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Anticipations of the Failure of Communism

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One of the questions that social scientists have to deal with in reacting to the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union is why they, and other nonacademic experts such as the intelligence agencies of the great Western powers, as well, did not anticipate that this would happen, or even that it could occur. The evidence is fairly clear that the world was taken by surprise by the transformations that emerged under Gorbachev and even more by the outlawing of the Communist party after the coup against him. There was, of course, an equivalent failure to expect that the East European Communist regimes would give up power.

From among the myriad relevant statements made by concerned social scientists and political analysts, we cite only one by the political scientist and neo-Marxist Adam Przeworski: "The 'Autumn of the People' was a dismal failure of political science. Any retrospective explanation of the fall of communism must not only account for the historical developments but also identify the theoretical assumptions that prevented us from anticipating these developments."[1] This essay attempts to deal with the second part of the question. Rightly or not, we pay much less attention at this time to the comparative historical issues that, given problems of space, must be treated separately. Hence, we ignore some of the important issues raised by Motyl, Suny, Szporluk, and Tapas.

The limits of social science

To come to terms with this failure of anticipation, or to pass a considered judgment on how serious it really was, we have to face a general limitation of social science, its inherent inability to predict the particular, such as the collapse of specific Communist regimes. The predictive successes of sociology and political science, on this macroscopic level, have been admittedly rather meager.

Social scientists are good historians. They are able to understand the processes involved in what has already happened. But they have not been good forecasters. Robert Solow, a Nobel laureate in economics, has called attention to the failures of his discipline by this dramatic question: "Why should anyone who forecasts so badly be expected to have worthwhile opinions on other subjects?"[2]

The most striking example of a generalized failure of sociologists and political scientists to anticipate developments may be found in the field of ethnicity. Until recently, Marxist and non-Marxist scholars agreed on a standardized set of generalizations about ethnic and national minorities. The latter argued that ethnicity reflected the conditions of traditional society, where people lived in small communities isolated from one another and in which mass communications and transportation were limited. Most scholars anticipated that industrialization, urbanization, and the spread of education would reduce ethnic consciousness. Universalism would replace particularism. This argument found its corollary in the belief of Marxists that socialism would result in a decline of ethnic tension and consciousness. Assimilation of minorities into a larger integrated whole was viewed by both groups of analysts as the inevitable future.[3]

As we know, the opposite has occurred, both in the Western and Communist countries, and in the less developed world as well. The Achilles' heel of Communism has turned out to be nationalism, not only that of Poles, Czechs, or Hungarians vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, but also the rising, and sometimes rabid, national feelings of the various ethnic groupings within Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union and, since the collapse of the latter, in Moldova and Georgia as well. In recent years, most of the multilingual, binational or bireligious states that have persisted for many decades, if not centuries, have been in turmoil. Canada, Belgium, Malaysia, and Lebanon all have had crises of national existence created by the demands of minorities for autonomy or independence. Pakistan and Cyprus have faced division, while ethnic rebellion has been suppressed in Nigeria and other parts of Africa.

Predictions made by social scientists are often comparable to weather forecasts. Meteorological forecasting remains, to a large extent, a matter of trained judgment and intuition because there are too many variables to be controlled and the relations among the variables are too complex. Moreover, the new mathematical insights of chaos theory have posited that this cannot be helped, either in meteorology or in any other science dealing with complex phenomena, by feeding more and more data into computers of ever growing capacity. "In science as in life, it is well known that a chain of events can have a point of crisis that could magnify small changes. But chaos (in the sense taken by chaos theorists like Edward Lorenz) meant that such points were everywhere. They were pervasive. In systems like the weather, sensitive dependence on initial conditions was an inescapable consequence of the way small scales intertwined with large."[4]

In citing the failures or, more accurately, the inadequate predictions of the various social sciences, it is not our intention to suggest that they are unable to analyze social and economic phenomena.[5] Clearly, all the disciplines have done much to explain the ways in which economy, society, and individuals behave. Social science, however, is still at its best in advancing what Robert Merton has called "middle-range" theories, and in explaining developments limited in time and space—particularly in the past—where at least there is some possibility of analyzing real data. As social science moves outward to deal with systemic trends and tendencies, its capacity to explain diminishes. Economists are able to avoid some of the methodological consequences of this problem by focusing on analytically closed systems based on limiting sets of assumptions. They are, however, no more able than other social analysts to comprehend total system behavior or to understand the behavior of particular economies.

It is not surprising, therefore, that discussions of the failure of students of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to anticipate the collapse of the Communist regimes sometimes invoked those limitations of human prevision inherent in the very subject matter, social life itself.

> *Seeking objectivity, legitimacy, and predictability, social scientists in the United States set out after World War II to embrace the traditional methods of the physical and natural sciences . . . But they did so at a time when physicists, biologists, and mathematicians, concerned about disparities between their theories and the reality they supposedly modeled, were gradually abandoning old methods in favor of new ones that accommodated indeterminacy, irregularity, and unpredictability—precisely the qualities that the social sciences were to leave behind. There was, in effect, a methodological passing of ships in the night: The "soft" sciences tried to become "harder" just as the "hard" sciences were becoming "softer."*[6]

But there are reasons to assume, as we are going to argue in this article, that although this is a good occasion to raise questions about the overall limitations of social science, the sources of failure are to be sought in our case, first of all, on another level. Students of Soviet and East European societies did not exploit to the fullest extent those theoretical sources of anticipation that have been available to the social sciences even given the most cautious methodological assumptions. This underutilization took the form either of not taking into account some general trends of social change that sociologists and political scientists are generally quite good at recognizing in other contexts or, more often, of not drawing the conclusions from them that, under other conditions, would have seemed to be obvious.

Failures of anticipation

The basic problem with the analyses of the Soviet Union, both academic and nonacademic, is that like social-science research generally, and even more than most, it is fraught with ideology and politics. Both the Left and the Right made judgments about the Soviet system that derived from their political beliefs. The Right believed that the Soviet Union was an "evil empire," that it was an oppressive totalitarian regime ready to use all resources under its control to retain and even to extend its power. Given its strength, including complete domination of means of communication, propaganda, and education, and the willingness to spend considerable funds on repressive institutions, the military and the secret police in particular, as well as the apparatus and ideological commitment of the Communist Party, there seemed no way the system could be overthrown from within.

The Right was certain that Communism was exploitative, that it violated the logic of economics and human nature, that there was considerable opposition to the regime, but few thought the conditions would produce a breakdown. The Right also believed that the system was militarily efficient, that morale in the armed services was reasonably high because they were treated well, and that therefore the Soviets were a serious threat.

The Left differed in its assumptions or beliefs about the nature of Soviet society. At one extreme, the various wings of the Communist movement, the Trotskyists apart, agreed that the system basically was a good one, a progressive one that was leading to improvements in productivity and the standard of living of the population and that the people supported Communism. Trotsky, however, while emphasizing the inefficiencies of the Soviet Union and the exploitation of the masses, believed the system was progressive, i.e., inherently anti-capitalist as long as the major means of production remained state owned.[7] The non-Communist Left varied considerably in its judgments, from assessments that were close to those of the Communists to much more critical ones, and in some cases evaluations that were not far from those of the Right.

Basically, most parts of the Left saw the Communist world as on their side, as representing some form of socialism, as efforts to create a more egalitarian and ultimately freer social system. Many felt that this attempt was distorted and severely corrupted, but the Soviet system was regarded essentially as part of their world, as on the Left. In interpreting the reasons for the Cold War, the Left put much more of the responsibility on the West. They did not believe that there was a Soviet military threat. Regardless of feelings about the nature of the system, the Left agreed with the Right that the Soviet regime would not be overthrown and that any consideration of its breaking down from within was a near impossibility.

It would, however, be unfair to portray serious students of the Soviet Union and the East European countries, whether they leaned to the left or to the right, as having unthinkingly translated their political preferences into projections of the future. One could, in fact, argue that there have not been many other fields of social and political study where the

methodological problems of anticipating large-scale developments were given such serious consideration as in the field of Soviet studies. Daniel Bell was able to draw one of his most interesting conclusions of the possibilities of prediction in social science from an examination of Sovietological analyses.

> *There should be a clear distinction between types of change which take place: between changes in Soviet society (the social system) and in Soviet politics, although in crucial moments one is dependent on the other. The difference is one of distinguishing between a process and an event; or, to revive an old distinction of the crusty sociologist William Graham Sumner, between* crescive *and* enacted *change.*
>
> *Crescive changes are those which surge, swell, go on willy-nilly, and develop with some measure of autonomy. . . . Enacted changes are the conscious decisions or intents of legislators and rulers (e.g., the declaration of war, the collectivization of agriculture, the location of new industry, etc.). Those who enact change have to take into account the mores of the people and the resources at their disposal, but these serve only as limiting, not determining, factors.*
>
> *Sociological analysis is most sure when it deals with crescive changes. These can be identified, their drift charted, and, like iceberg floes, their course and even their break-up specified more readily than others. But sociological analysis often fails in predicting political decisions. There are in history what Hegel called the "unique moments," and, in calling the turn, not pure reason but practical judgment (that unstable compound of information, intuition, and empathy) has to take hold. . . .*
>
> *The nature of the changes which one describes conditions the kinds of predictions one can make. One can define, and predict, the limits of broad crescive changes (e.g., if one knows the resource pattern of the Soviet Union . . . one can make a guess about the slowdown in the rate of economic growth), but in predicting the short-run policy turns one comes up against the variabilities of accident, folly and simple human cantankerousness.*[8]

In the next section we have occasion to refer to some other interesting discussions of the problem of anticipation in respect to the development or eventual transformation of the Soviet system. Here, it is enough to rely

on Bell's basic distinction to give a more precise characterization of what the general failure of anticipation consisted of in the Soviet case. According to Bell, it would have been unreasonable to expect social scientists to be more successful in predicting the "unique moment" of transition than political commentators, journalists, or statesmen were. The judgments of some of the latter turned out, in fact, to be better than the presumably more informed guesses of social scientists, as we show in the concluding section of this article.

The series of events and the decisions of key political figures leading to the liberation of the East European countries from the Soviet bloc and then to the abolition of the Soviet Union and the banning of the Soviet Communist party had been so rapid that social scientists, used to deal with slower processes of change and relatively safe generalizations, were at a special disadvantage in coming to grips with them.

Even if we forget for a moment the political prejudices and particular theories of Sovietologists, it seemed to be inherently implausible, to any social scientist with some knowledge of the Soviet system, that leaders who had made their way to the highest positions in the Communist hierarchy were capable of such daring or, for that matter, revolutionary initiatives as a Gorbachev or Yeltsin proved to be, that the bulk of Communist hierarchy was not able to put up a stronger resistance against these initiatives, and that the process of transition has been, relatively speaking, such a peaceful affair.

With the advantage of hindsight, it is easy to point out that some of the reformist or revolutionary leaders have not been so successful in shedding their Communist habits, that the conservative part of the Communist hierarchy has found better ways to resist the changes than to stage a full scale counter-revolution, and that the process of transition may still lead to violent conflicts on an immense scale. But even if events move, from now on, according to the worst-case scenario in all these respects, this would not change the exceptional character of the transition process as it has taken place.

What we could have reasonably expected from the social scientists working on the Sovietological field was, consequently, something more modest than a prediction of the actions of Gorbachev, Yeltsin, or their opponents. Rather they should have produced, on the basis of mapping out the broad, gradual social and economic changes, a description of the conditions on the eve of the great transition that would have left open, at least implicitly, the possibility of what actually happened, leaving specific predictions for daring spirits, scholars, or outsiders, who were willing to make risky bets. Most Sovietologists, however, assessed the situation in the 1980s in ways that did not allow for the coming revolutionary changes. What they did was, in fact, no less daring than to expect a revolution. They expected, to wit, just the opposite of what happened.

Before entering into a more detailed discussion of why Soviet specialists failed to anticipate the end of the Communist regime, even in the minimal sense indicated above, it seems to be useful to take a look at a couple of snapshots showing how Sovietologists judged the chances of a systemic change in the Soviet Union at the time when the revolutionary process, as we now know, was about to start. As a writer of a review of some Sovietological works remarked, to look at such snapshots in time is like opening an old family album. The figures on the pictures seem to be quaint and the viewer marvels at the lack of any sign of the fate awaiting them.[9]

In 1987, as the widespread extent of perestroika became evident, virtually all Western experts on the Soviet Union believed that Gorbachev's reforms could not but remain within the framework of the Communist regime. They differed only about how much change was possible. The Gorbachev enthusiasts were quite optimistic about the possibilities, while their more skeptical colleagues were stressing ultimate limits. Archie Brown, a leading British Sovietologist was a typical representative of the first tendency.

> *Much depends, of course, on the extent of the change we have in mind. If, domestically, any economic reform that falls short of a full-fledged market economy is to be discounted in advance, and if, in foreign policy, the criterion of significant movement is to be that the USSR ceases to proclaim the superiority of its socioeconomic system and stops trying to extend its influence, then those in the West who hold that no change in the Soviet Union is likely should have little difficulty in proving to their own satisfaction that they were right.*

It would appear, though, that change which fails to satisfy such unrealistic criteria may be important, difficult to achieve, and yet worthy of attainment. Domestically, this would apply to a reform that substantially increased the devolution of responsibility within the system, introduced elections with choice within the party or for soviets, reduced the power of the ministries, and made far more concessions to the market than the existing economic mechanism while changing, rather than abandoning, the role of party and state institutions in economic life. . . . Important, too, would be a change of Soviet foreign policy that sought to establish clearer and safer "rules of the game" for superpower competition.[10]

William Odom, a high-ranking Soviet analyst in the U.S. Army, was less enthusiastic about the scope of Gorbachev's initiatives than Archie Brown. A reader of their statements today, however, is mostly struck by their basic agreement on what Gorbachev could not possibly do or even desire.

It seems more and more clear that Gorbachev himself does not intend systemic change. He is exercising with remarkable energy and cunning the system bequeathed him by previous general secretaries. He is struggling to regain the vitality once possessed by the system. . . . If what one means by reform is a significant improvement in the standard of living for Soviet citizens and increased protection of their individual rights under law, that kind of reform cannot go very far without bringing about systemic change—the kind of change that Gorbachev cannot want.[11]

Is Gorbachev bent upon a fundamental change in the system? If he is, the chances that he can control it are small, virtually nil. . . . One is forced, therefore, to infer a more limited aim on Gorbachev's part, namely, a revitalization of the old system.[12]

Some who were right

Not all efforts at Sovietology were wrong about the future of the system. Journalists, political scientists, sociologists, historians, demographers, and economists produced many useful studies that pointed the way to the transformations after 1989. More than a few analyses have withstood the test of the subsequent developments.

A book edited by Zbigniew Brzezinski that appeared in 1969 contains fourteen articles dealing with the future of the Soviet Union. Six of them,

by Brzezinski, Robert Conquest, Merle Fainsod, Eugene Lyons, Giorgio Galli, and Isaac Don Levine, considered "collapse as a serious possibility although not immediately."[13] One, Robert Conquest, saw "the USSR as a country where the political system is radically and dangerously inappropriate to its social and economic dynamics. This is a formula for change—change which may be sudden and catastrophic."[14] Brzezinski himself, as we shall note in more detail below, repeatedly emphasized that collapse was a realistic possibility.

Most Sovietologists, however, did not agree with these judgments, in part because they thought that the system was improving, that conditions of life were better for the masses. Relying to a large extent on Soviet data, they concluded that the Soviet economy was doing so well to the point where "by the 1970s, the conventional wisdom (shared also by the CIA) came to be that the Soviet GNP was some 60 percent of the American."[15] These estimates, as we now know, were misguided and untenable as revealed by the Soviet authorities and scholars after Gorbachev took office. But that information had been available much earlier.

One of the most significant sets of such reports is by Murray Feshbach, a demographer who has been interested in health statistics. Feshbach, in a number of important papers written in the 1970s and 1980s, brought together a variety of data, drawn from Soviet sources, demonstrating how miserable Soviet living conditions were. Particularly noteworthy was his stress on the fact that infant mortality had been going up in the Soviet Union while adult longevity declined.[16] Such tendencies could not be found in any other country. While there are many countries that are low on both, the direction in industrialized countries has always been upward, except under Communism. Feshbach also noted and documented the tremendous extent of alcoholism in the Soviet Union.[17] Another demographer, Nick Eberstedt, drawing in part on Feshbach's work but also on his own, noted in the early 1980s evidence of considerable alienation, particularly in work, within Soviet institutions.[18]

A devastating critique of the Soviet system was presented by a Soviet emigre, Andrei Amalrik, in his 1970 essay, *Will The Soviet Union Survive*

Until 1984? Amalrik wrote during an earlier period of liberalization, that of Khrushchev. He suggested that the "liberalization" was a function of "the growing decrepitude of the regime, rather than its regeneration," that "the logical result will be its death, followed by anarchy."[19]

Basically, Amalrik argued that the strata who most benefited from the system, largely the educated professionals, want democratic reforms, greater freedom, and the rule of law. The masses, the workers without rights, the collective farmers, all exhibit "pervasive discontent" with their lot. Although the 1960s showed a slow growth in the standard of living, Amalrik predicted that "a halt or even a reversal in the improvement of the standard of living [such as was to occur from the seventies on] would arouse such explosions of anger, mixed with violence, as were never before thought possible." Such developments would take place because of the "ossification" of the system, and would affect industrial output. He saw the regime becoming "progressively weaker and more self-destructive."[20]

Beyond changes in class relations, Amalrik noted that the Stalinist expansion into Eastern Europe and its "fostering of international tension" created a danger for the Soviet rulers. More importantly, the USSR would not be able to hold down the forces of nationalism. Any event which undermined domestic stability "will be enough to topple the regime."[21] He anticipated a breakdown in the 1980s.

Awareness that the nationality question, ethnic tension, would undermine the system, is at the heart of the 1980 analysis by sociologist Randall Collins. In an article that he had difficulty in publishing in academic journals because it went so much against the accepted scholarly wisdom, until it finally appeared in his own book of essays in 1986, Collins wrote that the Soviet Union "had already reached its limit . . . and was entering a period of . . . decline . . . with the likelihood of extensive decline becoming very high before the 21st century."[22] He concluded that the country was overextended economically, militarily, and politically, that it simply would not be able to control "the Baltic, the Ukraine, the Caucasus and the Central Asian Moslem territories."[23] These would follow on the "breakdown of the central power of the Russian state."[24] As a Weberian, he emphasized legitimacy,

and suggested that the Soviet Union had major legitimacy problems, since its failures had produced a loss of faith in Marxism, in Communist ideology. Not only the masses and the intelligentsia, but the privileged generally no longer had faith.

The social historian Moshe Lewin, in a book published in 1988, produced an illuminating interpretation of the early Gorbachev era, which if widely noted would have prepared us for the momentous transformations soon to come. Following a quasi-Marxist (but not socialist) approach, much like Roman Szporluk and Alexander Motyl, he pointed to dialectic tensions among the various parts of the system—some of which were more advanced than others, some of which acted as a brake on the development of others, some of which were declining while others were growing—that would lead to a breakdown.[25] As we argue in the next section of this article, such a dialectical approach, sensitive to internal variations, based on a strand of an important macrotheoretical tradition in modern social thought, had a definite advantage for understanding the long-term processes underway in communist societies. It may be contrasted with those, dominant in Sovietology, which relied almost exclusively on theories specifically developed in or taken over from systems analyses in other fields to explain the peculiarities of the communist system.[26]

In 1987, Lewin wrote: "Whenever some aspects of the system seriously lag behind others—for example, if the political institutions are too sluggish—crisis and turmoil, reform or stagnation, if not worse, invariably ensue. This is the story of the Soviet Union in the twentieth century." While noting symptoms of decline and decadence, he also pointed to "vast changes in the Soviet social system (urbanization, industrialization, the growth of intellectual and professional classes)."[27] Lewin's particularistic and dialectical approaches did not make him a better prophet about political outcomes than the bulk of his more narrow and inward-looking Sovietological colleagues who concentrated on developments in Moscow, but he deserves recognition for anticipating the need created by structural changes for moves toward a more open society, which made the transformations of the early 1990s possible.

> *Although considerably reformed and strongly diluted, the anachronistic autocratic features have now come under pressure from the social environment. The* apparaty, *not too alert to the call of history, has [sic] been reminded that the* muzhik *(the implicit, sometimes explicit justification for the crude dictatorial regime) is no longer at center stage. Today well educated urban citizens, not backward peasants, are the largest demographic group.*

> *. . . the dimensions and potential of this novel society, especially its political aspects, are still poorly understood. But one thing is clear: Soviet society needs a state that can match its complexity. And in ways sometimes overt, sometimes covert, contemporary urban society has become a powerful "system maker," pressuring both political institutions and the economic model to adapt. Through numerous channels, some visible, some slow, insidious, and imperceptible, Soviet urban society is affecting individuals, groups, institutions, and the state. Civil society is talking, gossiping, demanding, sulking, expressing its interests in many ways and thereby creating moods, ideologies, and public opinion. At the same time, the impersonal, structural features of the social system create hard facts, define reality, and set limits. Both the personal and impersonal factors disregard controlling devices such as censorship, police controls or the* nomenklatura *(nomination process).*[28]

The Harvard historian Richard Pipes, a scholar of a more conservative political persuasion than Lewin, also used some quasi-Marxist ideas in his anticipation of the Soviet crisis. In 1984, before Gorbachev took office, Pipes called attention to the possibility of the emergence of a "revolutionary situation," and used Lenin's famous description of the conditions that produce one: " . . . a condition of stalemate between the ruling elite and the population at large: the former no longer could rule, and the latter no longer would be ruled in the old way."[29] He left open, however, both reformist and revolutionary outcomes, depending on the behavior of the Soviet establishment: "The *nomenklatura* is not the first ruling elite to face the choice between holding on to all power and privilege at the risk of losing all of it, or surrendering some of both in the hope of holding on to the rest."[30]

The totalitarian model

Western academic study of the Soviet Union and other Communist countries had been guided and indeed dominated by the totalitarian model from the 1950s to the 1970s. Given its widespread impact on academic and extramural analyses of the Soviet system, it seems worthwhile to set forth some general features of the original position, even at the risk of restating points that over the decades have become commonplace.

The totalitarian model was meant to be applied not only to the Soviet Union or Communist countries in general, but to other modern dictatorial political and social systems too, and above all, of course, to Nazi Germany. Although much maligned by Sovietologists in the 1970s and 1980s, it has proven to be the most fruitful of the paradigms.

Totalitarianism is called "a novel form of government" in both of the two most systematic and influential expositions of the model, Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*[31] and Carl J. Friedrich's and Zbigniew Brzezinski's *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*.[32] While an ideal-type construct, it was drawn from the empirical reality of different fascist and Communist states.

The novelty of this form of government derived from four features. First, under this type of rule, all organizations and associations, whether economic, political, cultural, educational, or purely social, were supposed to be integrated into a single hierarchy of control. Parallelism and organizational rivalry, however, were not to be eliminated; totalitarian government thrived on them. But all the competing groups were ultimately subordinated to a single center of command, embodied in the person of a dictator.

A second set of characteristics included in the original model related to methods of governing. Exponents of the totalitarian model stressed the importance of terror, but put a distinct emphasis on those methods of control, such as mass propaganda, state-managed rituals of mobilization, and systematic surveillance, which were based on modern developments in technology and organizational technique.

Third, all this formidable machinery operated under the guidance of an ideology that envisaged a total transformation of human nature and society. And fourth, as a consequence of its structure, methods, and ideological aspirations, totalitarian government had to become, inevitably, more than a political regime or system of rule by the common use of the term. Totalitarianism involved an unprecedented penetration and transformation of the social system, too. At this point, however, the focus of analysis shifted to a different level.

Although the first three points referred, albeit in an ideal typical way, to an actual state of affairs, the total transformation of society was seen as a utopia that might be, at tremendous human cost, approximated but never realized. Proponents of the model made different judgments about the degree of success of individual totalitarian regimes in this respect, but no one accepted the idea that totalitarianism could ever become total.

In Friedrich's and Brzezinski's book, for example, those institutions that had not undergone a radical transformation, such as the family, churches, and some professional communities including the officer corps, were treated as residual "islands of separateness."[33] Hannah Arendt, however pessimistic about the resilience of human bonds under totalitarian pressure, took note of the fact that such regimes were constantly using some traditional institutions, like rational bureaucracy and the legal system, as a facade to legitimate their sinister realities.[34]

As time went on, the model started to lose its original plausibility and seemed to be more and more in need of overhaul or replacement. After World War II, the horrors of Nazism gradually receded into the past and the glaring parallels between the Nazi and Stalinist regimes became blurred. The Soviet regime, having survived intact the convulsions of war, had taken on a modified character since Stalin's death, especially since the mid-1960s.

The keystone of the old system, personal dictatorship, had not been replaced and was now missing. The relations among the branches of totalitarian government—the party, the state, and the security apparatus—became more entrenched. Bureaucracy, a mere facade according to the original model, was more and more seen as the mainstay of the regime.

Methods of governing became milder. Although systematic surveillance and monitoring of political behavior remained in place, or were even perfected, the scale of intimidation was significantly reduced and, what was no less important, repression became a predictable consequence of nonconformist or dissident behavior. The official doctrine of Marxism-Leninism was not given up until the very end of the regime, but it was replaced in daily practice to a large extent by pragmatic considerations and even traditional values in the thinking of new leaders.

Penetration and transformation of society turned out to be much less successful than envisaged in the totalitarian model. The family, an island engulfed and threatened by the waves of terror according to the original analysis, gathered new strength and, of course, went through all the usual processes of transformation concomitant with modernization. Private bonds among individuals, assumed to have been largely destroyed by totalitarian pressures, were retied. Formal organizations, although not allowed to slip out of the control of central bureaucracy, were permeated and deflected from their original purpose by networks of personal or "informal" relationships, as they have been called in Soviet and East European parlance. The result was a social landscape quite dissimilar to Hannah Arendt's evocative picture of a sandy wasteland of atomized individuals who could be whipped up to frenzies of mobilization.[35]

But the general institutional and ideological framework, however undermined and overgrown by new social relations, remained in place. There was more than enough continuity to make an adaptation of the old theoretical paradigm to the new realities possible. This is what followers of the totalitarian analytical model had actually done, although sometimes without retaining the old label. Classic Stalinism was reinterpreted as a preparatory phase of a more mature, or ossified, or degenerated and corrupt bureaucratic regime of a special character determined by its origins. Adherents of the old model could point out moreover, in agreement with the prevailing political opinion within the communist countries, that there had been always a danger, sometimes more than a danger, of a relapse into some kind of neo-Stalinism.

It was especially due to the efforts of Brzezinski who, in a long series of impressive works, continued the line of thought started with Friedrich's and his 1956 classic that the totalitarian interpretation never lost touch with Soviet developments. From the early sixties until 1989 when *The Grand Failure* was published, Brzezinski always worked with the alternative of "transformation and degeneration."

In 1969 Brzezinski put the question in the following way:

> *Is Russia at the end of the highly motivated energetic period in its history and at the beginning of the sterile bureaucratic phase? Such energetic and bureaucratic cycles have been typical of Russian history: a major challenge gives rise to a major national response, coercively and collectively organized; the organized response then in turn becomes fossilized and bureaucratically stagnant, leading to a period of decay.* [36]

A year later, in a book on the "technetronic era," his version of the knowledge-based post-industrial changes that had emerged in the West, Brzezinski concluded that the rigid centralized systems of control in the Soviet polity and economy had become dysfunctional because the "scientific-technological revolution," to use Brezhnev's term, required greater flexibility and pluralism than the Party could accept. One possible consequence would be "political disintegration."[37] Almost twenty years later, he saw the following five options facing the regime: (1) "success of *perestroika*," (2) "protracted but inconclusive turmoil," (3) "renewed stagnation," (4) "a regressive and repressive political coup, in reaction to either Option 2 or 3," (5) "fragmentation of the Soviet Union, as a consequence of some combination of the above."

Among these options, Brzezinski deemed Option 2 the most likely alternative "for the next several years." He did not expect a quick end to the totalitarian regime, but he was certain that the moment of failure was close. *Perestroika*, i.e., revitalization of the system without a radical break with the totalitarian institutions and ideology, could not succeed. Turmoil and chaos could not last forever. The genie was out of the bottle, and there was not much chance that it could be put to sleep by renewed stagnation or put back into the bottle by a coup.[38]

Revisionism in Sovietology

The totalitarian model elaborated by Brzezinski and others remained quite fruitful when judged in the 1990s by the ultimate test of anticipating major changes. This, however, did not enable the totalitarian school of thought to maintain an important position in academic Sovietology as the turbulent 1960s drew to a close. The model lost much of its appeal to younger and more left-oriented scholars. Herbert J. Spiro felt confident enough to write the epitaph of the concept in a 1968 article in the authoritative *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*.

> *Totalitarianism is a twentieth-century term that did not come into general or academic use until the late 1930s. . . . The* Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences *(1930–1935), for instance, has no entry entitled "totalitarianism". . . .*
>
> *As the social sciences develop more discriminating concepts of comparison, as the developing political systems discover that the invention of new methods of modernization may obviate their need for slavishly copying more coercive methods from models whose experience is no longer relevant, and as, hopefully, the more glaring differences between the major parties in the cold war begin to wither away, use of the term "totalitarianism" may also become less frequent. If these expectations are borne out, then a third encyclopedia of the social sciences, like the first one, will not list "totalitarianism."*[39]

This brusque rejection came mainly from a new generation of scholars entering the field of Soviet and East European studies in the 1960s. They did not know the fear of totalitarianism that had been ingrained into many of their elders. They had different experiences from those of their academic predecessors who were refugees from Communism or Nazism or whose first-hand contacts with totalitarianism came from military or diplomatic service. They were able to visit the Soviet Union as honored guests, and found a country that did not appear totalitarian. Abbot Gleason, a professor of Russian history, described this aspect of the situation in a judicious way.

> *With the establishment of academic exchanges in the course of the 1960s, American professors and (even more important) graduate students were able to spend relatively long periods of time in the Soviet Union. They were able to meet ordinary Soviet citizens and understand their lives in ways that foreigners had found extremely difficult for decades. Impressionistic evidence suggests that, although two years in the Soviet Union usually had a devastating effect on leftist pro-Soviet opinions, it also undermined the totalitarian model. The state was surely intrusive, but the gap between that intrusiveness and the nightmare vision of* 1984 *was obviously great and not diminishing. Not only had the state not eliminated "private life," the hospitality of Soviet citizens and the store they set on friendship often impressed Americans and on occasion made them wonder if they were not the people who had become atomized.*[40]

This was a generation, furthermore, whose belief in the moral superiority of Western democracy and American foreign policy was thoroughly shaken by the Vietnam War. Although those opposed to the war usually did not glorify the achievements of communism as liberal fellow travellers and communists in the 1930s did, a principled rejection of communism was suspect in their eyes. They took any criticism of the Soviet system, if it was based on liberal or conservative values, as an indirect apology for Western democracy or, even worse, as cold-war propaganda. This political conflict between the previous generation of writers on communism and the new one of revisionist Sovietologists was played out, to a large extent, in the debate about the totalitarian character of Soviet-type society.

The revisionists rejected, first of all, the parallel between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Patterson, in an influential article on "The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism," contemptuously dismissed the analogy.

> *Americans both before and after the Second World War casually and deliberately articulated distorted similarities between Nazi and Communist ideologies, German and Soviet foreign policies, authoritarian controls, and trade practices, and Hitler and Stalin. This popular analogy was a potent and pervasive notion that significantly shaped American perception of world events in the cold war. Once Russia was designated the "enemy" by American leaders, Americans transferred their hatred for Hitler's Germany to Stalin's Russia with considerable ease and persuasion.*[41]

There was, in fact, nothing casual in the way this analogy between the Soviet and Nazi regimes had been worked out and used by serious political writers and social scientists of the referenced period. Tremendous intellectual and moral effort would be a more apt description.[42] This applies especially to the non-communist and anti-Stalinist Left that was, typically for the New Left's forgetfulness about the Old, ignored by Adler and Patterson.[43]

Another line of argument was aimed at the presumed sociological emptiness of the totalitarian model. Stephen F. Cohen in his book on *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, the best-argued statement and a veritable compendium of the revisionist position, spoke about the "totalitarianism school's inability to imagine any authentically social dimensions of Soviet politics."

> *Analyzing mutual influences and interactions between state and society is at the center of most historical and political study. Not Soviet studies, which saw only a brutal one-way, decades-long process in which the party-state "imposed its ideology at will" upon an inert society. The favored analytical imagery was a "permanent civil war between the rulers and ruled," a "regime with no links to the people." Mistaking Stalinist despotism and mass terror, the "linchpin of totalitarianism," for the whole of Soviet political and social life, most Sovietologists forgot a basic truth. Even such despotic conditions "in no way" mean, as a Soviet dissident later explained, "that Soviet society is like a raw lump of clay that yields to any sort of pressure."*[44]

Although it is easy to glean extreme statements from the literature, the social dimension of Soviet politics was never left out of the study of communist systems even in the heyday of the totalitarian model. At the 1953 conference on totalitarianism organized by the American Academy of Sciences, the proceedings of which became one of the key texts on the subject, Karl W. Deutsch spoke about the "cracks in the monolith." He spoke about cracks that could not be closed up because of the social constraints under which the system operates.

> *To elicit full identification and loyalty . . . a government must be to a considerable extent accessible and predictable. . . . Totalitarian governments need at least the*

appearance of accessibility and predictability if they are to hold the active support of their subjects. . . . (But) the more predictable and expectable a government becomes, the less totalitarian is it likely to remain. . . . Obviously, these inherent conflicts in the basis of the political support of totalitarian regimes can be sustained for considerable periods of time; but as these periods lengthen into generations the fate of most totalitarian regimes should become increasingly dubious.[45]

To tell the truth, Hannah Arendt found Deutsch's rather tentative conclusions "overoptimistic,"[46] but there were other voices too. David Riesman, who was not exactly inattentive to the "totalitarian temptation," to use a term that became fashionable later, wrote as early as 1952 about the "limits of totalitarian power."

Twenty and even ten years ago, it was an important intellectual task (and one in which, in a small way, I participated) to point out to Americans of good will that the Soviet and Nazi systems were not simply transitory stages . . . that they were, in fact, new forms of social organization, more omnivorous than even the most brutal of earlier dictatorships. . . . Yet it seems to me that now the task of intellectual and moral awakening has been pretty well performed, and stands even in danger of being overperformed. . . .

I think we can become so fascinated with the malevolence of Stalinism that we may tend to overestimate its efficiency in achieving its horrible ends. . . . Overinterpretation is the besetting sin of intellectuals anyway, and even when, with Hannah Arendt, we rightly point to the need to cast traditional rationalities aside in comprehending totalitarianism, we may subtly succumb to the appeal of an evil mystery; there is a long tradition of making Satan attractive in spite of ourselves. And the more practical danger of this is that we may . . . misjudge not so much the aims as the power of the enemy and be unduly cowed or unduly aggressive as a result.

Consequently, I want to open up a discussion of some of the defenses people have against totalitarianism. Not that these defenses—I shall discuss apathy, corruption, free enterprise, crime, and so on—threaten the security system of the Soviets. . . . [47]

These pertinent critical observations were only skirmishes compared to the massive invasion of Sovietology by sociology and social psychology led

by Alex Inkeles and his coauthors, Raymond A. Bauer and Clyde Kluckhorn. All the themes dear to the heart of revisionists are to be found in their books and papers, such as the "importance of informal mechanisms in the operation of a society that, on the surface, appears and pretends to be highly centralized and controlled,"[48] or the private networks of communication making possible the formation of, at least partially, independent opinions.[49]

Inkeles and his coauthors did not throw the totalitarian model overboard but, as Martin Malia recently remarked, "fleshed out the model with concrete analyses of its multiple structures."[50] Inkeles, however, was no less sparing in his criticism of an exclusive and one-sided application of the totalitarian model than the revisionists of the next generation who, characteristically, did not acknowledge his contribution.[51]

> *This totalitarian model had great strength. It answered too many of the really basic and distinctive characteristic facts of the situation. . . .*
>
> *This model also had certain weaknesses. One of the difficulties was that it was relatively insensitive to the sources of social support for the Soviet regime. It represented a screen which did not permit the intrusion of this kind of information, because, naturally, such information was a challenge to the adequacy of the model. . . .*
>
> *I suggest we get some new themes, new ideas, new models, into the discussion . . . because we are really dealing with a system which is in an important degree changing. But even in our interpretation of the past, new models of analysis may enrich and correct interpretations we have already made.*[52]

A third argument marshalled by the revisionists against the totalitarian model was directed at the old school's lack of predictive success. This argument was formulated by Stephen Cohen in terms quite similar to those we used in the previous section. Ironically, however, it is quite obvious that the same kind of criticism can be levelled against the new model that resulted from all this revisionist criticism.

> *Predictions should not be the main purpose of scholarly political analysis, but understanding change is central to that enterprise. Having imagined . . . a Soviet political life without social factors, and a "monolithic regime" without meaningful internal conflicts, Sovietology was left with a static conception of a frozen system. . . .*

> *The field could not conceive of what was already under way in the 1950s—gradual change away from Stalin's terror-ridden despotism. . . . Sovietologists actually discussed, and generally ruled out, the prospect of such change. . . .*[53]

The pluralist model

The new model that became dominant and, to a large extent, replaced the model of totalitarianism in the 1970s, did not have a name as commonly accepted as the old one. The most successful candidates for a general label were "pluralism," with or without qualifications and adjectives like "quasi," "bureaucratic," "institutional," and "corporatist." The differences were not purely terminological—they expressed important analytical controversies.[54] As to the empirical contents of the model, however, there was a fairly general consensus.

According to the pluralist model, to choose this label for the sake of simplicity, the different social and economic interests to be found in any modern society were not only present but also articulated and represented in a Soviet-type political system. The communist government, for its part, did not endeavor to transform or suppress these interests, which would have been impossible anyway, but tried its best to be responsive to them, and played basically a mediating role to maintain a balance within the general framework of the regime. As a result, it was successful enough to maintain a stable social arrangement, which was actually called a "social contract" by some authors. While leaving much to be desired, it offered hope for a peaceful satisfaction of any reasonable demands.

The drastic limitations on freedom of expression or the organizational monopoly of the party-state were not denied by the proponents of the pluralist model, nor were phenomena such as the chronic shortages of consumer goods ignored. The pluralists became, in fact, the earliest and most enthusiastic promoters of Gorbachev's reforms among analysts of the Soviet scene, having been very much aware that there was a lot to be reformed. They tended, however, to take a "realistic" approach to these difficulties and to the differences between Communist and democratic regimes in general.

The totalitarian model presented a system highly resistant to demands of change, no matter how pressing they were according to the pluralist model, but the Communist system was flexible enough to accommodate far-reaching shifts. The different judgments about the chances of meaningful reform did not depend, however, solely on differences in description and analysis. The adherents of the pluralist model applied a much lower standard of expectation about the responsiveness of a political system, of any political system, than their predecessors.

Jerry Hough, the most aggressive exponent of the pluralist school, even reckless to the point of exposing himself to the charge of being a Soviet apologist, made a sharp, and admittedly legitimate, distinction between the chances of an interest group to do politics on the input side (to make its demands public, to organize for promoting its demands, etc.) and the chances of obtaining favorable policy outcomes. He made, moreover, a theoretically less legitimate but politically highly significant distinction between demands that are relevant to the interests of ordinary people and those that are mainly the concern of intellectuals or politicians. In Hough's writings, this had the implication, sometimes quite clearly spelled out, that a liberal democracy might offer a better chance for interest groups to make a big show of their demands, and for intellectuals to work within their metier, but it is a matter of debate whether all this is of much help for disadvantaged groups.[55]

It would be as easy to single out extreme statements of the pluralist position as it was of the totalitarian model. Paragons of the pluralist school, looking for expressions of group politics, applied themselves to the study of letters to the editor in Soviet newspapers or of shades of meaning in scholastic discussions of Marxist-Leninist doctrine with a dedication worthy of more interesting subjects. Even the marginal differences in the number of ballots cast for the Communist list in various elections were analyzed in all seriousness.[56]

But the main problem created by the pluralists' approach was on a deeper level. By trivializing the differences between democratic and communist regimes, the new model impaired the sociological imagination to a larger

extent than had the totalitarian model.[57] While the latter made it hard to imagine how meaningful change might come about, the former made students of Soviet society insensitive to the need for systemic change.

It is again in Hough's work that we find the most symptomatic expression of this tendency. In the late seventies, Hough radically rewrote Merle Fainsod's classic monograph, originally an application of the totalitarian model, which was first published in 1953 under the title *How Russia is Ruled*. The new book, with the significantly changed title *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*, contained a final chapter, entirely from the pen of Hough, about "the future of the Soviet system."

> *The Soviet Union has an authoritarian political system, but it has a constitution and a set of party rules that correspond in large part to western conceptions of democracy, and it pledges allegiance to an ideology promising the establishment of full democracy and individual freedom. . . .*
>
> *Because of the ambiguous nature of the Soviet political tradition, any future evolution is highly likely to retain the framework of the present system in one sense or another.*[58]

The return of the totalitarian model

However decisive it seemed on the academic playing fields of Sovietology, the victory of the pluralist school turned out to be hollow. It was one thing to write an epitaph on "totalitarianism" in a scholarly encyclopedia, or to apply the somewhat Orwellian strategem of eliminating the idea of totalitarianism from a leading academic textbook,[59] but it was another to make the public oblivious of the danger of totalitarianism. "Totalitarianism" became a part of the political language, and due to its literary representations by such writers as Koestler, Milosz, Orwell, and Silone, the totalitarian model took a firm hold on the imagination of politically informed people in the West and, to an ever growing extent, in Eastern Europe, too. By the end of the 1970s when Sovietological pluralism seemed to be at its apogee, the second coming of "totalitarianism" was well on the way.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, a political scientist critic of President Carter's foreign policy who became an important political influence under Reagan, pushed the totalitarian model almost single-handedly into the center of public debate again. Applying a distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, well worked out in the scholarly literature but not much used in policy discussion,[60] Kirkpatrick directed the attention to the fact that, while the history of twentieth century "provided no grounds for expecting that radical totalitarian regimes will transform themselves," there were many instances of right-wing authoritarian regimes having given up power.[61]

Kirkpatrick's efforts by themselves could have been, and in fact were, dismissed by political opponents as attempts to demonize Soviet communism and to excuse the bolstering of friendly right-wing dictatorships by the United States.[62] At about the same time, however, tenacious adherents of the totalitarian model received a boost from unexpected quarters. After 1968 when, as it seemed, the last attempt to renew the Communist system on the basis of a revised version of its own ideology was defeated by the invading armies of the Warsaw Pact in Czechoslovakia, a continuously growing number of Soviet and East European dissidents had become interested in totalitarian theorizing.[63] Jacques Rupnik, in his book on the transformation of Eastern Europe, gave a pertinent characterization of this process.

> *The concept of totalitarianism has been fraught with paradox and misunderstandings in East-West communication. At a time when the countries of East-Central-Europe were . . . experiencing the "pure" totalitarianism of the Stalin era, they were, for obvious reasons, absent from the debate on the concept taking place in the West. Conversely, twenty years later, when the concept had been virtually banished from Western Sovietology as an unscientific product of the Cold War, it was reappropriated by all the independent thinkers in East-Central-Europe. The watershed year 1968 marked a political parting of the ways and was a catalyst which set the concept of totalitarianism on a separate course, East and West. In the West, 1968 marked the dawning of detente, which profoundly affected the way in which politicians, academics and journalists addressed the nature of the Communist system. For intellectuals of the Other Europe the Soviet tanks in Prague were seen as a final evidence of the failure of reform from within and of the existence of a permanent totalitarian "core" at the heart of the Communist system.*[64]

And after the late 1970s, when the new wave of open dissent in Poland and Czechoslovakia had made its impact on Western public opinion, academic students of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe could not remain completely unaffected either.[65]

The new dissent in Eastern Europe grew out of the disillusionment with Marxist revisionism, reformist Communism, and human-faced socialism in their local versions. The dissident movements were attracted, paradoxically, by those features of the totalitarian model that implied that there could be no inner transformation of totalitarianism. What they needed first was to find a rationale for opting out of the system. This was, of course, not exclusively a matter of private morality for the typical dissident. Dissidents were by choice, or became by force of circumstances, political animals. They did not seek only to save their souls; they wanted to act.[66] The initial paradox, therefore, had to be overcome by modifying the totalitarian model.

In the dissident's version of the model, full domination by the state was restricted to large-scale, formally organized political and economic activities. The intermediate space between these and the private life of family and personal networks, however, was left open to collective actions and even to collective formations of a more enduring kind, more or less independent of totalitarian controls. Official ideology was presented as a system of ritualized formulas and absurd lies people were forced to pretend to believe in, but no one actually took seriously.[67]

These were original and interesting assumptions and, as far as they went, opened up the possibility of an attractive new style of politics that was radically antitotalitarian in its aims and, at the same time, rational and moderate in its methods.[68] But even the most optimistic among the dissidents, who also assumed that the totalitarian state eventually would be cornered by a vigorous civil society growing up under its shadow, did not expect the demise of the regime soon. They were therefore no less surprised, although perhaps better prepared for the next steps, than Western observers of the Soviet and East European scene when communism came to an end.[69]

We have traversed a full circle, starting from the classic totalitarian model, continuing with pluralist revisionism, and finally arrived at another

version of the totalitarian model. Each of these models, although in different ways and to different degrees, offered important insights into the possibilities of more or less radical changes within the Communist system. All of them, however, made it hard to imagine that the system itself might be transformed soon or at all. But if we step out of this circle and consider not only theories that were developed for the express purpose of understanding totalitarian systems, the picture becomes less discouraging. One is tempted to say that the failure of Sovietology was partly due to the fact that it had lost contact with the classic tradition of social theory.

Implications of grand theory

Much of the grand theory implied that Communism would produce a reactionary and oppressive society, and concluded that the system would fail. Here we are thinking of the writings of classical sociologists such as Max Weber, Robert Michels, the elite theorists such as Vilfredo Pareto, and in more recent times Raymond Aron, as well as Marx and Engels themselves. Classical liberal economics, of course, also produced major theoretical works attesting to the inherent failure of socialism. Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, and Joseph Schumpeter all concluded that a socialist planning system and government ownership of industry were necessarily inefficient. They argued that a capitalist market system was inherently much more productive than its rival. These, of course, though eventually applicable to the Soviet Union, were about the functioning of statist systems generally, not about the U.S.S.R.

Max Weber, the great sociological critic of Marx, in his writings about socialism and capitalism, contributed important insights for understanding the nature of and subsequent failure of the Soviet Union.[70] He was, in fact, the mentor of the young Michels and inspired Michels's study of socialist oligarchy. Weber emphasized bureaucracy as the characteristic mode of large-scale social organizations in modern society, including both government and industry. Weber, however, generalized beyond politics to argue that whether the means of production were privately owned, as in capitalism, or publicly or socially owned, as under socialism, would make

little difference for the position of the lower strata. The socialist revolution would, in fact, intensify the bureaucratic character of modern industrial society, resulting in the increased oppression of the working class and other repressed strata.[71]

Weber formulated a theory of alienation under bureaucratic conditions, which differed from Marx and was subsequently expanded in the writings of scholars like Erich Fromm, C. Wright Mills, and David Riesman. Weber emphasized that in a bureaucratic system the people lower in the hierarchy have to "sell" their personalities, rather than their manufacturing skills, to impress their superiors. Bureaucracy produces what was later to be called organization men or marketeers or other-directed personalities. The theory implies that they are even more alienated from their true selves than is suggested by the Marxist analysis of alienation resulting from economic powerlessness.[72] Weber, who lived to see the beginnings of the Soviet rule, argued with students in Germany about the future of socialism, predicting that it would not produce a decent or egalitarian system, but rather a more oppressive one than capitalism because it would be more bureaucratic. Shortly before his death, he concluded one of his lectures by saying "Let us meet again in ten years to see who is right."

While a member of the German Social Democratic Party, Robert Michels put forth a major critique of socialism that was to become extremely influential. His book *Political Parties*, which first appeared in 1911, emphasized inherent oligarchic tendencies within political parties, especially within the socialist parties and most notably within the most important of them at the time, his own German party.[73] Michels noted that the socialists claimed to be the greatest advocates of democracy in the polity and the economy. Their coming to power would supposedly lead both to greater democracy and classlessness. Michels, however, documented in abundant detail that the internal structure of the socialist parties was not democratic, that the parties were controlled by an elite that was able, through its control of the organization and political resources, to dominate the membership. He also emphasized that the party bureaucrats were not workers, even if some of them had been such before they became party employees

and leaders. Hence he argued, as did Rosa Luxemburg from a different perspective, that the program of the party reflected not the social situation of the working class, but the position and interests of the socially privileged party elites. Since this was particularly true of the socialist parties, Michels concluded that socialist parties might triumph and come to office, but that socialism as an egalitarian system could never materialize. There would always be control by the party bureaucracy, who would be the ruling class in socialist society.

While Michels's classic work was written years before the Russian Revolution, it was seriously discussed in what for a time was the major theoretical tome of the Russian and international Communist movements, *Historical Materialism*, written by Nikolai Bukharin in 1924.[74] Bukharin, well versed in sociological theory, evaluated the writings of Durkheim, Weber, and Michels knowledgeably. Addressing the criticisms of Marxism by various bourgeois political scientists, he summarized Michels's argument, but then surprisingly did not reject it. Rather he acknowledged that the beginnings of a new ruling class or stratum could be seen in the Soviet Union. He stated, however, that it would not lead to the failure of socialism or to the growth of a new controlling class because one of the major variables that Michels stressed as making for elite dominance was in the process of being eliminated in the Soviet Union, namely, a proletariat lacking political competence or education.

Bukharin argued that the working class was being raised by a socialist society to a higher level of understanding, and consequently also of political participation, than had ever occurred before. These skills would enable the workers to resist what he accepted as the inevitable tendency of the dominant strata of a socialist society to try to become a new ruling class. Bukharin believed that a sophisticated proletariat would prevent this from occurring. It is obvious, however, that Bukharin was concerned that socialism might fail, that it might produce a new exploitative class. *Historical Materialism*, which was used as required teaching material in the Communist movement for a few years, was to disappear completely, and Bukharin himself, like almost all the Revolutionary fathers, was to be executed by Stalin as a traitor in the Second Moscow Trial in 1938.

Michels's *Political Parties* had, however, a considerable effect on young American radicals in the 1930s and early 1940s, including two who were to become sociologists, Philip Selznick and Seymour Martin Lipset. They had been Trotskyists, which meant that they were critically aware of the exploitative authoritarian character of the Soviet Union, but as they observed autocratic tendencies in the Trotskyist movement itself, they came to accept Michels's analysis that oligarchy and dictatorship seemed to be inherent in the organizational structure of revolutionary movements, a belief that was to lead them out of the movement and to be severely critical of the Soviet Union.

The writings of Weber and Michels were to have an influence on analyses of the Soviet system during and after World War II. James Burnham, who had been a leading American Trotskyist, wrote two books, *The Managerial Revolution* and *The Machiavellians*, which advanced the idea that the managerial bureaucracy was not only becoming the new ruling class of the Soviet system, but was also taking over throughout western industrial society, which he thought would become statist and managerial.[75] Burnham argued that power lay in the hands of the managers of industry who would be the new ruling class of a post-capitalist society. These ideas had appeared earlier in the writings of another former follower of Trotsky, although not a member, Bruno Rizzi, and subsequently in the works of Max Shachtman, who had been a Trotskyist leader.[76] Burnham was to give up his belief in the dominance of the managerially controlled state and become an advocate of pure market economies.

These views, it should be noted and acknowledged, did not conflict with those of the fountainhead of socialist theory and of Communist ideology, Karl Marx. Marxism is a materialist theory of society and history. The nature of society (the structural possibilities) is determined by the level of technology. Social structures, class relations, power systems, and ideologies are derivative from, and are closely tied to, the productive apparatus. Marx, therefore, rejected as utopian proposals to build communism prior to the emergence of highly industrialized countries.

Marx and Engels distinguished between utopian and scientific socialism in *The Communist Manifesto* and in Engels's work, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. The concept of utopian socialism referred in part to efforts in the Middle Ages to create egalitarian communes and to the writings of men such as Fourier and Owen, who favored creating cooperative communities in the nineteenth century. And following from Marx's assumption, the major Marxist theorists did not believe that socialism could be built in a nonindustrialized country like the Czarist empire. These included, prior to the Revolution, Russians Lenin, Trotsky, Plekhanov, and Martov, the last two the theoreticians of the Mensheviks, and, outside Russia, major figures Karl Kautsky and Rosa Luxemburg.

Underdeveloped, primarily agrarian countries did not meet Marx's materialistic requirement for socialism. He consistently emphasized that socialism could only come to power and take shape in a society that produces economic abundance, i.e., has the appropriate material substructure. Marx was convinced that an exploitative class society is the inevitable consequence of scarcity. Managers have to be highly rewarded to motivate them to organize the society. Surplus value has to be extracted from the lower classes to produce economic growth and to support the institutions of the ruling class, of government, of political organization, of defense against natural and human enemies. To repeat, socialism can only emerge in a society in which technology is so advanced, so productive, that the goal of equality, a high standard of living for all, is a practical one. Utopian, unrealistic efforts to create socialism, to form an egalitarian society prior to abundance, must fail.

In *Das Kapital*, Marx noted that "the most advanced society would show to the less developed the image of their future."[77] Ironically, this meant that the first socialist country would be the United States since it was the most developed country from the late nineteenth century on. Many Marxists, ranging from Friedrich Engels in Europe to Daniel DeLeon in the United States, Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, in France, August Bebel in Germany, and Maxim Gorky in Russia, concluded that America had to be the first socialist country. They continued to believe this up to World War I,

even when they saw large socialist movements developing in Europe, but not in the United States.[78]

The theory, of course, meant that Russia, not to speak of China, could not and would not be among the first socialist countries. The Russian Marxists, both Bolshevik and Menshevik, knew their Marx and believed this. They wrote that Russia first had to go through the stages of being a bourgeois society, a capitalist economy. Capitalism, a market economy, economic incentives, were necessary for growth under conditions of scarcity.

Prior to 1917, the only well-known Russian Marxist who argued that the working class, the socialist movement, should try to take power in Russia was Leon Trotsky. Trotsky did not believe this because he thought that the country was ready for socialism, but rather because, as he emphasized, Russia had missed the opportunity to develop along the lines that had occurred in the west. He argued that it was too late for the Russian bourgeoisie to take over their country and transform it into an economically developed capitalist democracy, like western Europe or America. Russia's weakness in the world market would prevent it from doing so. However, Trotsky did not propose that the party take office to erect a socialist system, but rather to lead the effort to industrialize the country using market or capitalist mechanisms.

The other Russian Marxists, both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, ridiculed Trotsky's theory and rejected the idea that the working class would come to power in an underdeveloped country. In 1917, however, the Bolsheviks did take over. The historical record documents that this happened because Lenin, who was a strategic genius, in effect decided that Trotsky was right, although he never acknowledged this openly. On his return from Switzerland in April 1917, he proposed that the Bolsheviks plan for the seizure of power. All the other leaders of the party thought he had lost his bearings and rejected his policy.

Lenin, however, was able to switch the party's orientation. He argued that Russia was the weakest link in the chain of capitalist nations as a result of the military defeats it had suffered in the war. He felt and hoped that a Russian revolution would provide the spark for the revolution in the

industrialized west, particularly in Germany, but elsewhere as well. And it was his belief that if the working class, if the socialist movement, came to power in the more developed countries of western Europe, that Russia could be helped along by them. No one, certainly not he nor any of the other Marxists, thought that socialist institutions could be erected in the backward material conditions of the Czarist Empire. He did not really believe that the Bolsheviks would hold power unless the west joined in.

We do not know what went through Lenin's mind as it became clear that the revolution would not succeed in the west, that the Bolsheviks were isolated in what had become the Soviet Union. For the first few years, he and the other Bolsheviks kept looking for the revolution to emerge in the industrialized West, in harmony with Marx's anticipations. But as it became clear that this was not happening, that they were isolated in their economically backward territory, one that showed little evidence of response to the egalitarian norms introduced under War Communism, Lenin became increasingly pessimistic. He put the blame for domestic shortcomings, not only on war conditions and under-development, but also on the low cultural level of the Russian people, on Asian traditions that made for passivity.

Marx's theory implied the effort to build socialism in a less developed society would result in a sociological abortion. If those words do not describe what happened in the Soviet Union, nothing does. Karl Marx anticipated that the premature creation of a socialist state would be a fetter on the means of production, not a goad, and would be repressive and reactionary. Marx would not have believed that the ruling class of the sociological abortion would give up as benignly as it has.

Some orthodox Marxists, focusing on organizational variables, came up with equally pessimistic predictions about the future of an effort led by an elite party, the Bolsheviks, to build socialism in Russia. Leon Trotsky, in the period after the Revolution of 1905, rejected the Mensheviks as too moderate, but regarded the Bolsheviks as too authoritarian. Analyzing the internal structure of their organization and Lenin's power within it, he predicted that a Bolshevik seizure of power would inevitably lead to an authoritarian regime, in which one party controlled everything, with a

dictator who dominated the party. He of course gave up this analysis when he joined the Bolsheviks in 1917.

The Polish-German Marxist Rosa Luxemburg also debated with Lenin in the early years of the twentieth century. She rejected his idea that a small revolutionary elite party would lead the working class into socialism. In two articles published under the title, "Leninism or Marxism?" in 1904, she argued against Lenin's organizational views. She attacked Lenin's emphasis on a centralized elite party, one that she thought implied contempt for the working class, suggesting they could not come to revolutionary consciousness on their own. Like Trotsky, she anticipated a future in which the Party would dictate to the masses, the Central Committee would dictate to the Party, and a leader would ultimately dictate to the Committee. After the Bolsheviks had come to power and established a dictatorship, she again polemicized against Lenin's views in a pamphlet on *The Russian Revolution*. She wrote, among other things: "Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party—however numerous they may be—is no freedom for all. Freedom is always and exclusively for the one who thinks differently."[79] And she predicted that

> *without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out of every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. . . . [The system becomes] a clique affair, a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians . . . such conditions must inevitably cause a brutalization of public life: attempted assassinations, shooting of hostages, etc.* [80]

The idea that socialism could only emerge in an advanced industrial society, which was a fixed dogma of Marxism prior to 1917, almost disappeared afterward, given the existence of the Soviet Union. It should be noted, however, that the justly esteemed Italian theoretician Antonio Gramsci wrote from prison in the middle 1920s, in line with the traditional Marxist gospel, that his country, Italy, must "Americanize" to become socialist. That is, Gramsci argued Italy must first become an advanced bourgeois industrial country like the United States, before it could move on to make a socialist

revolution.[81] Gramsci did not refer critically to the situation in the Soviet Union; as a Communist he could not, but he may very well have had it in mind, since it was much more backward than Italy.

Theoretical insight, political judgment

Finally, we must note that some politicians and journalists on both the Right and the Left seem to have known what was happening in the Soviet Union and based their policies and writings on this knowledge. Perhaps the most accurate description and prevision came from a conservative journalist, Bernard Levin, writing in the (London) *Times* in September 1977. Levin thought the same nationalist, social, and political forces that had produced dissidence within the elites in Czechoslovakia and other parts of Eastern Europe would inevitably produce the same outcome in the Soviet Union itself by 1989. He wrote with uncanny prescience that in the Soviet Union, the eventual leaders of revolt

> *. . . are there, all right, at this very moment, obeying orders, doing their duty, taking the official line against dissidents, not only in public but in private. They do not conspire, they are not in touch with Western intelligence agencies, they commit no sabotage. They are in every respect model Soviet functionaries. Or rather, in every respect but one: they have admitted the truth about their country to themselves, and have vowed, also to themselves, to do something about it.*
>
> *That is how it will be done. There will be no gunfire in the streets, no barricades, no general strikes, no hanging of oppressors from lamp-posts, no sacking and burning of government offices, no seizure of radio-stations or mass defections among the military. But one day soon, some new faces will appear in the Politburo—I am sure they have already appeared in municipal and even regional administrative authorities—and gradually, very gradually, other, similarly new, faces will join them. Until one day they will look at each other and realize that there is no longer any need for concealment of the truth in their hearts. And the match will be lit.*
>
> *There is nothing romantic or fantastic about this prognosis; it is the most sober extrapolation from known facts and tested evidence. That, or something like it,* will *happen.* When *it will happen it is neither possible nor useful to guess; but I am sure it will be within the lifetime of people much older than I . . . let us suppose, for neatness' sake, on July 14, 1989. . . .* [82]

In four major speeches delivered in 1982, 1983, 1987, and 1988, Ronald Reagan said the system was going down. At Westminster in 1982, he noted as simple fact that "of all the millions of refugees we've seen in the modern world, their flight is always away from, not toward, the Communist world," and he consigned Marxism-Leninism to the "trash heap of history." In 1983, he said Communism is a "sad, bizarre chapter in history, whose last pages even now are being written." In 1987, at the Brandenburg Gate, he stressed: "In the Communist world we see failure, technological backwardness, declining standards of health, even want of the most basic kind— too little food." And he proclaimed that his cold war policies were based on the assumption that the Soviet Union was a "basket case." Economics, Reagan believed, was the Soviet Union's primary failing. As a good pupil of the market economists, he explained that weakness as derivative from the fact that it is impossible for government planners, no matter how sophisticated, to ever substitute for the judgment of "millions of individuals," for the "incentives inherent in the capitalist system."[83] These conclusions were out of line with the advice he had been receiving from experts in the C.I.A., the Defense and State Departments. Seemingly, the President had his own sources, some of whom were in the Defense Intelligence Agency and the RAND Corporation.

From the Left, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, in a series of prescient statements, made from the late seventies on, gave even more emphasis to the terrible weakness of the Soviet Union. Asked to predict what would happen in the 1980s, he stated in 1979 that the Soviet system "could blow up." He pointed to the economic downturn, the "*rise* in mortality rates . . . the nationality strains."[84] In a speech in the Senate in January 1980, Moynihan noted: "The indices of economic stagnation and even decline are extraordinary. The indices of social disorder—social pathology is not too strong a term—are even more so. The defining event of the decade might well be the breakup of the Soviet Empire." In a commencement address at New York University in 1984, he pointed to the absence of legitimacy, "that the Soviet idea is spent . . . it summons no loyalty." Again in that year he commented, "the Soviet Union is weak and getting weaker,"[85] and in October

1984, before Gorbachev took office, Moynihan proclaimed: "The Cold War is over, the West won. . . . The Soviet Union . . . has collapsed. As a society it just doesn't work. Nobody believes in it anymore." Moynihan differed from Reagan in drawing policy implications. His strategy "for dealing with the Soviets is to wait them out." They will collapse.[86]

Given these judgments of the Soviet future made by political leaders and journalists, the question is why were they right and so many of our Sovietological colleagues wrong. The answer again in part must be ideological. Reagan and Levin came from rightist backgrounds, and Moynihan, much like the leaders of the AFL-CIO, from a left-anti-Stalinist social-democratic milieu, environments that disposed participants to believe the worst. Most of the Sovietologists, on the other hand, were left-liberal in their politics, an orientation that undermined their capacity to accept the view that economic statism, planning, and socialist incentives would not work. They were also for the most part ignorant of, or ignored, the basic Marxist formulation that it is impossible to build socialism in impoverished societies.

The differences among the Sovietologists, however, also stem from responding to varying sets of questions. The scholars sought to explain how the system worked. They took the fact of the USSR's long-term existence for granted. Thus, they looked for institutions and values that stabilized the polity and society.[87] Ideologically critical journalists and politicians, however, were disposed to emphasize dysfunctional aspects, structures, and behaviors, which might cause a crisis.

The distribution of emphases among the fourteen contributors to Brzezinski's 1969 collection, *Dilemmas of Change in Soviet Politics*, discussed earlier, is congruent with these assumptions. Two-thirds (four out of six) of those who foresaw a serious possibility of breakdown were, like Levin, Moynihan, and Reagan, nonacademics. Three-quarters (six out of eight) of those who could not look beyond system continuity were scholars.

One may ask, what about Asian communism? Why is it surviving, as in China and Vietnam? We obviously do not have time and space to deal with this issue, but we would note that China and Vietnam are following the strategy advanced by Trotsky before World War I for revolutions in under-

developed societies to preside over market-driven economies. Most of the Chinese economy is now private and is becoming even more so. Its most successful regions are the most market oriented. Vietnam is predominantly a capitalist economy. Equally or more important is the fact that it is 43 years since the Chinese party came to power and only 17 years for Vietnam, as compared to the 74 years that the Communist regime lasted in the Soviet Union. The men who made the Asian revolutions are alive and at the summits of their power structures; they acknowledge implicitly the failure of Communism, but do not quit. Communism still has its revolutionary legitimacy for them, one that decrepitude and biology had reduced, if not eliminated, in the USSR.

Finally, we would note that although Marx was right about the failure of efforts to create socialism in pre-industrial societies, he was wrong in anticipating the socialist revolution in advanced industrial ones. The United States apart, they all have significant socialist or social democratic parties, but without exception all of these have now given up socialist objectives; they all endorse the market economy as the best means to produce increased productivity and a higher living standard for the underprivileged.[88] Socialism and Marxism may be considered failures not because of developments in the formerly Communist world, but because of their inability to point the way for the advanced countries.

Does modern sociology have anything to contribute to the analysis of developments in the former Communist world? We hope we have shown that it does. But if you doubt it, may we note that while the party still held power, at a three-day conference on "The Party and Perestroika" at the Higher Party School in Moscow in 1989, attended by Communist scholars and intellectuals from all over the Soviet Union, a review of the stenographic record by S. Frederick Starr reports few references to Marx and Lenin, while statements by Max Weber and Talcott Parsons were invoked more frequently to analyze the situation and justify various proposals for reforms.[89]

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Notes

1. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1.
2. Robert M. Solow, "The public dimensions of economics: Some pitfalls," *Challenge* 21 (March–April 1978): 39.
3. Rita Jalali and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Racial and ethnic tensions: A global perspective," *Political Science Quarterly* 107 (Winter 1992–93): 137–158.
4. James Gleick, *Chaos: Making of a New Science* (New York: Viking, 1987), 23.
5. Cf. Seymour Martin Lipset, "Predicting the future of post-industrial society: Can we do it?" in Lipset, editor, *The Third Century: America as a Post-Industrial Society* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 1–18.
6. John Lewis Gaddis, "The Cold War's end dramatizes the failure of political theory," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 22 July 1992, 44; Gaddis, *The United States and the End of Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 190.
7. Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1937).
8. Daniel Bell, "Ten theories in search of reality: The prediction of Soviet behavior in the social sciences," *World Politics* 10 (April 1958): 358.
9. Donald R. Kelley, "Perestroika (book review)," *Soviet Studies* 44/2 (1992): 349.
10. Archie Brown, "The Soviet political scene: The era of Gorbachev?" in Lawrence W. Lerner and Donald W. Treadgold, editors, *Gorbachev and the Soviet Future* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1988), 38–39.
11. William E. Odom, "How far can Soviet reform go?" *Problems of Communism* 36 (November–December 1987): 30.
12. Ibid., 33.
13. See William Odom, "The pluralist mirage," *The National Interest* 31 (Spring 1993): 99–100. The book is Zbigniew Brzezinski, editor, *Dilemmas of Change in Soviet Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969). See table on 157 in Brzezinski's "Concluding Reflections."
14. Robert Conquest, "Immobilism and decay," in Brzezinski, ibid., 72.
15. Martin Malia, "From under the rubble, what?" *Problems of Communism* 41 (January–April 1992): 96.

16. Murray Feshbach, "Population and manpower trends in the U.S.S.R.," paper prepared for Conference on the Soviet Union Today, sponsored by the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, held in Washington D.C., April 1978; Feshbach, "Issues in Soviet health problems," in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Soviet Economy in the 1980s: Problems and Prospects*, Part 2, 97th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 31 December 1982), 203–227; Feshbach, "Soviet population, labor force and health," in U.S. Congress, Joint Hearings of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Joint Economic Committee, *The Political Economy of the Soviet Union* 98th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 26 July and 29 September 1983), 91–138.
17. It is interesting to note that Emmanuel Todd, who in his book *The Final Fall: Essay on the Decomposition of the Soviet Sphere* (New York: Karz Publishers, 1979) drew an exceptionally stark picture of Soviet decline, was also trained in historical demography.
18. Nick Eberstedt, *The Poverty of Communism* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1988), ch. 3. This chapter was originally published as "Human factors: Quality of life," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s: Problems and Prospects*, Part 2, 187–202. See also Eberstedt, "Health of an Empire: Poverty and social progress in the CMEA bloc," in Henry S. Rowen and Charles Wolf, Jr., editors, *The Future of the Soviet Empire* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 221–258 and Mikhail S. Bernstam, "Trends in the Soviet population," in ibid., 185–220.
19. Andrei Amalrik, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 35.
20. Ibid., 33, 41.
21. Ibid., 59, 64.
22. Randall Collins, *Weberian Sociological Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 187.
23. Ibid., 197.
24. Ibid., 203.
25. Moshe Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon: A Historical Interpretation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
26. For a systematic treatment of the state-society tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe see Walter D. Connor, *Socialism's Dilemmas: State and Society in the Soviet Bloc* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), ch. 1. Blair A. Ruble described the long-term social changes in the Soviet Union as a "quiet revolution" preparing the way for Gorbachev's reforms in "The Soviet Union's quiet revolution," in George W. Breslauer, editor, *Can Gorbachev's Reforms Succeed?* (Berkeley: Berkeley-Stanford Program in Soviet Studies, Center for Slavic and East European Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1990).
27. Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon*, viii.
28. Ibid., 145f.

29. Richard Pipes, *Survival Is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America's Future* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 199–200.
30. Ibid., 203.
31. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1973).
32. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956).
33. Ibid., part vi.
34. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, ch. 12, section 1.
35. For a fundamental criticism of the "atomization thesis" see Ralf Dahrendorf, "Totalitarianism revisited," *Partisan Review* 55 (Fall 1988): 541–554.
36. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Concluding reflections," in his *Dilemmas of Change*, 162–163.
37. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: America's Rule in the Technetronic Era* (New York: Viking Press, 1970), 164–172.
38. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Scribner, 1989), 100.
39. Herbert J. Spiro, "Totaliarianism," in David L. Sills, editor, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), vol. 16, 106, 112.
40. Abbot Gleason, "'Totalitarianism' in 1984," *The Russian Review* 43 (April 1984): 153.
41. Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Patterson, "Red fascism: The merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American image of totalitarianism, 1930s–1950s," *American Historical Review* 75 (April 1970): 1046.
42. About the American side of the story, see Robert A. Skotheim, *Totalitarianism and American Social Thought* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971). The most thorough historical treatment of the scholarly literature, covering both American and European developments, is to be found in Martin Jaenicke, *Totalitäre Herrschaft: Anatomie eines politischen Begriffs* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1971).
43. Irving Howe's generous and, at the same time, highly critical retrospective analysis gives a glimpse into the moral and intellectual turmoil behind early totalitarian theorizing: "Totalitarianism reconsidered: Yesterday's theories, today's realities," *Dissent* 38 (Winter 1991): 63–71.
44. Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 23–24.

45. Karl W. Deutsch, "Cracks in the monolith: Possibilities and patterns of disintegration in totalitarian systems," in Carl J. Friedrich, editor, *Totalitarianism* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964), 316–317.
46. Untitled discussion contribution in the Friedrich volume, 336.
47. "Some observations on the limits of totalitarian power," in David Riesman, *Abundance For What? And Other Essays* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964), 80–83. This essay was originally published in 1952.
48. Raymond A. Bauer, Alex Inkeles, and Clyde Kluckhorn, *How the Soviet System Works: Cultural, Psychological, and Social Themes* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), 218.
49. Raymond Bauer and David B. Gleicher, "Word-of-mouth communication in the Soviet Union," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 17 (Fall 1953): 297–310. Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen: Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), ch. vii.
50. Malia, "From under the rubble," 98–99.
51. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 7, 25.
52. Alex Inkeles, "Models and issues in the analysis of Soviet Society," *Survey* no. 60 (July 1966): 4–5.
53. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 25.
54. An overview of these debates is to be found in a *Festschrift* to H. Gordon Skilling. Skilling had been the first Sovietologist to initiate, in a cautious way, the analytical shift toward pluralism. Susan Gross Solomon, "pluralism and political science"; Jerry F. Hough, "Pluralism, corporatism and the Soviet Union"; Archie Brown, "Pluralism, power and the Soviet political system," in Susan Gross Solomon, editor, *Pluralism and the Soviet Union: Essays in Honour of H. Gordon Skilling* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983). For Skilling's own retrospective view, see H. Gordon Skilling, "Interest groups and Communist politics revisited," *World Politics* 36 (October 1983): 1–27. For the corporatist version, see Valerie Bunce and John M. Echols, III, "Soviet politics in the Brezhnev era: 'Pluralism' or 'Corporatism'?" in Donald R. Kelley, editor, *Soviet Politics in the Brezhnev Era* (New York: Praeger, 1980).
55. The general discussion is to be found in chapters 8–10 of Jerry F. Hough's *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977). For some of the politically explicit statements, see 23f, 33f, 40, 42, 173ff, 180, 197ff.
56. Peter Rutland, "Sovietology: From stagnation to *Perestroika*? A decade of doctoral research in Soviet politics," *Kennan Institute Occasional Papers* no. 241 (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center, 1990). Rutland, "Sovietology: Notes for a post-mortem," *The National Interest* 31 (Spring 1993): 109–123.

57. This general criticism does not imply that the pluralist school could not claim its share of predictive success too. Fairness demands that we mention, first of all, Hough's work on generational differences in Soviet top leadership. Having collated all the available biographical scraps and bits about Soviet leaders, he had firmly set his sights, already in the late seventies, on Gorbachev and a couple of other figures as harbingers of great changes: Jerry F. Hough, *Soviet Leadership in Transition* (Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1980), 154. Followers of the old school, on the other hand, dismissed Hough's high expectations on the grounds that all the new elites, however different were their educational and career backgrounds, "have . . . been co-opted and socialized into a common mold of traditional values and attitudes associated with their dominant elite political culture." Joel C. Moses, "Soviet leaders: Roots of behavior," *Problems of Communism* 30 (July–August 1981): 49.

58. Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 560. For Hough's predictions at the time of "Gorbachev's endgame" see Peter Reddaway, "The end of the Empire," *New York Review of Books*, 7 November 1991, 59.

59. Robert Conquest, "Academe and Soviet myth," *The National Interest* 31 (Spring 1993): 92–93.

60. Juan Linz, "Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes," in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, editors, *Handbook of Political Science* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), vol. 3, 175–411.

61. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *Dictatorships and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 51.

62. As she followed the unfolding of events in the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, Kirkpatrick was the first to acknowledge that she overestimated the staying power of communist regimes. See the articles and studies collected in Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, *The Withering Away of the Totalitarian State . . . and Other Surprises* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute Press, 1990).

63. In professional Sovietology, the first call to take Soviet dissidents seriously, both as sources of information and providers of new theoretical insight, came from Peter Reddaway: *Uncensored Russia* (Washington, D.C.: American Heritage Institute, 1972). The best scholarly overview of early dissident thinking in Eastern Europe was given in the volume edited and introduced by Rudolf Tokes: *Opposition in Eastern Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1979). For later developments see Tony R. Judt, "The dilemmas of dissidence: The politics of opposition in East-Central-Europe," *East European Politics and Societies* 2 (Spring 1988): 185–240. In the eighties, Timothy Garton Ash became such a close observer of East European dissidents that, for the time of the demise of communist regimes, he became a part of the scene he observed: Timothy Garton Ash, *The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of East Central Europe* (New York: Random House, 1989).

64. Jacques Rupnik, *The Other Europe* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989, rev. ed.), 224.
65. The Hungarian Pierre Kende and the Polish Smolar brothers played an important role in spreading the word in Western Europe. Cf. Kende and Krzysztof Pomian, editors, *Varsovie-Budapest 1956* (Paris: Seuil, 1978). A symptomatic expression of the resulting change of mood was Claude Lefort's *L'invention démocratique: Les limites de la domination totalitaire* (Paris: Fayard, 1981). For the general process see especially Walter Laqueur, "Is there now, or has there ever been, such a thing as totalitarianism," *Commentary* 80 (October 1985): 29–35 and Pierre Hassner, "Le totalitarisme vue de l'Ouest," in Guy Hermet, Pierre Hassner, and Jacques Rupnik, editors, *Totalitarismes* (Paris: Economica, 1984).
66. The classic statement of the paradox, with a hint at its resolution, was Leszek Kolakowski's "Hope and hopelessness," *Survey* 17 (Summer 1971): 36–52.
67. See, first of all, the two dissident classics: Adam Michnik, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1986) and Václav Havel, *Living in Truth* (London: Faber, 1988). Also, from the enormous literature we want to draw attention to two recent works that try to utilize the dissident experience for Western democratic theory: Jeffrey C. Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost: The Post-Totalitarian Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) and Jean L. Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992).
68. East European dissident ideas found, in this respect too, a wider application in Western political theory. See especially Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).
69. Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 280–281.
70. On Weber and other sociological critics of socialism, see Daniel Bell, "The post-industrial society: The evolution of an idea," *Survey* 79 (Spring 1971): 117–129.
71. Max Weber, *Economy and Society* vol. I (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), 223–225.
72. For discussion see Seymour Martin Lipset, *Conflict and Consensus* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1985), chapter 2, "Social stratification and social class analysis." Also: Seymour Martin Lipset and Richard Dobson, "Social stratification and sociology in the Soviet Union," *Survey* 88 (Summer 1973): 114–185; Seymour Martin Lipset and Terry Nichols Clark, "Are social classes dying?" *International Sociology* 6 (December 1991): 397–410.
73. Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (New York: Free Press, 1962).
74. Nikolai Bukharin, *Historical Materialism: A System of Sociology* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965).
75. James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972); Burnham, *The Machiavellians: Defenders of Freedom* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1970).

76. Bruno Rizzi, *The Bureaucratization of the World* (New York: Free Press, 1985). This was originally published in Paris in 1939. Max Shachtman, *The Bureaucratic Revolution: The Rise of the Stalinist State* (New York: Donald Press, 1962). See the discussion of these works in Bell, "The post-industrial society," 139–142.
77. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958), 8–9.
78. They looked to America as the country that would show others the way to socialism, in spite of the glaring weakness of socialist parties in the United States. As Howard Quint points out in *The Forging of American Socialism: Origins of the Modern Movement* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), 380, they "found the United States, of all the countries in the world, most ripe for socialism, not only in the light of Marxian law of economic development, but also by the express opinion of Friedrich Engels." Karl Kautsky, considered the leading Marxist theoretician in the German Social Democratic Party, announced in 1902 that "America shows us our future, in so far as one country can reveal it at all to another." He elaborated this view in 1910, anticipating "the sharpening of class conflict more strongly" in the U.S. than anywhere else. The British Marxist H. M. Hyndman noted in 1904 that "just as North America is today the most advanced country, economically and socially, so it will be the first in which Socialism will find open and legal expression." Quoted in R. Lawrence Moore, *European Socialists and the American Promised Land* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 58, 102. Werner Sombart emphasized this point in his classic 1906 book, *Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?* (White Plains, N.J.: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1976), 15: "If . . . modern socialism follows as a necessary reaction to capitalism, the country with the most advanced capitalist development, namely the United States, would at the same time be the one providing the classic case of Socialism, and its working class would be supporters of the most radical of Socialist movements." Maxim Gorky, who supported the Russian Bolsheviks from 1903 on, wrote in 1906 of his conviction that "socialism would be realized in the United States before any other country in the world." Quoted in J. E. Good, *Strangers in a Strange Land: Five Russian Radicals Visit the United States* (Ph.D. dissertation, Washington, D.C.: American University, 1979), 231. August Bebel, the leader of the German Social Democrats, stated in an interview in 1907 in the American socialist paper *Appeal to Reason* that: "You Americans will be the first to usher in a Socialist Republic." His belief at a time when his party was already a mass movement with many elected members of the Reichstag, but the American Socialist Party secured less than 2% of the vote, was based on the fact that the United States was "far ahead of Germany in industrial development." He reiterated his opinion in 1912, when the discrepancy between the strength of the two movements was even greater, saying that America would be "the first nation to declare a Cooperative Commonwealth." Quoted in Moore, *European Socialists*, 78f. Paul Lafargue paraphrased Marx on the flyleaf of his book on America by asserting that "the most industrially advanced country shows to those who follow it on the industrial ladder the image of their own future." Quoted in Moore, *European Socialists*, 91.

79. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution and Leninism or Marxism?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), 69.
80. Ibid., 71–72.
81. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 21–22, 272, 318.
82. Reprinted as Bernard Levin, “One who got it right,” *National Interest* 31 (Spring 1993): 64–65.
83. Edwin Meese, “The man who won the Cold War,” *Policy Review* 60 (Summer 1992): 36–39.
84. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Will Russia blow up?” *Newsweek* (19 November 1979): 144, 147.
85. “Senator to Reagan: ‘We won the Cold War,’” *Watertown Daily Times*, 10 September 1984.
86. “Soviet Union is ‘failed society’ in need of clear policy from U.S., Moynihan says,” *Buffalo News*, 15 October 1984.
87. A good example is Severyn Bialer’s “Sources of Soviet stability,” in Terry L. Thompson and Richard Sheldon, editors, *Soviet Society and Culture: Essays in Honor of Vera S. Dunham* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1988).
88. Seymour Martin Lipset, “No third way: A comparative perspective on the left,” in Daniel Chirot, editor, *The Crisis of Leninism and the Decline of the Left* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 183–232.
89. S. Frederick Starr, “Pooped party,” *The New Republic* (4 December 1989): 20.