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RETHINKING DEMOCRACY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

**SHIFTING TENSES IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS\***

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*Far better an approximate answer to the right question, which is often vague, than an exact answer to the wrong question, which can always be made precise.*

John Tukey, Princeton statistician, c. 1955.

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\*This paper reflects work done on Central and Eastern European new democracies with Christian Haerpfer, now at the New Europe Center, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, and William Mishler, University of Arizona; on Russia, with Stephen L. White, U. of Glasgow; and on Korea, with Doh Chull Shin, U. of Missouri Columbia. It was prepared as part of a British ESRC project on Consolidating Russian Democracy, R00238107 , with Stephen White.

By definition, a new democracy cannot be described as path determined. Only in a handful of first wave democracies that have evolved without a break from the distant past, e.g. England or Sweden, could this arguably have been the case. The second wave of democratization was usually about re-democratization, for countries such as Germany and Spain had previously had democratic as well as undemocratic regimes. Third-wave democracies are different, for most have been launched in countries where there is slight or no historical precedent for democracy (Rose, 1996: chapter 3; Diamond, 1999). At the launch of a new democracy, the relationship between the undemocratic past and the uncertain present is critical as the new regime tries to take root.

Democratization is a dynamic process rather than determined at a unique point in time. The starting point is the fall of an undemocratic regime and its replacement by an infant set of democratic institutions. At the mid-point in this process, a new democracy is "incomplete", for while it has survived it has not yet achieved all four core attributes of democracy: the rule of law, civil society institutions, accountability and free elections (Rose and Shin, 2000).

What should researchers do as regimes move from an undemocratic past to an uncertain future? The answer is: Shift tenses. There are grounds for expecting the legacy of the undemocratic past to attenuate as it recedes into the distance and those who knew the old regime begin to die off. Evaluations of current performance of the regime ought to become more realistic as more and more evidence accumulates about it. The probabilities for future development are much clearer after a decade of development. We can thus evaluate to what extent a new regime is (or is not) heading in a democratic direction and if it is, to what extent it has become complete and what is still lacking.

The process of democratization can be modelled as a process of supply and demand. Political elites control the supply of political institutions, especially at the time when a new constitution is crafted (cf. di Palma, 1990). Elite bargaining about the institutions of the regime is not confined to decisions about the rules for the first free election; it is a continuing process in every democracy. To conduct surveys of a "democratic political culture" without regard to whether institutions and processes of a new regime can aptly be described as democratic or becoming democratic is to leave government out of the study of politics.

While elites propose, the populace disposes. Elections provide a choice between competing elites, and competition makes elites sensitive to popular pressures, albeit elections can occur in many forms, from free and fair to elections without choice (Schumpeter, 1952). The significance of the demand-side role of

the mass public in new democracies justifies a heavy investment in sample surveys. But this does not of itself justify asking the same questions in new democracies that are asked in established democracies. In the latter, an individual's experience of the past and the present is of the same regime, and it is usually inconceivable to respondents that the established regime could be replaced by another. In such a context, the conventional strategy is to ask about ideal goals, or to compare the present polyarchical regime with a democratic ideal that is not so much futuristic as unattainable (cf. Dahl, 1998). In a new democracy, however, past experiences refer to an undemocratic regime and the present refers to an incomplete or "not yet established" regime. Future developments may--or may not--produce an established democracy. There is nothing teleological in the process of regime change, as is shown by the ebb and flow in the tides of each "wave" of democracy, not excluding the third wave (cf. Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 1999).

A lifetime learning model can integrate past and present experiences and future expectations (see Mishler and Rose, 2001). The starting point is socialization; activities of a regime--whether democratic or undemocratic--are predispositions that have an early and persisting influence on how adults evaluate successor regimes (for a restatement, see Eckstein, 1998). By definition, nearly all adults in a new democracy have initially been socialized in an undemocratic regime. In the Soviet Union, the Communist aspiration to create a "new" person led to aggressive mobilization of youths and adults, as evidenced in compulsory youth groups and election results. The consequences are ambivalent, as citizens could either become integrated in the new regime or react against what the party-state demanded, outwardly complying while inwardly resisting (cf. Shlapentokh, 1989). Undemocratic regimes in Latin America have usually sought to demobilize their citizens, so that elites could govern as they wished while individuals pursued interests outside the political sphere.

Performance theories emphasize current activities of government as the primary source of support, not only for an elected government, but for the regime itself, as performance outputs feed back to the citizenry (cf. Easton, 1965). The performance that counts is often assumed to be the management of the economy, but it can also be political performance, for example, the conduct of a war in Vietnam or Kosovo or Chechnya. Most performance models focus on the present, retrospective comparisons between the previous Parliament and the present, or between what the current government is doing and what a future government promises to do (cf. Key, 1966; Fiorina, 1981).

The formal contrast between socialization and performance theories is not a

logical contradiction. Socialization models implicitly incorporate an allowance for the performance of the regime when adult citizens were forming their initial political predispositions. In an established democracy, this may influence the partisanship of cohorts with different generational experiences. In new democracies, it may influence regime preferences (cf. Butler and Stokes, 1974; Rose and Carnaghan, 1995). Performance models allow for expectations formed by past performance influencing current assessments, albeit greater weight tends to be placed on the present.

The following pages view the implications of shifting tenses for survey research in new democracies, where we need theoretically relevant questions that relate to the existential past, present and future of their citizens. To illustrate the empirical significance of questions, results are given from surveys in post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

## **I THE STARTING POINT: THE EXPERIENCE OF UNDEMOCRATIC RULE**

When a new democracy is brand new, the present is a novelty and difficult to evaluate by familiar criteria. While citizens know what an undemocratic regime is like, they have had no experience of what their new regime will become. In such circumstances, asking people to evaluate a new regime invites conjectural responses to words that symbolize ideals rather than real experiences, as is the case of asking people about the past.

"Pasts" exist in a plurality of forms. In established democracies, the election calendar usually limits the time horizon of most political survey questions. However, many area-studies experts evoke remote eras and regimes. In Russian studies, references can be made to the time of the Tsars before and after the emancipation of the serfs. Nationalist rhetoric can refer to "time immemorial" or a thousand years of national history, as in Hungary. In Central and Eastern Europe, many references were made to the pre-Communist past, with special emphasis on the undemocratic regimes of interwar Europe. In post-Communist countries, the past is not counted but named: "before" or "under the old regime". Older people have lived under three or four regimes, and often in two or more different countries.

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<sup>1</sup> The limits of asking these questions in an established democracy is evidenced by the experience of conducting surveys in East and West Germans, for questions about regime change have no experiential basis to the average West German adult, while they are vivid to East Germans (cf. Rose, Zapf et al., 1993).

New democracies can be differentiated between those in which the past regime was a mobilizational totalitarian regime destroying competing institutions and aggressively socializing its subjects, or simply an undemocratic regime that showed some tolerance for institutions of civil society and indifference about what citizens think and do (Linz, 1975). Another distinction is between a new democracy which has a legacy of institutions of a modern state (Germany or Austria after World War II) and a new democracy lacking such structures (e.g. in a third world country) or, having a legacy of an "anti-modern" post-totalitarian state, as in the Soviet Union (cf. Rose and Shin, 2000). There are differences too even within a category, such as Communist or post-Communist countries, where there was a centralizing party enforcing many common institutions (Bunce, 1999).

The strength of surveying mass attitudes about democracy is that it reveals differences within countries that tend to be buried or glossed over in holistic studies of political institutions, aggregate economic performance or cultures. Whereas an inflation rate, a presidential system or a culture are expected to characterize the whole of a society, survey studies emphasize divisions within every society.

(Table 1 about here)

The CSPP Barometer surveys<sup>2</sup> have measured popular evaluations of familiar undemocratic regimes as well as the current regime (for the initial theoretical statement, see Rose, 1992). The regimes are not defined by symbolic or ideologically loaded labels, such as "democracy", a label appropriated by the East German Democratic Republic. Simon's (1998) careful analysis of a dozen surveys from post-Communist countries shows that "democracy" is a polyvalent symbol stimulating three fundamentally different responses. Some individuals see it in institutional terms, others in socio-economic; and a third group attributes liberal-individual significance. Therefore, Barometer surveys do not use the word democracy or markets or socialism. People are asked to evaluate regimes defined by reference to three points in time: the old regime, the present regime, and the uncertain future. While countries differ in the proportion who are positive or negative about the old and new regime--for example, Czechs are very much against the old regime and for the new, whereas Russians are the opposite--there is substantial variation within every new democracy.

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<sup>2</sup> The term Barometer surveys here refers to more than 90 surveys organized since 1991 by the Centre for the Study of Public Policy, U. of Strathclyde and collaborators. Cross-nationally comparable questions have been asked in 18 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and the Republic of Korea (for details, see [www.cspp.strath.ac.uk](http://www.cspp.strath.ac.uk)). The web site's SEEC section--Search Europe Electronically on Concepts--offers facilities for searching questionnaires and generating comparative, trend and cross-tabulation tables for nine countries and 37 surveys.

## II WHERE IS THE NEW REGIME NOW?

The paths of new democracies head in different directions. There is no logical requirement for the elite governing a post-Communist regime to be committed to democracy, as illustrated by developments in some successor states of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia. Logically, a new democracy can be a prelude to a new undemocratic regime. For example, the new democracies launched in the aftermath of World War I broke down in country after country within a few years (cf. Linz and Stepan, 1978). The cross-section review of regimes around the world by Freedom House ([www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)) annually reports that the median regime is "partly free". The Russian Federation today is an example of a country in this intermediate category; it also is an example of a new democracy that has moved backward rather than forward in its Freedom House rating since its launch in 1992.

When a new democracy is launched the competition that counts most is between past and present regimes. Each citizen can compare the old and new regime on the basis of experience. In such a context, judgments are made on transitive rather than absolute grounds. As Winston Churchill argued shortly after World War II:

No one ever pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time (quoted in Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer, 1998).

A transitive judgment does not require democracy to be successful in everything. nor does it require it to be positively desirable. A country such as Romania, which is ranked as "just" free by Freedom House and level with Egypt in the bottom third of the Transparency International Corruption Index can nonetheless be preferred to its predecessor regime of Nicole Ceaurescu.

Individual views of past and present regimes can be combined into four groups (Rose and Mishler, 1994). Democrats disapprove the Communist regime and approve the new regime; sceptics disapprove both the Communist and new regimes; the compliant approve both old and new regimes; and reactionaries approve the undemocratic regime and disapprove the new regime (Figure 1). In the post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, democrats are the largest single group but in no country are they an absolute majority. In Russia the largest group is reactionary, positive about the Communist regime and negative about the new democracy. In most countries the median two-fifths are ambivalent, either compliantly favouring both old and new regimes or sceptical.

Arguably, sceptics negative about both new and old regimes may be better democrats than those positive about a regime which has governed in an undemocratic way.

(Figure 1 about here)

A regime that is partly free or partly democratic is lacking something, but what is missing? A common answer is: More of the same. Political culture theories emphasize the need for more time to socialize a new generation into democratic norms or for the new regime to be institutionalized. Huntington (1991) has proposed that a new democracy needs at least three free elections to show that it is secure. This implies that the new regime is already democratic; the third election simply confirms its persisting stability. The turnover test regards democratization as complete when the initial governing party moves into opposition and its opponents take office by normal constitutional procedures. It was 20 years before this happened in the Federal Republic of Germany; in the Fifth French Republic it required 23 years; and in Italy almost half a century. Most post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe have already passed both "time" tests. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia have each held three elections and had at least one alternation between government and opposition.

Survey studies often assume that what is needed to complete democratization is more satisfaction with the new regime. The standard Eurobarometer question asks: *On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in our country?* Replies show (see e.g. Fuchs et al., 1995; Toka, 1995) that most people tend to take a middle position; in European Union countries the modal and median response is "fairly satisfied" and in post-Communist countries "not very satisfied". These responses highlight the inability of the satisfaction approach to stipulate how much is "enough" satisfaction with democracy.<sup>3</sup> A single question about satisfaction with democracy is flawed because it conflates ideal and real standards, and fails to distinguish between dissatisfaction due to faults in the regime that elites supply or due to the high standards of an idealist. In successor states of the Soviet Union, a person reporting dissatisfaction with the development of democracy is expressing a view shared by Freedom House, whereas a person expressing dissatisfaction with democracy in Denmark or the Netherlands is saying more about her or his high ideals than about a real world

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<sup>3</sup> The Churchill hypothesis does not have this problem because it uses a transitive criterion: a democracy should have more support, or at least be less unpopular, than competing alternatives.

regime. Support for this interpretation comes from the fact that aggregate satisfaction with democracy has nil (.001) correlation with a country's Freedom House score (based on satisfaction data reported from Eurobarometer, Central and East European Barometer and World Values surveys, as reported in Klingemann, 1999, Table 2.10). A step forward is to ask individuals to rate democracy as an ideal, and then to rate democracy as it is actually working in their country today (see Shin, 1998; Rose, Shin and Munro, 1999).

A contingent evaluation of democracy assumes that while democracy can work satisfactorily in some circumstances it is not ideal for all purposes and sometimes an undemocratic regime may be preferable (Table 2). When this question has been asked in European Union countries, an average of 78 percent say that democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government. less than one-tenth see an undemocratic government as sometimes preferable, and an average of eight percent see no difference between a democratic or undemocratic government. In four Mediterranean countries that have had the most recent exposure to undemocratic rule, the unconditional preference for democracy is higher still, an average of 81 percent. A contingent evaluation is, however, unrealistic because it is not possible to switch from a democratic to authoritarian rule according to the problem at hand. Elites offer a take-it-or-leave-it choice; institutions cannot be unbundled to produce the ideal "pick and mix" regime.

(Table 2 about here)

Instead of diagnosing imperfect democracies as needing more of the same, their fault can be that they lack "something else". A familiar argument is that a new regime lacks popular support because of shortcomings in economic performance. Lipset (1960; 1994) advanced this argument four decades ago, when there were few democracies in the world. When Communism collapsed, Przeworski (1991) argued strenuously that new regimes needed to guarantee social welfare benefits cushioning citizens against the shock of economic transformation, or else democracy would be in jeopardy. The first has not happened, nor has the second. Neither rampant inflation nor rising open unemployment has brought down fledgling post-Communist democracies.

Third-wave democracies are most likely to be incomplete because they have missing a defining characteristic of a modern state, the rule of law. Historically, most states have been neither modern nor democratic; in S.E. Finer's (1997) historical magnum opus, pre-modern states occupy the first three-quarters of the survey and democracy begins even later. Weber assumed that a modern state, governing by the impersonal rule of law through large formal organizations of state, market and civil society did not have to be democratic (1947; Cohen,



1985). His paradigm modern state was Prussia. The point is often overlooked, since in first-wave democracies such as England or Sweden the rule of law was established a century or more before they could be considered democratic. In the century-long evolution of democracy, which Dahl, Putnam and others have taken as the norm for democratization, free competitive elections with universal suffrage for men and then women came long after the rule of law was established.<sup>4</sup>

Third-wave democracies are experiencing "democratization backwards", for the great majority of these countries are not yet modern states. To ignore this is to succumb to what Terry Lynn Karl (2000) has described as "the fallacy of electoralism", that is, the belief that elections are not only necessary but also sufficient to make a regime democratic. In Latin America and East Asia the process of democratization has been occurring along with the conversion of pre-modern, personalistic systems of authority into modern states. In Africa institutions of the state reflect indigenous traditions and contemporary developments rather than European models (cf. Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). Post-Communist states of Europe present a different problem. Stalinization purged the pre-modern state and put in place an "anti-modern" party-state in which Socialist legality and party commands replaced the rule of law. The legacy of an anti-modern state hobbles democratization in countries such as the Russian Federation (Rose, 1999; Holmes, 1999).

In an undemocratic regime, departures from the rule of law take two major forms: repressing individuals and denying personal liberties, often by arbitrary actions; and corruption, both retail, extracting small sums of money from ordinary citizens, and wholesale, obtaining large sums of money for allocating public property and resources. In a new democracy, repression should be exceptional, insofar as the collapse of an undemocratic regime is followed by the "deconstruction" of repressive laws and institutions and a recognition that citizens have the right to "freedom from the state" (Berlin, 1958). Making public officials avoid arbitrary and repressive actions is not expensive in money terms--but it does mean the surrender of arbitrary powers.

Survey methods are in principle suitable for evaluating the extent to which a modern state is present or absent, and particularly the rule of law. When Barometer surveys ask people whether they feel freer today than under their previous regime a big majority consistently report greater freedom from the state

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<sup>4</sup> The United States is exceptional, for the denial of the right to vote to black Americans in much of the South until the 1960s was accompanied by basic violations of the rule of law.

(Rose, 1995). Table 3 reports illustrative results from three very different countries. It is striking that in each a substantial majority reports that, whatever the imperfections of their new regime, they enjoy greater freedom from the state. In the Czech Republic an average of 81 percent feel freer; in Russia, 73 percent; and in Korea, 70 percent. The low proportion of Koreans feeling freer reflects the lower level of repression in a predecessor regime that was undemocratic but not totalitarian.

(Table 3 about here)

In new democracies corruption is a more pervasive threat to the rule of law than is political repression. There is a carryover of corrupt practices from the old regime and new opportunities for corruption, particularly in post-Communist countries, where privatization has tended to favour those with insider knowledge and those in the old nomenklatura. Our Barometer surveys show widespread awareness of elite corruption--and a tendency to see corruption as worsening with democratization. In Russia, 74 percent think corruption among public officials in national government is worse than under Communism and/or very high. On a global basis, corruption tends to be highest in undemocratic regimes and lowest in established democracies ([www.transparency.de](http://www.transparency.de)).

Because corruption at the top of government is remote, perceptions may reflect media headlines. However, corruption in the delivery of local services is immediate, and the extortion of bribes by local officials, whether in a pre-modern or an anti-modern undemocratic regime, can create widespread popular resentment (Shi, 1997). Citizens spend more time as consumers of such services as education, health care, pensions, etc., than voting or in political activity. Hence, Barometer surveys ask people whether they expect to be treated fairly in the allocation of everyday services. In the Czech Republic, at least five-sixths expect to be treated fairly by the doctor, bank, local shops, post office and police. The weaker rule of law in Russia and Korea is shown by less than half expecting fair treatment from the police, and at least two in five not expecting fair treatment at municipal offices. In Korea there are big differences in fair treatment between local shops (92 percent) and police (45 percent). In the Baltic states, where public administration was part of the Soviet system, equality of treatment results in similar proportions of Baltic citizens and Russian residents saying that they are treated unfairly.

Confronted with public services that do not operate in a modern (that is, impersonal, rule-bound, bureaucratic) fashion, citizens have a wide choice of alternative strategies to get things done. They can push hard within the rules to get their entitlements; use connections to "personalize" the administration of

impersonal bureaucratic rules; or if they have money, turn to the market or pay bribes to public officials. Most people in regimes where laws are not administered in accord with Weberian bureaucratic rules are confident that they can get what they want from public agencies through one or another form of social capital networks. In the extreme case of Russia, there is a high level of competence, but it is uncivic competence, that is, a readiness to use strategies that break or bend the rule of law (see Rose, 1999a).

If the shortcomings of governors lead the public to scale down demands to match what political elites can supply, this will create a low-level equilibrium trap, as dissatisfied citizens resign themselves to their new democracy being a 'lesser evil' than the alternatives they have experienced (Rose et al, 1998: chapter 10). While rational in terms of immediate individual self-interest, it is collectively counter-productive in terms of a new regime becoming a modern state as well as an electoral democracy. A new democracy can persist indefinitely in a low-level equilibrium trap, not suffering repudiation but also lacking fundamental features of governance needed to make it a modern democracy. For most of the past half-century, the Republic of Italy has exemplified such a regime.<sup>5</sup>

### III POPULAR EXPECTATIONS OF WHERE NEW DEMOCRACIES ARE GOING

There can be competition between regimes as well as between parties. Since a new democracy is proof that regime change can happen here, some citizens may look forward to its repudiation and replacement by one or another form of undemocratic rule. While in an established democracy such as Sweden questions about support for undemocratic regimes are very hypothetical, in new democracies they refer to firsthand experience. Therefore, the Barometer surveys ask people who have lived under multiple regimes about their preferences for alternatives to democracy. The replies are discriminating (Table 4). Whereas less than a tenth say they would like to see the army rule or a return to the monarchy, more than two-thirds say that they would like important economic decisions made by experts. As Robert Dahl (1970) has argued, technocratic decisionmaking is not in principle against the public interest; we do not want to see airline pilots, brain surgeons or professors popularly elected but chosen on grounds of professional competence. In the post-Communist context, the demand for expert decisionmaking reflects a desire for decisions that work in practice rather than for decisions based on an ideology, whether that of Gosplan, social democracy or the neo-classical economic paradigm. Factor analysis shows that views about

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<sup>5</sup>. A point not noted in Putnam's (1993) study of some features of government in some parts of Italy. Cf. Levi (1996)

economic expertise are unrelated to endorsement of prima facie undemocratic alternatives, and judgments about monarchy (Rose et al., 1998: Table 5.5).

(Table 4 about here)

There is widespread rejection of undemocratic alternatives. Two-thirds of Central and East Europeans reject all three undemocratic alternatives--a return to Communist rule, government by a strong leader, or military rule--that constitute a factor-analytic scale of support for undemocratic alternatives, and only 11 percent endorse as many as two out of three alternatives. In Russia, 39 percent reject all three alternatives, and only 23 percent endorse at least two undemocratic alternatives. Moreover, less than half of those who approve of the old Communist regime actually want it back (cf. Table 1).

In a new democracy, expectations concern the regime as well as the outcome of the next election. Insofar as the masses and elites expect the new regime to last, they are more likely to support it as "the only game in town". Reciprocally, the expectation that a regime could collapse will make it more vulnerable to repudiation. To measure expectations, Barometer surveys pose the question: *Some people think this country would be better governed if Parliament were closed down and all parties were abolished. How likely do you think this is to happen in the next few years?* By 1998 in Central and Eastern Europe only 3 percent on average said they thought this was very likely to happen, and an additional 14 percent thought that it might happen. The proportion was highest in Romania and Meciar's Slovakia. This question was followed by another question asking people whether they would approve the abolition of Parliament. The answers were very similar to those given by the question about preferences for alternative regimes reported in Table 4c.

(Figure 2 about here)

Combining questions about the expectation and preference for getting rid of Parliament produces a fourfold typology of democratic and undemocratic expectations (Figure 2). The dominant expectation of Central and East Europeans is that the central institution of representative democracy, Parliament, is not in danger of being overthrown. When this question was first asked in autumn, 1991, 67 percent did not think it possible that Parliament would be suspended; by 1998 the proportion had risen to 82 percent. Moreover, the great majority of those expecting Parliament to endure want it to do so. Frustrated authoritarians, who would like to see Parliament abolished but think it unlikely to happen, are little more than a tenth of the total, equal in number to hopeful authoritarians.

Confidence in the persistence of new democratic institutions is not the

same as positive approval, measured by asking people to rate the regime as they expect it to be in five years. When the question was first asked in 1991, five years was a span of time when anything could happen, for in 1986 Soviet power was omnipresent. In 1993, when citizens of post-Communist countries had little experience of their new democracy, the great majority were optimistic about what the next five years would bring politically; 78 percent expected that the regime would meet their approval in future (Figure 3). To a substantial extent, this was due to persistence, since 61 percent were already positive about the current regime; the additional increment reflected future economic expectations (Mishler and Rose, 1996). However, in 1998, when citizens saw what their new regime had become, those satisfied had fallen an average of 21 percent. But this did not imply a crisis, for support for undemocratic alternatives had also fallen, and with it the expectation that Parliament would be suspended. While greater experience of a new democracy lowers current approval, there is still substantial optimism. Throughout the seven Central and East European countries, an average of 71 percent expect to rate their new regime positively in 2003, an increase of 14 percent above the present level.<sup>6</sup>

(Figure 3 about here)

Expectations in Russia are different. When the second New Russia Barometer survey was taken in 1993, the Federation was barely a year old. At that time, just under half of Russians were optimistic about what their regime would be like in five years. When evaluations were solicited five years later, current assessments were lower than prior expectations and, because the starting point was already low; barely a third of Russians were positive about the new regime. Less than half of Russians are positive about what they expected the regime to be like in 2003.

The future, like the past, is capable of indefinite extension. An undemocratic regime teaches people to be patient. Whereas citizens in an established democracy can measure time from one election to the next, in an undemocratic society time can be measured as the passage from one dictator or one regime to the next. An East German staring at the wrong side of the Berlin Wall in the 1960s or 1970s or a Russian contemplating Brezhnev reviewing troops in Red Square had little reason to expect rapid political change. And if they wanted the regime to change, there were palpable incentives to say nothing, for protest could be punished by loss of employment, imprisonment or worse. The

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<sup>6</sup> While comparing aggregate figures masks substantial changes of opinion by individuals, as far as a regime's prospects are concerned aggregate figures are more important, especially if they are positive and increasing in aggregate or stable.

more people dislike an undemocratic regime, the more they are compelled to be patient, that is, to suffer silently what they cannot alter (Rose, 1997).

Individuals who actively strive to overthrow a regime have a particular need for patience. This was true of Lenin as well as of Baltic peoples who worked to keep their national existence alive for half a century from 1941 to 1991. Patience encourages people to avoid hasty judgments of the performance of leaders in new democracies. Some Barometer surveys have asked people to choose between two statements--*it will take years for government to deal with the problems inherited from the Communists, or, if our system can't produce results soon, that's a good reason to try some other system of government*. Across Central and Eastern Europe, three-fifths choose the patient alternative. There is statistically significant relationship between patience and support for the current regime and for the rejection of undemocratic alternatives (Rose et al., 1998: 144f, Tables 7.2, 9.2).

The Barometer surveys have developed two questions to measure the time horizons of citizens in new democracies. Given the importance attributed to economic satisfaction, people are asked how long they think it will be before they are content with their standard of living. Consistently, people show very long time horizons, dividing into three groups--those who expect to become content within a decade; those who think it will take longer or will never attain be content; and don't knows (Figure 4). In Central and Eastern Europe, the median respondent in 1991 expected it would take at least ten years before contentment and 44 percent said they would never be content or were don't knows. Only 23 percent expected to be content within five years. By 1998, 10 percent had achieved contentment, and an additional 18 percent expected to become content within five years. However, the median respondent was still expecting to have to wait until 2010 or later before reaching a satisfactory living standard, while two-fifths were without specific hope of the future. In Russia, people have even fewer concrete expectations of becoming economically content.

(Figure 4 about here)

When people are asked a parallel question about how long they think it will take the government to sort out the economic problems of this country, in 1998 less than 15 percent of Central and East Europeans thought this could be done within five years, and only a third thought it could be done within a decade. Since this span of time can cover up to three general elections, most voters are casting their ballots in the expectation that the party they vote for, whether democratic or undemocratic, will not deliver what they want economically in the foreseeable future. Resignation, rather than frustration and aggression (Gurr, 1970), is the

best term to describe economic expectations of post-Communist citizens.

#### IV WHAT DO PEOPLE IN NEW DEMOCRACIES WANT?

Whether one focuses on past or present regimes, the implication is the same: becoming an established democracy is not the only course that can be followed by a new regime. While the dominant practice of new regimes is to adopt some elements of democracy (e.g. competitive elections), this concedes that many third-wave democracies are still "incomplete", that is, lacking the rule of law, and often having low levels of trust in civil society and in accountability too (Rose and Shin, 2000).

To capture how people in an incomplete democracy relate to their regime, and thus to monitor trends for the foreseeable future, questionnaires must allow for both civic and uncivic responses. Citizens whose elites supply an incomplete democracy can respond in at least three ideal-type ways, each of which can be measured and also monitored for trends.

■ Participation in a civic democracy. The Anglo-American tradition, from Almond and Verba through Putnam, is that people ought to participate in politics to achieve their individual ends. However, the Leninist tradition is that people are compulsorily mobilized to be "re-made" in the image of the New Soviet Man (Linz, 1975; Jowitt, 1992).

■ Participation in civil society. Institutions of civil society can act as a restraint on the state. But for individuals to participate actively in non-governmental organizations they must trust these institutions. In post-Communist societies, distrust in institutions is widespread; the median institution is either the object of distrust or viewed sceptically. Often this is with reason, for many institutions in old authoritarian regimes or new democracies are corrupt and more or less untrustworthy (Mishler and Rose, 1997; Mishler and Rose, 2001).

■ Depoliticization. In post-Communist regimes, freedom is the right to decide for yourself whether or not to participate in politics (Table 3). If people value their freedom from the state while distrusting both the state and nominally representative institutions, then a rational response is to reduce their interest in politics (since it is no longer of overriding importance to their life chances) and turn their minds to other things.

■ Pursuing a "normal" life. Reducing civic engagement gives individuals more time to devote to other activities. These may be pursuits relatively remote from public life, such as relaxation within the family circle, or activities with direct public implications, for example, pursuit of material betterment.

While few people can hope to rise to political eminence, many can hope for a new car or foreign travel previously beyond their reach. People who pursue their self-interest are not necessarily undermining the public interest. In post-Communist societies Adam Smith's argument that pursuing self-interest serves the collective may appeal more than Tocqueville's praise of civic association. Moreover, many theories argue that people who are more prosperous are more likely to support a new democratic regime.

In new democracies there are both individual and collective action problems. A regime that holds free elections but fails to follow the rule of law, allowing major public officials to get away with wholesale theft and minor officials to get away with petty corruption, this will discourage civic democracy. If institutions of civil society were weak or non-existent under an undemocratic regime, or perverted to the state's ends, will discourage individuals from participating in representative institutions. However, a person who wants to pursue a life free from political engagement cannot escape from the consequences of politics.

Russians today face problems of individual and collective action in an extreme form. Their new "democracy" is no longer an idea but a reality, and the manner of Putin's succession to Boris Yeltsin emphasizes continuity, even consolidation in the system of governance --and it is a reality that has little appeal to most Russians. Since the launch of the Russian Federation in 1992, substantial majorities of people have shown distrust of their political institutions and leaders, without endorsing any particular undemocratic alternative. They have shown formidable ingenuity and patience in finding ways to cope with day to day difficulties arising from the double transformation of the economy and the polity.

Yet when we look at a list of things that Russians regard as important to "normal" life, the state has an important role to play, whether directly or indirectly (Table 5). The eighth New Russia Barometer survey that went in the field immediately after the December, 1999 Duma election asked i) How important, or unimportant, do Russians regard a host of conditions, directly or indirectly related to public policy, as part of life in a normal society; ii) To what extent do people consider Russian society today is normal; and, of those who do not think Russian society is today a normal society, iii) How long will it take before Russia becomes



a normal society?<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>. All being well, the author will have the answers to these questions to present at the Houston conference.

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