The Soviet–East European Relationship in the Gorbachev Era
To Julianna, David, and Daniel
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Shortly after he came to power, Mikhail Gorbachev declared that close ties with Eastern Europe would be his "first commandment." Although it is doubtful that he was suggesting a reorientation of Soviet foreign policy whereby the relationship with the East European states would occupy the center of Moscow's foreign policy concerns, he signalled that he recognized the need for change in that very important relationship. For just as Gorbachev apparently understands that the Soviet Union must modernize domestically in order to be able to ensure both the regime's survival and the position of the state as a superpower in the international system, so it seems he has concluded that Moscow must adapt its external relations to changing conditions.

Given that Gorbachev has been in power for less than five years, it may be too early to judge precisely the nature of changes in the Soviet-East European relationship, but one may be able to identify certain trends or at least tendencies. The contributors assess not only the nature of the relationship but also the possibilities for more "organic" linkages between Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. There has been a diminution in the exercise of Soviet "petty dominance" over Eastern Europe, but are current changes more form than substance? Ultimately, how well are the parties adapting to changing conditions?

Beyond the actual policies pursued by the various states, the perception that they have of the relationship is particularly significant. Consequently, the analyses in the book involve an examination not only of policies but also of perceptions in a multidimensional approach. Thus, it is important that a broad range of expertise is brought to the issues. Four key areas are at the center of this study: political/ideological, economic, military, and sociocultural. And since the perceptions of the various parties play a vital role in the relationship, a double-entry system is employed that allows experts on Soviet policy on the one hand and those on Eastern Europe on the other to examine the same issues and thereby collectively provide a 360-degree analysis. In the concluding chapter the editor brings the various approaches together and examines trends and tendencies in Soviet-East European relations.

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A. B.
Introduction

Aurel Braun

Mikhail Gorbachev, at the time of this writing, has been in power a little longer than four years. This is certainly not long in comparison with some of his predecessors such as Stalin, Brezhnev or even Nikita Khrushchev. Such brevity, of course, does affect reasonable expectations of change, policy formulation, and implementation. Nevertheless, it is also noteworthy that Gorbachev has been in power somewhat longer than the combined rule of his two immediate predecessors, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko. And, despite obvious differences in political systems, it is also worth remembering that Gorbachev has also exceeded in time the period during which John F. Kennedy held the presidency of the United States. Therefore, even in the case of a system that may be as difficult to change as the Soviet one, a period of over four years does afford opportunities for considerable movement. But perhaps even more important than the time factor is Gorbachev’s often-declared intention to bring about “radical” reforms. If there is to be change at a certain stage, the shape of the process should become discernable. And, if it is not, then this may raise basic questions both regarding the analytic tools and the nature of the process.

There are intrinsic uncertainties in the analysis of any process of change, but there are particular difficulties in the case of the socialist systems. Different statistical and accounting systems and the frequent unavailability of data are only some of the impediments. These are not insurmountable but they do make the identification of trends and the prospects for prediction more difficult. In evaluating reform, whether it is within the Soviet Union itself or in the relationship between Moscow and the East European states (the focus of this work involves the six East European Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) member states—the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria) there are conceptual problems relating to reform and to crisis. There is also the difficulty of assessing the role of a single individual, in this case the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in bringing about change in the Soviet system and in the relationship with Eastern Europe. It is not merely the problem of the single actor model that is evident in
all political systems but also the specific conundrum of discerning the balance in roles that exists in socialism between the roles played by the individual leader and the system. Furthermore, there may be differences between the roles played by individual states and the manner in which a regional system operates. The paramount concern of this study is the nature of change in the interstate system in the Soviet bloc, focused on the Soviet-East European relationship. Yet this cannot be assessed without an examination of Gorbachev’s policies and the nature of the changes he has proposed and so far has implemented.

Timing, as in all politics, is essential and may be crucial to Gorbachev’s success. His initiatives certainly appear to be ambitious, and he has repeatedly emphasized the urgency of change. He has at the very least managed to effect a change in atmospherics, not only domestically but also in Soviet-East European relations. The psychology of change can generate a momentum of its own though the outcome may be quite unpredictable. The tremendous energy that Gorbachev has brought to the task that he has outlined for himself and the scope of his declared programs have raised both expectations and fears in the Soviet Union as well as in Eastern Europe. Karen Dawisha is probably quite correct in her contention (Chapter 1) that Gorbachev has already had a significant impact on Eastern Europe. Whether such impact will move development in a substantive way in the direction that Gorbachev hopes may be difficult to confirm. If there are no substantive changes in that direction three years after his rise to power, that in itself may be an important indicator of the nature of the process that Gorbachev has tried to set into motion. Still, the very change in atmospherics may in itself justify the labelling of Gorbachev’s period in power as an era, though its duration may prove to be considerably shorter than that of the rule of such Soviet leaders as Stalin or Brezhnev.

The contributors to this volume do take into account the views of those scholars who believe that profound changes are or are about to take place and thus do not exclude the possibility of transformation. But conceptual clarification and probative analysis require that a series of basic questions should be asked. In politics, and particularly in international politics that involve the Soviet-East European relationship, there are no innocuous questions. Nevertheless, the scope of such a study requires a focus on a number of specifics where comprehensive analysis of all external developments together with the domestic motivating factors is not feasible. Though these questions are in themselves value-laden, the authors in this study have attempted to focus on those issues that are the chief driving forces in the Soviet-East European relationship.

On the one hand, Soviet-East European relations do not quite mirror the interchanges between sovereign states. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to think of the East European states as part of the Soviet in-state system, for their area of autonomy is clearly larger. It is not the case, then, that the Soviet Union alone determines the nature of significant developments within Eastern Europe and the very character of interstate
relations within the region. Nevertheless, there are vital asymmetries that profoundly affect the nature of the Soviet-East European relationship. These involve asymmetries in power—political, economic, and military. In all these areas the Soviet Union alone is far stronger than all of the East European states combined. There is also an asymmetry in interest in that relationship. Whereas for the East European states the relationship with the Soviet Union is clearly their most important external link, the degree of interest on the Soviet part is far more difficult to assess. Shortly after he came to power Gorbachev declared that the strengthening of relations with East Europe would be his "first commandment" 1 and this combined with his advocacy of novoie myshlenie (new thinking) tends to indicate a strong interest in the region indeed. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily indicate that Eastern Europe is the primary focus of Soviet foreign policy—or at least not that it is consistently so. As a superpower with consequent global concerns, the Soviet Union needs to confront a series of external issues which can divert its interests from the region. There is, then, some disagreement among the authors as to the centrality of Eastern Europe in Gorbachev's foreign policy concerns with Karen Dawisha (Chapter 1) emphasizing, for instance, the centrality of Eastern Europe and Andrzej Korbonski suggesting that at certain times and in specific areas Gorbachev may have subjected the region to "benign neglect" (Chapter 4).

Other questions also arise out of the focus of this study. In a sense, regardless of the socio-economic system in particular states, all foreign policy starts at home. But, in the case of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, given the tenets of Marxism-Leninism and the asymmetrical relationship between the Soviet Union on the one hand and a diverse Eastern Europe on the other, Soviet domestic determinants of foreign policy, in particular, are crucial. And not only the nature of changes taking place in the Soviet Union but also the motives behind Gorbachev's decision to try to institute reforms become salient. His motives have already had an impact on the nature of the change taking place and are likely to help define the future course of developments. Several of the authors, but particularly economists Paul Marer (Chapter 5) and Carl McMillan (Chapter 2), analyze these motives.

Defining change may be at least as difficult. Perestroika (reconstruction, restructuring) may involve merely an attempt to reform the ineffective aspects of the system or may entail a systemic change. William E. Odom, who has asked whether Gorbachev's proposals constitute a systemic change, has laid out three criteria for gauging the nature of the current process in the Soviet Union. 2 These involve: a major shift to market pricing and allocation where the market exceeds central planning; the free flow of information to the degree required for effective market activity involving both domestic economic activity and international trade; and the assurance of the legal rights over the factors of production. Paul Marer (Chapter 5), takes a similar approach in the economic area, for it seems that in order for the Soviet Union to deal with fundamental economic problems it may
indeed need to undergo a systemic change. Boris Meissner of Cologne University has also formulated the question in a rather stark fashion by asking whether Gorbachev's perestroika represents reform or revolution. He contends that the reforms which Gorbachev has carried out so far are of a limited nature but that his perestroika envisions revolutionary changes. There are uncertainties, though, and a great many blank spots in Gorbachev's proposals, as is seen in the various assessments of it, both in this volume and elsewhere.

However, domestic developments in the Soviet Union, as noted, have a profound impact on the shape of the Soviet-East European relationship. And here another question arises as to what constitutes "normalcy." It should involve, one would think, a more "organic" relationship in the Hegelian sense between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the East European states on the other, where mutual interests and interdependence rather than the primary threat of force constitute the most important binding elements. In 1976 Helmut Sonnenfeldt and his boss, Henry Kissinger, tried to fine-tune a policy which would help foster such a development, a policy which came to be known as the "Sonnenfeldt Doctrine." I would disagree with critics who contended that it meant the abandoning of the "captive nations" in Eastern Europe. Rather, it aimed for a "more autonomous existence" for the East Europeans. For such a relationship to develop, the East European regimes (as well as that of the Soviet Union) must become stable. But here Gorbachev would have to face the classic Soviet dilemma in the region of maintaining both cohesion and viability. As Charles Gati said, Gorbachev realizes that "only profound reforms have a chance to make the region more stable but he had a problem because the price of stability is more independence from the Soviet Union."

It is then particularly difficult for the Soviet Union and the East European states to adapt to changing conditions in such a way as to ensure that healthy, normal relations develop between them. It involves adaptation both at the national level in order to create internal stability and adaptation of the regional system to changing conditions. The states involved must be able to build and use power, authority, and policy instruments so as to employ available resources effectively in pursuit of such goals. Adaptation may be purposive (that is, deliberate, blatant, etc.) and/or situational (that is, passive, involuntary, flexible, etc.).

Successful adaptation, though, involves not only policies but especially perceptions—both in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. The problems of perception played an important role in shaping the format of this volume. There are differences in perception between the masses and the elite and among the elite in the region. And there is, of course, considerable diversity in Eastern Europe. Even the source of advice to decision-makers is important in formulating perceptions (Marer, Chapter 5). Nevertheless, collectively we have tried to delineate the broad Soviet and East European perceptions. Consequently, we have employed a double-entry system where in a number of chapters specialists look at crucial issue areas from the Soviet perspective
and try to analyse Soviet perceptions and goals, and other scholars examine the same or similar issue-areas in terms of East European perspectives. Moreover, we have found it useful not only to concentrate on the main issue areas such as political and ideological developments, economic imperatives, military strategic concerns, and political-cultural relations, but also to provide whenever possible a historical perspective to current developments, as Korbonski (Chapter 4) has done.

There is also the importance of selecting appropriate case studies to try to assess trends or at least tendencies. In the economic realm this is particularly vital since this is where the main thrust of Gorbachev's policies have taken place. From the Soviet perspective, energy policies within the CMEA should provide a good indication both of the direction and dilemmas of Gorbachev's policies and the impact on the Soviet-East European relationship. Furthermore, an analysis of economic development in Hungary under the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) should help illuminate the issues of reform throughout Eastern Europe and also in some important respects in the Soviet Union. Whereas there are differences in size between Hungary's economy and that of the Soviet Union and in the nature of external mechanisms of control, there are significant similarities in policies between NEM and Gorbachev's perestroika. Moreover, recent developments in Hungary, which have resulted in the removal of Janos Kadar from his position as General-Secretary and in wholesale changes in the Politburo, should provide some important clues as to possible directions that such reforms may take.

Political/ideological, economic, and military factors, though, do not give us a complete picture because perception is affected to a significant degree by cultural attitudes. In the first three chapters which deal with the Soviet perspective the authors do touch both in a direct and in an indirect fashion on Soviet attitudes as a superpower and as the regional hegemon toward the East European states. In the last section, in Chapter 7, Melvin Croan devotes his contribution to an examination of East European political culture and cultural attitudes towards the Soviet Union and the possible emergence of a regional cultural identity.

Throughout the region cautious developments have been combined with ambitious plans. We are examining a process rather than single events and there are bound to be blank spots which prevent accurate prediction. It is also quite possible that the decision-makers who are formulating and attempting to implement policies, including Gorbachev, do not have a master plan and they themselves cannot accurately predict the outcome. It is also conceivable that there will be a whole range of unexpected developments and unintended consequences. However, after more than four years of Gorbachev's rule and the energy and ambition that he brought to the task of rejuvenating, not only the domestic structure but also Soviet-East European relations, we should be able to discern certain trends or at least tendencies in that relationship.
Notes

The Soviet Minister of Defense, General Yazov, also expressed some misgivings about glasnost when in criticizing Soviet articles on Army life, he compared such work with that prepared by "imperialist propaganda." Clearly, a major crisis in Eastern Europe would strain the loyalty of such men to the principles enunciated by Gorbachev since 1985.

Nevertheless, by way of conclusion it is important to underline that those East Europeans who think critically and carefully about such issues, and there are a large number of them, are convinced that the reform process begun by Gorbachev is wide-ranging, deep, and in certain key respects irreversible. Among this group is Alexander Dubcek who has perhaps had more cause and more time to think about such matters than anyone else in Eastern Europe. He, for one, has already reached his own firm conclusion about the depth and significance of the Gorbachev reforms. Commenting on all the ideological reformulations carried out in domestic and foreign policy since Gorbachev came to power—including those analyzed above—Dubcek offered the categorial opinion: "I can say that if the CPSU had then had the leadership it now has, the armed intervention in Czechoslovakia by the five armies would have been unthinkable."

Notes

9. Ibid., p. 110 (my italics).
12. Ibid., p. 165.
15. O. Vladimirov, Pravda, June 21, 1985. Vladimirov is generally accepted as the pseudonym of Oleg Rakhmanin.
17. Ibid. For a more detailed discussion of this and other debates, see Karen Dawisha, "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe: A New Challenge for the West," World Policy Journal, Spring 1986; Karen Dawisha and Jonathan Valdez, "Socialist Inter-


31. All of these objectives are dealt with in greater detail in O. Bogomolov, "Sotsialisticheskiye strany na perelomnom etape mirovogo ekonomicheskogo razvitiya," Kommunist, No. 8, May 1987, pp. 102-111.


33. Ibid., p. 13.

34. Magyar Tavirati Iroda (MTI) in English, October 13, 1987, FBIS-SOV, October 14, 1987, p. 16. Speeches by the other delegates are also contained in this issue of FBIS-SOV.

35. Mention of the work of the joint commission of Polish and Soviet scholars is provided in the "Declaration on Soviet-Polish Cooperation in Ideology, Science and Culture," Pravda, April 22, 1987; an interview with Jaruzelski on Moscow Television Service in Russian, May 15, 1987, FBIS-SOV, May 19, 1987, p. F3; Pravda, May 22, 1987; and an interview with the head of the USSR State Historical Institute, Ye. Afanasyev, in the Polish weekly Polityka, calling for an investigation of Katyn, Hamburg DPA in German, October 4, 1987, FBIS-SOV, October 5, 1987, p. 34.


intensive industrial structures. Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov went out of his way at the November 1986 Session of the CMEA to reassure the East European countries that Soviet energy shipments would grow in the 1986–1990 plan period, despite the increased pressure on the Soviet balance of payments from the dramatic fall earlier that year in the world price of oil. These commitments and programs imply joint planning at high official levels. The Progress (Yamburg) pipeline is being constructed, the regional nuclear power program is proceeding, and other large resource development projects are being pushed through (such as the Krivoi Rog iron ore combine).

In these circumstances, implementation of the 1985 Comprehensive Program will involve continued reliance on planned approaches at the state-to-state level. The traditional CMEA methods of plan coordination, followed up by bilateral, inter-governmental agreements, will therefore be the principal mechanism through which even the new programs of scientific and technical cooperation must be pursued. At the enterprise level, relations will have to continue to rely on old methods of accounting and settlement: barter, counterpurchase, and product-payback under (essentially bilateral) clearing arrangements. The transition to a decentralized mechanism of CMEA cooperation will inevitably consist of a contradictory mix of the old and the new.

It is the ambitious character of the Soviet initiatives, relative to regional realities, that raises this prospect of a long and difficult transition period. For the first time since Khrushchev, Soviet policy proposes a radical change in the nature of the CMEA system. Then the drive was to impose an integrated regional economy by means of centralized, supranational planning. The failure of that initiative resulted in two decades of virtual stagnation in the integration process. Now integration is to be determined through the decentralized action of market forces, subject to coordinated national policies. This strategy places reliance on institutions which are not well grounded in the still essentially administered economies of the member states. Whether the Gorbachev restructuring can be carried through successfully on the CMEA plane is as uncertain as it is at the national level. Meanwhile it represents a major redirection of Soviet policy for the regional system.

Notes

1. According to Soviet official statistics, the share of Soviet trade with the East European members of the CMEA (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Poland, and Romania) rose from 42.5% in 1980 to 47.2% in 1985 and 53.9% in 1986.


4. The East European debt to the USSR is denominated in an inconvertible unit of account, the "transferable ruble." Cumulative surpluses in Soviet trade with Eastern Europe over the period 1975-1986 amounted to 18.1 billion rubles, according to calculations based on official Soviet sources. Harriet Matejka notes a considerable discrepancy between Soviet and East European official statistics in this regard, with the latter indicating a cumulative imbalance of only 12.1 bln. rubles in the Soviet favor. See her "Déséquilibres, endettement et ajustement au sein du CAEM," *Études Internationales*, Vol. 19, No. 2, June 1988, pp. 293-300.

5. Moreover, as Karen Dawisha points out, instability in Eastern Europe has more than once in the past undermined efforts at reform in the USSR. See Chapter 2.


10. The effect of the fall in the price of oil was reinforced by the depreciation of the U.S. dollar, in which Soviet oil exports are settled.

11. These arrangements are described later, in the section on energy relations. The most comprehensive, if controversial, analysis of the costs of the relationship is M. Marrese and J. Vanous, *Soviet Subsidization of Trade with Eastern Europe*, Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1983.


13. East European participation in the financing of the Khmelnitsky nuclear power station, to be constructed in the Western Ukraine, was announced later in 1979 (see following).


Some have argued that the summit communique (which was short, vague, and very traditionalist in character) was backed up by more substantive unpublished agreements. (Cf. "A Blueprint for Gorbachev's Integration Strategy?" PlanEcon Report, Vol. 11, No. 36, September 4, 1986). It seems odd, however, that if it had been possible to agree on important new initiatives, these would not have been made public at the time. The fact that a program on scientific and technical cooperation (already raised at the 1982 CMEA session) was briefly alluded to but not elaborated upon in the summit announcements, suggests that full agreement had not been reached. A Hungarian economist has referred to the summit as taking place in a "Brezhnevian" atmosphere (L. Csaba, "Le CAEM sous le signe de la restructuration," Le Courrier des Pays de l'Est, No. 313, December 1986, p. 7).


17. TASS, June 17, 1987. The appointment in 1983 of Viacheslav Sychev to succeed Nikolai Fadeev, who had been Comecon Secretary since 1958, helped to pave the way for a new period in the history of the organization.

18. We may also note that the CMEA program was launched at the same time as the counterpart West European "Eureka" program. It is perhaps the latter that finally stimulated the socialist countries to action. The CMEA has a history of initiatives taken in apparent reaction to developments on the Western side. The organization itself is generally regarded as having been created in response to the American Marshall Plan for the postwar economic recovery of Western Europe.


20. The promotion of inter-enterprise linkages is also not a new idea. It was one of many concepts incorporated in the catch-all 1971 Program, and has since received growing attention in the authoritative CMEA literature. Cf. Iu. Shiriav, "Problems in the Development of Direct Relationships among Economic Organizations of CMEA Member Countries," published in Zahranicni obchod, No. 1, 1982; English version published in Soviet and East European Foreign Trade, Vol. 18, Fall 1982, pp. 1-14. The author is the director of the CMEA's International Institute for Economic Problems of the World Socialist System in Moscow.

21. L. Csaba, "Le CAEM sous le signe . . ." op. cit., who cites other CMEA authors in this regard.

22. Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of May 26, 1983, "On the Procedure Governing the Activity of Joint Economic Organizations of the USSR and other CMEA Countries on USSR Territory." It has been supplemented by the Presidium decree of January 13, 1987, "On Matters Concerning the Establishment on USSR Territory and the Activity of Joint Enterprises and International Associations and Organizations with the Participation of Soviet and Foreign Organizations, Firms and Management Organs" and a resolution of the USSR Council of Ministers of the same date, "On the Procedure for the Creation on USSR Territory and the Activity of Joint Enterprises and International Associations and
Organizations of the USSR and Other CMEA Countries.” The last provides the
most detail on the conditions for the establishment in the USSR of joint ventures
with CMEA partners. These can take three organizational forms: joint ventures
proper (with shared equity), international business associations (contractual rather
than equity ventures) and joint organizations (joint equity ventures for R&D
purposes).

23. Bulgarian Foreign Trade, No. 4, 1986, pp. 4-7, Hungaropress, various issues,
and Foreign Trade (Moscow), 3/1987, p. 60.

24. See, for example, M. Lavigne, “Problématique de l’entreprise multinationale
socialiste,” Economies et Sociétés, Vol. XI, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 35-78. The point was
stressed again, in the context of current moves to strengthen direct contacts, by
the Hungarian economist I. Wiesel in “K.G.S.T.,” an article on the CMEA published
in Figyelő, Vol. 31, No. 7, 1987, p. 3 (summarized in Abstracts of Hungarian Economic

25. The 1986 reforms of the Soviet foreign trade system were designed to create
the conditions for the “direct participation” of domestic enterprises in the imple-
mentation of the CMEA Comprehensive Program in cooperation with partner
enterprises in the other CMEA countries (Pravda, September 24, 1986, p. 1).

XXVIII, No. 3, Fall 1986, p. 57. The Hungarian economist A. Köves has questioned
whether turning inward is a feasible choice in his The CMEA Countries in the
World Economy: Turning Inwards or Turning Outwards, Budapest: Akad. Kiado,
1985.

27. In reviewing the background to the CMEA’s “strategic response to the
challenge of the 1980s,” Bogomolov has asserted that “the CMEA countries have
had to draw far-reaching conclusions from the worsening international situation
and the continuing crisis in the world socialist economy. Cold war winds blowing
from across the Atlantic have damaged trade conditions between East and West.
This is all the more alarming because it has given rise to problems of a purely
economic nature.” O. T. Bogomolov, “CMEA Economic Strategy in the 1980s” in
The World Socialist Economy, Moscow: Nauka, 1986, p. 20. In the same volume,
an article by H. Vlasin and N. Alekhin on CMEA scientific and technical cooperation
(“Scientific and Technological Cooperation”) calls attention (pp. 186-187) to the
constraints on scientific cooperation with the West.

28. The Soviet imperatives defined at the beginning of this paper should be
recalled here.


31. Ekonomicheskoe Sotrudnichestvo Stran-Chlenov SEV, Moscow. In a monograph
published on the Soviet role in socialist economic integration published by the
CMEA Secretariat in 1986, the pipeline is the subject of the briefest possible
reference in a short paragraph listing joint development projects in the period of
the Twelfth Five-Year Plan. (O. Bogomolov, SSSR v Sisteme Sotsialisticheskoi Ekono-
micheskoi Integratsii, Moscow: CMEA Secretariat, 1986).

32. On the financing of the earlier project, see J. Hannigan and C. McMillan,
“Joint Investment in Resource Development: Sectoral Approaches to Socialist
Integration,” in East European Economic Assessment, Part 2—Regional Assessments,
A Compendium of Papers submitted to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress


37. The period spanned by the announcements of the Khmelnitsky nuclear power and the Progress pipeline projects. Bulgarian and Romanian participation in Konstantinovka, formally agreed in 1982, was decided earlier, as a Balkan counterpart to Khmelnitsky.

38. That is, providing some needed equipment and technology and contracting for long-term counter-deliveries. The Soyuz (Orenburg) concept of cooperation, involved complete East European construction responsibility for designated sectors of the line, with coordination performed by a Soviet agency.

39. In illustration, a chapter (by A. Zubkov) on "CMEA Energy Supply" in a recent, authoritative Soviet source (The World Socialist Economy, op. cit.) devotes primary attention, despite its title, to energy-saving policies and programs in the region and only secondarily to measures to boost regional energy supply.


41. Bogomolov, SSSR v sisteme . . . ; Academician Bogomolov is director of the Institute of the Economics of the World Socialist System, USSR Academy of Sciences, and is regarded as a close advisor to Gorbachev on external economic relations.

42. Quoted in ibid., p. 25.


44. Izvestia, October 10, 1987, report (p. 6) of a roundtable of international economists at the Academy of Sciences, Moscow.


46. Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov's speech to the 43rd Session referred to the need to expand the use of national currencies in intra-CMEA settlements as a first step towards eventual convertibility and the institution of a collective monetary unit. TASS International Service, October 13, 1987.

47. Statement to the 42nd regular session of the Council held in Bucharest, November 3, 1986 (TASS International Service). Ryzhkov did not explicitly state that oil deliveries would increase; and added the typical provision that East European participation in joint projects would continue and that East European counter-deliveries would have to grow and improve in structure.
even a retreat from such liberalization as has taken place might be the result in some cases, with tighter controls being imposed to compensate for the loss of latent Soviet military support. In that regard, one may recall that in Romania the absence of Soviet troops coincides with the most repressive of all Eastern European regimes. On the other hand it is easy to foresee what the results of a complete Soviet troop withdrawal would be. For in yet one more conjunction that need not have been (on top of the sheer coincidence of Gorbachev's ascent with the post-nuclear drift), "inherent" political stability (what stability would be minus repression) is perhaps at an all time low throughout Eastern Europe. Both the party loyalty, even fervor, that energetic indoctrination secured among younger segments of the population during the 1950s, and the hopes of rapid economic growth that variously prevailed during the 1960s and into the 1970s have been dissipated. An irremediable aversion for the several regimes is now the norm in the public opinion of each country, while the internal cohesion of the several CPs now rests entirely on the sum total of individual calculations of material self-interest, with the last remnants of ideological commitment long gone. This last conjunction means that political conditions are less favorable than ever before for total Soviet troop withdrawals—if, that is, the Soviet leadership is both politically well-informed and prudent. But of course the evidence of four years is that the present Kremlin leadership is neither of these things, at least judging by what happened in Alma Ata, and between Armenians and Azeris in the Caucasus.

Notes


2. Soviet force levels show how limited was the immediate post V-J-day demobilization, notwithstanding the acute shortage of able-bodied manpower for reconstruction and production; T. W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970, pp. 8-15.

3. In the peak production year, the U.S. produced 96,318 airframes, the U.K. 40,300, Canada/Australia 26,263, and the U.S.S.R. 40,300; that understates the gap because of the many Anglo-American four-engine types versus the predominance of single-engine airframes in Soviet production. The 1944 aero-engine totals were 256,912 for the U.S., 56,931 for the U.K. and 52,000 for the U.S.S.R. R. J. Overy, The Air War 1939-1945, London: Europa Publ., 1980, Table 12, p. 150.


6. An incidental consequence was the imminent expectation of widespread nuclear proliferation: how could the appeal of weapons so useful be resisted by those who could have them?
7. Preferred bomber flightpaths would avoid Eastern Europe; the shortest routes from CONUS would be over the Pole, and the least-defended approaches would be from the south.

8. Because they are inherently more exposed and also more costly (higher transport costs), forward-deployed garrisons are not desirable, unless there is use in their forward deployment.


10. E.g., the changed composition of Soviet tactical aviation as lightweight interceptors/air superiority aircraft of the MiG-21 family gave way to a mix of multi-purpose MiG-23/-27 types and Su-19s, outright interdiction aircraft; in the ground forces the greater stress on offensive capabilities is exemplified by the introduction of otherwise counter-doctrinal elite forces (notably the air assault troops) as well as the new “Operational Manoeuvre Group” format, which required, inter alia, the acquisition of costly helicopters in large numbers.

11. In theory, there was a simple technical remedy for the diminished appropriateness of nuclear use against a diminished threat: nuclear weapons themselves diminished—“mini-nukes” in the jargon. Their advocacy has been recurrent and uniformly unsuccessful on the reasoning that attempts to secure advantages by the use of, say, 0.01 kiloton weapons would evoke 0.02 kiloton attacks, and so on.

12. Of which the prime exhibit is the conversion of the field artillery to much more costly self-propelled configurations and its concurrent expansion.

13. These calculations are the author’s estimates derived by inspection of the detailed force structures, rather than of financial data such as it is; for a summary of the gross uncertainty that persists in regard to the latter see, inter alia, the IISS Military Balance 1987/1988, pp. 29-31.


15. The O & M costs (and technical-manpower requirements) of Soviet ground forces vary according to their mobilization status. All 30 of the Tank and “Motor-Rifle” divisions in Eastern Europe (and their respective Army and Front echelons) are Category 1 formations, fully manned and with complete sets of late-model equipment; Category 2 formations have complete equipment sets but are only manned at 50-75% of authorized strength; Category 3 forces (the largest part) have older equipment sets and not much more than 20% of total authorized manpower, i.e., a mobilization cadre. See IISS Military Balance 1987/1988, pp. 34 and 39.
the new Soviet-East European relationship is likely to remain unchanged in the foreseeable future or whether it will change once again sooner rather than later.

Notes
I want to express my appreciation to Walter Connor, Mary Ellen Fischer, and Trond Gilberg for their perceptive and helpful comments on the first draft of this chapter.

1. In his comments on the first draft of this chapter.
2. In his comments on the first draft of this chapter. My own lengthy experience in Eastern Europe strongly supports this view.
4. Ibid., pp. 455 and 475.
6. James F. Brown was the first to draw attention to the inherent incompatibility of Soviet goals of cohesion and viability in Eastern Europe. For details, see his “Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its East European Allies: A Survey,” RAND Report R-1742-PR, 1975, passim.


24. Mary Ellen Fischer in her comments on the first draft of this chapter.


pressure on the East Europeans to contribute more to the Soviet's modernization effort is not likely to bear rich fruit to the Soviets nor is it likely to be a major factor in East European's own improved economic performance. Paradoxically, tightening the supply and conditions of Soviet energy and raw material exports may be the only thing that, in the long run, will yield substantial benefits for the countries of East Europe.

Notes

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
22. Klaus, loc. cit.
population, and the increased resentments, in turn, will heighten the Soviet doubts in the reliability of—at least some of—their Lesser Allies. Unfortunately for the Soviets, in international politics one cannot always have one's cake and eat it too, but such is the nature of the burden of the hegemonic power. They chose to maintain the Empire in Eastern Europe, and we should not feel sorry for them for having to pay the ever-spiralling costs of their unsavory enterprise.

Notes
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
regress of a would-be totalitarianism" and labelled "the Ottomanization rather than the Finlandization of the Soviet empire."59

Reasoning by historical analogy is always treacherous. In this instance, one must beware of the enticement of treating Eastern Europe as if it were or else could become a kind of socialist millet system: one is also well advised against succumbing to the temptation of dismissing the Soviet Union as "the sick man" of Europe, if not of the planet. On the other hand, East Central Europe together with Southeast Europe (however we may wish to define each in terms of territory and/or culture) does constitute something of a contemporaneous "sick heart of Europe."60 Much of the sickness grows out of the continued political dependency of proud peoples who have long been deprived of the opportunity for free national expression. It is precisely "this lack of independent national development," a Hungarian scholar reminds us, that has "created a special role for cultural identity because the national culture, the native language, and the native histories of this region became the integrating force."61 That being the case, the politics of cultural identity bids fair to constitute the epicenter of political life throughout Eastern Europe. And whether or not the idea of Central Europe has any real future, its contemporary exponents have already bequeathed it a rich legacy, destined to provoke renewed intellectual controversy and certain to be subject to repeated partisan challenge but, for all of that, a bequest of no small moral worth.

Notes


2. For one view of a strategy by the domestic democratic opposition that might overturn the Yalta "settlement" and result in a kind of "self-Finlandization," see Feher, loc. cit., pp. 30-34.

3. Apart from the implications of Gorbachev's advocacy of glasnost and perestroika for various East European countries, there is also the greatly reduced claim on behalf of the Soviet Union as a normative "model" of development and an international "center" of command, including an apparent deemphasis if not quite renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine. For a recent analysis of these developments, see Vladimir V. Kusin, "The 'Yugoslavization' of Soviet-East European Relations?" Radio Free Europe, RAD Background Report, No. 57, March 29, 1988. Cf. Eric Bourne, "May East-bloc States Now Chart Their Own Socialist Paths?" Christian Science Monitor, April 18, 1988.

4. See, for example, George Schopflin's "Central Europe: A New Political Identity," a presentation to the East European Program of the Wilson Center, Washington.


6. In discussing the distinction between the “second” or “underground” culture and the “first” or “official” culture in Eastern Europe, Gordon Skilling notes that “the line between the two cultures and the two forms of communication is not always sharp and distinct.” Skilling cites a leading exponent of the “parallel culture” in Czechoslovakia, Vaclav Havel, to the effect that “the once well defined and impenetrable dividing line between the two cultures appears to be growing fuzzy. . . .” H. Gordon Skilling, “Independent Communications in Communist East Europe,” Cross Currents, 5, 1986, pp. 53–75, esp. pp. 69–70.


8. For the contrary view that, as a result of the destruction of indigenous culture and intellectual life, “the Sovietization of contemporary Central and South East Europe has put down deeper roots than commonly supposed,” see Michal Reiman, “Die ‘Sowjetisierung’ Mittel- und Sudosteuropa,” Kursbuch, 81, September 1985, pp. 137–151, p. 149. Cf. the lugubrious, deeply anti-Russian ruminations of Milan Kundera to which reference will be made in our subsequent discussion.


11. For a discussion of “the situation among youth,” see Brown, Eastern Europe, pp. 399–403.

12. The term “critical intelligentsia,” as used here, is synonymous with “dissidents” and “independent thinkers.” Some of the people in question (and some of their sympathizers in the West) prefer the designation “independent” (thinkers, actors, etc.) and object to the notion of “dissidence” as already tainted by that from which it dissents. For an example of these sensibilities, see H. Gordon Skilling, loc. cit., (note 6) and his “Independent Currents in Czechoslovakia,” Problems of Communism, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, January–February 1985, pp. 32–49. Cf. Milan Kundera’s avowal of his “allergic” reaction to “today’s political terminology” (i.e., the term “dissident”) and his refusal to “make use of it.” “Milan Kundera’s Interview,” Cross Currents, 1, 1982, p. 15.

13. A detailed treatment of these issues may be found in Henry Cord Meyer, Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955.


16. Of course, the influence of Austria on Communist Eastern Europe is already a factor and has been for at least two decades. For a brief discussion, see Brown, *Eastern Europe and Communist Rule*, pp. 69–72 ("The Attraction of Austria").

17. On both points, see the apt observations of Garton Ash, loc. cit., p. 52. For a vivid sense of the distaste, not to say disgust, of East European dissidents for western "peaceniks" together with a trenchant critique of the Western peace movement's egocentrism, see Vaclav Havel, "Anatomy of Reticence," *Cross Currents*, 6, 1986, pp. 1–23.

18. For his part, Milan Kundera would deny this. In answer to the question of whether he felt "like an emigre, a Frenchman, a Czech, or just a European without specific nationality," he replied, "my stay in France is final, and, therefore, I am not an emigre." (!) France is my only real homeland now. Nor do I feel uprooted. For a thousand years, Czechoslovakia was part of the West. Today, it is part of the empire to the east. I would feel a great deal more uprooted in Prague than in Paris." Olga Carlisle, "A Talk with Milan Kundera," *New York Times Magazine*, May 19, 1987, p. 74. But what does Kundera's answer manifest if not that sense of irony so often deemed to be a major element in the Central European character?

19. The quote is Milan Kundera's and refers to the Jews themselves whom Kundera describes as Central Europe's "intellectual cement, a condensed version of its spirit, creators of its spiritual unity." He adds, "that's why I love the Jewish heritage and cling to it with as much passion and nostalgia as if it were my own." Milan Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," *New York Review of Books*, Vol. XXXI, No. 7, April 26, 1984, p. 36.

20. This is not the place to enter into a lengthy discussion of elitism in either theory or practice. Suffice it only to note that the concept itself connotes both the infusion of value and the elevation of the specially selected. Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (2nd ed., 1979) defines elite as "the choice or most carefully selected part of a group, as of a society or profession." A British political philosopher, Geraint Parry, has noted that for many observers, "elites are the sole source of values in the society or constitute the integrating force in the community without which it may fall apart." Geraint Parry, *Political Elites*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969, p. 13.

21. For a brief but pointed commentary, see Garton Ash, loc. cit., p. 46, which, *inter alia*, quotes Francois Bondy's cutting quip that "if Kafka was a child of Central Europe, so too was Adolf Hitler." With respect to Havel's description of the "Central European mind," Garton Ash asks, "*since when* has [it] been 'skeptical, sober, anti-utopian, understated'?” *ibid.*, italics as given.


25. Garton Ash refers to moving remarks to this effect at an unofficial culture symposium held at Budapest in 1984. See Garton Ash, loc. cit., p. 46

26. Ibid.


29. Ibid., p. 71.


32. Ibid., p. 118.

33. Interview with Philip Roth, loc. cit., p. 80.


35. It is not surprising that Milosz, as a Pole who hails from Wilno (the ancient Lithuanian capital of Vilnius), should celebrate the memory of the Polish-Lithuanian Union of yore. With respect to the issue of pessimism, Milosz observes that "dark visions of the future . . . seem to be a specialty of Central European writers." Czeslaw Milosz, "Central European Attitudes," _Cross Currents_, 5, 1986, p. 105.


37. Ibid., p. 224

38. Ibid., p. 225.


40. Ibid., p. 196.

41. The phrases are Garton Ash's. See Garton Ash, loc. cit., p. 48.


43. Ibid.


45. See _The Economist_, December 26, 1987, p. 52.


49. Ibid., p. 117.

50. On the first two matters, see Garton Ash, loc cit., p. 51.


55. He writes, "I would like to think of myself as some utopian son of Europe able to touch the Pacific at San Francisco with one outstretched arm and Vladivostok with the other; and keeping the peace everywhere within my embrace." Konrad, op. cit. p. 129.

56. Ibid.

58. Andrei Amalrik, Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984? New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1970, p. 61. Amalrik also prophesied that the countries of Eastern Europe “finding the Soviet Union powerless in Europe, will present territorial claims that have long been hushed up but not forgotten: Poland to Lvov and Vilna, Germany to Kaliningrad (Konigsberg), Hungary to Transcarpathia, Rumania to Bessarabia.” Ibid. He omitted mention of the even more likely possibility of a rekindling of ethnonationalist passions within Eastern Europe—already apparent—and the fresh pursuit of territorial claims as the result of the eruption of various disputes that simmer just below the surface within the region.


60. For the origins of this phrase and a highly pertinent discussion of its applicability in the Communist period, see Hugh Seton-Watson, The “Sick Heart” of Modern Europe, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1975, passim.

with the West. In the case of the East Europeans, denuclearization, troop reductions and withdrawals may produce positive results but can also lead to greater instability, enhanced Soviet military control, magnified concern with reliability, greater emphasis on territory and relatively heavier military burdens.

There is then a cacophony of centripetal and centrifugal forces at work in the region. Despite attempts at a controlled experiment the policies of the reformist Soviet and East European leaders may well produce a whole range of unexpected results domestically and in socialist interstate relations. As Polish dissident Jacek Kuron has said, "Gorbachev has set the social forces in motion, and neither he nor anyone else can know what the consequences will be." There are expectations of change both among some leaders and especially among the populations of several of the states. As well, there is resistance. Uncertainty is intermingled with hope. Cynicism, a pervasive malaise and anger also characterize the region. And the close intertwining of domestic and external factors adds to the regional turbulence.

Yet despite the enormous difficulties these states confront, it is not inconceivable that this turbulence will lead to the creation of a dramatically new, organic relationship between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Nikolai Shmelev in projecting an optimistic, long-term outcome for Gorbachev’s 1989 agricultural reforms suggested that the Soviet leader had deliberately initiated a “creative mess”—one that will lead to the necessary transformation. Perhaps this is an apt description of the changes that Gorbachev has brought to the Soviet-East European relationship. In the next few years though we should be in a better position to assess whether the adjective is justified.

Notes


12. Ibid., p. 149.
13. Ibid., p. 137.
23. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
29. Gorbachev, op. cit., p. 57.
34. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
65. Newsweek, April 13, 1989, p. 34.
66. Ibid, p. 36.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
73. Ibid, p. 2.
74. Ibid.
77. Eastern Europe Newsletter, (London), Vol. 2, No. 9, May 9, 1988, p. 3.
78. Ibid, p. 4.
79. They were Zoltan Kiraly, member of parliament for Szeget; Mihaly Bihari, deputy director of the Institute of sociology; Laszlo Lengyel, a reform economist
and one of the authors of the PPF’s “Change and Reform” program in 1987; and Zoltan Biro, a writer and chairman of the HDF.

96. Gati, op. cit., p. 162.
99. Ibid.
108. See, Henry Kamm, “In a Pro-Solidarity City, Poland’s Coming Vote Is Stirring Little Excitement” New York Times, June 1, 1989; in the June 4, 1989, election only 62% of the electorate voted compared to 79% in the 1985 elections. Newsweek June 19, 1989, p. 43.
115. Globe and Mail, June 6, 1989; CBC Radio News, June 6, 1989 7:00 a.m. EDT; CKO Radio News June 7, 1989, 7:30 a.m. EDT; Globe and Mail, June 20, 1989.
118. Ibid.
119. Newsweek, October 10, 1988, p. 49.
120. Tass, Moscow, October 1, 1988.
122. Ibid.
129. Toronto Star, April 1, 1989.
131. Ibid.
140. Officially, the poverty level in the Soviet Union for an urban family of four is 205.6 rubles a month ($339.24 US) which works out to about 51 rubles ($85) a person. New York Times, January 29, 1989.
147. The Central Intelligence Agency estimated that the Soviet economy grew by only 1.5% in 1988 and agricultural production fell by 2%, New York Times, April 23, 1989.
152. Ibid.
153. Ibid.


160. For further discussion on this issue see the excellent paper by Ivan Volgyes, "Class Struggle Revisited: The Problems of Class and Equality in Contemporary Hungary," at the conference on "Before the Storm Breaks: The Extent, Limits and Dangers of Reform in Communist Hungary," Pennsylvania State University, April 14–17, 1988, pp. 27–33.

161. Ibid. pp. 31–33.


177. Edward Luttwak has written in relation to strategy that it operates on the basis of paradoxical rather than linear logic. This perceptive analysis seems to apply also to the Soviet–East European relationship. See The Paradoxical Logic of Strategy, Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1987.


188. As reported in the Los Angeles Times, July 10, 1988, by Robert C. Toth.
190. Ibid, p. 5.
191. Ibid, p. 3.
199. Radio Budapest, February 21, 1988, 10:05 a.m. as reported in Radio Free Europe, Background Report, No. 60, April 6, 1988.
204. Ibid.
208. Ibid.
223. Britain $1.6 billion, West Germany $1.6 billion and Italy $775 million, Globe and Mail, Toronto, October 19, 1988. Together with loans from Japanese banks, the total comes to about $9 billion. According to John Hardt this tops the combined total (of $8 billion) of the three previous years. New York Times, October 23, 1988.
226. Ibid, p. 305.
236. Ibid.
237. Ibid.
245. "Strategic Datalink," The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, December 1988, Datalink No. 11.


247. For instance, the GDR will be cutting its armed forces by 10,000 soldiers, 600 tanks and 50 warplanes and will reduce its military spending by 10% within a two-year period. Globe and Mail, January 24, 1989; Hungary announced cuts in defense of 17% a manpower reduction of 9,300 and a withdrawal of 251 tanks, 30 armoured personnel carriers, 430 artillery pieces, 6 tactical rocket launchers and an aircraft during a two-year period. Globe and Mail, January 31, 1989.


249. Ibid.


258. Ibid.


265. Ibid.

266. One of the more prolific civilian writers is L. Semeiko of the USSR Academy of Science's Institute of the USA and Canada. See in particular his "Instead of Mountains of Weapons," Izvestiia, August 13, 1987.


268. Semeiko, loc. cit.


270. Semeiko, loc. cit.


282. Ibid.
283. See A. Braun "Whither the Warsaw Pact . . .," loc. cit.
285. Ibid. 24.
301. Ibid.
305. "Gorbachev: The View from Warsaw," Harpers, July 1987, p. 27.
In Bulgaria promises of greater reform should be viewed with some skepticism. Todor Zhivkov has a history of making promises under pressure and then retracting them as soon as the right opportunity arises. The nature and pace of Bulgarian reforms, therefore, will depend in part on the continuation of internal and external pressures and, of course, on the physical and political health of Zhivkov. In Czechoslovakia the regime is standing fast with conservative policies, but if reforms spread further in the bloc and begin to enjoy a degree of success, it will be increasingly more difficult for Prague to resist change. Lastly, in Romania there has been no change in the past several months and the bizarre domestic, political and economic policies of the Ceausescu regime are likely to continue as long as that leader remains in power.

* * *

In sum, the dramatic changes in parts of Eastern Europe and even in the Soviet Union raise at least as many questions as they provide answers. Changes are so numerous that it is difficult to exclude any possibilities. But in terms of trends and tendencies, most of the fundamental dilemmas and contradictions in the Soviet Union, in much of the East European states and in Soviet-East European relations remain unresolved. Though certain developments in the past few months are most encouraging, it is premature to speak of irreversible trends. Certainly there has been an acceleration of certain trends. Reform in Poland and Hungary has taken off, and especially the latter may be able to perform a successful "leap into the future," perhaps through a form of "Finlandization."

But in the Soviet Union there is still no systemic change domestically, and this is bound to have an impact on their relations with their fellow socialist states. The doctrine of socialism though is increasingly tested and concepts will need to be redefined. De-Leninization has begun in Poland and Hungary. What is "socialist" and what is acceptable "socialism" in Eastern Europe are increasingly more relevant questions. Hungary and Poland (or any other East European state that should engage in fundamental restructuring) also face a great dilemma. Should they accelerate reform so that they could "lock in" the changes against possible external shifts in Soviet policy? Or are they likely, by moving too quickly, to precipitate precisely the kind of Soviet clampdown that they fear? For, despite all the positive Soviet signals, Soviet-East European relations are still in a state of flux. And although the Soviet Union may be a tired superpower, it would be a mistake—especially for the East Europeans—to view it as a spent force. Moreover, change even within certain parameters is still highly dependent on the survival of Gorbachev and Gorbachevism.

Notes

3. Ibid.


22. Ibid.


42. Cited in the *Toronto Star*, October 14, 1989.


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