

# *The third wave: Democratisation in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe compared*

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**Hielke Vogelzang**

**Abstract:** In the second part of the 20th century most Latin American countries and later many of the Central and East European countries went through a process of democratisation. The objective of this paper is to analyse the differences in the democratisation process in these regions. For this paper I conducted four different case studies about Uruguay, Cuba, Czech Republic and Belarus. During my research I found 8 differences: elites or civil society as driving force, pacte or non-pacte transition, self-imposed or external imposed authoritarian regimes, global, politics, supranational organisations, rigidity, and need for non-political reforms.

**Keywords:** democratisation, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Cuba, Uruguay, Czech Republic, Belarus

**Author:** Hielke Vogelzang is a master student in International Economics and Business at the University of Groningen and Corvinus University Budapest. Contact: [h.vogelzang@student.rug.nl](mailto:h.vogelzang@student.rug.nl)

## **Introduction**

In 1993 Huntington wrote about the third wave of democratisation. He put the democratisation processes in Latin America and in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) both in the third wave. But some scholars like McFaul (2002) put the democratisation process in CEE in a separate fourth wave because Latin America because of differences in the democratisation process. An often mentioned difference is the pacte transitions in Latin

America compared the non-pacted democratisation in CEE. What makes some scholars see the democratisation process in CEE as a different wave and what makes others see it as the one and the same wave?

This paper focuses on the differences and similarities in the democratisation process of Latin America and CEE. First I will elaborate on the concept of democratisation, secondly I will describe the democratisation process in Latin America with help of the cases of Uruguay and Cuba, thirdly I will describe the democratisation process in CEE including cases of Czech Republic and Belarus, and I will end the paper with a conclusion about the differences in the democratisation process.

## **Democratisation**

In his essay “The end of history and the last man” the philosopher Francis Fukuyama (2006) described the democratisation process in the world towards liberal democracies. According to Fukuyama in 1989 the fall of the Berlin wall led to the end of history in that the rivalry between ideologies has ended and liberal democracy was recognised as the only way to go which he called ‘the end of history’. Most Latin American countries made the transformation towards liberal democracies in the 70s and beginning of the 80s while the East European countries started this transformation in the end of the 80s and beginning of the 90s.

The wave of democratisation in Latin America and CEE is not the only wave of democratisation in history. Huntington (1993) describes two previous waves; the first wave took place during the 19th century when many countries in North-America and Western Europe turned into democracies. In the first half of the 20th century some of the European countries turned back towards authoritarian government types and after the end of the Second World War a new process of democratisation started leading to the second wave of democratisation. As mentioned before the third and Huntington’s last wave took place in Latin America and CEE in the 70s, 80s and 90s.

Democratisation is the process of moving from a (partly) nondemocratic towards a more democratic regime (Huntington, 1993). This is often not an abrupt process but more of a continuum in which countries move towards the democratic end. Scholars use multiple definitions to describe democracy: A narrow definition is the Schumpeterian one which only requires the citizens to be able to vote between leading elites. Nearly all countries in the CEE

and Latin American countries fulfil this requirement (Karl, 1990). But if we use a broader definition including different institutions used to translate citizen's preferences into public policy like freedom of expression, association and media not all of them can be seen as full democracies. In this paper we focus on a broader definition to look at the more practical perspective of democracy. Lipset & Rokkan (1967) see political parties as essential agencies of mobilisation of citizen's preferences but not the only one.

The end of dictatorship does not always lead to the birth of democracy. For example the end of the Tsarist autocracy in Russia led to the communistic dictatorship of Lenin. More needs to happen to secure the path towards democracy. The removal of the dictatorships in Latin America in the 70s and 80s and in CEE in the 90s unleashed social and political forces which in the majority of the cases led to permanent democracy. Local circumstances often determine the outcome of a revolution. In the beginning of the 20th century the Russian revolution didn't improve democracy while at the same time many West-European countries were strengthening their democracy by implementing general voting rights.

While writing this paper we won't discuss the flaws of democracy making it debateable that democratisation is always a good thing for developing countries. In this paper I assume more democracy to be an improvement both for economic development and well-being of the population. This way it follows Fukuyama idea that democracy is the only way to go.

### **Transition in Latin America**

Latin America encompasses the countries with the Romanic languages in America south of the United States. The large majority of these countries started as colonies of the Iberian Peninsula. The countries are known for their cyclic pattern with alternations in movements forwards and backwards in democratisation (Huntington, 1993). Many of the countries already tried to democratise in the 19th century but failed and ended in dictatorships and oligarchs. After that they have been oscillating between democratic populist regimes and conservative military regimes. Both regimes kept failing in their promised economic development leading to reverse development towards the competing regime. The oil crisis in the 70s made it hard for authoritarian regimes to legitimacy their regime only by economic performance (Huntington, 1993). This was easier for the Soviet Union and Venezuela which

had their own oil and gas reserves. Many of the other authoritarian regimes in Latin America fall apart just after the oil crisis.

During the second wave of democratisation in the 40s Brazil and Costa Rica became democracies for the first time and Uruguay returned to democracy. In Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela elections did take place in the 40s but they returned to dictatorship shortly after the elections (Huntington 1993). In the 60s there was already a reversal of the second wave reducing the democracy in Latin America. Military coups took place in Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Uruguay and Chile. By 1973 Colombia and Venezuela were the only democracies in Latin America.

Because of the Cold War the United States feared the emergence of communistic regimes in Latin America during the turmoil and therefor intervened in some of the countries. It often helped to overthrow more leftist leaders and didn't care if they were democratic elected or not. This interference of the US has long history which started in 1823 with the Monroe doctrine where the US helped the Latin American countries to become independent of their colonisers Spain and Portugal. The democratic transitions in Latin America were in generally pacted transition were old non-democratic and the new democratic regime together agreed to a transition because both had an approximately equal balance of power.

The European Union (EU) is the most famous example of intraregional governance. But also Latin America had intraregional governmental organisations. In Latin America we have two different intergovernmental organisations for governance of the region. The thirst one is Andean with Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru as its members and the other one is Mercosur which has Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela as it members. Unlike the EU which is more moving towards a political Union both these blocks act as economic unions. There are efforts to unite both trading blocs into the Union of South American Nations which is intended to be a more political union.

To measure the success of the democratisation I use the democracy index created by the The Economist Intelligence unit. The index measures multiple indicators of democracy and provides a weighted average. It includes the following indicators: electoral process and pluralism, functioning of government, political participation, political culture and civil liberties. The economist divides the countries into four groups: Full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes and authoritarian regimes. We find Latin American countries all of the four categories and *table 1* shows the scores of these countries. Because Uruguay and

Cuba have the highest and the lowest scores I will use these as case studies to analyse the success or failure of the democratisation waves.

*Uruguay*

The Economist classified Uruguay as a full democracy and it had the highest score of all Latin American countries. Besides Costa Rica it is the only Latin American country which falls in the Full democracy category. Until the 70s Uruguay was a democratic island in Latin America giving it the reputation of Switzerland of Latin America (Kaufman, 1979). Because of the short authoritarian regime we call Uruguay an interrupted democracy.

In the 70s Uruguay shifted away from democracy because it turned out to be not the best way of development. Other countries like Philippines and India showed that an authoritarian-bureaucratic way of development was better as a democratic one (Huntington, 1993). In 1973 a civilian-military overthrew the democratic elected president starting an authoritarian period. The military forces were supported by the non-democratic and powerful neighbours

Brazil and Argentina. Because of Uruguay’s long history with democracy the authoritarian leaders were unable to do away with the democratic practises. In 1980 a big recession started in Uruguay leading to unemployment and high inflation putting regime under pressure. The civilian-military rule ended after 12 years in 1985 when negotiations between political and military leaders led to a new democratic civilian leader (Blake, 1998). Already before 1985 the main political parties and interest groups already gathered to design new government which should be implemented independent of who won the elections. But when Sanguinetti from the Colorado movement, which was part of this coalition, eventually won the elections the other involved parties didn’t want to govern with him anymore and he had to make a coalition with the opposition parties. But there was broad consensus between the coalition and opposition parties that trade liberalisation was needed leading and with this goal also the political transition went smooth.

Country	Democracy
<b>Uruguay</b>	<b>8.17</b>
<b>Costa Rica</b>	8.10
<b>Chile</b>	7.54
<b>Brazil</b>	7.12
<b>Panama</b>	7.08
<b>Mexico</b>	6.90
<b>Argentina</b>	6.84
<b>Colombia</b>	6.63
<b>Dominican</b>	6.49
<b>El Salvador</b>	6.47
<b>Peru</b>	6.47
<b>Paraguay</b>	6.26
<b>Guatemala</b>	5.88
<b>Bolivia</b>	5.84
<b>Honduras</b>	5.84
<b>Ecuador</b>	5.78
<b>Nicaragua</b>	5.56
<b>Venezuela</b>	5.15
<b>Cuba</b>	<b>3.52</b>

Table 1: Democracy index Latin America

In 1990 the Lacalle government from the National Party took office and wanted to go on with the liberalisation program. Also the following governments showed their willingness to sustain the democracy making Uruguay the most democratic regime in Latin America. The agreements before the election are a good example of the so-called pacted transitions which took place in Latin America where the leading elite decided to democratise the country (Karl, 1993). Because both the authoritarian regime and the opposition had significant influences and to avoid violent conflicts which was bad for everyone, both sides agreed to a pacted transition.

Uruguay's consensual slow process towards democracy and privatisation worked very well giving it the highest score in the democracy index of the Latin American countries. This can also be seen in the public support rates for democratic institutions which are high in Uruguay compared to for example Argentina. According to the same public survey Uruguay's citizens are also more in favour of state intervention in the economy than Argentina making it a paradox because in general democratisation and liberal markets go hand in hand (Blake, 1998).

### *Cuba*

The democracy index classified Cuba as an authoritarian regime. Although some recently some reforms suggest Cuba is relieving its strict rule but it is still seen as one of the most authoritarian countries in the world. In 1989 Cuba's economy was heavily affected by the break-up of the Comecon. Its economy was heavily tied to this economic cooperation and their economy was subsidised by the Soviet Union (Otero & O'Bryan). The period after in Cuba is called the *Special period* in which Cuba's economy was devastated especially because of the lack of energy which Cuba so far imported from the Soviet Union at the very low price. Although Cuba found some support from its oil rich neighbours Venezuela and Bolivia the economic problems put pressure on the government to follow the glasnost and perestroika of Gorbachev.

López (2002) identified two important differences between the communism in Cuba and the CEE countries. First one is that communism in Cuba emerged from national revolution and not like in CEE where communism was imposed by the Soviet Union (López, 2002). This does not count the Soviet Union itself where communism emerged as national revolution as

well. These nationalistic revolutions in Cuba and the Soviet Union create more legitimacy for the regime. A second difference is the intense repression in Cuba. Cubans do not want to be watched by secret service for being member of civil group because everybody breaks laws in Cuba to survive. This makes it easy for the secret service to arrest someone who is only being suspected of being a member of a civil group. The third difference is that civil societies in CEE had foreign media from Western-Europe to communicate but this is lacking in Cuba which is separated from the US by water. The transition in Cuba did not happen because it did not have these independent means of communication like in most CEE countries in the 80s (López, 2002). For reaching large masses the oppositional forces need independent communication and to make the population believe change is possible they need it as well. Civil society is defined as the independent self-organisation of society (Weigle and Butterfield, 1992). This has a legal framework which permits self-organisation and an identity of the social actors and goals.

For transition towards democracy under the regime countries need pressure in period before transition to split leading bloc in hard liners and soft liners were soft liners need to get the overhand and start liberalisation (López, 2002). This conflict should be pushed by civil sphere could originate from economic problems (which was the case in Uruguay and Soviet Union) or other problems like diseases (Otero & O'Bryan, 2003). Currently in Cuba there is an increasingly organised and vocal opposition but is currently not enough to withstand communistic regime oppression. The course towards democratisation also depends on kind of civil society, ultranationalists or religious groups might replace authoritarian communistic regime just with another authoritarian regime while human rights and other pro-democratic movements can lead to democratisation (Otero & O'Bryan, 1999). Certainly information providers like artist and media can make significant contributions towards democratisation but these are suppressed in Cuba.

Weigle and Butterfield (1992) identified four stages of civil society development. The first one is the defensive stage in which private entities actively defend their autonomy against the government. The second is the emergent stage in which independent social groups try to widen the public sphere which is sanctioned by the government. The third stage is the mobilisation stage in which independent social groups undermine the legitimacy of the non-democratic government by offering alternative forms of governance. The fourth and last stage is the institutional stage in which publicly supported leaders implement laws guaranteeing autonomy of civil organisations. This last stage creates a contractual relationship between

state and society ensured by independent elections. In 2003 civil society in Cuba was still in defensive stage. A positive aspect of the Cuban authoritarian regime is that elections already exist for high-level officials but the one-party system prevents real liberal elections.

In 2006 Fidel Castro had to step down as leading figure in Cuban politics because of health problems and his brother Raúl Castro took over his position. Many diplomats expected it to lead to a worsening of democracy in Cuba. But when he eventually took office reformed the economy and politically liberalised giving confidence that Cuba will democratise. Raúl created institutions for a horizontal relationship between the civil society and the government. This resulted in the recent talks between the US and Cuba about starting diplomatic relations, removing the trade embargo and easing the travel restrictions. Since Raúl Castro took office there are signs that Cuba moved towards the emergent phase of civil society development because Cuban civil organisation are becoming more active although they are still sanctioned.

Otero & O'Bryan (2002) tried to explain reasons why the communistic regime in Cuba didn't fail after the collapse of the Soviet Union like in CEE. Their conclusion is that the communistic regime in Cuba came into place after a nationalist revolution which created a strong Cuban identity together with loyal military and effective security keeping the communist regime in power. This regime is very effective in keeping the civil society weak and is able to create an anti-US sentiment. A problem for Cuba to open its market is that the United States is their largest potential trading partner. The United States probably won't allow free trade with Cuba without democratisation and will put pressure on Cuba. This is all made worse by the anti US-imperialism sentiments in Cuba making it politically very hard to negotiate with the United States.

Otero and O'Bryan foresaw three different scenarios for Cuba: continuation of status quo or even more oppression under new leader probably Raúl Castro, political and market liberalisation like in the CEE countries or gradual democratisation. Now in 2014 we can say that Cuba didn't exactly followed one of these scenarios. As predicted in the first scenario Raúl Castro became the new leader of Cuba but it didn't led to continuation instead it led to a gradual liberalisation. Although the time Raúl is in power is too short to tell if the liberalisation will only be temporary or permanent but at least it is going in the right direction. It appears that Raúl Castro tries to copy the Chinese growth model with liberal market reforms and keeping the one-party system. The Cuban government also gets support from the Chinese government to invest in its infrastructure. But in China the liberalisation of the



economy didn't lead to political reforms yet. So we can assume won't political reform in the near future.

### **Transition in CEE**

The historical conditions around the democratisation in CEE differed from those in Latin America. In CEE a wave of democratisation started straight after the collapse of the Soviet Union. But not all former Soviet republics in CEE ended up in democracy. Some of the transition processes failed and in other nations the democratisation never started. Differences in the relative power of democratic and authoritarian forces determined if the countries ended up as democracies, dictatorships or something in between (McFaul, 2002). McFaul puts in his analysis of the democratisation his focus on the elite steering the transition because according to him the lack of demonstrating masses proves the importance of the elite in the transition. This is different from the theory of Weigle and Butterfield (1992) who argue that a transition must come from the civil society. The most unequal distributions of power between the supporters of the authoritarian regime and the supporters of democratic led to the most stable forms of whatever ideology the dominating force supported. More equal distributions of power between the forces in general led to partial democracies. In contrast to the Latin American pacted transitions the transitions in CEE were non-pacted transitions. After the fall of the Soviet Union in most of the CEE countries an unbalance of power existed between the democratic and authoritarian forces. Before that the authoritarian forces were only able to stay in power because of the military power of the Soviet Union.

A historic difference between CEE and Latin America is that the Latin American countries were already sovereign before the transition while in Central and Eastern Europe countries were under Soviet influence for five decades and some of them even longer. During largest part of this Soviet era there was a planned economy and the Soviet Union tried to create a new Soviet nation in its influence sphere. This made the democratisation in CEE more complicated as in Latin America because at the same time they had to change towards bureaucratic coordination economic mechanism and nation building (Offe & Adler, 1991). Besides this they also had to create a welfare state to keep electoral support of the changes.

It is interesting to note that just like in Latin America in CEE democratic reforms were also reversed during the second wave of democratisation. CEE was liberated by the Russian army

during the Second World War and after the defeat of the Germans many military forces were still present in the CEE countries giving the Soviet Union a strong leverage over them. The Western countries also wanted to reward the Soviet Union for helping them to defeat the Germans that they allowed the Soviets to intervene in the CEE countries.

Already before the fall of the iron curtain it became easier in some of the CEE countries to organise a civil society. Hungary was the most in progressive by allowing an opposition party to exist besides the communistic party. In Poland the labour union *Solidarity* had a significant influence on the transition process showing the significance of the civil society. Although labour unions can sometimes also be seen as political actors instead of civil society. This is certainly the case in former Soviet republics where the labour unions were led by the communistic party they got the power status of civil organisations but not the autonomy. Both the movement in Hungary and Poland were caused by loser restrictions from the communistic party. This for example couldn't happen in Czech Republic where earlier protest were forced during the Prague Spring making the society afraid of liberalisation.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union also the Comecon and Warsaw pact disappeared leaving the small seized countries vulnerable and in need for new alliances. Most CEE countries sought market access and protection from the West-European countries by applying for EU and NATO membership. Democracy is an important value for these Western institutions and they made it a conditionality for the CEE countries to become a member. By doing this in several stages and over a longer time period they made sure the countries in CEE remained committed to democratic reforms. To become member of European Union the CEE countries had to keep the democratic reforms on track.

Now the countries have entered the EU this effect has weakened. The democratic index showed that the scores of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe are declining since 2008 just after Bulgaria and Romania entered the EU.

A complication in tracking the history of the nations in CEE is that it is hard to decide when the countries were really sovereign. Some countries were part of the Soviet Union during the Cold War and were certainly not sovereign like Ukraine while others like Czech Republic were not part of the Soviet Union but were heavily

Country	Democracy
<b>Czech</b>	<b>8.19</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	7.61
<b>Slovakia</b>	7.35
<b>Lithuania</b>	7.24
<b>Poland</b>	7.12
<b>Latvia</b>	7.05
<b>Hungary</b>	6.96
<b>Bulgaria</b>	6.72
<b>Romania</b>	6.54
<b>Moldova</b>	6.32
<b>Ukraine</b>	5.91
<b>Albania</b>	5.67
<b>Russia</b>	3.74
<b>Belarus</b>	<b>3.04</b>

influenced by it which makes their sovereignty disputable. The Soviet Union was very dominant within the Comecon and Warsaw Pact.

For the former communistic countries in Central and Eastern Europe we used the same democracy index from the Economist Intelligence unit to analyse their success in democratisation (*table 2*). I picked again the lowest and highest scores for the case studies which were Czech Republic and Belarus in CEE.

### *Czech Republic*

After the First World War Czech Republic was a part of Czechoslovakia which was during the interbellum the only democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. This ended with the German occupation in the Second World War. After the Second World War there was a short revival of democracy with the elections in 1946 but that helped the communists in power who with the help of the Soviet army installed one party rule in 1948. Stalin saw in 1947 when communist parties failed in Italy and France that the parliamentary way towards communism failed so he military intervened to help the Czechoslovakian communist into power (Grogin, 2001). After the coup in 1948 Czech-Slovakia became a member of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon putting it under the Soviet Union hegemony.

In contrast to Belarus the Czech Republic was never a part of the Soviet Union but the Prague spring showed the influence Soviet Union in Czech Republic as a member of the Comecon and Warsaw Pact. The Soviet Union wanted to keep the communistic parties in CEE to remain in power. After the coup of 1948 Czechoslovakia remained a one party system until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989. During the communistic there was no democracy except during the Prague Spring in 1968 were there were some liberalisation policies but these were soon reversed by intervention of the Soviet Union. Czechoslovakia paid the price for their uprising by Soviet Union intervention. But the involvement and suppression of the Soviet Union created civil society which was incongruent in its individual values and public behaviour (Weigle and Butterfield, 1992). To channel the civic society the parallel polis emerged which were partly state-sponsored organisations which organised activities for the civil society. These organisations were populated by people who did not completely internalise the values of the party and stopped the penetration of the state into the private sphere. It was a way for the regime to satisfy the Soviet Union and keeping some of their own

values. In 1989 this system was ended by ‘The Velvet’ revolution which was a peaceful student revolution and ended the communistic rule and led to the return of democracy in Czechoslovakia.

Until 1993 the Czech Republic was a federal state together with Slovakia but they broke up peacefully. The reason for the break-up can partly be explained by the experience of the Czech Republic with democracy making them more willing, compared to Slovakia, to reform towards democratic capitalism (Whitefield & Evans, 1999). After the break-up both countries adopted the parliamentarism with proportional representation with a low threshold with and derived all tier institutions directly from the Czechoslovakian state (Deegan-Krause, 2006). After the initial reforms during the break-up in 1993 there was one major democratic reform in the Czech Republic when they installed an upper house in the parliament.

### *Belarus*

Belarus is an interesting case for this paper because it failed in all its expectations to democratise and liberalise. Political parties remain weak and economic restructuring have not been initiated yet (Korosteleva Lawson & Marsh, 2003). Belarus has a façade democracy with elections but can’t guarantee the liberty of its citizens and the government is able to influence the public opinion. Their president Alexander Lukashenko rules their country on an authoritarian manner and Belarus is known to be the last dictatorship in Europe. Lukashenko has been president of Belarus since 1994 and has so far has been able to keep his position. During the Soviet time Lukashenko was a director of a state farm and served in the Soviet army. Belarus has so many defects in its electoral system that it in practise operates as an autocratic regime (Beichelt, 2004). One of the big defects is that the elections are completely steered from the top of the regime. But there are also defects in public arena and civic freedoms. Just like most of the other Commonwealth of Independent States countries Belarus is at the grey zone between democracy and autocracy. It is also member of the Eurasian Economic Community and the Collective Security Organisation Treaty all organisations in which Russia is the most influential member.

Just like the other former communistic countries in CEE Belarus started a process of democratisation after 1989. But in 1996 Belarus started to reverse the democratic reforms and turned back to autocratic rule (Beichelt, 2004). In 1996 the European Bank of Reconstruction

and Development admitted that the transition in CEE was not uniform and two groups have to be distinguished. Belarus, Russia and Ukraine were the countries which were slowly democratising and deviated from the other CEE countries in transition which were democratising at a much faster pace.

The Perestroika, the economic and political restructuring, never happened in Belarus oppositional forces were never allowed and the declaration of independence was actually send by Moscow in 1989. Belarus never wanted to be independent but wanted to keep the Soviet Union (Beichelt, 2004). During the first election of Belarus as an independent state in 1990 the Communist Party got 86 percent of the seats. The President was first elected in 1994 marking the height of the democracy in Belarus. The first elected president was Lukashenko who has so far won all presidential elections of independent Belarus. In 1995 the parliamentary elections had such a low turn-out that only 140 of 260 seats could be filled. Besides the low number of filled seats the low turn-out also significantly decreased the legitimacy of the parliament. The institution of the presidency had more legitimacy and so far the opposition in the parliament has been unable to combine forces and to block authoritarian regime. The low legitimacy reduces the informational opportunities for the opposition.

While the Czech Republic was only under influence of the Soviet Union Belarus was actually a part of it. Belarus was Republic within the Soviet Union and until 1990 Belarus never experienced real independence besides a short lived republic in 1918 but never experienced real democracy. It was one the only of the current autonomous CEE countries who never experienced independence before the collapse of the Soviet Union. In most of the CEE countries the civil societies played minor role in the transition. Solidarity in Poland was quiet an influential part of the civil society but further there were no big masses which led the transition but the communist leaders led the transition themselves like Gorbachev who saw it in their own interest to change regime (Poznanski, 1999).

Vachudova and Snyder (1996) identified dividing lines which affect nationalism in the domestic politics of the CEE countries. The nature of the regime change, degree of relative and absolute economic success, and ethnic geography all affect the nationalistic forces in these countries. In the Czech Republic the nationalistic parties were soon marginalised but in Belarus they still exist. According to Leshchenko (2004) Belarus has not a uniform nation building process but actually has two different nation-building forces at the moment. The first one is led by the president Lukashenko which tries to create a Slavic identity and actually

wants to integrate in Russia. The other nation-building process is led by the opposition party Belarus National front which emphasis the Belarus language and culture. The Belarus National Front wants to cut ties with Russia and pursues membership of the EU and NATO. In 1991 Belarus was a founding member of the *Commonwealth of Independent States* and With Lukashenko in power the regime started to progress towards more integration with Russia and in recent years Belarus and Russia were founding members of a custom and an economic Union. In Belarus the nomenklatura remained partly in place while the Velvet revolution in the Czech Republic led to a completely new regime. The planned economy in the Czech Republic was already allowing some market coordination allowing it to operate in the global market but this was not the case for Belarus. After the break of Czechoslovakia the Czech Republic became a homogeneous state while the Belarus ethnicity is hard to distinguish from the Russian ethnicity because Belarus was never an autonomous state before 1990.

### **Comparing the transition in Latin America and CEE**

Now we have looked at the democratisation in both Latin America and CEE and discussed for both areas a positive and negative case we start to draw some conclusions. The economist publishes every year a ranking of the state of democracy in all the countries in the world. Cuba, Belarus and Russia stood only countries from Latin America and East European countries that were classified as authoritarian regimes, many as hybrid or flawed democracy regimes and Czech Republic, Uruguay and Costa Rica even reached full democracies (Democracy index 2012).

In the literature two streams of literature can be distinguished who differ in what they see as the driving force of the transition; the first one focuses on the civil society (Weigle and Butterfield, 1992) and the second stream focuses on the elite (McFaul, 2002). Although McFaul mentions that the transition in the CEE was steered by the elite he argues that this was not the case in Latin America. Poznanski (1991) argues that the in the CEE the transition was steered form the top because it was in the interest of the leading elite. The leading elite could benefit the most from the partial reforms giving great opportunities for corruption. The relevance of the civil society can be proven by the fact that both Belarus and Cuba are suppressing the civil society because they see the danger for their position if the civil society grows in strength. In Latin America the reforms came mainly from below and in CEE mainly

from above. This made the democratisation in the CEE countries a radical transition which happened all at once with the fall of the Soviet Union while in Latin America the democratisation process was more a continuous process going from one country to another.

During the democratisation process there is agreement needed between the relevant actors otherwise the discontent between the actors may lead to reversal of the democratic reforms (Blake, 1998). In the pacted democratisation in Latin American there was broad agreement between the authoritarian and oppositional leaders creating a stable environment for the transition. In Central and Eastern Europe in most countries the reforms were not pacted by both sides but the opposition took over the government and neglected the old elite who became irrelevant. The agreement within the opposition differed from country to country.

A difference between the countries within Latin America and CEE is if the authoritarian regime was self-imposed or not. We know that certainly in Cuba the socialist regime was self-imposed and within the Czech Republic it was imposed by the Soviet Union and within Uruguay the authoritarian regime in the 70s was supported by its authoritarian neighbours. For Belarus it is hard to decide if it was self-imposed or not because at that time it partly belonged to the Russian Empire besides a very short independent period in 1918. The relevance of the self-imposition of the authoritarian regime is relevant because it helps to establish a national identity while being imposed by an external force creates more resistance. Certainly socialist governments tend to remain longer if they are created by nationalist revolution than when it is imposed by an external force. Path dependence seems to be important. The historical regimes in a country seem to have a great influence on the future regimes because both Uruguay and the Czech Republic who both had a more democratic history before they turned into authoritarian regimes were already democracies. This must certainly have influenced further democratisation after the transition in a positive way.

The situation in the global politics also influences the democratisation process. When the CEE countries democratised in the 90s the global politics looked different from the global politics in the 70s and 80s when the Latin American countries democratised. The transition in Latin America happened still during the Cold with a still influential Soviet Union while in the 90s the Soviet Union had just fallen apart decreasing the international support for authoritarian regimes.

Immediately after the transition in CEE the EU kept pressure on the former communistic countries to democratise by promising membership if they would reform. The old members of

the EU in West-European countries had a lot of experience in creating democratic nations and used conditionality to create sustainable democracy in CEE with mixed success. In the 90s the predecessor of the EU the European (Economic) Community was also more an economic than a political union. The Mercosur and Andean in Latin America (which only became economic blocks after the transitions) are still only economic unions lacking the power to force democracy and there were no members with plenty of democratic experience. The effect of these unions can be proven by the fact in both continents the most democratic countries (Uruguay and Czech Republic) are both member of a influential supranational union while the both weakest democracies (Cuba and Belarus) are not. Belarus is participating in the so far smaller Eurasian Union and Cuba is a member of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America but these unions only have limited power and still have to prove themselves. In many countries in CEE and Latin America the democratisation was partly led by the West but this is impossible in Cuba where there is a big anti-US sentiment. López (2002) advised the US not to comment on democratic reforms because this would only harm the process. But recently we can see diplomat attempts of the US to move Cuba in the right direction.

When the third wave of democratisation started in Latin America the countries there started democratising over several years each at a different moment. The democratisation in one country stimulated the process in its neighbour's countries but it was not like in CEE where the collapse of the Soviet Union led to a nearly immediate transition. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union it held the authoritarian regimes in place in all CEE countries. The collapse led to strict release of many oppositional forces.

In the Latin American countries the transitions were pacted between the old and new regime but because the CEE countries also needed to go through an economic transition and needed to create nation-building it became hard to get a pacted the transition. The opinion of the old communistic regime and the oppositional forces differed so much that it was impossible to come to an agreement, although Poland and Hungary partly succeeded in this because of their liberal policy before the transition. The pacted transitions in Latin America helped to leave out the radicals but led to more unstable democracies. In Latin America it was impossible for the parties to put economic reforms on the agenda because they could endanger the pact. The compromises in the pacted transitions led to partial democracies which is the most unstable outcome. In CEE most countries ended up in clear democracy or authoritarian regimes.



All waves of democratisation have different characteristics because of regional, historical and circumstantial differences. Huntington distinguished only 3 waves but if we look at the details you find many differences within the democratisation in one of the waves. His waves only focus on the big differences. This paper should provide you with enough information to decide if the democratisation processes in Latin America and CEE were one wave or two different waves. I would be curious if Huntington would put the democratisation process during the Arab spring and the recent protests in Hong Kong in the third wave as well or create a new one. So far these latest processes were only effective in creating new regimes but often without democratic reforms. We also see that China takes a different approach to an economic transition which is more gradual as in in the CEE and without a political transition. So far it looks an economic success but we have to wait for the democratic and social consequences (Szelenyi, 2008).

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