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Poland: Winding road from the Communist to the post-Solidarity elite

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In a historically short period of a half century, Polish society has experienced two radical changes of social order and two equally radical shifts of power elites. The first shift took place in the mid-forties, the second at the turn of the eighties and the nineties.

The aftermath of the Second World War brought about not only a new political elite, but also entirely new conditions and rules of social and political life. On the basis of the theory of elites, the best explanation of this radical shift of power would probably be the *circulation of elites* hypothesis. The question remains whether the second radical shift of power can also be explained in terms of the circulation of elites or in terms of the *reproduction of elites*. There are many studies dealing with the emergence of new elites in the postcommunist Poland,¹ but none of them addresses this hypothesis directly.

In this article we are exploring the issue of *circulation vs. reproduction* in the context of the formation of current elites. To understand this process in the postcommunist and post-Solidarity Poland, it is necessary to know the historical context of Polish development in the last decades (section 1), rules of Communist elite recruitment (section 2), and the composition of the current elites (section 3). We examine the *circulation vs. reproduction* hypothesis in the next section. Looking for arguments supporting one of these two models of change of the power elite, we keep in mind the *conversion of capital* thesis. The *conversion of capital* understood in Bourdieu's terms,² intrigues many students of the postcommunist transformation. Its most popular interpretation, frequently debated in academic circles and on the political scene, assumes that the "negotiated revolution" in Eastern Europe was a kind of trade off.³ To secure the non-violent shift of power, the Communist nomenklatura has been allowed to convert their political capital of the

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ancient regime into economic capital in the new regime. Our study enables some insight into this process. The chapter is concluded by a summary section on the formation of the postcommunist and post-Solidarity elite.

Two transformations and the emergence of the new elites: Historical context

To understand the formation of elites in present-day Poland, one has to consider the historical context of Polish post-war political life. The Second World War itself – prior to the Communist takeover – brought about tremendous changes in the structure and attitudes of Polish society. Three social classes virtually disappeared. The *bourgeoisie* and big landowners fled the country in two waves: in 1939 because of the Nazis, and in 1944–45 because of the Bolsheviks. The *petty bourgeoisie* – consisting of the vast majority of Polish Jews – was exterminated by the Nazis. The intelligentsia was decimated by both the Nazis and Soviets. A substantial part of this class emigrated, spreading all over the world. Due to the Yalta agreement, the territory of the country was moved nearly two hundred miles westward, resulting in migrations unprecedented in Polish history: in 1945–47 about four million people were relocated.⁴ The outcome of all these processes was disastrous: local communities disappeared, social control weakened, the inter-generational transmission of values was distorted, millions of uprooted people wandered across the country. On top of this, the Red Army was stationed on Polish soil, and among the Polish people there was a widespread disillusionment with the pre-war political elites' performance. All these factors strongly contributed to the Communist takeover of Poland.

Imposition of the Stalinist system in Poland,⁵ like in other East European countries, was based on five types of actions taken by victorious communists:

- (1) Establishment of political monopoly of the party legitimated by the principles of Marxism-Leninism;
- (2) Setting up of the mechanism of political approval for the incumbents of all strategic positions in politics, economy, media, culture, and intellectual life (the mechanism later known as the “nomenklatura system”);
- (3) Nationalization of economy, centralization of resources and

- their allocation through the mechanism of central planning (redistributive economy);
- (4) Terror and police repression against opponents of the new system;
 - (5) Mass and centrally orchestrated propaganda brainwashing the society to gain control over people's minds and souls.

By the end of the 1940s centralization of public life was completed, and it took the Communists two more years to subordinate nearly all institutions to their will. The last independent organization was the Catholic Church. Nonetheless, the Church was forced to pay tribute to the regime, declaring loyalty to the Communist powerholders.

The means employed by Communists to attain power were effective: the political system was under total control of the party, society appeared to be pacified, and social peace was secured. In return, the new authorities guaranteed full employment, some social benefits, and upward-mobility opportunities for the representatives of the lower classes.

This situation lasted seven years: from the late 1940s until the end of 1955. In the mid-fifties the intra-system dissent started to gain some importance. Party reformers, young Marxists (among them Leszek Kołakowski, Jacek Kuroń, and Karol Modzelewski), and some intellectuals and academics, fascinated with democratic socialism ("socialism with a human face"), tried to modify the system without changing its identity. They failed. Nonetheless, they contributed to the later development of democratic opposition in Poland, having a decisive impact on the left-of-the-center orientation of the dissident movement of the sixties and seventies.

In October 1956, after the bloody (June 1956) riots in Poznań,⁶ Władysław Gomułka – the domestic Communist leader expelled in 1948 – regained power. Stalinism in Poland was over. The semi-sovereignty, semi-democracy, and semi-pluralism of the mid-forties were re-introduced. Soviet advisers had to leave the country. The power of the political police was severely limited. Industrial democracy had been introduced (workers' councils), and the Church regained its relative autonomy. Collectivization of agriculture was halted, quasi-oppositional political groupings were tolerated, censorship became much more lenient, and some academic freedoms were re-installed. All these improvements, however, did not threaten the core of the system.

They were, undoubtedly, distinct deviations from the dominant pattern of Soviet-style Communism, but the identity of the Communist system remained intact. Strategic spheres of public life were, as before, under control of the party. Moreover, Gomułka's *thaw* was quite short: from 1957 onward the regime was gradually retreating from all democratic reforms introduced in 1956.

Despite the half-hearted reforms, "the Polish road to socialism," as Gomułka's reforms were called, managed to get social support, mostly due to two factors: removing the humiliating signs of Soviet domination, and halting the terror. It is necessary to stress, however, that reformed or not the system never depended on the support of the majority of people, simply because democratic procedures had never been a part of its logic.

The students' revolt of March '68, supported by most of the intellectuals and a good part of the intelligentsia, became a starting point for anti-systemic political identity for many future members of the Solidarity-based counter-elite. March '68 did not generate any institutionalized alternative political force. Nevertheless, it was an important experience for both the power-holders and the society. For the power-holders it provided proof that Gomułka was unable to cope with the country's problems, and resulted in strengthening the intra-party opposition against him. For the society as a whole, March '68 revealed the regime's readiness to use violent means to secure its power. The party initiated post-March '68 campaigns of anti-semitism and anti-intellectualism that politically awakened a large part of the intelligentsia, setting up a point of reference for their political views and preferences.

What March '68 meant for students, intellectuals, and a large part of the intelligentsia, the December '70 bloody riots in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Szczecin, and other Baltic Coast cities meant for Polish blue-collar workers. Indeed, December '70 changed the consciousness of the Polish working class, constructing a foundation on which ten years later an organization was built that shook the world's Communist system, and eventually contributed decisively to its final collapse. Although the Communists succeeded again in outmaneuvering the workers (replacing Gomułka with Edward Gierek, and promising a kind of Kadar's "goulash socialism"), many future Solidarity leaders, Lech Wałęsa included, originated from these riots.

March '68 and December '70 – two protests against distortions of Communism, brutally suppressed by the regime – had important long-run consequences. On the one hand, the regime showed its limited tolerance toward intellectual or working-class dissent, on the other, people learned their lesson, adopting a “wait-and-watch” strategy. This is why Gierek’s policy of cooptation of the intelligentsia, technocrats, and skilled workers into the system had limited societal response. At that time both the intelligentsia and working class split: some joined Gierek (and the honeymoon lasted until the mid-seventies), others rejected the idea of cooptation. The December '70 riots kindled the working-class dissent that was unique in the entire Soviet Bloc and that later (in the eighties) made the working class one of the sources of the counter-elite.

In 1976, Poland was again the scene of workers’ riots, this time on the outskirts of Warsaw and in Radom. Drawing conclusions from the previous attempts, in which the striking workers and supporting dissidents were organized on an *ad hoc* basis, the leaders of the democratic opposition, ignoring the Communists’ legal practices (but sticking to the Constitution), established the first permanent and formally structured oppositional institution. The Committee for Workers’ Defence,⁷ known by its acronym “KOR,” was organized by Warsaw intellectuals. Its establishment was publicly announced, all members kept a high profile, openly expressing their views. They pretended they lived in a democratic (“normal”) country. The *new evolutionism*⁸ concept was put into practice. The ethos – later known as the *Solidarity ethos* – of non-violence, dignity, human rights, freedom, equality, and pluralism started its way into millions of Polish minds.

Soon after KOR, many committees, parties, and alternative groupings were set up, such as the Free Trade Unions in Gdańsk and Silesia, SKS (Students’ Solidarity Committees) and NZS (Independent Students’ Association) in three major Polish academic centers, Młoda Polska (Young Poland) – a Gdańsk movement of young conservatives, KPN (Confederation of Independent Poland) – the first openly anticommunist political party, PPN (Polish Alliance for Independence) – a political group of anticommunist intellectuals, ROPCiO (Movement for Defense of Human and Civil Rights), Helsinki Committee. These and many other independent civic initiatives expressing divergent political persuasions and often grouping both workers and intellectuals were mushrooming.⁹ To complete the picture of the emerging embryos of the future counter-elite, one has to mention the role of the Catholic Intelligentsia Clubs, operating under the protective umbrella of the Catholic Church in all major Polish cities.

All the above-mentioned organizations created a pool for the political counter-elite that appeared on the public scene in the second half of the 1970s. Their activity soon culminated in the emergence of Solidarity. The birth of Solidarity, and the sixteen months (September 1980–December 1981) of legal existence of the nearly ten-million-strong movement, was a phenomenon whose impact on the erosion of the Soviet bloc may hardly be overestimated. In the Communist world it was the first secular, legal, mass, and nation-wide institution existing outside the control of the Communist party. It had a fully developed formal structure, covering the whole country: from the remotest village to Gdańsk (not Warsaw, the center of the regime, but Gdańsk!) and from the forgotten rural workshop to the giants of “socialist industrialization.” Institutionalization of the mass anticommunist dissent became a fact. Ten-million members of Solidarity elected a hundred-thousand previously unknown leaders, representatives, and activists. With the members of other civic and political initiatives independent of the Communist state, they created – in the period of merely sixteen months – an entire alternative political class. Thousands of people developed their skills of self-organization, experienced a free institutional environment, and acquired managerial, political, and administrative experience.¹⁰

One-third of the party members joined Solidarity. Most of them actively undermined the position of the party’s *apparatchiks*, joining the intra-party democratic movement (the so-called Movement of Horizontal Alliances). After the imposition of Martial Law, most of them left the party. As a result, in 1981–82 the party lost more than one-third of its members,¹¹ and the recruitment of new people into party ranks virtually halted.

This extraordinary period greatly affected the development and institutionalization of the Polish counter-elite. The opposition survived the imposition of Martial Law and reappeared as an organized political force in 1988, forcing the regime to take a seat at the Round Table in early 1989. On the other side of the political divide, in the second half of the Eighties the liberal wing within the party was gaining the upper hand, eventually convincing the party’s hardliners that negotiating with Solidarity was the only way to remain in power.

The changes initiated in 1988–89 were a combination of several overlapping processes. Breaking the barrier of Communist domination sped up political and economic dynamics. New political parties and

new civil-society institutions were mushrooming, and local communities revived. Societal activism, though not as spontaneous and widespread as in 1980–81, became an integral part of the extrication from Communism. This activism, combined with an enormous organizational effort to re-build the formal structure for the alternative society smashed by Martial Law, resulted in the victorious elections of 4 June 1989. The next day, the leading Polish actress announced on TV: “Communism in Poland is over.” And she was right!

The Round Table Accord between the Communist political elite and the Solidarity counter-elite set up a blueprint for the evolutionary character of the transformation. The outcome of the elections sped up this process, and sped up the replacement of the old elite by a new one. The Polish political scene entered a period of alteration and instability. Three parallel processes contributed to that:

1. Disintegration of Solidarity as a united anticommunist movement and the birth of many Solidarity-based political parties opposing each other.
2. Institutionalization of new political groupings of anticommunist and non-Solidarity persuasion.
3. Disintegration of the old communist party (Polish United Workers' Party), followed soon by its re-integration in a new organizational form and under a new (social-democratic) ideology.

In both radical systemic changes – in 1944–48 and 1989 the relations between the state and the Church were significant for the whole sphere of public life.¹² The Communists' strategy was to separate the Church from public life, to break its unity through state-controlled lay Catholics' organizations, and to instrumentalize the Church institutions for their particular political purposes. The Catholic Church has survived as an independent organization, despite the hostile institutional environment. Apart from its ministration duty, it fulfilled other vital social functions. Being an alternative for the state-controlled intergroup links, it counteracted social atomization. It was clearly visible during the first visit of the Pope to the homeland (1979), when the monopoly of the state for public communication was broken, encouraging hitherto isolated and dispersed political groups to communicate among themselves, and often to join independent civic activities.

After the imposition of Martial Law the Church institutions became a natural shelter and a kind of asylum for various activities of the civil society, mostly in cultural and educational spheres, but also in political

and even economic ones. During Marshall Law the Church had an incontestable authority in the society.

The situation has changed since 1989: the tension between the Church and civil society has been growing. The Church umbrella is not needed anymore, since the *negotiated revolution* of 1989 emancipated the society and lifted all restrictions on autonomy of social forces. On the other hand, in the initial stage of the current transformation the Catholic Church considerably extended its influence, partly because the previous limitations ceased to exist, and partly because some segments of the new political elite stimulated the growth of the political role of the Church. Public-opinion polls show that before the collapse of Communism the majority of Polish society had a favorable opinion of the political role of the Church, while recently the majority declare critical views.¹³ As a result, one may notice a significant drop in the authority of the Church over the last years.

Changing patterns of elite recruitment under Communism

By the early 1950s, the circulation of elites had been completed. All the prewar and non-communist war-time politicians were ousted. The same happened to other leaders of society: former economic managers were replaced by working-class cadres; civil servants by the “new intelligentsia” hastily trained in special programs; and lawyers by lower party activists armed with “revolutionary instinct.”

At that time recruitment of the new elite was virtually limited to the party channels. Legitimation of the new elite was based not on social support (in those times the social base of Communism in Polish society was extremely limited) but on the “historical mission of the working class and its vanguard – the Communist Party.” Two patterns of elite recruitment prevailed: *Communism-combatant* in the immediate post-war years and *Communist-combatant-proletarian* during the late 1940s and early 1950s.¹⁴

According to the *Communist-combatant* pattern, the primary criteria of selection were faithfulness to the Communist principles confirmed by membership in the Communist party, activity in the political organizations operating during the WWII in the Soviet Union and subsequently in Poland, or recommendation from active service in the Polish Armed Forces formed in the Soviet Union.

The *Communist-combatant-proletarian* pattern, on the one hand, made the criteria of the first pattern more stringent; on the other hand, it broadened the *pool of eligibles* to include people of the right class origin and class membership.

With Gomulka's return to power the personnel policy changed. The Stalinist wing of the party was cut, but quite soon the same happened with the reformist ("revisionists") wing. The former reappeared on the national scene under the nationalist banner in the mid-sixties, inspiring the March '68 anti-semitic and anti-intellectual campaigns. The latter either left the party or were deprived of political importance by being "exiled" to provincial party committees or ambassadorships. Nevertheless, the new formula of elite recruitment was introduced, stressing the importance of occupational skills and abandoning the class origin criteria. The *party-specialist* pattern¹⁵ was an attempt to reconcile political and qualificational requirements. To satisfy the first provision, a candidate was expected to be a party member, to satisfy the second one – a diploma holder. Under Gomulka, however, the political requirements still distinctly predominated over qualifications. Under Gierek this relationship was more balanced. Several factors contributed to that. Probably the decisive one was the combined effect of the initial success of Gierek's economic policy, demographic trends, and the wide opening of the educational system (which at the elementary and vocational level took place in the late forties, and on the secondary, and to some extent on tertiary levels, in the mid-fifties). In the seventies, just after Gierek's elevation to the leadership, the post-war baby-boom generation, much better educated than the previous one, entered the labor market. For this generation, Gierek's technocratic vision of "developed socialism" had some attraction, and the political tribute they had to pay did not seem particularly high.¹⁶ But also under Gierek, political requirements dominated over skills, particularly in times of economic slump, which in Poland always meant times of political destabilization. Moreover, occupational credentials were often treated as a pure formality; it was the degree or diploma that counted, not the merit of a candidate.

The fourth pattern of elite recruitment, that of the *loyal expert*, the party proclaimed during the Solidarity period (1980–81). The regime could no longer ignore popular demands for meritocratic selection of the elite. According to the *loyal expert* pattern, political involvement and political preferences were not to be a matter of the appointment procedure as long as the appointees declared their loyalty to the Con-

stitution.¹⁷ After the short period under military rules for recruitment in the first stage of the Martial Law (1982), the pattern of *loyal expert* had been repeatedly reaffirmed by Jaruzelski's government, and in the second half of the eighties was regarded as one of the most important instruments of the economic reform and national reconciliation. Contrary to the three previous patterns of elite recruitment however, the *loyal expert* pattern has never been fully translated into practice.¹⁸ Essentially it remained an empty formula.

Despite the astounding stability of the *party-specialist* pattern of elite recruitment in Poland, we do not advocate a thesis that throughout the post-Stalinist period the very same rules governed the selection of the nomenklatura's elite. The four patterns of elite recruitment reflect the fluctuation in rules of cadre policy. The intensity of their implementation varied dramatically: the *loyal expert* pattern was not really put into practice, whereas the *Communist-combatant* was rigorously obeyed. Throughout the post-war period there were exceptions in the employment of these patterns. For instance, strict rules were rarely adopted to the tiny group of incumbents of the top positions. *Politbureau* members, Central Committee secretaries, the highest governmental officers were nominated on an individual basis, according to their personal status within the ruling circles at a given moment.

In the 1980s alone, the party twice underwent essential internal transformation. The first time during the Solidarity and Martial Law period,¹⁹ the second time after 1986, when the policy of imposition of pro-market economic reforms à la Kadar failed. Because of these transformations many representatives of the old cadre disappeared from political life, and the dominating influence on party policy fell into the hands of *party liberals*, who understood the necessity of market reforms and democratization of public life. Many of them were recruited from outside the party/government ranks, possibly according to the loyal-expert pattern.²⁰ In other words, the nomenklatura of 1988 had very little in common with the narrow-minded Gomułka's nomenklatura formed before the war and in the period of struggle for *peoples' power*; neither did it have much in common with the technocratic but doctrinarian Gierek's nomenklatura.

The process of circulation of communist elites was strongly dependent on the stability of the political situation at a given moment, and on the firmness of a leader's rule. During periods of stability, circulation was virtually non-existent. During times of economic or social – thus politi-

cal – turbulence, it was extremely intense. The latter case characterized Poland ever since the late 1970s. Therefore, incumbents in the 1988 top nomenklatura positions might not properly reflect features typical for nomenklatura throughout the period of Communist rule. One has to keep this in mind to avoid misinterpretations.

Social composition of elites

For further analysis we have distinguished six types of elites: three categories within the old elite and three within the new one. The Communist nomenklatura of 1988, which originally consisted of eight strata of incumbents in party-controlled top positions,²¹ is divided into:

1. The old political elite – party functionaries, legislators, state and governmental administrators, top regional administrators, leaders of mass organizations, and top representatives of the foreign service. Altogether, 502 members of the old political elite were interviewed.
2. The old economic elite – directors and deputy directors of the largest enterprises: 263 respondents.
3. The old cultural elite – decision-makers in media, science, education, and culture: 123 respondents.

The new elite is divided into three analogous groups:

4. The new political elite of 1993 consists of incumbents of high positions in government and regional administration, and deputies to Parliament: 282 respondents.
5. The new economic elite of 1993 is a heterogenous category, consisting of three segments of the postcommunist economy: directors and deputy directors of large state-owned enterprises, presidents and vice-presidents of large cooperatives (considered currently a non-state sector), and owners, chief executive officers, and their deputies in the private sector. The last category includes firms of various ownership status: individually owned, limited liability companies, stock companies, joint ventures, etc. Altogether, 588 members of the new economic elite were interviewed, among them 228 directors and deputy directors in the state sector.
6. The new cultural elite of 1993 is composed of people holding positions similar to the cultural section of the nomenklatura: leaders of media, academic, and cultural organizations. This is the smallest of all six groups: 90 people were interviewed.

The social composition of the old and new Polish elites shows some striking differences, and some striking similarities (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). Among the members of the new elites, women are represented more often (sometimes three times more often) than among the 1988 nomenklatura. It would be difficult to say, however, that the change in the gender structure of elites is impressive: after the collapse of Communism women are still severely underrepresented among the top position holders. The nomenklatura – as one could expect – is considerably older than other groups. This is not because they held top positions five years earlier than members of other elites: the age structure of this group has been adjusted to 1988, the year when they held top positions in the country. The youngest, according to the expectations, are the new political and economic elites. Nearly two-third of them are below fifty. Indeed, the generational aspect of the transformation is very clear.

Data describing social background (Table 2) show three important characteristics of Polish elites. The first one is a very high percentage – up to 20–23 percent – of those who were brought up in single-parent families (mostly without a father). Undoubtedly this is an effect of the war. This very fact is an important factor determining the cultural and social capital of respondents, and – possibly – shaping the structure of their personalities. The second one is the relatively low status of origin of Polish elites. Nearly two-thirds of both the old and the new elites come from peasantry, working class, and non-manual families. The differences in background variables among various categories of Polish elites are the third important feature. It is not true, as many might expect, that the new elites are distinct in this respect from the old ones. Considering

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the old (1988) and new (1993) elites in Poland

Variables	All elites		Political elites		Economic elites		Cultural elites	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
<i>Gender</i>								
Man	93.0	88.5	90.8	87.9	95.8	89.1	95.9	86.7
Women	7.0	11.5	9.2	12.1	4.2	10.9	4.1	13.3
<i>Age in year of incumbency</i>								
Under 40	10.5	18.0	13.0	21.3	6.8	17.2	8.1	13.3
40–49	33.7	44.1	33.5	43.6	39.9	45.6	21.1	35.6
50–59	40.4	25.8	37.7	22.0	42.2	29.1	47.2	16.7
60–69	14.1	11.3	14.8	12.1	11.0	7.8	17.9	31.1
70 or above	1.4	0.8	1.0	1.1	–	0.3	5.7	3.3
<i>Number of respondents</i>	888	960	502	282	263	588	123	90

Table 2. Social background of the old (1988) and new (1993) elites in Poland

Variables	All elites		Political elites		Economic elites		Cultural elites	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
<i>Father's occupation</i>								
Party/mass organizations elite	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	–	0.2	–	–
State/regional administration elite	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	0.8	1.2	–	1.1
Economic elite (top managers)	2.7	3.4	3.2	5.3	2.7	2.9	0.8	1.1
Cultural elite (cultural decision-makers)	0.1	0.2	0.2	–	–	0.2	–	1.1
Low managers	6.3	8.8	4.8	11.3	7.2	7.3	10.6	10.0
Professional with subordinates	2.5	5.0	2.2	7.4	0.8	2.2	7.3	15.6
Professional without subordinates	2.8	4.3	2.6	5.0	1.1	2.7	7.3	12.2
Non-manual	15.4	19.7	13.7	20.9	16.7	20.1	19.5	13.3
Skilled manual	23.9	25.4	23.9	16.0	29.3	31.6	12.2	14.4
Unskilled manual	2.3	0.4	2.0	1.8	3.0	1.4	1.6	–
Peasant, agricultural laborers	20.9	15.9	24.3	14.9	19.8	17.9	9.8	6.7
Brought-up without father	17.9	12.8	17.9	13.8	15.2	11.2	23.6	20.0
Father not in labor force	4.3	1.8	4.0	2.1	3.4	1.2	7.3	4.4
<i>Father's education</i>								
Primary	53.0	47.8	58.0	38.3	55.2	56.0	28.5	24.4
Secondary	19.7	22.9	16.7	21.3	22.0	24.1	26.8	20.0
Tertiary	9.1	16.3	7.6	26.9	6.5	8.3	21.1	34.5
No father or no data on education	18.2	13.0	17.7	13.5	16.3	11.6	23.6	21.1
<i>Father's Communist Party membership</i>								
Never member	80.5	77.9	77.3	80.1	84.8	77.4	84.6	74.4
Ever member	19.5	22.1	22.7	19.9	15.2	22.6	15.4	25.6
<i>Number of respondents</i>	888	960	502	282	263	588	123	90

both fathers' education and occupation, we show that members of both the cultural elites and the new political elite more often come from high-status families than do members of both economic and old political elites.

Communist-party membership strongly differentiates the new and the old elites. To say that the highest proportion of the party members (nearly 80 percent) was found among the old elite would be trivial. It would not be trivial to observe, however, that more than half of the members of the new economic elite used to be party members. The proportion of party members among the new political and cultural

Table 3. Social characteristics of the old (1988) and new (1993) elites in Poland

Variables	All elites		Political elites		Economic elites		Cultural elites	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
<i>Respondent highest education</i>								
Primary	4.3	0.4	7.0	–	0.8	0.7	0.8	–
Secondary	8.3	10.0	13.3	6.7	1.9	12.9	1.6	1.1
Tertiary	87.4	89.6	79.7	93.3	97.3	86.4	97.6	98.9
<i>Respondent occupation in 1988</i>								
Party/mass organizations elite	14.1	0.9	24.3	2.8	0.8	–	0.8	1.1
State/regional administration elite	22.9	4.7	39.8	13.8	1.1	0.7	–	2.2
Economic elite (top managers)	30.7	32.2	4.4	6.0	92.4	49.3	5.7	2.2
Cultural elite (cultural decision-makers)	11.9	3.0	1.8	1.1	1.1	0.7	76.4	24.2
Low managers	6.2	26.0	7.6	13.5	2.3	32.8	8.9	21.1
Professional with subordinates	3.4	11.8	5.4	19.9	0.4	6.0	1.6	24.4
Professional without subordinates	3.2	11.5	4.8	25.9	–	3.2	3.3	20.0
Non-manual	1.0	4.0	1.8	5.0	–	4.1	–	–
Skilled manual	2.9	0.9	5.0	0.7	0.4	1.2	–	–
Unskilled manual	–	0.1	–	0.4	–	–	–	–
Peasant, agricultural laborers	1.2	1.5	2.2	4.3	–	0.3	–	–
Not in labor force	2.6	3.4	3.0	6.7	1.5	1.7	3.3	4.4
<i>Respondent Communist Party membership in 1988</i>								
Never	18.9	53.3	18.9	69.5	12.2	43.0	33.3	70.0
Former member	4.1	10.2	2.4	7.8	6.5	11.7	5.7	7.8
Member in 1988	77.0	36.5	78.7	22.7	81.4	45.2	61.0	22.2
<i>Respondent occupation in 1993</i>								
Party/mass organizations elite	2.4	0.4	4.2	1.1	–	0.2	–	–
State/regional administration elite	4.7	22.0	7.4	74.1	1.5	–	0.8	2.2
Economic elite (top managers)	24.1	58.6	13.3	3.2	53.6	93.6	4.9	4.4
Cultural elite (cultural decision-makers)	7.0	8.5	2.6	0.4	0.8	0.5	38.2	86.7
Low managers	13.2	5.4	15.1	8.5	13.3	4.6	4.9	–
Professional with subordinates	5.2	1.4	5.2	3.5	1.9	0.5	12.2	–
Professional without subordinates	7.1	0.8	9.2	2.5	1.5	4.6	10.6	1.1
Non-manual	6.2	0.3	9.2	0.7	3.4	0.5	–	–
Skilled manual	2.1	–	3.6	–	0.4	–	–	–
Unskilled manual	0.1	–	0.2	–	–	–	–	–
Peasant, agricultural laborers	1.1	0.5	2.0	1.8	–	–	–	–
Not in labor force	26.8	2.0	28.1	4.3	23.6	0.5	28.5	4.4
<i>Number of respondents</i>	888	960	502	282	263	588	123	90

elites is much lower than among all other categories, but still exceeds 20 percent.

One should not be surprised that one-fifth of the members of the old elite never belonged to the party. This is how the nomenklatura mechanism worked: it assumed party control over personnel policy, not necessarily appointment of party members only. Communist regimes in the post-Stalinist epoch insisted they were meritocratic. Promotion of competent non-party members was an important vehicle of legitimacy. Even non-competent non-party members' promotion may have given the impression of meritocratic selection.

It is worth mentioning that since the seventies membership of the Communist Party was not based heavily on ideological grounds in Poland. In most cases it resulted from careerist or opportunist attitudes. To illustrate this thesis, let us point out that over 60 percent of the 1988 nomenklatura declared themselves Catholic. This fact is an indicator of a profound split between the private and public domain in Communist Poland, which is described in Polish sociological literature as "social dimorphism."²² To be a Catholic in private life and a Communist in public was probably the most common – although far from only – case of social dimorphism.

An introductory analysis of the composition of Polish elites offers several hints concerning *circulation vs. reproduction* hypotheses. It must be stressed that our data do not support the view that a distinctive line separates the old elite from the new one. Instead, several similarities suggest that, as far as recruitment basis and patterns of social attainment are concerned, the old political elite and both economic elites have a lot in common. That would imply a tendency toward a reproductive pattern of personnel change, at least regarding the new economic elite. On the other hand, the distinctiveness of the new political and cultural elites – in terms of social background, education, party membership – suggests the circulation pattern. Moreover, it has to be remembered that some of our samples are quite heterogeneous. The old political elite, for example, consists of party apparatchiks, deputies to Parliament, and high-ranked civil servants; the new economic elite includes both representatives of the state-industry managerial class and the new private entrepreneurs. This heterogeneity might be a key to grasping the logic of the processes of elite transformation at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s.

Circulation or reproduction of elites?

Operationalization of the hypotheses

The circulation of elites hypothesis, like the one concerning their reproduction, may be operationalized in many ways. In their introduction to this issue, Iván and Szonja Szelényi made a number of conceptual distinctions concerning reproduction and circulation of elites, which we use here. In this section we focus our attention on reproduction, assuming for brevity that circulation is its opposite. It is a significant limitation, resulting from the fact that the data analysis is still in its initial phase. Our central hypothesis is that there was more circulation than reproduction in Polish elites.

The concept of reproduction-circulation of elites has two aspects: intergenerational and intragenerational. In the case of Eastern Europe, the intergenerational aspect might be understood in two ways: 1. A reproduction of the nomenklatura elite takes place when the members of the new elite are so-called “cadre-kids”: offspring of the higher officials of the party/state apparatus; and 2. A reproduction of the pre-communist elite takes place when the members of the new elite appear to be children or grandchildren of the pre-war elite (aristocracy, *grand bourgeoisie*, high-ranked bureaucracy).

The most obvious case of intragenerational reproduction occurs when the incumbents of new positions prove to be the old elite themselves. This type of reproduction has two faces: *simple reproduction*, when incumbents of command positions under Communism succeeded in maintaining the same positions after the collapse of the old regime, and *reproduction by conversion*, when incumbents of command positions under Communism succeeded in maintaining their elite status, but currently belong to another fraction of the elite than they did before. Speaking in operational categories, simple reproduction occurs if the incumbents of the 1993 command positions in 1988 held positions in the same stratum of the elite, and reproduction by conversion occurs if the incumbents of the 1993 command position in 1988 held command positions in some other stratum of the elite.

Considering the characteristics of the East European transformation, it is worthwhile to distinguish the third aspect of intragenerational reproduction. Let's call it *vertical reproduction*. We deal with vertical reproduction whenever the new elite consists of people who under Commu-

nism did not belong to the nomenklatura elite, but were on the trajectory to achieve such positions and had the assets at their disposal necessary to reach this goal. The one step forward – to become elite members – they then made under the new system. In Poland, and probably in other countries of Eastern Europe as well, political debates frequently refer to this model of reproduction of elites, sometimes describing the transformation itself as a “revolution of the deputies.” According to this view, those deputies are the main beneficiaries of the transition: they are the persons who were not high enough to be executed by the revolutions but high enough to take over the positions and privileges of the beheaded. Speaking in operational categories, vertical reproduction occurs when the members of the new elites are recruited from among those who in 1988 were sub-elite: those who held medium-rank managerial posts and were members of the Communist party.

In Eastern Europe, and certainly in Poland, two competing value judgments dominate discussion on the personnel aspects of transformation. One advocates some continuity; another calls for radical change. The arguments for continuity are based on practical principles stressing that the requirements of competent bureaucracy and smooth transition make it necessary to maintain a part of the old apparatus. The arguments for radical change are based on revolutionary principles, stressing the necessity of the total substitution of the old bureaucracy, which is seen as a potential saboteur of transition. One may ask which of these two models was applied in Poland.

The *circulation-reproduction* hypothesis is tested here in “inflow,” and not “outflow,” categories. This means that the analysis focuses on the new elite (not on the nomenklatura) and we investigate from what classes of the Communist society the new elite’s members “flowed in.” Obviously, an opposite approach (to study outflow from the old elite to the postcommunist destination) is equally valid and interesting. We will use it later in exploring the conversion of nomenklatura power.

Intergenerational elite reproduction

We examined some aspects of intergenerational reproduction above when we discussed the composition of elites. The data on fathers’ occupation presented there show that there is no high intensity of intergenerational reproduction. Apparently, most of the present-day elites are not children of party officials, pre-war aristocracy, or *bourgeoisie*.

Still, such a situation was not expected. We had been inclined to expect that two groups would be overrepresented among the new elites: on the one hand, people with high inherited cultural capital (measured by fathers' education) and, the other hand, children of the Communist privileged class, defined in a broader way than the top nomenklatura alone, to include also party members who held managerial positions (Communist sub-elite). The latter case – if data support it – might be called *intergenerational vertical reproduction*.

Table 4 includes figures showing the proportion of respondents coming from nomenklatura families, from other politically privileged families (father as member of the Communist sub-elite), and from culturally privileged families (father with university education). Considering the heterogeneity of the new economic elite, we divided it into groups according to the sector of economy. In accord with our expectations, the intergenerational reproduction of elites is not high, although it is clearly visible. However, the character of this reproduction is slightly different from what we predicted.

Taking all three new elites together, we found fewer people coming from culturally privileged families than we anticipated. This result is mostly due to the low proportion of parents with tertiary education among the members of the new economic elite. It may be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it may be a consequence of the broad scope of the intragenerational reproduction: it is probable that a large part of the new economic elite originated from the Communist managerial class, which as a whole was recruited from the lower classes. We

Table 4. Intergenerational reproduction of elites: Percentages of the 1993 elite members coming from politically and culturally privileged families

Social background	Political elite	Cultural elite	Economic elite				Total
			Total	State	Coop.	Private	
Father member of the old elite	6.8	3.3	4.5	3.1	3.4	6.6	5.0
Father member of the old sub-elite (party manager)	11.3	13.3	11.7	12.2	10.2	12.3	11.8
Father with tertiary education	26.4	34.4	8.3	8.3	6.1	9.9	16.2
<i>Number of cases</i>	282	90	588	228	148	212	960

test this interpretation later, while discussing intragenerational reproduction of elites. On the other hand, it may be the result of general regularities governing the processes of social mobility in Poland. People coming from lower classes, more often than children of the intelligentsia and professionals, choose engineering and managerial careers. They prefer “practical” occupations (and not “abstract” ones, like humanities, social sciences, or the arts), and pay more attention to material benefits connected with their vocation. Also among the new political elite we found fewer people than expected from university-educated families. We believe that this can be attributed to the fact that among its members are representatives of the workers currently in Solidarity.

Taking all three new elites together, we found more people coming from the Communist political class (both from top nomenklatura and sub-elite families) than we anticipated. To our surprise, among the new political elite and among new private entrepreneurs (the two elite that were to serve as a symbol of democracy and the free market) the proportions of persons coming from the Communist political class are even a bit higher than among the other segments of the new elite. We believe that different mechanisms are responsible for this similarity. Regarding private entrepreneurs, we think it is mostly the result of intergenerational conversion of political capital into economic capital. Regarding the new political elite, this phenomenon may be partly explained by the leftwing social environment that a good part of Polish democratic opposition originated from. In this case “cadre kids” were “rebellious kids,” who ideologically contested their Communist fathers. This rebellion led them to dissident organizations, and finally, after collapse of the old regime into the ranks of the new political elite.

Intragenerational elite reproduction

The essence of the *circulation-reproduction* hypothesis, and of heated political controversies over it, is not intergenerational, but intragenerational reproduction of elites. To what extent does the present ruling elite originate from the old elite? The data on simple reproduction, reproduction by conversion, and vertical reproduction are presented in Table 5. The first thing to note is that the overall scope of reproduction of the elites is relatively broad: 40 percent of the members of the present elites held elitist positions under Communism. And if we include those who were then a step below (in the sub-elite), the

Table 5. Intragenerational reproduction of elites: Percentages of the new elite members belonging in 1988 to the old elite (simple reproduction and reproduction by conversion) and to the old sub-elite (vertical reproduction)

Position in 1988	Position in 1993						Total
	Political elite	Cultural elite	Economic elite				
			Total	State	Coop.	Private	
Political elite	16.6	3.3	0.7	–	0.7	1.4	5.6
Economic elite	6.0	2.2	49.3	46.9	61.5	43.4	32.1
Cultural elite	1.1	24.4	0.7	–	1.4	0.9	3.0
<i>Total, old elites</i>	<i>23.7</i>	<i>29.9</i>	<i>50.9</i>	<i>46.9</i>	<i>63.6</i>	<i>45.7</i>	<i>40.7</i>
Sub-elite	2.5	6.7	6.3	7.4	4.1	6.6	5.2
<i>Number of respondents</i>	282	90	588	228	148	212	960

rate of reproduction will rise to forty-five. At the same time, there are significant differences among the three groups constituting the new elite. Among the economic elite, reproduction amounts to 50 percent (57 percent while including sub-elite group of party managers), in the political elite, it is 24 percent (26 percent while including vertical reproduction), and in the cultural elite, reproduction amounts to 30 percent (36 percent).

Another very important feature is the narrow scope of reproduction by conversion, and the broad scope of simple reproduction. Simple reproduction is most clearly visible among the economic and cultural elites. The high rate of simple reproduction may prove – at least we hope – that in the selection of the new elite from nomenklatura, an essential role was played by meritocratic factors. Those of the nomenklatura who were real experts in their fields succeeded in retaining their offices under the new system. Those who were not had to leave. We cannot, however, exclude an alternative interpretation: that those remained who had higher social capital and were more ruthless, cynical, and opportunistic.

The easiest to interpret in circulation-reproduction terms is the economic elite. Only in this case may we say that it is mostly the reproduced Communist economic elite. And it does not matter with which sector of the postcommunist economy we deal – whether it is the

state-owned, cooperative, or private one. In all cases, the proportion of nomenklatura is very high, and in the cooperatives it is enormous. The last case does not surprise us, because for many years cooperatives in Poland were known as a “haven” for party-coterie arrangements and as shelter for discredited *apparatchiks*.

The most interesting among the three sectors is the private one, which was to be the outpost of the market economy. It is apparently governed by the old economic elite to the same extent as the state-controlled sector: every second owner or top manager in the private sector used to be a director of a socialist enterprise. What does this fact mean for the conversion of power thesis? We think it is a strong argument for it. We defined “conversion” as the transfer from one segment of communist elite to other segments of the postcommunist elite. Transfer from the post of a nomenklatura director to the position of owner, major shareholder, or chief executive officer of a private firm is doubtless a form of conversion of political capital into economic capital. We do not mean to suggest that the nomenklatura directors did not possess proper managerial qualifications, and that political capital was their only asset. Just the contrary: we believe that they possessed above-average managerial skills and, precisely because of that, acquired command positions in business. Simultaneously however, we believe that despite these qualifications they would not have achieved success in business if it were not for their political assets, which guaranteed them easy access to information, decisionmakers, powerful networks, low-interest loans, etc.

Obviously, a classic case of conversion of power takes place when “pure” political power converts into “pure” economic capital: from *apparatchik* to billionaire. In the present sample such a classic conversion does not occur: none of the members of the private economic elite was a high-ranked full-time officer of the party apparatus in 1988, and very few were top government officials. This does not mean, however, that *apparatchiks* did not get into business. We should not jump to conclusions until we have focused on the outflow from the nomenklatura sample, investigating what positions the former officers of the Communist administration acquired in 1993. The nomenklatura origin of most members of the new economic elite explains the previously observed similarity between the old and the new economic elites. They are similar simply because they used to belong to the same class of Communist managers. Intragenerational reproduction of the cultural and political elites is much lower than that of the economic elite. Here

– particularly regarding the political elite – we should speak of circulation rather than of reproduction: the proportion of newcomers is much higher than that of “old cadres.” Thus, the revolutionary principle of exchange of political personnel was not employed in Poland. Rather, we are closer to the pragmatic principle of continuity of power: 75 percent new people and 25 percent old ones. Yet, we must stress that to claim responsibly that the pragmatic model of cadre exchange was adopted, we would have to be sure that it was meritocratic criteria that led to the nomenklatura’s retaining elite positions.

Data presented in Table 5 show the significant prevalence of simple reproduction over vertical reproduction. This requires some comment. Is “revolution of the deputies” a slogan with no foundations? We do not think so. In our opinion it includes a part of the truth. It does not clearly show in our analysis because, while operationalizing the concept of nomenklatura in Poland, we included within this group deputy directors of the largest enterprises and firms directly controlled by Central Committee of the Communist Party. In consequence, the old economic elite, and to a lesser extent the old cultural elite, include positions that in other countries were included into the “general managers” category. This overestimates simple reproduction and reproduction by conversion, and underestimates vertical reproduction. It also overstates the general intensity of reproduction of elites in Poland, since it is certain that some deputy directors were not party members in 1988, so, if the definition of nomenklatura were more rigorous, they would be included neither into the nomenklatura nor into the sub-elite. This must be remembered while making inter-country comparisons.

The data analysis does provide an unequivocal answer to the question, *circulation or reproduction?* In postcommunist Poland, elites are formed both ways. Thus, the answer is circulation *and* reproduction. It should be given in this order, for *per saldo* circulation prevails over reproduction. It is the new economic elite that is responsible for the comparatively high rate of elite reproduction in Poland. First, this is because most of its members originate from the nomenklatura. Secondly, it is because the new economic elite are more numerous than the two others combined, so that it most strongly determines the picture of the whole. Confirming our expectations, the highest circulation occurs among the new political elite. Thus, the core of the new power elite consists of new people. Reproduction of the old political elite is a limited phenomenon. This cannot be said about conversion of

the old political capital into market assets. This issue, however, has to be dealt with elsewhere.

Conclusions: The postcommunist and post-Solidarity elite

In the final phase of our fieldwork, in September 1993, the early parliamentary election took place in Poland. It resulted in the victory of the postcommunist party (37 percent of the seats in the Diet) and the peasant party of satellite descent (29 percent). The left wing Solidarity-rooted Labor Union was also successful (9 percent), while the post-Solidarity Christian and rightwing parties were severely defeated: none of them gained a single seat in Parliament. From among Solidarity-rooted parties it was only the centrist Democratic Union (led by Mazowiecki and Kuroń) that managed to preserve its status (16 percent of the seats). The result of the election was the formation of a postcommunist and peasant coalition cabinet, supported by a decisive majority in both the Diet and the Senate, and having a good chance to remain in power for the next four years.

The results of the September election induced many commentators and analysts, as well as a large part of the Polish and foreign public, to formulate conclusions like “Communism has returned to Poland.” Regarding the interesting problems of elites, conclusions of this type assume the form: “In four years – 1989–1993 – the exchange of elites in Poland described a full circle: from Communists to Communists.” We do not agree with these conclusions, which oversimplify the Polish situation. We argue against these overhasty conclusion in the final section of this article. The fundamental premise of our reasoning is the conviction that in present-day Poland there is neither Communism nor Solidarity. Poland today is both postcommunist and post-Solidarity.

Sociological surveys present social reality at a given time. In our case it was in 1993 that we carried out the interviews – and 1988, the last year of Communism in Poland and the last year to which many items of our questionnaire referred. Social and political elites, however, do not follow the timetable of sociological inquires. In the years preceding 1988, and particularly during 1989–90, Poland experienced major changes in elite recruitment. After the Round Table and the June 1989 election, the Party fell like a house of cards. A new party, Social-Democracy of the Republic of Poland, was formed on its ruins in January 1990. Most of the old leaders did not join the new party, passing the leadership into

the hands of the younger generation. The new leaders were mostly people politically shaped in the 1980s and directly engaged in the Round Table negotiations. By 1993 there was no Solidarity. Both the remnants of Solidarity 1980–81 and the recreated Solidarity that was victorious in 1989 disintegrated in 1990–91, and only the trade union remained under this name.

Although blue-collar workers constituted the core of Solidarity, and the movement would not have come into being without the strikes initiated by the working class, it would still be an oversimplification to call Solidarity a workers' movement. Intellectuals took an active role in laying the foundations of Solidarity and in significant ways influenced its shape, but it was not the intellectuals' movement either.²³ And though the demands for higher earnings and better working conditions formed an essential part of its program, Solidarity was not a movement of economically handicapped employees. Solidarity was an organization integrated around those values that the *ancien regime* did not want to – or could not – live up to. It was a mass movement of the Poles who were separated from the authorities by an impassable distance. Although the living standard of Poles was far below the Western standards, the real distance between the people and the ruling class was not economic. It was primarily a political distance: those who were active in Solidarity could not otherwise influence public life. It was also a cultural distance: the values, the *Weltanschauung*, the moral standards, the faith, and even the language of those who joined Solidarity were depreciated and devalued.²⁴

Solidarity was a formidable oppositional institution. It had organizational structure and successfully mobilized society through reference to humanistic, patriotic, and religious symbols. Solidarity's leaders had political experience, and the movement adopted an effective *non-violence* ethos. Solidarity was, however, entirely unprepared to govern in a democratic polity. Its emphasis on communitarian values was useful in an authoritarian state; but under democracy the vision of "society vs. state" turned destructive. Solidarity could not find the ways to act when the country was no longer "theirs," but ours. Before June 1989 political struggles were fought along one line: between regime and opposition. After June 1989, politics became multidimensional. It is no longer tantamount to morality: the politics of anti-politics belongs to the past.²⁵ Politics no longer unites the whole nation and appeals to universal human values; it comes "down to the Earth"; it asks only – in Lasswell's terms – *who gets what, when, and how*.²⁶

Solidarity was not able to adjust to the new situation. The dichotomy “we vs. them” was a moral dichotomy, which had its origin in the opposition of good and evil. With the decline of the Communist regime, there were no more enemies to integrate society. Paradoxically, the formation of the Solidarity cabinet accelerated its disintegration. Solidarity was to serve as social and political base of the government, and simultaneously as “an umbrella” protecting the market reforms. It was the agency that set the priorities of the cabinet and was supposed to control, through its Parliamentary representation, the execution of government policies. At the same time, Solidarity was a mass Trade Union that was to protect the interests of wage-workers and represent them in conflicts with state-controlled employers.

Solidarity – like a character from an ancient tragedy – created the situation that led to its unavoidable annihilation. Subverting Communism, promoting democracy, pluralism, and the market economy, it fundamentally changed social reality, the perception of this reality, and even the language in which this reality was described. And all these changes questioned its identity, and negated the very justification of its existence: solidarity. It appeared that the transformation meant the shift from the world of community and moral rights to the conflict world of diverse economic and political interests. The blue-collar workers of the largest *socialist* enterprises and the powerless intelligentsia constituted the social base of Solidarity. It was soon apparent that precisely these two groups were those most endangered by reforms initiated by Solidarity. Revolution started to devour its children.

Solidarity’s antagonists were better prepared for the new, market-driven, competitive world. When Solidarity was in decay, the postcommunist Left took the comfortable place of that opposition. It reconstituted itself and portrayed itself as a representative of economic interests of those groups bearing the highest costs of the shock therapy. It did not, however, propagate the restitution of the old system. The postcommunists were well aware that people in Poland might miss social protection provided by the old regime, but would not accept the return of the *ancient regime*. The postcommunist elite has no personal stake in the restoration of the old socio-economic system either: they are successful in the pluralist political system and market economy.

The dichotomy “we vs. them” was the key to understanding the Polish developments throughout the eighties. It ceased to be the key to understanding in the nineties. This can be seen in terms of the social charac-

teristics of the elites we surveyed. We can tell whether they used to be Communists, unionists, members of Communist satellite organizations, or nationalistic anticommunists. Yet, this no longer matters. A post-communist and post-Solidarity elite is in the making. The individual political biography has no real impact on what position someone achieves: it has more to do with the social interests one articulates. The classical political division between “Left and Right” reemerges, and the political genealogy loses its importance.

A postcommunist and post-Solidarity elite has formed since 1990. The results of the September 1993 election are only the most spectacular manifestation of this process. A new “thick line” is drawn. It is no longer important whether one was a party member or a Solidarity member, whether one supported Martial Law or fought against it. What matters is the attitude toward social-safety nets, privatization and re-privatization, state protectionism, subsidizing of agriculture, inflow of foreign capital, the political role of the Church, etc. Polish elites of 1993 reflect more and more clearly these divisions, and less and less clearly the divisions that dominated Polish public life throughout the 1980s.

Notes

1. See W. Wesołowski, “The role of political elites in transition from Communism to democracy: The case of Poland,” *Sisyphus – Social Studies* 8 (1992): 77–100; J. Wasilewski, “Dilemmas and controversies concerning leadership recruitment in Eastern Europe,” in P. Lewis, editor, *Democracy and Civil Society in Eastern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1992); J. Wasilewski and W. Wesołowski, editors, *Początki parlamentarnej elity: Posłowie kontraktowego Sejmu* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 1992).
2. P. Bourdieu, *Distinctions: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); P. Bourdieu, “The forms of capital,” in J. G. Richardson, editor, *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).
3. L. Bruszt, “1989: The negotiated revolution in Hungary,” in G. Szoboszlai, editor, *Democracy and Political Transformation: Theories and East-Central European Realities* (Budapest: Hungarian Political Science Association, 1991). See also E. Han-kiss, *East European Alternatives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
4. M. Latuch, *Demografia społeczno-ekonomiczna* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, 1980).
5. See T. Hammond, editor, *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975). George Sanford describes the Communist takeover of Poland in this way: “In the Polish case the communist takeover was a mixture between the outright imposition of a ‘baggage train’ government, as in Romania,

- and the genuine parliamentary methods of Czechoslovakia.” (G. Sanford, *Polish Communism in Crisis*, London: Croom Helm, 1983). This might be an accurate description, taking into account that *some* democratic procedures were adopted indeed: the 1946 referendum, and the 1947 multi-party general elections. Since the referendum’s results were falsified by the Communists (see A. Paczkowski, *Referendum z 30 czerwca 1946 r.: Przebieg i wyniki*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ISP PAN, 1993), we may assume that the same happened with the Communist-controlled 1947 general election. Therefore, we claim that the Polish case is much closer to the Romanian than to Czechoslovakia’s model.
6. About Polish crises see J. Karpinski, *Countdown: The Polish Upheavals of 56, 68, 70, 76, 80* (New York: Karz-Cohl, 1982).
 7. J. J. Lipski, *KOR: A History of the Workers’ Defense Committee in Poland, 1976–1981* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
 8. A. Michnik, “A new evolutionism,” in *Letters from Prison and Other Essays* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987).
 9. M. H. Bernhard, *The Origins of Democratization in Poland: Workers, Intellectuals, and Oppositional Politics, 1976–1980* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
 10. On Solidarity in 1980–81 see, for instance, T. Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1983); A. Touraine et al., *Solidarity: The Analysis of a Social Movement, Poland 1980–81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); J. Holzer, *Solidarność 1980–81. Geneza i Historia* (Paris: Institute Litteraire, 1984).
 11. A. Sulek, “Polish United Workers’ Party: From mobilization to non representation,” *Soviet Studies* 42 (1990): 499–512.
 12. B. Szajkowski, *Next to God... Poland: Politics and Religion in Contemporary Poland* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1983).
 13. Data from a survey carried out in October 1994 by the Center for Public Opinion Studies, as reported in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, No. 1722, 9 February 1995.
 14. J. Wasilewski, “The patterns of bureaucratic elite recruitment in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s,” *Soviet Studies* 42 (1990): 743–757.
 15. Wasilewski, “The patterns of bureaucratic elite recruitment in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s.”
 16. Actually, not only for this generation. Gierek succeeded – no doubts about that – in convincing part of the intellectuals and the intelligentsia (particularly the technical intelligentsia) and a part of the skilled industrial workers as well, that it was possible to combine socialism with democracy and material well-being. His openness to the West and long-run projects (as in the “second industrialization” of Poland) sounded persuasive for many. His cooptation policy ended eventually in failure not because nobody followed him, but because most of Gierek’s initial followers retreated when they realized that the prosperity of 1972–75 was over, the neo-Stalinist methods of governing were returning, and a mass corruption – new phenomenon among Polish Communist rulers – degenerated the power apparatus.
 17. This included, among many remnants of the Stalinist constitution of 1952, the chapter about the leading role of the Communist party and fraternal cooperation with the Soviet Union.
 18. For empirical evidence, see Wasilewski, “The patterns of bureaucratic elite recruitment in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s.”
 19. Let us illustrate these changes by pointing out that in 1983 only 4 percent of the incumbents in high party offices in southern Poland were nominated during Gierek’s

- term. The others took office either during the “sixteen months of Solidarity” (47%), or at the time of Martial Law (49%). Equally radical changes took place in other regions. See: J. Wasilewski, “Social processes of regional power elite recruitment,” *Sisyphus – Sociological Studies* 5 (1989): 205–224.
20. The most recent sociological data (prior to the present project) describing the patterns of Communist elite recruitment refer to 1986. Until then, the *loyal expert* model apparently was not employed. It seems, however, that in the last few years of Communist rule in Poland some incumbents in top positions in the party and government were recruited according to this pattern. The preliminary stage of the analysis does not allow us to verify this surmise.
 21. These eight strata of the old elite were as follows: 1. Central Committee level party apparatus; 2. Lower party apparatus (secretaries at the voivodship level); 3. Legislators, chief state and governmental officials; 4. Top state administrators at the voivodship level; 5. Mass organizations’ leaders of the central level; 6. Economic elite: directors and deputy directors of the largest enterprises; 7. Cultural elite: incumbents of high posts in cultural, academic, and mass-media institutions; 8. Higher echelons of the foreign service (ambassadors, deputy-chiefs of missions, representatives at international organizations).
 22. E. Wnuk-Lipinski, “Social dimorphism,” in I. Bialecki, J. Koralewicz, M. Watson, editors, *Society in Transition* (London: Berg Publishers, 1987).
 23. There is a big controversy among scholars about the role workers and intellectuals played in origin of Solidarity and shaping its policy. See R. Laba, *Worker Roots of Solidarity: A Political Sociology of Poland’s Working Class Democratization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); L. Goodwyn, *Breaking the Barrier: The Rise of Solidarity in Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); M. Bernhard, “Reinterpreting Solidarity,” *Studies in Comparative Communism* 24 (1991): 313–330; J. Kubik, “Who done it: Workers, intellectuals, or someone else? Controversy over Solidarity’s origins and social composition,” *Theory and Society* 23 (1994): 441–466.
 24. Kubik, “Who done it: Workers, intellectuals, or someone else? Controversy over Solidarity’s origins and social composition.”
 25. See G. Konrad, *Antipolitics* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984); V. Havel, “Politics and conscience,” in *Open Letters by Vaclav Havel* (New York: Vintage Books: 1992); D. Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Antipolitics: Opposition and Reform in Poland Since 1968* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); V. Tismaneanu, *Reinventing Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1991).
 26. H. D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936).