’, ‘fairness’, ‘equality’ etc (See Appendix A). Only two of the relevant sixty one responses were negative. These negative responses were associated with the words ‘unjust’ and ‘unfair’. So, the word-symbol of democracy does significantly appeal being linked with associated concepts that encapsulate a sense of what is right.

#### *The comparative rejection of communism:*

The responses to communism were in stark contrast to those for democracy. Predictably, responses to communism were negative.<sup>8</sup> Only one response from fifty one was ‘not’ negative (See Appendix A). Furthermore, the kind of responses contrasted sharply with those for democracy. Communism was not commonly identified with moral associations. Instead, communism was associated with negative emotions. Of the fifty one ‘affection-based’ responses to communism, twenty one were of a moral/immoral content. The rest largely referred to the basic emotive responses of disgust and rejection, evident in such associations as ‘horrible’, ‘hatred’, ‘awful’ and ‘good-riddance’.

*Wider inference:*

The data supports the belief of Filipowicz that democracy appeals through a moral sense of what is right. The data also illustrates that the symbol of communism lacks appeal and generates feelings of disgust and rejection. Bringing these two findings together, the inference is that the moral right of democracy rebounds off the emotive rejection of the communist past.

These results on the comparative foundation of support gives weight to Rose's assessment that democratic support across the post-communist region is founded on a rejection of the past.<sup>9</sup> There are however important limits to the inference. I may have identified a moral sentiment favouring democracy, but I do not test the support significance. Moreover, as Rose would acknowledge, one cannot conceptually separate moral sentiment from instrumental reasoning.

### **6.3 Issue 2 – The instrumental explanation**

Following the study on moral affection, I now turn towards the instrumental explanation. As already mentioned, this part of the research serves the purpose of ascertaining whether an affection-based explanation of support can be treated as separate from instrumental reasoning.

#### **6.3.1 The instrumental perspective related to Poland**

I defined the instrumental perspective in Chapter 2 as a support explanation based on the understanding of democracy as an instrument for ends' sake. With respect to Poland, the strength of the instrumental argument is that public support for democracy resulted largely from the economic failure of the past (communist) regime. During the past regime, demands for democratisation reflected political tensions that were being activated by economic circumstances. As Montias points out, most political demands were triggered by what were understood as economic violations by the authorities.<sup>10</sup> Also supporting such an argument was a CBOS survey from 1992 showing that 46% of respondents believed that the primary role of the new political system was to bring economic prosperity.<sup>11</sup>

In my study fifteen responses from the word association test stressed the importance of democracy as the most effective system (See Appendix A). These associations included such notions as 'necessary', 'important', 'essential' and 'the only solution'. The number of responses is small in relation to the number of overall responses, but it does indicate that for many people the foundations of democratic support depend on the belief that democracy is the most effective form of government.

### ***6.3.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

The investigation wished to ascertain whether democratic support is related to the belief in the effectiveness of the current (democratic) system. This will help to determine whether any affection-based explanation can be treated as separate from instrumental reasoning. The aim was achieved by statistically testing the strength of the relationship between democratic support and the belief in the current (democratic) system's comparative effectiveness.

I divided measurements of the perceived effectiveness into two parts:

- The primary measurement was designed to test the support significance of the belief in 'economic effectiveness' (See Q16.1 in Appendix C).
- The other measurement was designed to test the support significance of the belief in 'law and order effectiveness' (See Q16.2 in Appendix C). The interest in this alternative variable is because the rising crime rates have led to concern over the system's inability to cope with a breakdown in law and order. In 1995 in Poland 57% of those responding to a CBOS poll felt more threatened by crime in a democratic country rather than in a non-democratic country. In contrast, only 23% felt safer in a democratic country.<sup>12</sup>

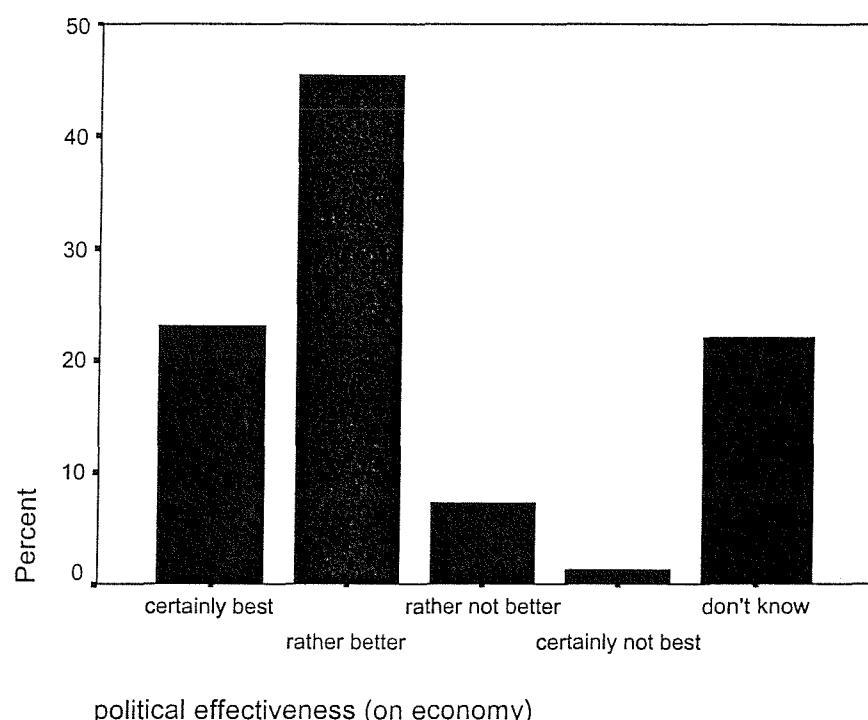
### ***6.3.3 Results and interpretations***

The results and the interpretation of the results are divided into two parts. I begin with an analysis of the support significance of the belief in 'economic effectiveness'. Then I compare the support significance of 'economic' effectiveness with that of 'law and order' effectiveness.

*The importance of 'economic effectiveness':*

Figure 6C illustrates the widespread belief that the current democracy in Poland is economically effective. In total over two thirds of all respondents looked favourable at the economic effectiveness of the current democracy ('certainly best' and 'rather better'). Furthermore, most of the other one third were not negative but, rather, undecided. 22.2% of the total responses were undecided, and only 8.9% were negative ('certainly not best' and 'rather not best').

*Figure 6C Belief in the 'economic effectiveness' of the current democracy:*



How does this data relate to democratic support? As the cross-tabulation in Table 6C illustrates, supporters of democracy were by far the most likely to believe in the economic effectiveness of the current democracy. The percentage of those who believed that democracy was 'certainly best' for economic effectiveness who were strong/certain supporters of democracy was 85.2%. In contrast, the percentage of strong/certain supporters of democracy who were not positive about economic

effectiveness was only 19.4%. Accordingly, the chi-square test illustrates a high level of significance. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient was strong at .52.

*Table 6C Relationship between 'democratic support' and belief in 'economic effectiveness':*

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
effect on economy	certainly best	138	85.2%	20	12.3%	4	2.5%
	rather better	143	45.1%	136	42.9%	38	12.0%
	other	42	19.4%	74	34.1%	101	46.5%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	225.67	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's Rho	.52	.03	<.001

N = 696

The significance of the relationship should not be exaggerated. Though strong, the belief in economic effectiveness is not a pre-condition of support. Indeed, of the grouping who were not positive about economic effectiveness, 53.5% still favoured a democracy (See 19.4% + 34.1% from the category labelled 'other'). Yet, somewhat revealing is that approximately two thirds of this percentage were not certain about democracy, i.e. were not strong supporters. The data therefore suggests that a lack of belief in the economic effectiveness of the current economy relates to a weaker conviction in democracy.

*'Economic effectiveness' and 'law and order effectiveness' compared:*

It was found that a belief in 'law and order effectiveness' somewhat reflected a belief in 'economic effectiveness'. This could be expected because the effectiveness of any political system will be conceived in general as well as in specific terms. Nevertheless, important differences were evident.

First, the widespread social concern over crime meant that there was a weaker belief in 'law and order effectiveness' than in 'economic effectiveness' (See Figure 6D). The majority did believe in the current system's superiority in dealing with law and order, but that majority was limited to 53.6% (See 'certainly best' and 'rather best'). Also, only 15.5% of those sampled were 'certain' of its effectiveness. Furthermore, 25.2% of the total number of responses were negative about 'law and order effectiveness' which contrasted with only 8.9% who had been negative about 'economic effectiveness' (Compare 'rather not better' and 'certainly not best' in Figures 6C and 6D).

*Figure 6D Belief in 'law and order' effectiveness of the current regime:*

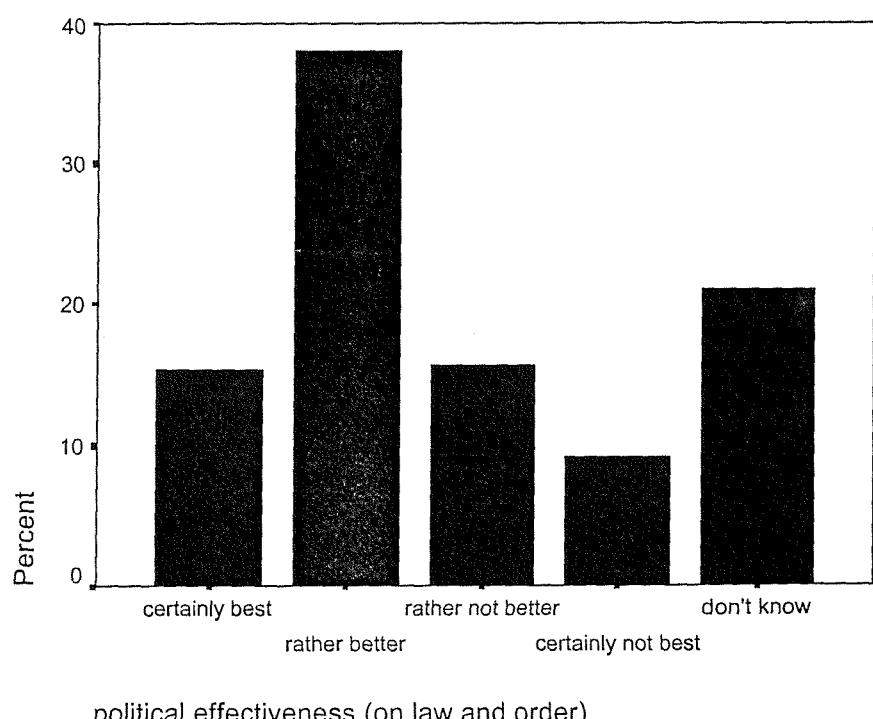


Table 6D      Relationship between democratic support and belief in 'law and order effectiveness':

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
effect on law-order	certainly best	94	87.9%	10	9.3%	3	2.8%
	rather better	147	55.3%	96	36.1%	23	8.6%
	other	81	25.2%	124	38.5%	117	36.3%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	171.06	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's Rho	.47	.03	< .001

N = 695

The second important difference is that 'law and order effectiveness' is a less significant support factor than 'economic effectiveness'. The relationship between 'law and order effectiveness' and 'democratic support' is not weak. The chi-square test illustrates that there was a high level of significance, and the correlation coefficient was strong at .47 (See Table 6D). However, it was belief in economic effectiveness that emerged with the strongest of the two support relationships. The correlation coefficient for 'economic effectiveness' was .52 which, though not too dissimilar, was higher than the coefficient of .47 with respect to 'law and order effectiveness'. Furthermore, these two variables were at different levels of independence when related to democratic support through partial correlation analysis. When controlling for 'law and order effectiveness', the coefficient between 'democratic support' and 'economic effectiveness' fell to only .37 (See Table 6E). In contrast, when controlling for

‘economic effectiveness’, the coefficient between ‘democratic support’ and ‘law and order effectiveness’ fell to .27 (See Table 6F).

*Table 6E Partial correlation showing the relationship between ‘democratic support’ and ‘economic effectiveness’ (controlling for ‘law and order effectiveness’):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variable)	Level of sig. (with control variable)
Correlation	.52	.37	<.001

N = 692

*Table 6F Partial correlation showing the relationship between ‘democratic support’ and ‘law and order effectiveness’ (controlling for ‘economic effectiveness’):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variable)	Level of sig. (with control variable)
Correlation	.47	.27	<.001

N = 692

*Final inference:*

The analysis shows that belief in ‘economic effectiveness’ is not only a highly significant support factor, but also a support factor that is of greater significance than belief in ‘law and order effectiveness’. This indicates that belief in the economic output of the current democratic system has been a critical support factor over the decade. Widespread moral affection for democracy may be present, but democratic support for this reason is difficult to separate from an instrumental belief that the current democratic system is the best for the economy.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

In the first part of this chapter I report on the finding that, as expected, the sample group favoured democracy more than the average for Poland. The group also shared the characteristic of doubt that exists in society, which includes the reluctance to endorse an authoritarian alternative. I investigated the broad explanatory approaches for democratic support with the purpose of providing a framework for the more specialised investigations that are reported in later chapters. Data reported in Part 6.2 supported Filipowicz's argument that the symbol of democracy appeals through a moral sense of what is right. I found that the sentiment to the appeal of democracy was largely reactionary. Therefore, the implication is that the strength of affection depends on a relatively recent reaction against a despised regime rather than a deeply imbedded cultural appreciation of democracy.

The findings discussed in Part 6.3 showed that any affection-based explanation of support is difficult to separate from an instrumental belief that the current democratic system is the most effective system available. This was particularly the case with respect to a belief in 'economic effectiveness' of the current democracy. In the next chapter I consider the focus of explanation.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> In the CBOS survey from December 1997, 16% rejected the statement that democracy was best/better with a further 21% 'not knowing'. CBOS, "Społeczna Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> The lack of support for an authoritarian alternative in part relates to the rejection of the communist past. However, the authoritarian alternative need not be interpreted as support for the past communist regime.

<sup>4</sup> Data recorded in 1998 showed that, in terms of specific alternatives to the existing democracy, 15% agreed that communism was preferable to democracy. Only 4% believed the old system was 'good' with 32% believing that it was tolerable but with faults. This is somewhat paralleled by data showing the trajectories of support for past versus present systems. See R. Rose and W. Mishler, *5 Years After the Fall: Trajectories of Support of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 298 (1998). The 'limited' support for a communist alternative can be compared with 6% that agreed to a military regime and 4% that agreed to a 'return' to a monarchy. Data is documented in R. Rose and W. Mishler, *A 12-Nation Survey*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 306 (1998).

<sup>5</sup> Under the moral influences of the Catholic Church and a political history dominated by an aspiration for self-determination, the mind-set is argued to be in terms of 'political principles'. Podgóreczki argues that the principles are inherited from the attitudes of the mobility towards sovereignty, and that they are constantly being regenerated through the Catholic Church. See Chapter 4 in A. Podgóreczki, *Polish Society*, Westport: Praeger, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> S. Filipowicz, "Democratic Legitimacy in a Historical Perspective – Concepts and Approaches for Research", p.60 in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Problems in Legitimacy in Eastern Europe*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.61.

<sup>8</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 4, communism was not well supported in Poland. Furthermore, of some relevance is that attitudes towards communism have been shown to become increasingly negative amongst younger generations. See R. Rose., *Generational Effects on Attitudes to Communist Regimes: A Comparative Analysis*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 234 (1994).

<sup>9</sup> Rose may stress the importance to democratic support of the rejection of the communist past, but Rose is also rational in his outlook. Affection for democracy may be present in the rejection of the past, but Rose does not argue that democratic support is built on affection.

<sup>10</sup> Montias stresses the importance of economic factors for sparking political tensions. J. M. Montias, "Economic Conditions and Political Instability in Communist Countries," *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 13:4 (1980) 283-299. For a more detailed look at how consumer dissatisfaction became ignited in 1970 and 1976 by 'unexpected' increases in prices of goods, see B. Mieczkowski, "The

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Relationship Between Changes in Consumption and Politics in Poland," *Soviet Studies*, 30:2 (1978) 262-269. Also relevant is the work of the historian Bronisław Geremek who observes that the rhythm of political crises in Poland unavoidably "brings to mind certain periodic economic fluctuations". See B. Geremek, "Between Hope and Despair," *Daedalus*, 119:1 (1990) 107.

<sup>11</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Akceptacja Idei Demokracji," No. 925, Warsaw, 1992.

<sup>12</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995. Both violent and non-violent crime has increased in Poland since the change of power. The increase in non-violent crime is in some part related to more goods now being available for theft, but the increase in violent crime is less easily explained. With respect to social perceptions, it is possible that the extent of the rise in violent crime is being exaggerated. Now that a free media exists, which thrives on reporting crime, people feel more insecure.

## *Chapter Seven*

### *The Importance of Democracy* *‘For What it is’*

#### **7.1 Introduction (the problem with dissatisfaction)**

Does democratic support depend on the understanding of democracy ‘for what it is’? The problem that must be immediately faced is the need to explain how the strong sense of dissatisfaction with the functioning of the current democracy can coincide with support. The percentage of those satisfied with the current democracy in Poland has never exceeded half of those sampled in CBOS surveys. Also, as explained in Part 4.1.3, despite fluctuations over time there has been no indication of a lasting move towards greater satisfaction. Dissatisfaction was at its peak in 1995 when the percentage was recorded at 67%, a percentage almost reached again in 1999 when it was 62%.<sup>1</sup> In 1997 only 3% believed that democracy was functioning well and without need for change, which was a rise from 1% recorded in July 1993.<sup>2</sup>

Dissatisfaction with the functioning of the system is not a reason to dispel the support significance of a belief in democracy ‘for what it is’. The current democracy may be frustrating under specific political and economic circumstances, but a belief in the system can sustain support. In Part 7.2 I investigate the belief in what the current system ‘will become’, i.e. a political hope factor. Then I investigate the belief in democratic power structures. In Part 7.3 I look at the belief in the ‘role of the citizen’ in democracy, and in Part 7.4 I look at the belief in pluralistic power arrangements.

#### **7.2 Issue 3 – Democracy for what it will become**

##### **7.2.1 Hope for democracy in Poland**

Kolarska-Bobińska has suggested that democratic support in Poland is based on the widespread belief that the condition of the current democracy will improve.<sup>3</sup> Data

from the mid 1990s did justify such an opinion. In 1995 84% approved of the ‘future’ (democratic) system which contrasted with 69% that approved of the ‘current’ system.<sup>4</sup> The difference between the approval of the ‘future’ and of the ‘current’ systems has since narrowed with 72% in 1998 approving of the ‘future’ system. This suggests that in the latter part of the 1990s the citizens largely came to recognise that the ‘current’ system was here to stay and, if so, then the ‘political hope factor’ was not of such importance.

### ***7.2.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

Findings from my study indicate that ‘communism’ is generally understood as over. ‘Defeated’ and ‘fallen’ were responses to the word-symbol of ‘communism’ (See Appendix A). So, what of the identity of the current system? In this investigation I ascertain whether the current system is understood as a ‘complete’, ‘false’ or ‘incomplete’ democracy. If understood as ‘complete’, then support cannot be founded on the belief in what Polish democracy ‘will become’. If understood as ‘false’, then support can not be founded on what democracy ‘will become’ because the implication is that the credentials of the democratic system are rejected. However, if understood as an ‘incomplete’ democracy, then support can be founded on what democracy ‘will become’ because the implication is that the current system has possibilities not yet realised. Therefore, only through the widespread perception of an ‘incomplete’ democracy can ‘hope’ be accepted as a potentially significant support factor.

### ***7.2.3 Results and interpretations***

#### *Ambiguous responses to the question of ‘complete’ democracy:*

The number of direct responses that referred to the current political system as a ‘complete’ democracy were limited. From the free writing exercise one response stated that “democracy is booming!” (See Appendix B). Also, a few responses associated the word-symbol of democracy to notions such as ‘here’ (See Appendix A). The limited number of responses does not however suggest that the current political system is

rejected as a ‘complete’ democracy. This is because there is a problem in that a large number of responses, although not explicitly referring to the current system as a complete democracy, may well have presumed this to be the case.

*The perception of an ‘incomplete’ democracy:*

A set of responses referred to an ‘incomplete’ democracy. Six responses associated the word-symbol of democracy to notions such as ‘elusive’ and ‘difficult to make work’ (See Appendix A). Also, from the free writing exercise two responses firmly stated that the current democracy has some way to go before being labelled as a complete democracy (See Appendix B). One respondent stated:

“As far as present Polish conditions are concerned, we still need a lot of time and lots of changes before we can say there is democracy in Poland.”

So, the implication from these responses is that ‘hope’ might still be a support factor. The importance of a hope factor should not however be overstated. First, the number of responses referring to the ‘incompleteness’ of democracy was small. Second, there was the widespread perception of ‘false’ democracy.

*The perception of ‘false’ as opposed to ‘incomplete’ democracy:*

One response from the free writing exercise described the current democratic system in Poland as like an ‘artificial monster’:

“My personal opinion is that what is called ‘democracy’ in Poland is not a real democracy, but an artificial monster allowing a part of our community to be in a position that they do not deserve to be in.”

A total of sixteen responses associated the word-symbol of democracy to a ‘falsity’. Included in this category of responses were words such as ‘utopian’, ‘fairy tale like’

and ‘artificial’. Overall the responses pointed to the perception of ‘false’ democracy being significantly more widespread than the perception of ‘incomplete’ democracy.

The widespread perception of ‘false’ democracy that I have identified in my research is reflected in CBOS surveys. These surveys have shown that a significant percentage of Poles have not accepted the credentials of the current democratic system. Even following the introduction of a new constitution in 1997, a significant minority of 35% believed that the current regime was closer to a non-democracy.<sup>5</sup> The percentage of those who believed that the regime was non-democratic barely changed over the constitutional and structural changes of the 1990s. In 1993 39% of respondents believed that the regime was closer to a non-democracy.<sup>6</sup>

*Final inference:*

A certain level of caution has to be exercised when interpreting the data from this part of the study. There were a limited number of responses that referred to this issue. Nevertheless, from that number only a few indicated the perception of an ‘incomplete’ democracy. Instead the current political system was largely perceived as either ‘complete’ or ‘false’ and, therefore, the current political system was largely perceived as the system that is here to stay. As a result, I infer that there is no strong evidence to indicate that democratic support significantly depends on a ‘political hope factor’.

### **7.3 Issue 4 – ‘Power to the people’ as a support explanation**

This section of the analysis is interested in evaluating whether democratic support has been based on a widespread belief in public ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’. If democratic support has been founded on such belief, then two presumptions must be made. First, the practise of democracy must be understood by the public as approximating to ideas of public ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’. Second, this political role for the public must be valued enough by them to be a support factor. Below is an evaluation of the two presumptions as they relate to Poland. This is followed by the empirical investigation which is divided into three parts.

### 7.3.1 ‘Power to the people’ related to Poland

*The public role in democracy and feelings of powerlessness:*

In Poland there are problems with the presumption that democracy is associated with public ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’. First, limits to the conceptual understanding of democracy need to be acknowledged. In Poland there has been a weak conceptual link between democracy and the political role of the public. In a survey conducted in the early 1990s it was found that only 7% of sampled Poles associated democracy primarily with public participation.<sup>7</sup> Second, even when the democratic system of government is conceptually linked to the idea of public participation and empowerment, there is the widespread perception of ‘powerlessness’ under the practise of the current (democratic) system. In a CBOS poll from 1993 83% agreed with the statement that ‘ordinary people have no influence on public decision making at all’.<sup>8</sup> In this section I discuss this widespread perception of powerlessness and its support implications. First I consider issues related to ‘internal efficacy’ (public participation in the political process). Then I discuss issues related to ‘external efficacy’ (elite responsiveness to public participation).

Perceptions of ‘internal efficacy’ under the current political system have been damaged by Poles’ tradition of conceiving participation in ‘collective’ terms.<sup>9</sup> Multiple parties may have been present in the Sejm in the 1980s, but the practice was hardly that of an openly, competitive parliamentary system. So, following transition the components of a highly competitive system of participation were not expected. The reality of competitive democracy had to become distinguished from the collective expectations. Nevertheless, the indications are that the Poles are becoming increasingly positive about the participatory role of the citizenry in the current system. By 1998 78% believed that the new political system is ‘better than alternatives at allowing each person to decide whether or not to take an active interest in politics’. Only 2% thought it worse.<sup>10</sup> Despite low electoral turnouts, the vast majority of the citizenry have consistently believed that voting is an important function of democracy. Only 14% rejected the importance of the 1993 Parliamentary elections to the functioning of democracy.<sup>11</sup> The valuing of Presidential elections is even more pronounced with 89%

believing that the Presidential election of 1990 was of importance and 91% believing that the Presidential election of 1995 was of importance.<sup>12</sup>

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, ‘participation’ is not enough to provide ‘empowerment’. For effective power, the elite must be sensitive/responsive to public participation. In Poland during the 1990s the feeling of powerlessness has been explained by the widespread social perception of an insensitive elite, i.e. in terms of ‘external efficacy’. There is a widespread distrust of politicians.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, deriving from a historically rooted sense of alienation from those in power, Polish society can be described as having an ‘us and them’ mentality.<sup>14</sup> Together, both distrust and alienation have arguably resulted in the widespread perception of a top-heavy articulation of interests within the current pluralistic structure. For Szklarski, interests being represented in the public sphere are perceived as “more of a playground of special interests rather than a field where diverse interests compete.”<sup>15</sup> The problem is not related to the pluralistic form of democracy but to the feeling that one set of political leaders have been replaced by another.<sup>16</sup>

Plenty of evidence supports the view that feelings of powerlessness are related to ‘external efficacy’. In 1992 a CBOS survey showed that 87% of Poles agreed with the statement that ‘elected MPs quickly lose touch with those that they are supposed to represent’. In the same survey 76% agreed with the statement that ‘politicians don’t show an interest in people like me’ and 73% agreed that ‘politicians only think of their own well being and private profits’.<sup>17</sup> Such perceptions have had a direct effect on levels of dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy. In 1993 as many as 56% of those dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy blamed their dissatisfaction on ‘the government’s lack of sensitivity towards the ideas of ordinary people’.<sup>18</sup>

Such perceptions of insensitivity are, of course, directed at the politicians own behaviour and not the political system. However, the widespread perception of insensitivity has had a damaging effect on the understanding of the development of democracy because the public expectation is one of misrepresentation. Democracy may be recognised as offering better opportunities for participation, but such participation will be understood as ineffective if the politicians are not responsive. In the case of Poland, a broad distrust of the political players has led to a reluctance to identify with the new representative structures. Most obviously, there has been an

almost pathetically low party identification in Poland. Though negative party identification is a phenomenon across post-communist Europe, in Poland the negativity has been particularly pronounced. For instance, in 1995 only 18% possessed a ‘positive’ identification with particular political parties. This was in stark contrast to 90% who possessed a ‘negative’ identification with particular parties.<sup>19</sup>

The political players themselves must take considerable responsibility for the citizens’ inability to identify with representative structures because it is they who promote/develop the system. A certain sympathy may be felt for the politicians because they were confronted with a unique set of difficulties. As Pańkow points out, the politicians were themselves insecure about their own role because things happened so fast.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, the behaviour of the political players has been criticised for being ‘inappropriate’ for the development of the party system and, also, for being ‘irresponsible’. Directly following the hand-over of power, the fragmentation of Solidarity alienated citizens from the new set of elite. In the 1991 parliamentary elections the winning Democratic Union collected only 12.3% of votes, approximately 6% of those eligible to vote. This was the result of both a low turnout and a choice from no less than 67 parties. Since the early 1990s the party system has remained loose. In 1998 Anderson showed that Poland had the least electoral proportionality and the most electoral volatility from nineteen sampled Western and Central European democracies.<sup>21</sup> Such findings lead Legutko to directly blame the elite because, by serving only personal needs, they have reacted like ‘homeless nomads’ to the new party structure.<sup>22</sup>

#### *The valuing of the public role in democracy:*

I have identified clear weaknesses with the presumption that democracy is associated with public ‘participation’ and, especially, ‘empowerment’. Now I identify weaknesses in the presumption that the public role is valued enough to be a support factor. The cultural stress on Poland as a nation who have longed for political empowerment is somewhat fuzzy. One reason for this is the paradox of the inter-war experience in which a democratic parliament was both unpopular and, eventually, subordinated under a Piłsudski led Sanacja regime. Furthermore, there has been a

considerable strain of authoritarianism prevalent in Polish society that has been empirically documented since the 1970s.<sup>23</sup> Also well documented, however, has been the shift during the 1970s and 1980s towards favouring democratic ideas. Frustrated about the absence from public life, attitudes increasingly favoured an empowered role for the citizenry.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, the on-going shift towards favouring a political role for the citizenry was interpreted as a sign that a political society was waiting to be activated in the post-communist era. As Lena Kolarska-Bobińska writes, “During this period it was generally assumed that every citizen wanted to actively shape the world surrounding him and participate in public life”.<sup>25</sup> The presumption proved far too simplistic.

In the early 1990s there was a significant trend away from political activism.<sup>26</sup> Probably the best evidence of this was the 1991 parliamentary elections when only 43% bothered to vote. As a consequence, the cultural presumption that public ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’ had become ‘deeply’ valued in Polish society has been modified. Most notably, there is a wide recognition that instrumental reasoning ‘in part’ explains the value shift of the 1970s and 1980s. In that period, citizens increasingly felt that economic change was only possible with accompanying power to remove the existing elite.<sup>27</sup> Once removed, the interest in political life became more distant. Moreover, accompanying the withdrawal from public life in the 1990s has been evidence showing that a political role for the citizenry is not highly valued. In a CBOS survey from 1996 only 13% of respondents defined ‘good power’ as ‘democratic’.<sup>28</sup> Also, throughout much of the 1990’s over 40% of citizens in CBOS surveys agreed with the statement that ‘living under a democracy is not important to them’.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, the belief in a nation that had longed to become part of a participatory democracy has become little more than part of the myth behind Polish civil society.<sup>30</sup>

### **7.3.2 *The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

The results of the empirical investigation are divided into three parts which are collectively designed to construct a coherent picture of the political role of the citizenry as a support explanation. More specifically:

- The first part concentrates on issues of internal efficacy (See Part 7.3.3). It primarily serves the aim of ascertaining the extent to which the appeal of the

current democracy is founded on an association with public input/participation. A further aim is to ascertain the type of participation envisaged by the respondents. These aims were achieved through an interpretation of responses from both of the qualitative research exercises.

- As already mentioned, public ‘participation’ does not necessarily result in ‘empowerment’. For effective power the political elite must be sensitive/responsive to public participation (external efficacy). Therefore, the second part concentrates on perceptions of external efficacy (See Part 7.3.4). As with the first part, this was achieved through an interpretation of responses from both qualitative research exercises.
- The first two parts serve the purpose of ascertaining the strength of the association between public empowerment and the current democracy. As already mentioned, public empowerment must also be valued if it is to be a support factor. The third part therefore involved testing the importance to democratic support of a belief in public empowerment (See Part 7.3.5). This was achieved through testing the support significance of a research variable from the questionnaire.

*The interest of a sympathetic sampling group:*

No political scientist would propose that a belief in the public role would be the only support explanation; but a set of university students is a grouping that might be expected to be particularly sympathetic to the role of the citizen. First, it has been argued that educated respondents have a greater awareness and sympathy than most for the idea of public ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’. This argument cannot be taken too far. Education may widen perspectives, but it also provides a more critical framework for an understanding of the world.<sup>31</sup> Second, Ziolkowski has argued that, despite the prevalent ‘materialism’ in Polish society, there is the continued presence of post-material values across the young generation.<sup>32</sup>

### *7.3.3 Results and interpretations (on internal efficacy)*

#### *Collective/national empowerment:*

Three responses from the free writing exercise referred to collective/national empowerment. This came as little surprise when recognising the deeply ingrained sense of Polish community.<sup>33</sup> As one student enthusiastically put it:

“We no longer depend on the Soviet Union. We are a free country and no one tells us what to do. If we are in trouble, we can only blame ourselves. ...we have our own opinions and do what we think is right.”

#### *Participation as an appealing but limited feature of democracy:*

Eight responses from the free writing exercise directly referred to the participatory role of the citizenry in the current political system (See Appendix B). All eight responses were positive, hence one can conclude that the participatory role of the citizenry is a particularly appealing feature of democracy. Of course, the sampling group does not represent a nation, but these positive responses do reflect the generally favourable view in Polish society on an active political role for the citizenry. The findings indicate that the current (democratic) system is being associated with opportunities for participation.

Despite the indication that public participation is an appealing feature of the current system, the number of responses that referred to this issue was limited. A total of eight responses is less than one in seven of all relevant responses from the free writing exercise (a total of sixty one responses were recorded from the exercise). The ratio of responses that referred to public participation from the word association test was even smaller than that from the free writing exercise. In the word association test only seven from over two hundred responses associated the word-symbol of democracy with the political role of the citizenry. These responses were largely comprised of loose associations referring to ‘people power’ (See Appendix A). Of interest is that no responses associated the word-symbol of communism to any shortage of public participation. In fact, responses to communism were almost totally referring to ‘output’

associations. To conclude the findings indicate that public participation is an appealing feature of democracy, but that the extent of the appeal is limited in number.

*The type of participation envisaged:*

Despite the limited number of relevant responses, the data indicated the type of public participation envisaged by the respondents. From the eight relevant responses in the free writing exercise, three suggested a delegative role by referring to the power to choose the set of elite. Responses to the word-symbol of democracy included 'we choose politicians' and 'truly free elections'.

The majority of the relevant responses indicated a broader political role for the public. Two responses from the free writing exercise referred to the representative role with respect to being able to "...find a party that suits their political views". The majority of the relevant responses referred to a wider participatory role. A total of five responses from the free writing exercise directly referred to a kind of on-going participation. Concentrating on the pluralistic party mechanism, one student wrote:

"People have the opportunity to belong to any political party which represents their own ideas or opinions."

With respect to political society, another respondent wrote:

"There is freedom of speech, religion and political views. It means a lot for those who felt somehow limited by the previous system. They can express their attitudes in public and belong to any political party they want to."

The results of the study indicate that the type of participatory role envisaged under the current democracy is mainly in terms of a wider participatory style of democracy.

*Wider inference:*

My interest has been to investigate the association between the current democracy and public participation. What I have found is that the current democratic system is understood as providing a political role for the citizenry and that, amongst those who referred to the subject, this role is unanimously appealing. Furthermore, I have found that the participatory role envisaged by the sample group is relatively sophisticated. Amongst an educated group, the young democracy is understood as providing a wide participatory role for the citizenry.

Despite these positive and relatively sophisticated associations, I have also found that the extent of the appeal in 'public participation' is limited. As with research from the early 1990s, only a small percentage of respondents primarily associated democracy with participation.<sup>34</sup> I return to the issue of the significance that can be attached to the results because of the limited data when discussing the support relationship in Part 7.3.5. Before that I examine the issue of the perceptions of the sensitivity of the political elite.

#### **7.3.4 Results and interpretations (on external efficacy)**

*Perceptions of an insensitive elite:*

Few responses referred to the current elite as 'more' sensitive to citizens' wants than those from the past regime (See Appendix B). As one respondent wrote:

"Politicians have changed a lot. They have become more representative in regard to both their look and overall behaviour. Polish politicians, at least some of them, are better educated, use better Polish and some can even speak a foreign language."

Over twice as many respondents however referred to the current elite as insensitive to citizens' wants. These negative perceptions were largely of an elite that is more interested in serving personal interests than representing citizens. One association to

the word-symbol of democracy was ‘selfish leaders’. Similarly, as one respondent from the free writing exercise wrote:

“Once they are in office, only one aim is to be achieved: to become rich, powerful and influential as soon as possible.”

Similar views were expressed by another respondent:

“They earn ten or fifteen times more than people I know, despite often being more stupid than me. What allows them to be respected is their expensive clothes, cars and good perfumes. It is enough to listen to their senseless speeches in parliament to call them uneducated, if not stupid.”

#### *Explaining perceptions of ‘insensitivity’:*

These perceptions of elite insensitivity largely concentrate on the self serving character of the current elite. This perception might in part be the result of deep political conflicts on show in a society not accustomed to a competitive form of politics (See Part 7.4.1 for a discussion). However, this explanation cannot be separated from the widespread distrust and alienation in Polish society. The perceived insensitivity is largely a continuation of negative attitudes towards the ruling elite. All of the responses to the word-symbol of ‘communism’ that referred to the elite were negative. They included such associations as ‘patronising’ and ‘deceitful’ (See Appendix A). So, perceptions of insensitivity under the current democracy may be widespread but, as one respondent put it:

“It is like history repeating itself and nothing can be done about it.”

*Wider inference:*

These findings show a weakness in the association between public 'empowerment' and the current democracy. The democratic method of government may be understood as providing opportunities for public 'participation', but the political elite are not broadly recognised as responsive to such participation. Rather, as Szklarski has argued, the perception is of political players whose special interests compete in relative isolation from wider society. As a result of my analysis I infer that the current democracy is not widely understood as providing 'effective' empowerment.

### ***7.3.5 Results and interpretations (on the support relationship)***

My analysis has led to the conclusion that, despite providing opportunities for participation, the 'practice' of the current democracy is not understood as providing 'effective' empowerment. Nevertheless, democratic support might not depend on the 'practice' but on valuing the idea of public empowerment.

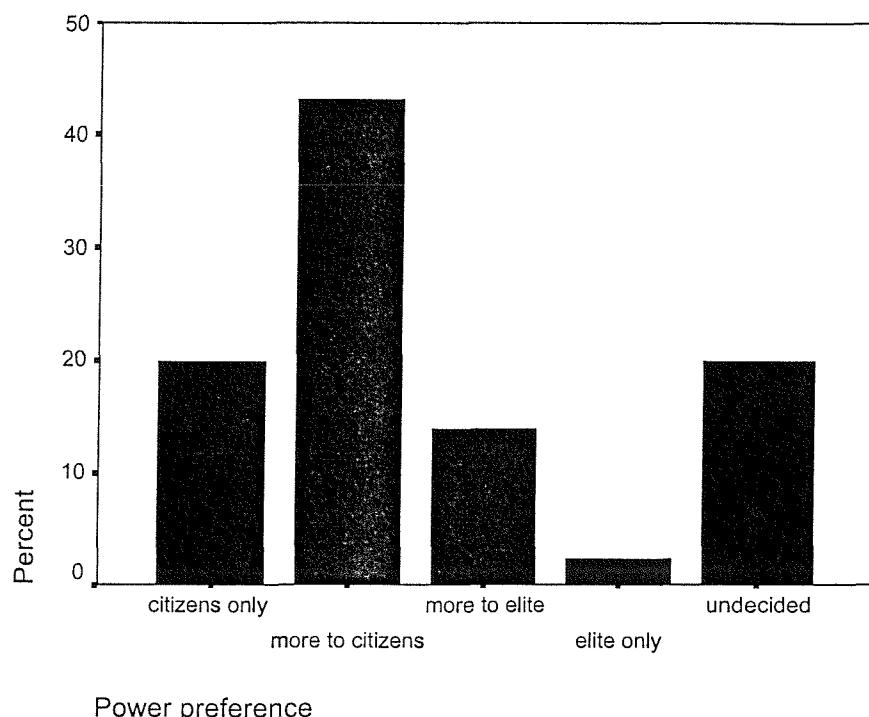
In this final part of the investigation on Issue 4, I statistically test whether the idea of public empowerment is valued enough to influence democratic support. The question format that I used was designed to reflect the type of political role most commonly envisaged by the respondents (See Part 7.2.3). The role envisaged was seen mainly in terms of a wide participatory role for the citizenry. This indicated that the conception was in terms of a democracy in which citizens can directly shape decision making. Therefore, answers would allow me to ascertain respondents' level of orientation towards a 'direct' form of democracy (See Q15 in Appendix C). The question was unavoidably in quite general terms, but the answers allowed me to measure the basic 'power preferences' and relate them to democratic support.

*The 'appeal' of public empowerment:*

Figure 7A illustrates that respondents' power preference was generally in favour of more political control by the citizenry than by elite. This 'democratic' orientation was to be expected. The answers however did indicate caution about providing the citizenry with 'complete' control over the decision making process (See

Figure 7A). 43.5% favoured 'more' power to the citizenry which contrasted with 20% who favoured 'complete' power to the citizenry. Also, as with support for democracy, there was a significant percentage who were undecided. 20% of the total were undecided with the remaining 16.5% favouring control by elite, i.e. 'more to elite' and 'elite only'.

*Figure 7A Belief in public empowerment:*



*An appeal unrelated to democratic support:*

What is the relationship between 'power preference' and 'democratic support'? The cross tabulations in Table 7A show that those favouring control by the citizenry were no more likely to be democratic supporters than those favouring control by elite. The slight relationship that was evident contradicted the 'logical' expectation. 42.4% of those who believed in 'complete power to the citizenry' were 'strong/certain supporters of democracy', whereas 50.4% of those who believed in 'more/complete

power to elite' were 'strong/certain supporters of democracy'. Despite a low level of significance, the correlation coefficient was actually negative at -.05.

This slightly negative correlation came as something of a surprise. One psychological explanation might be that those who tend to be the most supportive of democracy are more likely to be 'realists' in their understanding of power. Alternatively, those who tend to be less supportive of democracy might be more likely to be 'idealists', in their understanding of power, who react against the disappointments with the practice of the current regime. The evidence for this explanation is however not conclusive because the negative correlation coefficient is of no meaningful significance.

*Table 7A Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'power preference':*

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Power	citizens only	59	42.4%	49	35.3%	31	22.3%
	more to citizens	151	50.2%	93	30.9%	57	18.9%
	more/only elite	58	50.4%	35	30.4%	22	19.1%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	2.55	>.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's Rho	-.05	.04	>.05

N = 555

*Explaining the absence of a relationship:*

One possible explanation for the absence of a relationship might be that respondents were not aware that democracy is conceptually associated with the political role of the citizenry. Somewhat supporting this view is that support for the 'authoritarian alternative' was largely unrelated to a power preference. Table 7B illustrates that, amongst the small grouping of those who believed in an authoritarian method of government, 77.8% also believed in complete/more power to the citizenry (22.2% and 55.6%). However, previous analysis of the qualitative data has shown that the current democracy was being related to a political role for the citizenry. The findings suggest an alternative explanation. They suggest that public empowerment is not valued to the extent that it becomes a support factor. The idea of empowerment may have some appeal and the current system may be associated with a political role for the citizenry, but the number of responses that referred to such a role was limited. Instead democracy was associated with other factors that are arguably of greater priority. Accordingly, in the statistical analysis the belief in public empowerment was not found to be of significant enough value to motivate support.

*Table 7B      Relationship between the 'authoritarian orientations' of those that did not state a belief in democracy and 'power preference':*

		one authority					
		best/better		not best/better		don't know	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Power	citizens only	6	22.2%	14	35.9%	11	25.0%
	more to citizens	15	55.6%	19	48.7%	23	52.3%
	more/only elite	6	22.2%	6	15.4%	10	22.7%

N = 110

### 7.3.6 Conclusion on 'power to people' as a support explanation

I have found that public 'participation' and 'empowerment' are appealing ideas, and that the current (democratic) system is associated with a political role for the

citizenry. However, in Part 7.3.4 I found that this participatory role is not associated with effective empowerment because the political elite are perceived as insensitive to citizens' wants. I also found no evidence to suggest that this participatory role is valued to the extent that it becomes a support factor. In Part 7.3.3 I found that the extent of the appeal in the participatory role is limited. In Part 7.3.5 I found no significant statistical relationship between 'democratic support' and 'power preference'. Therefore, my findings indicate that a belief in the political role of the citizen is not a significant support factor.

Such a conclusion is something of a surprise. My evidence suggests that, independent of aspirations in recent history, in late 1990s Poland a political role for the citizenry is not highly valued. Furthermore, my evidence contradicts arguments on post-material culture shifts that presume a young and educated grouping posses strong democratic values.

#### **7.4 *Issue 5 – Belief in competitive pluralism***

Issue 5 is concerned with evaluating whether or not democratic support has been founded on a widespread belief in the competitive pluralistic power structure. Such an explanation is confronted with a basic problem. As already mentioned, those not accustomed to a pluralistic power structure often see democratic governments as weak. Competitive politics can appear particularly chaotic and disorganised. In Poland since 1989 this has appeared to many to be the situation. In CBOS surveys the respondents' own explanation for their dissatisfaction with the functioning democracy has been dominated by perceptions of chaos and disorganisation. Furthermore, those explaining dissatisfaction through such a perception has actually risen over the past decade from 43% in 1993 to 49% in 1996.<sup>35</sup> So, can a belief in the pluralistic power structure be said to explain democratic support when confronted with the belief by many that the current democracy is weak? This explanation could be significant if the political players are themselves targeted as the reason for weak government. However, if the dissatisfaction is linked to the pluralistic form of democracy, then democratic support cannot depend on a belief in political pluralism. These issues will be considered below.

#### 7.4.1 Competitive pluralism related to Poland

*'Blame the chaos on the politicians':*

As Lipset pointed out in *Political Man*, "if a political system is not characterised by a value system allowing the peaceful 'play' of power, democracy becomes chaotic".<sup>36</sup> Without a peaceful play of power, the public belief in the functioning of democracy can be damaged.<sup>37</sup> In Poland the behaviour of the political players has not been conducive to the development of an appealing democracy. Maybe most alarming has been Polish democracy developing into a 'confrontational-pluralist' model with players accused of whipping up conflicting passions, especially through an unwillingness to forget the past.<sup>38</sup> The issue of 'lustration' has even been described by Olszewski as a fight between 'good and evil'. Furthermore, despite the political players being outwardly supportive of democracy, there has been a concern that many of the politicians are critical of democratic institutions. Most obviously, Lech Wałęsa as President invoked powerful images from the past in which parliament in particular was targeted as being destructive to effective government. As Holc writes, Wałęsa is guilty of re-introducing "a vision of a democratic government that characterises the Sejm as a threat to democracy rather than an arena for it".<sup>39</sup>

An important repercussion of the internal conflict and external criticism of the Sejm has been to damage the perception of the Sejm as a caring institution. In the 1980s there had been a high level of trust in the Sejm because, as Jasiewicz states, the parliament stood as a symbol of representation rather than as a real actor within the state decision making process.<sup>40</sup> However, as a real actor under the rigours of a competitive system of government, the public trust in the Sejm has been eroded. By March 1999 only 30% believed that the Sejm functioned well with 54% believing that it functioned badly.<sup>41</sup>

Despite these criticisms, accusations against the politicians for creating a conflict based style of politics should be interpreted with some caution. There are bound to be tensions in a young democracy with the introduction of competitive politics. The elite are open to public scrutiny which can give a sour taste. It is the politics of dissent and division replacing the facade of consent and cohesion.<sup>42</sup>

Accordingly, is the widespread perception of the young democracy as ‘chaotic’ better explained by an understanding of the pluralistic form of democracy itself?

*A social incompatibility with pluralism:*

Many political scientists have argued that in Poland there is an incompatibility between social expectations and a pluralistic form of government.<sup>43</sup> Holc writes that, “Poles seemed to have been somewhat jarred by the personalisation and divisiveness of parliamentary debate so soon after the apparent consensus of 1989-90.”<sup>44</sup> For others, the stress is on pluralistic democracy disorientating society through destroying the myth of unity.<sup>45</sup> Bielsiak has warned that ‘internal fragmentation’ is incompatible with the social norms of unity and solidarity leaving society exposed to nationalist and religious slogans encouraging chauvinism, intolerance and prejudice.<sup>46</sup> Despite these views of scholars, the actual evidence for the cultural incompatibility with pluralistic democracy is mixed. In the rest of this section a summary of the evidence from various sources is divided into three parts.

First, findings have indicated that there is an incompatibility between pluralistic power structures and what much of the population both expect and want. The strong sense of ‘Polishness’ has politically manifested itself in terms of a belief that government should serve the collective rather than ‘group/individual’ will. In a survey conducted in the early 1990s, 63% thought that politicians should represent ‘society at large’, whereas only 23% thought that society should represent ‘constituents’.<sup>47</sup> Also, the moral politics of a ‘correct’ policy direction has provided the further expectation that the ‘collective will’ is inseparable from a ‘common good’.<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, the one existing politician whose popularity has consistently soared above all others has been that of the (ex-communist) President. Keeping his head above the day to day group conflicts between politicians has resulted in President Kwaśniewski’s widespread popularity. In May 1999 a survey showed that up to 79% trusted Kwaśniewski.<sup>49</sup> The same cannot be said of the political elite who ‘play’ the game of competitive politics. In the same survey no other member of government nor any MP was trusted by more than 50% of respondents.

Second, findings indicate a level of confusion in Polish society about the pluralism that characterises a democratic system of government. Many Poles because of their unfamiliarity with the system have found the features of the functioning democracy distinctly 'uncomfortable'. In 1993 53% said that they did not feel at home with the democratic system.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, despite the broad support figures, the public have often displayed what Pańkow has described as a misunderstanding of the details of pluralistic democracy.<sup>51</sup> In a CBOS poll in 1992 only 57% of those polled believed political parties were 'a necessary component of the democratic direction'.<sup>52</sup> This was in part due to a reaction against the array of disorganised political parties. In 1993 78% agreed with the statement: 'party conflict is a reason for the country's difficulties'.<sup>53</sup> The misunderstanding however has gone further than being only associated with the party system. In 1993 35% of Poles supported rule by a strong person despite only 11% believing that democracy was 'not the best system of government'.<sup>54</sup> Also, in a CBOS survey from 1993 74% answered that 'nobody has invented any better alternative to democracy' despite 71% answering that 'a little bit of authoritarianism does no harm'.<sup>55</sup> Such attitudes are hardly compatible with the proposition that support for democracy has been founded on the valued features of pluralistic power structures.

Third, despite certain levels of social incompatibility and misunderstanding of political pluralism, there has continuously been a widespread acceptance of the features of competitive politics. In 1993 70% believed that political parties were necessary for the health of democracy,<sup>56</sup> and by 1995 approximately three quarters treated party conflict as something normal.<sup>57</sup> Certainly the political system has been perceived as conflict ridden. By 1997 56% believed that the introduction of the new constitution would bring even more conflict.<sup>58</sup> Yet, also in 1997 70% acknowledged the Sejm as a necessary institution within which to achieve agreements between conflicting social groups.<sup>59</sup>

#### *7.4.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)*

I attempted to ascertain whether a belief in competitive pluralism can explain democratic support. As already mentioned, the explanation can be sustained if the political actors are understood as the reason for chaos/disorder, but if a wider problem

with the pluralistic form of democracy is identified, then the explanation is weak. I divide this analysis into two parts:

- First I ascertain the extent to which the political actors were associated with a form of 'unpleasant' competitive behaviour.
- Second I ascertain the extent to which such associations can be understood in terms of an incompatibility with the pluralistic form of democracy.

Both of these aims were achieved through an interpretation of responses from the two qualitative research exercises. In this investigation I do not statistically test any specific factors for verification.

#### *A sympathetic sampling group:*

As already mentioned, young and highly educated respondents would be expected to be more positive than most in their attitudes towards democracy as a method of government. Positive attitudes towards the structure of democracy are most prevalent across those with higher education. In 1997 only 12% of those with higher education perceived democracy as being characterised above all by 'disorder and chaos'. This contrasted with 22% of those with only primary education who believed this to be the case.<sup>60</sup> The younger population who are familiar with the features of political pluralism also tend to be less critical of democracy as a method of government. In the same survey, 11% of those between 16 and 18 perceived democracy in terms of disorder and chaos which contrasted with 19% of adults. Nevertheless, as with 'Issue 4', the sympathy of the sample group offers an interesting perspective to the beliefs of society as a whole. If this student group is not significantly sympathetic towards competitive pluralism, then the presumption must be that those across wider society are even less likely to endorse pluralism.

#### **7.4.3 Results and interpretations**

##### *The perception of 'squabbling' political players:*

The word-symbol of democracy was associated with 'unappealing' behaviour through the terms of 'hype' and 'bad to watch' (See Appendix A). Further responses

associated democracy directly with conflict ridden behaviour. These associations included 'quarrelsome', and 'noisy politicians'. Squabbling people in suits do get perceived in negative terms.

*The perception of disordered' democracy:*

A significant cluster of responses associated democracy with disorder. Democracy was associated with the chaotic alternative to the order of a single representative power source. A number of respondents associated the word-symbol of democracy with such terms as 'messy' and 'chaotic' (See Appendix A). This was in stark contrast to respondents relating the word-symbol of communism with 'powerful' and, most commonly, 'efficient'. The lack of appeal in the pluralistic character of the current democracy is also prevalent in responses from the free writing exercise. As one participant wrote:

"There is such a big mess in politics and the economy that no one is able to state what is done properly or improperly. What makes me furious is the political system in Poland. In communism we had one major political party and a very small opposition. Now, when it comes to any election, I am really getting lost in what is going on in our political scene."

*The cluster of positive responses:*

Responses referring to competitive pluralism were not all negative. As was to be expected amongst the specific sampling group, a cluster of participants associated democracy with a healthy political balance. A number of respondents associated the word-symbol of democracy with terms such as 'flexible' and 'balanced' (See Appendix A). One respondent in the free writing exercise wrote:

"Pluralism is a much more stable form of state, just like a three-legged stool is more stable than the one with one leg only."

*Wider inference:*

A number of responses did positively relate democracy to a balanced pluralistic structure, but on balance the majority of responses were negative, even amongst this sympathetic sampling group. One can conclude therefore that, when applied to Polish society at large, the indication is that any support significance from a belief in the pluralistic structure must be ‘limited’.

Of interest is the fact that the negative responses related to the ‘pluralistic form of government’ as much as to the ‘competitive behaviour of the players’. The players may get blamed for the perceived chaos, but the blame is part of a wider dislike of pluralistic power arrangements. This strengthens the argument that competitive pluralism cannot be a significant support factor for democracy. The extent of the hostility towards ‘competitive’ styled politics amongst a group of university students indicates quite how much Polish society still has to move before it appreciates competing power arrangements.

## 7.5 *Conclusions*

In this chapter I have investigated the idea that democratic support depends on the understanding of democracy ‘for what it is’. In Part 7.2 I investigated Kolarska-Bobińska’s suggestion from the early 1990s that democratic support is based on the widespread belief that the condition of the current democracy will improve. Several years on, no meaningful evidence was found in this study that a political hope factor still exists. Rather, I inferred that the current democracy is mainly recognised as the system that is ‘here to stay’.

In chapter I also investigated the importance to democratic support of the democratic power structure. I found limited evidence to suggest that support is significantly founded on the understanding of the power structure. In Part 7.3 I did find that the participatory role for the citizenry is both appealing and linked to the current democracy. However, those who responded to this issue were few in number indicating that the appeal is of low priority. Furthermore, the statistical test reinforced this interpretation by showing that no significant relationship exists between ‘democratic support’ and ‘power orientations’. Accordingly, I concluded that the

participatory role of the citizenry is not of sufficient value to be a significant support factor. As previously mentioned, these findings are something of a surprise in that they contradict cultural explanations. The findings contradict the belief that a participatory role in Polish society is widely valued. Second, the findings contradict the presumption by post-material theorists such as Inglehart that the young and educated grouping should possess strong democratic values.

The conclusion reported in Part 7.4 was somewhat less dramatic. I reached the conclusion that a rational appreciation of competitive pluralism cannot be a significant support factor. Certain responses did illustrate an appeal in the balanced quality of pluralistic power arrangements, but responses far more commonly illustrated the hostility towards competitive styled politics. This suggests that Polish society has a long way to go before warming towards pluralistic power arrangements.

Some caution is advisable with respect to all these conclusions because the inference is mainly based on data collected in the qualitative techniques. Nevertheless, taken as a whole these findings suggest that democratic support is not significantly founded on an appreciation ‘for what democracy is’. There is limited appeal in democracy as a method of government except for the idea of public empowerment. I did find however that the idea of public empowerment is only of limited value as a support factor.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> The data from 1997 is recorded in CBOS, "Społeczny Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97 Warsaw, 1997. The data from 1993 is documented in CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> Kolarska-Bobińska argued in 1994 that there was still very real hope for the new democracy. L. Kolarska-Bobińska, *Aspirations, Values and Interests: Poland 1989-1994*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1994.

<sup>4</sup> Longitudinal data on the difference in support for the current and future regime is documented in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>5</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996), p.23. Rather than being associated with a public role in state decision making, democracy was largely being associated with social welfare and, in particular, notions of freedom.

<sup>8</sup> CBOS, "Poczucie Wpływ na Sprawy Publiczne i Potrzeba Politycznej Aktywności Społeczeństwa," No. 1042, Warsaw, 1993. For the structural domination of the state institutions rendering input quite impotent, see K. Stobińska, "Elity Polityczne Wobec Dylematów Transformacji," p.126 in J. Wasilewski (ed.), *Konsolidacja Elit Politycznych w Polsce 1989-1993*, Warsaw: ISP Publishers, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Reykowski found perceptions of democracy to be unstable, ambivalent and underdeveloped. Moreover, there was a discrepancy between abstract concepts and their practical realisation which Reykowski describes as a result of short experience. J. Reykowski, *Wartosci i Postawy Społeczne a Przemiany Systemowe. Szkice z Psychologii Politycznej*, Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Data documented in R. Rose and W. Mishler, *A 12-Nation Survey*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 306 (1998).

<sup>11</sup> CBOS, "Znaczenie Udziału w Wyborach dla Funkcjonowania Demokracji w Polsce," BS/180/155/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> For the widespread distrust in Polish society, see P. Sztompka, "Trust and Emerging Democracy – Lessons from Poland," *International Sociology*, 11:1 (1996) 37-62. Geremek similarly argues that a resulting culture of anti-politics is dangerous for democratic survival because the activation of civil society is based on conquering political opposition rather than living to the side of it. B. Geremek, "Civil Society Then and Now" in L. Diamond, M. F. Plattner and T. Evans, *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> Wnuk-Lipiński explains that alienation from the political elite has resulted in an 'us and them' mentality. E. Wnuk-Lipiński, "The Radical Transformation of a Social System and its Contradictions," p.133 in Adamski, W (ed.), *Societal Conflict and Systemic Change: The Case of Poland 1980-1992*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> B. Szklarski, *Semi-Public Democracy: Articulation of Interests and Systemic Transformation*, Warsaw: Institute of Political Studies, 1997, p.123.

<sup>16</sup> The widespread belief that little has politically changed except for a change in the elite is discussed in R. East, *Revolutions in Eastern Europe*, London: Pinter, 1992.

<sup>17</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Prawo," BS/366/73/92, Warsaw, 1992. Of course, distrust need not necessarily be all bad for the development of democracy in Poland. As already mentioned, Almond and Verba have argued that a 'healthy' distrust of the political elite justifies the democratic structure of 'dividing' power across a competing elite.

<sup>18</sup> CBOS, "Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce," BS/14/14/97, Warsaw, 1992.

<sup>19</sup> R. Rose and W. Mishler., *Negative and Positive Partisanship in Post-communist Countries*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 286 (1997). The dislocation of interests was particularly hard on the workers. The problem was one of an inability to identify with class interests during a period of change in which the workers were decomposing into specific occupations.

<sup>20</sup> I. Pańkow, "Dysonans Poznawczy Polityków Okresu Transformacji," in J. Wasilewski, (ed.), *Konsolidacja Elit Politycznych w Polsce 1989-1993*, Warsaw: ISP Publishers, 1994. Also, on the need for the passage of time to carve out new structures of representation, see L. Kolarska-Bobińska, "Social Interests and their Political Representation: Poland During Transition," in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>21</sup> C. J. Anderson, "Parties, Party Systems, and Satisfaction with Democratic Performance in the New Europe," *Political Studies*, 46:3 (1998) 572-588.

<sup>22</sup> R. Legutko, "Frivolous Prometheus," *Polish Sociological Bulletin*, 101:1 (1993) 63-69.

<sup>23</sup> The so-called 'authoritarian personality' is discussed with respect to Polish society in J. Koralewicz, "Authoritarianism and Confidence in Political Leaders," in W. Adamski (ed.), *Societal Conflict and Systemic Change: The Case of Poland 1980-1992*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1993. The broader authoritarian characteristics of Polish society are discussed in J. Miller, K. M. Słomczyński and R. J. Schoenberg "Assessing Comparability of Measuring in Cross-national Research: Authoritarianism-conservatism in Different Sociocultural Settings" *Social Psychology Quarterly* 44:3 (1981) 178-91 and G. Kolankiewicz and R. Taras "Poland: Socialism for Everyman?" in A. Brown and Grey (eds.), *Political Culture and Political Change in Communist States*, New York: Holmes and Meier, 1977.

<sup>24</sup> Plenty of evidence from the 1970s and 1980s show an 'attitudinal shift' across generations towards favouring democratic ideas. In 1981 Nowak showed that the youth were significantly more likely than their parents to support the influence of society on decision making. S. Nowak, "Values and Attitudes of the Polish People," *Scientific American*, 245:1 (1981) 23-32. Inglehart and Siemieńska found a similar relationship leading Inglehart to conclude that, as with Western states, Poland was undergoing a post-

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material value shift towards favouring political expression. R. Inglehart and R. Siemieńska “Changing Values and Political Dissatisfaction in Poland and the West: A Comparative Analysis,” *Government and Opposition*, 23:4 (1988) 440-457. Also of interest is that the Solidarity phenomenon is widely interpreted as an outcome of the rise of the new middle-class. See J. Kurczewski, *The Resurrection of Rights in Poland*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

<sup>25</sup> L. Kolarska-Bobińska, *Aspirations, Values and Interests: Poland 1984-94*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1994, p.11.

<sup>26</sup> As already mentioned in the notes of Chapter 3, Bernhard discusses the reasons for the weakness of civil society following transition. M. Bernhard, “Civil Society after the First Transition: Dilemmas of Post-communist Democratisation in Poland and Beyond,” *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 29:3 (1996) 309-330.

<sup>27</sup> The removal of the set of elite was understood as achievable only through fundamental political changes that would empower the citizenry. For Barclay Ward the explanation for the shift lies somewhere between an instrumental and affection-based explanation. Ward Argues that underneath the instrumental interests were demands for a wider participatory democracy. B. Ward, “Poland” in W. A. Welsh (ed.), *Survey Research and Public Attitudes in Eastern Europe and The Soviet Union*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981.

<sup>28</sup> This statistic should be put into context because the survey was not showing ‘anti-democratic’ values. In the same survey only 7% defined ‘good power’ as ‘strong’. Rather, the survey showed that far higher up the list of political priorities were the concepts of justice, honesty and competence. ‘Good power’ was defined by 28% as ‘just’, 27% as ‘honest’ and 23% as ‘competent’. CBOS, “Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce,” BS/14/14/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>29</sup> CBOS, “Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych,” BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999. The percentage who believe that living under a democracy is important has slightly increased over the decade from 36% in 1992 to 45% in 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Smolar describes the myth of civil society to be like that of ‘a historical costume’ because its usefulness disappears ‘with the times that dictated its wearing’. A. Smolar, “From Opposition to Atomization,” *Journal of Democracy*, 7:1 (1996) 24-38.

<sup>31</sup> Those with higher education have commonly been more critical than the less educated on the issue of the effectiveness of political action. For instance, in 1992 56% of those with higher education believed that demonstrations and protests were ‘ineffective’ which contrasted with 44% of those with vocational training and 41% of those with only primary teaching. CBOS, “Sposoby Wpływania na Decyzje Władz,” BS/356/65/92, Warsaw, 1992.

<sup>32</sup> Ziolkowski argues that, despite the prevalent ‘materialism’ in Polish society, there is the continued presence of post-material values. M. Ziolkowski, “On the Diversity of the Present: Suspended between Tradition, the Legacy of Socialism, Modernity and Postmodernity,” *Polish Sociological Review*, 121:1 (1998) 21-43.

<sup>33</sup> It is this community spirit which is said to cause the Polish aversion to a pluralistic/divisive form of 'democratic' government.

<sup>34</sup> In the early 1990s only 7% of sampled Poles associated democracy primarily with public participation. J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996), p.23.

<sup>35</sup> CBOS, "Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce," BS/71/71/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>36</sup> Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981, p.45.

<sup>37</sup> Such damage was statistically evident in the 1995 Presidential conflict when the percentage of citizens who supported the statement that 'non-democratic government can sometimes be more desirable than democratic government' peaked at 47%. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999. Nevertheless, as already discussed in Chapter 4, this damage was without long-term consequence to democratic support.

<sup>38</sup> A comparative analysis of confrontational politics is conducted in A. Seleny, "Old Political Rationalities and New Democracies - Compromise and Confrontation in Hungary and Poland," *World Politics*, 51:4 (1999) 484-521.

<sup>39</sup> J. P. Holc, "Competing Visions of Polish Parliament," *East European Quarterly*, 29:1 (1995) p.71.

<sup>40</sup> K. Jasiewicz, "From Protest and Repression to the Free Elections" in W. A. Adamski (ed), *Societal Conflict and Systemic Change: The Case of Poland 1980-92*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1993.

<sup>41</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99, Warsaw, 1999. Ratings for the representative institutions do fluctuate. In 1998 well over 40% consistently rated the Sejm as functioning well. Similar figures and fluctuations are reflected in perceptions of the Senate. For instance, in December 1998 50% believed that the Senate functioned well but by March 1999 only 35% believed that it functioned well.

<sup>42</sup> The negative appearances of politicians in young democracies is discussed by Larry Diamond in L. Diamond, M. F. Plattner and T. Evans, *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993.

<sup>43</sup> In the 1980s there was an increasingly widespread opinion in Poland that political pluralism was necessary to reflect the differentiation of interests and attitudes. However, the norms/expectations of wider society meant that a public display interpreted as satisfying ones own private desires remained unacceptable. See G. Post, "Polskie Cnoty Kardynalne i Grzechy Główne," in J. Wasilewski, (ed.), *Konsolidacja Elit Politycznych w Polsce 1989-1993*, Warsaw: ISP Publishers, 1994. Of particular interest has been an argument by Attila Agh that Solidarity's playing to national sentiment and unity has not been compatible with the 'cut n thrust' character of political pluralism. Rather, such sentiment fuelled the lack of respect for the effectiveness of participation and pluralistic norms within the young democracy, noting that the Solidarity movement has contradicted itself by fragmenting into the mutual animosities and infighting that citizens found ugly. See A. Agh, *Emerging Democracies in East Central Europe and the Balkans*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, 1998.

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<sup>44</sup> J. P. Holc, "Competing Visions of Polish Parliament," *East European Quarterly*, 29:1 (1995) p.70.

<sup>45</sup> The myth of unity being frustrated under democratic politics is discussed in J. Szacki, "Polish Democracy: Dreams and Reality," *Social Research*, 58:4 (1991) 711-722.

<sup>46</sup> J. Bielasiak in W. D. Connor and P. Płoszajski (ed.), *The Polish Road from Socialism: The Economics, Sociology and Politics of Transition*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993.

<sup>47</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Akceptacja Idei Demokracji," No. 925, Warsaw, 1992.

<sup>48</sup> The primacy placed on the public good has been related to the chivalric and romantic tradition in Poland epitomised by such figures as General Piłsudski.

<sup>49</sup> CBOS, "Zaufanie do Polityków w Maju," BS/85/99, Warsaw, 1999. The reformed communist Aleksander Kwasniewski built his popularity through avoiding conflict. He has by far been the most popular politician in the post-communist period, despite a hostile press. Goban-Klas explains that Kwasniewski has won support because he did not respond to aggressive attacks in a similar fashion. T. Goban-Klas, "Politics versus the Media in Poland: A Game without Rules," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transitional Politics*, 12:4 (1996) 24-41.

<sup>50</sup> J. Reykowski, *Wartości i Postawy Społeczne a Przemiany Systemowe*, Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>51</sup> Data recorded in I. Pańkow, "Miedzy Misją a Wyobcowaniem, Przypadek Polskiej Elity Politycznej," in K. Pałecki (ed.), *Elity Polityczne w Polsce*, Warsaw: Adam Marszałek Publishers, 1992.

<sup>52</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Prawo" BS/366/73/92, Warsaw, 1992.

<sup>53</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993. Also of interest is that in the early 1990s only 4% related democracy primarily to the mechanics of multiple parties and a division of powers. J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996).

<sup>54</sup> Data documented in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>55</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka" BS/101/82/93, Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>56</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>57</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995. Of no small importance for the social acceptance of democratic norms has been the introduction of the 'Small Constitution' in October 1992. The 'Small Constitution' effectively moderated the extent of the political pluralism in parliament by creating a 5% electoral threshold for power.

<sup>58</sup> CBOS, "Opinie o Konstytucji," BS/71/71/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>59</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>60</sup> CBOS, "Społeczny Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97 Warsaw, 1997.

## *Chapter Eight*

### *The Importance of a Belief in the Economic Direction*

*Framework to the chapter:*

In this chapter I investigate the relationship between democratic support and a belief in the direction of economic change (Issue 6). I begin however by briefly considering the perceptions on the quality of the elite in the present democratic system. This step is necessary because it is the direction of economic change by the present political players that is being evaluated.

#### *8.1 The perception of the quality of elite*

In Chapter 7 I identified a number of negative responses in my own study that referred to the political players. There were however a cluster of responses that indicated that the current political players were perceived by the respondents as acting with lesser prejudice than players under the past regime. In the word association test, democracy was associated by these respondents with such terms as ‘tolerant leaders’ and ‘objective governments’ (See Appendix A). Also, as one respondent put it in the free writing exercise:

“We get treated better by those in authority.”

So, although perceived as a group that are ‘insensitive’ to citizens’ wants, the current elite are perceived by some as being less biased than in the past. Further evidence of this view of less bias can be found in the CBOS poll of 1995 which showed that there is more respect for those in authority under a democracy than for those in authority under

a non-democracy. 57% of respondents agreed with the view that ‘people have greater respect for those in authority under a democracy’. Only 23% believed the reverse.<sup>1</sup>

## **8.2 Issue 6 – The importance of economic liberalisation**

### **8.2.1 Economic beliefs related to Poland**

In the 1980s some economic liberalisation occurred as a result of an increased rejection across society of socialist state planning.<sup>2</sup> Despite the decades of socialist propaganda, by 1985 the majority of Poles had come to believe that ‘manufacturers should be free to produce what people need’ rather than ‘the state dictate what manufacturers produce’. 39% believed that ‘manufacturers should produce what they want’ in contrast to 35% who believed that ‘the state should dictate production’.<sup>3</sup> Reform was at the time limited because of the past regime’s inability to manoeuvre without popular support and, also, because of a deep reluctance to relinquish control.<sup>4</sup> As was increasingly realised, real economic change required the legitimacy of a new regime. The democratic method of government was in part designed to provide this legitimacy with democratisation and economic liberalisation being packaged together in Poland. So, has democratic support in Poland been founded on the belief in the economic direction of change? I will attempt to identify the economic beliefs of Poles, then I will consider whether such economic beliefs can be linked to democratic support.

#### *‘Quasi-liberal’ beliefs:*

The current economic attitude of Poles is not founded on a culturally imbedded appreciation of a capitalist economy. Rather, as Szacki observes, the popularity of “present-day Polish liberalism has developed spontaneously as a result of the crisis of the communist system...” and wins appeal as a means of eliminating the “...defects of that system”.<sup>5</sup> This leads Szacki to argue that there appears to be something of a ‘quasi-liberal disposition of many Poles based on the rejection of the extremities of the alternative.

The quasi-liberal disposition can be identified in respect to socialist ‘ideological’ orientations. McGregor writes that the Poles, “...held out little hope for

socialism to succeed as an economic system.” Yet, simultaneously, “...they were not adverse to socialist principles – some were avidly embraced”.<sup>6</sup> In particular, the egalitarian principles have been upheld across society,<sup>7</sup> hence the high value placed on social justice. In a CBOS survey from 1997 social justice was ranked as the most important value from a set of values that included freedom.<sup>8</sup>

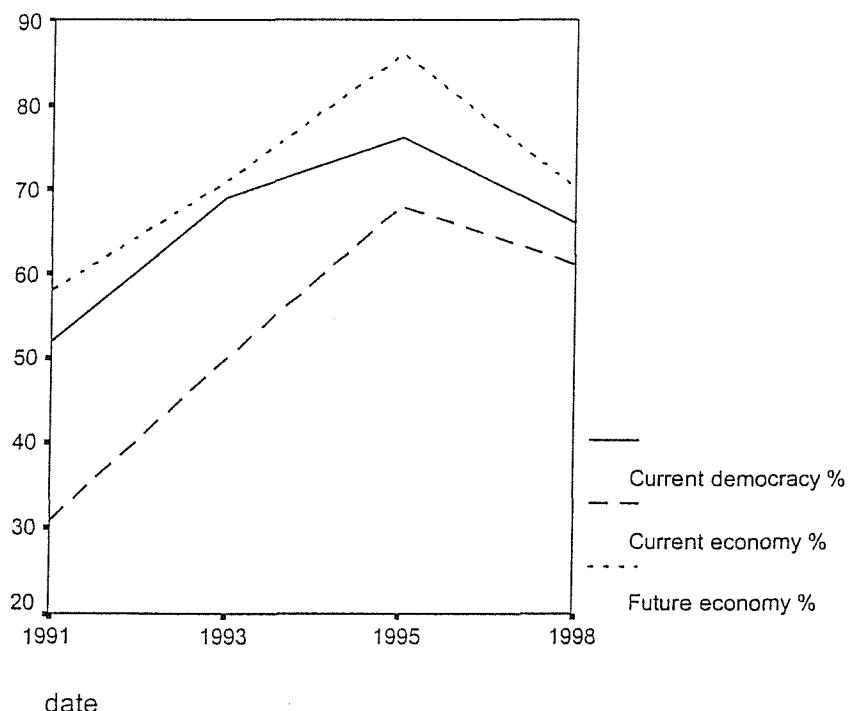
The egalitarian streak is also reflected in the belief in the protective economic role of the state in Poland.<sup>9</sup> In 1997 89% believed that ‘the state should peg prices in the provision of health services’ and 87% of respondents believed that ‘the state should financially relieve the agricultural sector’. There is also the widespread belief in the state ownership of valued services. In the same survey, 68% of respondents believed that ‘the medical services should be provided by the state’ with only 18% preferring the private sector.<sup>10</sup> To a certain extent, such figures can be explained by an intensification of demands on the state during a period of economic hardship and uncertainty, but they are not only a defensive reaction against existing conditions. They come from a deeply embedded social expectation that the state should provide a basic level of economic security. This has implications for the level of privatisation the Poles would find acceptable.

Public opinion may favour a protective role for the state, but the belief in the power of the market has also become widespread. The return of the communists in the SLD’s victory in 1993 was never a rejection of the move towards market forces but, rather, a call for more protective reform. As a reaction against the economic insecurities of the period, it was Cimoszewicz and Kwaśniewski who appealed as “constructive reformers with a social conscience”.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, despite the reaction against Shock Therapy, the practical support for free market economics continued to increase in the 1990s. The figure of 39% who favoured the power of manufacturers over the state in 1985 had by 1998 increased to a figure of 61%.<sup>12</sup> In fact, across post-communist Europe, Poles are the most supportive of how their current economy works. In 1998 61% of Poles approved of the current economy which compares to 38% of Czechs and 10% of Ukrainians.<sup>13</sup> So, can democratic support relate to a belief in the direction of economic change?

*Relating democratic support to a belief in the economic direction:*

In general terms, the rejection of communism paralleled the rejection of socialist state planning. Similarly, the increase in democratic support has paralleled the acceptance of the 'new' economy. Figure 8A illustrates the dynamics. The diagram shows the parallel dynamics of support for democracy and for the economy.<sup>14</sup> It also shows the proximity between support for democracy and a belief in the future economy, a point that will be returned to later in the study.

*Figure 8A Democratic support, economic support and support for the future economy during the 1990s in Poland:*



Source: New Democracies Barometer I, III, IV and V recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer, 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

Zagórski has found a significant statistical relationship in Poland between 'support for political changes' and 'support for privatisation'.<sup>15</sup> This reflects the

relationship that Whitefield and Evans found in post-communist Europe in general between ‘democratic support’ and ‘support for marketisation’. So, there is evidence indicating that democratic support is related to economic attitudes. Support for marketisation implies support for some privatisation. It does not necessarily mean support for privatisation of all public utilities. This issue is returned to in section 8.2.4.

The pattern of democratic support across the party divide provides a further clue to the relationship between democratic support and support for marketisation. With a broad party consensus on the direction of change for the economy, the relationship is supported by democratic support being relatively evenly spread across the main party divide.<sup>16</sup> Evidence points to this even spread with 70% of AWS and 60% of SLD supporters being supporters of democracy in 1998. Furthermore, in the same survey 81% of the distinctly pro-liberal UW supporters were supporters of democracy,<sup>17</sup> a higher percentage than amongst the less liberal political groupings. The support patterns across the party divide suggest a relationship between pro-liberal attitudes and democratic support. The strength of the relationship is limited, which suggests important limits to the relationship between democratic support and economic beliefs. It should not be forgotten that a sizeable minority of citizens believe that democracy is counter-productive to the goal of liberalising the economy. In a CBOS poll from 1997, 23% of those polled believed that democracy postponed systemic reform.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the relationship between democratic support and economic beliefs is unclear and need not necessarily be causal or reinforcing. Below I investigate the basic relationship between democratic support and economic beliefs. In Chapter 10 the causal direction is considered.

### ***8.2.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

The empirical investigation served the aim of ascertaining the strength of the relationship between democratic support and the belief in the direction of economic change. I divided the investigation into two parts for the purpose of both exploring and testing the relationship. More specifically:

- First I explored the association between the current democracy and the general direction of policy change in the 1990s. The exploration involved investigating the associations made between the current democracy and a liberalising agenda. This was achieved through an analysis of responses from the qualitative techniques, especially the free writing exercise. The interpretations led into the next part of the investigation.
- Second I tested the support significance of economic beliefs. The test was conducted by the use of the questionnaire. Two economic beliefs were tested: 'preferred type of ownership' and 'preferred level of state expenditure'. The beliefs were ascertained by asking two questions that used the condition of the current economy as a central reference point (See Q13 and Q14 in Appendix C). Respondents stated their 'preferred direction of ownership' and their 'preferred direction of state expenditure'.

*The specific sampling group:*

The sampling group was expected to be more supportive of the direction of economic change than would be found in other social groups. Young adults have been found to be less positive than their elders about state ownership,<sup>19</sup> but it is in terms of the higher educated citizens that the difference in economic beliefs is most pronounced. In 1998 61% of those with higher education believed that the reforms being undertaken were advantageous to the development of the economy. This contrasted with 40% of those with only primary education who believed the reforms were advantageous.<sup>20</sup> Those with higher education have been found to be more likely than others to be negative about state intervention. For instance, in 1998 only 5% of those with higher education believed that 'state industry should survive for the purpose of protecting jobs'. This contrasted with 14% of those with further education, 21% of those with vocational training and 31% of those with only primary education. A similar pattern is reflected in belief in public ownership. In the same survey 44% of those with higher education believed that 'energy should be provided by the state'. This contrasted with 60% of those with further education, 62% of those with vocational training and 69% of those with only primary education.<sup>21</sup>

### **8.2.3 Results and interpretations on the appeal of policy direction**

#### *The ratio of output responses 'in context':*

The number of responses in the free writing exercise that referred to 'policy' under the current democracy totalled seven. This was a ratio of approximately one in eight of the recorded responses which illustrated a limited interest. The frequency of comments on this issue should however be put in a wider context. Almost half of all responses from the free writing exercise concentrated on the social and economic environment associated with the current democracy (See Chapter 9 for the analysis of the 'associated environment'). Whereas only seven responses may have directly referred to policy, almost half of all responses referred to the social and economic impact of such policy. When including such responses, approximately five in eight of all responses in the free writing exercise related to 'output'. This was a highly significant frequency and reflects other findings indicating that democracy is related to 'output' as much as in terms of what it is as a method of government.<sup>22</sup>

#### *Positive output and the economic agenda:*

Responses that associated democracy with output were mainly positive. Most of the responses that referred to 'policy' in the free writing exercise were positive. Of the seven 'policy' responses, five were positive and two were negative (See Appendix B). Similarly, with respect to the word-symbol of democracy, there were seven positive and two negative responses that referred to general output (See Appendix A). The positive associations linked democracy with words such as 'useful', 'advantageous' and 'brings successful results'. Also of interest is that the 'output' responses to the word-symbol of 'communism' were mainly negative. These included such responses as 'harmful policies', 'painful', 'damaging our country', 'useless result', 'destructive' and 'ineffective' (See Appendix A). So, the positive perceptions of output under democracy were in stark contrast to those perceptions of output under communism.

For a more detailed understanding of these positive 'output' associations with democracy, it is necessary to evaluate the 'policy' responses from the free writing

exercise. All of the positive responses from this exercise referred to the shift in the direction of policy, especially with respect to the economy. The appeal of policy was seen in terms of the economic direction towards liberalisation. One respondent wrote:

“Our country's leaders got the chance to follow better patterns, get rid of communist legacies of huge interference and change the drastic economy.”

Similarly, a further respondent wrote:

“...they (the authorities) have embarked on a grand and noble conversion into a system of freedom and a free market.”

A certain cost was being recognised in respect to the economic direction of change. As one of the less positive respondents put it:

“For the last few years my family has been given almost the same amount of money by the state, but the prices keep on going up and very quickly. Isn't it ridiculous!”

A frustration with the move towards market forces was in fact only expressed by one respondent. For the majority, the policy direction of a move towards economic liberalisation was perceived in positive terms.

*Final inference:*

I have found that a significant factor that has appealed about the current political situation is the change that is taking place in the economic direction. I have shown that the change in the economic direction is linked in the minds of the respondents to the current democracy. I now turn to whether the appeal of the change in the economic direction is a significant support factor.

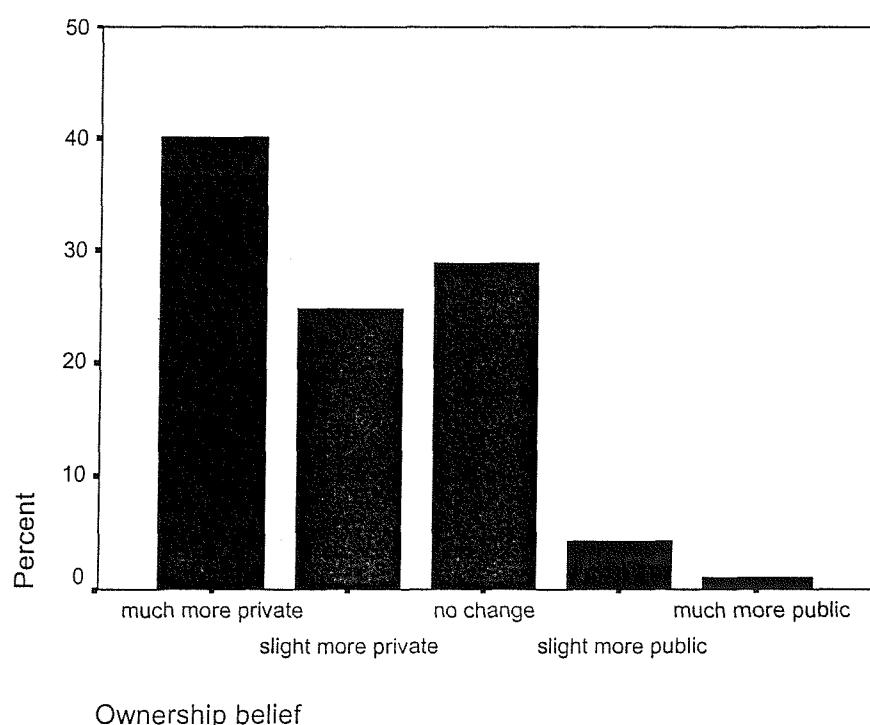
#### 8.2.4 Results and interpretations on the testing of economic beliefs

##### *Identifying economic beliefs:*

As expected, the majority of respondents to the questionnaire favoured an increase in the level of private ownership (See Figure 8B). 65.3% of respondents favoured an increase in private ownership, the majority of whom favoured 'much more' rather than 'slightly more' private ownership than the present level. 29% of respondents favoured the status quo and only 5.6% of respondents favoured an increase in state ownership ('slightly more' and 'much more' state ownership).

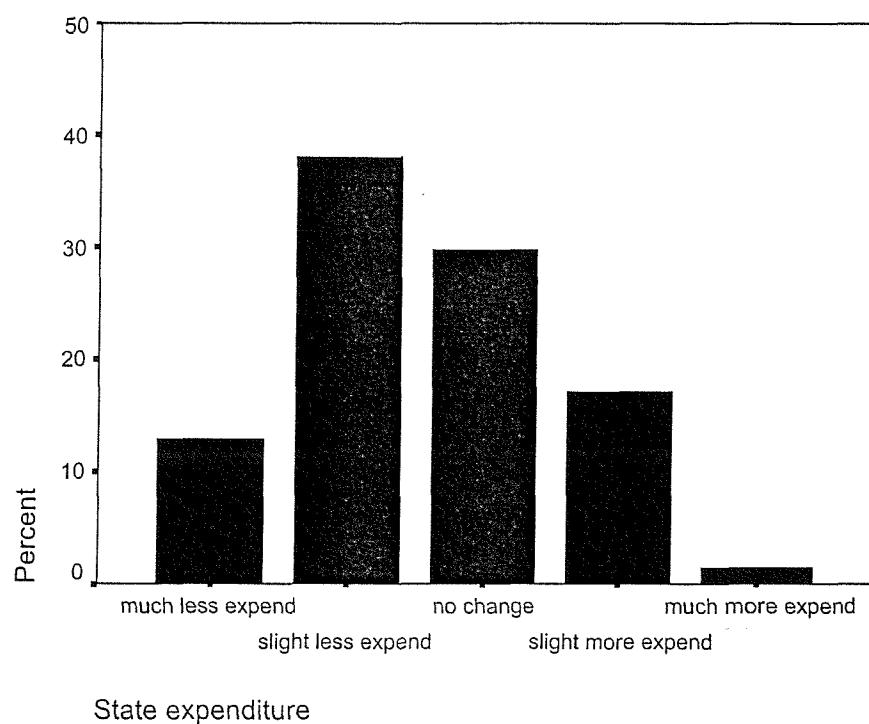
The liberal beliefs that underlie these opinions are particularly pronounced when it is recognised that the central reference point in the question was understood as closer to capitalism than to socialism. In 1998 only a small minority of 17% from a CBOS survey believed that the existing economic system was closer to a socialist than a market economy. In contrast, a total of 39% believed that the existing economic system was closer to a market economy.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 8B *Belief in private vs. public ownership:*



As in other studies, the widespread support for private ownership was not matched by widespread support for reductions in state expenditure (See Figure 8C). 51.2% of respondents favoured a reduction in state expenditure ('slightly less' and 'much less' state expenditure). Approximately three in four of them however favoured only a 'slight' rather than 'large' reduction in state expenditure. Furthermore, a significant minority of 18.9% favoured an increase in the level of state expenditure ('slightly more' and 'much more' state expenditure).

*Figure 8C Belief in state expenditure:*



These differences indicate something of the quasi-liberal disposition of Poles discussed by Szacki and McGregor. On the one hand there is the belief in private enterprise as a response to the failures of state control under socialist economics, and on the other hand there is the reluctance to release the state from its protective role. By no means does this indicate a paradox in economic beliefs. Rather, such a quasi-liberal disposition of citizens is highly compatible with the social capitalism that is currently

being fostered in the European Union. What is of interest to this thesis is how these economic beliefs relate to democratic support.

*The relationship between 'democratic support' and 'ownership belief':*

As the cross-tabulation in Table 8A illustrates, those who favoured private ownership were significantly more likely to be supporters of democracy than those who were against state ownership. Of those who preferred 'much more' private ownership, 64.2% were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. In contrast, only 17.9% of those preferring 'more' state (public) ownership were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. The chi-square test shows that the null hypothesis should be rejected, and the correlation coefficient is strong at .32. So, 'ownership belief' was significantly related to democratic support. This relationship will be discussed further when the multivariate analysis is considered in Chapter 10.

*Table 8A Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'ownership belief':*

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Ownership belief	much priv	179	64.2%	69	24.7%	31	11.1%
	slight priv	66	38.2%	78	45.1%	29	16.8%
	no change	70	34.8%	71	35.3%	60	29.9%
	more pub	7	17.9%	10	25.6%	22	56.4%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson Chi-square	94.67	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.32	.04	<.001

N = 692

Of interest is that the reverse pattern was not evident with respect to the small group of pro-authoritarians, i.e. ownership belief not linked to an authoritarian orientation. Table 8B shows that the pro-authoritarians were not more likely than others to believe in public ownership. The implication is that those who support authoritarianism are not especially drawn towards a belief in public ownership. This finding is based on the small sample of 142 respondents who did not state a belief in democracy. The findings are of interest and their implication will be discussed in the conclusions.

*Table 8B Relationship between the 'authoritarian orientations of those who did not state a belief in democracy' and 'ownership beliefs':*

		one authority					
		best/better		not best/better		don't know	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Ownership belief	much priv	8	25.8%	16	51.6%	7	22.6%
	slight priv	8	27.6%	12	41.4%	9	31.0%
	no change	12	20.0%	18	30.0%	30	50.0%
	more pub	5	22.7%	8	36.4%	9	40.9%

N = 142

#### *The relationship between democratic support and state expenditure:*

The relationship between democratic support and state expenditure shows a different story to that between democratic support and state ownership. As the simple cross-tabulation in Table 8C illustrates, no significant relationship was evident between democratic support and a preference for state expenditure. From those preferring 'much less' state expenditure, 45.6% were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. Similarly, from those preferring 'more' state expenditure, 45.8% were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. Accordingly, the chi-square test shows that the level of significance was low with the null hypothesis unable to be rejected. Furthermore, a coefficient at -.02 indicated that there was no correlation.

Table 8C Democratic support and belief in state expenditure:

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
State spending	much less	41	45.6%	23	25.6%	26	28.9%
	slight less	133	50.2%	90	34.0%	42	15.8%
	no change	89	43.0%	69	33.3%	49	23.7%
	more	60	45.8%	47	35.9%	24	18.3%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson Chi-square	10.93	>.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.02	.04	>.05

N = 693

*Final inference:*

My research showed that private ownership was strongly supported by most of the respondents and was shown to be significantly related to democratic support. In contrast, a reduction in state expenditure was not so widely endorsed and was shown not to be a significant support factor. These findings suggest an interesting explanation of democratic support based on macro-economic belief systems. They suggest that democracy gains support through an accompanying belief in private ownership without significantly losing support from concerns over the reduced 'protective' role of the state. Contrary to the concerns of Przeworski and Offe, I suggest that the erosion of the protective role of the state has not been a significant factor influencing support. It has not threatened the foundations of democratic support.

Of interest is the finding that the pro-authoritarians were not especially drawn towards a belief in public ownership. There was no indication that a lack of belief in

private ownership significantly drew the respondents towards an authoritarian alternative to the current political system. Despite the early concerns of Kitschelt, those that oppose the free-market are not simplistically been drawn towards an anti-democratic alternative.

### ***8.3 Conclusion***

From this final inference I am able to shape an explanation of democratic support that puts macro-economic belief structures at the centre. First the data indicated that belief in private ownership is an important support factor. In part 8.2.3 I found that the economic direction the country has taken is a factor in the appeal of democracy. Then, in part 8.2.4 I verified the importance of ownership belief as a democratic support factor.

Second the data indicated that democratic support is not significantly eroded by concerns over the reduced protective role of the state. This finding can in part explain the relative stability of democratic support. Whereas democracy gains appeal as a result of being associated with the benefits from private enterprise, it does not significantly lose appeal as a result of the hostility towards reduced levels of state protection.

Third, the findings provide an explanation on why the authoritarian alternative is unpopular. They indicate that a lack of support for private ownership may erode democratic support, but that this lack of support for private ownership did not draw the respondents towards an authoritarian alternative. So, in conclusion I suggest that democratic support would be weaker without its association with marketisation, and that the authoritarian option is not understood as offering a viable alternative economic direction.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> The social shift towards favouring a more liberal economy has occurred through a generation change. For the generations socialised in the 1980s and 1990s, the pattern has firmly been towards rejecting state planning in favour of a more capitalist economy. For a regional comparison, see R. Rose, *Generational Effects on Attitudes to Communist Regimes: A Comparative Analysis*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 234 (1994).

<sup>3</sup> CBOS, "Państwo a Rynek – Poglądy Polaków po 13 Latach," BS/149/149/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> The uniquely Polish 'Third Way' was sold during the 1980s as an attempt to combine socialism with petty-entrepreneurship. For a look at its wider context, see V. Zubek, "The End of Liberalism? Economic Liberalisation and the Transformation of Post-communist Poland," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 30:2 (1997) 181-203.

<sup>5</sup> J. Szacki, A Revival of liberalism in Poland, *Social Research*, 57:2 (1990) p.468.

<sup>6</sup> J. P. McGregor, Socialism and Youth in People's Poland, *East European Quarterly*, 25:2 (1991) p.118.

<sup>7</sup> The strength of egalitarian principles across Polish society are identified in S. Nowak, "Values and Attitudes of the Polish People," *Scientific American*, 245 (1981) 23-32.

<sup>8</sup> 39% prioritised social justice over alternative values. This contrasted with 31% who prioritised freedom over other values. CBOS, "Społeczna Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97, Warsaw, 1997.

<sup>9</sup> Bialecki and Mach show that an egalitarian redistribution of wealth is strongly supported despite a rejection of state planning. I Bialecki and B. Mach, "Orientacje Społecno-ekonomiczne Posłów na tle Poglądów Społeczeństwa," pp.149-156 in J. Wasilewski and W. Wesołowski (eds.), *Początek Parlamentarnej Elite: Posłowie Kontraktowego Sejmu*, Warsaw: IfiS Publishers, 1992.

<sup>10</sup> Attitudes were less positive in respect to inefficient state industry with only 21% of respondents believing that state industry should survive for the purpose of protecting jobs. CBOS, "Opinie o Interwencjonizmie Państwowym," BS/91/91/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>11</sup> F. Millard, "The Polish Parliamentary Election of September, 1993," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:3 (1994) p. 310.

<sup>12</sup> CBOS, "Państwo a Rynek - Poglądy Polaków po 13 Latach," BS/149/149/98, Warsaw, 1998. The social shift towards favouring economic liberalisation temporarily reversed during the socio-economic hardship resulting from the 'shock therapy'. However, since the immediate years following 'shock therapy', those favouring the new economic system have doubled. See R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer, 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>13</sup> Conversely, Poles have become the least nostalgic towards the old economic system. For instance, by 1998 only 41% of Poles approved of a socialist economy which contrasted with 47% of Czechs and 90%

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of Ukrainians. Czechs support of the current economy had collapsed from a high of 71% in 1995 (See Table 11A in the concluding chapter of this thesis). Recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> A more detailed diagram on the dynamics of support for political and economic change is shown in K. Zagórski, "Hope Factor, Inequality, and Legitimacy of Systemic Transformations – The Case of Poland," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 357-376.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Against Kitschelt's fears, the development of political parties in Poland did not depend on opposing attitudes towards economic transition. Rather, a broad economic consensus came to exist between the dominant political groupings. Only the UW were distinct in their 'pro-liberal' economic policy. Both AWS and SLD broadly agree to a continuation of economic liberalisation in which the state acts as a significant buffer against resulting socio-economic hardship. The subjects that fundamentally divide the AWS and SLD are in respect to attitudes on secularism and punishment for former PZPR activists. The divisions between the political parties is discussed further in M. Kocór and T. Małyk, "The Political Beliefs of Poles and Their Party Affiliations. An Expression of Socio-economic Cleavage," in H. Kubiak and J. J. Wiatr (eds.), *Between Animosity and Utility Political Parties and Their Matrix*, Warsaw: Scholar, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>18</sup> CBOS, "Funkcjonowanie Demokracji w Polsce" BS/14/14/97, Warsaw, 1997. Of relevance to this issue is data showing a very slight rise in the amount of respondents who believe that democracy hinders the development of the economy. In 1992 only 17% believed that democracy hinders the development of the economy. CBOS, "Demokracja a Skuteczność Reformowania Polskiej Gospodarki," BS/176/21/92, Warsaw, 1992. Nevertheless, the broad majority do believe that democracy enables the reforming of the economy. In 1997 the level was 56%.

<sup>19</sup> In 1998 47% of those aged between 18 and 24 believed that energy should be provided by the state. This contrasted with 65% of those aged 35-44 and 71% of those aged above 64. A more negative attitude towards state ownership by younger age groups does not result in a rejection of the wider 'protective' function of the state. It was found that youth are no less likely than their elders to believe that the state should support inefficient factories to protect jobs. CBOS, "Opinie o Interwencjonizmie Państwowym," BS/91/91/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>20</sup> Less educated groups are characterised by a high level of uncertainty on the issue of economic reform rather than a hostility towards the direction of reform. 31% of those with only primary education could not say whether reforms were advantageous or not which contrasts with 8% of those with higher education. CBOS, "Stosunek do Reform Systemowych," BS/173/173/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>21</sup> CBOS, "Opinie o Interwencjonizmie Państwowym," BS/91/91/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>22</sup> As already indicated, the emphasis on output is dominated by associating democracy with notions of freedom. From the work already cited, only 7% of Poles related democracy to, above all, participation.

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Also, only 4% related democracy to, above all, parties, elections etc. In contrast, 15% related democracy to social welfare and 64% to freedom. J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996).

<sup>23</sup> The belief has shifted considerably over the decade. The number believing that the existing economic system is closer to a socialist economy than a capitalist economy has shifted from 39% in 1993 to 17% in 1998. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

## *Chapter Nine*

### *The Importance of the Associated Social and Economic Environment*

*Framework to the chapter:*

In this Chapter I investigate the importance to democratic support of the social and economic environment in which the current system has to operate. I divide the investigation into two parts. In Part 9.1 I explore the appeal of the environment associated with the current democracy (Issue 7). Then in Part 9.2 I test the relationship between democratic support and personal social and economic conditions/expectations (Issue 8).

#### **9.1 Issue 7 - The appeal of the social and economic environment**

##### **9.1.1 The environment**

*The 'freedom' association:*

The appeal of freedom, without state interference, has deep-roots in Polish society. This appeal has been explained in terms of historical experience,<sup>1</sup> as well as by the familiar arguments of culture change.<sup>2</sup> Democracy is a method of government that has become almost synonymous with accompanying freedoms. As early as 1981 Olejczki found that democracy was more associated in people's minds with freedom than with concepts of political participation.<sup>3</sup> By the early 1990s 64% of Poles in a survey associated democracy with, above all, some form of freedom.<sup>4</sup>

The appeal of democracy through the provision of liberties is not straightforward. The association that is made between liberty and democracy must be put into context. Democracy in Poland is not as significantly linked in people's minds

with the provision of ‘private space’ as elsewhere in post-communist countries. This is because the communist experience in Poland never significantly penetrated the private space of the citizenry. Instead, Poles experienced a gradualist line in which levels of independence were sustained (See Part 4.1.2). This point needs to be appreciated by those not familiar with Poland because of the tendency by many to be influenced by Western propaganda relegating all communist societies to ‘zero tolerance totalitarianism’. Certainly an active civic arena was lacking, but the private space of the family, peer groups and the Church was largely undisturbed.

A second point relating to freedom is that, as in all post-communist countries, the valuing of liberties in Poland has important limits. The calls for freedoms of association and information were loud during communism,<sup>5</sup> but the wave of enthusiasm for the introduction of an active civic arena was soon eroded by the experience of transition. As with the debate on public ‘participation’ (See Part 7.3), any argument relating the importance to society of political freedoms is weakened by the slow speed of civil society to become politically activated since 1989.<sup>6</sup> This is not to deny that, for some, the opening up of forms of political expression has been appreciated for its own sake. For instance, a free media might be valued for providing a more honest and varied flow of information.<sup>7</sup> Yet, for many the freedoms have exposed anti-liberal attitudes.

The forces of Catholic conservatism are openly anti-liberal now that they are ‘free’ to voice opposition. There has been a moral backlash against ‘liberal’ abortion policy and, more recently, against the availability of pornography.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, such conservative forces are hardly limited to religious segments flexing their new political muscle. Surveys may show a broad consensus agreeing to the existence of an independent media,<sup>9</sup> but a considerable minority of citizens believe in placing limits on that independence. In a CBOS survey from 1993, 32% of respondents believed that the press should be controlled simply because of its ‘disorientating’ effects.<sup>10</sup> Curtailing freedom of expression also had popular support on issues such as disrespect for Polish history, Polish-Jewish relations and religious tradition. Moreover, the value placed on freedom has diminished over the decade. In the few years between 1995 and 1997 those who valued freedoms over alternatives dropped from 37% to 31%.<sup>11</sup> So, despite

general support for liberty in abstract, Poles are not such passionate libertarians in practice.

A third factor is that the valuing of certain freedoms needs to be put into a 'material' context. Civil society has become activated in the arena of absorbing new forms of social expression. As an example, one need only think of the flowering of various kinds of 'light' papers and magazines, as well as the popularity of foreign travel.<sup>12</sup> But, such freedoms are of limited value without the resources with which to purchase such items as magazines and tickets for foreign travel. Accordingly, economic factors should not be ignored when acknowledging the wider importance of the associated environment to democratic support.

*The wealth association:*

In Poland the economic environment under the democratic system was generally perceived as positive by the late 1990s. As already discussed, the effects of 'shock therapy' were hard on the population, but since the middle of the 1990s Poland has experienced economic growth. Feeding a wider sense of optimism is the fact that the general population has experienced an increase in wealth. The gains have not all remained in the hands of an economic (and political) elite. A significant underclass may have developed, but by 1998 over half of the population had become satisfied with what it could purchase.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the prosperity from the economic growth has directly been associated with democracy. In a CBOS survey from 1995, 64% of respondents believed that people are generally wealthier in a democracy with only 14% believing that people are generally wealthier in a non-democracy.<sup>14</sup> Also of interest is that these figures are closely mirrored by perceptions of happiness. 64% of respondents from the same survey believed that people are happier in a democracy with only 8% believing that people are happier in a non-democracy.

#### **9.1.2 *The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

In this part of the investigation I explore the appeal of the environment associated with the current democracy. The exploration is based on data from the qualitative research. The free writing exercise is of particular importance with twenty nine responses relating democracy to an associated environment.

The investigation ascertains the liberal, material and, also, wider lifestyle associations with democracy. One objective is to ascertain whether the views of the sampling group related to Piotr Sztompka's perception of a culture change across society. For Sztompka the economic changes have resulted in cultural adjustments. These adjustments include a move to an entrepreneurial culture which, along with moves in civic culture, are described by Sztompka as a 'civilisation break'.<sup>15</sup> He argues that there is an increasingly dynamic quality to life in the new global economy as the young generation escapes from the influences of the past.

#### *The specific sampling group:*

As a young generation 'escaping' the influences of the past, the opinions of the sample group on questions of an economic and social nature could be particularly interesting. It should however be noted that the respondents could not be expected to be affected as the average citizen by the loss of economic 'security' and 'predictability' resulting from economic changes.<sup>16</sup> This is because, as an educated group those sampled would be expected to be more likely than most to gain materially from the economic changes under democracy,<sup>17</sup> and less concerned with their financial situation in the future.<sup>18</sup> Also, as a young group, they would be expected to be relatively untouched by deep financial concerns.<sup>19</sup>

#### **9.1.3 Results and interpretations**

I divide the analysis into three parts. First I concentrate on the responses that referred to economic/material associations. Second I concentrate on the responses that refer to liberties and notions of autonomy. Third, I concentrate on responses that incorporated elements of both economic and liberal associations. This latter part provides a more complete picture of the environment and accompanying lifestyle that relates to democracy.

#### *The economic environment:*

The positive economic associations with the word-symbol of democracy contrast strongly with negative economic associations with the word-symbol of

communism. Whereas democracy was linked in the respondents' minds to wealth creation, communism was linked to with economic factors such as 'strikes', 'queues' and 'poverty'. Fifteen responses referring to 'poverty' (See Appendix A). No response from either of the qualitative exercises related democracy to a 'less' affluent society. As one respondent wrote:

"Thanks to **democracy**, the life of the Polish nation has become easier and better. There is no need to queue and shops are full of various goods. Not only the supply has changed for the better, but also the financial possibilities. Free competition in the market made the development of private business possible. Therefore, the Polish are more prosperous."

The respondent concludes:

"Democracy has completely changed our way of life. It has made it better, at least in terms of the materialistic part of life."

Of further importance is to acknowledge how the association between wealth and democracy was conceived. Most responses (including the previous quote) related wealth to democracy through the success of the policy direction under the current system. As a further respondent wrote:

"It (democracy) gave people capitalism, opened the borders and created the free market. Consequently, we became much richer."

The responses indicated that for the sample group wealth is seen to result from the policy adopted under democracy of a move towards economic liberalisation. How such economic factors relate to democratic support will be discussed in Chapter 10, but for now I concentrate on the liberal environment associated with democracy.

*The freedom associations:*

Thirty eight responses to the word-symbol of communism referred to the interfering character of (past) state control. The associations included ‘obstructive’, ‘demagogic’, ‘aggressive’, ‘oppressive’ and ‘tyranny’ (See Appendix A). Further responses related communism to the human cost of interference. They included associations such as ‘enslaving’, ‘stifling’, ‘controlling’, ‘constraining’ and ‘submissive’. In contrast, democracy was associated with the removal of heavy-handed interference. Thirty eight responses to the word-symbol of democracy referred to the single notion of ‘liberty/freedom’. Furthermore, a total of fifteen responses from the free writing exercise related the current democracy to freedoms and autonomy (See Appendix B).

The most common association with freedom was ‘freedom of expression’. Four responses from the word association test related democracy to ‘freedom of expression/speech’. A further four responses from the free writing exercise related the current democracy to freedom of expression and one to freedom of information. As one respondent wrote:

“We are no longer subjected to various restrictions. We are free to say and do whatever we want to - these are the privileges of living in a **democratic** country.”

Numerous other responses related democracy to freedom of expression through the wider context of cultural enrichment. This concentration on freedom of expression was largely to have been expected. Across the post-communist region generally, the freedom most commonly related to democracy has been that of opinion/criticism.<sup>20</sup>

Of relevance to the issue of freedom is that one set of responses referred to freedom of movement. Four responses from the free writing exercise associated the current democracy directly with freedom of travel, with two further responses relating democracy to travel in a wider cultural context:

“The growth of tourism is a sign of the **democratic** changes which took place nine years ago.”

In more detailed terms, a further respondent wrote:

“Democracy allows people to travel easily abroad because citizens’ passports are kept by them at their home and not at the militia stations as before.”

Freedom of movement has not been found in other studies to be a commonly expressed value across post-communist Europe.<sup>21</sup> On an emotional level Poles have been closely linked to travel through a history of emigration. Freedom of movement might also be expected to be important to a young student population keen to experience new opportunities.

Also of relevance were two responses that related democracy to freedom of association. One was in terms of the Catholic Church and the other in terms of feminist groups. Finally, there were a considerable number of responses that related democracy to autonomy. Autonomy was conceived in positive terms. As one respondent wrote:

“The new **democracy** taught people that they are free to decide, that only they have the right to change their lives.”

Responses relating democracy to autonomy rebounded off the responses relating the word-symbol of communism to ‘uniformity’ and ‘destruction of the individual’ (See Appendix A). To conclude the findings suggest that autonomy as well as specific freedoms are an important part of the appeal of the current democracy.

#### *The wide picture:*

The purpose of this part of the analysis is to provide a wide picture of the social and economic environment associated with democracy. As already mentioned, freedoms and autonomy are of limited value without the resources with which to purchase such items as magazines and tickets for foreign travel. Also, material affluence may provide resources, but such resources are of little value without the basic freedoms to pursue activities such as foreign travel. As a consequence, I presume that

any wide picture of the environment/lifestyle associated with democracy must be based on responses that either explicitly or implicitly incorporate economic conditions with freedom associations.

A set of responses from the free writing exercise related democracy to an improved quality of life (See Appendix B). Freedom of expression, movement and personal autonomy were all related to pleasurable experiences. For instance, referring to travel, one respondent stated that:

“We can visit any country we want to, meet people from all walks of life and make new friends. We get to know their culture, customs and religion.”

Associating democracy with a pleasurable environment was in contrast to a set of associations with the word-symbol communism (See Appendix A). The word-symbol of communism was associated with responses such as ‘monotonous’, ‘depressing’, ‘grey’ and ‘boring’. Of particular importance is that the word ‘boring’ was repeated as many as five times. I suggest therefore that democracy is associated with a more stimulating environment than that under the previous (communist) system.

Also of interest was responses that related democracy to improved career opportunities. In the word association test, democracy was related to ‘equal opportunities in life’ and ‘equal chances’. This was reflected in the free writing exercise in which one respondent wrote that the new Poland has:

“...a **democratic** nation of good, efficient workers”, in which people  
“...learn to work efficiently. The new system is challenging and best  
for ambitious, hard working, creative people who are not afraid to take  
risks.”

These responses were in contrast to the associations with the word-symbol of communism. Communism was associated with ‘limited possibility’, ‘no perspective’, ‘no hope’ and ‘gloomy future’ (See Appendix A). Democracy therefore gained significant appeal as a political system associated with improved career opportunities.

So far I have stressed only positive associations with the environment that accompanies democracy. There were responses that referred to social issues in less positive terms. First, a set of responses indicated that democracy is associated with a breakdown of law and order. One respondent wrote:

“A rise in the crime rate is apparently one of the prices of **democracy** that society has to pay.”

A further respondent similarly wrote:

“The new conditions of a **democracy** are giving some room for all types of major and minor crimes, which turns out to be an extremely dangerous consequence of the new lifestyle.”

Another set of responses indicated that democracy is associated with a general weakening of social cohesion. Several respondents criticised the changing values of society. These included references to a shift towards more materialistic and individualistic values, as well as concerns over the ‘Americanisation’ of Polish society and a moral concern over exposure to pornography (See Appendix B).<sup>22</sup> Also of interest were associations with the word-symbol of communism that indicated a shared identity (since lost).<sup>23</sup> These responses to communism included ‘unified’ and ‘homogeneous’ (See Appendix A). So, although the current democracy may be associated with an environment of ‘greater’ pleasure and opportunity, it is also associated with concerns over both crime and a breakdown of social cohesion, i.e. with concerns over basic social insecurities.

*Final inference:*

Relating democracy to social insecurities reflected the general concerns in Polish society about what commonly get described as the ‘excesses of freedom’. Such responses could largely have been expected. As Samuel Huntington reminds us, “...democratisation involves removing the state constraints on individual behaviour, a

loosening of social inhibitions and uncertainty and confusion about standards of morality. ... although the evidence is sketchy and unsystematic, democratisation appears to involve an increase in socially undesirable behaviour, including crime and drug use, and possibly to encourage disintegration of the family and other bastions of collective authority.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, feelings of disorientation and physical insecurity have been widespread in the ‘new’ Poland. In 1993 72% of respondents in a CBOS survey agreed with the statement that ‘it is becoming harder to find any sense in the surrounding world’.<sup>25</sup> A survey has found that Poles are more likely to feel threatened by crime under democracy than under a non-democracy.<sup>26</sup>

Despite these social insecurities, in this study most of the relevant responses referred to the economic and social environment in positive terms.<sup>27</sup> From the free writing exercise, only five of the twenty nine relevant responses were negative. Rather, democracy was associated with increased wealth and freedoms that, in terms of the wide picture, provide a world of foreign travel, better television and, for these students, improved career opportunities. Therefore, the sample groups views do relate to those of Sztompka. I can infer that the group did mainly associate democracy to a positive ‘dynamism’ of modern life. Social concerns may have been present, but democracy was largely associated with an environment which, at the very least, offered more.

## ***9.2 Issue 8 – The support significance of social and economic variables***

Democracy may have been associated with a more positive environment, but the associations need not necessarily be significant democratic support factors. In this part of the investigation I test the relationship between democratic support and various social and economic factors.

### ***9.2.1 The importance of economic variables in other studies***

Before discussing the results of my empirical investigation, I summarise the support significance of the economic environment found in other studies. As with post-communist Europe generally, support for democracy in Poland has been found to be not closely related to levels of income of the individual. In 1999 60% of citizens earning less than 275 zł per week were democratic supporters which contrasted with

73% of citizens earning more than 799 zł per week.<sup>28</sup> This indicates a very weak relationship between income and democratic support.

It is the change in economic conditions under transition that has been shown to be a more significant support factor than current levels of income. This factor can be understood in terms of macro-economic conditions. As already documented, democratic support was at a low of 52% in 1991 following two years of economic decline and rising unemployment. Support then began to rise as a sustained period of economic growth set in. Nevertheless, the importance to support of the wider macro-economic conditions is difficult to distinguish from the importance of change on personal economic circumstances/expectations.<sup>29</sup> Rychard has stressed the significance to support of being a 'winner' rather than a 'loser' in economic change.<sup>30</sup> Certainly the number of democratic supporters reflects the amount who believe that their personal situation is better under democracy. In 1995 when 67% were polled as supporting democracy, a similar figure of 64% felt that they were personally wealthier in a democracy.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, a clear relationship between 'winners' and democratic supporters can be identified. In 1998 76% of 'winners' were supporters of democracy whereas 46% of 'losers' were supporters of democracy.<sup>32</sup> Such data indicates that being a winner is a relevant support variable, but with almost half of 'losers' still supporting democracy, the relationship should not be exaggerated.

Of further importance to democratic support has been the perception of 'future' economic conditions.<sup>33</sup> As Figure 8A from Part 8.2.1 shows, the dynamics of democratic support have followed a remarkably similar pattern to that in the belief in the current and future economy. Furthermore, such patterns are reflected in the importance to democratic support of personal economic expectations. Zagórski found that 'expectations' of material conditions was as strong an influence on people's evaluation of systemic change as 'experience' of material conditions.<sup>34</sup> In other words, the belief that one 'will be a winner' is as important to support as the belief that one 'is a winner'.

### ***9.2.2 The empirical investigation (aims and methods)***

In this part of the study I report on the tests of the support significance of personal social and economic factors, noting that the economic factors examined were

in part those found to be of interest when Issue 7 was considered. The social factors under analysis were 'religion', 'size of hometown population', 'gender' and 'course of study'. I categorise the economic factors under analysis into three separate areas of interest: 'wealth', 'experience of the leisure economy' and 'future work situations'.

There are two factors of wealth that are explored, both of which are concerned with 'family wealth'. The students were presumed to have experienced most of their lives in the economic conditions of their family and so family wealth was the most appropriate measure. The first factor referred to the 'change in family wealth'. Concentrating on the personal impact of the transition, I tested the importance of the direction of change in 'purchasing power' over the past decade (See Q7 in Appendix C). The second factor referred to 'current levels of family wealth'. The measurement of 'current family wealth' was slightly problematic because most individuals in the sampling group were not expected to possess the necessary knowledge for an accurate measurement. To lessen the margin of error therefore I used two questions designed to record a subjective and an objective measure of current family wealth (See Q8 and Q9 in Appendix C). These two sets of responses were then collapsed into a single scale for the purpose of measurement.

The interest in the 'experience of the leisure economy' was also divided into two factors: entertainment and travel. The 'entertainment' factor was based on how often such places as bars, restaurants, clubs and cinemas were visited (See Q6 in Appendix C). The 'travel' factor was based on the extent of foreign travel (See Q5 in Appendix C). Of further interest was whether the experience of the leisure economy related to democratic support independent of 'wealth', hence suggesting a qualitative influence based on enjoyment of the leisure economy.

The final area of interest was the importance to support of how it is understood economic change will effect the future work situations. The aspects of future work to which the questions related were 'future income' and 'future job security' (See Q10.1 and Q10.2 in Appendix C). Also of interest was whether 'future job security' related to support independent of 'future income', hence suggesting a qualitative influence based on future job insecurity.

*The specific sampling group:*

The sampling group is of particular interest because, as with post-communist Europe generally, the most important social factor that relates to democratic support has been the level of education.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, certain findings have suggested that both social and economic factors have had limited impact on political attitudes when controlling for the education variable.<sup>36</sup> The following empirical analysis is of importance therefore as it tests the support significance of various social and economic factors when the education variable is controlled.

### **9.2.3 Results and interpretations**

*A social picture (religious commitment and hometown population):*

Religion was not a significant support factor. As Table 9A illustrates, there was a tendency for 'practising Catholics' to be 'less' favourable towards democracy than others (others being 'non-practising Catholics', 'other beliefs' and 'non-believers'). However, the low level of significance in the chi-square test means that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The correlation coefficient is weak at -.06.

*Table 9A Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'practising Catholics':*

religion	practising other	democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
		193	44.3%	150	34.4%	93	21.3%
		128	50.2%	79	31.0%	48	18.8%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	2.28	>.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.06	.04	>.05

N = 691

Size of hometown population was of greater but still minor support significance. As Table 9B illustrates, there was a tendency for those from towns with smaller populations to be less favourable towards democracy. Though not strong, the correlation coefficient was -.09. This low correlation was not a surprise because size of hometown has been found to be a minor support factor in other pieces of research.<sup>37</sup>

*Table 9B Relationship between democratic support and hometown population:*

size of town	democratic support					
	certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
<10,000	67	41.6%	44	27.3%	50	31.1%
10,000-100,000	118	46.6%	92	36.4%	43	17.0%
>100,000	139	49.1%	94	33.2%	50	17.7%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	15.05	<.01

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.09	.04	<.05

N = 697

These statistics indicate that the strong democratic supporters were characterised by certain social differences, even amongst the controlled sample of university students. Those who are strong supporters of democracy tend to come from larger towns and not to be practising Catholics. A social explanation could be based on the conservative (authoritarian) influences on the rural and religious segments of the population. As illustrated in Table 12A in Appendix C, there is a link between the population size of a community and religious commitment. Alternatively, an economic explanation could explain the difference. The rural populations who happen to be more religious than urban counterparts have been insecure about the economic direction of change. The importance to support of these social variables found in my research is however marginal, hence the search for support explanations is best sought elsewhere.

*A 'gender' factor:*

One finding of note is the relationship between democratic support and gender. The cross-tabulation in Table 9C shows that females were less likely to be supporters of democracy. They were significantly more likely to be 'uncertain' about whether democracy is best. 17.8% of females did not know whether democracy is best, whereas only 5.6% of males did not know. Furthermore, the support relationship was not weak with a correlation coefficient of -.17.

*Table 9C Relationship between democratic support and gender:*

		sex			
		female		male	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
democratic support	certainly best	190	40.8%	134	58.0%
	rather better	163	35.0%	67	29.0%
	not best/better	30	6.4%	17	7.4%
	don't know	83	17.8%	13	5.6%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	21.09	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.17	.04	<01

N = 697

Findings that indicate a less favourable attitude towards democracy by women has been found in other studies.<sup>38</sup> Why might this gender difference occur? From a social perspective, it has been argued that women are more supportive of authoritarian values. As Waldron-Moore writes with respect to the region, "...because Eastern European women are found to accept traditional roles, to prefer the order and security of authoritarian rule, and to be less willing to accept political diversity, they are less likely to be supportive of change to a democratic system".<sup>39</sup> However, the argument on authoritarian values is contradicted by the finding that females were less likely to favour an authoritarian alternative (See Table 9D). From the grouping of 143 who did not state a belief in democracy, only 20.4% of the women favoured authoritarianism which contrasted with 33.3% of males. Females were found to have a high level of uncertainty about authoritarianism as with democratic support.

*Table 9D Relationship between 'gender' and the authoritarian orientations of those who did not state a belief in democracy:*

		sex			
		female		male	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
one authority	best/better	23	20.4%	10	33.3%
	not best/better	40	35.4%	15	50.0%
	don't know	50	44.2%	5	16.7%

N = 143

The gender factor might be better explained by the argument that females are less politicised than men. It might also be explained by economic factors. Traditional female occupations such as teaching have been hit hard by the economic changes.

Indeed, Table 12B in Appendix C shows that females were significantly less positive than males about the way that economic change will influence their 'future income'. Furthermore, 'future income' weakened the strength of the relationship between democratic support and gender (See Table 9E). By controlling 'future income', the correlation coefficient fell from -.17 to -.14. So, the data suggests that the 'gender factor' is in part explained by economic differences between men and women.

*Table 9E Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'gender' (controlling for 'future income'):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	-.17	-.14	<.001

N = 692

*The 'lucky' law students:*

One issue of interest is how the course of study undertaken by the sampled group related to support. I would suggest some caution with these interpretations because I only used a limited sampling of students from each course. However, one unavoidable observation is that the Law students were significantly more supportive of democracy than students from other subjects (See Table 9F). This observation by itself does not mean much, but its explanation is of importance.

Law students may have been more supportive of democracy because of a greater appreciation for the rule of law but, as with gender, the importance of economic factors cannot be ignored. Those undertaking Law are commonly from families who already practise within the relatively secure and prosperous legal profession. Therefore, of little surprise was to find that the law students were the most economically advantaged. This economic advantage is with respect to family wealth, experience of the leisure economy and future work situations (See Tables 12C in

Appendix C). The law students should be treated as the true economic beneficiaries of change.

*Table 9F Democratic support and course of study:*

	democratic support					
	certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Economics	45	42.9%	38	36.2%	22	21.0%
Law	86	69.4%	28	22.6%	10	8.1%
Languages	7	30.4%	12	52.2%	4	17.4%
Maths	12	32.4%	16	43.2%	9	24.3%
History	22	43.1%	15	29.4%	14	27.5%
Art	10	30.3%	13	39.4%	10	30.3%
Physics	17	44.7%	11	28.9%	10	26.3%
Polish	27	43.5%	23	37.1%	12	19.4%
Biology	17	47.2%	10	27.8%	9	25.0%
Pedagogics	31	43.1%	23	31.9%	18	25.0%
Geography	22	52.4%	15	35.7%	5	11.9%
Chemistry	28	37.8%	26	35.1%	20	27.0%

N = 697

*The importance of family wealth:*

The direction of change in the family's purchasing power was related to democratic support. As can be observed from the cross-tabulation in Table 9G, those whose purchasing power had improved were more supportive of democracy. 50.2% of those whose 'purchasing power' had 'considerably improved' were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. In contrast, only 27.5% of those whose purchasing power had 'worsened' were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. The relationship was not however strong. The chi-square test did not show a high level of significance and the correlation coefficient was weak at .1.

Table 9G      Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'purchasing power':

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
purchasing power	much better	102	50.2%	59	29.1%	42	20.7%
	slight better	152	50.2%	98	32.3%	53	17.5%
	no change	58	38.7%	57	38.0%	35	23.3%
	worsened	11	27.5%	16	40.0%	13	32.5%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	14.91	<.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.10	.04	<.01

N = 696

The relationship between 'current family wealth' and 'democratic support' reflected the relationship between change in 'purchasing power' and 'democratic support'. This similarity in support relationships was not unexpected because, as Table 12D in Appendix C illustrates, those whose current family wealth is 'above average' tend to be those whose purchasing power has 'improved'. The support significance of the current family wealth can be observed in the cross-tabulations in Table 9H. Only 12.8% from those whose family's wealth was 'above average' were 'non-believers/uncertain' about democracy. In contrast, 23.8% from those whose wealth was 'neither above average nor with savings' were 'non-believers/uncertain' about democracy. Nevertheless, the relationship that existed was weak with a correlation coefficient of .07, and the chi-square test showed that the null hypothesis was not able to be rejected.

Table 9H      Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'current family wealth':

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
family wealth	above average	79	53.0%	51	34.2%	19	12.8%
	other (saving)	143	44.7%	117	36.6%	60	18.8%
	other (no saving)	59	47.6%	36	29.0%	29	23.4%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	7.28	>.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.07	.04	>.05

N = 593

The weak relationships between the family wealth variables and democratic support indicate that current/experienced wealth is only a minor support factor. Nevertheless, a certain point of interest can be induced from the difference between the two tested 'wealth' variables. Of these two variables, the direction of 'purchasing power' was a more significant support factor than 'current family wealth'. This suggests that 'current' economic conditions are not as important to democratic support as the 'direction' of change in economic conditions. I will refer back to this point in the conclusions.

*The importance of experiencing the new leisure economy:*

As with wealth, experience of the leisure economy is of limited support significance. Table 9I shows that the more a respondent had travelled abroad, the more likely he/she was to favour a democracy. Similarly, Table 9J shows that the more that a respondent had experienced entertainment, the more likely he/she was to favour a democracy. Yet neither of the support coefficients were strong. With respect to

'foreign travel', the levels of significance were low and the correlation coefficient was weak at -.09. Experienced 'entertainment' was a more significant support factor, but the correlation coefficient was only a little stronger at -.11.

*Table 9I Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'foreign travel':*

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
foreign visits	zero	89	41.6%	65	30.4%	60	28.0%
	1 or 2	115	47.5%	87	36.0%	40	16.5%
	3 or 4	67	48.2%	49	35.3%	23	16.5%
	more than 4	53	52.0%	29	28.4%	20	19.6%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	12.73	<.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.09	.04	<.05

N = 697

*Table 9J Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'experienced entertainment':*

		democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
experienced entertainment	< 1	68	38.6%	55	31.3%	53	30.1%
	1	104	47.5%	79	36.1%	36	16.4%
	2	68	47.6%	50	35.0%	25	17.5%
	> 2	84	52.8%	46	28.9%	29	18.2%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	16.23	<.01

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.11	.04	<.01

N = 697

Does experience of the leisure economy relate to democratic support 'independent' of wealth? As already mentioned, if the relationships with the leisure economy are independent of wealth, then the data would suggest a qualitative influence on democratic support based on enjoyment of the leisure economy. Despite the weaker correlation coefficient, experience of 'foreign travel' was a support factor more independent of wealth than was experience of 'entertainment'. When controlling for the two wealth variables, the support relationship with 'foreign travel' weakened from -.09 to -.06 (See Table 9K). In contrast, when controlling for the same wealth variables, the support relationship with 'entertainment' collapsed from -.11 to -.03 (See Table 9L). From a sociological perspective, the experience of foreign travel might be understood as widening an individual's appreciation of democratic regimes. As such, it might be expected that the data would indicate a qualitative influence on democratic support. In fact at best it only indicates a marginal influence.

*Table 9K Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'foreign travel' (controlling for 'wealth variables'):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	-.09	-.06	>.05

N = 588

Table 9L Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'experienced entertainment' (controlling for 'wealth variables'):

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	-11	-.03	>.05

N = 588

*The importance of future work situations:*

The final analysis in this chapter tests the support significance of how the direction of economic change is understood as effecting work situations. As already mentioned, the work situations of interest were with respect to 'future income' and 'future job security'. Also of interest was whether or not 'future job security' was a support factor independent of 'future income', hence suggesting a qualitative influence on democratic support based on future job insecurity.

As the cross-tabulation in Table 9M illustrates, those who believed that economic change will positively effect their future income were significantly more likely than others to support democracy. 63.6% of those who believed that change would make their future income 'much better' were 'strong/certain' supporters of democracy. This contrasted with only 31.9% of those who believed that their future income would be 'worse' under the changes. As the chi square test illustrates, the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'future income' cannot be ignored, especially because the correlation coefficient is quite strong at .17.

Table 9M Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'future income':

	future income	democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
much better	future income	63	63.6%	22	22.2%	14	14.1%
slight better		173	47.3%	128	35.0%	65	17.8%
no change		59	42.4%	43	30.9%	37	26.6%
worse		29	31.9%	35	38.5%	27	29.7%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	25.42	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.17	.04	<.001

N = 695

As with 'future income', those who believed that economic changes will positively effect their 'job security' were more supportive of democracy (See Table 9N).<sup>40</sup> However, the strength of the relationship was weaker than that for 'future income'; a correlation coefficient of .17 against .10. Furthermore, when controlling for perceptions of future income, this relationship weakened to .05 (See Table 9O). The importance of job security could not, therefore, be treated as a significant support factor 'independent' of future income.

*Table 9N Relationship between 'democratic support' and 'future job security':*

	future job security	democratic support					
		certainly best		rather better		non believer/uncertain	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
much better	34	66.7%		11	21.6%	6	11.8%
slight better	109	44.9%		85	35.0%	49	20.2%
no change	97	50.0%		64	33.0%	33	17.0%
slight worse	66	42.9%		54	35.1%	34	22.1%
much worse	18	33.3%		15	27.8%	21	38.9%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	22.65	<.01

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.10	.04	<.01

N = 696

*Table 9O Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'future job security' (controlling for 'future income'):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	.10	.05	>.05

N = 691

*Final inference:*

The investigation shows that personal social and economic factors are of support significance, but that the significance is limited. The support significance was especially limited with respect to social factors and economic conditions/experience. Despite 'religion' and 'hometown population' relating to support, it was 'gender' that provided the most significant social factor. Also, 'purchasing power', 'current family wealth', 'experience of foreign travel' and 'experience of entertainment' were all found to have only limited support significance.

The only factors that are found to have meaningful support significance in this part of the analysis are those that refer to future work situations, i.e. those that refer to the future as a critical reference point. As such, the data suggests an explanation based in part on the economic hope factor that is discussed in the work of Offe and Przeworski. However, I would suggest that the hope factor should not be exaggerated as a support explanation. By the late 1990s the general population had become more

realistic in respect to economic expectations. Also, for a grouping of students, future economic conditions would be expected to be of personal importance.

Despite the limited the support significance of the factors examined, I would suggest there is one important support influence that can be induced from the findings. This factor refers to the significance of how the 'direction of economic change' is understood as effecting the individual, i.e. whether the individual is a 'winner' or 'loser' under the changes. The most important economic factors were not 'actual' economic conditions/experiences but, as Rychard has argued, the perception of how economic change effects the individual. From the wealth variables, the direction of change in the 'purchasing power' was of greater importance than 'current family wealth'. Reinforcing the support significance of the direction of change was the support importance of 'future income'. Those who believed that change will positively effect their future income were significantly more supportive of democracy than others. The data indicates that the subjective understanding of how change effects/will effect the individual is an important support influence. This influence is discussed in more detail in Part 10.22.

### **9.3 Conclusion**

In Part 9.1 I found that there were a considerable number of links in the respondents minds between support for democracy and changes in economic and social factors. These associations were not all positive. Democracy was associated with crime and a 'negative' social shift towards more individualistic and materialistic values. Nevertheless, for this grouping of university students the environmental associations with democracy were mainly positive. They were dominated by perceptions of increased wealth and freedoms that collectively offer a world of foreign travel, better television and improved career opportunities. In short, they were dominated by the perception of what Piotr Sztompka describes as the 'dynamism' rather than insecurities of modern life.

In part 9.2 I tested the importance to democratic support of a number of personal social and economic factors and found only modest relationships. I found that the social and economic conditions/experiences that were examined were not

significant support factors. Of course, there were untested economic conditions/experiences that might have been found to have support significance. We cannot be sure that the factors under analysis encapsulated all economic factors of significance, especially because change in Poland is both subtle and complex. Nevertheless, the findings generally suggest that democratic support does not significantly depend on existing levels of personal wealth. One factor of significance however is important; support significantly related to the understanding of how economic change 'effects/will effect' the individual. In the next chapter I analyse how economic factors collectively relate to democratic support.

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*Notes and references:*

<sup>1</sup> Poles have historically been seen as people who value liberty. The history of valuing ‘individual’ liberty can be related to as far back as the gentry’s taking of civil rights from the King. However, the cultural value is more commonly related to the long periods of subordination to foreign rule in which many Poles fought to maintain a separate cultural identity from the ruling states. It is this resistance to an erosion of cultural identity that has provided a deep valuing of such liberties. An example is the freedom of the Polish Catholic Church over the state.

<sup>2</sup> The shift in values has been towards favouring political liberties as well as political participation and empowerment. For instance, as early as 1981 Nowak showed that ‘youth’ were significantly more likely than their parents to support freedom of speech. S. Nowak, “Values and Attitudes of the Polish People” *Scientific American*, 245:1 (1981) 23-32. A similar pattern was found by Inglehart and Siemienksa who related the changes to the wider argument of post-material value change. R. Inglehart and R. Siemienksa, “Changing Values and Political Dissatisfaction in Poland and the West: A Comparative Analysis,” *Government and Opposition*, 23:4 (1988) 440-457.

<sup>3</sup> J. Olędzki, “Opinie Młodzieży Polskiej o demokracji burzliwnej i socjalistycznej,” *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 1:2 (1981) p.253.

<sup>4</sup> Data documented in J. Simon *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996).

<sup>5</sup> The call for political freedoms largely paralleled the call for public participation/empowerment. Amongst others, Timothy Garton-Ash in *The Opposition* distinguishes the demands for social self-organisation for political reasons from an absence of demands for a wider range of social and economic re-organisation. Indeed, it was under the weight of workers’ demands in the 1970s that the regime allowed a channel for political expression through accepting the creation of KOR. Even if the regime intended KOR to function as little more than an instrument through which workers could vent frustrations, the Committee soon took on a more potent role. As a representative structure, KOR provided the institutional framework which allowed the emergence of Solidarity and the subsequent rise of samizdat as an independent press.

<sup>6</sup> For a recent discussion on how Polish society has gradually adjusted to new forms of political activism, see Chapter 6 in F. Millard, *Polish Politics and Society*, London: Routledge, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> The belief in the right to free information is illustrated by the heritage of the underground media in response to the distrust of information during communist times. The rise of self-publishing was important with the majority of those interned during martial law in the crackdown of 1981 being involved in self-publishing.

<sup>8</sup> The friction between the values of Catholicism and a modern ‘liberal’ state is discussed further in M. Tatur, “Catholicism and Modernisation in Poland,” *The Journal of Communist Studies*, 7:3 (1991) 225-249.

<sup>9</sup> In 1995 82% agreed with the statement that the press should not be interfered with because it guaranteed freedoms. CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>10</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>11</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Stosunek do Demokracji," BS/152/152/97, Warsaw, 1997

<sup>12</sup> The sales of 'light' papers and magazines are documented in T. Goban-Klas, "Politics versus the Media in Poland: A Game without Rules," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transitional Politics*, 12:4 (1996) p.28.

<sup>13</sup> Levels of economic satisfaction across the post-communist region are documented in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer, 1991-1998*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> P. Sztompka, "Building Open Society and Perspectives of Sociology in East-Central Europe," *Contemporary Sociology*, 27:4 (1998) pp.330-32.

<sup>16</sup> Wnuk-Lipiński has suggested that the expansion of freedoms is perceived as little compensation to the loss of security and predictability. Accustomed to a more paternalistic society, Wnuk-Lipiński argues that freedoms have become associated by many with 'too much poverty, inequality, insecurity, obscene expression, selfishness over community spirit and erosion of unity'. Wnuk-Lipiński, "Economic Deprivations and Social Transformations" in W. Adamski (ed.), *Social Conflict and Systemic Change: The Case of Poland 1980-92*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1993.

<sup>17</sup> Those with a higher education are more likely than less educated counterparts to materially benefit from wealth creation. For example, in January 1998 only 19% of those with a higher education did not have enough money to buy necessary clothes and shoes. This contrasted with 55% of those with only primary education. Reflecting this data, 72% with higher education had enough money to experience cultural experiences such as visiting concerts or theatres. This contrasted with 53% of those with only primary education. CBOS, "Aspiracje Materiałne Polskich Rodzin," BS/4/4/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>18</sup> In January 1998 14% of those with higher education described themselves as either worried or very worried about their financial situation. This contrasted with 32% of those with further education, 52% of those with vocational training and 64% of those with only primary education. CBOS, "Polskie Rodziny – Poczucie Bezpieczeństwa Materiałnego i Zagrożenia Biedą," BS/87/87/98, Warsaw, 1998. It is argued by Rychard that the higher educated understand the changes better and, as a consequence, are able to adapt to the changes better than less educated counterparts. This leaves the educated less prone to the 'psychological costs' of transition. On the 'cultural capital' of the educated see A. Rychard, "Beyond Gains and Losses: In Search of Winning Losers," *Social Research*, 63:2 (1996) 465-485.

<sup>19</sup> In January 1998 38% of those aged between 18 and 24 described themselves as either worried or very worried about their financial situation. This contrasted with 45% of those aged 35-44 and 53% of those aged above 64. CBOS, "Polskie Rodziny – Poczucie Bezpieczeństwa Materiałnego i Zagrożenia Biedą," BS/87/87/98, Warsaw, 1998. For the way that changes generally are perceived by the youth in the

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region, see P. Macek, C. Flanagan, L. Gally, L. Botcheva and B. Csapo, "Post-communist Societies in Times of Transition: Perceptions of Change Amongst Adolescents in Central and Eastern Europe," *Journal of Social Issues*, 54:3 (1998) 547-561.

<sup>20</sup> Documented in J. Simon, *Popular Conceptions of Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 273 (1996).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Only 2% of Czechs and less than 1% of Hungarians related freedoms to those of 'movement'.

<sup>22</sup> Despite the social concerns of many from the sampled group, youth have been shown to be less concerned than their elders with social issues. Only 10% of the youth believed that 'restoring' social harmony/stability was the underlining need for the country which contrasted with 37% of those aged between 55 and 64. CBOS, "Nadzieje i Obawy Polaków," BS/41/99, Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>23</sup> Tymowski examines what he describes as the shattering of the collective community in A. W. Tymowski, "Poland's Unwanted Social Revolution," *East European Politics and Societies*, 7:2 (1993) 169-202. Konarski has warned of the cognitive attraction of nationalism for the preserving of group identity, especially in times of material insecurities in which 'foreign' influences can be held to blame. W. Konarski, "Modern Nationalist Tradition in Poland," in Bozóki, A (ed.), *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>24</sup> S. P. Huntington, "Democracy for the Long Haul," *Journal of Democracy*, 7:2 (1996) p.7.

<sup>25</sup> CBOS, "Demokracja i Polityka," BS/101/82/93 Warsaw, 1993.

<sup>26</sup> In a CBOS survey from 1995, 57% of respondents believed that people feel more threatened by crime under a democracy with only 23% believing that crime is more threatening in a non-democracy. Furthermore, in the same survey 12% blamed their dissatisfaction with democracy on governments' inability to cope with crime. CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>27</sup> As already mentioned, youth have been shown to be less concerned with social conflict and division. See CBOS, "Nadzieje i Obawy Polaków," BS/41/99, Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> CBOS, *Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych*, BS/59/99, Warsaw (1999). Levels of income have not proven to be an important determinant of support for the broad direction of change. In 1994 Zagórski showed that income has little significance on the level of support for change ( $r = 0.13$ ). K. Zagórski, "Hope Factor, Inequality, and Legitimacy of Systemic Transformations – The Case of Poland," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 357-376.

<sup>29</sup> The reasoning behind this relationship with macro-economic factors can in part be explained through a sociotropic dimension to Poles' economic understanding. The sociotropic understanding of the economic situation is shown in L. Kolarska-Bobińska, "An Economic System and Group Interests," in W. Adamski (ed.), *Societal Conflict and Systemic Change: The Case of Poland 1980-1992*, Warsaw: IFIS Publishers, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> For a wider discussion on the winner-loser model, see A. Rychard, "Beyond Gains and Losses: In Search of Winning Losers," *Social Research*, 63:2 (1996) 645-85. Certainly those who positively

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evaluate their family's living conditions under the transformations are more likely to possess positive attitudes towards socio-economic transformations. In 1994 Zagórski documented that changes in family's living conditions are strong determinants on the evaluation of changes ( $r = 0.41$ ). K. Zagórski, "Hope Factor, Inequality, and Legitimacy of Systemic Transformations – The Case of Poland," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 357-376.

<sup>31</sup> In the same surveys 17% were non-supporters, and 14% felt that in non-democracies they were wealthier. The data on 'wealth in democracy' is recorded in CBOS, "Społeczna Wizja Ustroju Demokratycznego," BS/118/99/95, Warsaw, 1995.

<sup>32</sup> CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji," BS/78/78/98, Warsaw, 1998.

<sup>33</sup> In Poland this 'future' perspective has been particularly important with Polish society being described by Tarkowska as 'a waiting society' because of historic experience. E. Tarkowska, "A Waiting Society: The Temporal Dimension of Transformation in Poland," *Polish Sociological Bulletin*, 102:2 (1993) 93-102.

<sup>34</sup> K. Zagórski, 'Hope Factor, Inequality, and Legitimacy of Systemic Transformations – The Case of Poland', *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 357-376. Similarly, Markowski found a strong relationship between 'trust in institutions' and 'prospects for the future'. R. Markowski, "Trust in Institutions in East Central Europe at the Beginning of Transformation" in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Democratic Legitimacy in Post-communist Societies*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>35</sup> The importance of education as a support variable has been shown throughout the 1990s. For example, Zagórski showed that the only objective variable that significantly related to support for transformation (including democratisation) was level of education. K. Zagórski, "Hope Factor, Inequality, and Legitimacy of Systemic Transformations – The Case of Poland," *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 27:4 (1994) 357-376.

<sup>36</sup> Education was argued to be the most important factor that explains political attitudes in J. Frentzel-Zagorska and K. Zagorska, "Polish Public Opinion on Privatisation and State Interventionism," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 45:4 (1993) 705-728 and, T. Tyszka and J. Sokołowska, "Perceptions and Judgements of the Economic System," *Journal of Economic Psychology* 13:3 (1992) 421-448.

<sup>37</sup> There is little evidence indicating that those citizens living in a rural setting are less positive about the functioning of democracy. However, CBOS surveys have shown a tendency for those from the countryside to be more 'uncertain' in their support attitudes. For instance, in 1999 26% of those from the countryside were unable to say whether democracy is a better system of government which contrasted with 8% of those from cities of over half a million. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99 Warsaw, 1999.

<sup>38</sup> In 1999 20% of women were unable to say whether democracy is a better system of government which contrasted with 12% of men. Also, where an attitude is expressed, women tend to be less concrete in their judgements. In the same survey only 12% of women were strong/certain supporters of democracy which contrasted with 18% of men. CBOS, "Społeczna Ocena Demokracji i Instytucji Politycznych," BS/59/99 Warsaw, 1999.

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<sup>39</sup> P. Waldrow-Moore, “Eastern Europe at the Crossroads of Democratic Transition – Evaluating Support for Democratic Institutions, Satisfaction with Democratic Government, and Consolidation of Democratic Regimes,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 32:1 (1999) p.37.

<sup>40</sup> Job insecurity amongst those with a university training should not be overlooked. A CBOS survey in 1999 which ranked the fears of respondents showed that 23% of those with higher education feared losing work which contrasts with 19% of those with only primary education. However, of importance is the level of job insecurity felt amongst those with vocational training. 37% of those with vocational training feared losing work. Another finding relating to this issue was that those with higher education are significantly less likely to fear poverty. 3% of those with higher education feared poverty which contrasts with 12% of those without primary education. CBOS, “Nadzieje i Obawy Polaków,” BS/41/99, Warsaw, 1999.

## *Chapter Ten*

### *The Causal Path*

#### *Framework to the chapter:*

In this final part of the investigation I set out to explain how economic factors relate to democratic support (Issue 9). I do not presume that economic factors when inter-related can lead to a unifying factor that determines the level of support.<sup>1</sup> There can be multiple explanations of support, with non-economic factors also being of importance. However, the findings reported in earlier parts of the thesis show that economic factors are of special importance, and so their inter-relationship is worthy of investigation.

The analysis is divided into two parts. In Part 10.1 I investigate the relationship between 'economic conditions' and 'ownership belief' as support factors. Then in Part 10.2 I concentrate on developing the causal path that is inferred from Part 10.1.

This investigation involved analysing the interrelationships between economic variables and democratic support. As mentioned in Part 5.4.4, I avoided the use of regression analysis. This was because the ordinal scaling system did not provide the range of answers necessary for meaningful regression analysis. I do not therefore provide firm statements referring to the direction of causality. Nevertheless, through partial correlation I have been able to ascertain the path by which economic factors relate to democratic support, and this has allowed me to suggest causal relationships. Indeed, in the various causal paths suggested in this chapter, an 'arrow' sign illustrates the most likely order of relationships based on the partial correlation analysis.

#### ***10.1 Issue 9 - Economic conditions and ownership belief related to support***

##### ***10.1.1 Theoretical background***

The support explanations of such theorists as Przeworski and Offe concentrate on the importance of personal economic conditions/expectations (See Part 2.3.1 for the

theoretical foundations). From these theorists' perspective, the support significance of 'ownership belief' is secondary to that of 'economic conditions'. As is illustrated in Path A, 'economic conditions' are presumed to be the central influence on democratic support. 'Ownership belief' may statistically relate to democratic support, but in such a causal path this statistical relationship is an indirect consequence of 'economic conditions' influencing both 'ownership belief' (an economic belief) and 'democratic support' (a political belief).<sup>2</sup>

*Path A:*

$$\text{Ownership belief} \leftarrow \text{Economic conditions} \rightarrow \text{Democratic support}$$

An alternative causal path is suggested by Evans and Whitefield in which 'ownership belief' is of central importance to democratic support. What is important in this alternative path is the rejection of the presumption that 'ownership belief' only relates to democratic support as an indirect consequence of 'economic conditions'. This alternative path does not reject the support significance of 'economic conditions'. As illustrated in Path B, the 'economic conditions' explain democratic support only insofar as they influence a change in 'ownership belief'.

*Path B:*

$$\text{Economic conditions} \rightarrow \text{Ownership belief} \rightarrow \text{Democratic support}$$

### **10.1.2 Evidence**

The data collected for this study provide only a small amount of evidence that can be said to support Path A. From Issue 8, I ascertained that 'existing economic conditions' were moderately related to democratic support (those conditions being 'direction of purchasing power', 'current family wealth', 'experience of entertainment' and 'experience of travel'). Furthermore, in Tables 12E, 12F and 12G in Appendix C, I

show that these economic conditions were only moderately related to 'ownership belief'. Therefore, some support has been found for the relationships in Path A.

Other, stronger, evidence was however found that contradicts the relationships expressed in Path A. First the 'economic conditions' were not strongly related to either 'ownership belief' or 'democratic support'. So, the implication is that 'economic conditions' were, at most, of marginal influence on support.<sup>3</sup> Second, in stark contrast to 'economic conditions', 'ownership belief' was strongly related to democratic support.<sup>4</sup> So, the findings suggest that 'ownership belief' is significantly more important to the support explanation than 'economic conditions'. Third, and most important, the study has also shown that 'economic conditions' were subordinate support factors when compared with 'ownership belief'. When controlling for 'ownership belief', the relationship between the 'economic conditions' and 'democratic support' dwindled to the point of little significance (See Table 10A). In contrast, when holding all four of the 'economic conditions' constant, the support significance of 'ownership belief' barely altered. As Table 10B illustrates, the correlation coefficient fell from .32 to .29. So, it appears that the support significance of 'economic conditions' is not independent of 'ownership belief', but the support significance of 'ownership belief' remained largely independent of 'economic conditions'.

*Table 10A Partial correlation showing the relationships between 'democratic support' and 'economic conditions' (controlling for 'ownership belief').*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variable)	Level of sig. (with control variable)
Purchasing power (of family)	.10	.04	>.05
Current wealth (of family)	.07	.04	>.05
Experience of foreign travel	-.09	-.02	>.05
Experience of Entertainment	-.11	-.08	<.05

Table 10B Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'ownership belief' (controlling for 'economic conditions'):

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	.32	.29	<.001

N = 682

I infer from analysing the data that Path A should be rejected as an explanation. The support significance of economic circumstances was marginal, and the significance was largely dependent on the importance of 'ownership belief'. The data indicated that democratic support is better explained by Path B. Ownership belief was a highly significant support factor. Also, the significance was largely independent of economic circumstances. In the next part of this chapter I concentrate on developing the understanding of this causal path.

## 10.2 Developing the causal path

### 10.2.1 The importance of a macro-economic belief structure

In this section I am interested in how 'ownership belief' relates to 'democratic support'.<sup>5</sup> I test whether 'ownership belief' as a support factor depends on 'economic effectiveness'. If so, then the suggestion is that 'ownership belief' relates to 'democratic support' by reinforcing a belief in the economic effectiveness of the current democracy. The causal path of interest is as follows:

*Path C:*

*Ownership belief → Economic effectiveness → Democratic support*

The relationship between 'ownership belief' and 'economic effectiveness' was strong with a correlation coefficient of .42 (See Table 10C). Furthermore, when controlling for 'economic effectiveness', it was found that the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'ownership belief' was considerably weakened. Table 10D illustrates that the correlation coefficient fell from .32 to .14. Hence, 'ownership belief' was not a support factor independent of 'economic effectiveness'. The suggestion is that a belief in the change in the direction of the level of private ownership does reinforce democratic support through encouraging the perception of an economically effective political system. As in Path C, the picture is one in which democratic support is influenced by a belief in the economic direction of change.

*Table 10C Relationship between 'ownership belief' and 'economic effectiveness':*

		effectiveness (on economy)					
		certainly best		rather better		not best/know	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
Ownership belief	much priv	113	40.6%	126	45.3%	39	14.0%
	slight priv	28	16.2%	94	54.3%	51	29.5%
	no change	19	9.5%	82	40.8%	100	49.8%
	more pub	1	2.6%	14	35.9%	24	61.5%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	128.66	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.42	.03	<.001

N = 691

Table 10D Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'ownership belief' (controlling for 'economic effectiveness'):

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variable)	Level of sig. (with control variable)
Correlation	.32	.14	<.01

N = 688

### 10.2.2 The importance of the individual

The analysis reported above suggests that a macro-economic belief structure is at the centre of the support explanation. The belief structure cannot be expected to influence democratic support in complete isolation from the economic circumstances/expectations of the individual. What follows reports on a test of whether the belief structure is in part related to democratic support because of an understanding of how the economic changes will effect 'future income'. The causal path of interest is as follows:

*Path D:*

*Future income → Ownership belief → Economic effectiveness → Democratic support*

The findings suggest that 'future income' does relate to 'democratic support' through the macro-economic belief structure (as shown in Path D). A significant relationship was found between 'future income' and 'ownership belief' (See Table 12H in Appendix C). It was also found that the recorded relationship between 'future income' and 'democratic support' was largely dependent on 'ownership belief'. When controlling for 'ownership belief', the support relationship fell from .17 to .09 (See Table 10E). Therefore, I conclude by suggesting that the macro-economic belief

structure relates to democratic support because of an understanding of how economic change effects/will effect the individual.

*Table 10E Partial correlation showing the relationship between 'democratic support' and 'future income' (controlling for 'ownership belief'):*

	Value (without control variable)	Value (with control variables)	Level of sig. (with control variables)
Correlation	.17	.09	<.05

N = 687

### 10.3 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide a picture of how economic factors relate to democratic support. The fact that regression analysis could not be used means it is not possible to make a firm statement on the direction of causality. Nevertheless, the results indicate that democratic support is significantly founded on a macro-economic belief structure. 'Ownership belief' influences democratic support by encouraging the perception of the economic effectiveness of the current regime. The results also indicate that such an influence cannot be separated from personal economic factors. These personal factors may only indirectly relate to democratic support, but support is in part rooted in an understanding of how the macro-economic changes in Poland effect/will effect the individual. The path showing how economic factors relate to democratic support is as follows:

*Path E:*

*Economic conditions*  
+  $\rightarrow$  *Ownership belief*  $\rightarrow$  *Economic effectiveness*  $\rightarrow$  *Democratic support*  
*Future income*

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***Notes and references:***

<sup>1</sup> My research has indicated that democratic support is 'influenced' by a number of factors rather than being 'determined' by a single universal factor. The research seeks to identify and understand these influences through multivariate analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Theorists such as Przeworski and Offe may have presumed that macro-economic beliefs encouraged economic hope in the early years of transition, but unless material circumstances began to approximate to expectations, the presumption was that democratic support would be withdrawn.

<sup>3</sup> A certain level of caution in this interpretation is necessary because there are other economic variables that have not been tested. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, 'economic conditions' have been shown to be weak support factors in other studies.

<sup>4</sup> As reported in Chapter 8, the relationship between 'ownership belief' and 'democratic support' was strong with a correlation coefficient of .32. In contrast, as reported in Chapter 9, the strongest relationship between 'existing economic conditions' and 'democratic support' was with a correlation coefficient of only .11.

<sup>5</sup> The association is not a holistic association but, rather, is based on an understanding of the direction of policy under democracy. A holistic association is not realistic. In the early years of transition, Poles may have been presented with a holistic package of both political democratisation and economic liberalisation, but conceptual confusion faded during the 1990s. Rather, as this study has illustrated, the current democracy is closely associated with the policy direction of a move towards economic liberalisation.

## *Chapter Eleven*

### *Conclusion*

#### *11.1 The context and contribution of the study*

##### *The investigation in context:*

The objective of the thesis is to provide an explanatory picture of democratic support in post-communist Europe. I mean by democratic support ‘a preference for a democratic system of government over alternatives’. Post-communist Europe is an interesting region in which to study such support (See Chapter 3). Citizens across the region have expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy. There is no widespread affection for the young democratic regimes. The post-communist countries have undergone difficult economic transitions that have led to periods of considerable hardship. Yet, despite these challenging political and economic conditions, democratic support has been sustained.

My empirical study targeted what might be expected to be a relatively optimistic group in Polish society. As such, the study was well placed to be able to explain why democratic support has been sustained in the post-communist region. Before summarising the conclusions to the study, the investigation requires putting into context.

First, my findings are based on a case study and so the data that I have assembled relates to a targeted group. The findings must be understood in the context of a group of Polish university students at a period of relative economic optimism (For a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the case study see Part 4.2.2). These students are not a representative group of the whole Polish nation. Nevertheless, the sample group mainly came from the mid-west of Poland which is a more or less average region for that country. Also, my direct access to this particular group meant that I did not depend on ‘volunteers’, hence the group was a good representation of the

student population in Poland. It is in this context that the results and interpretations are open to wider elaboration and generalisation.

Second, my findings do not pretend to provide a complete explanation of democratic support. There is not one determining factor that can explain support. Rather, as my findings show, a number of factors can explain support. The empirical study has attempted to identify the support explanation/s that dominate, but it is possible that certain factors that may have some importance in the explanation of support are not identified in this research. I show factors that are important, but not necessarily all factors that have influence.

*The contribution to the discipline:*

This research has made what I believe to be two important contributions to the discipline. The first relates to the empirical design. My objective which is to identify the support explanation/s that dominate was achieved because the empirical design allowed me to make a detailed investigation into the broad explanatory picture of democratic support. By adopting a case study method I was able to target one group and to fuse qualitative with quantitative research methods. The usage of two original qualitative research exercises served the purpose of exploring the 'emotive' and 'rational' appeal of democracy. The usage of a quantitative research technique allowed me to test the factors of interest that had been illuminated in the qualitative research. This fusion of research techniques provided a unique process of triangulation which I believe to be an important contribution to the discipline.

The second contribution to the discipline relates to the interpretations that have resulted from these research methods. I show the importance to democratic support of various economic factors and beliefs. Of particular importance is that democracy is associated with greater rewards than under the past (communist) system because of the direction of economic change. Furthermore, I also suggest that democratic support is related to what I describe as a 'protective support buffer'. This 'buffer' has resulted from an understanding that democracy is still able to provide levels of state protection (See Part 11.3.2 for the explanation). Indeed, I believe that the main contribution of this work is that it indicates that democratic support is founded on an association with a

wide systemic equilibrium between capitalist provided enrichment and state provided protection.

## ***11.2 Summary of research findings***

What follows is a summary of the findings from my study. I bring together what has been learned from each of the issues under investigation. This leads into Part 11.3 which looks at the wider ramifications of the findings with particular reference to post-communist Europe.

### ***11.2.1 The importance of the instrumental perspective***

My empirical study explored the explanatory power of the affection-based and instrumental-based explanations. In Issue 1 I investigated the affection-based explanation and found that the word-symbol of democracy does appeal through a moral-based affection (See part 6.2). This finding backed Filipowicz's argument that the popularity of democracy in Poland depends on the widespread perception of its moral 'right'. The result that linked democracy to a sense of moral right suggests that democratic support is strong.

Two further findings did however cast doubt on this implication. First, the moral affection partly reflected an emotive rejection of the word-symbol of communism. This indicated that the strength of affection depends as much on a reaction against the past (communist) system as on any deeply imbedded cultural appreciation of democracy. The reactionary base to the appeal of democracy supports Richard Rose's rationalist perspective that the appreciation of democracy depends on a comparative preference to that of the past regime. Second, in Issue 2 I investigated the instrumental explanation and found that any affection-based explanation of support is difficult to separate from instrumental reasoning (See Part 6.3). Though exceptions were evident, democratic support was in general difficult to separate from the belief in the effectiveness of the current democracy, especially with respect to the economy. So, affection for democracy may be the basis of some reservoir of support, but an affection-based explanation is difficult to distinguish from instrumental factors.

### ***11.2.2 A weak appreciation of democracy 'for what it is'***

Chapter 7 is concerned with whether or not democratic support can be founded on what Gibson and Rose have suggested is an appreciation of the benefits of the political system. The sample group was of particular interest with respect to this explanatory perspective because, theoretically, the group should have been more sympathetic than most to the democratic system. Poles have been closely linked to a democratic heritage, and arguments based on culture change suggest that democratic government appeals more to the 'young' and 'educated' than society at large. Despite the theory, no evidence was found to suggest that democratic support in this group was significantly founded on a belief in 'what it is'.

In Issue 3 I investigated the importance to democratic support of a political hope factor (See part 7.2). This was based on Kolarska-Bobinska's suggestion in the early 1990s that democratic support depends on a belief that the current democracy will improve. I found no evidence that by the late 1990s any significant hope factor remained. Instead the findings suggested that the current democracy by the late 1990s was mainly being understood as the system that was 'here to stay'.

In Issue 4 I investigated whether democratic support has been founded on a widespread belief in the 'political role of the citizen' (See Part 7.3). The democratic system often sells itself in terms of providing an effective political role for the citizenry. The sampled group was one that was expected to be sympathetic to political input. Political empowerment has been stressed as a value throughout Polish history and, in keeping with the ideas of Lipset and Inglehart, the educated youth are supposed to be sympathetic to democratic values. The findings from this research however showed that the political role of the citizen was of limited support significance, even amongst the grouping of university students. I found that the ideas of public empowerment may have appealed, but the appeal did not relate to democratic support. I therefore concluded that the political role of the citizen is not a significant enough value to motivate democratic support.

In Issue 5 I investigated whether democratic support has been founded on a widespread belief in the competitive pluralistic power structure (See Part 7.4). I found limited evidence to support this explanation. Despite some respondents praising the 'balance' in pluralistic power arrangements, most were negative about the competitive

behaviour in pluralistic democracy and the perception of a ‘chaotic’ system was common. The daily bickering of ‘persons in suits’ is not an endearing characteristic of democratic politics in any part of the world. In Poland the competitive character of politics is not only conflict ridden but also contradictory to the traditional emphasis on a collective interest. It would appear that Polish society needs both time and for intense political rivalry to settle down before warming to pluralistic power arrangements.

I do not wish to overstate the importance of these findings. Most of the interpretations were based on the qualitative study. More research is necessary in order to be confident about the inferences being made. My findings do however indicate that democratic support has not been founded on an appreciation of what democracy is as a system of government. No significant appreciation of political pluralism was present. Also, despite the fact that the political role for the public had appeal, this appeal was not valued enough by the individual to motivate democratic support.

### ***11.2.3 Understanding the economics behind support***

The investigation has shown that various economic factors are of importance to democratic support. In this section I explain how these factors are of importance. First I explain the significance of personal economic (and social) factors. Then I explain the support significance of the economic belief systems. This leads me into a discussion in Part 11.3 on their wider implications.

#### *The association between democracy and the social and economic environment:*

In Issue 7 I explored the social and economic environment that is associated with democracy (See Part 9.1). A certain set of responses on democracy and the environment were not positive, most notably those that referred to an increase in crime. Responses referring to such social concerns were not however as widespread as responses referring to positive (economic) associations. Democracy was widely associated with increased wealth and freedoms that together painted a picture of a world of foreign travel, better television and improved career opportunities. Relating to Piotr Sztompka’s interpretation of change in society, the young group being investigated associated democracy with a positive dynamism rather than the insecurities of modern life. The association was with what Sztompka refers to as the ‘civilisation

break'.<sup>1</sup> I draw a parallel with what the famous economist Joseph Stiglitz has described as a more dynamic economy offering the advantages of competition, communication, innovation and, maybe most important to the grouping of students, the 'incentives' that were in short supply under the past (communist) system.<sup>2</sup>

With Issue 8 I tested the support significance of personal social and economic factors (See Part 9.2). Despite identifying widespread associations with positive lifestyle adjustments, in general I found only modest relationships between democratic support and personal social/economic factors. Both social factors and current economic conditions/experiences were of minor support significance. Of some interest was that 'gender' provided the most significant social factor. I suggested that this is because females are less politicised than men and because traditional female occupations such as teaching have been hit hard by the economic changes. Of further interest were findings that supported Rychard's argument that support depends on people feeling like they are 'winners' with the changes taking place. In particular, the findings suggested that an important support factor is feeling like one 'will become a winner' in the future. For this young sample group, of importance was how the direction of change was understood as going to effect their 'future income'.

#### *Democracy 'for the economic direction':*

With Issue 6 I ascertained the strength of the relationship between democratic support and the belief in the economic direction of change (See Chapter 8). I showed that the current democracy was being associated with the move towards greater private enterprise. I also showed that democratic support is significantly related to a belief in the move towards privatisation. This is an interesting finding by itself and re-confirms similar relationships identified by Zagórski in the early 1990s with respect to Poland and by 'Evans and Whitefield' with respect to post-communist Europe.

This relationship between 'ownership belief' and 'democratic support' was at the centre of a causal explanation of support considered in Issue 9. Personal economic conditions/expectations are commonly put at the centre of the causal explanation,<sup>3</sup> but I found that these personal economic factors largely related to democratic support through 'ownership belief' (See Part 10.1). Applying this finding to what I have already induced, personal economic factors are of support significance only in so far as

they are understood as being effected/going to be effected by the broad economic changes towards private ownership.

I also found that 'ownership belief' was related to democratic support through a wider macro-economic belief structure. 'Ownership belief' influences democratic support through encouraging perceptions of the economic effectiveness of the current regime. The resulting causal path that I induced from analysing these economic factors was as follows:

*Economic conditions*

+                   → *Ownership belief* → *Economic effectiveness* → *Democratic support*

*Future income*

The causal path puts an economic belief system at the centre of the support explanation. This result might to some extent be due to the fact that the sample group being analysed was highly educated and, therefore, had a good understanding of the macro-economic changes. Nevertheless, the implications of this causal path it will be argued stretch well beyond the specific case study.

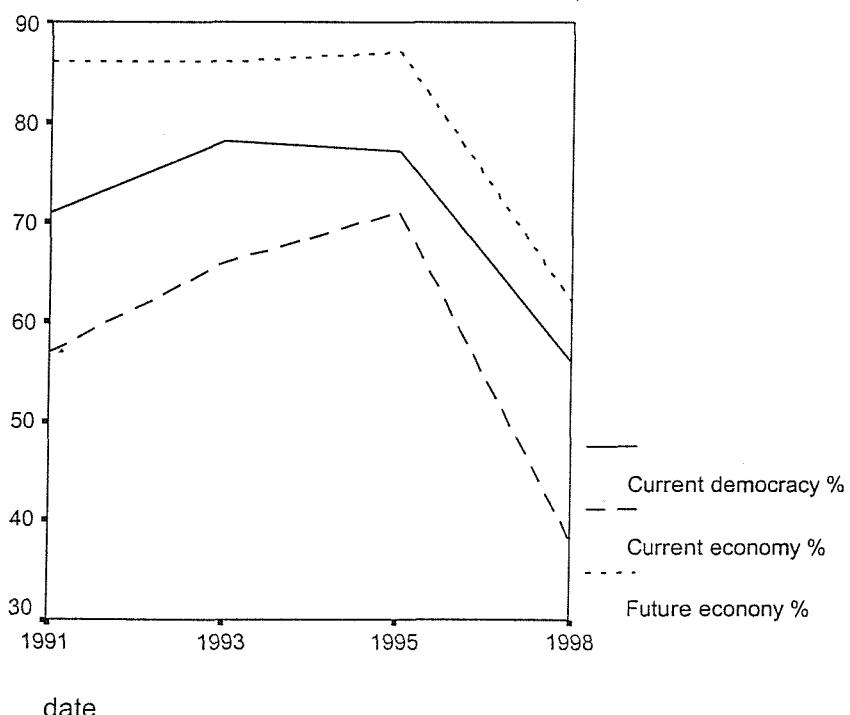
### **11.3 The wider implications**

#### **11.3.1 An economic success story in context**

The study has demonstrated that democratic support is closely related to a belief in the macro-economy. Figure 8A in Part 8.2.1 illustrated how support for the current democratic system in Poland has paralleled support for the current and future economy. This unavoidably links democratic support in Poland to an economic success story. After all, it is the economic success that has fed optimism about the macro-economy. As the largest market in Central Eastern Europe and with a ready supply of 'entrepreneurial spirit', Poland has undergone a prolonged period of economic growth resulting in a large middle class.<sup>4</sup> As Timothy Garton-Ash observes, in this economic environment it is hard to resist "the pressures of a Western consumerist, entertainment model of 'normality' ...."<sup>5</sup>

This economic success story must be put in context, along with its support implications. First, for large sections of Polish society economic optimism is in short supply.<sup>6</sup> Second, the Central Eastern European region is generally ‘advantaged’ by possessing the geo-political influences that are able to sustain a certain belief of democracy.<sup>7</sup> Across many of the more eastern European post-communist societies positive feelings towards the new economic order have been in short supply. In these societies prolonged periods of economic difficulties, not to mention concerns over crime and corruption, have laid the seeds of doubt that weakens the belief in both the economic and political systems.<sup>8</sup> Third, even amongst the more fortunate Central Eastern European countries, support for the political and economic systems are not immune to the effects of an economic downturn. As Figure 11A illustrates, both political and economic support collapsed in Czech during the economic downturn between 1995 and 1998.<sup>9</sup>

*Figure 11A Democratic support, economic support and support for the future economy during the 1990s in Czech:*



Source: New Democracies Barometer I, III, IV and V recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

Post-communist Europe is of particular interest for the study of democratic support. The degree of economic success has varied from one country to another, hence the effect of economic factors on democratic support can be observed. In the case of the Czech Republic, democratic support remains vulnerable to economic influences. Yet, as Hartyl explains, the loosening of the safety net across the post-communist region has 'not' resulted in an explosion of the political status quo.<sup>10</sup> The findings in my empirical study suggest why economic difficulties across the region have not led to the widespread erosion of support. In Part 11.3.2 I discuss the importance of a 'protective support buffer'. Then in Part 11.3.3 I discuss the implications of this support buffer with respect to removing the appeal of an alternative to democracy.

### ***11.3.2 The protective support buffer***

The findings from my empirical study suggest that economic difficulties have not significantly led to the widespread erosion of support because of a 'protective support buffer'. In statistical analysis from Part 8.2.4 I found that democratic support was significantly related to the appealing feature of increasing private ownership. It was not however related to the far less appealing feature of reducing state intervention. This indicates that the popularity of democracy has been founded on the associated belief in private enterprise but not eroded by hostility towards reduced levels of state protection.

From this inference I reason that democracy is therefore associated with a more dynamic economy than under the (communist) past and, also, with being able to provide a protective buffer against the resulting insecurities. For those experiencing the 'difficulties' of the new economics, democracy is still understood as able to provide levels of state protection. In effect, democracy is associated with the ability to provide a wide systemic equilibrium between capitalist provided enrichment and state provided protection.

I would suggest that this systemic equilibrium has largely resulted from the mechanism of democracy. Citizens' votes across post-communist Europe have resulted in political players who have followed a 'gradualist' approach to economic liberalisation.<sup>11</sup> The social costs of reform have therefore been damped. In making

such a proposition I am not stating that economic conditions are better as a result of gradual liberalisation. According to the perspective of Balcerowicz, more speedy economic reform early in transition would have provided the wealth for more prosperity and systemic stability in the long-term. I am suggesting that putting the breaks on painful economic reform has limited the spread of a simplistic association between democracy and crude ‘uncaring’ capitalism. Instead of the current democracies, it is the demands from international organisations such as the IMF, World Bank and, increasingly, the EU that are associated with being ‘uncaring’.<sup>12</sup>

### ***11.3.3 The lack of an alternative***

The association between democracy and ‘protective capitalism’ results in removing the oxygen to pro-authoritarian reactionism. In my own research I found that ‘negative economic conditions’, ‘low economic expectations’ and ‘no belief in private ownership’ all related to weaker levels of democratic support. Yet, no evidence indicated that those respondents who had such opinions were especially drawn towards an authoritarian alternative. The economic characteristics of the small grouping of ‘pro-authoritarians’ were indistinguishable from those who did not state a belief in democracy (See Part 8.2.4 with respect to ‘ownership belief’ and Tables 12I and 12J in Appendix C with respect to ‘economic circumstances’). Furthermore, support for an authoritarian alternative was limited. Whereas approximately 20% of those sampled did not indicate a belief in democracy, less than one in four of those sampled supported an authoritarian alternative (See Part 6.1).

Even though my sample group may not have been representative of a complete cross section of the population of the post-communist region, the association between authoritarianism and a protective state is weak across most of post-communist Europe. Even where nostalgia for the past ‘protective’ economy is strong, the number that prefer a return to the past system remains limited. For instance, though in 1998 75% of Bulgarians believed that the socialist economy worked well, only 24% supported a return to the past political system. Similarly, in the same year 70% of Hungarians supported the socialist economy but only 23% supported a return to the past political system.<sup>13</sup> Certain exceptions are evident, but democratic support is not widespread amongst those believing that democracy offers little chance of removing ongoing

economic difficulties. An example of a country where such a belief dominates is Ukraine. Economic hardship and low levels of economic optimism have led to Ukrainians' increasing preference for a return to the past political system. By 1998 51% of Ukrainians wanted to restore the former communist regime.<sup>14</sup> Across the wider region however there has been a broad rejection of the protective regimes of the past with the effect of stabilising democratic support across most of post-communist Europe.

#### ***11.4 Final statement***

My findings suggest that support for democracy is largely rooted in macro-economic belief structures. Democracy may widely be understood as breeding conflict and may even be associated with insecurities not experienced for generations in countries such as Poland, but democracy is generally associated with the direction of change away from the socialist planning of the past and towards a better world. Democracy is associated with the policy direction that removes the comparative failure of the state-dominated economies of old. As such, my findings support Rose's focus on the rejection of the past as an explanatory factor for democratic support.<sup>15</sup>

My findings indicate that young democracies not only received support because they are seen as providing the rewards of global capitalism, but also because they are seen as having sweetened the bitter taste. Even when an individual's macro-economic beliefs are against the move towards marketisation, support can be found for democracy because it offers the protective role of the state. Democracy has become associated with a kind of systemic equilibrium providing protection in parallel with the benefits of a global capitalist economy. I would suggest that this protection is what has allowed the stability of a new order across post-communist Europe. The cover of state protection from the democratic system combined with the opportunities for improvement is sufficiently attractive to prevent the paternalistic alternative from gaining support. Even when democratic commitment is weak, the authoritarian replacement is not attractive.

There is a need to acknowledge that this macro-economic explanation is largely specific to the case of young European post-communist democracies. I would not therefore want to make too sweeping generalisations with respect to the wider

ramifications. However, two of the ramifications are worth suggesting. First, I suggest that the region has illustrated the importance to democratic support of wider (economic) systemic associations. In post-communist Europe the association is particularly strong because democratisation has been accompanied by a distinct change in the economic direction with a move towards global capitalism. A similar pattern can be found elsewhere such as across much of Africa and South America.<sup>16</sup> Second, I suggest that post-communist Europe has illustrated the importance of allowing the democratic mechanism to put its own brakes on moves towards global capitalism. As most established Western democracies in the twentieth century have shown, an important means of subduing the popularity of totalitarian regimes is to be sensitive to economic difficulties and concerns.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, I conclude with a warning that sets of elite in young democracies must respond to citizens' insecurities, as well as aspirations, if democratic support is to stabilise.

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**Notes and references:**

<sup>1</sup> P. Sztompka, "Building Open Society and Perspectives of Sociology in East-Central Europe," *Contemporary Sociology*, 27:4 (1998) pp.330-32.

<sup>2</sup> J. E. Stiglitz, *Whither Socialism?*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Amongst others, Przeworski and Offe presumed that support would collapse if socio-economic expectations were unsatisfied. Such approaches would acknowledge that macro-economic beliefs relate to democratic support, they would interpret the relationship as an indirect consequence of economic circumstances (See Path A in Chapter 10).

<sup>4</sup> As already discussed, Poland has been economically successful compared to other European post-communist countries. Despite the consistently high unemployment figures, Poland was the first former communist country to record economic growth since the communist collapse. By 1995, the economy reached a growth rate of approximately 7%, which was broadly sustained for the following three years (See Table 4A in Part 4.1.3).

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Garton Ash, *History of the Present*, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1999, p.412.

<sup>6</sup> For a significant minority, very real political and socio-economic concerns exist about the direction of 'progress'. Take, for example, the fear that 'what the communists couldn't do with tanks, the capitalists are doing with banks'. In more concrete terms, two of the most concerned social groupings today are the small-scale farmers and the factory workers who feel that their livelihood is threatened by further European integration and accompanying liberalisation.

<sup>7</sup> The proximity to the European Union is a clear benefit to Central/East Central European countries such as Poland. Those countries that are wider afield have no such organisations with which to rationalise the advantage of becoming democratic and capitalist. For a wider discussion, see L. Whitehead, "Eastern Europe a Decade Later: Geography and Democratic Destiny," *Journal of Democracy*, 10:1 (1999) 74-80. For the shared Southern and Eastern European advantages of proximity to the Western symbols of encouragement, see Attila Ágh, "The Comparative Revolution and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe," in G. Pridham (ed.), *Transitions to Democracy*, Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> In Romania support for the current democracy slumped from 69% in 1991 to 60% in 1995 following a significant decline in optimism in the economy. The percentage who supported the future economy similarly slumped from 77% to 61% in the same years. The most negative support figures are east of Poland in Ukraine and Russia. In Ukraine support for the current democracy has peaked at only 33% in 1995 when a mere 16% supported the current economy and 41% supported the future economy. Data recorded by the Paul Lazarsfeld Society and recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp.33-37.

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<sup>10</sup> J. Hartyl, "Perceptions of Social Safety in the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary and Poland," in A. Bozóki (ed.), *Problems in Legitimacy in Eastern Europe*, Budapest: T-Twins, 1994.

<sup>11</sup> A phenomenon of not only Poland but much of the region was for citizens to turn against the process of liberalisation as the pains of reform set in. As discussed in Chapter 3, this has commonly resulted in a return to power of the 'reformed' communists who possess a more cautious attitude towards change.

<sup>12</sup> In Poland there has been a fall in the appeal of EU membership in the near future. CBOS surveys showed that support for membership in Winter 2000 still stood at above half of the population. However, the number who would prefer 'no' membership was almost 30%. The Economist, "Pole's Ambivalence Towards EU," January 11, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Data is recorded in R. Rose and C. Haerpfer, *Trends in Democracies and Markets: New Democracies Barometer 1991-98*, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, Studies in Public Policy, No. 308 (1998).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> The findings reconfirm the importance of Easton's push-pull perspective as a support explanation (See Chapter 3). There may be no great love of democracy, but it is seen as preferable to the alternative.

<sup>16</sup> The pattern spread into much of Latin America and Africa in line with a rejection of authoritarian experiences. See L. Diamond, M. F. Plattner and T. Evans, *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993. Of particular interest for a further study would be to conduct a cross-national comparison to ascertain the differences and similarities in what democracy really means to people across the globe. For instance, Africans in the aftermath of civil and regional war cannot be expected to have the same 'visionary' associations with democracy as those Europeans in the aftermath of communism.

<sup>17</sup> One need only think of the importance of 'The New Deal' under Roosevelt to boost the economy through government interference during the Great Depression as a means of subduing the growth of communism across North America. The same can be said to have happened with the adoption of Keynes' economic policies in post-war Britain and elsewhere.

## *Appendix A*

### *The Word Association Test*

#### *A note on the order of presentation:*

The word association test was designed to collect associations with two specific word-symbols of interest: 'communism' and 'democracy'. As discussed in Chapter 5, respondents were fully aware that they were participating in a research exercise. I did however want to prevent them knowing the word-symbols that were of interest to me. This level of secrecy was necessary so that those who had participated in the test would not at any time discuss the theme under analysis with those who were still to participate in future tests. The means by which I hid the identity of the word-symbols of interest was to present them amongst a list of ten nouns. I presented the list of ten nouns in the following order:

- Mountains
- Buddhists
- Bill Clinton
- Democracy
- Marriage
- Poland
- Babies
- Communism
- The Irish Pub
- Alcohol

The order of presentation was designed with two specific points in mind. First, I did not want the associations with 'communism' to simplistically deflect the associations with 'democracy' were separated from one another in the order of presentation. Second, I wanted the respondents to approach each of the two nouns of

interest with ‘neutral’ rather than ‘prejudiced’ thoughts. Therefore, the two nouns of interest were positioned between ‘light’ nouns that ‘amused’ the respondents rather than build up prejudices. Below I present ‘all’ of the recorded responses to the word-symbols of ‘democracy’ and ‘communism’. The responses to the word-symbol ‘democracy’ are recorded in their coded categories, and responses to the word-symbol of ‘communism’ are recorded to reflect these categories (See Figure 5B in Chapter 5 for the coded categories). I also indicate the responses that I have not used in the analysis.

### ***Responses to the symbol of ‘democracy’:***

#### ***1. Emotions/Attitudes:***

##### *i. Moral affection:*

- ‘legal’ – ‘good’ x9 – ‘equality’ x20 - ‘fairness’ x29 (fairness including ‘just/fair’ x22, ‘human rights/right’ x7).
- ‘unjust’ – ‘unfair’.

##### *ii. Wider affection:*

- ‘popular’ x3 – ‘positive’ x2 – ‘great’ – ‘happy’ – ‘proud’.
- ‘stupid’.

##### *iii. Comparative:*

- ‘necessary’ x4 – ‘needed’ – ‘important’ x4 – ‘the best’ x2 – ‘essential’ x2 – ‘the only solution’ – ‘agree’.

iv. *Time:*

*Sub. Democracy as complete:*

- ‘new/here’ x2.

*Sub. Democracy as incomplete:*

- ‘elusive’ – ‘hard/difficult to make work’ x4 – challenge for us.

*Sub. Democracy as false:*

- ‘utopian’ x4 – ‘fairy tale like’ – ‘impossible’ x4 – ‘slogan’ – ‘untrue’ – ‘unreal’ - ‘false’ x2 – ‘artificial’ – ‘non-existent’.

2. *Role of the citizen:*

i. *Broad associations:*

- ‘for the common man’ - ‘role of the people’ - ‘people power’ x2 - ‘the power of everyone’.

ii. *Delegative system:*

- ‘truly free elections’ – ‘we choose politicians’.

3. *Pluralistic structure:*

- ‘well organised’ – ‘well balanced’ – ‘flexible system’ – ‘flexible’.
- ‘messy’ – ‘chaotic’ – ‘wild’ – ‘not good for making decisions’.

4. *Behaviour of authorities:*

i. *Responsiveness:*

- ‘greedy leaders’ – ‘pompous’.

ii. *Type of interaction:*

- ‘noisy politicians’ – ‘quarrelsome’ x2 – ‘hype’ – ‘bad to watch’.

iii. *Quality:*

- ‘tolerant politicians/leaders’ x3 – ‘objective governments’.

5. *Output:*

i. *General output (results of policy):*

- ‘advantageous’ – ‘brings successful results’ – ‘good for what it brings’ – ‘useful’ x4.
- ‘doubting how successful’ – ‘useless’.

ii. *Direction of policy:*

- ‘freedom/liberty’ x38.

6. *Liberties:*

i. *Expression:*

- ‘freedom of speech/expression’ 4.

ii. *Economic:*

- ‘capitalism’.

*ii. Autonomy:*

- ‘expressing our free will’.

**7. *Social and economic situation:***

*i. Material situation:*

- ‘material success’ – ‘materially better’.
- ‘uneven wealth’.

*ii. Opportunity:*

- ‘equal opportunities in life’ – ‘equal chances’.

*iii. Values:*

- ‘creating liberal minds’ – ‘individualism’ - ‘materialism’.

*iv. Social order:*

- ‘law and order at last’.

**8. *Others (not incorporated into the analysis):***

*i. Symbolic associations:*

- ‘ancient Greece’ – ‘ancient’ – ‘US/America’ x6.

*ii. Democratic institutions:*

- ‘parties’ x2 – ‘parliament’.

*iii. Not categorised:*

- ‘demanding’ – ‘tricky’ – ‘fashionable’ – ‘something we forget about’ – ‘not likely to continue’ – ‘idea’ x3 – ‘ambiguous’ x3 – ‘non-democratic’ – ‘words’.

*Responses to the symbol of 'communism':*

**1. Emotions/Affection:**

*i. Moral affection:*

- 'bad' x5 – 'wrong' x3 – 'evil/wicked' x3 – 'bad idea' – 'inequality' – 'unfair/unjust' x6.
- 'equality'.

*ii. Wider affection:*

- 'unpopular' x2 – 'narrow minded' – 'sick system' – 'overrated' – 'annoying' – 'anger' – 'awful' – 'horrible' x5 – 'stunk' – 'filthy' x2 – 'hatred' – 'stupid' x6 – 'ridiculous' x2 – 'crazy' – 'nonsense' – 'crazy' – 'funny tragedy' – 'good riddance'.

*iii. Time:*

*sub. Past:*

- 'defeated' – 'fallen'.

*sub. Present:*

- 'has influence on today'..

**3. Structure of system:**

*i. Positives:*

- 'efficient' x3 – 'political efficiency' – 'powerful'.

*ii. Negatives:*

- 'clumsy system'.

**4. *Behaviour of authorities:***

*i. Responsiveness:*

- ‘lies’ x2 – ‘deceitful leaders’ – ‘patronising’.

*ii. Quality:*

- ‘useless people’.

**5. *Output:***

*i. General output (results of policy):*

- ‘harmful policies’ – ‘painful’ – ‘damaging our country’ – ‘useless result’
- ‘destructive’ – ‘ineffective’.

*ii. Direction of policy:*

- ‘no freedom’ x4 - ‘totalitarian’ x11.

**6. *The illiberal environment:***

*i. The specific character of state interference:*

- ‘obstructive’ x2 – ‘restrictions’ x3 – ‘demagogic’ – ‘strict’ – ‘orders’ – ‘not tolerate anything’ – ‘rigorous’ – ‘oppressive’ – ‘intimidation’ – ‘terrorise’ x6 – ‘beating people’ – ‘killing’ x2 – ‘censorship’ – ‘wall surveillance’ – ‘purges’ – ‘cruel’ x5 – ‘emotionless’ – ‘inhumane’ x2 – ‘aggressive’ – ‘bloody’ x3 – ‘merciless’ x2 – ‘harsh’ – ‘tyranny’.

*ii. The human cost from interference:*

- limiting 4 - ‘dangerous’ x4 – ‘overwhelming’ x2 - ‘enslaving’ x2 – ‘stifling’ x2 – ‘controlling’ x2 – ‘constraining’ – ‘dependent’ - ‘lots of fear’ – ‘threatened’ – ‘submissive’.

7. *Social and economic associations:*

i. *Material situation:*

- ‘free education’ – ‘good for Mr. Average’.
- ‘blocks’ – ‘food stamps’.
- ‘poor’ x5 – ‘poverty’ x10 – ‘hunger’ – ‘hard times’ – ‘strikes’ – ‘empty shelves’ – ‘queues’ x5 – ‘grey’ x6 - ‘dirty town’.

ii. *The public mood:*

- ‘boring’ x5 – ‘monotonous’ – ‘unhappy life’ – ‘unhappy people’ – ‘discontentment’ – ‘depressing’ – ‘sad people’ – ‘people don’t value themselves’.

iii. *Opportunity:*

- ‘limited possibility’ – ‘no perspective’ – ‘no hope’ – ‘gloomy future’ – ‘pessimistic’.

iv. *Values:*

- ‘uniformity’ - ‘destruction of the individual’.

v. *Feelings of collective identity:*

- ‘unified’ - ‘homogeneous’.

8. *Others (not incorporated into the analysis):*

i. *Communism as unrealised:*

- ‘paradise’ – ‘utopian’ – ‘great idea only’ – ‘paradoxical’ – ‘naive’ x2 – ‘false’ – ‘nice idea but impractical’ – ‘Orwellian world of animals’.

ii. *Symbolic associations:*

- ‘red’ x10 - ‘great names’ – ‘Lenin’ – ‘Russia x3’ – ‘China’.

*iii. Not categorised:*

- ‘black’ - ‘overrated’ – ‘funny’ - ‘strange to understand’ – ‘complicated’
- ‘hopeless’.

## *Appendix B*

### *The Free Writing Exercise*

Below I present all of the recorded responses that referred to democracy from the free writing exercise. I document them in their appropriate categories (See Figure 5B in Chapter 5 for the coded categories).

#### *1. 'Time':*

##### *i. Democracy as complete:*

- “Democracy is booming now....”

##### *ii. Democracy as incomplete:*

- “We haven't got a democratic system yet. We are still developing it fully and learning how it operates and what democracy actually means.”
- “As far as present Polish conditions are concerned, we still need a lot of time and lots of changes before we can say there is democracy in Poland.”

##### *iii. Democracy as false:*

- “My personal opinion is that what is called ‘democracy’ in Poland is not a real democracy, but an artificial monster allowing a part of our community to be in a position that they do not deserve to be in.”

2. *Role of the citizen/nation:*

i. *National empowerment:*

- “We no longer depend on the Soviet Union. We are a free country and no one tells us what to do. If we are in trouble, we can only blame ourselves. ...we have our own opinions and do what we think is right.”
- “Now Poles are entitled to decide on political matters of their motherland on the grounds of being members of a democratic country.”
- “Poland as a nation won its freedom back. We now do what we as a people think is best.”

ii. *Role of the citizen:*

*Sub. Limited ‘delegative’ democracy:*

- “Politically we as a nation now have the right to choose, but the wrong people in power.”
- “Democracy is an improvement. It allows the carrying out of free rather than phoney elections giving us greater power to choose.”

*Sub. Representative democracy:*

- “...the majority of citizens can find a party that suits their political views.”

*Sub. Representative-participatory democracy:*

- “Thus, Polish people have been given the choice to choose the party that they want to belong to or they want to be represented by. Polish people understand that they are the ones who decide about the future of their country. They can feel that they are in control of what is happening in their country since they have been given the rights guaranteed by democracy. ...it is democracy which allows the Poles to choose their president and government by common referendum. All adult citizens share in the government through their electoral representation.”

*Sub. Wider participatory democracy:*

- “People have the opportunity to belong to any political party which represents their own ideas or opinions.”
- “There is freedom of speech, religion and political views. It means a lot for those who felt somehow limited by the previous system. They can express their attitudes in public and belong to any political party they want to.”
- “Governing the country, at the local and central level, has become the interest of an average citizen who wants to decide on what is going on in the country. People are more and more aware of their rights and they are learning how to decide on their future. This explains the growing interest in running for parliament or local governments.”

*Sub. Participatory-delegating democracy:*

- “In some ways we as a society have the rights to influence the political life in our country. ...we choose our politicians and have the freedom to interfere in their works, meaning we are equally responsible for our country.”

**3. *Pluralistic structure:***

*i. Balanced structure:*

- “Various persons either on TV or in newspapers lament over a messy political situation in Poland these days. They say that in hardly any country apart from Poland you can find over a hundred political parties. But, when you have a closer look, you realise that only three or four parties are really important and influential, so the situation is actually in perfect shape. Besides, pluralism is a much more stable form of state, just like a three-legged stool is more stable than the one with one leg only.”

*ii. Disordered structure:*

- “One of the drawbacks of democracy is that a large number of parties have appeared on the Polish political scene. It is especially visible during elections when there is a rush to win as many voters as is possible.”

- “At the beginning of transition everything seemed to be prepared perfectly. Nowadays, however, there is such a big mess in politics and the economy that no one is able to state what is done properly or improperly. What makes me furious is the political system in Poland. In communism we had one major political party and a very small opposition. Now, when it comes to any election, I am really getting lost in what is going on in our political scene.”

4. *Behaviour of authorities:*

i. *Responsiveness:*

*Sub. Inensitive elite:*

- “An abnormal thing in our politics is our politicians. Although the AWS is in the majority, its members are no better than those of the SLD because they all share one common feature: to get as much money from politics as possible. Not everybody knows that the richest people in Poland are connected with senators and ministers etc. They earn ten or fifteen times more than people I know, despite often being more stupid than me. What allows them to be respected is their expensive clothes, cars and good perfumes. It is enough to listen to their senseless speeches in parliament to call them uneducated, if not stupid.”
- “Politically we now have freedom of rights but the wrong people have power and have started to use those rights for their own purposes. Power must be put in loyal and wise hands.”
- “The system has changed but the mentality of politicians remains the same. Once they are in office, only one aim is to be achieved: to become rich, powerful and influential as soon as possible.”
- “It is true that millions are exploited by the politicians and businessmen. It is like history repeating itself and nothing can be done about it.”

*Sub. Sensitivity and representative quality of elite:*

- “Politicians have changed a lot. They have become more representative in regard to both their look and the overall behaviour. Polish politicians, at least some of them, are better educated, use better Polish and some can even speak a foreign language.”

*ii. Quality:*

- “...we have new governments and people with a good attitude who, at last, are interested in our country's matters and not their own.”
- “Now we are in a democracy we are free from communist ideology. We get treated better from those in authority - as individuals and not as part of the grey mass.”

**5. Output:**

*i. Specific policy:*

- “I am really angry and becoming more and more fed up with our politics. Every time when I hear about any rise of prices I get furious. Why? For the last few years my family has been given almost the same amount of money by the state, but the prices keep on going up and very quickly. Isn't it ridiculous! And there are even people whose situation is much worse than ours.”
- About the early period of transition in respect to taxation, he states, “At that time the law was the subject of quick changes and transformations. But, maybe because it was created in too much of a hurry in an atmosphere of excitement, the law was both imprecise and inconsistent. This resulted in a situation in which it was quite easy to avoid the law when helped by a clever lawyer which is why, since 1989, there have been so many scandalous and shameful offences and crimes in Poland. ...almost all firms and ordinary tax payers have since tried to avoid those rules so as to pay less money to the government.”

*ii. Direction of policy (non-interfering elite):*

- Responding to a common criticism that nowadays politics in Poland seems to be only a struggle for power and money, the subject writes “I am afraid that they have always been like this. Be it in ancient Rome or Greece, wars broke out because some emperors wanted to acquire new lands and slaves, wanted to spread their influence over a larger area. Still, another example to convince the critics is the frightening lessons of the recent past. People got arrested, persecuted and even killed on political grounds not so long ago. This does not happen today and, so, it is a real nonsense to state that the political situation got worse.”

*iii. Direction of policy (towards economic liberalisation):*

- On the direction of changes in 1989, he/she states “There was little to guide the new leaders, worried that their plans for radical change would be overtaken by economic collapse, civil war and authoritarianism. If the new leaders lacked a specific guidance on how to manage the transition, they agreed on the final destination: that a centrally controlled economy does and cannot work. ...they have embarked on a grand and noble conversion into a system of freedom and a free market.”
- “...Polish society learnt about Western Europe and America. Our country's leaders got the chance to follow better patterns, get rid of communist legacies of huge interference and change the drastic economy.”
- “We have been provided with a democratic constitution granting lots of freedom and a range of other laws. This is the source of possibilities thanks to which the Poles are improving the condition of the economy.”
- “Open borders changed the Polish market. The government started to import goods from Europe and America and also export Polish goods there. This meant that the material situation in Poland got better.”

**6. Liberties:**

*i. Expression/information:*

- “Rzeczpospolita Polska is a **democratic** country now. Such rights as freedom of speech, religion, opinion and association are no longer broken in Poland.”

- “We are no longer subjected to various restrictions. We are free to say and do whatever we want to - these are the privileges of living in a **democratic** country.”
- “There is **democracy** in freedom of speech. People are more or less equal and can express their views freely - the most positive change.”
- “Living in a **democratic** country makes people feel their freedom. Freedom of speech gives us the right to express different opinions on matters.”
- “In contemporary **democratic** Poland, the media provide people with relatively accurate, unbiased information. Radio Three, for example, broadcasts programmes with politicians representing different political views.”

*ii. Movement:*

- “In a **democratic** system all people are equal and have equal rights.” As an example the respondent continues to focus on the right to be free to travel. “The democracy of our country can now be observed in the increasing number of Poles travelling all over the world. We no longer need the permission from authorities to have a passport.” The respondent concludes, “The change in the political system in Poland definitely improved the way of life of Polish people. They can now fully decide about themselves.”
- “The growth of tourism is a sign of the **democratic** changes which took place nine years ago.”
- “**Democracy** allows people to travel easily abroad because citizens’ passports are kept by them at their home and not at the militia stations as before.”
- Responding to ‘**democracy**’, “Since communism we have open borders to travel.”

*iii. Association:*

- “...Since we have had **democratic** governments, teaching religion is really welcomed in all kinds of schools.”
- “The new **democratic** system enabled the coming of new feminist organisations into existence. This is important as feminists try to change the mentality of society: that is the way we perceive the role of women in our culture.”

iv. *Autonomy:*

- “Until 1989 there was no such thing as **democracy**. Now all Polish people have freedom of thought, freedom of speech and the right to choose the way of life that they want to live.”
- “The new **democracy** taught people that they are free to decide, that only they have the right to change their lives.”
- “Unlike in communist times, everybody living in a contemporary **democracy** has a right to take matters into their own hands.”
- “In a **democratic** system all people are equal and have equal rights. For instance, very important politicians no longer have the power to decide about other lives.”

7. *Social and economic situation:*

i. *Material situation:*

- “**Democracy** gave people much more freedom enabling them to do what they really want to do. It gave people capitalism, opened the borders and created the free market. Consequently, we became much richer.”
- “With **democracy** more and more countries started being interested in our market, which is observable from day to day. This has meant that Poland is changing for the better with us becoming richer.”
- “Thanks to **democracy**, the life of the Polish nation has become easier and better.” The respondent continues with a description of the improvement in the quality and quantity of goods available. “There is no need to queue and shops are full of various goods. Not only the supply has changed for the better, but also the financial possibilities. Free competition in the market made the development of private business possible. Therefore, the Polish are more prosperous.” The respondent concludes, “Democracy has completely changed our way of life. It has made it better, at least in terms of the materialistic part of life.”
- “**Democracy** creates chances for a better lifestyle. The American president, Abraham Lincoln, said that when one starts poor, as he must do in the race of

life, free society is such that he knows that he can better his conditions. He knows that there is no fixed condition of labour for his whole life. Naturally it can be accepted that the advantages coming from democracy are visible to everybody. However, one should take into account that Poles have dealt with democracy for a short time and the positive effects cannot be expected at once."

- "Naturally, pensioners in other **democratic** societies get enough money ....".

*ii. Opportunity:*

- "...a **democratic** nation of good, efficient workers", in which people "...learn to work efficiently. The new system is challenging and best for ambitious, hard working, creative people who are not afraid to take risks."

*iii. Values:*

- This respondent relates democracy to an undesirable value shift. "Before **democracy** children were very different. They used to be more obedient to their parents. A parent's word was like a holy word. Nowadays children rule over the parents. We are experiencing a decline in parents' authority." The respondent continues by explaining the phenomenon as a negative shift from communal values an towards the values of 'individualism and materialism'.

- This respondent relates democracy to dubious American values. "Together with establishing a **democratic** system and other radical changes in our lives came the Americanisation of our society. With the opening of borders came a great influence of the American language, films, music, denim, hot dogs and McDonalds." The respondent continues by giving details about these influences, especially about American programmes on TV which she describes as having 'dubious values'. The subject concludes by stating, "The problem is that Poland has become a slave of America. ...the cult of America still lasts. America doesn't necessarily mean bad, but we don't have to imitate anything that comes from US and act according to the saying monkey see, monkey do."

- "**Democracy** has brought freedom, but unfortunately we Poles cannot use it in a proper way (probably no nation can), and the freedom is often abused. For

instance, these days nothing prevents/protects seven year olds from looking at porno pictures in every newsagents on their way to school.”

iv. *Social order:*

- This respondent relates democracy to TV violence and rising crime. “**Democracy** means freedom of the press and TV. TV channels, radio stations and tabloid magazines have been booming, and they give thorough reports of any brutal events which people, after all, are entitled to know. But, apart from that, TV also makes us used to watching plenty of violence in films, and permanent exposure to violence desensitises and blurs the line between what is acceptable and not.” The respondent claims that the result is aggressive behaviour. In conclusion, the respondent states, “Freedom means openness to all influences. It can be used in a constructive, creative way but, on the other hand, we must take into account negative phenomena. A rise in the crime rate is apparently one of the prices of democracy that society has to pay.”
- “The new conditions of a **democracy** are giving some room for all types of major and minor crimes, which turns out to be an extremely dangerous consequence of the new lifestyle. Acts of violence are widespread throughout the whole country, which makes them feel abhorrence and evokes their deep revulsion.”

v. *General 'lifestyle/cultural' associations:*

- “**Democracy** means freedom of the press and television. Television channels, radio stations and tabloid magazines have been blooming.”
- “Openness to the world has become one of the most important consequences of **democracy**. We are allowed to travel abroad, have access to foreign TV, radio, press and the internet. Therefore, we know more about the world and ourselves. We can compare, adopt and modify ideas as well as appreciate our own traditions, customs and values. A change in the attitude towards health is one of those easily observable changes.” The respondent writes about a change in behaviour towards healthier food and exercise through the usage of fitness clubs. The subject concludes by writing that “Poland has become a health conscious nation which is, in my opinion, one of the most beneficial changes.”

- This respondent relates democracy to a lifestyle leading to a broader culture boom. “Now Polish people are free. ...**democratic** governments cannot force us to think and see things as it wants them to be.” Following a description of books, films and news which is no longer controlled, the respondent continues “Now the individual has a chance to show what he or she can achieve. We are not a group or community which has to stay together. Everyone is their own person and everything he wants to do depends only on him. ...We are now able to travel all over the world. We can visit any country we want to, meet people from all walks of life and make new friends. We get to know their culture, customs and religion. Most of all, we have the possibility to exchange ideas.” The respondent continues to relate this change to an import of foreigners (including stars), products, services and festivals, all leading towards a ‘boom in culture’. He/she concludes, “Although we still have an inferiority complex to defeat, everything is moving in the right direction.”

## *Appendix C*

### *The Statistical Survey*

#### *The Questionnaire:*

As a non-native speaker of Polish, I needed to use professional Polish sources for the wording of the original questionnaire. I worked with colleagues at the ‘Department of English’ and the ‘Institute of Sociology’ at UMK so that accuracy and clarity of meaning was provided in the original Polish version. It was decided that I should use relatively informal language because I did not want to create a formal setting for the execution of the questionnaire with the students. Most notably, I used second person singular rather than formal ‘Mr/Mrs’ (‘Pan/Pani’) in the wording of the questions, e.g. in the usage of verb forms such as ‘do you think...’ (‘czy uważasz...’).

Below I present the direct English translation of the questionnaire that was used in the statistical survey. In the English translation I include the number and percentage of responses that were recorded for each of the choices available. Following the English translation, I present the original Polish questionnaire.

#### *English translation with resulting responses:*

Please mark what, according to you, the most appropriate answers to the following questions are.

	No	Total
	(698)	%
Q1. Are you:		
(a) Female?	466	66.8%
(b) Male?	232	33.2%

Q2. How old are you?

(a) 18 – 20	396	56.4%
(b) 21 – 23	294	42.2%
(c) 24 +	10	1.4%

Q3. Do you consider yourself:

(a) a practising Catholic?	436	62.8%
(b) a non-practising Catholic?	182	26.2%
(c) of another religious belief?	26	3.7%
(d) a non-believer?	50	7.2%

Q4 Was the majority of your youth spent in a town of:

(a) less than 1,000?	51	7.3%
(b) between 1,000 and 10,000?	110	15.8%
(c) between 10,000 and 100,000?	254	36.4%
(d) between 100,000 and 500,000?	258	37.0%
(e) more than 500,000?	25	3.6%

Q5. How many countries have you visited in the last five years (excluding Poland)?

(a) zero	214	30.7%
(b) one or two	242	34.7%
(c) three or four	140	20.1%
(d) five or six	58	8.3%
(e) more than six	44	6.3%

Q6. On average, how often do you go out to such places as bars, restaurants, clubs and cinemas?

(a) less than once a week	177	25.4%
(b) once a week	219	31.4%
(c) twice a week	143	20.5%
(d) three times a week	83	11.9%
(e) more than three times a week	76	10.9%

Q7. The reforms taking place in this decade are altering the access to luxury products such as fashionable clothing, electrical equipment and cars. In this decade, has the ability to get such products in YOUR FAMILY:

(a) considerably improved?	204	29.3%
(b) slightly improved?	303	43.5%
(c) neither improved nor got worse?	150	21.5%
(d) slightly worsened?	33	4.7%
(e) considerably worsened?	7	1.0%

Q8. Compared to average Polish families, do you believe that YOUR FAMILY is:

(a) considerably more wealthy?	17	2.4%
(b) slightly more wealthy?	138	19.8%
(c) average	497	71.2%
(d) slightly less wealthy?	41	5.9%
(e) considerably less wealthy?	5	0.7%

Q9. Over the last two years, has your family:

(a) been able to save money?	464	67.0%
(b) had just enough money to get by?	120	17.3%
(c) had to spend part of savings?	80	11.5%
(d) had to borrow money?	29	4.2%

Q10. The next two questions refer to changes in the labour market that are currently taking place in Poland.

Q10.1 Do you think that as a consequence of these changes you will have:

(a) much more opportunity to find a WELL PAID job?	99	14.2%
(b) slightly more opportunity to find a well paid job?	367	52.7%
(c) the same amount of opportunity to find a well paid job?	139	20.0%
(d) slightly less opportunity to find a well paid job?	69	9.9%
(e) much less opportunity to find a well paid job?	22	3.2%

Q10.2	Do you think that as a consequence of these changes you will have:			
	(a) much more opportunity to find a STABLE job (without danger of loosing it)?	52	7.5%	
	(b) slightly more opportunity to find a stable job?	243	34.9%	
	(c) the same amount of opportunity to find a stable job?	194	27.8%	
	(d) slightly less opportunity to find a stable job?	154	22.1%	
	(e) much less opportunity to find a stable job?	54	7.7%	

Q11. In general, do you think that the changes taking place this decade have made this country a place:

(a) considerably better to live in?	141	20.3%
(b) slightly better to live in?	399	57.4%
(c) neither better nor worse to live in?	90	12.9%
(d) slightly worse to live in?	56	8.1%
(e) considerably worse to live in?	9	1.3%

Q12 The next two questions refer to political systems.

Q12.1 Generally, do you think that the best political system is one with free elections and a number of political parties?

(a) certainly yes	324	46.5%
(b) rather yes	230	33.0%
(c) rather no	29	4.2%
(d) certainly no	18	2.6%
(e) don't know	96	13.8%

For those who have marked either a or b, please move directly on to question 13. For those who have answered c, d or e, please move to question 12.2.

Q12.2 Do you think that the best political system is one with one strong centre of power (without the need for free elections and a number of parties)?

		Total %	Valid %
(a) certainly yes	10	1.4%	7%
(b) rather yes	23	3.3%	16.1%
(c) rather no	26	3.7%	18.2%
(d) certainly no	29	4.2%	20.3%
(e) don't know	55	7.9%	38.5%

Q13. Generally, do you think that the current economic system in Poland should be characterised by:

(a) considerably more private ownership?	297	40.3%
(b) slightly more private ownership?	173	25.0%
(c) no change in ownership?	201	29.0%
(d) slightly more state ownership?	30	4.3%
(e) considerably more state ownership?	9	1.3%

Q14. Generally, do you think that current taxes and the connected state expenditure on such things as education and health care should be:

(a) considerably lowered?	90	13.0%
(b) slightly lowered?	265	38.2%
(c) not changed?	207	29.9%
(d) slightly raised?	120	17.3%
(e) considerably raised?	11	1.6%

Q15. Should decisions about important national issues such as EU membership or abortion belong:

(a) completely to the political elite?	14	2.0%
(b) in greater part to the political elite?	100	14.4%
(c) in greater part to the 'people'?	301	43.4%
(d) completely to the 'people'?	139	20.0%
Or		
(e) difficult to say.	140	20.2%

Q16. The final two questions refer to your opinion on the effectiveness of the current political system with its free elections and a number of political parties:

Q16.1 Do you think that the current political system is the best for the development of the ECONOMY in Poland?

(a) certainly yes	162	23.2%
(b) rather yes	318	45.6%
(c) rather no	52	7.5%
(d) certainly no	10	1.4%
(e) don't know	155	22.2%

Q16.2 Do you think that the current political system is the best for maintaining LAW AND ORDER in Poland?

(a) certainly yes	108	15.5%
(b) rather yes	266	38.2%
(c) rather no	110	15.8%
(d) certainly no	66	9.5%
(e) don't know	146	20.9%

*Original Polish version:*

Zakreśl odpowiedzi, które według Ciebie najlepiej odpowiadają na poniższe pytania.

1. Czy jesteś:

- (a) kobietą?
- (b) mężczyzną?

2. Ile masz lat?

- (a) 18 – 20
- (b) 21 – 23
- (c) 24+

3. Czy uważasz siebie za:

- (a) praktykującego katolika?
- (b) nie praktykującego katolika?
- (c) osobę innej wiary?
- (d) osobę niewierzącą?

4. Czy większość swojej młodości spędziłeś w miejscowości o populacji:

- (a) mniejszej niż 1,000?
- (b) między 1,000 a 10,000?
- (c) między 10,000 a 100,000?
- (d) między 100,000 a 500,000?
- (e) większej niż 500,000?

5. Ile krajów odwiedziłeś w ciągu ostatnich pięciu lat (wyłączając Polskę)?

- (a) zero
- (b) jeden lub dwa
- (c) trzy lub cztery
- (d) pięć lub sześć
- (e) więcej niż sześć

6. Przeciętnie, jak często wychodzisz do takich miejsc jak bary, restauracje, kluby, kina?

- (a) mniej niż raz w tygodniu
- (b) raz w tygodniu
- (c) dwa razy w tygodniu
- (d) trzy razy w tygodniu
- (e) częściej niż trzy razy w tygodniu.

7. Reformy zachodzące w tej dekadzie zmieniają dostęp do „produktów luksusowych” takich jak modne ubrania, sprzęt elektroniczny i samochody. Czy w ciągu tej dekady dostęp do takich produktów w TWOJEJ RODZINIE:

- (a) znacznie się poprawił?
- (b) trochę się poprawił?
- (c) ani się nie poprawił ani też nie uległa pogorszeniu?
- (d) trochę się pogorszył?
- (e) znacznie się pogorszył?

8. W porównaniu z przeciętnymi polskimi rodzinami, czy uważasz, że TWOJA RODZINA jest:

- (a) znacznie bardziej zamożna?
- (b) trochę bardziej zamożna?
- (c) przeciętna?
- (d) trochę mniej zamożna?
- (e) znacznie mniej zamożna?

9. Czy przez ostatnie dwa lata twoja rodzina:

- (a) była w stanie zaoszczędzić pieniądze?
- (b) miała ilość pieniędzy zaledwie wystarczającą na przeżycie?
- (c) była zmuszona wydać część oszczędności?
- (d) musiała pożyczać pieniądze?

10. Kolejne dwa pytania odnoszą się do zachodzących obecnie w Polsce zmian na rynku pracy.

10.1 Czy sądzisz, że w wyniku tych zmian będziesz miał (a):

- (a) o wiele więcej możliwości znalezienia DOBRZE PŁATNEJ pracy?
- (b) trochę więcej możliwości znalezienia dobrze płatnej pracy?
- (c) tyle samo możliwości znalezienia dobrze płatnej pracy?
- (d) trochę mniej możliwości znalezienia dobrze płatnej pracy?
- (e) o wiele mniej możliwości znalezienia dobrze płatnej pracy?

10.2 Czy sądzisz, że w wyniku tych zmian będziesz miał (a):

- (a) o wiele więcej możliwości znalezienia STAŁEJ pracy (bez zagrożenia jej utraty)?
- (b) trochę więcej możliwości znalezienia stałej pracy?
- (c) tyle samo możliwości znalezienia stałej pracy?
- (d) trochę mniej możliwości znalezienia stałej pracy?
- (e) o wiele mniej możliwości znalezienia stałej pracy?

11. Generalnie, czy uważasz, że zmiany zachodzące w Polsce w tej dekadzie sprawiają, że ten kraj jest miejscem, w którym:

- (a) żyje się o wiele lepiej?
- (b) żyje się trochę lepiej?
- (c) żyje się tak samo?
- (d) żyje się trochę gorzej?
- (e) żyje się o wiele gorzej?

12. Następne dwa pytania odnoszą się do ustrojów politycznych.

12.1 Generalnie, czy uważasz, że najlepszym ustrojem politycznym jest ustroj z wolnymi wyborami i wieloma partiami?

- (a) zdecydowanie tak
- (b) raczej tak
- (c) raczej nie
- (d) zdecydowanie nie
- (e) nie wiem

Koncentrując się na tych którzy zaznaczyli 'a' lub 'b', proszę przejść bezpośrednio do pytania 13. Koncentrując się na tych którzy odpowiedzieli 'c', 'd' lub 'e', proszę przejść do pytania 12.2.

12.2 Generalnie, czy uważasz, że najlepszym ustrojem politycznym jest ustroj z jednym silnym ośrodkiem władzy (bez potrzeby wolnych wyborów i wielu partii)?

- (a) zdecydowanie tak
- (b) raczej tak
- (c) raczej nie
- (d) zdecydowanie nie
- (e) nie wiem

13. Generalnie, czy uważasz że obecny system ekonomiczny w Polsce powinien charakteryzować się:

- (a) znacznie większą własnością prywatną?
- (b) trochę większą własnością prywatną?
- (c) brakiem zmian we własności?
- (d) trochę większą własnością państwową?
- (e) znacznie większą własnością państwową?

14. Generalnie, czy uważasz że obecne podatki i powiązane z nimi wydatki państwowego, na przykład na edukację lub służbę zdrowia, powinny być:

- (a) znacznie obniżone?
- (b) trochę obniżone?
- (c) nie zmienione?
- (d) trochę podwyższone?
- (e) znacznie podwyższone?

15. Czy decyzje o ważnych sprawach narodowych, np. o włączeniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej czy o legalizacji aborcji, powinny należeć:

- (a) całkowicie do elity politycznej?
- (b) w większej części do elity politycznej?
- (c) w większej części do przeciętnych obywateli?
- (d) całkowicie do przeciętnych obywateli?

CZY

- (e) trudno powiedzieć.

16. Ostatnie dwa pytania odnoszą się do Twojej opinii na temat efektywności obecnego systemu politycznego z wolnymi wyborami i wieloma partiami.

16.1 Czy uważasz, że obecny ustrój polityczny jest najlepszy dla rozwoju EKONOMII w Polsce?

- (a) zdecydowanie tak
- (b) raczej tak
- (c) raczej nie
- (d) zdecydowanie nie
- (e) nie wiem

16.2 Czy uważasz, że obecny ustrój polityczny jest najlepszy dla utrzymania PRAWA I PORZĄDKU w Polsce?

- (a) zdecydowanie tak
- (b) raczej tak
- (c) raczej nie
- (d) zdecydowanie nie
- (e) nie wiem

*Extra statistical relationships of interest:*

The following statistical relationships are those that have been part of the analysis in this research. I have located them in this appendix because they did not directly relate to democratic support.

*Table 12A Relationship between 'hometown population' and 'practising Catholics':*

size of town	religion			
	practising		other	
	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
<10,000	120	75.5%	39	24.5%
10,000-100,000	159	63.3%	92	36.7%
>100,000	157	55.7%	125	44.3%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	15.28	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.15	.04	<.001

N = 694

*Table 12B Relationship between 'gender' and 'future income':*

	future income	sex			
		female		male	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %
	much better	41	41.4%	58	58.6%
	slight better	247	67.3%	120	32.7%
	no change	99	71.2%	40	28.8%
	worse	77	84.6%	14	15.4%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	42.97	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	-.22	.04	<.001

N = 696

Tables 12C The economic situation of law students:

		Course			
		Law students		others	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Existing wealth	above average	45	36.0%	109	19.2%
	others (with savings)	62	49.6%	264	46.5%
	others (without savings)	18	14.4%	195	34.3%

		Course			
		Law students		others	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
extent of foreign travel	zero	19	15.2%	194	34.0%
	1 or 2	55	44.0%	187	32.7%
	3 or 4	24	19.2%	115	20.1%
	more than 4	27	21.6%	75	13.1%

		Course			
		Law students		others	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Effect on future income	very positive	36	28.8%	63	11.1%
	quite positive	67	53.6%	298	52.4%
	no influence	12	9.6%	127	22.3%
	negative	10	8.0%	81	14.2%

Chi-square test (on future income):

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	33.93	<.001

*Correlation coefficient (on future income):*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.19	.04	<.001

N = 694

*Table 12D Relationship between 'current family wealth' and 'purchasing power':*

	purchasing power	family wealth					
		above average		other (saving)		other (no saving)	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
much better	much better	90	60.4%	78	24.4%	23	18.5%
slight better	slight better	47	31.5%	158	49.4%	55	44.4%
no change	no change	10	6.7%	76	23.8%	28	22.6%
worsened	worsened	2	1.3%	8	2.5%	18	14.5%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	105.85	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.34	.04	<.001

N = 593

*Table 12E Relationship between 'current family wealth' and 'ownership belief':*

	family wealth	Ownership belief			
		much priv	slight priv	no change	more pub
				Row %	Row %
above average	above average	52.7%	24.0%	21.9%	1.4%
other (saving)	other (saving)	40.6%	25.3%	29.4%	4.7%
other (no saving)	other (no saving)	33.3%	29.3%	30.1%	7.3%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	14.94	<.05

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.14	.04	<.001

N = 589

*Table 12F Relationship between 'purchasing power' and 'ownership belief':*

	Ownership belief			
	much priv	slight priv	no change	more pub
			Row %	Row %
purchasing power	much better	48.8%	25.4%	23.4%
	slight better	44.7%	23.8%	26.5%
	no change	25.7%	26.4%	37.8%
	worsened	20.0%	27.5%	42.5%

*Chi-square test:*

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	37.09	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.21	.04	<.001

N = 691

Table 12G Relationship between 'experienced entertainment' and 'ownership belief':

		Ownership belief			
		much priv	slight priv	no change	more pub
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
experienced entertainment	< 1	37.7%	21.1%	30.9%	10.3%
	1	36.4%	27.6%	31.3%	4.6%
	2	45.4%	18.4%	30.5%	5.7%
	> 2	44.0%	31.4%	22.6%	1.9%

Chi-square test:

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	23.30	<.01

Correlation coefficient:

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.11	.04	<.01

N = 692

Table 12H Relationship between 'future income' and 'ownership belief':

		Ownership belief			
		much priv	slight priv	no change	more pub
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
future income	much better	66.7%	14.1%	19.2%	
	slight better	42.1%	27.1%	26.6%	4.2%
	no change	32.4%	23.7%	36.0%	7.9%
	worse	17.6%	28.6%	39.6%	14.3%

Chi-square test:

	Value	Level of sig.
Pearson chi-square	67.08	<.001

*Correlation coefficient:*

	Value	Std. Error	Level of sig.
Spearman's rho	.28	.035	<.001

N = 690

*Table 12I Cross-tabulation between the 'authoritarian orientation' of those that did not state a belief in democracy and 'purchasing power':*

	power to purchase	one authority					
		best/better		not best/better		don't know	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
much better		12	28.6%	17	40.5%	13	31.0%
slight better		13	24.5%	18	34.0%	22	41.5%
no change		5	14.3%	16	45.7%	14	40.0%
worsened		3	23.1%	4	30.8%	6	46.2%

N = 143

*Table 12J Cross-tabulation between the 'authoritarian orientation' of those that did not state a belief in democracy and 'future income':*

	future income	one authority					
		best/better		not best/better		don't know	
		Count	Row %	Count	Row %	Count	Row %
much better		2	14.3%	6	42.9%	6	42.9%
slight better		17	26.2%	24	36.9%	24	36.9%
no change		9	24.3%	14	37.8%	14	37.8%
worse		5	18.5%	11	40.7%	11	40.7%

N = 143

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