CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF "EUROPE" IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRE-1989 ERA WITH THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF "EUROPE" IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRE-1989 ERA WITH THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

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Departing from the idea of a slippery ideological surface over which the term "Europe" is conceptualized, which is continuously susceptible to shifts and redefinitions, this thesis is devoted to the attempt to outline the differences between the two ways of the conceptualization of "Europe" in Central Eastern Europe in two specific periods and political contexts. The first period mentioned is the early 1980s, or pre-1989 period, punctuated with the Central European intellectuals' (the so-called dissidents') discourse on the "European" affiliation of the region-especially in cultural terms. The transformation literature is also mentioned in order to pose the counter-factual arguments of this intellectual strand. The second period mentioned is the late 1990s and early 2000s, where the idea of "Europe" is identified with the EU and the EU accession. In this respect, Poland and Hungary are chosen as the sample countries for the scrutiny of the second period. Euro-discourses of the political parties and the concept of "party-based Euroscepticism" are scrutinised. The Polish and Hungarian media and the public opinion are also investigated to understand how and with what references "Europe" is conceptualised in late 1990s and early 2000s in the political space of Central Eastern Europe. Thus, in this study, the basic claim is that the intense debates and the literature on the "Europeanness" of Central Europe and on the transition that these countries have to realize in order to be "European" do not have a

substantial basis in the conceptualization of "Europe" in the current political spaces of Poland and Hungary.

ÖZ

MERKEZ VE DOĞU AVRUPA'NIN SEÇİLEN ÜLKELERİNDE "AVRUPA" NIN DEĞİŞEN TASARIMLARI: 1989 ÖNCESİ DÖNEM VE AVRUPA ENTEGRASYON SÜRECİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI

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"Avrupa" fikrinin kavramsallaştırıldığı ideolojik zeminin kayganlığı ve sürekli olarak yeniden tanımlandığı fikrinden yola çıkarak, bu çalışma, Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa'da iki ayrı dönemde ve bağlamda referans verilen "Avrupa" kavramının iki ayrı açıklanış biçimini irdeliyor. İlk olarak, "Muhalifler" olarak tanımlanan Merkez ve Doğu Avrupalı entellektüellerin, bölgenin, özelllikle kültürel anlamda, Avrupalılığı üzerine oluşturdukları söylemine sahne olan erken 1980ler, yani 1989 öncesi dönem inceleniyor. Bu anlamda, çalışma, söz konusu entellektüel çizginin ve bu çizginin karşı-tezlerini sunmak amacıyla dönüşüm literatürünün temel argümanlarını ortaya koymayı hedefliyor. "Avrupa" sözcüğünün tam anlamıyla ve sadece Avrupa Birliği ve Avrupa Entegrasyon süreci ile tanımlandığı ikinci dönem olan geç 1990lar ve erken 2000ler, tezin ikinci temel vurgu noktasını oluşturuyor. Bu bağlamda, söz konusu dönemin incelenmesi için örneklem olarak seçilen Polonya ve Macaristan'da, siyasi partilerin Avrupa söylemleri ve "Avrupa Kuşkuculuğu" kavramı mercek altına alınıyor. Polonya ve Macaristan basını ve kamuoyu da, "Avrupa nasıl ve hangi kavramlara referansla kavramsallaştırılıyor?" sorusunu cevaplayabilmek için, tezin asıl problematiği çerçevesinde, irdeleniyor. Bu çerçevede, tezin ana vargısının, Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa'da, söz konusu bölgenin "Avrupalılığı" ve "Avrupalı" olmak için hayata geçirmeleri gereken dönüşüm üzerine oluşturulan yazının, Polonya ve Macaristan'ın siyasi alanlarındaki Avrupa'nın şu anki kavramsallaştırılması bağlamında özsel bir temeli olmadığı argumanı olduğu savunulabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa, "Muhalifler", Avrupa Kuşkuculuğu, Polonya Siyaseti, Macaristan Siyaseti

To

My Family,

whose love and existence have always been the most precious things I have in life.

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encouraging me even in times I have unbearably been distressed. I must have done something very good in life to deserve friends and colleagues like them.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: EUROPE IN BRACKETS

We argue about fish, about potatoes, about milk, on the periphery. But what is Europe really for? Because the countries of Europe, none of them anything but second-rate powers by themselves, can, if they get together, be a power in the world, an economic power, a power in foreign policy, a power in defence equal to either of the superpowers. We are in the position of the Greek city states: they fought one another and they fell victim to Alexander the Great and then to the Romans. Europe united could still, by not haggling about the size of lorries but by having a single foreign policy, a single defence policy and a single economic policy, be equal to the great superpowers.

Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, who initiated the UK's application to join the EEC, *The Listener*, London, Febuary 8, 1979.

It would be too easy for a social scientist to assume that a Hungarian or a Polish would find himself/herself transformed into a "European" in the morning of the 2nd of May. "European" in this sentence refers to a citizen of any member state of the European Union, but it may be interpreted differently by different perspectives, and thus this axiom could be affirmed/falsified/ignored accordingly. Actually, the point of emphasis here is the shift of the way in which the conceptualization of the term "Europe" is realized. One may assume that the countries mentioned above has always been European and does not require such a transformation, the change that turned to be visible between the 1st of May and 2nd of May is just symbolic

and these countries have always been a part of Europe. A second perspective may claim that the citizens of these countries require a much more profound transformation than was the case in Kafka's "Metamorphosis". In this perspective, Poland and Hungary can be assumed to represent another world precisely different from Europe, and that region could never have the characteristics that make Europe Europe, irrespective of the date on the calendar. Or, one may take up the idea that "Europe" in this sentence is synonymous with the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union, and thus symbolises the subsidies that a Hungarian or a Polish farmer would receive from the Union.

Thus, the slippery surface over which the term "Europe" is conceptualized is susceptible to shifts, changes and redefinitions. The possibility of searching these different conceptualizations constitutes the general departure point of this study. More particularly, this study is devoted to the scrutiny of two snapshots from two different periods regarding the so-called Central Eastern Europe and Western Europe which have been punctuated by different conceptualisations of the term "Europe". The use of the word "so-called" here shows that different conceptualizations lead to the use of different terms and suffixes for the very same region or entity.

Before going into the details of the problematic that this thesis will be dealing with, it would be appropriate to underline first what it would not be dealing with. The study in question will not be dealing with a putative European identity. The issue of identity has been connected with European integration from its very beginning. The

very appearance of supranationality has given rise to the discussions about the relationship between national and European identities, which have been dealt with either directly, in terms of identities themselves or indirectly, in terms of the multiple loyalties or crumbling sovereignty. Thus, the integration of the Central Eastern Europe into the web of the European Union inevitably necessitates the scrutiny of the existence of a common European identity with reference to a European identity-national identity relationship/duality. One can add different dimensions to this picture, such as historical experiences, cultural patterns or a political culture and argue the relevance of a post-communist or a regional identity. Moreover, the search for an identity in this context necessitates a retrospective gaze to the historical, cultural and political experiences of the so-called Eastern Europe and Western Europe in order to pick up similarities and differences between the two cases. However, this thesis will not be dealing with the question of European identity and the attached concerns such as whether it is constructed or not, or whether there is a tension between a putative European identity and national identities. It would be a laborious effort to dig out how certain conceptualizations of "Europe" stem from the articulation of a certain identity, and such an attempt to understand the social categories, labels or self-definitions that give rise to such a conceptualization would be beyond the very aims of this study. Nor would it be relevant to discuss whether some stereotypes that feed a certain type of a conception regarding "Europe" stem from an alleged European identity, a national identity or another type of identity such as a post-communist one. In this study, the

identities attached to the actors referred, to the historical circumstances described or to the intellectual positions cited are treated as taken for granted.

Similarly, this study does not make a thorough reference to the chronological set-up of the European integration. From the early 1950s onwards, starting with the founding of first the Coal and Steel Community, later the European Economic Community and later on the European Union, the European integration has very much pre-occupied the political, economic, cultural agendas of not only the members of these entities, but also of all the actors in other regions, including Central Eastern Europe as well. Moreover, it could be claimed that the integration and the enlargement process of the EC/EU had profound impacts on the ways in which "Europe" is described. However, the mere chronological development of the European Union *per se* would be insufficient to explain to what extent the word "Europe" has been associated with the Union. Moreover, this thesis is not about the European Union *per se*. Within the limits of this study, the European Union is mentioned to the extent that it contributes to the formation of the context within which the word "Europe" is conceptualized.

The main concern of this thesis is to outline the differences between the two ways of the conceptualization of "Europe" with regard to Central Eastern Europe and Western Europe. The first period mentioned is the early 1980s, or pre-1989 period, punctuated with the Central European intellectuals' discourse on the "European" affiliation of the region, which has sown the seeds of the "Return to Europe" discourse

of the 1990s. This post-1989 discourse coincided with the emergence of the transformation literature. The basic idea is to understand what concepts or concerns play a role in the presentation of "Europe" as a sense of belongingness or non-belongingness in the 1980s by the Central Europeans. The first reference point in this respect is the use of different terms for the very same region. For instance, the region is signified as "Central" Europe, when it is the "Europeanness" discourse initiated by the Central European intellectuals in question. This line of intellectual thinking generally revolves around the idea of the "Europeanness" of Central Europe in question throughout in the 1980s, and has been usually adopted by the Central European intellectuals, the so-called "dissidents". In this context, the "Europeanness" of the region in question is treated as given. The Central European intellectuals present the disintegration of socialism in the countries concerned as a historical chance to return to the place that the countries historically, politically and most important of all, culturally, already belong to. The main aim is to use the alleged common cultural, historical and intellectual Central European heritage as a leverage to prove the "Europeanness" of the Central Europe, so much so that "Europe" is designated an almost sacred and magical connotation. The word "cultural" must be italicised here, as the cultural commonality between Western Europe and Central Europe is the main feature that establishes this discourse and designates "Europe" as an allegiance. Although the main period in the first part is the 1980s, references to the terms "Mitteleuropa" and "Ostpolitik" will also be made in order to understand the

essence of the debates on what actually makes these countries European and which historical, cultural or existential features make the region in question "European". Thus, the first chapter is devoted to the attempt to deal with what basically Central Eastern Europe owes its "Centrality", "Easternness" and "Europeanness" on a conceptual basis and the main period of reference is the 1980s. This intellectual line of thinking has been established by the debates of Czech, Hungarian and Polish "dissidents" roughly in the first half of 1980s, and will be referred to in this respect. This intellectual strand could be denoted, broadly speaking, as the predecessor of the "Return to Europe" discourse of the 1990s, which stressed the "Europeanness" of the Central European candidate states within the context of the EU enlargement.

On the other hand, the countries in question are attributed the label of "Eastern Europe", when the demarcation lines of the post-Cold War era are used. This categorization is also valid for the transformation literature, which is another main reference point in this study in order to understand the prescribed ways in which "Eastern Europe" may be transformed so as to have the features that the "genuine Europe" has *par excellence* such as a functioning market economy, a full-fledged civil society, minority rights etc.. Moreover, in order to understand the mind-set which presupposes such an existential diversity between "Eastern Europe" and "Western Europe", references to earlier periods such as Enlightenment or Inter-war era will also be made. The transformation literature of the late 1980s and early 1990s represents a politico-cultural framework which includes a contrasting set of premises in

comparison to the conceptualizations of "Europe" reflected by the Central European intellectuals throughout the 1980s. In this contrasting framework, East/West distinction is the central referential point. In that evaluation, the East is seen as a subaltern of the West and moreover what characterizes the East is what does not characterize the West. What is more interesting than this, "the East was created by the West as a world of fantasies full of exotic and interesting images and memories" (Said, 1998:11). By this way, the relationship between the creation of a mythical East and the attempt of the West to dominate the East is depicted. The so-called "Orientalism", a term mainly coined by Edward Said, starts with the presupposition that positions the East as an object of knowledge and investigation (Mutman, 2002). Moreover, "the East" is created in a "linguistic laboratory" (Mutman, 2002) and thus categorized via the linguistics and discourses of the West (Kahraman and Keyman, 1998). This point is important on the part of the shifts that the word "Europe" and the suffixes experience. It has even been argued that "the name 'Eastern Enlargement' ends up as an orientalising tool when applied as the marker of the current re-division of Europe" (Böröcz, 2001).

The remaining chapters of this study are devoted to the attempt to dig out the dynamics of the perception of "Europe" in the political spaces in Poland and Hungary from the late 1990s onwards. The conception of political space is widely used in the recent studies in social sciences. Yet, there is no fixed categorization of this term. In this study, the conception is used in terms of the terrains in which political processes,

debates and reflections take place. In this sense, the party politics, media and opinion poll researches are specified as empirical basis of this concept in this study. In this framework, the attempt will be to understand what really constitutes the content of the discussions regarding Europe and the EU in these countries. The most significant trait of this analysis is to see that Europe is identified, more often than not, with reference to the EU. While "Europe" is conceptualised as given in the first period mentioned, i.e. in the pre-1989 period, "Europe" and "Europeanness" are conceptualised as acquired traits within the framework of the EU accession in the second period mentioned (late 1990s and 2000s) in these countries. Actually the agenda of the political spaces of Poland and Hungary is dominated by the EU accession, starting from the 1990s onwards. In this respect, the historical evolution of the EU accession regarding Poland and Hungary is the theme of the second chapter of this study. A few years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, ten former communist countries were already applicant countries to join the EU. After some rounds of negotiations launched in 1998, it has been decided in December 2002 at the Copenhagen summit that 10 countries will join the EU in 2004: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. This process marked the pace of the discussions regarding "Europe" in Poland and Hungary. By this token, the thesis fulfils the obligation to understand the historical evolution of this relationship between the EU and the countries concerned to the extent that this evolution determines the fate of the conceptualization of the EU in the political spaces of them.

What could be said regarding the conceptualization of the EU in the political spaces of Hungary and Poland is that the EU is usually pronounced with reference to the certain stereotypes and certain policies. The European integration is usually depicted as an asymmetrical relationship between the EU and Poland and Hungary, where the former is the dominant side. The EU serves as a "modernisation anchor"(Inotai, 1997). This either leads to an anger felt towards the EU due to this asymmetry or to pessimism that this asymmetry could not be overcome even if the "homework" is fulfilled, and these two are not mutually exclusive. It could even be claimed that the concept "Europe" has begun to signify a deep pessimism and lost its magic in recent times while the civilizational target put in the 1980s has been apparently reached.

To reiterate, the representation of the Euro-debate in the political spaces of Poland and Hungary especially from late 1990s onwards only takes the EU as the signifier of "Europe". Even if the word "Europe" is used, it refers to some certain stereotypes such as "European family of nations" or "European civilization". Moreover, the focus is on very superficial aspects of the accession and the substantive elements that are essential to the accession process are skipped. The positive and almost other-worldly connotations attached to the notion of "Europe" of the pre-1989 period are no longer on the scene. The magical and semi-deified "Europe" has fallen down onto the earth from the holy skies it has been located in the 1980s, and possibly hit onto the annoying and dark buildings of Brussels. The "given Europeanness" of

the 1980s has been substituted with an Europeanness that has to be acquired mainly during the EU accession process, which seems rather paradoxical as the target put in the 1980s must have been even more converged contextually.

In the third chapter, a reference will be made to the question what "Europe" meant for political parties. In order to do this, the attempt, first of all, will be to delineate the theoretical framework of the concept of "Euroscepticism" and to show that the "Euroscepticism" itself is intrinsically strategical. The basic idea here to be substantiated seems to be that except for the parties that show *de facto* or outright opposition to the EU, Euroscepticism within the framework of these countries express strategic and short-term concerns. Next, the shift in the Euro-rhetoric of the political parties of the countries in question will be unveiled. The political parties mentioned are the parties that had seats in the national assemblies of those countries: Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP), Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party (Fidesz-MPP), Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), Independent Smallholder Party (FKgP) and Party of Hungarian Justice and Life (MIEP) of Hungary; Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), Labour Union (UP), Polish Peasant Party (PSL), The League of Polish Families (LPR), Self-Defence (SO) and Law and Justice Party (PiS) of Poland. The aforementioned shift in terms of the party discourses will be treated as a data to substantiate the assumption that the conceptual framework of the political parties regarding "Europe" has been characterized by a scarce set of references and by a slippery rhetoric. The penurious toolkit used to conceptualize

"Europe" usually revolves around certain stereotypes and makes "Europe" an ordinary issue of the political agenda to be politically exploited.

With the same token, a subsequent attempt in this respect will be made to dig out the identification of the EU by particular policies. Proving that Common Agricultural Policy or Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU are the first names contemplated after the word "Europe" is pronounced may help point out the shallow perspective used to define "Europe".

Within the framework of the fourth chapter, the press will be treated as a tool to assess the extent of the conceptualization of "Europe" in the political spaces of the countries concerned. Due to the linguistic constraints, only a secondary reading of press could be realized and only press analyses by different scholars and analysts have been referred to. As the core point to be emphasised has not been the evaluation of "Europe" *per se* by the press in Poland and Hungary, such a secondary reading seems sufficient to understand the Euro-perspective of the press. In this part, it is intended to show that the coverage of "Europe" in the press points out to the same shallow and superficial concepts.

Last, but not least, the public opinion in Poland and Hungary will be elucidated, which forms the point of emphasis of the fifth chapter. It will be argued that the assessment of the attitude towards the EU by the public may give an idea about how "Europe" is conceptualized by the people living in these countries. Rather recent public opinion polls will be tried to be given, and a particular attention will be paid to

the EU referenda held in these countries. By this way this question may be answered: "with what references "Europe" is understood by the public?".

Thus, in this study, the basic claim is that the intense debates and the literature on the "Europeanness" of Central Europe and on the transition that these countries have to realize in order to be "European" do not have a substantial basis in the conceptualization of "Europe" in the current political spaces of Poland and Hungary. The magical "Europe" of the 1980s has been changed with a "Europe" that has lost its magic and the problems associated with the EU accession have caused a degree of disenchantment in terms of the conceptualization of the very same concept. Two main snapshots will be made to the two different periods (the 1980s on the one hand and late 1990s and early 2000s on the other) regarding the conceptualization of "Europe" in the political spaces of these two countries, Poland and Hungary. The question why these countries have been chosen as the samples could be answered best by looking at two main imperatives. First of all, the phenomenon of the EU integration urges the political science literature to understand how this process is perceived by the domestic politics of new members. A next step in this respect must be to look at how it has been perceived retrospectively and to assess whether there is a continuity or rupture, as argued by this study, between past and present. Secondly, as mentioned before, the intellectual strand formed by Polish, Hungarian and the Czech intellectuals, which was the main cultural resistance network against socialism in the 1980s, put the "Europe" as a horizon line. To locate this picture into today's political environment is

assessed as a necessary effort. Moreover, the intensity of Eurosceptical political parties, especially in the Polish case, and the still decreasing levels of public support for the EU have necessitated to ask why the main changes observed in the reference points in the conceptualization of "Europe" are so different in the two periods concerned. The question to be answered is: "How is 'Europe' conceptualized in these two different contexts in Central Europe (particularly in Poland and Hungary) and what are historical, cultural, political and intellectual conditions that give rise to these conceptualizations?" The aim could be described as a mapping exercise with two particular contextual references and as an attempt to understand the general dynamics of political spaces of Poland and Hungary regarding "Europe". Actually, the very basic aim is not aloof from the question in the quotation at the beginning of this part: "But what is Europe really for?"

CHAPTER 2

THE CONCEPTIONS OF "EUROPE" BY THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN WRITERS AND THE TRANSITION LITERATURE IN THE PRE-1989 ERA

2.1. Introduction: Winding the Magnet

If we are to say a couple of words about the conceptualization of either "Central Europe" or "Eastern Europe", it is necessary to make a reference to the context and the ideological and intellectual connotations attached to it which gave birth to the use of these terms. The use of this "either/or" binary opposition above mostly owes to what is called "the power of naming"[1] because:

> giving a place a name can be a crucial step in enhancing and legitimizing particular, perspectives, assumptions and perspectives. In fact, much of the power of the naming stems from its ability to conceal that it does indeed represent specific and partial views (Hagen, 2003: 491).

That is, be it "Central Europe", "Eastern Europe" or "Mitteleuropa", the region in question has been submerged to different interpretations in different eras and contexts, conditional upon its name-giver. This may be deemed as the

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[1] Here, Hagen seems to refer to a Foucauldian use of knowledge-power relationship which entails that naming a region is less an objective exercise than the signifier of "discursive formations, tense constellations of power, knowledge and spatiality" (Gregory, 1995: 29). To make it clearer, it was "Foucault's analysis of discourse in *Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, which helped Said to construct the epistemological basis of *Orientalism* (Said; 1998:14). Said tries to show how "the East was created by the West as a world of fantasies full of exotic and interesting images and memories" (Said, 1998:11). The West defines the characteristics of the Orient, classifies it and treats to these discursive formations as something natural and timeless (Said, 1998:172).

variations that the Westerners show or use in winding the conceptual magnet of Central Europe. That is, the magnet pointing east and west in general and the Central and Eastern European countries, which make up the core of this study, in particular had been winded differently at different times. For instance, as Graubard speaks about the evolution of the terminology regarding the region, the term "Eastern Europe" points to the Cold war partition of the world, while "Central Europe" is a term preferred and mostly used in 1970s and 1980s and maybe a sole "Europe" describes the region nowadays, especially when we think of the EU accession period of the countries in question (Graubard, 1991).

Departing from this point, this chapter is devoted to the attempt to understand how Central Europe has been conceptualized both by "the West" and the intellectuals of the region itself. This may be the most crucial step in perceiving how the idea of "Europe" is conceptualised with regard to its east and west and when, how and by whom these directions have been written with capital E and W or not, referring to the power of naming. Are they considered as a part of Europe whose Europeanness has been just delayed in the post-Yalta order and whose existence under Soviet domination was not enough to erase their European history? If so, they have just returned to the place they already belong after the demise of Communism, which could only be counted as a small interval in a big European continuum. Or, were they just taking their role in the play about a family with respectable, upstanding members, being the Westerners and a set of annoying relatives, being the Easterners? (Judt, 1996). Were they

just a part of Europe that requires to be known, but not Europe that knows, as Voltaire reminds? (cited in Judt, 1991). If so, they were just trying to return to where they never belong. In order to understand how Europe and Central Europe are conceptualized with respect to each other, a laborious attempt is necessary to understand the intellectuals' position in interpreting the location of the countries of Western Europe and those of Central Europe and cultural, social and political projections of this location. Was there a cultural continuum between the aforementioned regions or a strict and irreplaceable gap?

Thus, the above summary delineating the contours of the study to be conducted points out two different lines of intellectual considerations. The scrutiny of the first line of intellectual thinking generally revolves around the "Return to Europe" discourse culminating in the 1980s which has been usually adopted by the Central European intellectuals, so-called "dissidents". The main aim is to use the alleged common cultural, historical and intellectual Central European heritage as a leverage to prove the "Europeanness" of the Central Europe. Moreover, a historical reference to the terms, "Mitteleuropa" and "Ostpolitik" will also be made in order to understand the essence of the debates on what actually makes these countries European and which historical, cultural or existential traits converge the region in question to the idea of "Europe".

The second line of thought departs from the "East-West dualism and the corresponding counter-factualism of an 'us-them' polarity" (Delanty, 1995: 16). It is especially accelerated in the post-Yalta order, where the Berlin Wall

actually demarcates a clear-cut line between the East and West. In the 1980s and especially after 1989, this line disappears at least as a figure and a vast literature and intellectual discourse are constituted to speak about the putative transformation that the countries in the region must be engaged in to be "Western". The intellectuals seem to be arguing that a transformation in economic, political and social areas is essential and there is no guarantee that such a transformation will be successful in enabling these countries acquiring some features that Europe has *par excellence*. The main arguments of the transformation literature are intended to be given in this chapter -even if the actual time period when the transformation literature has been intensely established is the late 1980s and early 1990s- in order to present the counter-argument of the debates of Central European "dissidents". The aim of this chapter is to scrutinize the nature of the intellectual debates on the belongingness or non-belongingness of Central Europe to the idea of "Europe", especially on cultural, existential and identity terms. The actual historical period to be referred is the 1980s, the period marked by the precedent effects of the demise of communism in 1989, by the repercussions of the debates of the Central European intellectuals and by the transformation literature. However, thematic references to the earlier periods such as Enlightenment and inter-war era will inevitably be made.

2. 2. Where is Central Europe?

"Central Europe is back" says Timothy Garton Ash in his groundbreaking essay *Does Central Europe Exist?* in 1986. As he underlines, "for three decades after 1945 nobody spoke of Central Europe in the present tense". This sentence shows the march of the concept Central Europe, by drawing the chronological borders of the term. The same idea is expressed by Rupnik as: "the ghost of Central Europe is back to haunt the lands of what used to be known as 'real socialism'" (Rupnik, 1991:234). Actually, this project to bring Central Europe back in, as Feher states, has been an integral part of the 'long revolution against Yalta', i.e. against the Allies' decision to partition Europe into Soviet and Western spheres of influence in 1945 (Feher, 1988). Europe was the exact direction which the magnet showed to the former "Eastern Europe" by the end of 1980s.

However, that's not the whole story. The above sentence also refers to the slippery ground on which the term Central Europe is conceptualized and used, as much as it refers to the changes it imposes on the use of the tenses. It meant a distancing from the East and an otherness from Russia. That's true; the mostly emphasised year appears as 1989 in the above paragraph, which had been a breaking point in the history of the term Central Europe. The year 1989 prohibited the use of the term and stipulated a clear-cut division between the

historic Central, East Central and South-eastern Europe by subsuming them under the label "Eastern Europe" and by arrogating the lands of EEC by the use of title "Europe" for them.

However, both the term Central Europe itself and the thematically close concepts attached to it such as Mitteleuropa, Ostpolitik etc... were being used decades ago in the debates about the historical, cultural, geo-political, etc... place of the region in question. Therefore, it is vital to make a reference to these concepts and relevant arguments and to delineate the historical trajectory of the term "Central Europe" and the relevant debates in order to understand to what extent the term culminates in the statement that: "Central Europe has always been European".

2.2.1. Mitteleuropa, Ostpolitik etc..: Considerations on the use of the conception of "Central Europe" until 1980s

It may seem interesting to find one of the earliest pronunciations of the term Central Europe in German as "Mitteleuropa", but it would not be surprising for one who is aware of the more profound connotations attached to it especially after the First World War. One remark made by Friedrich Neumann (1917) who popularized the term during First World War, characterizes the content, aim and connotations of the term: "Mitteleuropa is war harvest". For some, it means that the defeated Germans use the term in order to embrace a giant territory remiscient of Habsburg Empire with the drive to hegemonize it culturally and civilizationally, while some think that it is an economic fantasy resulting from

Germans' wish to get rid of the memories of destruction they had experienced during the war. However it was perceived, Neumann's coinage of the term assesses a Central Europe under the aegis of Germany both as a possibility of human championship and as the justification of German predominance. According to Schwarz, "Neumann's vision was simply the cleverly disguised preparation of a giant territory under German control, from the North Sea to the Middle East and the calls for tolerance and flexibility contained in the book were only a sugar coating to make the swallowing of the bitter pill more palatable" (Schwarz, 1989: 147). Similarly, Neumann seem to promise that Europe after the war will bring "the blissful state of eternal peace" and "two long trenches will be formed from North to South, one of which will run somehow from the lower Rhine to the Alps, the other from the Courland to the left or right of Rumania" (cited in Schwartz, 1989:147). This trench politics and search for German hegemony in the region probably aimed to translate post-war ambiguities into a political and economic entity by subsuming Central Europe under German hegemony. Meanwhile, Czech, Polish and Hungarian versions of Central Europe tend to "view small size and vulnerability as prerequisites for inclusion and are characterized by exclusion of Germany" (Hagen, 2003:494). For instance, Tomáš G. Masaryk's[2] construction of Central Europe could be mentioned in this regard. The label of his construction, *Stredni Evropa*, meant Central Europe in Czech language exactly like Neumann's *Mitteleuropa* meant Central Europe in German but these two words referred to two totally different conceptualizations. While Neumann placed the German element to the very centre of the Central European idea, Masaryk wanted to exclude Germany from his *Stredni Evropa*. For Thomas

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[2] One of the most influential interwar European statesmen and the first president of Czechoslovakia

Masaryk it was a "peculiar zone of small nations extending from the North Cape to Cape Matapan" and including Laplanders, Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, Finns, Estonians, Letts, Lithuanians, Poles, Lusatians, Czechs, Slovaks, Magyars, Serbo-Croats and Slovenes, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Turks and Greeks, but no Germans or Austrians (Todorova, 1997). Therefore, the early 20th century experienced the use of Mitteleuropa by Germans synonymous with Central Europe while probably carrying more insidious projections as a hegemonic project and the use of the term Central Europe and the rejection of Mitteleuropa by the Central Europeans as a counter-hegemonic project.

The year 1945 signifies another milestone in the history of the term "Central Europe", which refers to a bygone area in a bipolar world without a central or a middle space from then on (Hagen, 2003). According to Judt, Central Europe, which became invisible to the West after 1945 onwards, seems unable to be "Central Europe" even during the events of 1956 and 1968 (Judt, 1991). This "breathtaking ignorance" lasted until the 1970s and 1980s, the years which meant the "normalisation" or "Centralisation" of the region. Judt presupposes many reasons for this switching of the magnet: Shift of European political balances, and the resulting Western empathy for Central Europe, death of Marxism, the works of Central European intellectuals such as Kundera, Adam Michnik, Lech Walesa etc.., academic exchange between the area and Europe, re-emergence of "rights talk" to European political life, anti- Americanism of Europe. He concludes that, opening a parenthesis to the transition literature, salient factor in the emergence of the concept of "Central Europe" is not the

altered circumstances of the East but the changed sensibilities of the West. What mattered was the timing.

Thus, everybody agreed on the composition of magnet, one direction of which was totally reserved for a forbidden zone. There were only a few feeble voices which did not comply with this consensus. Polish historian Oskar Halecki, instead of rejecting such a binary conceptualization, proposes to add West-Central and East-Central Europe as intermediary zones:

> West-Central Europe was basically German in character, while East-Central Europe included those lands between Germany, Russia, Turkey and Sweden (Hagen, 2003: 495).

In the Preface of his book History of East Central Europe, Halecki states:

> the motivating ideas in describing the fairly well-known modern centuries of European history from the point of view of the victims were these: That a free East Central Europe is indispensable for any sound balance of power on the Continent, and that the temporary disappearance of that whole region created a dangerous tension between suppressed nationalisms and apparently well-established imperialisms which usually were in dangerous rivalry with one another. Seen from the point of view of the nations of East Central Europe, which were independent between the two world wars and which again lost their freedom after the second, even contemporary history must appear in a different light (Halecki, 1952:2).

Halecki speaks of Central Europe as a vast *terra incognita* of European historiography, between Sweden, Germany, and Italy, on the one hand, and Turkey and Russia on the other (Halecki, 1952:4). According to him, in the course of European history, a great variety of peoples in this region created their own independent states, sometimes quite large and powerful; in connection with Western Europe they developed their individual national cultures and contributed to the general progress of European civilization (Halecki, 1952:4).

In line with this, he challenges the geopolitical order of Cold War era and argues:

> no permanent peace will be restored before their (Central Europeans) traditional place in the European Community, now enlarged as the Atlantic Community, is restored (Halecki, 1952:4).

The idea of Mitteleuropa was resurfaced within the framework of Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik during the 1970s. What Brandt called "two states in one nation" (Craig, 1994) aimed at seeking German unification by lowering the barriers between East and West and by pursuing a European peace order by way of full recognition of the sovereignty and frontiers of existing East European states, including, paradoxically, the German Democratic Republic (Craig, 1994). The aim of this Eastern policy was to strengthen relations with the members of Warsaw Pact and to promote arms reductions across the continent (Garton Ash, 1991).

Garton Ash links the inclusion of the Central Europe within the European agenda to the concept of "Mitteleuropa" (Garton Ash, 1991). According to him, the reiteration of this term in the discussions of the 1980s has been in the form of a plan of, or at least suggestion of Germany's return to the East. Ironically, Germany, in order to be more powerful in Europe is assumed to turn her face to her Eastern neighbours, which had its most important justification in West Germany's economic and commercial power with respect to the East Central Europe. According to Rupnik, Mitteleuropa meant a farewell to post-war settlements (Rupnik, 1991:247). By this way Germany in the East meant a Central Europe in the centre. Garton Ash distinguishes four intersecting circles

of the debates on Central European discussion in the 1980s in West Germany

(Garton Ash, 1991:4-5). The first one, according to him, is the cultural

discovery of the area, referring to Karl Schlögel (Schlögel, 1986) and his quite

stimulating essay which presupposed "the rediscovery of Mitteleuropa would be

carried forward in the realm of ideas, culture, non-political exchange and, to put

in Marxist terms, consciousness" (Garton Ash, 1991:4). The second circle can

be described as historical-geopolitical, right-national.

> [It] takes as its starting point not the concept of Mitteleuropa as such, but, rather, a view of German history as being primarily determined by that country's geopolitical position or even as the European centre (Garton Ash, 1991:4).

This view was primarily said to belong to conservative historians such as

Hillgruber, Hildebrand and Stürmer. Third position, historical-geopolitical, left-

national stream actually was obtained by passing of the above argument to the

early rhetoric of Kohl government and was transformed into the idea of

"Neutrality for Central Europe". The aim was:

> ...to oppose any fashionable thought-experiment about a special position for Mitteleuropa. (..). This concept must not be a dangerous explosive charge against the political integration of "Europe of Freedom" (Garton Ash, 1991:5).

The fourth intellectual circle is said to be the effort to include the concept

of Mitteleuropa to the second phase of Mitteleuropa.

> Mitteleuropa is a goal of détente. (..) [It was] an acceptable term of art, or motto, for that ever closer web of common interests and mutual dependencies between the states of Eastern and Western Europe that the circle of Berlin Social Democrats set out to create more than a quarter of a century ago (Garton Ash, 1991:6).

As it could be seen, Mitteleuropa in the early1980s was used as a

challenge to the post-war settlements and an attempt to revive a reappraisal of a

"central space in the imagined geography of Europe" (Hagen, 2003). On the

contrary, the idea of Mitteleuropa in the late 1980s, especially after 1989 when the division of Germany has no longer been issue on the political arena, has been interpreted as the revival of German quest for hegemony and frequently criticized. According to Hagen, the most dramatic protests came from German Social Democrats and other liberals who described Germany as the Fourth Reich, establishing a link with the Nazi Third Reich (Hagen, 2003).

> One of the first to raise this frightening prospect was, quite surprisingly, Peter Glotz[3] who had earlier promoted his own version of Mitteleuropa. In late 1989, perhaps fearful of the course the conservative Kohl administration would chart after reunification, Glotz sarcastically asked, "Please at least in this century no more plans for a 'Fourth Reich' " (Hagen, 2003: 501)

2.2.2. The Political Environment that Gave Rise to the Debates of "Dissidents"

The consensus on the aforementioned East-West distinction, which seems to be undisturbed by a few controversial arguments, has been apparently challenged by the "Return to Europe" discourse in the 1980s by the Central European writers. Be it facilitated by the second de-Stalinization and the perestroika policy of Gorbachev, as mentioned by Garton Ash (Garton Ash, 1989), or by the quest of the relationship between totalitarianism and democracy, as mentioned by Ekiert (Ekiert, 1991), a vast literature and series of debates concerning the Europeanness of Central Europe have stamped the arguments concerning the locations of Western Europe and Eastern Europe vis-à-vis each

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[3] Peter Glotz has been the Secretary General of the German SPD (Social Democratic Party) for many years.

other. The dominant idea is that Central Europe shares the same historical and cultural trajectory with the Western one and main point of emphasis is to distinguish it from Eastern Europe, meaning primarily Russia. For instance, Wandycz claims that Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland belonged to the Western civilization as they have experienced all great historical currents such as Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment (Wandycz, 1992). With the same token, Hanak prefers to call Central Europe as the eastern zone of the West rather than the Western rim of the East (Hanak, 1989). But of course, Milan Kundera with his the *Tragedy of Central Europe*, György Konrad with his *Anti-Politics*, Adam Michnik with his *Notes from the Prison and Other Essays* and Vaclav Havel with his *Power of the Powerless* seem to be the vanguards in this regard.

Before going into the details of the arguments of these writers culminating into the "Return to Europe" discourse, it would be a brainstorming exercise to mention the ideological and political environment which has led to such an eruption.

Garton Ash, in his article *The Uses of Adversity*, speaks of the "extraordinary quality of Polish cultural life" in the 1980s, which especially found its resonance after the events of 1980-1981[4] (Garton Ash, 1985a: 105). The existence of a world of learning and culture independent of the state which claims to control it and the ability of the Solidarity movement to form a popular

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[4] "The workers' movement, Solidarity, had developed out of a wave of strikes that affected more than 4000 enterprises in August 1980" (Staniszkis, 1984:76). Touraine tells us that the meaning of Solidarity is that it provided the workers' struggle with democratic and national credentials, culminating in the Gdansk, Szczecin and Jastrzebie Agreements (Touraine, 1983).Against this working class movement usually punctuated with strikes, protests and demonstrations, "it would be a big mistake to stay without doing anything" for General Jaruzelski, who proclaimed martial law in Poland in December 1981 (Jaruzelski, 1981).

front "which has evolved from a dissident minority to a dissident majority after 1980" (Garton Ash, 1985a:106) established the main pillars of this intellectual movement. Garton Ash mentions a kind of attitude that the intellectuals pretend to have in this environment which stipulates a duality between a still totalitarian state (though Rupnik claims that it may called as an authoritarian system after the 'normalization' period of the 1970s [1993]) and a proliferating "civil society", a civil society within which there is no clear dividing line between workers and intellectuals: The principle of "As If". These intellectuals are said to engage in intellectual activities such as organizing conferences, printing Samiszdat publications[5], meeting in unofficial committees[6] as if they were living in a free country. Garton Ash seems to assign the responsibility to change this "As if" clause into a present tense to the intellectuals and the colourful intellectual environment. In a poem dedicated to Adam Michnik, Polish poet Krynicki writes:

> Living here and now
> you must pretend
> that you live elsewhere and in other times
> and, at best, fight with the dead
> through the iron curtain of clouds (cited in Garton Ash,
> 1985a:106)

In this respect, Garton Ash makes a distinction between Hungarian intellectual life and the Polish one. The Polish intellectual movement is said to be characterized with a confrontation with the State while such a thing is not claimed

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[5] The unofficial publications printed, published and disseminated illegally are called Samiszdat in Poland in the aforementioned period.
[6] As Solidarity is an umbrella movement bringing many different committees with slightly different inclinations, speaking of Solidarity means speaking of committees. The most important of these committees is KOR (the Workers' Defence Committee), the name of which has been changed to KOR (the Social Self-Defence Committee) in the later years as the Solidarity movement has began to appeal to a more broader goal by time, according to Garton Ash (1986).

to happen in the Hungarian case. The Hungarians are said to have an illness of a periphrastic language and they never say anything directly (Garton Ash, 1985b:146). Moreover, Garton Ash tells us that Hungary is a maze full of mirrors which conceal hedges and therefore nothing is linked to constant rules or attitudes (Garton Ash, 1985b:143). Thus, the first tendency, Hungarian preference to get around the system rather than confronting it (Garton Ash calls this a "Kadarite inclination"[7]) and the second one, a moving maze [what is permitted at 8 o'clock may be denounced at noon (Garton Ash, 1985b:145)] prevents Hungary from having a "civil society" like Poland. Thus, "Hungary's 'democratic opposition' of intellectuals has not yet developed either a distinctive political strategy, (..), or those links with other classes-above all, workers- without which Solidarity would never have been born" (Garton Ash, 1985b:148).

The point at which all these conceptualizations and arguments above are relevant with the scope of this study is that Garton Ash sees this intellectual accumulation as the only way to assert a Central European identity for these countries, and thus to be European. Garton Ash, speaking about the mythopyoeic tendency of Central Europeans (Garton Ash, 1986), arguing that Central Europeans are in a big fallacy by thinking that a common past will be a key to

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KOR is especially important as Adam Michnik, one of the most outstanding names of the "dissidents", as will be mentioned later, is a central figure in KOR.

[7] This phrase is usually used in the literature in order to point out to the compromise between the democratic opposition against the communist state in Hungary which is very different from Polish confrontational style. This mostly owes to that Hungarian opposition had a politically less full-fledged strategy and dealt generally with economic liberalisation and privatization and "the engagement in private enterprise so far been seen rather as an alternative to the pursuit of civil society in the narrower, more political sense" (Garton Ash, 1988: 274). In this respect, democratic opposition experiences a direct connection of well-organized associations of entrpreneurs with the State, not actually in a Polish style opposing manner. "The main organ of entrepreneurial and free market discussion is not a samiszdat journal but an entirely official weekly HVG, which might very loosely be described as the Hungarian *Economist*" (Garton Ash, 1988: 279)

common present and that "every attempt to distil some common essence of Central European history is either absurdly reductionist or invincibly vague" (Garton Ash, 1986:197). Meanwhile, he tells us that the qualities and values of Michnik, Havel and Konrad emerged from their specific Central European experience- "which is the Central European experience of our time" (Garton Ash, 1986:214).

2.2.3. The Role of Central European Intellectuals in the Euro-Debate in Central Eastern Europe

Vaclav Havel, with his books *The Power of the Powerless* and *The Anatomy of a Reticence*, may be claimed to be the intellectual spokesman of Czech political thought with a rich and poetic narration. The main pillar of his thinking is his hesitation to appeal to a political content and thus his claim for an "anti-politics". His point of departure is the human being, with his conscience and subjectivity. Garton Ash claims that he employs moral categories and Judeo-Christian individualism (Garton Ash, 1986) which seems to represent the downfall of man to the being. Within the framework of this subjectivity, he criticizes those in Charter 77[8] who overestimate the importance of direct political work in a

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[8] The movement known as *Charter 77* took its name from the title of a document initially circulated within Czechoslovakia in January 1977. Originally appearing as a manifesto in a West German newspaper and signed by 243 Czechoslovak citizens representing various occupations, political viewpoints, and religions, the document by the mid-1980s had been signed by 1,200 people. Charter 77 criticized the government for failing to implement human rights provisions of a number of documents it had signed, such as the Czechoslovak Constitution and the Final Act of the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Vaclav Havel is one of its founders, who has been the first post-communist leader of Czechoslovakia after the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia quietly and peacefully transferred rule, what was later dubbed as the "Velvet Revolution".

traditional sense and who still conceive their activity primarily as a matter of seeking *power in the state* (Garton Ash, 1986- *emphasis original*). Similarly, he rejects categories such as right or left, finding them out-dated, and proposes categories such as right or wrong.

In the critique of totalitarian system, the most frequently used concepts by Havel are "living in a lie" and "living in truth". He substantiates this argument by giving an example of a greengrocer (Havel, 1985). He speaks of a greengrocer who places in his window, along the onions and carrots, the slogan: "Workers of the World, Unite!!" and asks why he does this. According to Havel, the overwhelming majority of shopkeepers never think about the slogans they put in their windows, nor do they use them to express their real opinions. The slogan hides the sign it carries, which could be interpreted as: "I am greengrocer X and I know what to do to obedient with the system". What it hides something higher, according to Havel, is ideology (Havel, 1985: 28).

> Individuals need not believe all these mystifications, but they must behave as though they did, or they must at least tolerate them in silence or get along well with those who work with them, for this reason, however, they must live with a lie. They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, *are the system* (Havel, 1985-*emphasis original*).

The alternative is, not surprisingly, "living in truth". It is exemplified by greengrocer's snapping and stopping putting up the slogans, "merely to ingratiate himself" (Havel, 1985: 39). "He rejects the ritual and breaks the rules of the game. He discovers once more his suppressed identity and dignity" (Havel, 1985: 39). The *origins* of Charter 77 (not Charter 77 *per se*) is said to be found where living with a lie confronts with living with a truth, which is apparently pre-political

(Havel, 1985: 47-*emphasis added*). Living in truth seems to be reserved for "dissidents", not only in Czechoslovakia, but in Central Europe *in toto*.

What is more crucial than this binary opposition is Havel's claim about the deep moral crisis in society linked to the act of living in a lie, especially in terms of explaining Western position vis-à-vis this Central European struggle for identity. The human identity (including the Western one) is said to be submerged in a profound crisis, mainly due to the consumer value system. Havel states:

> A person who has been seduced by the consumer value system, whose identity is dissolved in an amalgam of the accoutrements of mass civilization, and who has no roots in the order of being, no sense of responsibility for anything higher than his or her personal survival, is a demoralized person. The system depends on this demoralization, deepens it, is in fact a projection of it into society (Havel, 1985: 45).

In his article the *Politics of Anti-Politics* (1993), Havel substantiates the roots of this moral crisis. By using the terms Mystic and the Absolute, he tells us that this world mostly owes its existence to this Absolute which regulates, substantiates, revitalizes and directs the world's all laws, traditions, prohibitions and norms and the agnosticism which must be respected (Havel, 1993: 407). However, the new Absolute of the world is objectivity, necessitating the rational perception of a scientific world model. The modern man, whose world is contaminated by science and technology, can only react to the smoke coming from a plant by putting a filter in it, but not by antagonizing it in a metaphysical manner (Havel, 1993: 408). The translation of this modernity on the political realm is the impersonalization and demystification of the power in a Machiavellian manner. According to Havel, Machiavelli is the first person to

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formulate this rational power technology (Havel, 1993: 411). Why this point is relevant for the current quest is that Havel argues that this impersonal power finds its best meaning in the totalitarian systems. Therefore, "totalitarian power is a crucial warning made to the contemporary civilization" (Havel, 1993: 414). By explaining the existence of totalitarian systems with the moral crisis stemming from modernity, Havel underlines the necessity of Western interest in the attempt to get rid of totalitarianism, i.e. dissident movements. Since the point of departure is the universal human and since he/she, either Western or Central Eastern, is claimed to be threatened by the same malady, Havel uses being dissident as a necessity cross-cutting the artificial boundaries imposed by the very same threat. By the very same token, by making reference to the Western peace movements, he argues that the danger of war arises not from the existence of weapons but political realities behind them. "The main 'political realities' in question are division of Europe and the continued Soviet domination over half of it" (Garton Ash, 1986: 203).

> "What threatens peace in Europe" Havel agrees, "is not the prospect of change but the existing situation". The key to a lasting peace lies not in disarmament or arms control as such, but in changing these political realities. In the long term this must mean overcoming the division of Europe (...) and moving toward what Havel calls "the ideal of a democratic Europe as a friendly community of free and independent nations" (Garton Ash, 1986: 203).

On the other hand, Adam Michnik is a very active political figure in the history of Polish intellectual movement and of KOR and Solidarity in particular. But, this does not mean that his intellectual set-up is aloof from Havelian moral categories and metaphysical abstractions. In his essay *The letter from Biolenka*

in 1982, when he talks about the Martial Law, the resistance is perceived as moral rather than a political issue:

> It is difficult to find a universal formula. Everyone has to answer in his own conscience the question how to counter the evil, how to defend dignity, how to behave in the strange war that is a new embodiment of the old-age struggle of truth and lies, of liberty and coercion, of dignity and degradation (Michnik, 1982: 40; cited in Koczanowicz, 2003: 7).

As it can be seen, Michnik's starting point is also the individual and Garton Ash describes him as a "catholic positivist, Catholic nationalist, liberal, libertarian or even neo-conservative" (Garton Ash, 1986: 193). His idea of democratic opposition stems from two ideals: the politics of truth and non-violence. The former refers to a conceptualisation similar to that of Havel's, which stipulates that the key to future redemption from totalitarian system springs not from objective condition of states, but the internal condition of human being. Living in truth is linked to the people who do not accept roles assigned to them, which leads to rejection of Kadarite solution, the contours of which have been drawn above. "No one among the activists of Solidarity today believes in dialogue and compromise with the authors of December coup. Nor do I" (cited in Garton Ash, 1986: 208). The struggle to live in truth is presented as the only solution instead of a Hungarian compromise between the civil society and the State. On the other hand, the latter constitutes an extension of putting the human conscience at the top of the list. "Taught by history", Michnik writes in his 1985 Letters from Gdansk Prison, "we suspect that by using force to storm the existing Bastilles we shall unwittingly build new ones"

(cited in Garton Ash, 1986: 199). Similarly, he argues that Solidarity has never resorted to violence.

Michnik seems not to use the concept of Central Europe in none of his articles but he mentions the necessity for the states between Russia and Germany.

> For Michnik, as for most of the democratic opposition, it is self-evident that the small states between Russia and Germany contributed to their own self-destruction by the nationalist rivalries of the inter-war years, and therefore that, were they ever to become independent again, they should cooperate as closely as possible- if not actually confederate (Garton Ash, 1986: 196).

What is most significant in Michnik's works is his emphasis on the prior and unique position of the Solidarity in the opposition movements, which does not seem to appear in any of the writers mentioned. He tells us:

> Solidarity can be erased from walls, not from human memory. The exemplary character of the Polish experiment has been stressed repeatedly: for absence of violence, for its tactic of restoring social ties outside the official structures (1982: 39, cited in Koczanowicz, 2003: 8)

Finally, Michnik shares the same ideas with Havel about the Western peace movements and argues that the danger of war could only be reduced via full respect for human rights. The task assigned to the West in order to control the Soviet threat is simple: to support the opposition movements in Central Europe. The ideas of Michnik are important from the point of view of the proliferation of opposition movements in Central Europe. Particularly, his discourse which prioritizes rather conservative Western values such as self-sacrifice, self-consciousness and self-conscience and which articulates human rights as leverage for his ideas make him crucial for the "Return to Europe" discourse in assessing the nature of this return.

György Konrad is another important figure in the Hungarian intellectual struggle, apparently being affected by its traits and characteristics. He shares similar characteristics with Havel and Michnik in terms of the place of individual and in terms of his insistence on politics of anti-politics, which has given its name to his book. In contrast to Michnik, he frequently uses the term Central Europe, especially when "the statement is positive, affirmative and sentimental, but he uses the concept "Eastern Europe", when the context is neutral or negative (Garton Ash, 1986: 194). His inclination to make a reference to the concept could be seen best in his assertion of a common Central European history and fate. As referred to by Garton Ash (1986):

> it was East Central Europe's historical misfortune that it was unable to become independent after the collapse of the Eastern, Tatar-Turkish hegemony and later the German-Austrian hegemony of the West, and that it once again came under Eastern hegemony, this time of the Soviet-Russian type. This is what prevents our area from exercising the Western option taken out a thousand out a thousand years ago, even though this represents our profoundest historical inclinations (cited in Garton Ash, 1986: 194).

His reference to a common history and cultural heritage based on the Habsburg Empire lay the basis of his insistence on "the establishment of a neutral, pacifist Mitteleuropa free from superpower conflict and the threat of nuclear war" (Hagen, 2003: 497). According to Hagen, Konrad advocates Mitteleuropa as implies a refusal to participate in the Cold War, an attack on state intrusion in private life, and a means to overcome the division of Europe by clearing a central European space of certain geopolitical relationship (Hagen, 2003).

Moreover, he thinks that "who or what" that could induce the Soviet Union is the international intellectual aristocracy, seeing the failure of three national liberation movements, as embodied in his words, 'three tries, three mistakes'. "It appears that the intelligentsia-not the working class is the special bearer of internationalism" he writes (cited in Garton Ash, 1986: 207). Dissidents- autonomous intellectuals- are the same the world over, irrespective of their political philosophies. Garton Ash's suggestion to the intelligentsia is to come together and to produce the intellectual framework for going beyond the "intellectually sterile operations of ideological war" (Garton Ash, 1986: 207). With one step further, he assigns to the creative intelligentsia the task of enlightening the executive intelligentsia, i.e. of contributing to the reform of the existing system. Konrad's ideas for the Kadarite regime seem to be pronounced as "the least of all evils", in contrast to Michnik's conceptualization of such a dialogue with the State unacceptable, however such a task seems incompatible with his conceptualization of "politics of anti-politics". Yet, this rhetoric of dialogue does not prevent Konrad from thinking the civil society as a separate entity from the State:

> Konrad urged his fellow dissidents to reject the very idea of seizing or sharing power and to devote their energies to religious, cultural, economic and professional associations. Civil society appears in his book [Anti-politics] as an alternative to the state, which he assumes to be unchangeable and irredeemably hostile (Walzer, 1995:21, cited in Koczanowicz, 2003: 10)

Konrad appears as another important figure in Central Europe's quest for being European and having European traits such as civil society. His pronunciation of the concept Central Europe and attributing it a special feature

vis-à-vis the unwanted enemy, i.e. totalitarianism make him a characteristic part of the Euro-discourse of the so-called "dissidents".

2.2.3.1. Irresistible Lightness of Being European: Milan Kundera on the Way Back to Europe

In his articles appearing between 1981 and 1985, Milan Kundera speaks of Soviet domination and Western ignorance of the region. In the article *Tragedy of Central Europe* Kundera tells us that during the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, what was at stake was not the political regime, but were Hungary and Europe itself, which is too hard for a French or American to understand (Kundera, 1984). During the invasion, Hungarians could die for their country and for Europe- "that's a phrase that could not be thought in Moscow or Leningrad; it is precisely the phrase that could be thought in Budapest or Warsaw (Kundera, 1984:33). According to him, at that moment, Hungary was no longer European (meaning Western) as it was driven from its own destiny losing the essence of its history and identity (Kundera, 1984: 33). But, what took place in Prague and Warsaw in its essence was not a drama of Eastern Europe, of the Soviet Bloc or of Communism, but it was the drama of the West- "kidnapped, displaced and brainwashed" (Kundera, 1984: 33). Kundera continues "(...) in each of the revolts in Central Europe, the collective cultural memory and the contemporary creative effort assumed roles so great and so decisive- far greater and far more decisive than they have been in any other European mass revolt" (Kundera, 1984: 33).

Therefore, "Europeanness could be prized not by those who took it for granted, but by those who lived in the greatest fear of losing it" (cited in Bideleux, 1998). Thus, the threat of Soviet might had been a factor fortifying the Europeanness of Central Europe, culturally speaking. The Europeanness of the region in question is proved on the basis of a huge difference with Russia, both historically and culturally. "(..) on the eastern border of the West- more than anywhere else- Russia is seen not just as one more European power but as a singular civilization, an other civilization" (Kundera, 1984: 34). The reason why the disappearance of a region so European has gone unnoticed and unnamed is sought in Europe itself losing its own cultural identity: "Europe has not noticed the disappearance of its cultural home because Europe no longer perceives its unity as cultural unity" (Kundera, 1984: 36). Therefore, the final point that Kundera reaches and the role it perceives for Central Europe is not unexpected: "Central Europe, therefore, should fight not only with its big oppressive neighbour but also against the subtle, relentless pressure of time, which is leaving the era of culture in its wake" (Kundera, 1984: 37).

2.3. "Europe at the Back" instead of "Back to Europe"

2.3.1. Conceptualization of East-West Divide of Europe Until 1989

Istvan Rev, introducing the term "the post-mortem victory of communism", states that: "for the majority of Westerners, the Wall was a mirror in which they were able to see just how fortunate they were to live in a world that others considered to be completely utopian" (Rev, 1994:160). For years and years, social sciences have been densely preoccupied with the Berlin Wall and the year 1989, *annus mirabilis*, to such a degree that one may think that many scholars would have been too unhappy and too jobless without them. Besides the ample implications of the fall of Berlin Wall and the demise of communism, the most salient result was the drawing of the iron curtain between the West and the so-called communist world and -even at the risk of reductionism- between West and East, which, for decades, meant different things to different people, different ideologies and different regions. For instance:

> for West, until the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989, the border of Europe was a clear line: river Elbe. This was the historical borderline in the middle Ages, in early modern times, and after the agreement which was allegedly reached in Yalta after World War II. (...) After this date, the River Elbe, that firm, serious and symbolic line dividing Eastern feudalism and Western bourgeois development, communism and pluralist democracies, became a common German river that flows slowly through the territory of the European Community (Rev, 1994:164).

The analysis of this relationship between the East and the West compels one to translate it into theoretical terms. The main theoretical framework of this

East-West antagonism is constructed by the Foucauldian discourse theory and Said's study on the mental construction of this unegalitarian relationship. Said, in his work *Orientalism* (Said, 1998), explores West's knowledge of the East and its relevance to power relations in a Foucauldian sense. As opposed to conventional, liberal perspective, which assumes that the valid knowledge requires the suppression of power, Foucault claims that "power and knowledge directly imply one another and there is no power relation without correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations"(cited in Turner, 1994). It was Foucault's analysis of discourse in *Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish* helped Said to construct the epistemological basis of *Orientalism* (Said; 1998:14). Said tries to show how "the East was created by the West as a world of fantasies full of exotic and interesting images and memories" (Said, 1998:11). The West defines the characteristics of the Orient, classifies it and treats to these discursive formations as something natural and timeless (Said, 1998: 172).

However, even though the dates 1945 and 1989 symbolize a breaking point in the formulation of this duality based upon the representation of Eastern Europe as the mirror-image of the so-called West, the oldest traces of this antagonistic nexus could be traced back to the Enlightenment period.

L.Wolff explains that, "it was Western Europe that invented Eastern Europe as its complementary other half in the age of Enlightenment" (Wolff, 1994: 4). But the relationship between these halves is apparently not egalitarian.

Murawska-Muthesius argues that we owe too much to Wolff who analysed the idea of backward and underdeveloped *l'orient de Europe* which has been invented by French Encyclopaedists in the age of the Enlightenment as a constitutive part in the construction of the progressive, modern and civilized western Self (Murawska-Muthesius, 2001). He refers to the travel memoirs of Chappe d'Auteroche with the title *Voyage en Siberie*, which has been published in Paris in 1768 (cited in Murawska-Muthesius, 2001).

> It is a merger of cartography and allegory, which apart from the traveller's itinerary from Paris via Vienna, Warsaw, Petersburg, Moscow to the most remote towns of Siberia, shows the difference between the allegorical figures of France and the Holy Roman Empire, represented as 'classically garbed goddesses', and those of Poland and Russia- 'as allegorical savages'. Wolff poses the print as emblematic for his argument, concluding his caption by saying: 'such was the philosophical deployment of the concept of 'civilization' in distinguishing between Western Europe and Eastern Europe (Murawska-Muthesius, 2001:5).

Voltaire was one of the most important Enlightenment figures using this East-West framework. In his *Historie de Charles XII in* 1731, he is said to substantiate the aforementioned contradiction between East and West with a series of tableaux representing eastern lands and peoples who appeared for the first time as meaningfully related to one another (Wolff, 1995). Wolff links the use of the first person plural for denominating the reading public serves to the presence of the public in the text, which implicitly points out an inclusion/exclusion nexus. For instance in Voltaire's *An Historico-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia*, he presented his observations to the public:

> Every reader may not perhaps be equally diverted with this description of these cold and desolate regions, where unpolished manners and ignorance, as well as in religious as worldly affairs, ride triumphant, and deprive the natives of the truest

use of those blessings, which nature has, in so liberal and extraordinary a manner bestowed on some of these countries. When we, therefore, compare the brutish and wretched condition of these people, with the civilized state of Europe, where better and more prudent manners are cultivated, where arts and sciences flourish, where we have abundant means to come to a true knowledge of God and his worship, we have the greatest reason to praise the divine Goodness, to rejoice at our happy state, and to deplore the misery and blindness of these people (cited in Wolff, 1995).

In the inter-war period, it could be argued that the signified of Eastern Europe would rather dramatically shrink to the size of group of small and immature 'latecomers to the Europe of nation-states', sandwiched between the mature bodies of Germany and Russia, and pursuing their own fiercely nationalistic interests (Murawska-Muthesius, 2001). The total exclusion of Communist Russia from the picture was not a good reference for these small countries of "land-between", but a good clue that these countries required the intervention of the West to eradicate their insecurity and vulnerability.

> Bernard Partridge's editorial cartoons for Punch of the 1930s in particular around the time of Hitler's assaults on Czechoslovakia, dwell on the idea of smallness and a childish mischievousness by representing the countries of Central Europe, such as in the representation of a group of unruly children, two urchins, standing for Poland and Hungary, bully a smaller kid representing Ruthenia, all of them wearing clothes connoting their social inferiority, such as a sheepskin coat and shoes made of straw. The cartoon refers to the events following the Munich Conference, when Czechoslovakia not only lost the Sudetenland to the Third Reich, but also other parts of its territory to Poland and Hungary, the latter occupying a large portion of Ruthenia, then the easternmost province of Slovakia (Murawska-Muthesius, 2001: 7).

According to Murawska-Muthesius, this sense of childishness and naive credulity associated with the (totally) Eastern Europe constructs the basis of the Western attitude of the post-Cold War context. At this point, it would be mind-opening to refer to the line of thought which is constructed upon an antagonistic and unegalitarian relationship between the East and West, being embodied in the

democratic West and totalitarian and democracy-seeking East. These ideas and images of distinction between West (ern) Europe and East (ern) Europe had a certain impact upon the transition process of the post-communist societies. In the next part, the focus will be upon this impact.

2.3.2. Eastern Europe vs. Western Europe-after 1989

With the dismantling of the communist regime in CEECs in 1989, the remnants of a state-socialist, totalitarian past were intended to be substituted with a brand new system, having a neo-liberal and a pluralist parliamentarian politico-economical system with a full-fledged civil society, an uncensored press, equal citizenship rights etc.. at work. Actually the answers given to the "from.....to...." question during the "Fill in the Blanks" process had pointed out just to the aforementioned age-old distinction between East and West. Actually in spite of the sureness of the direction of the magnet, the CEECs were to decide which direction they were to go: They would really return to the West having the aforementioned features *par excellence* or they would remain "static, illiberal submerged into never-ending circles and strives", meaning that "they would either be located at Western rims of the East, or Eastern borders of the West" (Bideleux and Jeffries, 1998:10). Actually, this "either-or" situation has led to a two-fold perception of the East, which can be frequently encountered in the transformation literature:

- They can be European to the extent that they have been transformed

- Even if they have been engaged in the transformation process, they cannot be successful.

Therefore, social sciences have been abundantly punctuated with historical, cultural, geographical, political and even emotional comparisons (and more often than not, distinctions) of the East and West. At this part of the study, some examples from the literature which advocate the unbearability of the huge gap between Central and Eastern European and Western countries will be given.

2.3.3. The Difficulties of the Transition/Transformation Process within the Transition Literature

It would be right to say that George Schöpflin, in his articles "The Political Traditions of Eastern Europe" (Schöpflin, 1991) and "Central Europe: Definitions Old and New" (Schöpflin, 1989) intends to reveal the Eastern Europeanness of Eastern Europe. Despite the fact that he says that Eastern Europe, both geographically and politically, is a transition zone between West and East, with which he actually means Russia (Schöpflin, 1991:65), he seems to register the area in question under the heading of "East". This could be understood from the examples he gives from Poland, Hungary and other countries of the region.

Schöpflin, first of all, sees the conceptualisation, generation, legitimation and exercise of power as the source of different political traditions of East and West. According to him, West is characterised by the fragmentation of power while in the East, power is highly concentrated.

> In practice, Eastern Europe constituted a transitional zone between the Western tradition of the division of power and the eastern tradition of concentration of power. In Eastern Europe, there were indeed elements of autonomy, but the role of the state was generally stronger than in the West (Schöpflin, 1991: 64).

With the same token, the power of the ruler can hardly be challenged as "the ruler knows best, the individual does not" (Schöpflin, 1989). On the other hand, division of power in the East resulted in the reciprocity of rights, meaning that "the ruler owed a duty to his subjects, coupled with the existence of a separate legal sphere through which that duty could be enforced" (Schöpflin, 1989:11). This reciprocity, which seems to be facilitated with a much-maligned feudalism and feudal contracts with right attaching to both sides, provides a chance for "improvement through transcendence" (Schöpflin, 1991:63). Moreover, recognition of complexity as a normal feature of life contributes to the formation of more static empires of "the East". Therefore, East European path is characterised with a politically and economically strong state and this sort of a state system is hegemonic and can be counted as the origin of Etatism.

Within this context, Schöpflin attaches a big importance to the religion. The different religious traditions of Western Christendom and Eastern Christendom seem to determine the level of development or undevelopment of the regions in question. Due to the fragmentation of power, society and culture in the West, with conflicting and complementary duties and obligations to different secular rulers, "the universal church became the dominant integrative institution,

which sought to create a particular order, regularity, similar observance of the rulers and the like" (Schöpflin, 1989:13). On the other hand, because of its insistence on using religion for strengthening the legitimation of the empire, this homogenisation of power in the Eastern Christendom has led to Caesaropapism[9].

> The rivalry of the ruler and the church made it possible for third parties to emerge with their own sources of power. Three of these spheres- commercial, scientific and urban- had very far-reaching consequences (Schöpflin, 1991:62).

Indeed, Church opposition (being embodied in the Christian ban on usury) is claimed to introduce the emergence of the commercial sphere. The ability to develop autonomously from the Church and even from the local ruler facilitated the formation of political techniques safeguarding trade and the reciprocity of contracting parties. On the other hand, no significant trading centres could be found in the East. With the same token, the native bourgeoisie of the West that monopolizes the ongoing economic transactions is unable to find its counterpart in the East because in that area there is no native entrepreneurial class but all economic transactions are made by Jews, Armenians, Serbs etc.. "East European bourgeoisie constituted a colony of the West and it is incapable of performing the integrative function (...) which it had carried out in the West" (Schöpflin, 1991:88). From the same point of view, in the West, the understanding of the religion that its power has laid in the spiritual realm it has

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[9] "Caesaropapism" is a concept used to refer to the combination of the power of worldly (secular) government with the spiritual authority of the Christian Church; most especially, the subordination of the spiritual power of the Christian Church to governmental authority. After Christianity (Orthodoxy) has been accepted as the official religion of the Roman Empire by the Emperor Constantine, the religious power and the governmental power have been exercised by the same person, i.e. the Emperor. This has been usually criticised by the Catholic part of Europe, where these two have been divided historically. Thus, Caesaropapism is usually used in a negative sense to blame the exercise of religious and secular power by the same person or institution.

controlled has led to the emancipation of the scientific sphere from the tutelage of the Church after the Middle Age about 13th century, finding its meaning in the foundation of universities and to the separation of the religious and secular legitimation. In the more static empires of the East, according to Schöpflin, the innovation, change and autonomy of the intellectual sphere assigned to the Western universities seem to be non-existent.

Of course, new elements could be added to the outline of Schöpflin's conceptualization of the East and the West, but it would be unnecessary to enhance the list. As a final remark, the Eastern lands confront another intranscendable wall of difference: a common historical legacy. Schöpflin presents a "ready list" of the events that constitute the European cultural mainstream: Judeo-Christian and Hellenic heritage as transmitted by Christianity, medieval universalism, Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, Romanticism, Nationalism, etc.., which culminate in the European Community. He remains silent whether the Eastern Europe has shared more or less some elements of such a tradition. The actual point of emphasis is the differences hitherto counted and later mentioned in terms of the perception of "history" (Milosz, 1986; cited in Schöpflin, 1989:23). He tells that whereas in Western culture time is neutral, colourless, weightless...in Central Europe it is intense, (...), full of surprises, indeed an active participant in the story). It could be concluded that Schöpflin believes that the different historical, economic, political and cultural trajectories of East and West are unable to converge.

Another point that is frequently used to substantiate the East-West distinction is the concepts of democracy and civil society. Going into the details of such crucial concepts is beyond the aims of this study, but a few references to the noodle points of the argument are crucial. If the statement that "the trials and tribulations of democracy in the West have a direct impact on the image and influence of democratic ideas in the CEECs" (Kaldor and Vejvoda, 1999) is taken for granted, it is inevitable to conclude that the adaptation of these institutions by the CEECs is a pre-condition for the democratization attempts in the region. Understanding democratisation from such a perspective inevitably leads one to the famous ready checklist mentality exemplified before and there is a vast literature testifying on the account of necessity but more often than not the impossibility of such an adaptation. In the transformation literature, the impossibility of the transplantation of a Western-type economy and its prospective institutions was sought in the cultural inconvenience of the individuals living in the CEECs for a Western type democracy. For instance, Ost intends to show the structural basis of weakness of liberalism and civil society in Central and Eastern European countries (Ost, 1993). According to him, people living in these countries "do not know what is actually in their interest and what is not" (Ost, 1993: 457). Despite early moments of freedom (Prague Spring, Solidarity), the prospective premise of a neo-liberal system of a weak state and a strong civil society seems to be non-existent in CEECs. Of course there had been different segments of the society (he is very careful in using the term 'class') but there exists no *natural* conflicts between social groups (*emphasis added*). "Take

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away the old regime in state socialist society, and you do not have natural conflicts between different social groups." (Ost, 1993: 460) This is what is meant by the interest- identity confrontation. To give an example, Solidarity, being a workers' organisation is claimed to be confused about its task in the post-communist era. "Should it fight for the interests of workers or for the interests of society as a whole?" (Ost, 1993: 462). If the aim is to settle the capitalism or to create the conditions in which a middle class could arise, and if we keep in mind that "Solidarity itself has said that defending workers should be secondary to building capitalism and a new middle class" (Ost, 1993: 464), should we call the Solidarity a worker's party or a liberal party with liberal universalist pretensions? For instance, Walesa as president gave the impression that his constituency would be represented though having a worker as president, not through new avenues of presentation. Ost, having this problematic in mind, goes one step forward and widens this confusion to the interpretation of the post-communist transition. Due to the embourgeoisiement of the old elite and within this framework due to the denunciation of the communism as red capitalism and pro-market liberalists as leftists, "East Europeans, having made a collectivist revolution for a market economy, tend to want their capitalists to be collectivists. When they are merely individualists, they are denounced to be communists" (Ost, 1993: 472). He concludes, under the light of all these provisions, that the post-communist transition could only achieve economic liberalism, accompanied by the political illiberalism and again points out the cultural inconvenience of the CEECs to transplant a Western type democracy and political life.

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Krol (1999) seems to share the same idea and underlines the adversity of the transition "alignment" between that of Western democracies and CEECs. According to him, "the liberal tradition grew as a result of social and economic changes and not as their cause" (Krol, 1999: 75). This seems to lead to the imposition of a civil society from above, not as a natural requirement of the society and associations. A confusion or unconsciousness similar to Ost's could be read from Krol's statements:

> After the elections [in 1990], I tried to find out why Walesa was successful? (...). The answer is simple (...): Perhaps, those of us, who were engaged in the struggle for independence and freedom, were mistaken about the values for which people were yearning. We thought they wanted freedom, and to an extent, we imposed it on them, but it seems now that people do not know what to do with the freedom they have regained (Krol, 1999: 74).

Historical uniqueness of the transformation of Eastern Europe, as indicated by Offe (Offe, 1997), seems to appear as the leverage point of the relevant transition literature. Balcerowicz seems to agree with Offe that this asymmetry *produces a historically new sequence*: mass democracy (or at least political pluralism, i.e. some degree of political competition) first and market capitalism later (Balcerowicz, 1995-*emphasis original*). Böröcz, making reference to Polanyi's (Polanyi, 1944) wartime account of the original great transformation of the West (economic transformation preceding democratic reform), states that in East Central Europe, with the exception of Hungary, political change has come first (Böröcz, 1993).

Bryant and Mokrzycki (Bryant and Mokrzycki, 1994), making reference to Polanyi's account of the acquisition and loss of the balance between economic liberalism and social protection, advocate that social fabric of the countries in

question are hard to reconcile with a market mentality. The social fabric requiring protection from the maladies of the self-regulating market and leading to the development structures such as welfare state, social market and social capitalism will also prevent people of CEECs from being pure "economic men" of Adam Smith:

> It was only natural to assume, as most intellectuals, including sociologists that the 'socialist' social fabric, including its macro sociological properties, the artificial product of an imposed social order and an irrational economy, would vanish as soon as men and women were free to choose their own way. (..) They took for granted what was needed was to set people free by removing the economic and social impediments to the natural expression and articulation of individual interests (Bryant and Mokrzycki, 1994: 7).

It would be too hard, too lengthy and too ambitious to make a full- fledged reference to Polanyi, and would it be inappropriate too because of the different political economic situations of Western societies in 1930s and CEECs in 1990s, but the main point to be done is the zealousness of making the social structure adopt the socio-economic structure and the invalidness of the "alleged willingness of individuals to abandon the micro sociological categories they found themselves in" (Bryant and Mokrzycki, 1994: 7).

Making the same point, Burawoy and Verdery, departing from the idea that "the new had to be built within the framework of old", speak of the confrontation of the micro and macro levels (Burawoy and Verdery, 1999). They accuse the literature mapping the "Second Great transformation" of leaving little space for the micro-world of day-to-day life, for the impact of what Akos Rona-Tas (Rona-Tas, 1997; cited in Burawoy and Verdery, 1999) has called "small transformations". According to them, capitalist institutions provoke their own

forms of resistance; new institutions appeal to the "good old days" and actually

lead to deeper "pathologies" (Burawoy and Verdery, 1999: 10). Elizabeth Dunn,

in her study in the same volume about shock therapy in order to quicken

marketization which actually creates its own barriers, speaks about Polish

salespeople facing different dilemmas. "They aspire to Western market

principles but find themselves trapped between retailer who demand the same

old rewards and marketers who deny them those inducements" (Dunn, 1999: 10).

To reiterate, it is argued by Burawoy and Verdery and other scholars in their

book that the disassociation between the micro and macro levels in terms of

adoption to the capitalism is apparent, where the micro-world of day-to-day life

resists to be transformed. These "unintended consequences" visible on the part of

the micro-level seem in line with the general traits of the transformation

literature exemplified above.

This situation, of course, effects people's aspirations about the state.

Speaking about the prevalence of the idea of the patronage state in the area in

question, Bauman suggests the term "liminality" for the CEECs (Baumann,

1991). According to him, liminality is a condition between separation (the

disappearance of the old situation, status or regime) and aggregation (the

formation of a new one), which can be described as "threshold, unstructured, a

break in determination and ambiguity". In the threshold they stand (*limen*

meaning threshold in Latin), in CEECs,

> the accelerating disintegration of the communist system was in a way an
> unanticipated outcome of demands the system itself gestated and styled.
> 'Objectively', and in the view of many protesters, the demands required a further
> strengthening of the managerial role of the state. But it was precisely that

managerial role, already stretched beyond its capacity, which stood in the way of satisfying the opposition's demands (Baumann, 1991: 21).

What is apparent in this picture is the current location of the state as the address for collective demands, hopes and fears, although the wind of change is expected to blow on the account of the invisible hand. "At the height of popular disaffection in Poland, during the heyday of Solidarity and the years of its legal suppression, research after research found that a large majority of the population wanted the state to deliver more of its, specifically communist promise" (Baumann, 1991: 20). The hopes for the prevalence of the patronage state point out the aforementioned cultural, at least emotional resistance to a Western type capitalist economy.

Kaldor and Vojveda, departing from the difference between formal and substantive democracy, argue that all CEECs have more or less been engaged in formal democracy, but substantive democracy is under way (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999:19). By formal democracy, they mean the set of rules, procedures and institutions and by substantive democracy they mean " a way of regulating power relations in such a way as to maximise the opportunities for individuals to influence the conditions in which they live, to participate in and influence debates about the key decisions that effect society" (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 3-4). In this manner, they present Robert Dahl's procedural minimum conditions for democracy (Dahl, 1982:11): inclusive citizenship (not on the basis of race, ethnicity or gender), rule of law (protection from tyranny of majority), separation of powers, elected power-holders, free and fair elections, freedom of expression

and alternative sources of information, associational autonomy, civilian control over the security forces etc.. (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 4-5). Their study is said to meet the formal democracy in the ten CEECs. For instance, they have democratically ratified constitutions or separation of powers between the legislative, executive and juridical branches can be said to be settled (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 7). "Regular elections have led to the alternation in the power of divergent parties or coalitions, thus proving that the mechanisms of political competition can operate and are accepted by the political actors" (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 7). But, they emphasize that elections are not a sufficient condition for the existence of democracy but have to be complemented by a "variety of competitive processes and channels for the expression of interests and values-associational as well as partisan, functional as well as territorial, collective as well as individual" (Schmitter and Karl, 1991:78). On the contrary, when we look at, for instance, political parties to test the existence of substantive democracy,

> both the former communist and the new parties [in the CEECs] tend to be highly centralised and to have markedly hierarchical structures. It can be argued that they see themselves, as their communist predecessors did, as instruments for the capture or preservation of power rather than transmission belts for political ideas and debates (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 11).

Kaldor and Vejvoda also talk about the anti- political sentiments of the people of the area in question, showing the incongruence with the political set-up in the CEECs and "the substantive features of a Western democracy".

> Reluctance of people to engage in politics has its roots in the negative political legacy of prolonged life in an over politicised communist polity, but also in a sense of powerlessness, of the inability to influence political or economic events, in a situation in which the perception of parts of the electorate is that agencies

such as IMF or the World Bank have much greater leverage on their future than internal actors (Kaldor and Vojveda, 1999: 12).

The message is clear: the CEECs may have the appropriate institutions of a formal democracy but what matters is the extent they are appropriated adequately and correctly. "Copied and transplanted institutions that lack moral and cultural infrastructure on which 'original' can rely are likely to yield different and often counter-intentional results" (Offe, 1993). Pointing out, again, the two levels that transformations in East Central Europe proceed, namely the institutional and cultural, Sztompka speaks about the dichotomy of institution building and culture- building (Sztompka, 1996). As "clock of the citizen runs much slower and lags behind the institutional developments" (Sztompka, 1996: 125), it is vital to generate changes at the deep cultural level. But, "Eastern European transformations are determined by the fact of modernisation requirements- simultaneously concerning the political, social and cultural spheres- mutually blocking instead of mutually stimulating one another" (Muller, 1992:146; cited in Sztompka, 1996).

Using a well-drawn historical line of Stalinist, post-Stalinist, post-communist and state-socialist period of East Central Europe, Ekiert speaks about the limits of the democratisation process in the region (Ekiert, 1991). As a departure point regarding the burgeoning of the civil society in the region, he warns us to beware of the necessity of reformulating the traditional distinction between state and civil society, making references to two separate categories: political society and domestic society. First of all, he describes the category of

domestic society as the whole range of primary and secondary social groups within society (Ekiert, 1991: 300). It represents the domain of purposeful action restricted to the private sphere and organized in terms of material needs and self-interests, having the state as the apparatus of coercive power. On the other hand, using a Tocquevillian definition, Ekiert interprets the political society as the entirety of voluntary associations and social movements in an active political community. As Forment (Forment, 1988) puts it,

> [it is] a place or realm where people congregate to debate and act on the burning, public issues of the day. (...) In political society, collective activity is organised around the principle of solidarity, and is expressed usually in terms of public debate and participation (cited in Ekiert, 1991).

What is important from the point of the view of the issue in question, Ekiert advocates that in the Stalinist and post-Stalinist period, events such as Kadar's stabilisation policies in Hungary after 1956 revolution and Solidarity movement in Poland could be claimed to be the fore-runners of a civil society. However, what we see here is the development of a domestic society with the concessions given to some sections of the society such as the educated industrial workers, targeted intellectuals, in change for a withdrawal from politics, which has been called as the "new social contract" by Liehm (Liehm, 1975). That is, the most ambitious era regarding the development of a civil society is characterized by the absence of a political society in those countries by Ekiert. These concessions and informal mechanisms of interest mediation and representation are interpreted as the institutionalisation of the system of clientalism and corruption. However, later on, Ekiert continues, the post-Stalinist

compromise between the domestic society and the party-state has been broken down by the dissolution of official ideology, which has resulted in the formation of open public spaces and a political society in its full sense:

> The breakdown of this post-Stalinist accommodation between the party-state and domestic society in the 1980s took place by means of two distinctive processes. The first is the rebirth and reassessment of traditional, political and cultural values designed by intellectual elites as an attempt to defy dominant political institutions and to permeate the vacuum left by the collapse of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the dissolution of official political discourse. This development can be called as the formation of a new political society and the creation of open public spaces. (..) A second process shaping the situation in East Central Europe which often, but not necessarily, went together with the formation and institutionalisation of political society, was the slow relaxation of ideological, political and organisational constraints through which the party-state kept in check, often unsuccessfully, the expansion of domestic society (Ekiert, 1991: 305-308).

But now, according to Ekiert, there was another problem: the effects of market reforms in the 1980s showed a growing system of inequalities:

> The interaction between the democratisation of the polity and the marketization of the economy presents a specific problem and creates an additional dimension of conflicts and tensions which are largely absent in classical transitions from authoritarian regimes. (..) The transition to democracy is likely to occur in situations in which the power of the state and civil society simultaneously expand. In East Central Europe, however, it is more probable that the power of the state and civil society will simultaneously decline (Ekiert, 1991: 311).

To reiterate, Ekiert advocates that even if the events of 1980s have led to the burgeoning of the political society where the collective activity is expressed in terms of public debate and participation in Central Eastern Europe, due to the problems inequalities caused by the economic transformation, transition to democracy is not very likely to occur. The fulfilment of all conditions for a Tocquevillian democracy is not sufficient for the democratization in the region.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, the nature of the intellectual debates on the position of Central Europe vis-à-vis the idea of "Europe", especially in terms of cultural and existential affiliations, has been unveiled. The actual point of emphasis has been that the terminology used is conditional upon the perspective employed or the period referred. For instance, the term "Eastern Europe" is used for the region when the post-Cold War delineation of the regions is employed. Moreover, it is usually used by the intellectuals who advocate that the region had to be transformed on economic, cultural, social and political terms to be "European", though this is usually regarded as a trivial effort. On the other hand, the term "Central Europe" is used usually to emphasise the "Europeanness" of the region, frequently by the Central European intellectuals, so-called "dissidents".

Thus, the above summary points out to two very general line of thinking in terms of locating the so-called "Central Europe" and "Western Europe" vis-à-vis each other. The first period that has been referred to is the early 1980s. The main aim of this discourse has been expressed as the emphasis of the "Europeanness" of Central Europe, stressing the common cultural, political and historical trajectories of Central Europe and Western Europe. The most outstanding intellectuals contributing to the "Return to Europe" debate have been mentioned: Vaclav Havel, Adam Michnik, György Konrad and Milan Kundera. The main characteristic of the debates conducted by these intellectuals was the emphasis of an "anti- politics" discourse and the main leverage to stress the commonalities

between Western Europe and Central Europe appeared as the culture. The point of reference is usually that Central Europe and Western Europe could be distinguished only geographically: "The idea of a unified region does not take into account the existence of two genetically, structurally and developmentally different regional entities: the Central European and East European" (Hanak, 1994).

The very basic departure point of the second line of thinking is the East-West dualism. It has been argued that this dualism has been (re)produced by post-Yalta order, where the Berlin Wall actually delineates a dividing line between the East and West. In the 1980s and especially after 1989, the main intellectual attempt in this sense has been to argue that the eastern part of the Wall had to be engaged in a transformation process to internalize the so-called "European features", which are conceived in essentialist terms, it is implied that there is no guarantee that such a transformation will succeed in enabling these countries have those features. The main ideas of the transformation literature have been mentioned in order to pose a counter-argument to the former line of thinking by the Central European intellectuals, even if the transformation literature could be associated with the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Thus, this chapter has been devoted to the attempt to understand the conceptualization of "Europe" by Central European and Western European intellectuals mainly in the 1980s. The main concern is to argue how Central Europe and Western Europe is located vis-à-vis each other conceptually and the main reference point is the concern about a belongingness or non-belongingness

to Europe on the part of Central Europe. Existential and cultural attempts to understand the abovementioned two-fold location are significant in this period.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUALIZING "EUROPE" IN CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE FROM 1990S ONWARDS: HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EU AND HUNGARY AND POLAND

3.1. Introduction

To the extent that this study tries to dig out the dynamics of the perception of "Europe" in the political spaces in Poland and Hungary, it is obligatory to understand what really constitutes the content of the discussions regarding Europe and the EU in these countries.

In this chapter, broadly speaking, it will be argued that the ideological and cultural concerns or discussions attached to the idea of "Europe" in the late 80s and early 90s are irrelevant to the formation of the political spaces of the sample countries regarding the EU, especially in the late 90s. "Europe" seems to be vocalized only and only with reference to certain policies, stereotypes and discourses, which are not exactly related to any concern of culturally or ideologically constructed question of belongingness. This belongingness, in terms of the cases in question, only entails belonging to a "rich man's club" or to a specific policy. "Europe" is not presented as a

question of ideological affiliation but of acquiring room for short-term gains or manoeuvres.

More particularly, in order to substantiate this idea, the attempt will be to understand the historical evolution of the accession process regarding Poland and Hungary with the question in mind: what is the nature of the process that took these countries from a strict decision to return to Europe, to disconnectedness, disinterestedness and irrelevance? The question needs to be tackled within a two-fold perspective: to analyse both the dynamics of the Union and the candidate states during this process. Thus, within the framework of the effort to unveil the difference between the conceptualizations of "Europe" in the 1980s and late 1990s and 2000s, it is necessary to mention what the EU itself, as the first reference mentioned when it is "Europe" in question from 1990s onwards, understood from "Europe" or being "European".

3. 2. Historical Evolution

To the extent that the argument in this chapter is that Hungarian and Polish perceptions of Europe from 1990s onwards (from the start of accession negotiations) has underwent a drastic change, it is obligatory to introduce the historical stage upon which such a change has been carved. If we are to advocate that the attitudes towards "Europe" have changed, especially after the start of accession negotiations which are

accepted as a touchstone within the framework of this research, in favour of a more pragmatic, superficial and strategic conceptualisation, it has to be proven that this change has been fed or accelerated by certain historical moments. As Agh introduces the beginnings of the process,

> in the late 80s, two isolated "reform countries" Hungary and Poland were taking small steps within the former system to disengage their countries as much as possible from USSR. Then, neutralism was deemed as a positive thing. (...) With the dissolution of Warsaw Pact, self-liberation of Poland and Hungary has been 'over-determined' again with the change of international order. Neutrality has been a "punishment" now (Agh, 2001:9).

According to Agh, the decision of "Return to Europe" has been very much necessitated by these changes in the international order. As he summarized the process, the shift from affirming "neutrality" to avoiding it was accelerated by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the redefinition of the "sides". Actually, the above mentioned "small steps within the former system" has substantiated the direction of change, long before the total demise of the system.

> Already in the late communist era, Hungarian governments went as far in their efforts to improve relations with the then European Community as it was possible to do in the political climate of the day, taking the lead among Central and East European countries in this respect (Batory, 2002b).

Admission to the IMF and the World Bank in 1982, establishment of contacts with the European Parliament, application for the membership of the Council of Europe under the premiership of Miklos Nemeth on the part of Hungary may be listed under the heading of these "small steps". Diplomatic relations between the EU and Hungary and Poland were firstly established via Trade and Cooperation Agreements in July 1988 and September 1989 respectively.

Of course, it was not a coincidence that the EC and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) of the Eastern bloc have established mutual diplomatic relationships just several months before the agreements.

In Hungary, under the premiership of Joszef Antall, the gap in the foreign policy formed by the disappearance of Warsaw Pact, CMEA and the Soviet Union itself has been filled by new priorities such as "Euro-Atlantic integration, good relations with other countries of East Central Europe, and the representation of the interests of ethnic Hungarians abroad, living in the countries neighbouring Hungary" (Batory, 2002b:2). Western orientation was seen as a security guarantee in a post-Cold War environment (Grabbe and Hughes, 1999). Batory adds the highly ambitious 1990 "Programme of National Renewal" to this picture which was characterised by the goal of conclusion of the association agreement [which entered into force in December 1991] with the EC to "provide the foundations for future full membership which was expected by 1995" (Batory, 2002b:2). This orientation was reflected in the parliamentary resolution granting a mandate to the Hungarian government to apply for membership of the EU was adopted unanimously in March 1994 (Batory, 2002b).

Similarly, Poland's foreign policy was constructed upon cooperation with the so-called West. As is expressed by the Polish Foreign Ministry:

> aside from a strict cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic sphere, including the US with regards to the anti-terrorist operations, Poland desires to keep the current dynamic relations with its principal European partners: Germany, France and Great Britain. One of the symbols of Poland's return to the family of democratic states was the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Germany and France which took place in Weimar in August 1991 (Polish Foreign Ministry's Official Website).

The signing of the Europe Agreements between Poland and Hungary and the EU is the most important cornerstone in the attempt to formalize this intention to become a part of "Europe". The framework of these agreements has been expressed by the EU as follows:

> The Europe Agreements provide the framework for bilateral relations between the European Communities and their Member States on the one hand and the partner countries on the other. The Europe Agreements cover trade-related issues, political dialogue, legal approximation and other areas of cooperation, including industry, environment, transport and customs. They aim progressively to establish a free-trade area between the EU and the associated countries over a given period, on the basis of reciprocity but applied in an asymmetric manner (i.e. more rapid liberalization on the EU side than on the side of the associated countries) (European Union Official Website).

Both Poland and Hungary signed the Europe Agreement (also referred to as the Association Agreement) for associate membership in December 1991 which came into force in February 1994.

According to the European Union, the Europe Agreements are based on shared understanding and values, and prepare the way for the EU and the partner countries to converge economically, politically, socially and culturally. They cover political cooperation, favorable trade relations, economic activities and cultural cooperation (European Union Official Website). The main aim of the Europe Agreements seems to establish free trade in industrial products within transition periods.

> In addition to the liberalization of trade, the Europe Agreements also contain provisions regarding the free movement of services, payments and capital in respect of trade and investments, and the free movement of workers (European Union Official Website).

Under the Agreements, the partner countries also commit themselves to approximating their legislation to that of the European Union, particularly in the areas relevant to the internal market.

While these occurred in the Eastern part of "Europe", the events in Brussels were submerged into totally different dynamics. It must be made clear that at the beginning of this above mentioned "Back to Europe" process, the EC did not have a full-fledged strategy or a time table for the accession of the CEECs. Agh speaks about "business-like" Western behaviour that narrowly focused on Western economic interests, about the Europe agreements, which was demonstrated in 1990 and 1991 at the negotiations (Agh, 2001: 9). The concept of "benign neglect" that is usually used in the literature, for instance, was embodied in some historical events and decisions. Agh argues that, contrary to what is usually considered, Euro-agreements were not so satisfying and generous:

> Euro-agreements were below the expectations of the ECE states for the reasons below:
> • The asymmetric opening of the European market does not include the so-called sensitive sectors of the EU: coal, steel, textile and agriculture. But these are the only sectors where the East Central European economies can effectively compete with West European products
> • The EU rejected financially binding commitments in the agreement. Financial protocols, such as in the case of associated Turkey, were not signed. The associated countries realistically considered the PHARE[11] support as completely inadequate.

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[11] The PHARE programme was established by an EU Council Regulation at the end of 1989 to provide immediate grant assistance to Poland and Hungary to support the process of economic transformation. Initially the aid was provided in four main areas: agriculture, improving access to the Single Market for Polish and Hungarian goods, cooperating in projects for environmental protection and encouraging investment in these countries (Mannin, 1999). After the creation of a European Training Foundation by a 1990 Commission proposal, the education was seen as a priority area by the PHARE for reform. One of the sub-programmes of the PHARE, PEIE (Educational Pack on European Integration) preset the use of the first multimedia, methodologically modern pack on European integration issues in the Polish and Hungarian market of educational materials (*The Official Website of the Council of Europe*). PHARE also made financial assistance available to support privatization, financial reforms and industrial restructuring.

- Regarding the free movement of workers only minimal concessions were made to the Visegrad states to the EU (Merkel, 1996:45-46, cited in Agh, 2001:31)

Similarly, he substantiates his argument by a reference to the decision of the EC Foreign Ministers on 15 April 1991 that membership of the EC could be mentioned in the Preamble of Association Agreements as "ultimate, though not automatic goal" (cited in Agh, 2001: 31). Moreover, "in 1991 and 1992, the Commission made it clear that the Association Agreements with Central Europe were no automatic entrance tickets to the Community" (Agh, 2001: 31). Similarly, Batory advocates:

> the Europe Agreement or association formula first extended by the EC to the post-communist countries was little more than a classical trade agreement, supplemented by a political dialogue (...) and backed by technical and financial assistance (Batory, 2002b:2).

Non-existence of such a coherent Western strategy towards the CEECs was mainly because of the fact that the Community was very busy with its internal problems. The need to provide a political legitimation to the so-called "economically giant, but politically dwarf community"[12], which very much furnished the way to the Maastricht Treaty or the Treaty on the European Union prevented the Community from doing much in order to integrate the East. The direction of the change stipulated by the new Treaty gave the signals of a new understanding of democracy which emphasised the demos, political participation, openness and a more socially-oriented integration. For instance, Agh links this new conceptualisation of democracy to a shift

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[12] The dichotomy was originally used for Germany and Japan after the Second World War. In the EU context, it is usually advocated that such a conceptualisation of the EU was among the main concerns which led to the aforementioned Treaty on the European Union, as a mere economic cooperation would not be commensurate with the so-called highly ambitious objectives of the Union.

from a minimalist concept of democracy to a more elaborated understanding, exemplified by an emphasis on the minorities in the Copenhagen Criteria later on. Of course, it is open to speculation that the fruits of this change, being proclaimed in the new decisions or summits of the new Union, resembled to the major concerns of the 1997 World Bank report, which was very much speaking of the effective, participatory and citizen-friendly service state, as claimed by Agh (Agh, 2001).

Similarly, Sedelmeier (2000) argues that the EU's decision to enlarge eastwards must be considered beyond the parameters of a material rationality and evaluated as an extension of an EU collective identity created within the framework of Maastricht process. As Sedelmeier (2000) argues,

> the EU's decision to open accession negotiations was not the result of a strategic choice in response to the potential instability in the CEECs. The ability to agree on enlargement despite the veto power of negatively effected member governments is thus not a reflection of the EU's capacity as a collective strategic actor in international politics. Rather, the EU's decision to pursue accession negotiations can largely be attributed to the collective identity that the EU created for itself and the regulative norms such an identity entailed (Sedelmaier, 2000: 183).

Moreover, it seems that the link associated between identity and enlargement is to convince the enlargement-opponents of the endorsement of the CEECs' membership (Sedelmaier, 2000). The "responsibility" of the EU towards the CEECs, which is the usually used concept both by the policy-makers and politicians within the European Union who support the Eastern enlargement, urged the Union to support the political and economic reforms and their integration with the EU. According to Sedelmaier (2000), Mitterrand's statement in 1980 that "what we term Europe is a

second-best option which alone cannot represent all European history, geography and culture" (Haywood, 1993; cited in Sedelmaier, 2000) must be understood within this context.

Thus, on the part of the candidate states, the most important reflection of this new understanding emphasising *the political* and a new conceptualisation of democracy and collective identity was the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 which provided that the Europe Agreement countries could become members of an enlarged EU as soon as they fulfilled certain general criteria for accession. The EU set three main criteria for the start of accession talks with the CEECs for membership:

> Stable political institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities; a functioning market economy that can withstand competitive pressure from other EU countries; and the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union, implementation of the EU common law or *acquis communataire*, and administrative and judicial capacity (European Council, 1993: 13).

Thus, the aforementioned "benign neglect" was substituted by a more conducive effort to integrate the CEECs to the framework of the EU on the part of the Union itself. The framework drawn by the Copenhagen European Council had been concretized further by the adoption of the *pre-accession strategy*. In December 1994, the Essen European Council defined a pre-accession strategy to prepare candidate countries for EU membership. It was mainly based on:

- the implementation of the Europe Agreements

- the PHARE programme of the financial assistance

- a "structured dialogue" bringing all member states and candidate countries together to discuss the issues of common interest (European Council, 1994).

The aforementioned shift in the attitude of the EU against the CEECs was most markedly indicated in July 1997 by the issuing of the *Agenda 2000* and the Commission's opinions for the ten applicant CEECs. Agenda 2000

> did not only open the negotiation process and further outlined the conditions for accession of CEE to the EU but also differentiated between two groups of applicant countries: fast-track (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia, plus Cyprus) and slow-track (Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia) (Iankova, 2000:9).

Agenda 2000 proclaimed that the interest of the EU is to "assess how democracy actually works in practice" (Agh, 2001:23).

"This development has heated-up the accession process with intense political and public debate in both the fast- and slow-track applicants for EU membership" (Iankova, 2000:9). Actually, from the time of Copenhagen Summit and *Agenda 2000* on, all the future conclusions or decisions on the part of the EU seem to be constructed upon them. From October 1998 on, the Commission has begun to issue regular reports on the candidate countries' progress towards accession. For instance, the Commission proclaimed that: "Poland is a functioning market economy and should be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union in the near term, provided it continues and completes its present reform efforts". Accordingly it was noted that, in *2000 Regular Report on Poland's Progress Towards Accession* by the European Commission, the measures were needed to be taken to improve Poland's

infrastructure and the response of labour markets to changing economic conditions. Similarly, "regular report of the EC on Hungary's progress towards accession stipulated that Hungary continues to fulfil Copenhagen political criteria" (Hegedus, 2001). Hegedus speaks about some problems of Hungary mentioned in the regular report such as segregation of Roma people[13] in local communities and schools, police brutality, high level of corruption and over-weight of government representation in the boards of public service media, but anyway he finds the EC's opinion positive and encouraging (2001). With the same token,

> the European Council in Göteborg on 15-16 June 2001, similarly to all of its former resolutions, applies a sophisticated wording about the future of the European Union [for Hungary]. As the Presidency conclusions proclaim, enlargement is irreversible. The highest representatives of the fifteen member states also claim that the road map, the official scenario for the accession negotiations, should make it possible by the end of 2002 to complete these talks with applicant countries that will be ready. In order to get ready, successful candidates have to fulfil the political and economic criteria of accession as well as to adopt and implement the *acquis communataire*. The objective is that they should participate in the European Parliament (EP) elections of 2004 as members (Hegedus, 2001: 201).

What has to be emphasised here is that the above mentioned transformation of the perception of the EU about the CEECs stretching from benign neglect to the approval of accession until the next EP elections has been counterposed on the part of the candidate states, but in a counter- clock- wise direction. The ideally- constructed image of Europe, championed by the discourse of "Return to Europe" in the early 90s

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[13] Since the collapse of communism, "the Roma" have become a subject of increasing political interest and significance. Since the Council of Europe Resolution 1203 (1993) which declares them to be a "true European minority" requiring special protection, Roma issue is conceptualised as a minority problem which finds its resonance under the heading of "political criteria" in annual regular reports of countries (Kovats, 2002). In the Hungarian context, *Accession Partnership* with Hungary includes a need for "further efforts to improve the situation of the Roma".

is replaced by less enthusiasm and more disconnectedness on the part of the peoples

of CEECs, which constitutes the backbone of one of the following sections.

CHAPTER 4

A CRITICAL OUTLOOK ON HOW THE POLITICAL PARTIES EVALUATE THE ISSUE OF "EUROPE" IN HUNGARY AND POLAND IN THE LATE 1990S AND EARLY 2000S

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a reference has been made to the question what the Europe meant for political parties. In order to do this, the first attempt has been to delineate the theoretical framework of the concept of "Euroscepticism" and to show that the "Euroscepticism" itself is intrinsically strategical. This has led to the idea that except for the parties that show *de facto* or outright opposition to the EU, Euroscepticism within the framework of these countries express strategic and short-term concerns. While doing this, the shifts in the rhetoric or the stance of the party leaders regarding the European integration have also been referred to. Moreover, the identification of the EU to particular policies by the political parties in question has been exemplified and has been shown as a proof of the shallow perspective through which "Europe" is conceptualised by the political parties. The scrutiny of the ways in which the Polish and Hungarian political parties conceptualise "Europe" verifies the central argument of this study: the ideological and cultural concerns or discussions with regard to

"Europe in the early 1980s and are irrelevant to the formation of the political spaces of the sample countries regarding the EU, especially in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

4.2. Euroscepticism at Hand

The Europeanization of the CEECs has gained a new impetus with the start of negotiations and the prospective accession of the countries in question as the second momentous process in their history after their withdrawal from the Soviet sphere of influence in 1989. In this context, at least literally, one of the main components of the EU accession process exists in the form of the term "Euroscepticism", as has been noted before. In the 1990s, it would be hard to find any political party or any citizen that would think an alternative to the EU, but now the picture seems to be a bit more complicated. The positive view of the Hungarian, Polish and Czech public about the EU was around 69%, 59% and 49% respectively in May 2000, which was actually more conducive in the first years of the pronunciation of the name EU. However, the percentages seem to be like 54%, 44% and 42% according to the same alignment in May 2001 (Kopecky and Mudde, 2002). Euroscepticism is defined by Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002a) as "a contingent or outright opposition to the process of the European integration". Moreover, a distinction is made between soft and hard Euroscepticism. Hard Euroscepticism entails a categorical and outright denial of the entire project of the EU. As Taggart and Szczerbiak explain,

there are two short-hand methods of assessing whether a party is 'hard Eurosceptic'. The first is if it is a single-issue anti-EU party. We assume that a party would only mobilise solely against the EU if it were opposed to it on principle. The second method is to ask whether the opposition to the EU is framed in language that stresses that it is too capitalist/socialist/neo-liberal/bureaucratic, depending on ideological position (communist/conservative/socialist, populist) and calls for a fundamental re-casting of the terms on which their country is an EU member that is incompatible with the present trajectory of the European project. This is sometimes expressed as unconditional support for EU membership but on conditions so unattainable that it is tantamount to being de facto opposed to EU membership (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:7).

On the other hand, Taggart and Szczerbiak argue that soft Euroscepticism speaks of an opposition towards a certain policy or rule, which is usually escorted with the discourse of "national interest" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b).

If someone supports the EU as it currently exists and opposes any further integration, they are effectively [soft] Eurosceptic, because this is at odds with what is the dominant mode of integration that is on-going (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:8).

After putting the terminology in this way, Taggart and Szczerbiak introduce some observations about Euroscepticism both in member states and candidate states, effectively in a comparative way. First of all, they argue that Euroscepticism is an established part of all EU member states' party systems except Spain, which is a more visible concept in the candidate states (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b). We are faced with a depiction of Eurosceptic parties in member states with an average vote of 5.66%; many of which are parties of protest and whose position on Europe may be evaluated as a secondary concern (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b). On the other hand, Eurosceptic parties have a more significant average vote share of 25.9% and higher levels of support in the candidate states, which is linked to an automatic association between negotiation and 'national interest' (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b). This

picture in which soft Euroscepticism is a more common feature than hard Euroscepticism in both cases, when translated into numbers, becomes such that "the mean level of support for soft Eurosceptic parties is over twice that of hard Eurosceptic parties (with the means being 14.13 per cent and 5.42 per cent respectively) [for both member and candidate states]" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:22). When comparing the candidate states to member states in this respect, soft Eurosceptics emerge as more important to their party systems in the CEECs than in member states. By the same token, hard Euroscepticism is: "only derisory in the Central and Eastern Europe but are significant in some member states" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:32).

Secondly, speaking in terms of the location of the parties in the power-opposition spectrum, usually the parties at the margins of party systems and minority parties seem to deploy hard Euroscepticism while soft Euroscepticism is expressed by mainstream parties. This is clarified by Taggart and Szczerbiak:

> (..) going into a government or being 'coalitionable' (moving away from the periphery to the centre of the party system) leads to a 'softening' or even abandonment of a party's Eurosceptic stance, [while] being on the periphery of a party system inclines a party towards being more Eurosceptic as a means of differentiating itself from the political mainstream (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:26).

Speaking comparatively, in the member states, major parties of government are absent in the list and mainstream parties only exist in factional form (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b). On the contrary, Taggart's (Taggart, 1998) statement on the absence of the governing parties among the Eurosceptical parties identified does not

hold true for the CEECs. Parties at the margins of party systems and minority parties adopt hard Euroscepticism while soft Euroscepticism is expressed by major parties of government within the context of CEECs (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002a).

Thirdly, Taggart and Szczerbiak tell us that Eurosceptic parties are usually on the right wing of the spectrum in the CEECs while they are evenly spread in member states (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b), which does not necessarily show that party's position on the left-right spectrum is correlated with either it is Eurosceptical or not (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2001). Reading between the lines, Taggart and Szczerbiak seem to tell us that the strong tendency to see parties expressing Euroscepticism at the right of political spectrum does not mean that Euroscepticism is monopolised by right-wing ideology. For instance, while giving the list of political parties with Eurosceptic positions, they put the Czech *Republican Party of Czechoslovakia* in the same list with *Hungarian Workers Party of Hungary* (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2001:21). Moreover, they give some reasons why the Eurosceptic parties are usually right parties in the region concerned.

❖   First of all, they argue that:

> "One type of left-wing party adopting Euroscepticism in Western Europe does not exist in Central and Eastern Europe: Green parties or new left parties which exist as 'currents within parties rather than as parliamentary forces in their own right" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b).

❖   As a probable second reason, they point out to the exigency faced by the left parties of the region, most of which are former communists, to transform

themselves to Western-type social democratic parties, with usually pro-European discourses. The fact that right in the CEECs are more eclectic and nationalistic than their counterparts in the West may be a reason for the natural affinity between soft Euroscepticism and East European right (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b).

Fourthly, regarding the candidate states, "Euroscepticism is most likely to be stronger in those candidate states where accession is perceived as a more immediate prospect than in those candidate states where it seems more distant" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2001:13). Therefore, party-based Euroscepticism is conditional upon the provision that the accession becomes a hotter and ready-to-be-challenged issue in political agenda, at least relatively.

Last, but not least, Taggart and Szczerbiak advocate that there is not a direct correlation, or let's say, translation between party-based Euroscepticism and levels of popular Euroscepticism for both member and candidate states (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b).

> The dynamics of competition within a party system may increase the strategic incentives for the expression of positions that differentiate the parties and therefore might lead to parties being Eurosceptic where reservoir of popular Euroscepticism is relatively low. The same may be true in reverse where they may be relatively high levels of popular Euroscepticism but the dynamics of the party system may create the incentives for consensual behaviour (in order to form coalitions) so that Euroscepticism is thereby minimised in the parties in favour of a consensus around European integration (Taggart and Szczerbiak 2001:12).

By jettisoning the cause-effect relationship between the will of the constituency and the stance of the party in question regarding European integration, they,

somehow, get one step nearer to the idea that Euroscepticism is a strategical political concept.

Speaking about the September 2002 parliamentary elections in Poland, Szczerbiak points out to this misfit between party-based Euroscepticism and level of popular anti-EU stance (Szczerbiak, 2002). He tells us that the opinion polls showing the emergence of Eurosceptic Polish public opinion being represented by 25-30% of voters are not directly reflected by the electoral results:

> Even if one accepts that *Self- Defence* [a party that will be mentioned later] is a *de facto* hard Eurosceptic party, the share of the vote won by openly anti-EU parties (18.07%) still understated the levels of public opposition to EU membership (Szczerbiak, 2002:12).

Moreover, he uses the above conclusion about this misfit in order to prove the statement that instead of the higher percentage that the Polish parliament will consist of parties which are critical of or hostile to EU, the results of September 2001 elections[14] cannot be evaluated as a 'Eurosceptic backlash'(Szczerbiak, 2002).

Returning to the theoretical framework of Euroscepticism established by Taggart and Szczerbiak, they, at the end of their research, ask some "research questions" that need to be answered in order to provide a broader research as a "mapping exercise". One of these questions will be referred here, which is seen vital to investigate the concern about what constitutes the basic motive of the party-based Euroscepticism. Answering this question would be helpful for both better

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[14]The results of the September 2001 parliamentary elections will be mentioned thoroughly in the following section. See the pages 103-105

understanding the aforementioned concept and get one step nearer to questioning what really determines party- based Euroscepticism in the region: ideology or strategy? The question that will be referred to is whether it is possible to compare member states with candidate states, posed by Taggart and Szczerbiak. In this respect, they cite Karen Henderson who argues that the issue of EU membership is possibly evaluated differently in member states and Central and Eastern European countries, where it is "inextricably bound up with the transition issues" (cited in Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:27). Maybe, the clues of this phenomenon could be traced in the fact that the only Eurosceptic parties that are at the same time in power are visible in the Central and Eastern European countries. Similarly, the fact that CEECs are 'newcomers' in Europe and European issues can be used to prove that it will likely be taken for granted, as Batory explains:

> much of the ambiguity in this scheme arises from the fact that considering European integration as a 'constant' independent variable is problematic in relation to parties in member states. Not only is the EU changing, but its transformation is essentially effected by party governments across the member states through EU institutions. Moreover, national traditions and regulatory systems from the viewpoint of which parties make judgements about the future direction of market or social integration on European level also varies widely. In contrast, having started from a 'status quo' of central planning, parties in most post-communist countries are more likely to associate the EU with market integration and having at present little or no influence on the changes taking place within it, relate to the EU as it is (Batory, 2002a:528-9).

Therefore, the existence of different contexts may prevent one from taking the parties of member states and candidate states as a single set. Moreover, it may give the idea that they come to an already established institution may easily provide them with a stimulus to act on pragmatic grounds.

On the other hand, Kopecky and Mudde (2001, 2002), speculating about the erosion of the consensus on the question of European integration, argue that Euroscepticism does not entail any degree of rejection of the basis upon which the EU is constructed, but only an opposition to accession at that time or as such. Actually, they criticise Taggart and Szczerbiak on the grounds that soft Euroscepticism is defined too broadly and distinction between European integration and accession is skipped. Instead, they offer a new classification. They call those who believe in the general ideas of European integration and support EU as *Euroenthusiasts*, those who believe in the general ideas of European integration but are pessimistic about current reflection of these ideas as *Eurosceptics,* those who subscribe neither to the ideas underlying European integration and the EU itself as *Eurorejectionists* and those who do not believe in the ideas of European integration but approve the EU as *Europragmatists*. They, one by one, classify the parties in Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary on the basis of their attitude to European integration. In this context, they ask the question: "is a party's position on European integration to be changed whenever it is deemed strategically convenient or is it grounded in the broader party ideology and thus less vulnerable to short-term political considerations?" (Kopecky and Mudde, 2002:319). Their answer leans more to the thesis that the parties' stances on European integration are ideological such that all social democrats and liberals are Europhiles and all extreme-right and Communist parties are Europhobes. That is, to the extent that they talk about two different axes, i.e. European integration and EU,

"they argue that although parties may change their position on the latter axis, they are very unlikely to do so on the former as this would involve a substantial re-orientation of their entire political ideology" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:34). In a nutshell, they seem to advocate that Eurosceptics approve the key ideas of European integration underlying the EU, but they oppose to the way that the EU is at the moment or about the course of its future. But, cited in Taggart and Szczerbiak, they are told to say that Eurosceptics use contestory rhetoric about the *European project itself*, rather than *some aspects of EU policy* or *approach* (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b-*emphasis added*). This definition is said to exclude "those who simply criticise particular policies that are found objectionable" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002b:35). This statement is a rather confusing one, as it could be claimed that the so-called *European project itself* and *certain policies or approaches* are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, if you are criticising Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), you are directing your criticism to the European project. If you take away CAP or Euro or let's say, delegation of power to Brussels in terms of standardisation of cocoa level in the chocolates all over Europe, *European project itself* only remains as an abstraction. Therefore to the extent that Kopecy and Mudde define Euroscepticism as the criticism of the EU at a moment rather than the European integration itself, they subscribe to the idea that Euroscepticism is opposition to *the current* rather than *the ideal*.

Batory, too, tries to assess the extent to which party, ideology and strategic incentives have an impact on political parties' attitudes to European integration in

Hungary (Batory, 2002a). Actually, her focal point seems to be how EU membership and European integration are channelled into party politics. She finds three different evidences from the political field in Hungary. Firstly, she advocates that party attitudes to the European issue are influenced by pressures such as public opinion, constituency interests and electoral strategies. Secondly,

> in multi-party systems, policy coordination among potential or actual coalition partners and the need to project a mainstream image to be considered as such also affect parties. This impact is relevant primarily in relation to 'hard Eurosceptic' parties as hard Euroscepticism tends to be perceived as an obstacle to a governmental role (Batory, 2002a:527).

Thirdly, which is the most relevant one to the subject in question is the issue of ideology, which is carried beyond a single left-right dimension and conceptualised more multidimensionally, though done very ambiguously.

> By distinguishing between integration as an economic and political process, 'Europe' can be interpreted in ideological terms: the former generating issues relating to levels of regulation, social redistribution and economic (in) equality, the latter relating to sovereignty and indirectly democracy and national identity. While the first aspect may correspond to the well-known socio-economic Left-Right dimension of West European party systems, historical party identities, most pre-dating European integration, bear no relation to the second (Batory, 2002a:528).

Within this context, her research on the political parties in Hungary concludes that what differentiates parties is the way they perceive the EU and the terms they find acceptable for joining it, rather than whether or not they want to join, which disposes the emotional or cultural reasons. The distinction between attitudes to integration and policy on EU membership shows us the existence of a broad elite consensus, "despite the absence of an agreement on why and whether the long-term political implications

of European integration are desirable" (Batory, 2002a: 535). Next step is, surprisingly

enough, the ideological variant:

> As far as the latter aspect [attitude to integration] is concerned, there are detectable
> differences in party attitudes which, as the initial preposition ran [policy on EU
> membership], ideological variation explains. In the Hungarian case, these range from
> the strongest EU-commitment characterising the cosmopolitan market-oriented parties
> to a markedly sceptical, if not hostile, attitude to European integration at the bottom of
> the national-social protectionist quadrant with rather more ambiguous position in
> between. A changing ideological profile, (...) also implies changes in rhetoric on
> Europe. This correspondence clearly indicates the importance of party ideology in
> explaining party responses to Europe (Batory, 2002a: 535).

She seems to argue that since there is a broad elite consensus, what makes the

stances towards EU differ is the ideological variation. This seems very blurred and a

broad elite consensus is more akin to showing that Europe is a strategical issue

4.3. Changes in the Party Leaders' Discourses

A second way to assess the perception of the idea of "Europe" may be to

examine the changes in party leaders' discourses or in the parties' stances. This

necessitates a closer look at Hungary's and Poland's political systems in order to

clarify political dynamics shaping the political space in the aforementioned countries.

4.3.1. Hungarian Politics

Hungarian party system is mainly characterised by its two-bloc system[15]. *Hungarian Socialist Party* (MSzP)–*Alliance of Free Democrats* (SzDSz) coalition between 1994 and 1998 (which will be referred as I. Socialist-Free Democrat coalition from now on) has been followed by 1998-2002 *Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party* (Fidesz-MPP) -*Hungarian Democratic Forum* (MDF) governing coalition.

In April 2002 Parliamentary elections, MSzP has received 42.1%, and SzDSz has received 5.5% of the votes while the electoral coalition consisting of the Fidesz and MDF has received a percentage of 41.1%. The government coalition was formed between the MSzP and the SzDSz, which accounted for 198 out of 386 MPs.

Contrary to the Polish party system, as will be mentioned later on, Hungarian party system is characterized by a broad consensus in terms of EU membership (Batory, 2001). Two anti-EU parties *MIEP* and *Independent Smallholders Party* have stayed out of parliament as they could not transcend the 5% national electoral threshold in the April 2002 elections.

However, it is necessary to outline how this pro-EU position is maintained and how the idea of "Europe" in general and the European integration in particular are conceptualised by the Hungarian political parties. The changes in party leaders'

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[15] Batory (2002b) advocates that April 2002 poll created this two-bloc system giving the evidence that: "while in 1990, 1994 and 1998 six parties established groups in the National Assembly, in the 2002-6 term only four will be represented". On the contrary, it is argued by this research that it was already two-bloc in 1998 elections within which two parties (Fidesz and Hungarian Socialist Party) received 73% of the votes (38.3% and 34.7% respectively).

discourse, with a particular emphasis on Fidesz leader, Viktor Orban will be touched upon.

4.3.1.1. Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP)

Magyar Szocialista Párt (the Hungarian Socialist Party-MSzP) was founded as the larger successor to the state-party (the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party-MSzMP) in October 1989 (Batory, 2001). This change in name, the Party's affiliation to the Socialist International and the redesigning of its programme make the Hungarian successor party a successful case of 'social-democratisation' (Waller, 1995). But the change the MSzP had envisaged did not stop there. "While in the early 1990s the dominant strategic vision within the MSzP leadership was a 'traditional', working-class social democratic appeal, by 1994 the technocratic, market-liberal wing took over. Together with these changes, the party also opted for a universalist, pragmatic, 'moderniser' stance which implied an imperative 'to catch up with Europe" (Batory, 2001:19). Thus, the Socialists toned down their ideology and instead, claimed to have expertise and managerial competence in electoral competition in 1994 party manifesto, after it has returned to power for the first time since it 'negotiated its way out of power' in 1989 (Batory, 2002b). A clear illustration of this approach is shown by MSzP's 1994 *Theses about the Nation*, cited by Batory (2001):

> In the view of the Socialists', there is no other way of modernization for Hungary and more broadly Central Europe than joining the process of European integration as soon

as possible, voluntarily giving part of sovereignty and transferring that to the institutions of European integration. At the same time, (...) the divorcing of national and state frameworks offers an opportunity for Central Europe... to approach the national question from a qualitatively new angle (Batory, 2001: 19).

This strong European commitment which seems to be conducted on pragmatic grounds is probably a part of a broader change in Party's identity. MSzP's self-constructed party identity was built on the rejection of the 'ideologisation' of party politics in general, and of a missionary approach to foreign policy in particular (Batory, 2001). Therefore, the decision of the Socialist Party to form a coalition with the Free democrats in the 1994 elections, although it received absolute majority alone, was not very surprising, which probably helped strengthen the Socialists' new outlook.

In opposition, the Socialists' 2002 manifesto echoed that of Fidesz-MPP in 1998 in promising 'consistently to represent…national interests' and negotiate better deals in Brussels by giving up the Orban government's "aggressive tone, unnecessary conflicts with, and patronizing of, the negotiation partners".

4.3.1.2. Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz)

Szabad Demokratak Szövetsege (Alliance of Free Democrats-SzDSz), a member of the Liberal International since 1993, is the successor of the radical anti-communist Democratic Opposition of the former regime and the junior partner of MSzP- SzDSz coalitions of 1994 and 2002 respectively. SzDSz seems as the party which most

openly reveals its pro-Europeanness. Hungarian EU membership by 2002 was the first among the party's 10 key objectives in their programme for 1998-2002, overtaking in importance decreasing inflation or the growth of incomes, for instance. The 300-page-long Free Democrat election manifesto bore the title "For a Modern, European Hungary" while the principles of the party stated the creation of a "Hungary where freedom and solidarity are the most fundamental values, and which is an equal member of the community of free and democratic European states" as the key task ahead (Batory, 2001). "The Free Democrats commended the Alliance to the voters as 'the party of European Hungary' in their 2002 election campaign" (Batory, 2002b:6). However, the SzDSz is said to disappoint its electorate by its alliance with the Socialists. As Lang noted, "In 1994, the party repeated its good result of 1990. But the subsequent four years of power sharing with the ex-Communist Socialist Part (MSZP) made SZDSZ voters sceptical. In the 1998 elections, the Free Democrats lost almost two-thirds of their electoral support" (Lang, 2000). Europe seems not to be the only issue that determines the colour of the SzDSz voter.

4.3.1.3. Fidesz-MPP

Starting its life as a radical anti-Communist youth movement before the first free elections (in 1988), *Magyar Polgari Part* (Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party) (Fidesz-MPP) espoused a liberal ideology and often co-operated with the *Free Democrats* in

opposition during the conservative government of 1990-94 (Fidesz was an acronym for *Fiatal Demokratak Szovetsege*-"Alliance of Young Democrats", which is the name of the initial movement).

Thus, Fidesz's political reservoir was fed by a liberal, anti-communist and active movement, so was the Viktor Orban's, who has grown as an activist under the auspices of this movement and became the leader of the party derived from it in 1993:

> Twenty-six-year-old Viktor Orban, a recent law graduate, was in no mood for looking back when he stepped forward to address 200,000 people at a Budapest ceremony commemorating Imre Nagy, Hungary's former Prime Minister who was executed in 1958. The year was 1989 and Orban, the last speaker to address the crowd, calmly waited his turn as his predecessors — all greying dissidents still wary of the crippled communist regime — spoke vaguely of past accomplishments and the need for democratization. When Orban's turn finally came, he reached the podium in a few bold strides. The solution, he announced, was for Russian troops to leave Hungary. "If we believe in our strength we will be able to put an end to the communist dictatorship," he proclaimed (TIME, without date).

This liberal heritage presented a Fidesz, which constituted a distinct bloc standing between the reformed communists of the MSzP and the conservative-nationalist parties led by Hungarian Democratic Forum, which drew on pre-communist Hungarian right (Hanley, 2004). This liberal outlook has been reflected in the party's Euro-rhetoric as well. Party's 1994 manifesto included the premise that Hungary's fastest possible integration into Europe was its primary foreign policy objective:

> The success of our integration [policy] is largely dependent upon the development of non-conflictual relations with the neighbouring countries. At the same time, our successful EU-integration will contribute to the stability of the East Central European region and the situation of minorities (Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party, 1994; cited in Batory, 2001).

However, Fidesz's presence in this now-unpopular conservative-national and Christian right -led by a disintegrating MDF-did not fare well in the 1994 election, in which Fidesz's already low vote declined. Remaining in opposition after the 1994 election, Orban made attempts to broaden the party's appeal. Having already dropped its upper age limit of 35 as the criteria for membership in 1993, Fidesz added Hungarian Civic Party to its name in 1995. The same year, in effort to change its image as a "youth" movement, the party officially dropped "Alliance of Young Democrats" from its name, adopting instead its Hungarian acronym "Fidesz"[16] (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2003).

Like the MSzP, this change in the name of the party did not remain as a symbolic act and the party attempted to renew its policies. With this token, Fidesz's European rhetoric has changed significantly during the 90s, in favour of a more aggressive, nationalist and conservative tone than its former technocratic approach (Batory, 2002b).

> From what had started out as a radical alternative youth movement, and then as a party that often described itself as a 'social-liberal', by the late 1990s, Fidesz (...) was transformed into a centre-right 'catch-all' party espousing conservative and nationalist values at least as much as liberal ones. Reflecting this, in 2000 the party decided to leave the liberal International- of which it had been a member since 1992- and the European Liberal, Democratic and Reform Party (ELDR) and join the centre-right European People's Party (Batory, 2002b:4).

Thus, 1994 electoral defeat meant an ideological shift for the party, which presented a new Fidesz, which has assigned the task of upholding the national interest

[16] Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Forum (Fidesz-MPP) is the original name of the party in question but it will be referred as "Fidesz" for the sake of simplicity, as it is often used in the relevant literature

and "Hungarianness" to itself. Meanwhile, Fidesz's location in the power spectrum has changed as well. In Hungary, many key market reform policies and austerity measures were carried under the 1994-1998 Socialist-Free democrat administration, rather than the first post-1989 government formed of the Hungarian right, whose approach towards marketization was cautious and whose priorities were largely non-economic (Hanley, 2004). The unpopularity of such measures contributed to the liberal-left's defeat by the Fidesz-led bloc in 1998 election (Hanley, 2004). The shift in Fidesz's ideological affiliations was complemented by its coalition with Independent Smallholders and its election ally MDF. This coalition gave the Fidesz a chance to be the aggressive, conservative champion of the Right-wing.

This new Fidesz perspective in favour of a more conservative, nationalist and Christian outlook was also reflected in its Euro-discourse. The famous Fidesz slogan "There is life outside the Union" seems to exemplify this new perspective. "New" Fidesz viewed Hungary's membership as a "natural claim to harmonise our [Hungary's] position on the cultural map of Europe with our position in the European economy" (Batory, 2001). Enlargement was consequently considered as alliance of interests based on 'mutual benefits', the terms of which were to be determined in negotiations that were expected to be characterised by the "niggardliness of the [negotiating] partners" (Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party, 1996; cited in Batory, 2001).

This focus on national interest and national identity is complemented by the upholding of material and economic benefits of EU integration and a correlation

between globalisation, EU integration and national identity. The context drawn by the move towards EU membership is seen appropriate to consolidate Hungarian identity:

> After the Second World War, slowly we became grey. One country among Eastern Europe's unfortunate, occupied, socialist states. The best proof of how grey we become comes if we quickly look around, then we will see roughly where we managed to sink into the greyness, what kind of buildings, what kind of material culture, and generally what kind of things we were capable of creating in the past period... I think, before the accession to the European Union, it would be good to formulate a picture of Hungary, in which there is life, in which that life pulsates, which has colours and a particular flavour, before we get stuck with the image of a diligent, hard-working but not especially exciting small Central European people (Orban, 1999; cited in Kosztolanyi, 2000).

In its thesis paper on European unification, *Europe is our Future; Hungary is our Homeland,* Fidesz states:

> Our nation's future is only secured by holding ground in the global economic competition (...) We failed to recognize what the member states of the European Union had already realized: without their national existence and identities, it is not only their nations that are going to be dissolved in globalisation, but also the EU (..) We can only consolidate our national values, interests and sovereignty in the 21st century if we consolidate our positions in the world, the European Union and in the Euro-Atlantic region (Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party, 2002)

Similarly, the EU as "a new historical chance in raising the living standards of Hungarians" is the first aspect of European integration in this respect (Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party, 2003). As Orban outlines in his speech quoted below, his reference point about the prosperity of member states of the EU is the economic development, which is formulated as the main aim for the Hungarian future. More interestingly, economic development and prosperity are the first issues pronounced in a national image conference:

> When, in the course of their rise to prosperity, the most advanced countries of Europe reached the stage at which a process of continuous economic development was set in motion, as is now the case in Hungary, the prospect of the economic advancement of

the masses opened up before them, as is now the case in Hungary, in my opinion. Once they arrived at that stage, these countries outlined quite clearly what they felt they needed in the future. We must do the same. I outline the aims for the future in ten points: everyone should have three children, three rooms and four wheels (Orban, 2000; cited in Kosztolanyi, 2000)

Another important feature regarding Viktor Orban's attitude towards the EU is that he is very uncomfortable for the pace of the accession negotiations. When Fidesz has been elected as the junior partner of the governing coalition in 1998 parliamentary elections, what bothered Orban most was the speed of the enlargement.

EPP News: You evidently feel that EU enlargement should have come earlier than 2004?
Viktor Orban: Our idea was that from 1990s onwards. That was a historic moment in 1990, when Soviet occupation ended and the EU could have enlarged quickly. It could have been done in 1994, maybe even 1995. But it was obvious that a different decision have been made in the early 1990s (...) It sealed our fate for a decade (Orban, 2002)

Similarly, the main premise of his opposition to the Medygessy government was that they were not doing anything to speed up the negotiation process.

The EU integration seems to be the main issue constituting the ground on which Viktor Orban opposes and accuses government. Fidesz seems to think that the Medygessy government does not negotiate hard enough. Viktor Orban's irreconcilable attitude that the party leader had during 2002 autumn and winter –before the 2003 EU Referendum-in terms of his accusation of the government with not negotiating hard enough in the Copenhagen Council can be given as an example.

EPP News: You think the Socialists are not negotiating hard enough for Hungary's interests?
Orban: In the last six months they have been rather soft. They seemed to defend the position of the EU, not Hungarian interests. For example, as I have explained in the

[European People's Party's] Congress today, there has to be a balance of rights and obligations for Member States (Orban, 2002).

4.3.1.4. Independent Smallholder Party (FKgP)

Független Kisgazdapart **(**Independent Smallholder Party-FKgP**)** is known for its initial anti-European discourse, which attacks the "shameless supranationalism" of the other so-called liberal parties. This discourse mainly appeals to the political populism and to national and Christian values, being exemplified by the FKgP's famous motto, "God, Fatherland, Family". Thus, it is a populist, nationalist party and in economic terms the party is faithful to the interests of mainly small property owners, peasants and the rural middle class. Yet, the initial anti-European rhetoric evolved into a pro-European one after the party's further move towards the centre especially after the mid-1990s. "Instead of postponing integration to an indefinite future, FKgP called for European integration as a way of strengthening Hungary's economic influence." (Batory, 2001:16). The point of reference is again the national interest.

> "The 1995 manifesto of FKgP criticised the negotiation strategy of the socialist-liberal government coalition which the party felt was servile, and advocated instead to defend the national interest by following the 'wise' policy of (the then) Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Claus, renowned for his critical approach to his country's EU accession" (Batory, 2001).

In line with this, the party warned the Hungarians on the issue of land ownership. EU membership, coming at a time when the Hungarian economy was still unprepared, would destine the country to a subordinated position within the Union and threaten the loss of national identity. Being integrated into a more developed society,

Hungarians could easily lose their distinct national characteristics (FKGP, 1995; cited in Batory, 2001). After being the junior partner of the governing coalition after 1998 parliamentary elections, the anti-EU rhetoric has altogether been left and the nationalist discourse has prevailed. "In 1999, Independent Smallholder Leader Joszef Torygan submitted bills proposing the removal of the Crown into the parliament building and passage of a constitutional amendment making the Holy Crown an official symbol" (Fowler, 2004). By the same token, the emphasis regarding the European integration was on the material aspect: "Accession only makes sense if the country will have access to the development funds that have so far been usually provided by the Union" (Government Programme, 1998; cited in Batory, 2001).

4.3.1.5. Party of Hungarian Justice and Life (MIEP)

Magyar Elet es Igazsag Partja (Party of Hungarian Justice and Life-MIEP) is also a nationalist-populist party, opposing the foreign influence in the country. It has been established in 1993 by a small group leaving the then coalition's main party Hungarian Democratic Forum in protesting against the signature of the basic treaty with Ukraine. MIEP's main concern is the defence of national interest at any price. When founded, "the MIEP's political programme is grounded in a revitalised version of the 'third way' approach, arguing that Hungary must not follow either Eastern or Western patterns, but that a Hungarian model of social and economic development

must be found" (Navracsics, 1997). In a 1999 party document, *the Hungarian Way*, it has been declared that MIEP is "neither Right nor Left but Christian and Hungarian" (cited in Batory, 2002d). MIEP supporters show a very heterogeneous character, though intellectuals and the members of the so-called "Christian national middle class" are over represented[17]. The nationalist discourse is accompanied by anti-Semitism:

> Ideologically speaking, the party carries out a consistent enemy discourse, employing such tools as oversimplification, creation of dichotomies and reliance on stereotypes and prejudices. (..) Conjuring up images of the enemy goes hand-in-hand with a continually kindled state of emergency, caused, according to MIEP rhetoric, by the enemy that must be ostracized or defeated in order to overcome the problem. The enemy is quite clearly discernible: they are "the small circle of liberal and un-Hungarian people out to destroy the nation, who deliberately loot the coffers and occupy all key positions" as Csurka puts it [in his book *All that there is*] (Kriza, 2004).

This nationalist appeal is perpetuated by the name of a later party document in 1999, *The Hungarian Way* and the party's motto in this document: "The Hungary is for Hungarians" (MIEP, 1999). In line with this, the EU enlargement is treated as a Western attack aiming to erode Hungarian nation and identity: "Due to pressure from global financial interest and for reasons of business, they want to settle, to enlarge, in fact to colonize, to redraw borders….while they do not provide for the economic, political and cultural conditions for these processes" (cited in Kriza, 2004). Moreover, "the EU is not an end, but a means of manipulation, which makes it possible to 'liquidate nations' with Globalism", as *Magyar Hırlap* has evaluated Csurka's speech

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[17] "Both in 1998 and 2002, MIEP got much higher number of votes in wealthy Buda districts populated traditionally by the national conservative middle class than the average vote received by them in the country" (Kriza, 2004: foot note 9)

in its March 2000 party rally. (cited in Batory 2002d). Yet, MIEP seems to be careful not to rule out EU membership explicitly. For instance, in its 2002 election programme, it insisted on conditions for Hungary's entry, such as a full "guarantee that Hungarian land remains in Hungarian ownership" or wage parity with the current member states, which were unlikely to be met. (cited in Batory, 2002d). Similarly, MIEP's signature on the formal six-party declaration that expressed support for fast EU integration in September 2000 can be another clue of this avoidance to oppose the EU directly (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, 2000). This probably stems from the fact that the MIEP has supported the Fidesz-Smallholder-Democratic Forum coalition from 1998 onwards with a hope to be a part of the governing coalition. This support seems to continue during the April 2002 election campaign. *Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty* reports the decision of Csurka to support any right-wing candidate in the eve of the April 2002 elections:

> The Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP) can be the third force in Hungarian politics, party Chairman Istvan Csurka told the party's 10th national conference on 19 January, according to Hungarian media reports. He said he expects MIEP to win at least 13 percent of the vote in the April parliamentary elections, and "according to some secret surveys," the party could garner as much as 25 percent in Budapest. Csurka announced that his party is ready to support any right-wing candidate that has a better chance of winning in the second round of elections, on a reciprocal basis (RFE/RL Newsline, 2002).

However, due to the fact that Orban did not reciprocate, and MIEP could not pass the electoral threshold to enter the Parliament in April 2002 elections, MIEP has quickly returned to its traditional radical discourse. As has been stated by the *MIEP Presidium* on the 2nd September of 2002,

preparing for the fall 2002 municipal elections, the Justice party pledged to start 'an information campaign' to make Hungarian society aware of the consequences if it endorses [EU] accession in the current, extremely unfavourable conditions' and called on the 'national forces to form a united front against the social liberals' irresponsible, humble, servile intervention to join the EU (Batory, 2002d).

The manoeuvres of the MIEP in the political spectrum point out to a crucial issue: Firstly, with regard to the previous part of this study concerning Euroscepticism, MIEP's attitude towards the EU accession is conditional upon its existence in the parliament and its proximity to the political centre. When MIEP was a parliamentary party in the 1998-2002 period, it refrained from showing an explicit opposition to the EU accession, by making a rough reference to national interest and material gains. It was also inclined to take a supportive role towards the governing centre-Right coalition. However, when the party was ruled out from the parliament in April 2002 elections and the centre-right forces refused to ally with it, MIEP again returned to its traditional, radical discourse, which means that the Euro-rhetoric of a radical right party like MIEP is constrained by the practical exigencies of political arena and the conceptualisation of "Europe" is contingent upon the dynamics of party politics.

4.3.1.6. Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)

Magyar Demokrata Forum (The Hungarian Democratic Forum-MDF) was formed in 1987 by a group of populist-oriented intellectuals primarily from small and

medium-sized towns, in the presence of Imre Pozsgay, the head of the communist party's *Patriotic People's Front* (Kitschelt et. al., 1999). It was the largest governing party in the first free-elected Parliament of the post-communist era (receiving the 43% of the votes). Under Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, the MDF formed a center-right coalition government with the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKgP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) to command a 60% majority in the parliament. As prime minister and party leader, Jozsef Antall consolidated control over the party and moved it away from its more populist roots and towards a more conservative and Christian Democratic profile. This change angered many radicals within the Democratic Forum, which had difficulty in the regaining unity after the expulsion of one of its founders, the ultra-nationalist Istvan Csurka (who later on established the Hungarian Justice and Law Party). After a heavy defeat in the 1994 election, many moderates left to form their own party (later on forming Hungarian Democratic People's Party, MDNP).

MDF as the major government party of the early 1990s launched Hungary's quest to "return to Europe" (Batory, 2001). The later profile adopted by MDF could be traced in its Euro-discourse in that period. "When issue of the conclusion of basic treaties with the neighbouring countries (also considered an as informal condition of NATO and EU membership) forced each of the parties to choose foreign policy priorities in the second term, MDF's decision was to 'pursue…. national unity/collaboration irrespective of political borders and circumstances' as the top

priority" (Batory, 2001:17). Thus, MDF's initial position was much more appealing to the Hungarians "over the borders and the territories inhabited by them (as well) in the uniting Europe" (MDF, 1998; cited in Batory, 2001:17).

MDF's former rather ideological stance was changed into a more mild position with some pro-EU connotations, especially at the end of 1990s. This shift is called as the "weakening of populist-national element in the party's ideological make-up" by Batory (2001). However,

> "after the election [2002 parliamentary elections], a merger of the two parties [Fidesz and MDF] was mooted, but the Democratic Forum's chairwoman, Ibolya David, continues to reject Fidesz's attempts at consolidation, instead positioning her party as a true conservative alternative to the more populist Fidesz" (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2003).

4.3.1.7. Political Contestation Between two Blocs before the April 2002 Elections

Before the elections, the general profile of the political parties was such that socialist-liberal MSzP-SzDSz coalition favoured policies for the low-income strata while keeping the level of central distribution low, while the centre-Right Fidesz - MDF alliance championed Christian-national values and welfare spending on middle classes (Batory, 2002c). As mentioned before,

> during its campaign, from the end of February, Fidesz moved closer and closer to the far right to attract MIEP voters, but it was too late. And by the end of March, the party had no time to return to the centre; it became the prisoner of its own MIEP-like rhetoric. As a result, MSzP was able to move into the vacuum at the centre with its milder

campaign, at the same time that the Centre Party, an organisation supposed to have no chance at all, was making some headway. So whatever Fidesz gained on the right it lost in the centre of the political spectrum (Bozoki, 2002).

Bozoki (2002) links the electoral defeat of Fidesz to its harsh rhetoric which was not commensurate with the electorate it appeals. According to him, there is a controversy between Fidesz's nationalist connotations and its tendency to appeal to the "transition-loser" middle class, without paying attention to other social strata that have "lost" too:

> During the 1989-90 democratic transition, absolute priority was given to demonstrating the break with the old regime; that is why those days were dominated by politics heavy with symbolism that drew a sharp dividing line between past and present. The political elites and their followers spoke the language of morality politics. After that, the most important issue was the mitigation of crises caused by the vast economic changes, at which point political discourse became dominated by pragmatic debates on state finances, budget balances, and the reform of big distributive systems. With a politics symbols jettisoned, reform politics took over, manifesting itself in debates about how to handle the country's deep economic crisis and how to achieve successful transition in the economy. This culminated in a package of austerity measures targeting a fast transition to market economy. Once a major change in an economic system is achieved, and the economy has gained new momentum, political discourse generally turns to and increasingly focuses on issues of distribution. This is just what occurred in Hungary when the political force that was elected in 1998 openly supported the middle classes, regarding them as the major driving force behind the economic and moral development of the nation. However, this force paid little attention to other social strata: the old, the uneducated, the marginalized, and the unemployed. What proved a novelty in this new situation (as compared with international trends in democratic consolidation) was the group's aspiration to divide society. In times of economic prosperity, it is quite unusual for a government to start its tenure with a program of carrying out something "more than a government change, but less than a change of [political] systems" and then to pursue it with an onslaught of intense pressure. Such an attitude makes one question whether the government is really devoted to consolidation politics based on national reunification (Bozoki, 2002:3).

Europe was an important component of the political debates in Hungary in April 2002 elections. Pre-election campaign was marked by Fidesz's change of gear in terms of rhetoric, which focused on Fidesz's term in office, together with MDF, first,

and on warnings against a new MSzP- SzDSz financial austerity package, seeking the

favours of Western investors later on (Batory, 2002c). As Batory reveals:

> both Fidesz and MSzP pledged consistently to defend the national interest abroad, including the negotiations in Brussels, and accused one another of either betraying it by siding with foreign negotiation partners in their criticism of Orban's policies (as the government claimed about the opposition) or being incompetent in achieving it (the opposition about the government). MSzP chairman Laszlo Kovacs called for an end to the aggressive tone and unnecessarily confrontations, which, according to the Socialists, characterised the Orban government's foreign policy, while Medgyessy argued that Orban's 'Eurosceptic' statements drew the government's commitment into question. Prime minister Orban maintained that, in contrast with the Socialists, his party, as centre-right parties generally, 'defend the national interest more openly and do not have the tendency to accept and use the style known from the fashionable European Union discourse of the day (Batory, 2002c: 4).

Similarly, they used particular policies of the EU and particular parameters of

EU accession in order to oppose each other. While they were in opposition before the

April 2002 elections, the main card of the Socialists was, surprisingly enough, the

"national interest" (Batory, 2002b). They argued that: "their foreign policy would be

free of party-political interests and ideological prejudices" (Kovacs, 2002). Moreover,

> MSzP called for renegotiation of the land ownership deal in Brussels, arguing that the conditions the Fidesz-led coalition had reached were unsatisfactory, as well as the status law with Romania and Slovakia. Although it is too early to judge the new government's record [at the time of writing of Batory's paper-November 2002], the rhetoric has certainly changed: the Medgyessy cabinet seems to judge a conciliatory tone more effective than the confrontational style they believe characterised Viktor Orban's tenure in office (Batory, 2002b:6).

This picture did not change completely after the elections. Hegedus speaks

about the Fidesz leader attacking the Socialist-Free Democrat government, "which

kept its eyes on the international requirements and not on the nation's interests-

calling them former 'Moscovites', 'Euro-serviles' and new 'Brusselites'" (Hegedus, 2003:3).

4.3.2. Polish Politics

What mainly distinguishes Polish politics from the Hungarian must be the salience, at least the existence of a broader and more significant anti-EU camp. In the early 1990s, like all the Central Eastern European countries, Poland has envisaged a consensus in terms of the provisions of the foreign policy that prioritised a "return to Europe". However, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, new parties emerged political scene which did not subscribe to such a consensus. Two new Eurosceptic parties, *League of Polish Families* and *Self-Defence* took 18% of the votes in September 2001 elections and entered the Sejm, together with *Law and Justice Party* (PiS) (9.50% of the votes) and *Polish Peasant Party* (PSL) (8.98% of the votes), which were Eurosceptic parties as well, and were not alien to the political scene. "Of the six parties and groupings that secured representation in the *Sejm*[18], two of them winning 18.07% of the votes and 91 seats, might be described as having adopted a hard Eurosceptic stance of de facto outright opposition to the EU membership" (Szczerbiak, 2002:7). But, as Szczerbiak argues, this cannot be called as a "Eurosceptic backlash" due to several reasons, which will be scrutinised in this section later on.

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[18] The more powerful lower house of the Polish parliament

Moreover, one of the most Euroenthusiast Polish political parties, the liberal, post-Solidarity *Unia Wolnosci* (Freedom Union-UW) could not manage to enter into the Parliament. On the other hand, Poland has been governed by the Democratic Left Alliance-Labour Union[19]-Polish Peasant Party coalition since the September 2001 elections[20]. "The fact that the former communists and their allies fell short of winning an overall parliamentary majority and have been forced to form a government with an agrarian party critical of the EU has constrained their room for manoeuvre somewhat" (Szczerbiak, 2002:1).

4.3.2.1. Democratic Left Alliance-Labour Union (SLD-UP)

SLD is the most significant party of the Polish pro-EU camp. "It [SLD] is comprised of a number of trade unions, women, youth and other social organisations, that had enjoyed during the Communist era. It was derived from the *Social Democracy of the Republic of Pol*and (SdRP), communist *Polish United Worker's*

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[19] Parties' original names are *Soujusz Lewicy Demokratycznej* (Democratic Left Alliance-SLD) and *Unia Pracy* (Labour Union-UP) (SLD-UP). They have formed an electoral coalition for the September 2001 elections, which will be referred with the abbreviation SLD-UP from now on. This electoral coalition received 41.04% of the votes in the last parliamentary elections.

[20] PSL has been ruled out from the Coalition in March 2003. *BBC News Europe* (2003a) quotes Prime Minister Miller who declared: "It is impossible to be in the government and oppose it at the same time. I won't be held hostage by anyone" about the ejection of PSL from the government. The reason for the breaking up of the government is said to be "the PSL delegates' vote against measures to adopt a special road tax. With the introduction of stickers, to be purchased by drivers who wish to use Poland's few motorways (a couple of hundreds of kilometers), it would be possible for the Polish government to co-finance with the EU the construction of new roads in that vast country. However, the PSL voted against, apparently in reprisal against the SLD's earlier blocking of fuel subsidies for farmers" (Radio Netherlands, 2003). It could be claimed that the reason why the PSL began to oppose the government's policies is the shift in its political discourse, especially with regard to "Europe", which will be analyzed in detail in the forthcoming paragraphs.

Party (PZPR) and former *All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions Federation* (OPZZ)" (Szczerbiak, 2001: 96). As can be seen, "SLD is an alliance of successor parties of the former Communist Party, but it no longer describes itself-in contrast to the UP-as openly left-wing and clearly distances itself, particularly in terms of economics, from its former socialist objectives. (..) They emphasize the significance of the EU as a community with shared values, but this-both qualitatively and quantitatively- plays a comparatively minor role" (Dauderstadt and Joerissen, 2004:7).

The other partner of the coalition is the *Unia Pracy* (Labour Union-UP). UP was founded in 1992 after the merger of some smaller parties belonging to the left wing of Solidarity. It describes itself as the only Polish party which is openly left-wing and is oriented towards Western European social democratic and socialist parties. Its economic policy orientation differs markedly from that of the SLD, and the UP feels itself-in keeping with its name- being committed to the interests of workers. In 1996, it was admitted to the Socialist International (SI) along with the SdRP. Only a half page of the UP's programme is devoted to European policy. The UP endorses EU accession but only on condition that Poland's comparison with other accession countries- is also taken into consideration in the EU, that Poland is not treated as a second-class member, as is not over-burdened materially or financially. Its attitude is said to be neither that of a Euro-sceptic nor that of a Euro-enthusiast (Dauderstadt and Joerissen, 2004:7).

"SLD-UP's electoral strategy was aimed at all Poles at home and abroad" (Szczerbiak, 2003:731). Szczerbiak argues that the Coalition's slogan: "Let's Return to Normality, Win the Future" shows the basis of their pragmatism, competence, stability and claim to be a catch-all party. "Although it described itself as a left-wing, social-democratic formation, SLD-UP coalition was able to win the most support in every socio-demographic group" (Szczerbiak, 2003:735)

4.3.2.2. Polish Peasant Party (PSL)

September 2001 Parliamentary elections ended with 8.98% of the vote and 42 seats for *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe* (Polish Peasant Party-PSL). PSL is a political party based on the basic transition losers-winners dichotomy and apparently it is on the Polish farmers' side, who had to pay a high price for the reforms.

> The PSL favours a model of small family households and subsidised agriculture. (..) The members of the party used to demand that the government should pay compensation to farmers who have lost in natural disasters. They oppose to the presence of Western supermarkets in Poland, which, according to PSL members, are destroying small domestic traders. The PSL tried to represent the best interest of small peasants, as well as big food producers (Czernicka, 2004a:9).

Despite the fact that the electorate of PSL, i.e. farmers, has seen the EU as the source of all the difficulties they face and has shown outright opposition to the EU, PSL has supported the EU accession until the early 2000s (Czernicka, 2004a). Moreover, "among the agricultural electorate, individuals' attitudes toward the EU were not consistent with the position of their favourite party and disappointed voters

showed their discontent to the PSL political elite" (Czernicka, 2004a: 10). For instance, the political discourse of the PSL in the last elections most significantly revolved around an ambiguous concept of "national interest". As Szczerbiak explains,

> the party's programme argued that: "(Poland's) relations with the EU should be based on strengthening (our) national interests as part of the process of integration, and not just passively joining a larger community. It is necessary to be aware that, in spite of the proportion that exists in the levels of income among its member states, the EU is a 'rich man's club' and not inclined to give in to the demands of the poor candidate states from the East. (..) EU must also take into account our expectations and aspirations (Szczerbiak, 2002:11).

The PSL vice-president Marek Sawicki said that they supported EU membership but only 'on the basis of partnership' and rejected an 'unqualified opening up' to the EU (Szczerbiak, 2002:12).

However, PSL has experienced a change in its discourse in the year 2002. Czernicka links this change to PSL's concern that its electorate was appealed by a new populist party *Samoobrona* (Self-Defence-hereafter SO). At this point, it is important to underpin the programme and historical trajectory of SO in order to present these two parties' political behaviours simultaneously and to understand the shift in PSL's rhetoric, especially in terms of the EU.

4.3.2.3. Self- Defence (SO)

Samoobrona (Self-Defence-hereafter *SO*) has been founded as the *Farmers' Trade Union Self-Defence* in 1992 and was transformed into a party in 1999.

"*Samoobrona* is a movement which primarily represented the category of heavily indebted farmers, who were the most important victims of the new economic situation (...) The populist ideology of SO was both anti-Communist and anti-Solidarnosc [anti-Solidarity]" (Czernicka, 2004a: 12). The party, chaired by Andrej Lepper, increased its votes to 10.20% in 2001 general elections, which has taken 1% of the votes and no seats in the Parliament in 1997 elections despite the fact that "only six per cent of the respondents said that they had voted for *Samoobrona* in surveys right after the 2001 elections" (Czernicka, 2004a:13). According to Szczerbiak, although it does not express any outright opposition to the EU and is opposed to integration in the way it exists today, *SO* must be called a hard Eurosceptic party, as it links its support to a set of unachievable conditions (effectively exemption from the provisions of the Single Market) (Szczerbiak, 2002).

When the results of the September 2001 general elections are scrutinized, it could be deduced that PSL's fear about the attraction of its votes by the SO does not seem to be in vain. "One fifth of the traditional PSL voters had voted *Samoobrona* in 2001" (Kubiak, 2003).

According to Czernicka, the main question regarding SO and PSL's positions vis-à-vis each other is whether SO can take the place of PSL and become a political representation of agricultural world or it will be transformed into a catch-all party (Czernicka, 2004a). It seems that the latter holds true for SO and for the party leader Andrej Lepper. It is usually argued that SO does not even have a program in a written

form and one even cannot find even the slightest trace of such a program in the media, magazines, radio or television (Lepper, 2003). This pragmatism could also be understood with a reference to the simplicity of the Lepper's slogans, such as the one launched after the Copenhagen Summit in 2003: "Moscow stole from you; Warsaw is stealing from you; Brussels will steal from you".

The main advantage of Lepper seems to be using SO's non-existence in the government as leverage to advocate the Party's uncorruptedness and novelty. This claim is also used with regard to the EU and European integration. One of the election leaflets of the party reads as follows:

> They (SLD, PSL, AWS and their chums in the [Civic] Platform) are implementing the same programme of making Poland on the West, selling our national assets together with the liquidation of the jobs. They have all gone mad about Brussels. But the truth is brutal-no one will give us something for nothing. It is the European Union that is exporting more than 16 billion US dollars worth of goods to us annually. Our total imports add up to 48 million US dollars. It is who we are supporting two and a half billion jobs in the West, jobs that we lack here (extract from *Self-Defence* election leaflet, cited in Szczerbiak, 2002:10).

"All politicians steal" and "We weren't in charge, we're not responsible for the crisis," say Lepper and his activists (The Warsaw Voice, 2004). As Czernika cites:

> Lepper accused several leading politicians from the SLD and PO of accepting bribes and contacts with the criminal underworld. He was especially critical of the former Deputy Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz, who is now the president of the National Bank of Poland (NBP). Lepper called him 'the ultimate scoundrel'. According to Lepper's opinions, politicians are weak, unable to lead independent policy. They were educated at foreign universities and they serve foreign governments (Czernicka, 2004a: 15).

This rhetoric stemming from being away from power inevitably leads to an anti-elitist stance and discourse. For instance, he has spent the summer of 2002 (the

summer before 2002 local elections) with attempted roadblocks and protests against the government, at one point reaching almost 20% of popularity in opinion polls (BBC News World, 2002). Lepper blames all the other politicians for the current economic and social crisis in Poland: "After all, it was you [all the other politicians], wearing suit and tie and Dior and Chanel cologne, who pampered one another so affectively that today we are dealing with a complete crisis in heavy industry, agriculture, small and medium-sized business, retail and services" (cited in Czernicka, 2004a: 16).

Thus, SO introduces itself as an alternative to the PSL, which is included in the list of 'all the others', with a discursive appeal to the transition-losers. SO has been originated from a farmers' movement, but this transition- losers category of SO seems to include lower middle class, such as the shopkeepers who cannot compete with the supermarkets.

As mentioned before, SO's this catch- all- and-PSL-voter strategy has made PSL change its political rhetoric. The pro-EU stance of the PSL was apparently transformed to a more EU-critical basis, which was deemed to be facilitated by a withdrawal from the coalition. One of the aims of the party was to re-establish the links with the country-side and the original PSL electorate. Thus, the main aim of the discursive shift of the PSL is the fact that it could not represent the concerns of its real electorate vis-à-vis the transformation of the economy especially due to the European integration, which has been intended to be appealed by the SO.

4.3.2.3. League of Polish Families (LPR)

The main protagonist of the anti-EU camp is the League of Polish Families (LPR), a coalition of various parties and organisations leaning towards the Catholic nationalist right that won 7.87% of the vote and 38 seats (Popescu and Hannavy, 2002). LPR has been founded in May 2001, just before the 2001 general elections. The main target group of the LPR seems to be the electorate correlated with religiosity, gender (female), a village or small-town background, low education and low income (McManus-Czubinska et. al., 2003). The emphasis point of LPR with regard to its anti-European discourse is the "loss of sovereignty", which is conducted over a Brussels-Moscow-Warsaw tripartite metaphor. "You have served Moscow in the past, and now you are serving Brussels" appears as the most frequently used claim by Roman Giertych, the leader of LPR. According to Giertych,

> Poland is in danger because of foreign threats. (..) Ten years after the political and economical transition, Poland is at the moment the most dramatic in modern history. This diagnosis concerns all sectors of life. Economic situation is serious and the state of public finances becomes grave. These problems are the results of foreign policy which lead this country to the European Union. (..) Associated agreement between the EU and Poland costs twelve billion dollars every year. Because of a negative trade balance with other EU partners that Poland had since 1995, the unemployment was created and one million people are out of work because of products imported from members of the EU (LPR Party Program, cited in Czernicka, 2004b).

Thus, LPR's concept of "loss of sovereignty" is used together with economic terms, particularly in the form of a representation of the EU accession as bankrupt. "Ending all expenditure connected with preparing for EU membership, would,

Giertych argued, save the country around 39 billion zlotys" (Szczerbiak, 2002:8).

Similarly, LPR generally focuses on the need to renegotiate the accession agreement,

which led to a $10 billion trade deficit and created more than one million new jobs in

EU countries at Poland's expense. Moreover, "an important segment of our national

assets has been given away while the remainder is (now) being taken over" by the

implementation of the association agreement (Szczerbiak, 2002). The connivance of

previous Polish governments was "directed by the interests of foreign capital".

An article in *Gazeta Wyborcza* quotes some claims of Zygmunt Wrzodak, a

Sejm deputy from LPR, who accuses the previous governments and current coalition

of selling the Polish assets hastily and enthusiastically, which has resulted in

economic deterioration and unemployment:

> "The government wants to sell Polish land for a mere silver mite" claimed Sejm deputy
> Zygmunt Wrzodak, a League leader with a penchant for denouncing "Eurosocialism".
> He indulged in right-wing populism against privatization, claiming that within the last
> twelve years the government had sold 75 percent of national assets for only 10 percent
> of its value, any truth of which would be hollowed out by his party's enthusiastic
> support of nineteenth-century style capitalism. Wrzodak further argued that the 3.5
> million unemployed in Poland would double after the accession, and that "We are being
> ruined by imports from the European Union. It's a civilizational regression that can be
> seen by the naked eye. We are becoming a labor reservoir for Europe (Lockard, 2002).

Moreover, this economic deterioration is escorted with sinister aims of the

Union over Poland, wanting to change the Polish Catholic values with those of

Cosmopolitan Judaizing Union. Some probabilities such as conversion of farm lands

to highways, replacement of natural foods with chemical ones and German invasion

of the Polish land are also associated with "Europe" and the EU. Lockard provides a

good summary of the rhetoric of Wrzodak:

Using a classic term inherited from political anti-Semitism, Wrzodak asserted that "this will result in the dissolving of our nation in a cosmopolitan Union". Pro-EU politics thus represent a capitulation of Catholic moral values to the cosmopolitan Judaizing forces of the European Union. In his previous association with ROP, *the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland*, Wrzodak became known for his rhetorical synthesis of anti-Semitism and anti-communism. Wrzodak, lately a media darling of anti-EU politics, used to publish press releases from the Solidarity offices at the Ursus tractor factory claiming that the Polish government was in the hands of "Jewish communists."
A more nuanced version of such rhetoric echoes from church pulpits in Poland, which is driving an anti-EU campaign that has gained substantial power (...) Wrzodak compared the Union to a modern Tower of Babel that is carrying out a politics of colonization towards Poland and wants to obliterate farmers on their land, so that farmland can be converted to highways and natural foods replaced by chemical foods. This conglomerated culture was inherently untrustworthy, and Wrzodak warned against believing in any agreements with the European Union, since the Union was founded by capital and will break agreements if it wishes. He also suggested that Germans have never accepted the loss of the Western Lands and will want to break these agreements, even though they are international guarantees. Finally, Wrzodak used Israel as an example, saying that after 2000 years Israel returned to its ancient lands, is fighting for that land, and sells its land only to Jews (Lockard, 2002).

Claim to be "new and uncorrupted" in the political scene and the attempt to distance the Party from the current political actors and actions, which are seen as the reason of the economic and social crisis of Poland seems to be the motto of the LPR, like the SO. For instance, the establishment of local European information centers in order to inform people about the EU before the EU accession referendum is evaluated as a partisan maneuver of the SLD, which will fill the centers' ranks with SLD sympathizers. Moreover, the establishment of these centers is an embodiment of the fact that the EU accession is a "daylight robbery" and that the government only canalizes the financial resources to the pro-EU parties and organizations:

Roman Giertych termed a decision of employing 5000 people in local European information centers a robbery in broad daylight by the SLD and the infringement of sides' equality principle in the European referendum. An agreement on employing 5000 graduates was signed on Sunday by Minister for European referendum Lech Nikolski and Economy and Labor Minister Jerzy Hausner, who assigned 15 million zlotys for the programme from the labor fund. According to Giertych, taxpayers' money will go for

the pro-European option irrespective of taxpayers' views and, what's more, creation of more white-collar jobs has never curbed unemployment rate. 'With such a disproportion in campaigning opportunities between integration advocates and opponents the referendum will become a fiction because the government, having at its disposal common money, the state budget theoretically may assign billions of zlotys for convincing citizens to vote for integration whereas the SLD as a party lacks such an opportunity. That's why we perceive the agreement as a robbery in broad daylight, a robbery of our and government's money' Giertych argued. "Poland has other goals than employing SLD activists' children at the commune level' Giertych said and added that Nikolski would be held accountable for such actions (Polish Daily News Bulletin, 2004).

Another salient characteristic of LPR's anti-European political discourse is its reference to the historical symbols and events. For instance,

the campaign on the referendum was begun by a poster with the painting of Jan Matejko, "Rejtan's Defiance", painted in 1866. (…) This painting chosen by the LPR presents Tadeusz Rejtan, deputy to the Sejm of 1773. This is an iconic painting of an emotional protest against the First Partition of Poland[21]. Rejtan blocked access to the Sejm's debating-chamber in a vain protest against this inevitable decision. This event has become the most spectacular act of defiance, attaining near-mythological status in folk memory. The goal of the exploitation of this historical symbol is to build an association between this partition of Poland by foreign countries and the accession to the EU (Czernicka, 2004b: 10-11).

Similarly, the anti-European discourse is conducted over an alleged resemblance between the previous Soviet domination and exigencies of European integration. For instance, the slogan on a LPR referendum campaign poster: "Every Pole will have a

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[21] The "Partitions of Poland" (more correctly the partitions of the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania), term frequently encountered in the history literature, took place in the 18th century and ended the existence of a Polish sovereign state. They involved Prussia, Russia and Austria dIIIiding up the Polish lands between themselves. The first of the partitions traces back to 1772. The wars of the 17th. Century had left Poland ruined; her population had decreased by a third and the victory at Vienna was the Commonwealth's last military success. Taking advantage of a now weakened Poland, Prussia, Russia and Austria agreed to annex parts of the country in 1772. The Commonwealth lost 733,000 sq.km (23%) of her former territory and 4,500,000 of her population; Prussia took the smallest, but economically best, area; Austria took the most heavily populated areas, whilst Russia took the largest, but least important. To give the crime some legality the Sejm was forced to ratify the partition in 1773, despite the resistance of some Deputies, led by Tadeusz Rejtan (Kasprzyk, 2003).

job, so let's go to the European Union now. Every Pole will have a Mercedes…to wash" shows this aim, as again stated by Czernicka (2004b).

Anti-European stance of LPR is escorted with a discursive collaboration with Radio Maryja. Radio Maryja is a radio station known for its anti-EU stance and for the nationalist and anti-Semitic discourse. This near-mythical and irrational rhetoric culminates around the assumption that since the beginnings of the 1990s, the EU has been driven by the international masonry, whose primary objective is to eliminate the church from public life. One of publicists of *Nasz Dziennik*[22], Jerzy Bajda directly argues that "(...) from this 'Europe' comes materialism, secularism, atheism, racism, wild capitalism, utilitarianism, socialism and communism of different sorts, which bring various forms of slavery and exploitation of the man, until a total dehumanisation of culture and terrifying forms of Genocide" (Slowik, without date).

In this regard, Radio Maryja group generally appears to distance itself from the official position of the Polish Catholic Church, which is known for its full support for Poland's European integration since the 1980s. The favourable attitude shown by the Polish Episcopal Conference (twice visited Brussels, official positive opinion expressed in March 2002) is of a major significance in this context (Polish Episcopal Conference, 2002). That position is fully in line with the vision of European unity stressed by the Polish Pope. During John Paul II's 1999 visit to Poland, he stated explicitly his support for EU integration, as the first Slavic pope in history. However,

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[22] Right-wing anti-EU newspaper, which is akin to Radio Maryja line

this disparity seems to fade out by time. Following another pro-EU address on May 19 2003 by the Pope, Radio Maryja abruptly rejected its Eurosceptic rhetoric and began "urging Catholics to follow Vatican's advice and vote in favour of EU membership" (Deutsche Welle Online, 2003).

Thus, LPR and Radio Maryja generally employ a very tough, irrational anti-EU political discourse which deifies a basic, rural-based, anti-modernist, illiterate and even xenophobic electorate. The way Giertych approaches the EU is somewhat superficial and reductionist. Trayor gives a good sketch of LPR's "anti-EU" discourse:

> The skeptics [in Poland] are led by sharply suited young demagogues whose politics echo those of Jörg Haider in Austria. Roman Giertych, the 32-year-old leader of the League of Polish Families spearheading the campaign, says: "I am a barrister. I have read the accession treaty. It says Poland can be excluded from the single market when we join. It's a trap. It's a joke". He knows he cannot win, so he is recommending abstention. That, too, is the tactic of the virulently nationalistic Roman Catholic radio station, Radio Maryja. It cannot publicly defy the Vatican and so is telling listeners the question is complicated. If you do not understand all the issues, it would be better not to vote (Trayor, 2003).

Surprisingly enough, the previous outright opposition to the EU of the LPR is converted to a more ambiguous and indirect reaction during the electoral campaign of September 2001. As Szczerbiak describes this shift:

> During the election campaign, however, LPR leaders were much less ambiguous about their outright opposition to EU membership. LPR chairman Marek Kotlinowski, for example, argued that "for us, the alternative to taking Poland into the EU is respecting the rights of the sovereign states...We are for cooperation with everyone who wants to build social relations with Poland on a Christian basis". Similarly, LPR vice-chairman Roman Giertych argued that, "we did not fight for our independence for all those years only to now give away a portion of our sovereignty to some kind of supranational organisation" (Szczerbiak, 2002).

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4.3.2.4. Law and Justice Party (PiS)

Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc (Law and Justice Party-PiS) can also be named as a political party having a Eurosceptical tone in its party programme and election and referendum campaigns. For example, its leader failed to attend the signing ceremony of the "Pact for Europe" an attempt to develop an all party-consensus in support of EU membership during the electoral campaign[23]. PiS does not have an outright and outspoken opposition against the EU as LPR or SO have, but mainly uses a rhetoric advocating a tough negotiating position and an intense reference to the concept "national interest". Thus, PiS position vis-à-vis the EU is very ambiguous. This ambiguity is well attested by Szczerbiak :

> The PiS election programme described EU membership as one of its two foreign policy priorities but went on to criticize a negotiating strategy based on attempting a secure specific target date for Polish accession. PiS argued that 'Striving for an appropriate position for Poland in the Union, in other words one worthy of a large European country cannot be pursued effectively, when the method and speed of the negotiations are determined by successive, apparently unrealistic entry dates. The quality of our membership, and therefore a determined defence of our interests, is what is most important (Szczerbiak, 2002:11)

In the speeches of party leaders in the parliament the main references appears to be made to the issues of "strong state", "Christianity" and "realism". For instance,

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[23] Under the leadership of the [then] Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek, leader of the major government party AWS (Solidarity Electoral Action), a cross-party "Pact for Europe" has been signed in Warsaw, on August 22, 2001. The basic aim of this pact was to "ensure cross- party cooperation during the two years of tough negotiations" (EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament, 2001). The signatory political party leaders were Jerzy Buzek (AWS), Bronislaw Geremek (UW), Leszek Miller (SLD) and Maciej Plazynski (PO).

Kazimierz Ujazdowski, as the leader of the PiS, expressed these overblown references

in his speech in the Sejm on the 14th of March, 2002:

> (..) By adopting Christianity a thousand years ago, Poland became a member of the family of European nations, an heiress of the Mediterranean civilization. We are convinced that the community of independent states, which was originated by European statesmen related to Christian democracy, is a good thing in the history of our continent. Poland can bring its cultural background of a nation with long Christian tradition into the common Europe. It is also bringing the ideals of the "Solidarity" movement and the potential of dynamic development of the last decade. However, in foreign policy there is no greater sin than attachment to doctrines or ideological prejudice. Such attachment to doctrines is present in positions assumed by both Euro-enthusiasts and fierce opponents of the European Union. Their positions do not correspond to the real questions of Polish politics or practical interests of the Polish state. Ideological chains do not explain the essence of Polish policy regarding the European Union or the essence of problems which Polish politics is faced with.
> European Union is a political and economic reality. It is a particular association of nation-states. A lot of signs, and actually all of them, indicate that neither the federalists nor fierce opponents of the Union will see their dreams come true. The EU will not be a new federation but it will remain an association of states of national structure.
> The most important thing is that in Polish EU's policy we should be guided by realism and not by political doctrines. We should not think that after our EU accession or the referendum on the European Union the world history will come to an end (Ujazdowski, 2002).

With reference to this discourse of "strong state", the main claim is that the EU,

"Europe of hegemony", is moving towards a super-state status, whose

supranationality will violate the Polish right to make decisions. This supranationality

intends to hegemonize the Polish nation. References to the Polish history are also

made and it is noted that there has always been some Poles who intended to solve the

national problems *outside* (*emphasis added*), which shows a lack of dignity and

stupidity. The position of the PiS is clarified vis-à-vis the supranational EU by the

title of the speech quoted below by the Party's chairman: "We cannot stand

hegemony":

(...) First of all, I must draw your attention to one provision of the drafted constitution. It talks clearly, *expressis verbis*, about the superiority of the EU constitutional law over the constitutions of nation-states. Here comes a question: how can a provision of this kind be ratified? Polish constitution does not provide for such a possibility. In article 91 it talks about incorporating international agreements into our laws and about their superiority over the acts (which is impossible to overcome in the case of discrepancy). In any case it does not mention the superiority of these international agreements over the constitution. We deal with a completely new situation. And there is no point in seeking in constitutional regulations anything which would be the basis for ratifying this sort of solution. It would actually require an amended constitution, enforcing the regulations about controlling the acts' compliance with our constitution, and here I mean European acts. Unless we give up the superiority of our constitution - in short, we accept the loss of our sovereignty (...) Moreover, taking into consideration the way of making decisions, if we look at Europe in real terms and notice the mechanisms of pressure, including bribery, it will be completely clear that there are attempts to build a dominated Europe, a Europe of hegemony. Why should we accept it? Did we not have enough hegemony for at least 270 or 280 years of our history? I know that there are such Poles, or I should use a more proper word here: "Pollacks", who say that Polish problems can be solved outside, that we rule the state badly and the others should rule over us. But it is the sign of lacking dignity, extreme stupidity and also missing knowledge of history (Kaczynski, 2003)

Moreover, the configuration of the problems to be solved in the European

Convention and the European Constitution are presents as the concretisations of this

effort to hegemonize the Polish nation:

(..) This constitution creates, due to its adoption if validated, a new situation which is radically different from the one we have accepted in the Accession Treaty. And the former referendum referred to the Accession Treaty itself. The very creation of constitution opens the way to something which can be called the nationalization of the Union, changing the international agreement from a very important one, but one of many international organizations, into something clearly overcoming the frame of international organization, something creating a European state. This change is so far reaching that the nation must confirm it directly. Our constitution provides for elements of direct democracy. In which situation should they be used if not in this one? I repeat: the fact of creating such a constitution draft gives enough reason to appeal to the institution of referendum. (..) We deal with the enforcement of various powers and their expansion. The European Union goes into such fields as education or culture. Let us pay attention at least to everything that is connected with historical education, with this dispute, which is very alive today, with the challenge of the European Parliament to create the common vision of history, the vision, in which the Europeans, and not the Germans, are responsible for the Holocaust, the vision in which we deal with the

symmetry of crimes committed by various countries or various nations. In advance I state that my political formation will do as much as possible, and it will devote everything not to allow such treaty with such rules to pass in the referendum. (..) Everybody who observed work of the Convent knows exactly that no democracy was present there. You could only have a chat there. But if democracy means that you can only have a chat then democracy was present there. But democracy is also about making joint decisions, and these decisions were made in the presidium with the dominant role of France's ex-president, Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, who boasts a complex reputation. That is what it really looked like. So I am afraid that it is the prefiguration of problems which we will deal with in so-constructed European Union: that we will be allowed to have a chat. But to be frank, decisions will be made in a small group. The whole package of our relations with the Germans should be added. After all, what is happening now is putting up the basis for claims. For the time being they are only moral and historical ones but soon there will be others. It is only a matter of time when these claims are submitted. So we must not accept them. As well as we can not approve of being blackmailed. After all, we are already being insolently blackmailed: if you don't accept you will be 'forced out of the game' (this is the Prime Minister of Portugal who clearly works at somebody's order) (Kaczynski, 2003).

To recapitulate, it could be claimed that the Euro-discourse of the PiS is constructed upon the premise that the supranationality of the EU threatens the power of Polish state to make independent decisions, which has been verified by the provisions stipulated by the draft of the EU Constitution and by the European Convention, within which the decisions were taken by a small group. References to the Polish history and Christianity are also made. However, the EU accession is the top priority of the PiS' election programme before the September 2001 elections, and the most pronounced slogan in the January 2003 party congress was: "Strong Poland in Europe".

4.4. Identification of the EU with Particular Policies

Another important clue about the fact that the perception of "Europe" expressed by the political parties is strategic and bound up with short-term concerns, especially

within the framework of election campaigns, may be to point out to the equalization of "Europe" with particular policies and an immediate loss-gain calculation. Underlining such identification may help prove the narrowness of the perspective through which the EU is evaluated.

In the Hungarian context, the most important leverage in the identification of "Europe" with any particular policy is the issue of purchase of the Hungarian lands by the foreigners after the accession. The automaticity in the pronunciation of the "EU" and "land purchase" and "subsidies" simultaneously proves the framework and parameters of the Euro-debate in Hungary. As Orban reveals:

> We do understand that for various reasons, the new member states cannot for several years receive 100% of what they are due under the EU common budget. But as early as 2005, Hungary will have to pay 100% of its contributions. We believe that those should be reduced proportionally, to the same percentage of what we receive from the budget. Agricultural quotas are another good example. After enlargement, a Hungarian wheat farmer in Sopron (on the Austrian border in Western Hungary) will get 4500 Euros a year per hectare in subsidy. The Austrian farmer 100 meters away will have 18000 Euros. There is no customs, no trade barrier. Both can sell anywhere in Europe, including Hungary (Orban, 2002).

Similarly, the indexation of the Euro-debate to specific policies is the most used theme of Polish politics. As the *Sejm* includes numerous parties having agrarian bases, the most salient particular policy referred to is, without doubt, the Common Agricultural Policy and the transfer of funds in the aftermath of EU membership.

In its party programme, the PSL argued that "it is obligatory for the EU to take into the inclusion of Polish agriculture in the Common Agricultural Policy, from the moment when Poland joins the EU, (with Poland) entitled to the same direct

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payments and structural funds on the basis of principles that have operated in the Union up until now" (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002).

Another reason why the themes of the land purchase by the foreigners and the agricultural subsidies granted to Poland are the top issues during the articulation of the issue of the EU by the political scene is that the new government, different than the former AWS[24]-led government has adopted a new negotiating strategy regarding the EU.

> Being weak, unstable and containing a substantial soft Eurosceptic current clustered around the ZChN[25], the previous AWS government found it difficult to make any significant concessions to the EU in a number of key negotiating areas. It rigidly demanded an eighteen-year transition period on the sale of Polish land to foreigners refusing the EU's offer of seven years. It also rejected the EU's proposal of allowing member states to introduce transition periods of up to seven years before citizens from candidate countries would be given unrestricted access to Western labour markets. (..) (Szczerbiak, 2002:14).

On the other hand, the new negotiating strategy adopted by the new SLD-UP coalition foresaw that the transition periods on the Polish access to Western labour markets would be accepted as proposed by the EU. Moreover, the transition period for the purchase of Polish land by the foreigners were decreased from the previous 18 years

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[24] Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) has been formed in 1996 as an electoral alliance bringing together more than 30 centre-right political parties and it emerged as the largest parliamentary grouping with 33.83% of vote in 1997 elections and main government coalition partner after 1997 election- although the hegemonic role within this grouping was played by a trade Union, Solidarity (Its junior partner was Freedom Union (UW) which is a merger of two centrist parties also from within Solidarity) (Szczerbiak, 2001).

[25] Christian National Union (ZChN) is one of the components of the Solidarity Electoral Action. The agreement implemented by 23 December 2000 within the framework of an effort to reform the AWS stipulated that the coalition decisions would be made by an eight-member board. Four of the seats went to the AWS Social Movement (RS AWS) and the Solidarity trade union, while the others were divided between the Conservative Peasant Party (SKL), the Christian National Union (ZChN) and the Polish Party of Christian Democrats (PPChD), which enhanced the weight of the aforementioned components in the coalition (Rohozińska, 2001**).**

to 12 years, with no restrictions on the purchase of land for investment purposes (Szczerbiak, 2002). The fact that the governmental actions are indexed to this new negotiating strategy has rendered the agricultural concerns and purchase of Polish land by the foreigners the only thing that is understood from the accession.

As scrutinized before, the main leverage of LPR and SO's political discourse is agriculture as well. Low level of farming subsidies that the EU has offered Poland for its first year of membership to bolster is frequently emphasised and these two political parties construct their Euro-discourses mainly on the agricultural issues, for instance on CAP, state subsidies etc.. "SO emphasised that the EU subsidies will measure only %45 of the support farmers would normally receive from the Polish government"[26] (Jasiewicz, 2002). Moreover, the transition period for the purchase of land by foreigners is another problematic area where the Polish politicians highly speculate on. "Because of the differences in prices of land in candidate countries and members of the EU, Polish government asked a transitional period of 18 years before the free access of foreigners to the local market"[27] (Czernicka, 2004b: 12).

LPR's frequent reference to historical symbols and events also applies to agricultural issues. "The organisation charged to collect signatures was named

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[26] According to the Treaty of Accession signed on the 16th of April, 2003 by the EU and Poland, in 2004, Polish farmers may get up to 50% in direct subsidies, already in practice in the current Member States, 55% in 2005, 60% in 2006 (figures indicate the direct subsidy and level of support from the Polish budget agreed in Copenhagen in December 2002) as well as the gradual increase thereafter, equalling the level current Member States now benefit from.

[27] As a result, in the accession negotiations, Poland requested a transition period on the purchase of agricultural land and forest plots--twelve years for companies, three years for private farmers buying land in the east of Poland, and seven years for those buying land in western and northern Poland (which has been concluded in this form).

Plawocka. It is a reference to a book written in 1885 by Boleslaw Prus, under the same title *Plawocka.* This novel, about the rivalry of Polish and German peasants over land, is known for strong anti-German undertone" (Czernicka, 2004b: 13).

Another most commonly referred aspect of the EU and European integration is security. Leszek Miller, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, frequently uses concepts such as "stability", "borders" and "regional", which represent the EU as a regional world power in terms of military and security.

> The dreams of many Poles are being fulfilled. Democratic Poland is already very close to membership of the European Union, a community of free nations that are jointly building our continent's prosperity and security (...) Accession to the European Union is the cornerstone for a better future for us and our heirs. For the first time in centuries, our borders are safe, we are free and independent, and our aspirations towards development do not collide with the aims and ambitions of giant neighbors. We have left the world of dictate and politics from a position of strength behind. We solve domestic and foreign disputes by means of negotiations. We are on the proper side of the world, a world still enmeshed in bloody conflicts and wars in many places. We ourselves achieved this, but we must make sure we remain free and secure. Fate itself will not guarantee this. It depends on us and on our accession to the European Union (Miller, 2002).

This intense reference to the security is frequently vocalized by the Foreign minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz:

> Three institutions of security in particular are associated with the security aspect: the USA, NATO and both the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Foreign minister Cimoszewicz makes it clear that the security of Poland is the principal goal of Polish foreign policy and that the guaranteeing of this security is directly linked to NATO membership. He also supports the development of CFSP and ESDP, while underlining that one aim of this development should be support for USA. That is 'Europe' should not become 'stronger' for its own sake or a counter-weight to the USA, but rather to be a stronger partner of the USA, because Europe's security in turn depends upon the USA and the transatlantic cooperation (Dauderstadt and Joerissen, 2004: 7-8).

The security dimension is also the first priority to be pronounced by the PiS in

terms of Polish foreign policy:

> The first aim of [Polish foreign policy] is Polish security and active participation in the NATO. One of the greatest successes of foreign policy of the independent Republic of Poland was joining the NATO 3 years ago. (..) We believe that Poland's presence in the NATO is the foundation of our security. (..) The condition of NATO's good functioning is a harmonious cooperation of European states with the USA. We are against such actions-whatever their reasons-which would lead to withdrawing American troops from the continent (Ujazdowski, 2002).

CHAPTER 5

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA VIS-À-VIS THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF "EUROPE" IN THE POLITICAL SPACES IN POLAND AND HUNGARY

5.1. Introduction

If the ways in which the idea of "Europe" is conceptualized in the political spaces of the countries concerned are to be sought, it is vital to scrutinize one of the most essential elements that influence this formation process: media. The investigation of the effect of television and press to this process would apparently be a very laborious effort. Yet, with regard to the aims of this research, it may be enough, and of course obligatory, to exemplify the extent of this relationship between the conceptualisation of "Europe" by the media and what "Europe" means for the political agendas of the countries in question. The attitude of the press vis-à-vis the EU is seen as an important factor in the shaping of political space regarding the European integration. Due to linguistic constraints, only analyses written in English by other scholars or analysts could be used and thus first hand information is mostly inapplicable in this chapter.

Therefore, the aim in this chapter would be to unveil the ways in which the idea of "Europe" in general and EU accession in particular are articulated by the daily press in Poland and Hungary.

5.2. Hungarian Case

The scrutiny of the representation of the idea of "Europe" and of the concepts which are referred with regard to the EU accession in the Hungarian newspapers is important to understand how "Europe" is conceptualised by the main actors of/in the political space, i.e. by the media.

According to Hegedus, what is most noteworthy on the part of Hungarian media vis-à-vis the European integration is the narrow perspective, usually fed by lack of information (Hegedus, 2003). Hegedus argues that this lack of information prepares the raw material of the media on this issue, which is even fortified by it.

> Timing of enlargement was the first and single question raised by the Hungarian journalists in the late 90s and at the beginning of this century. The accession negotiations, especially at the end of the talks about the scale of financial package, were described as a political game between 'us and them' and not as between future partners. The role of the European Commission was simplified as the agent of member states. The mainstream Hungarian media–with some important exceptions- were not able to create an intellectually sophisticated framework in order to explain the nature of integration process (Hegedus, 2003:2).

He argues that the mechanical and insensitive perception of the EU determines the destiny of the Europe debates in Hungary, which is aloof from its real content and context.

> In order to demonstrate Hungarian insensitivity to European ideas, we can compare the reactions of *the Guardian* with the point of view of *Magyar Nemzet* ("Hungarian Nation") a conservative Hungarian daily. The headline of British newspaper on 26 October 1998, 'Blair puts the UK into the heart of Europe' summarised its analysis.

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The Guardian claimed that at the Pörtschach summit, Prime Minister Blair committed Great Britain to deeper integration with the European Union in order to decrease the fears of marginalisation of his country, which had decided not to join Economic and Monetary Union. The same day, the Hungarian newspaper did not grasp the significance of the British initiative at all. "There was a tension due to Tony Blair's security policy recommendations. The issue was pushed into the background after hard debates". This statement simply constituted a total misunderstanding: the shift in the European policy of Britain under the Labour government had contributed significantly to the development of institutional construction and the implementation of new European defence identity (Hegedus, 1999:7-8).

Hegedus adds that the Berlin Summit, was too significant to be defined by the Hungarian daily newspaper *Nepszabadsag* as: "instead of a big rumble of mountains, the result was a silent squeaking of mice", in the aftermath of which no sophisticated explanation about the final decisions on *Agenda 2000*, which is vital for the candidate states, as mentioned before, appeared in the media (Hegedus, 1999).

He argues that there are three main concepts drawn from or used in order to prove the "Europessimism" of Hungarian media (Hegedus, 2001):

- *Selfishness*: The "Europessimist" Hungarian media seem to be too introvert and superficial to contain a terminology of, for instance, "counterbalance" or "deal". "As an article entitled 'Selfishness' *Nepszabadsag,* the biggest Hungarian daily, claimed, the Germans and the Austrians want to limit free movement of labour from the candidate countries, although they will be the biggest beneficiaries of enlargement, in fact they want to have double advantages" (2001:5).

- *Aggressive Demands*: "Europessimists describe the internal talks and debates as eternal boxing, where the athletes not only hit but also blackmail each

other" (2001:6). Within the same framework of lack of information, EU is interpreted not as a roof of negotiation or deliberation, but a jungle within which "mutual punching [in the Berlin Summit]" is the case, even by the social scientific articles (Hegedus, 2003:2).

- *Empty Pockets*: It seems that a follower of Hungarian media who does not have any slightest idea about the EU or European integration except the information received from the newspapers would be assured that the EU is a mere economic cooperation. European Union is reduced to an economic cooperation, which excludes political dimension of a united Europe and European solidarity (Hegedus, 2001:6). Moreover, this economic cooperation has very little for the newcomers. Hegedus speaks about a Europessimistic nightmare about an enlarged European Union where "those behind the gate will show their empty pockets to the newcomers" and a new "distribution war on the heritage" leftover from the European budget will break out, as prophesied by *Nepszabadzag* (2001:6).

"The weekly magazine HVG put a round-bitten one euro coin and the title "entrance fee" on its front page after the Copenhagen Summit: the correct solution sounds that the member states were not willing to pay enough and the candidate countries could gain just a little portion of the budget" (Hegedus, 2003:3).

Similarly, while speaking about the EU and Hungary's mutual discursive construction of one another, Kovacs (2001) argues that Hungary replicates in the daily

press the way in which the EU expresses its dominance on the candidates. According to Kovacs, the EU communicates with the applicant without granting it subjectivity and treats it as an object as a part of constructing a hierarchy between itself and the "other states". Moreover, Hungary participates in the maintenance of a colonialist dynamic and the Euro-discourse of Hungarian press reinforces the same hierarchy (Kovacs, 2001). Analysis of the newspapers *Magyar Nemzet* and *Nepzabadzag* between 1 and 15 September 1999 is used to substantiate this argument. For instance, according to this analysis the EU is conceptualised as a standard by the newspapers (Kovacs, 2001). The domains of life that the EU serves as a standard include the distribution of blood donations, agricultural interventions, banking software and even mobile phone area codes. "This shows that for the Hungarian press in 1999, the EU is the absolute and undifferentiated good. There are no alternative reference points that may help adjudicate how well a country is doing and the EU standard is assumed to be one and knowable" (Kovacs, 2001: 11). This inevitably puts Hungary to a position of petitioning for admission. "The typical petitioner activity is to make oneself ready and admissible for the EU", which is said to be exemplified in the quote: "Viktor Orban has underlined that 2002 is not a date Hungary expressed to the EU as a demand, but a goal set for itself, which means that by 2002, Hungary has to be ready to be admissible to the EU" (Kovacs, 2001: 13). A following implication of this petitioning perspective is that accession is conceptualized as a reward and "getting in" is difficult. Moreover, different aspects of membership are depicted as an object of desire by the

newspaper headlines and quotes: "The salaries of Eurocrats in Brussels have always been the object of envy" and "if at a given border crossing, the wait is longer than thirty minutes, travellers may expect a differentiated procedure: for instance, Hungarians returning home or citizens of the EU leaving the country will not be registered" (Kovacs, 2001: 14- footnote 30).

Thus, the representation of the Euro-debate in the Hungarian media focuses on very superficial aspects of the accession, skipping the substantive elements that are essential to the accession process. This narrow perspective could be either interpreted as an uncontrollable anger directed towards the EU due to, for instance, the pace of accession or the unequal financial receipts by the member states and the candidates. Or, this could be seen as the reproduction of the unequal relationship between the candidate countries and the EU, which is called by Kovacs (2001) as the "epistemological construction of colonialism".

5. 3. The Polish Case

The attitude of the Polish newspapers towards the European integration also poses a possibility for a fruitful analysis of the conceptualization of "Europe" in the political space of Poland. A similar construction of the relationship between Poland and Hungary is visible in the Polish daily press, meaning that the Polish newspapers

appeal to the EU as the dominant side, while Poland is depicted as a supplicant that must comply with the terms set by the EU (Lubienski, 1998).

The survey made by Lubienski during 2 months preceding the launching of accession talks on March 30, 1998, covered the articles and quotations from the daily Polish newspapers such as *Gazeta Wybocza*, *Rzeczpospolita*, *Trybuna, Zycie* and *Nasz Dziennik* (1998).

The most significant trait of the language used by these newspapers in the period referred above appears to appeal to the aforementioned hierarchical and asymmetrical relationship between Poland and the EU. "The press generally depict Poland as the European Union's supplicant or student" (Lubienski, 1998: 12). The frequently used terms for the Polish part are "should", "request" or "must". The headline from *Rzeczpospolita* of 14-15 February apparently reflects the attitude towards the Polish position in the negotiations: "Negotiating on one's knees". "Owners or Beggars" is the name given to an article on the negotiations by *Zycie* on 20 March 1998 (Lubienski, 1998). It could be induced from this asymmetrical relationship that Poland's position is weaker, but it would become stronger once the country complies with the proposals put forward by the Union. "The papers write that the precondition for Poland's accession to the European Union is the country's *adjustment* to European standards, regulations and legislation principles" (*emphasis original*-Lubienski, 1998: 15).

Thus, within the framework of this asymmetrically constructed relationship, the accession process is most often is presented together with the metaphor of a road:

"How far is the Union?" (*Trybuna*, 26 March 1998) or a metaphor of homework: "We have homework to do" (*Zycie*, 27 March 1998) (Lubienski, 1998: 12-3).

However, the above mentioned perception of Polish position in the negotiations is escorted with the criticism of the EU for placing overly high demands: "The document [Accession Partnership] bears numerous signs of a dictate, but it has been consulted over with the Polish side" (Zycie, 27 March 1998). Moreover, it is wondered that the accession negotiations refer to "Partnership or Colonization?" (*Nasz Dziennik,* 12 February 1998; cited in Lubienski, 1998). For instance, in spite of its pro-government and pro-European line, even the newspaper *Zycie* is sometimes critical of the way in which the EU negotiations are made, especially concerning the system of agricultural subsidies: "It is difficult not to get the impression that (...) the Union is interested mainly in keeping Poland as a market for its products. So a contemporary type of neo-colonialism" (*Zycie*, 6 March 1998; cited in Lubienski, 1998:24).

Similar to the Hungarian case, along with the general sympathy with the EU accession, the Polish newspapers appeal to the EU as a super ordinate of Poland that knows and dictates "how to do" in the aforementioned period. This sometimes leads to a Polish position that accepts this asymmetry and knows that it has to "finish its homework". Sometimes, this motion of "dictate" is criticised, and the Polish negotiators are blamed for being too compliant.

Another survey conducted by Thiel (2003) points out to a similar argument (2003), comparing the evaluation of Europeanization and the EU accession by the Polish newspapers in 1997 and 2003. According to the article, when compared to the majority of positive reports (26 articles out of 47 articles) issued by the newspapers in the year 1997, the Polish view appears in a different light, with the majority of reports being neutral or being negative (Thiel, 2003). This change in the perception of the EU accession is linked to the fact that the Polish public debate, more and more, shifts from more general, idealistic discussions about the EU towards more specific issues like battled economy or real costs of the accession. Therefore, it could be argued that the perception of the idea of "Europe" or of the EU accession by the Polish press is very much bound up with the current phase of Europeanization, getting one step nearer to the general argument of this study that the Polish public debate is determined by the immediate and practical political concerns.

This marked pessimism and superficiality could be traced in the attitude of Polish newspapers in the eve of EU accession referendum. The newspapers in the following day of the EU referendum pose a euphoric and emotional attachment to the EU accession, being reflected by headlines such as: "Our homeland is in the European family of nations-yes to Poland!" (*Trybuna*, 9 June 2003) or "Yes, we are in the Union!" (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 June 2003) (cited in *BBC News*, 6 June 2003). However, this almost universal delight was not commensurate with the concerns echoed just before the EU referendum. "The joy of unification has been replaced by

bitterness: they don't want us". This is how *Gazeta Wyborcza* summed up the mood in

Poland just before the referendum (*Socialist World*, 28 April 2004).

CHAPTER 6

THE PUBLIC OPINION AS A TOOL TO ASSESS THE

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF "EUROPE" IN POLAND AND HUNGARY

6.1. Introduction

> The state of public opinion, in both the current and future member states of the EU is clearly a key factor in the 'Communication Strategy on Enlargement'[28]. The communication strategy is designed to be responsive to the needs of the general public, and it is therefore important that the Commission be aware of the level of knowledge and of the key concerns of Europe's citizens (European Union Official Web Site).

Thus, according to the European Commission, the public opinion and communication with the public opinion are treated as a tool to ease the enlargement process. An implicit aim behind this may be to cure the famous "democratic deficit" of the EU, which basically stipulates the view that "the Union's institutional set-up is dominated by institutions with little involvement of directly elected politicians and weak control by the people they ultimately represent" (Wirtz, 1999). However, as far as the attempt to understand the way in which "Europe" is understood in the Central and Eastern European Countries in general and in Poland and Hungary in particular, public opinion gains a relatively high significance beyond a mere aim of the justification of a project, so called

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[28] In the European Commission's "Communication Strategy on Enlargement" adopted in May 2000, it is stated: "Enlargement is a top priority for the European Union. The enlargement process will bring about major changes, which will effect the citizen in many ways. It is, therefore, vital that the people of Europe, in the member states and in candidate states, understand reasons for enlargement, as well as the benefits it will bring and the challenges it poses" (*European* Commission, 2000).

"enlargement". Therefore, in line with the central aim of this study, public opinion will be used as a tool of utmost importance in order to understand how and with reference to what concerns the "Europe" is conceptualised by the people of the countries in question, keeping the premise that public opinion is the main constituent part of the political space in mind. A particular attention will be paid to the Polish and Hungarian EU referenda, which have been held in June 2003 and April 2003 respectively.   The state of public opinion and the referendum campaigns conducted by the political parties will be assessed together in this section for the sake of keeping the integrity of the issue in question.

6.2. Polish Public Opinion vis-à-vis European Integration

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, it would be very hard to find a Polish who would think of an alternative to the European integration or to the EU accession. The political and economic transformation outlined in the preceding sections has created a euphoria and enthusiasm in the eyes of the public in terms of "Return to Europe". However, this Euro-enthusiasm was accompanied by, or maybe stemming from a deep distrust for the current situation in Poland. In May 1992 only 11% of the society believed that Poland was going in the right direction, while 74% held the opposite view and 48% of the respondents described the situation of their household as bad and 11% as good (CBOS, May 1992-cited in Slowik). In the parliamentary elections of 1993 voters rejected elites of *Solidarity*

origin and supported post-Communist parties. The beginning of economic growth brought about only a slight improvement of this generally pessimistic mood.

Therefore, the initial enthusiasm in terms of "Return to Europe" was not accompanied by a satisfaction of Polish public with the economic and social conditions of that period. Moreover, as the time has passed, the dissatisfaction with the elites made the public more and more critical of the elite-led governments' policies in terms of Europe. This, at the same time, means that Europe more and more has been identified with the policies of the elites.

It could be argued that, in accordance with the aims of this study, the differences that the conceptualization of "Europe" has been exposed to have caused the public opinion's disillusionment and disappointment in terms of Europe. Actually, when the idea of "Europe" was a civilizational project, as the ideas expressed by the Central European intellectuals later on culminated in the "Return to Europe" discourse in the early 1990s, it was much more widely accepted by the public. On the other hand, within the framework of the EU negotiations, especially after 1998, the public has experienced the newly arising problems which have more practical character and concern the Poles directly-such as the questions of land acquisition, free movement of labor and conditions of participation in CAP. Therefore, on the part of the public opinion, the change of in the pace of the idea of "Europe" has been both the cause and the effect of the change of the conceptualization of "Europe": The more the agriculture or the CAP has been an important issue in the very practical lives of the Poles, the more it became the first issue recalled after the pronunciation of the word "Europe".

Besides, the more it became the first issue recalled, the more disappointed the public got with the idea of "Europe". The following data shown in the Table 1 scrutinize what Polish public opinion understands from "Europe" and European integration:

TABLE 1: POLISH SUPPORT FOR EU MEMBERSHIP, 1994-2002

	June 94	May 95	May 96	March 97	Aug 97	May 98	Dec 98	May 99	Nov 99	Feb 00	May 00	Sep 00	Mar 01	May 01	June 01	July 01	Oct 01	Dec 01	Jan 02	Feb 02	Mar 02
Yes	77	72	80	72	72	66	64	55	59	55	59	55	59	55	54	53	56	60	57	54	55
No	6	9	7	12	12	19	19	26	26	26	25	26	25	28	29	25	24	22	22	25	29
Don't know	17	19	13	16	15	15	19	19	15	19	16	19	16	17	17	22	20	18	21	21	16

Source: CBOS. Poporcie dla wejscia Polski do Unii Europejskiej i opinie o konwencji Europejskim. Warsaw: CBOS, March 2002 (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002)

When the preceding data pointing out to the change in the attitude towards "Europe" in general and European integration in particular is deeply scrutinized, it could be found out that this change is parallel to the changes in the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the process, as shown in the Table 2:

TABLE 2: BENEFITS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION, 1993-2000

Who benefits most from Polish-EU relations?	July 93	March 94	May 95	May 96	Aug 97	Aug 98	May 99	Nov 99	May 00	Sep 00	Mar 01	Dec 01	Feb 02
EU countries	41	38	31	19	28	39	39	47	44	50	54	51	59
Poland	5	8	11	11	11	7	8	8	8	6	6	6	5
Both equally	27	26	33	46	35	30	30	27	29	26	25	25	19
Don't know	27	27	26	24	27	24	23	18	19	18	15	18	17

Source: CBOS.Stosunek do integracji Polski z Uniq Europejska po ogloszeniu nowego stanowiska negocjacyjnego. Warsaw: CBOS. January 2002; and CBOS. Opinie o integracji Polski z Uniq Europejska. Warsaw: CBOS, March 2002 (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002)

Another point of emphasis in terms of this benefit-loss nexus is that while most Poles think that EU integration will bring more benefits than losses to their country, they are uncertain whether they would benefit as individuals. In a March 2001 CBOS survey, 56% of the respondents think that accession will benefit Poland, while for 16% of the samples it would be disadvantageous (for 10%, it would make no difference and 18% did not know). Similarly, in the same survey, it has been found out that 32% of the respondents think that EU membership would benefit them personally while for 50% of the samples it would make no difference (11% did not know and according to 8% it would be disadvantageous) (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002). This figures has been exposed to some changes in the June 2001 OBOP/Polytika survey, in which 31% of the respondents felt that EU membership will bring Poland gains rather than losses while %27 thought that losses would outweigh the gains (25% said that they would be equal and 17% did not know) (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002). However, only 21% think that they would be personally advantaged and 24% said that it would bring them greater losses (23% said that it would have no impact, 18% said that the effect would be neutral and 14% did not know).

As these figures suggest, most Poles think that the EU will benefit more from the Polish EU integration. Moreover, even a four month-time has been enough for more Poles to think that the acquisitions caused by the integration will be outweighed by the losses (the surveys have been done with an interval of 4 months). Similarly, more than a half of the respondents think that the EU integration will not have an immediate impact in their personal lives. Therefore,

the EU integration will be more beneficiary to the "old" Europe than the "new" Europe and even if it would be beneficial for Poland, the individuals do not think that they will experience it in their lives.

In parallel with these remarks, another component to the Euro-attitude of the Poles is that they are suspicious that Poland will not be a member of the EU on an equal footing with the other members. This can be called as a "fear of second-class-membership", as mentioned before.

TABLE 3: THE PERCEPTION OF THE EU VIS-À-VIS POLAND AND THE "OLD MEMBERS"

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement, and how strongly?	Even after the eastern enlargement, the EU will put the interests of its western member states above the interests of its new eastern members like Poland? %
Strongly agree	27
Agree	49
Disagree	20
Strongly disagree	2
Mixed/depends	2

Source: McManus-Czubinska et.al., 2003a :10

Similarly, as other opinion polls show, a great majority of Poles are convinced that even after the accession to the EU, Poland will be a second-rate member (67%). What is more interesting than this is that the conviction of Poland's unequal future status in the EU is shared by both the supporters and opponents of integration. 90% of the opponents believe that Poland will be a second-class member and this view is also shared by more than a half of the adherents of Polish accession to the Union.

This remark may be evaluated as a realistic appreciation of the distance that still exists between Poland and most member states as well as a superficial and emotional evaluation of this second-class membership. They also appear to be aware that joining the EU will involve making certain sacrifices and have fairly modest expectations that are likely to accrue from it (Kolarska-Bobinska, 2001). A June 2000 ISP survey found out that only 4% of the Poles believed that their country would benefit from EU membership immediately, 51% after a few years and 30% after more than ten years.

In this respect, the main reason why most Poles think that Poland will not be able to cope with the consequences of the accession is the idea that Poland is not ready to compete with the advanced economies of the member states. This idea of a "premature accession on unfavourable terms" (Szczerbiak, 2002: 30) could be traced in the results of February 2002 CBOS survey. According to this survey, the potential negative impact of the EU integration on Polish economy is the mostly referred concern underlying the opposition to the EU accession (Szczerbiak, 2002).

Moreover, economy is again the first issue referred to -regarding the support of/opposition to the EU integration- even if the questions are not asked in economic terms. Poles overwhelmingly would base their voting decision in accordance with the economic criteria, not on political and social criteria.

TABLE 4: THE REASONS FOR VOTING IN THAT WAY IN THE COMING EU REFERENDUM

Would you vote that way mainly because of.....	%
The effect of EU entry in our economy?	72
the effect of EU entry on our political and cultural development?	20
Neither/mixed/depends	8

Source: McManus-Czubinska et.al., 2003a:16

Moreover, both YES and NO sides would have denoted that they would base their voting decision in the EU referendum on economic criteria-not on economic and cultural criteria:

TABLE 5: VOTING CRITERIA IN THE COMING EU REFERENDUM

IRRESPECTIVE OF THE VOTE GIVEN

	Would you vote that way mainly because of the effect of the EU on our economy (as % of "economy"+ "culture")
Amongst those who would vote...	
for joining the EU	78
against joining the EU	80
Amongst those, who, in an EU referendum are...	
certain to vote	81
very likely to vote	75
not very likely to vote/certain to abstain	60

Source: McManus-Czubinska et.al., 2003a: 16

Similarly, a more recent February 2002 CBOS survey points out to a similar economic reference in terms of EU accession:

TABLE 6: BENEFITS OF THE EU INTEGRATION-ACCORDING TO SPECIFIC AREAS

General benefits	26%
Benefits for specific areas	
Reduction in unemployment, job opportunities	26%
Benefits for the economy, economic development	19%
Improvements in living standards, quality of life	18%
Open borders	5%
Benefits for agriculture and the countryside	4%
Positive impact on domestic public affairs	3%
Common currency, the Euro	2%
Integration as a historical necessity	
Globalisation, need to avoid international isolation	12%
General-necessity of, lack of alternatives	10%
Better perspectives for future generations	7%
Only hope for rescuing the country	4%
Don't know	2%

Source: Szczerbiak, 2002

Putting the economy as the firstly referred variable, it could be concluded that the socio-economic factors are the first issues pre-occupying the Poles regarding the EU accession. Moreover, when divided into its constituent parts, the main reason why the Poles oppose the EU integration is that they think that it will affect negatively some particular sectors in economic terms:

TABLE 7: THE PERCEPTION OF SOME PARTICULAR SECTORS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EU INTEGRATION

June 1994		Feb 2002
24%	**It will have a negative impact on farms**	53%
40%	**It would be positive**	26%
37%	**ership as a negative thing for public sector**	35%
32%	**EU membership as a positive thing for public sector**	33%
6%	**EU membership as a positive thing for private sector**	29%
67%	**EU membership as a negative thing for private sector**	42%
57%	**It would have a positive impact on living standards**	42%
10%	**It would have a negative impact on living standards**	23%

Source: Derived from the data presented in Szczerbiak, 2002

Similarly, a June 2000 ISP survey found out that 56% of the Poles believed that EU accession would mean the collapse of many small and medium-sized enterprises and increased unemployment (28% disagreed) (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002:30).

Another important question that deserves particular attention is that whether there is a correlation between the people's party preferences and their attitudes towards the EU accession. The polling evidence gathered just after the September 2001 parliamentary elections reveals that the supporters of EU membership represented a majority among the voters of all main parties and groupings represented in the parliament except for the LPR (24% in favour and 52% against) but including Self-Defence (33% in favour and 29% against). As far as the priorities and the programmes of the Polish political parties are concerned, it may be a little surprising that the supporters of Self-Defence and Justice and Law Party support EU membership.

TABLE 8: SUPPORT FOR POLISH EU MEMBERSHIP BY PARTY,

OCTOBER 2001

	PO	SLD	PiS	SO	PSL	LPR
Yes	66	60	44	33	32	24
No	9	15	14	25	25	52
Don't know	8	11	14	13	13	2
Won't vote	18	15	28	29	29	22

Source: B. Roguska and J.Kucharzyk, *Wybory 2001 a integracja Polski z Uniq Eupejskq*, Warsaw: ISP, p.13 (cited in Szczerbiak, 2002: 18).

However, a CBOS survey conducted in September 2001 confirms the fact

that LPR support is associated with EU entry (cited in Manus-Czubinska et. al.,

2003b). As explained by Manus-Czubinska et.al,

> this may be because LPR sympathisers, more than others, are afraid that the EU poses a threat to Catholic culture as Poland merges into a more secular Europe. But this relationship between LPR sympathies and attitudes to EU entry is weaker than some other dispositions, for example, LPR supporters have stronger views on the church than on the EU (Manus-Czubinska et. al., 2003b:38-9).

TABLE 9: LINKS BETWEEN PARTY SYMPATHIES AND EUROPEAN

ISSUES

	Party Sympathies						
	SLD	SO	PSL	UW	PO	LPR	PiS
EU is bad for Poland	-	+18	-	-12	-15	+11	-
EU entry would damage own family's living standards	-	+21	+16	-	-22	+11	-
Tightening eastern border is bad	-	+17	+10	-	-10	-	-
Identity; exclusively Polish; not all European	-	+16	+10	-	-	+13	-
EU entry would damage agriculture	-	+15	-	-	-11	-	-
Keep zloty	-	+12	-	-	-	+10	-
EU entry would damage Polish private enterprises	-	+12	-	-	-13	+11	-
EU threatens freedom in Central Europe	-	+11	-	-	-11	-	-
EU threatens Poland's independence and culture	-	+11	-	-	-15	-	-
EU entry would damage state enterprises	-	+10	-	-	-14	-	-
An influx of foreigners with different culture would be bad	-	+10	+10	-	-	-	-
EU officials are corrupt and wasteful	-	-	-	-10	-15	-	-

Sovereignty more important than international cooperation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(Table 9 continued)

Souce: Manus-Czubinska et al., 2003b, p.41

Note: Correlations less than 10 are not shown. All reported are significant at the one percent level. Entries, other than the first line, are ranked in descending order of correlation with Samoobrona sympathies.

When the SO and PSL columns are checked, it could be seen that the opposition to the EU by the sympathizers of these political parties are more correlated with the suspicion felt against the foreigners from different cultures or against the living standards that are to be deteriorated by the EU accession, than the straightforward conviction that "EU is bad for Poland". "It also seems that Samoobrona sympathizers' opposition is pragmatic, and not a reflection of cultural fright or xenophobic nationalism. It does not reflect attachment to symbols like the national currency. Indeed, it does not even seem to reflect fears for Polish agriculture so much as fears for living standards. It is intensely practical" (Manus-Czubinska et. al., 2003b:38-9). It is even more surprising that individual sympathy for the overtly anti-EU LPR does not indicate strong EU views in general. At the grass-roots, if not at the leadership level, sympathy for the LPR reflects concern for the status of the Church within Poland much more than any concern for the future of Poland's Catholic culture within an enlarged Europe (Manus-Czubinska et. al., 2003b).

TABLE 10: PERCENTAGE OF LIKELY VOTERS WHO WOULD

SUPPORT POLISH EU ACCESSION IN A REFERENDUM

	In percentage of all respondents	In percentage of those would "surely vote" in a referendum and knew how they would vote
April 1996	68	89
April 1999	82	93
April 2001	75	91
June 2002	76	89
November 2002	69	84
December 2002	63	80
January 2003	62	79
February 2003	65	81
March 2003	70	85
April 2003	70	85

Source: Monthly omnibus polls by the *Median Public Opinion* and *Market Research Institute*, each with an N=1200 clustered random route sample of the adult population. The data are weighed so as to correct for the impact of non-sampling error on the democratic composition of the sample (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 21).

6.2.1. Polish EU Referendum and its Repercussions in the Political Space

On June 7-8, 2003, Polish voters went to the polls to decide whether their country should join the European Union. While government officials feared the turnout would fall short of the mandatory 50 percent of eligible voters, in the end almost 58.85 percent cast a ballot, with 79.1 percent voting "tak" (yes) to join the European Union. According to the Polish constitution, a turnout of less than 50 percent would have thrown the decision on EU membership to the parliament[29].

It has been stated that the Polish referendum was much bound up with the current political issues of the country (Szczerbiak, 2003). For instance, the decreasing popularity of the Miller's government "had led to fears that voters may use referendum as an opportunity to register their disapproval with the government's performance by voting No or more likely staying at home" (Szczerbiak, 2003:4). Similarly, what has determined the attitudes of the political parties regarding the referendum was their reaction to the current political developments. For instance Justice and Law Party (PiS) has declared that it would

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[29] According to the Polish Constitution Article 90, "1. A statute, granting consent for ratification of an international agreement referred to in para.1, shall be passed by the Sejm by a two-thirds majority vote in the presence of at least half of the statutory number of Deputies, and by the Senate by a two-thirds majority vote in the presence of at least half of the statutory number of Senators. (..) 3. Granting of consent for ratification of such agreement may also be passed by a nationwide referendum in accordance with the provisions of Article 125".Therefore, it is also possible to ratify an accession treaty by a two-thirds majority in the both houses of the parliament. However, the general political inclination has been to have a referendum. If the turnout in the referendum were below the constitutional limit of 50%, the parliamentary option could be resorted, but according to Szczerbiak, "such a decision would be open to challenge both on legal grounds and (perhaps more importantly) on the dubious political legitimacy that it would confer on a decision of such historic proportions" (Szczerbiak, 2002: 34, foot note 100).

vote "no" in the referendum if membership terms offered in the Copenhagen Summit[30] were not improved (Szczerbiak, 2003).

Polish "Yes" camp was constituted of President Kwasniewski, the government party SLD, Civic Platform (UW), Catholic Church and umbrella grouping called "Civic Initiative YES in the Referendum". The government spent approximately 3 million Euro, organizing public meetings and travelling all through the country to meet the EU-curious and critical public. Every household also received a special brochure signed by the Polish President, Aleksander Kwasniewski, in which he explained how wonderful life in the EU could be. The Polish church has also provided its support for the country's European integration. Pope Jean-Paul II also called on the Polish people to vote in favour of the membership of the Union.

> I know that many Poles are against Poland's integration into the Union. I understand their concern to maintain the cultural and religious identity of our country. I share their concern. I must however point out that Poland has always been an important part of Europe and that it cannot abandon the community that, it is true to say, has undergone many crises, but that represents today a family of nations founded on a common Christian tradition. Europe needs Poland. The Church in Europe needs the demonstration of Polish faith (Pope John Paul II, 2003).

PiS can also be added to this list, which has voted "Yes" in the referendum in spite its former stance. As *The Warsaw Voice* depicts the campaign,

> accession to the EU is a decision of key importance for the future of all Poles," says Law and Justice. "Strong Poland in Europe," is the slogan under which the PiS has been conducting its European campaign since April 27. Party leader Jarosław Kaczyński stresses that thanks to accession, Poland will gain influence on the EU's economy, which already exerts a strong influence on the Polish economy. In their leaflet urging Poles to vote yes in the referendum, the PiS says that "as EU

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[30] "In the run up to the December 2002 Copenhagen Summit it emerged that EU accession could provoke a state budget crisis in the early years of membership and that there was a danger that Poland could actually end up being a net contributor to the EU budget. This was because full contributions to the EU would have to be paid from the central budget from day one, whereas most EU aid would go to local authorities or individuals" (Szczerbiak, 2003:3).

members, the Polish people will be able to decide the future of the continent. Once rooted in the political structures of the West, Poland will be ensured security and stability-indispensable conditions for lasting growth (The Warsaw Voice, 2003).

The media was also very pre-occupied with the referendum, generally culminating around the affirmation of the Polish EU accession:

"Twice as many must go" exclaimed the *Gazeta Wyborcza* in the headline of a special, free edition distributed Sunday, June 8. Public television's highly popular headline news program *Teleexpress* also made a last-minute concealed appeal, saying that only a few more percent were needed for the referendum to be valid three hours before the closing of polling stations. Not hesitating to opt for elements of a negative campaign, *Gazeta Wyborcza* published a completely fictitious edition dated June 5, 2009, designed to shock voters with potential headlines that foretold a possible power struggle spurred by radicals and of the dramatic fall of Poland's significance on the international political and economic arena-if the accession vote were to fail" (Poland Monthly, 2003).

Not surprisingly, "No" camp was composed of the *League of Polish Families* (LPR) and *Self-Defense* (SO). "I would like to thank those who had the courage to go against the tide and vote 'no' [and] those who had the courage to stay at home today". LPR leader Roman Giertych said (*Warsaw Voice*, 7 June 2003). The famous LPR slogan, "Yesterday Moscow, today Brussels" was again on the forefront and the economic issues such as the prices that were told to rise after the EU accession were again referred to frequently. Moreover, references to the current party politics were linked to a putative "no" vote in the referendum: "No" vote would hasten the downfall of the unpopular SLD government, growing attention to the pledge that premier Miller gave in 2002 that he would resign if he lost the EU referendum (Szczerbiak, 2003).

Eurosceptics already criticized what they saw as a non-balanced media campaign and openly pro-EU attitude by public TV and radio. During the

campaign no public money was distributed among the opponents. The mainstream No-organization, the League of Polish Families (LPR) however, says it distributed over 20 million leaflets (EU Observer, 2003).

> The postcard [issued by LPR] featured the body of Charlie Chaplin with the face of Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller, saying, "I put all my cards on the EU." If this was not enough, on the other side of the postcard voters could read a letter allegedly written to a Byelorussian mother by her son living in the EU. In the letter posted at the end of 2005, the son complains about the high prices and asks for one kilo of real, natural ham (Latvian Public Policy Site).

Self Defense's anti-EU campaign was less acute. "In spite of his often bitter anti-EU invective, party leader Lepper argued that his party was not opposed to Polish EU membership in principle but simply against the unfavorable accession terms negotiated by the government and *Self-Defence* campaigned on the rather enigmatic slogan 'The Choice is Yours'" (Szczerbiak, 2003:6). According to the *Warsaw Voice*, when the result of the referendum was clear SO leader Lepper adopted a more moderate tone than he had in the run-up to the vote, saying he was satisfied with the results (7 June 2003). "*Samoobrona* did not say 'no' and I never said 'Do not go and vote'" he said (Warsaw Voice, 7 June 2003).

Radio Maryja's position in the EU referendum campaigns was not very different from its inclination to tone down its anti-EU stance as exemplified before. "Towards the end of the campaign its director, Father Rydzyk began to send out mixed signals about the broadcaster's stance; for example, describing the EU as 'purgatory' rather than 'hell'!" (Szczerbiak, 2003: 6).

As can be clearly seen, the perpetuation of the Euro-debate by the political parties during the EU accession referendum in Poland is very much bound up with

the then political priorities and maneuvers. The formation of pro-EU and anti-EU camps is not an independent variable and thus the attitudes of EU accession by the Polish political parties during the EU accession referendum campaign is very much determined by the particular policies of the EU (such as CAP) and by the current political debates (such as the unpopularity of Miller government). Moreover, the ambiguous discourses of some political parties and the discursive changes that the political parties had experienced in that period are also noteworthy. These elements can be held up to prove that the "Europe" discourse of the Polish political parties in the EU accession referendum period in particular is very much constructed upon a slippery surface susceptible to changes inserted by their immediate practical political concerns.

6.3. Hungarian Public Opinion vis-a-vis the EU Integration

Hungary was also the first former communist country that as early as in April 1994, submitted its application for EU membership. "During the accession negotiations, when the most controversial chapters were on the agenda, on some of the hottest issues, the union settled the dispute first with Hungary, and then the agreed solution served as a pattern for agreements on the same chapter with other candidates" (Fölsz and Toka, 2004). This shows an intense elite commitment for EU accession of Hungary. This also held true for the public opinion at least initially, yet the same erosion in terms of support for EU integration has also been

experienced in Hungary, though not as drastic as Poland. No major political entity seems to question the country's Western orientation. This relatively strong orientation may be linked to various reasons. For instance, it may be considered that the West has got a historical debt to Hungary; therefore the EU accession of Hungary is an inevitable historical necessity. With one step forward, it could be claimed that Hungary is the fittest of all candidate countries for EU accession thanks to its position in the communist era. According to Henderson,

> the country has been least threatened by a return to the authoritarian economic and political tendencies of the communist era. This is because Hungary already in the 1980s showed a lower level of obsession with the communist domination, and regarded itself as an independent actor. It was ahead of its Warsaw Pact partners in rejoining the West in the 1980s and has remained ahead. This, in turn, has led to a degree of impatience at the thought that it might have to wait for slower states in achieving its accession to the EU in the first wave of eastern enlargement"(Henderson, 2002:17).

Departing from this point, it has to be underlined that the main feature of the Hungarian attitude towards the European integration is characterized by the doubts felt for the pace of accession mainly due to above reasons. For instance, the attitude of Fidesz leader vis-à-vis the speed of accession negotiations could be given as an example of this stance of the Hungarian elites, as mentioned in the previous section. Every step in Hungarian accession timetable has contributed to the frustration felt towards the speed of the EU accession:

> In the early nineties, Hungary hoped that accession would take place as early as in 1996. When the country officially submitted the application, accession was expected to happen already before the end of last decade. When in 1997 the Commission published its report Agenda 2000, Hungarian officials grudgingly reckoned that the budgetary guidelines allocated spending for the new members only from 2002 on. So, when the negotiation process was at last launched in 1988, the target date for Hungary's entry was set as 1 January 2002. The official Hungarian opinion always emphasised that each applicant country should advance

in the accession process with the speed that fits her, and fast-moving countries should not be put to wait for the laggards (Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 2).

Thus, as things turned out to develop more slowly than planned, the Hungarian elite became more and more frustrated with and critical towards the EU. This changing pattern of support for the EU has also found its resonance on the part of the public opinion. Although support for joining the European Union was always rather high among the Hungarians, and never fell below two-thirds of the respondents, this support has been conditional upon the timing of the accession. For instance, as Table 11 shows, the support has been very high in 1999 just after the accession negotiations have started, but eroded as the negotiations have progressed:

TABLE 11: THE HUNGARIAN SUPPORT FOR THE EU INTEGRATION

	In percentage of all respondents	In percentage of those would "surely vote" in a referendum and knew how they would vote
April 1996	68	89
April 1999	82	93
April 2001	75	91
June 2002	76	89
November 2002	69	84
December 2002	63	80
January 2003	62	79

February 2003	65	81
March 2003	70	85
April 2003	70	85

(Table 11 continued)

Source: Monthly omnibus polls by the Median Public Opinion and Market Research Institute, each with an N=1200 clustered random route sample of adult population. The data are weighed so as to correct for the impact of non-sampling error on the demographic composition of the sample (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 21).

Actually, the fall in the support of the Hungarian public opinion for the EU accession could be traced back to the early 1990s, mainly because of the same doubts about the timing about the EU accession and the attitude of the EU member states towards Hungary.

Hegedus speaks about a shift from the 90s' idealistic, historical-emotional rhetoric expressing a general wish to catch up with the more successful welfare states and pluralistic political systems to the emphasis on the pragmatic economic benefits coming from the financial transfers of European funds (Hegedus, 2001). He adds that: "the vision of a united Europe ceased to be a mobilising message: instead of thinking about big ideas and common values, Hungarians have become more excited about short-term advantages" (Hegedus, 2001: 203). "The general attitudes towards the European Union have slowly shifted from an emotional wish to join the exclusive club without hesitation and a hope to enjoy material benefits from membership to cautious reservations" (Hegedus, 2003:2).

Agh speaks about the very same process in terms of "post- revolutionary hang-over". He links the aforementioned shift to mainly three reasons:

- Over-heated expectations of the early 90s, which led to disappointment. "From the early 90s on, there have always been promises by the EU or its individual member states about full membership for the ECE states with the next three-five years. As time has passed, those promises have constantly been both renewed and postponed yet again in the same way, that is, for the next three-five years. Initially, the ECE political elites took these promises far too seriously themselves, and exaggerated them even more in their own interest, i.e. for both electoral and legitimation purposes. From the mid-nineties on, however, the ECE political elites have begun to listen to such EU rhetoric more cautiously, although they have never ceased to overvalue it" (Hegedus, 2003: 36).

- Inability of parties to formulate Euro-policies and to present them in everyday terms

- "Intellectual/political level of the European discourse has been so low for many years that this empty sloganeering has already produced irritation in the electorate" (Agh,2001: 37).

    This disinterestedness, either it is "Europessimism" as called by Hegedus (1999, 2001, 2003) or "Euro-fatigue", as Agh (2001) describes, is ornamented by some ideas such as "present member states have no interest in enlargement", "national egoism is the core of European decision-making"," everything in the EU is about money" or "even during the accession talks, the Fifteens loved to make fun of us". (Hegedus, 2003). For instance, for Hegedus, Hungarian European identity which is "premature, shaky and non-political" is characterised by the

reservations such that the real intention of the EU is to postpone enlargement. Actually, according to Hegedus, such a Hungarian European identity is "neither a reaction to Europeanization nor a Eurosceptical ideology. It simply mirrors the wish of a new comer, who wants to enter an old club impatiently, (...) [which] creates a European identity *ex ante*" (Hegedus, 2001:3).

Hegedus argues that such kind of a conceptualization of "Europe", so-called "Europessimism", fed by rumors or stereotypes instead of discussions regarding the future of the EU about democratic deficit or federalism for instance, can not be called disillusionment as it does not stem from any particular information (Hegedus, 1999). Hegedus explains this lack of information by referring to two main concepts, which is very much commensurate with the aims of this study and the issue at hand: the effect of media and the "elites".

Due to similar reasons as outlined by Hegedus (1999, 2001, and 2003), the Hungarian public opinion does not seem sure about the direct benefits of the EU accession:

TABLE 12: BELIEFS ABOUT THE VALIDITY OF VARIOUS

STATEMENTS ABOUT HOW MEMBERSHIP IN THE

EUROPEAN UNION WILL IMPACT HUNGARY

Statement	True	Untrue	Can not say
There will be fewer alcohol addicts	9	73	18
Number of suicides will drop	13	61	26
National culture will have less significance	23	66	12
Population decline will stop [in Hungary]	25	53	22
Hungary will become the most important country in the region	27	52	21
Relations with some neighbouring countries will deteriorate	29	50	21
Hungary will lose her independence	33	59	9
It will be harder to travel to Hungary for ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries	33	46	21
More foreigners will move to Hungary	33	53	15
Government will spend less on social programs	38	43	19
There will be more horror and porn movies and books around	38	46	17
Inflation will drop significantly	39	38	24
Hungarian products will not be competitive	40	46	15
There will be more impoverished residential areas	41	42	17
Crime will increase	42	41	17
There will be more drug addicts [in Hungary]	43	39	18
There will be a bigger gap between the eastern and western parts of the country	43	39	18

(Table 12 continued)			
People will pay less attention to each other	47	42	11
Most national assets will come to be owned by foreigners	48	38	14
There will be a robust middle class	48	28	24
Hungary will have a bigger [international] influence	50	35	15
Living standards will significantly improve	51	36	13
The role of Budapest will increase in the nation's life	51	32	18
Hungary will be better able to represent the interests of ethnic Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries	52	26	22
Hungarian jobs will be protected	52	27	21
Hungary will catch up with the standards of developed Western countries	54	33	14
Border control system will create extra financial burdens	58	20	22
Communication will become more expensive	60	28	12
The quality of health care will improve	61	27	13
The highway system will get much better	63	25	12
Salaries will increase	64	25	12
Hungarian arts and culture will get better recognised	64	20	16
Many Hungarian medical doctors and nurses will work abroad	65	23	12
More families will have computer and internet access	66	17	16
Medicine and medical equipment will become more expensive	69	19	13
Prices will increase	69	21	10
The gap between poor and rich will widen	69	22	9
Transportation will become more expensive	74	15	12
Hungary will obtain foreign loans more easily	75	13	13

Hungarians will learn foreign languages more easily	76	17	8
There will be a greater choice of consumer goods	79	13	8
Employees will have to meet higher expectations	79	12	9
More modern medicines and medical equipment will be available	79	10	11
Hungarians will have more job opportunities abroad	83	10	7
It will be easier for students to study in Western Europe	84	9	8

(Table 12 continued)

Source: Szonda-Ipsos survey about the referendum campaign commissioned by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Clustered random sample of the adult citizen population with N=3000, and fieldwork carried out between 17 February and 16 March 2003. The data are weighed so as to correct for the impact of non-sampling error on the demographic composition of the sample (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 23).

The same perspective used in the evaluation of the impact of the EU accession outlined above is also reflected by the answers given to the questions about the beneficiaries of the EU accession. According to the Hungarian public, EU membership is one of those things that makes the rich even richer, and the poor probably poorer or at least unaffected. The elderly and the people employed in agriculture seem the least advantaged groups:

TABLE 13: BENEFICIARIES OF HUNGARIAN EU ACCESSION

	Disadvantaged	Benefit	Neither-nor
Those who speak foreign languages	4.3	91.4	4.2

Professionals	5.3	87.3	7.4
Politicians	5.5	87.2	7.4
Budapest residents	7.5	80.4	12.1
Residents of the western part of Hungary	8.6	75.7	15.7
Children	8.7	83.8	7.5
Young people	9.5	85.3	5.2
Industrialists, big business	9.6	82.2	8.2
Civil servants, public sector employees	11.9	75.9	12.2
Teachers	12	76.3	11.7
Economically active people	20.7	64.8	14.5
People on maternity leave	32.8	41.7	25.6
Middle aged people	35.8	46.7	17.6
Industrial workers	36.2	47.5	16.3
Residents of western part of Hungary	41	41.7	17.3
The unemployed	42.8	42.9	14.3
Pensioners	47.2	34.3	18.4
Small entrepreneurs	52.1	36.2	11.7
The elderly	52.2	28.2	19.6
People employed in agriculture	54.7	33	12.4

(Table 13 continued)

Source: Szonda-Ipsos survey about the referendum campaign commissioned by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Clustered random sample of the adult citizen population with N=3000, and fieldwork carried out between 17 February and 16 March 2003 (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 25).

Like its Polish counterpart, Hungarian public opinion has a tendency to associate the EU accession mainly with economic benefits. More interestingly, this

tendency is visible on the part of both "Yes" and "No" voters. Only 22% of the reasons given for a "Yes" vote in the referendum were non-economic in content, while 33% of the respondents gave at least one non-economic reason for an affirmative vote. At least one clearly economic reason was mentioned by them, and clearly economic reasons amounted to the 49% of all reasons shown.

TABLE 14-FREQUENCY OF ECONOMIC VERSUS OTHER ARGUMENTS IN VOLUNTEERED REASONS FOR REFERENDUM VOTE INTENTION:

Vote intention:	Yes	No
Percentage of all reasons offered that fall into each type:		
Clearly economic reasons	49	46
Clearly non-economic reasons	22	17
Other reasons	29	36
Total number of reasons offered:	3528	434
Percentage of respondents offering at least one reason of given type		
Clearly economic reasons	59	41
Clearly non-economic reasons	33	21
Other reasons	45	45

No reason given	11	18
Number of respondents:	1964	305

(Table 14 continued)

Source: Szonda-Ipsos survey about the referendum campaign commissioned by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Clustered random sample of the adult sample population with N=3000, and fieldwork carried out between 17 February and 16 March 2003 (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 24).

The correspondence between the political affiliations and attitudes towards the EU is not of outstanding importance in Hungarian case, as there is not a wide range of Eurosceptical political parties such as in the Polish case, but this correlation still deserves mentioning. For instance, it could be argued that the Fidesz's harsh rhetoric vis-à-vis the European integration, especially from 2002 onwards may cause the decrease of the positive evaluation of the EU by the Hungarian public:

TABLE 15: POSITIONS ATTRIBUTED TO THE FOUR

PARLIAMENTARY PARTIES REGARDING EU MEMBERSHIP

SHORTLY BEFORE THE REFERENDUM

	Fidesz-MPP	**MDF**	**MSzP**	**SzDsZ**
Not at all supportive	7	2	0	0
A little bit supportive	19	13	2	3
More or less supportive	49	60	19	37

Very supportive	25	26	79	60

(Table 15 continued)

Source: The question asked to the respondents is: "How characteristic do you think is for [name of the party] that it supports EU membership: not at all, a little bit, more or less, or very much?" Poll by the Median Public Opinion and Market Research Institute with an N=1200 clustered random route sample of the adult population, interviewed on 6-10 March 2003. The data are weighed so as to correct for the impact of non-sampling error on the demographic composition of the sample (cited in Fölsz and Toka, 2004: 25).

6.3.1. Hungarian Referendum

"Are you in favor that the Hungarian Republic becomes a member of the European Union?" This was the question that the Hungarians were to decide on 12 April 2003 EU Referendum. The answer was a "Yes" by the 84% of those who voted and a "No" by 16% who voted against, although the voter turnout was very low (45%). Fortunately, Hungary did not have a threshold of 50% turnout for a referendum to be valid like Poland, which has been altered recently. A legal reform in 1997 stipulated that only issues falling within the parliamentary competence can be put up to a referendum and the previous 50% turnout requirement has been changed with the provision that any binding referendal result must be backed by the 25%+1 of the electorate, irrespective of the turnout (Fowler, 2003).

What is most interesting about the context of EU Referendum in Hungary is that it was not a very "interesting" issue at all. The overlapping of the time tables of parliamentary elections and the referendum to some extent may be the reason,

or the fact that the Hungarian politics is not divided in terms of EU accession as in the Polish case could be shown as a fact. But, what is most noteworthy, especially in terms of the aim of this study, is the first one, which draws attention to the conceptualization of the referendum vis-à-vis the parliamentary elections. According to Fowler, the voters were more interested in the parliamentary elections at which they had to choose between two alternatives because they knew that the results of the elections really were to change something in their daily lives. But, the EU referendum did not seem equally influential. As Fowler explains:

> in 2002 parliamentary poll, voters saw a clear choice between two alternatives, the result was obviously going to be close, and the turnout corresponded closely to the share of the population reporting that the outcome mattered. In the EU referendum, (...) voters seemed to have little sense that their vote mattered, in terms of affecting what was seen as an inevitable result; or that the result would make much immediate difference to their lives. An expectation of personal benefit had always been strongly correlated with a 'Yes' vote and a high commitment to voting. In March [2003], 42% of the electorate expected personal benefits from accession-much close to the size of actual "Yes" vote than the 60-65% that were intending to vote for the EU" (Fowler, 2003: 9).

Moreover, the obligation to choose between these two alternatives, i.e. the deep divide between Right and Left, is shown as a reason of the low voter turnout in the referendum. "People have been educated to believe that all that the Other Side does and proposes simply cannot be any good. (..) On the EU issue, Hungarian minds were similarly confused: how can everybody, left and right, government and opposition parties, be in favor of EU accession? As a right-winger, how can I say yes to a proposal from the leftwing government?" (Kliphuis, 2003).

In this respect, the low voter turnout, when compared to the 70% voter turnout in the parliamentary elections, and the disinterestedness of people to the EU referendum may provide one with a perspective on how the public opinion treats

"Europe" as a component of the political agenda. This is also reflected in the reasons

people have reported for not voting in the EU accession referendum in Hungary:

TABLE 16: REPORTED REASONS FOR NOT VOTING IN THE EU ACCESSION REFERENDUM IN HUNGARY

	%
Saw "Yes" result as inevitable	57
Too busy to vote	57
Believe accession good but not important enough to vote for it	51
Saw disunity, mixture of "Yes" and "No" calls among politicians	34
Believe accession bad but did not want to vote "No"	27
Weather	11

Source: Szonda Ipsos poll, *Nepszabadzag,* 15 April 2003 (cited in Fowler, 2003)

However, the lack of a clear-cut controversy over the EU issue in Hungarian

politics did not mean that no politicization of the issue has been experienced.

Especially the political campaign that has been initiated for the October 2002 local

elections have involved very significant Euro-motifs. Moreover, the same period

has also meant the emergence of a debate on the constitutional requirement necessitated by the 1997 reform. These two events, the forthcoming local elections and the plead for the constitutional change have usually came to forefront with respect to the EU accession.

> With most of the issues clarified by the 1997 reform, the greatest procedural problem when the political elites came to consider the referendum after the 2002 parliamentary elections was that the holding of the poll would require a constitutional amendment (Fowler, 2003: 3).

As mentioned before, this was because of the fact that the EU issues necessitated the transfer of sovereignty of Hungarian parliament, irrespective of the holding of a referendum. This was the main reason why the referendum was used as a pretext to challenge the EU accession in terms of its supranationality, especially by the main opposition party, Fidesz. This point was also important as such a constitutional amendment required the approval of the two-thirds of the MPs, which strengthened Fidesz's hand. Thus, the referendum, which was seen as the precursor of such a constitutional amendment, must be understood within the framework, and it has been already understood as such by the Hungarian politics.

What has to be said first with regard to the Fidesz's position in terms of the transfer of sovereignty must be its ambiguous nature. Although Orban declared that his party was setting conditions for its support for the constitutional amendment in mid-September 2002, when launching Fidesz's local election campaign (Fowler, 2003), this support was not straightforward. First of all, Orban has established his party's support for the constitutional amendment over its perception of domestic politics. For instance, "Orban tied Fidesz's support to the implementation of domestic policies (support for farmers and small businesses;

higher wages) which he claimed would protect Hungary against otherwise unavoidable disadvantages of accession, including higher prices and the failure of many small firms" (Fowler, 2003:4). Secondly, Fidesz refused to support any text under which Hungary was to share some of its sovereignty to the EU. "Instead, under the text which finally passed, the exercise of Hungary's sovereign powers may take place 'jointly' with other member states or 'independently via the EU institutions'" (Fowler, 2003:4). Moreover, even after the constitutional amendment has been made, Orban continued his irreconcilable attitude. For instance, he blamed the government for not negotiating hard enough in the Copenhagen Summit with regard to financial aids and agriculture*. However, it could be said that Orban was in the "Yes" camp, especially noting that Fidesz has signed a cross-party agreement, which declared commitment to accession and to the aforementioned constitutional amendment. According to Fowler (2003), this ambiguous stance employed by Fidesz was due to the party's expectations from the domestic political gains. This statement seems true, especially Fidesz's claim to be the leading figure of Hungarian right-wing is considered, as exemplified previously in this chapter.

Another interesting dimension of the Hungarian EU referendum was the nature of the campaign maintained by the "Yes" camp. The "Yes" camp was composed of 4 political parties having seats in the parliament, the president, the Budapest city administration, the major employers' and business organizations and trade unions, the major churches, mainstream press and mainstream left- and right-wing intellectuals.

The Socialists' referendum campaign was, not surprisingly, based upon the premise that the EU meant rising living standards and greater life opportunities for Hungarians, mainly taking youth as the target group. The prime minister on a TV program declared that only less educated people are against the EU, as the EU is a society of knowledge, where uneducated people became marginalized. But, he comforted the viewers that they will take care of these people too, so they should not be afraid of their future in the EU. They can, too, bravely say "Yes" (TEAM [the European Alliance of EU-critical Movements], 2003). Of course, the referendum was also used as a tool to condemn/criticize the opposition. More often than not, they have thought of themselves as true representatives of European values, accusing the opposition party of willingly blocking the Hungarian road to Europe (Lorant, 2003).

On the other hand, Fidesz's more recent campaign stressed "dialogue with voters", which was more positive when compared to the party's former attitude. Anyway, according to many commentators, this attitude has had a negative impact on the voters. Moreover, this attitude resulted from the loss of parliamentary elections:

> Robert Wright, a Budapest-based correspondent for the "Financial Times" agreed that Fidesz and former Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who narrowly lost a bitterly fought election last year, have had a negative influence on public opinion. Wright told *RFE/RL*: "The reason, as I see it, essentially, would be that Viktor Orban, the former prime minister, has been soundingly Eurosceptical over the last little while. Now, he and people from his party claim that they are not Eurosceptical, [but that] they are 'Euro-realists'. But, whatever the actual technicalities of what they are saying, they are tending to draw far more attention to the negative side of the EU than the positive side", Wright said (Tomiuc, 2003).

The emphasis point of Fidesz referendum campaign was mainly based on economical concerns. There would be further sacrifices for pensioners and the unemployed; farmers would not be getting a square deal due to the transition periods, and the leftwing government should have tried harder to get a better deal in the Copenhagen summit (Kliphuis, 2003). After the referendum, the Fidesz's point of reference was the failure of Socialist-led referendum campaign: "The amateurism of the costly communication campaign undertaken by the socialists resulted in one of the lowest participation rates in the last thirty years in the referenda on membership organized by European countries" declared Joszef Szajer, vice-president of Fidesz (cited in Deloy, 2003b).

The so-called "costly communication campaign", costing almost $9 million, kicked off on 24 February after several months of preparation. The main protagonist of the campaign was the *EU Communication Public Foundation (EUKK)*. Funded by the Prime Minister's Office, the EUKK was engaged in a campaign aiming to acknowledge people of the daily repercussions of the EU accession:

> Tibor Palankai, the head of the public fund that manages the campaign, told RFE/RL that it mainly features television ads and phone hot lines to answer questions from public regarding EU membership. "We set up a call centre, and the call centre has been working last week [the third week of February] and the citizens may ask any questions. (...) Then we support the media, and the media makes some certain ads for EU membership with such questions as 'Can you open a shop in Vienna?' or so. These are short questions, and the answer is 'Yes' and [the ad] is repeatedly shown on television" Palankai said (Tomiuc, 2003).

Thus, the campaign included famous sports/entertainment personalities answering as "Yes"/ "No" to questions such as "Will Hungary keep its independence?" or even "Are girls cute in the EU?" "We aim to make the question

of European integration a personal affair for everyone" declared Tibor Palankai (cited in Deloy, 2003a). Thus, the questions that the campaign appealed aimed at raising the awareness of public opinion on the EU, but at the same time resulted in the narrowing down of the focus and perspective of the EU referendum. For instance, the issue of famous Hungarian poppy-seed has been exposed to particular attention, ironically to some extent. As Fowler tells (2003), the official celebratory event organized for the day after the referendum on Felvonulasi square (Demonstration square) was advertised as 'the world's biggest poppy-seed cake party' and the duly took place with a 134 meter-long specimen. Moreover, the country's biggest daily newspaper *Nepszabadzag* had chosen to launch its weekly EU-related page with the poppy seed problem, which is linked to fears about the impact of EU regulation of the commercial use of opium (21 October 2002).

The "No" camp was composed of small radical-left *Hungarian Workers' Party*, MIEP, diasporic *World Federation of Hungarians and* a number of small groupings, such as the *Movement for a Free Hungary*. Hungarian Workers' Party is said to drop its opposition to accession, deciding that its wish for a radically different EU could be best pursued from inside (Fowler, 2003). Therefore, the EU opposition before the referendum was championed by the right-wing parties and groupings, mainly arguing that they were not against the EU *per se*, but rather the EU's current form and Hungary's accession terms. Departing from the idea that the anti-EU campaign was mainly perpetuated by the right-wing, another weapon of the opposition may be the association made between a "Yes" vote in the referendum and the approval of the liberal-socialist government.

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The alleged inequality between the uses of the financial sources by the two camps has been another point of the opposition's criticism. MIEP received only small amounts of state funding following its failure to enter into the parliament in April 2002 elections, and no other funding was available for the "No" camp, which was a key source of resentment (Fowler, 2003). The Movement for a Free Hungary, which described its task to make people's feelings resonant with the referendum, is said to apply for financial support to the EUKK and to be refused without any explanation. "Yet, 'the Association for Nature Conservation and Bird Protection' was supported as they promised to make some propaganda for the "Yes" side, and so was the case for "Association for Mental Illness" (TEAM [the European Alliance of EU-critical Movements, 2003).

To recapitulate, the EU referendum in Hungary has experienced a very superficial referendum campaign, usually with reference to the very aim to make the EU a personal concern, and it could be said that the politicization of the referendum was very bound up with the immediate political debates such as Copenhagen Summit, with the well-known "bloody" battle of rightists and leftists and with the disinterestedness of the Hungarian people to the EU accession. They have faced a two-fold political attitude: A "Yes" camp, though divided internally, arguing that if you like your children and care for their future, you must say "Yes", and a "No" camp comparing the government's campaign to communist-era "agitprop", and the EU to the Soviet Union. The picture was complemented by the superficial nature of EUKK's dissemination campaign.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

While talking about the idea of "Europe", Delanty often uses the phrase "invention and reinvention of 'Europe'" (Delanty, 1995). This thesis has been mainly devoted to the attempt to search this (re)invention of the idea of "Europe" in two specific periods and in two specific political contexts. The main concern has been to unveil the changing conceptualization of "Europe" in the 1980s (pre-1989 period) and in the late 1990s and early 2000s in Central Eastern Europe. Investigation of the terminology used for the very same region by different mindsets and for different contexts have been seen relevant to understanding what "Europe" has meant for the political actors in the specified periods.

Departing from this point, the first chapter has been devoted to the attempt to understand how "Central Europe" has been conceptualized both by "the West" and the intellectuals of the region itself in the 1980s. This has been considered as the most crucial step in perceiving how the idea of "Europe" is conceptualised with regard to its east and west in this period. In this regard, two different lines of intellectual thinking have been mentioned. The core period mentioned has been the early 1980s, punctuated with the Central European intellectuals' discourse on the "Europeanness" of the region, which has sown the seeds of the "Return to Europe" discourse of the

1990s. The main aim of this intellectual strand is to use the alleged common cultural, historical and intellectual Central European heritage as a leverage to prove the "Europeanness" of the Central Europe. Moreover, a reference to the transformation literature has been made in order to present a counter-factual analysis vis-à-vis the Central European intellectuals' position. Although the transformation literature fits neatly to the actual period mentioned chronologically, as the most outstanding examples of this literature have been given in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the main premises have been given in order to substantiate the problematic at hand.

In the remaining chapters of the study, the dynamics of the perception of "Europe" in the political spaces in Poland and Hungary have been intended to be unveiled with its all dimensions. Poland and Hungary have been chosen as the sample countries in this sense as the intellectuals of both countries have been an important part of the intellectual strand of the early 1980s mentioned. Moreover, the intensity of Euroscepticism in terms of political parties and public opinion especially in the Polish case requires particular attention when the conceptualization of "Europe" in these countries is to be unveiled. From late 1990s onwards, the political agendas of former communist countries have been intensely preoccupied with the EU accession. The general evolution of the EU accession process is mentioned in the second chapter of this study. This historical process, along with its direct consequences, has also led to the emergence of a different aspect of the conceptualization of "Europe": Europe is identified, more often than not, with reference to the EU. Moreover, the EU is usually

pronounced with reference to certain stereotypes and certain policies. The European integration is usually depicted as an asymmetrical relationship between the EU and Poland and Hungary, where the former is the dominant side. Within this framework, speaking comparatively, the basic finding of this study has been that in Central Europe, the idea of a "given Europeanness" of the 1980s has been replaced with an "Europeanness" that needs to be acquired, acquired mainly via the fulfilment of the obligations of the EU accession. Moreover, the positive attitude vis-à-vis "Europe" of the 1980s has been substituted with "Europe" which is usually recalled with negative connotations. The pronunciation of the name of EU causes a deep pessimism and anger, which delineates a totally different picture than drawn by the so-called Central European "dissidents. Thus, the second chapter deals with the question about the nature of the process that took these countries from a strict decision to return to Europe, in the 1980s, to the disconnectedness and pessimism of the late 1990s and early 2000s. The question needs to be tackled within a two-fold perspective: to analyse both the dynamics of the Union and the candidate states during this process.

The third chapter mainly dealt with the question what "Europe" means for the political parties in these countries. A theoretical reference has been made to the concept of "party-based Euroscepticism", which means a contingent or outright opposition to the process of the European integration (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002a) by the political parties. This has been mainly done in order to argue that except for the parties that employ a hard Eurosceptical position, which stipulates a categorical and

outright denial of the entire project of the EU, party-based Euroscepticism itself is a strategical political concept and thus the Eurosceptical position and discourse of any political party do not give us any idea about the actual dynamics of the way in which that political party conceptualises "Europe". Moreover, party discourses about "Europe" have been analysed in order to unveil the slippery surface over which these political parties conceptualize "Europe". The political parties analysed have been those which are represented in the national parliaments of the countries concerned: : Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP), Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party (Fidesz-MPP), Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), Independent Smallholder Party (FKgP) and Party of Hungarian Justice and Life (MIEP) of Hungary; and Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), Labour Union (UP), Polish Peasant Party (PSL), The League of Polish Families (LPR), Self-Defence (SO) and Law and Justice Party (PiS) of Poland. A further reference has been made to the identification of the EU by particular policies. Proving that Common Agricultural Policy or Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU are the counterparts of the EU in the political agendas of those political parties and political figures have been seen in line with the aims of this study. The narrowness of the lens through which "Europe" is seen by the Polish and Hungarian political parties has been shown as a fact to substantiate way in which "Europe" is defined in the political spaces of Poland and Hungary. It has been assessed that "Europe" is an ordinary political issue to be

exploited, which is very remote from the magical connotations attached to it in the pre-1989 period.

As a further step, the conceptualization of "Europe" by the daily press of Poland and Hungary has been scrutinized. By this way, it has been derived that the coverage of "Europe" in the Polish and Hungarian press points out to the same shallow and superficial concepts.

In the fourth chapter, the public opinion in terms of the EU support/opposition has been unveiled. It has been considered that the elucidation of the attitude vis-à-vis the EU by the public is crucial to understand the conceptualization of "Europe" in the political spaces of the sketched countries. Rather recent opinion polls have been referred to, and a particular attention has been paid to the EU referenda held in these countries.

This study shows that the magical and semi-deified connotations attached to the concept of "Europe" in the pre-1989 period have been displaced by the stark and cynical conceptualization of "Europe" in the late 1990s and early 2000s in Central Eastern Europe, where "Europe" is identified with the EU and EU accession in the latter case. As a further attempt, Poland and Hungary have been chosen as sample countries in order to understand the ways in which "Europe" is understood by the political parties, media and public opinion. Thus, in this thesis, the basic conclusion is that the intense debates and the literature on the "Europeanness" of Central Europe of the 1980s and on the transition that these countries have to realize in order to be

"European" lost its significance and appeal from the 1990s onwards. What now seems dominating the agenda in the political spaces is rather related with Euroscepticism, apathy and disconnectedness.

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