

Central European University  
Department of Political Science

# **The Selection of Executive Elites in New Democracies**

**-The role of elite continuity in democratic consolidation in Poland and Romania-**

Student: Bogdan-Constantin Grigore

Department of Political Science, Central European University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts

Supervisor: András Bozóki

Budapest, Hungary

2014

## Abstract

*The influence of political elites on democratic consolidation has long been an integral part of the field of consolidology, considering its actor-oriented approach. What this paper attempts to find is whether the continuity of political elites matters for democratic consolidation, in other words, whether young democracies where the members of the pre-democratic elite continue to play a central role in the democratic political system have a worse chance at consolidating their democratic regime.*

*In order to do so, I look at executive elites, namely cabinet members, in two post-communist countries, Poland and Romania. In order to prove the main hypothesis, that elite continuity is damaging to democratic consolidation, the paper first presents a comparative case-by-case study, followed by statistical analysis using data I compiled for this thesis. The latter part looks at both physical continuity of communist era elites in office, as well as the continuity of their socioeconomic background.*

*The result is that, while a strong causal link from elite continuity towards democratic consolidation is hard to find considering the small sample size, a small effect can nonetheless be observed, allowing the conclusion that elite continuity, both in terms of direct, physical, continuity and in terms of the career backgrounds of political elites, is damaging for democratic consolidation.*

## **Acknowledgements**

I would first and foremost like to thank my research supervisor, Prof. András Bozóki, without whom this paper would not be possible. I then wish to thank the other members of the Original Four, namely Yazmin Morlet-Corti, Maryam Haq, and Mindaugas Savickas, for their relentless humour and moral support. Last but not least, I offer my gratitude to Iva Todorova, whose assistance and childlike exuberance were most helpful in conducting this research.

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Abstract .....  | i  |
| Acknowledgements .....  | ii |
| List of Tables .....  | iv |
| Introduction .....  | 1  |
| Chapter I.....  | 5  |
| 1. Literature Review .....  | 5  |
| a) Definition of Democratic Consolidation.....  | 5  |
| b) Problems with concept of democratic consolidation .....                            | 6  |
| c) Factors influencing democratic consolidation .....                                 | 8  |
| d) Elites and Democratic Consolidation.....   | 11 |
| 2. Research question and theoretical framework.....                                   | 17 |
| 3. Methodology .....  | 22 |
| Chapter II – Executive Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Poland and Romania .... | 25 |
| 1. Poland.....  | 26 |
| 2. Romania.....   | 30 |
| Chapter III – Data Analysis.....  | 34 |
| 1. Data .....   | 34 |
| a) Sources .....  | 34 |
| b) Measurement.....   | 36 |
| c) Limitations .....  | 37 |
| 2. Analysis.....  | 38 |
| a) Summary statistics .....   | 38 |
| b) Romania .....  | 40 |
| c) Poland .....   | 41 |
| d) Poland and Romania .....   | 42 |
| 3. Interpretation .....   | 43 |
| Conclusion and discussion .....   | 46 |
| References .....  | 51 |
| Appendix 1 .....  | 54 |
| Appendix 2 .....  | 56 |

## List of Tables

Table 1 – ARCH regression for Romania without Rule of Law

Table 2 – ARCH regression for Romania with Rule of Law

Table 3 – ARCH regression for Poland without Rule of Law

Table 3 – ARCH regression for Poland with Rule of Law

Appendix 2:

Table 1 – Social background of post-communist ministers in Poland

Table 2 – Social background of communist elites in Poland

Table 3 – Social background of post-communist ministers in Romania

Table 4 – Social background of communist elites in Romania

Table 5 – Percentage of ministers with a communist background in Romania, by year

Table 6 – Percentage of ministers with a communist background in Poland, by year

# Introduction

The topic of democratic consolidation is a fairly new field of study that emerged within the comparative study of democratization in order to describe and analyze the challenges faced by new democracies after they successfully undergo a transition to democracy. In other words, consolidology is an emerging field of study that seeks to find how democracy can survive in a country that experienced a regime change away from autocracy. The relative novelty of the field and its wide application mean that, while the concept is used quite often in contemporary literature, there is little consensus on what exactly democratic consolidation is and what factors are most responsible for consolidating democracy. Answers to the latter question involve causal explanation ranging from economic to institutional, from behavioural to attitudinal, and from actor-centred perspectives to more general explanations observing the structure of society itself.

In this paper I adopt an elite-based account of democratic consolidation, believing that political actors, and especially those that can significantly impact the political process in their countries, are one of if not the most important factor behind democratic consolidation. The role of political elites in the consolidation of democracy is a particularly poignant problem in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where the persistence of communist-era elites even after the change of regime, especially in the first years of transition, created skepticism as to the future of democracy in this region. Although the revolutions of 1989 at first seemed to offer a clean slate for the development of democratic regimes, fully breaking with the communist past, reformed communist parties retained their cohesion and popular appeal after transition, and very often emerged victorious in elections.

So does then the fact that many of the governing elites of former communist countries initially became part of their nations' ruling class before transition to democracy matter for the democratic consolidation in these countries? The view I adopt in this paper is that elite permanence is indeed a damaging circumstance for a young democracy, as those elites that were socialized into the institutions, norms, and practices of the pre-democratic regime risk retaining some of their non-democratic behaviours and attitudes. Furthermore, their continued prominence in the political process of their nations can delay and perhaps even reverse the consolidation of democracy.

Thus the argument of this paper is that elite continuity is harmful for the consolidation of democratic regimes due to the danger that political elites of the previous regime may pose a threat to the survivability of young democracies. Although much literature deals with the impact of political actors on democratic consolidation, there are not many studies that attempt to empirically test the effect that elite continuity has on the consolidation of democracy. Moreover, this paper attempts to expand the concept of elite continuity by adopting the distinction between the physical permanence of pre-democratic elites as elites of the new regime, termed political continuity by this paper, and the preservation of their career background, with or without their continuation in power, which this paper terms socioeconomic continuity.

Political continuity is considered in this paper to be a negative influence on democratic consolidation because of the potentially harmful effects that elites, socialized into the norms and practices of a non-democratic regime, may have on the implementation of democratic rules after the transition to democracy. This is all the more poignant in post-communist countries, which, faced with the double issue of democratic consolidation and market liberalization, may present opportunities for pre-democratic elites, using their influence and power, to gain undue advantages using the process of transitioning towards a free market in their favour. Moreover, if they are not

fully committed to respecting the rules and institutions established with the introduction of democracy, there is a risk that they may try to undermine the process of democratic consolidation and return to a non-democratic regime.

Socioeconomic continuity, on the other hand, is an often overlooked aspect of elite continuity that may have negative effects for democratic consolidation even without the physical presence of pre-democratic elites within the democratic regime. The expectation of this paper is therefore that, in order for a democracy to become consolidated, it needs to break away from the recruitment practices of the previous regime, as they may produce elites socialized into the same values and behaviours as those in power before democratization. If the elites of the democratic regime share the same background as those of the pre-democratic regime, this paper expects them to continue much of their political attitudes and behaviours. If, on the other hand, their career background is different, then that may either be the result of newly emerging socioeconomic fields arising from democratization or market liberalization, or of the rise in importance of previously marginalized career backgrounds; both of these possibilities imply a break with the pre-democratic past and therefore the development of new elites, more likely to respect and follow the norms and values of democratic governance.

To test this hypothesis, I observe the impact of both direct, physical continuity of communist-era elites, and that of continuity in social and economic background of democratic elites on the process of democratic consolidation in two former communist countries, namely Poland and Romania, for most of the post-transition period, namely from 1990 to 2012.

The first chapter of this paper deals with the most widely accepted theories on democratic consolidation found in the relevant literature, offering a brief overview of the conceptual and methodological issues surrounding the concept and reviewing the main theories on the factors behind it. The second part of the first chapter then proceeds to introduce the theoretical

framework used in this research, derived from the reviewed literature and developed primarily from the perspective of democratic elitism. The third part of the first chapter outlines the methodology used in order to demonstrate the main hypothesis, which consists of comparative case-by-case study combined with statistical analysis. The second chapter is devoted entirely to the comparison between the process of democratic consolidation in the two countries, with particular emphasis on the role played by executive elites in the consolidation of democracy. The third chapter deals with the statistical aspect of my analysis, including a description of the data, most of which was gathered specifically for the purposes of this paper, an analysis of the time-series regressions conducted on the data, and the interpretation of the results.

The analytical tools in this paper shall seek to find confirmation of the main hypothesis, which is that it is not just physical continuity of political elites in office that has a negative effect on democratic consolidation, but also the perpetuation of their career background, and in the process developing a more profound understanding of the role political actors play in the consolidation of democracy. By using the arguments presented in this thesis, I shall show that executive elites do have a major role to play in the development of a democratic regime, and that for democracy to be consolidated, it is best for its elites to break free from the pre-democratic values, norms, and institutions, and particularly the methods of recruitment of the previous regime.

# Chapter I

## *1. Literature Review*

### **a) Definition of Democratic Consolidation**

In this thesis I use the concept of democratic consolidation, a relatively new term that developed within the field of democratization studies in political science with the emergence of new democratic regimes after the Third Wave of democratization (Huntington 1991). As most of these countries successfully moved away from autocratic regimes towards some form or another of democracy, democratic consolidation replaced, to a large extent, the concept of democratic transition as the keyword for studying the process of democratization in these young democratic regimes. In the past two decades, comparative studies on democratization have focused on institutional stability and on deepening the practice of democracy within these new democratic regimes. This means that the use of the concept of democratic consolidation presupposes the fact that democracy was already established before the process of consolidation can begin. Democratic consolidation is thus understood as a “second transition” from a democratic government to a democratic regime. (O'Donnell 1992: 18-19).

However, in spite of its wide use and its accompanying large body of literature, there is little consensus on what the concept of democratic consolidation actually means (Schedler 2001). The most commonly accepted definition of democratic consolidation is the process whereby a democratic regime becomes more likely to endure; in other words, by consolidation, democracy becomes ‘the only game in town’, to use Linz and Stepan’s famous formula (Linz 1996),

whereby all politically relevant actors accept the rules of democracy, and there are no important anti-democratic actors that devote significant resources to changing the nature of the regime. Democratic consolidation thus means the ability of a democratic regime to survive crises and challenges to its legitimacy, ensuring its short-term and long-term survival.

On a more practical level, democratic consolidation is understood to mean the implementation of the rule of law, and the fact that all politically relevant actors, including non-political actors with potential political impact, such as the military, have a stake in the preservation of the democratic regime and would not favour a return to pre-democratic norms and practices. In an institutionalist understanding of democratic consolidation, the concept refers to the elimination of the last vestiges of (formal or informal) institutions left over from the authoritarian regime that go against democratic norms and practices.

### **b) Problems with concept of democratic consolidation**

This definition is, however, problematic in its generality, as it suffers from a form of conceptual stretching. By this definition, democratic consolidation can be understood both negatively, i.e. a democratic regime's "life expectancy", as well as positively, namely the deepening of democratic practices and institutions, moving towards a form of advanced democracy. (Schedler 2001).

Even if one were to adopt the original, narrow understanding of it (the ability of a regime to survive in the long run) as opposed to the wider understanding (the process of progressing further towards an advanced democratic regime), the concept still suffers from a number of clarity issues. In this line of argument, for example, Schedler (2001) identifies two different concepts of

the decline of of democratic consolidation, namely democratic breakdown (a “quick death” of democracy) and democratic erosion (a “slow death”) .

The “quick death” of democracy is the original understanding of what democratic consolidation is supposed to avoid. A quick death, or democratic breakdown, refers to the risk of a newly established democracy being overthrown, especially as a result of a coup. This understanding of democratic breakdown is concerned with anti-system actors who can and do revert the process of democratic transition and return to the pre-democratic regime. In time, a more sophisticated understanding of the minimalist definition of democratic consolidation emerged, which sees as a major threat against democracy its erosion. In other words, this refers to a deterioration of the democratic regime whereby non-democratic norms and practices are slowly introduced, or where democratic institutions suffer a slow decline, ‘a progressive diminution of existing spaces for the exercise of civilian power and the effectiveness of the classic guarantees of liberal constitutionalism’ (O'Donnell 1992: 17-56). This “slow death” of democracy does not by necessity lead to a full return of an authoritarian regime, but it does prevent the stabilization and institutionalization of democratic practices, hampering the implementation of the rule of law and the legitimacy of the new regime.

Considering the “murkiness” and generality of the concept of democratic consolidation, and the difficulty of adopting a universally accepted definition of the concept, authors writing within this field oftentimes state beforehand what their particular understanding of the concept is. In order to avoid the ambiguity stemming from an unqualified use of the concept, this paper shall adopt the minimalistic understanding of democratic consolidation. I shall define democratic consolidation as the process by which a democratic government, established as a result of democratic transition, becomes a democratic regime, thereby reducing the risk of democracy

being overthrown and/or eroded over time, guaranteed by the acceptance by all politically relevant actors and institutions of democratic norms and practices.

### **c) Factors influencing democratic consolidation**

In addition to the lack of a single definition of democratic consolidation used in literature, there is also an apparent confusion within the embryonic field of consolidology between the causes of democratic consolidation and democratic consolidation itself (Schedler 2001: 67), whereby democratic consolidation is often taken to mean the implementation of democratic institutions, socio-economic development, popular acceptance of democracy, and so on. There is, in other words, a certain confusion between cause and effect, between the factors that lead to consolidating democracy and the features that characterize a consolidated democracy. That aspect aside, as can be seen from the above definitions of democratic consolidation, the concept is exceedingly actor-oriented; the basic understanding of the concept refers to the acceptance of democracy by all relevant actors.

The most frequently mentioned factors presented as leading to the consolidation of democracy generally fall within three categories, namely behavioural, attitudinal, and institutional (Schedler 2001: 69). The behavioural explanation of democratic consolidation considers, as one may suspect, that the behaviour of politically relevant actors is the prime determinant of a democratic regime's stability and chances of survival. For such authors (Diamond 1999: 65–72; Linz and Stepan 1996: 5–6; Gunther et al. 1995: 7) a democracy can be considered to be consolidated if there are no anti-democratic symptoms, in other words, if there are no anti-democratic behaviours on the part of politically relevant actors, all of whom adhere to the rules of the democratic game. Such anti-democratic behaviours can be, for instance, violence (Elster et al. 1998: 27); if political actors are willing to employ violence to reach their political goals, then the regime can hardly be

considered consolidated. A second source of anti-democratic behaviour is related to elections: if political actors negatively impact in any way the free exercise of democratic elections, be it by fraud, intimidation, refusing to accept legitimate election results, then this negatively impacts the process of democratic consolidation. Lastly, all actors need to accept the rule of law for the regime to be consolidated, meaning that they must respect the constitution, existing laws, and formal or informal rules of conduct (Diamond 1999:69). Violations of the rule of law need to be more than isolated minor transgressions to be considered a significant issue affecting democratic consolidation, but if such transgressions become commonplace, then one can assume that democracy is indeed in peril, as it sets a dangerous precedent. This of course raises the issue of threshold: how much transgression is necessary for the regime to be considered unconsolidated? The most commonly used answer is that violations of the rule of law need to be produced by politically significant actors who can pose a serious threat to the regime (Gunther et al. 1995: 7–8).

A major issue with the behavioural explanation of democratic consolidation is that it usually seeks the presence or absence of crises as symptoms of regime stability. But the lack of a crisis is not in itself a good indicator of democratic stability. If a regime experiences no crises simply due to lucky circumstances, there is no guarantee that it would not fall under the pressure of even the smallest threat to its existence. Alternatively, a crisis may strengthen a democratic regime by its ability to “weather the storm”, as was the case with the Spanish coup attempt in 1981 (Almeida 2003). The failure of the coup and its rejection by King Juan Carlos had, in the long run, the effect of strengthening Spanish democracy. Such crises are nonetheless rare; while it is possible that a crisis may strengthen democracy, it is more likely to lead to its collapse, or simply its weakening.

Attitudinal explanations of democratic consolidation take not the behaviour of actors to be the primary cause for the development of a democratic regime, but rather their ‘preferences and perceptions’ (Schedler: 75). The authors that hold this perspective on democratic consolidation see the regime preferences of relevant actors as essential (for example Diamond 1999, Linz and Stepan 1996). This explanation sees both the attitudes of the population and of the elites as relevant, but this raises some causal questions: is the legitimacy of the regime a result of its consolidation or is it the other way around? It is nonetheless a good assumption to make that a reserve of popular support is essential, as crises, while generally causing a drop in public support, may be non-fatal if there are enough people that support the regime. Moreover, as some authors have argued, political and economic performance are considered separately when it comes to the legitimacy of democratic regimes, and it is primarily the former rather than the latter that is used in evaluating legitimacy (Diamond 1999: 192). In terms of actors, attitudinal explanations for democratic consolidation see it as a two-player game, as the strategic interplay between pro- and anti-democratic forces, with the goal of transforming this game into a one-player game with the removal of anti-democratic actors, with the end result that there are no relevant actors spending significant resources on the overthrow of the democratic regime (Gunther et al. 1995, Linz and Stepan 1996). In other words, attitudinal explanations adopt a strategic view of democratic consolidation, whereby democratic actors attempt to neutralize anti-democratic ones and gain the support of neutral actors, with the end goal of making all significant actors become stakeholders in the survival of the democratic regime.

A third explanation taken by some authors as essential for democratic consolidation is the existence of favourable structural factors (Bandelj and Radu 2006). These authors look upon the existence of a structural background that is conducive to democracy, instead of the attitudes and behaviours of actors; it may be either socioeconomic factors or institutional ones. Those that

adopt a socioeconomic framework observe that a nation's economic development (measured in, for instance, GDP per capita), or its level of economic equality (measured by such indices as the GINI coefficient) do have a very strong impact on a democratic regime's stability and its likelihood to survive. While there is indeed a strong link between economic development and democratic consolidation, there are many outliers and the relationship does not apply for all cases. The institutional factors considered to lead to the consolidation of democracy are based on the understanding that essential for consolidation is the 'affirmation and strengthening of certain institutions, such as the electoral system, revitalized or newly created parties, judicial independence and respect for human rights, which have been created or recreated during the course of the first transition.' (Valenzuela 1992: 4). Institutional understandings of democratic consolidation look towards the establishment of institutions that reward democratic practices while punishing non-democratic ones.

An alternative causal explanation of the consolidation of democracy, complementary with the behavioural, attitudinal, or institutional explanations, is the nature of the democratic transition itself, and thus, indirectly, of the pre-democratic regime. Also important for democratic consolidation stemming from the acceptance of democratic transition as a causal factor is previous regime history; where there are previous experiences with democracy, this can create a form of reverse legitimacy, whereby new elites emphasize their distinction from the non-democratic regime and its negative features (Valenzuela 1992).

#### **d) Elites and Democratic Consolidation**

Even authors that adopt an alternate causal explanation to democratic consolidation other than the elite-driven behavioural or attitudinal ones do accept the central role of the relevant actors in the process of consolidation. As stated above, a central feature of democratic consolidation is

considered to be the conflict between pro- and anti-democratic forces. For instance, Valenzuela defines democratic consolidation as the ‘struggle between actors who benefit—or think they could benefit at a certain point—from those institutions’ existence, and those who do not.’ (Valenzuela 1992: 16-17). While all of the three mentioned categories of causal explanations for democratic consolidation have their merits, there is one aspect that seems to be insufficiently developed in the existing theory on the subject. Both behavioural and attitudinal explanations for democratic consolidation are heavily actor-oriented, whereas structural explanations are not. There is little discussion in the theory on the socioeconomic background of the actors themselves, those that can and do in fact impact the process of consolidation, and this is a gap that this paper shall attempt to fill by considering the social and economic background of political elites as an essential factor behind democratic consolidation. Further, it is the assumption of this paper that among the most relevant actors are those that play a central role within the political system, in other words, the elites of the young democratic regime. The paper shall also take into account the caveat raised by Valenzuela that ‘[t]he establishment or reestablishment of the procedures consonant with democratic governance multiplies the numbers of political and social actors who actively participate in politics.’ (Valenzuela 1992: 16).

Having accepted that political elites are essential in the process of democratic consolidation, in this paper I aim to study the background of elites within newly established democratic regimes, analyzing whether differences between elites have an impact on the consolidation of democracy. The paper therefore proceeds from the background of elite theory, more specifically it adopts the perspective of democratic elitism, as framed by Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, Robert Michels, Max Weber, Joseph Schumpeter, and Robert Dahl.

Democratic elitism is a theoretical framework in the study of political elites according to which they gain power via relatively open and free elections, entry within this competition is

relatively open, elites are held accountable to the electorate primarily through subsequent elections, and political elites share a commitment to democratic values. A central aspect in democratic elitism is thus the concept of “consensually united elites” (Best 2010: 7). The theory of democratic elitism was developed by early twentieth century elite theorists, notably Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, Robert Michels and Max Weber (Best: 1). While there are numerous differences between their theoretical approaches to elites, what these authors have in common is their skepticism that the implementation of the concept of popular sovereignty is entirely possible. Instead, these authors consider that the existence of elites and their autonomy, even in democratic states, is unavoidable. The best that can be achieved, according to these authors, is an elite democracy, a system marked by intra- and inter-elite competition, where public officials are indeed elected, but where voters do not have much choice in the selection of elites or the implementation of policies. (Best: 2).

Max Weber, in elaborating on his theory on professional politicians, considers this class of democratic elites as a group of people who do not only live for politics, but also live off politics, in other words derive their livelihood from the professionalized practice of politics (Weber 1958: 84). Weber’s theory on democratic elitism originates in his concept of “leader democracy”. For instance, in his *Politics as a Vocation* lecture, Weber argues that the best form of organizing a democratic society is one where political leaders and policy makers are autonomous, under popular scrutiny. The key process leading to the development of such a society is political professionalization, whereby traditional local-based politicians, living “for politics”, are being replaced by a new type of politicians, those living “off politics”. Weber based this assertion by observing that such a process was occurring in contemporary Germany, and predicted that it would become universal and spread to other countries as well. Fearing that mass democracy would easily degenerate into a competition between sectional interests, Weber presents his idea

of leader democracy, which would later evolve into the theory of democratic elitism, a political system dominated by one charismatic leader, who would thus be insulated by popular pressures but accountable to the other political leaders (Weber 1921/1968: 1459). This charismatic leader would nonetheless control career politicians and state and party bureaucrats, thus establishing a limit to their influence.

Weber's concept of leader democracy emerged from his observation that democratic political systems have the ability to produce leaders capable of generating mass mobilization, while democratic competition generates more competent leaders than the simple appointment of state bureaucrats. A leader democracy, with the rule of a charismatic and popular leader, would be better suited for expanding German influence than the political system of the German Empire, with its combination of monarchic rule and state bureaucracy. (Weber 1921/1968). Weber considered that war is a fundamental test of a political regime's efficiency, and a leader democracy would be best suited for that purpose within the international context of the early twentieth century.

Vilfredo Pareto, another early theorist of democratic elitism, was less optimistic than Weber in the qualities of such a regime. Pareto distinguishes between two types of political elites, namely demagogic "vulpine" politicians, i.e. a "demagogic plutocracy" that governs through demagoguery and corruption, and the military plutocracy, a "leonine" elite. Because such an elite is interested in the distribution of wealth rather than its creation, the demagogic plutocracy is replaced by a military plutocracy that attempts to reverse economic and social decline by military force. As the military plutocracy overreaches in its "warlike activities", it is in turn replaced by the demagogic plutocracy, in something he names the "plutocratic cycle", a process he deems unavoidable. (Pareto 1921/1984: 55–62).

Joseph Schumpeter, another theorist of democratic elitism, established his theory of competitive democracy in his *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942). His book argues that democracy can be defined as a combination of governance by elites and popular input, whereby elites gain power by competing amongst themselves for votes. For Schumpeter, voters have no say in policy making, while competitive democracy is characterized by free and fair competition between elites. Schumpeter's theory proved to be very influential, being largely accepted by authors such as Robert Dahl or Giovanni Sartori, but many others have criticized the exclusive focus on procedural and formal aspects of democracy, while ignoring more fundamental elements of that type of regime, namely rule of law, minority rights, a constitutionally backed respect for human rights, etc.

Giuseppi Di Palma (1973) considers that an essential aspect of democratic elitism is the "consensually united elite", characterized by "restrained partisanship". Among the features of restrained partisanship, Di Palma includes the recognition by elites of the opposition's right to exist and participate in the decision-making process, significant autonomy for their respective bases of support, a pragmatic, rather than idealistic approach to policy making, and the use of sufficient secrecy that can aid in their bargaining processes.

One of the more influential theorists that elaborated on democratic elitism is Robert Dahl, with his theory of polyarchy. Developing the theory of democratic elitism, Dahl contends that liberal democratic regimes are broadened by popular participation. Diverging from the classical perspective of democratic elitism, Dahl emphasizes the participation of voters, expressed primarily within traditional rights (Dahl 1971: 20). Additionally, Dahl considers that the inclusion of minority groups, via the right of public contestation, is a fundamental characteristic of democracy. Historically, Dahl argues that contemporary democracies developed through the inclusion of minority groups, following two main paths, namely the expansion of political

participation, and the expansion of competition between political elites, with modern democracies exhibiting both. The more divergent and conflicting the social groups participating in the political process, the more difficult is the establishment of a polyarchy, leading Dahl to argue that mutual security is more likely to be established within a small group of political elites united by shared values and interests than among leaders coming from widely divergent social strata. (37).

Democratic elitism theory emphasizes the fact that even in advanced democratic regimes political elites exist as an autonomous “class”, with its own interests and objectives. For that reason, democratic elitism theorists contend that a democracy can be, at best, an intra-elite contest, with a higher or lower degree of influence from the interests of voters. One of the criteria for defining political elites as a “class” is the professionalization of politics. Jens Borchert for instance (Borchert: 2) emphasizes that the different research traditions within the field of elite theory, while apparently having little in common, share one major feature, namely their interest in professional politicians, i.e. those politicians that make a career out of politics. While studies on political elites in the United States tend to focus almost exclusively on legislative elites, mostly Congressmen but also members of state legislatures, research on professional politicians in Europe tends to emphasise party politics, and sees political parties as fundamental to the career advancement of political elites. This is partially justified by the differences in relative strength that political parties have in the two types of political systems. While American politicians do not seek career advancement within their own parties, owing to the loose organization of political parties in the United States, in Europe career advancement without significant party support is unthinkable (10).

In both research traditions, however, executive elites are considered the epitome of professional politicians. Not all politicians who gain a seat in Parliament can be considered to belong to a “political class”, as a large part of them are backbenchers (in the more loosely defined

meaning of the term), meaning junior Members of Parliament who do not have the perspective of career advancement through the executive, and who have little influence over the policy making process within the legislative. Considering that in contemporary democratic systems, especially in the case of parliamentary democracies, the role of the executive in shaping policy has increased significantly relative to the role of the legislative, executive elites can be considered to be the clearest case of professional politicians, i.e. politicians that make a career out of and live off of politics.

The literature on the topic of democratic elitism thus emphasizes the central role of professionalized, career politicians in their political systems. From that understanding of the importance of political elites I will then argue that members of the executive are among the best representatives of professionalized politicians, therefore becoming one of the main factors behind the survivability of democratic regimes and the consolidation of democracy in countries that recently experienced transition away from autocratic forms of government.

## ***2. Research question and theoretical framework***

This paper will analyze the political and socioeconomic background of executive elites in new democracies, and see whether differences in the background of political elites between newly established democracies have an impact on the process of democratic consolidation. Thus the main research question of this paper is whether elite continuity has a negative impact on democratic consolidation, and whether politically relevant actors play a more important role in the process of consolidation than alternate factors.

Considering the wide variety of understandings and definitions of the concept of democratic consolidation, I shall define the concept as follows: democratic consolidation is a process

whereby a newly established democratic government, having undergone a successful process of democratic transition, undergoes a second transition as a result of which it becomes a stable and consolidated democratic regime, characterized by the acceptance of democratic norms and practices by all politically relevant actors, and which is capable to survive challenges to its stability, both in the short and long term. As the previous chapter established, democratic consolidation can be impacted by a variety of factors, which can be widely grouped into behavioural, attitudinal, and structural. This paper shall adopt an actor-centred structural explanation of democratic consolidation. In other words, I shall argue that the central factor influencing democratic consolidation is socioeconomic, as in other structural theories on democratic consolidation. However, instead of looking at the structural factors describing the country as a whole, this paper shall use the social, economic, and political background of politically relevant actors themselves as the primary explanatory factor behind democratic consolidation.

Most common theories on democratic consolidation are indeed actor-oriented, with the understanding that democracy is considered to be consolidated when its ideas, practices, rules, and institutions are adopted by those actors that can, directly or indirectly, affect the regime type. In keeping with the theory of democratic elitism that this paper uses, I shall assume that political elites are essential in the developments of a political regime.

The reason why this paper focuses on executive elites rather than legislative or other type of political elites is that the career paths of elites generally follow an established hierarchical path that differs slightly from country to country. Politicians, especially when they are characterized by office-seeking behaviour, normally seek to advance to higher offices within the political system (Best 2010). What the higher offices are is, however, contingent on the country in

question. Nevertheless, a national executive position can be considered to be one of the highest offices in most democracies, more so than a national or local legislative office.

A relevant issue that must be taken into account is that executive elites very often have a prior history as members of the national legislature. For that reason, the factors that influence the manner in which legislative elites are selected are ultimately reflected in the career paths of ministerial elites. There is a number of factors that can impact the selection of legislative elites, namely who can become a candidate, who the selectorate, i.e. those in charge of selecting candidates for office, is, how decentralized the elite selection process is, and the actual manner in which candidates are selected (Hazan et. al. 2010: 18).

In what concerns the preconditions and requirements for becoming a candidate, there are countries that have very demanding conditions, while in others becoming a candidate is a very open process (19). There may be age restrictions, the necessity of having been a member of the party or party organization for a certain period of time, the payment of a monetary fee, etc. Incumbency can also have an influence on candidacy, considering that some parties may impose fewer preconditions on incumbents becoming candidates once again. The second factor that determines the manner of legislative elite selection is the selectorate (33). Here again there is a spectrum of inclusiveness, ranging from countries where the entire electorate has the right to select candidates, to countries where a sole party leader has that right, with several intermediary forms. In what concerns the level of centralization, this can impact the selection of legislative elites by making candidates either more likely to follow the party line, as is the case for a centralized selection system, or more likely to promote and follow local interests, as happens when the selection system is decentralized (55). The last dimension of candidate selection is the method of selection, which can be voting, appointment, or a mix of the two (66). Intra-party

voting systems may also exhibit a large degree of variety, from purely majoritarian to proportional systems.

These dimensions can be applied to the selection of executive elites as well. Considering that executive elites are a much narrower group than legislative elites, formed of perhaps the most professionalized politicians, it is natural that the selection of ministerial elites follows a stricter process. Because of the more stringent requirements for becoming a candidate for a ministerial post, prospective candidates have to be subjected to a more limiting selection process. In addition to age requirements, the precondition of having held office within the party (which is however not a universal requirement, as technocrats and other non-party candidates can sometimes become ministers), and other preconditions similar to those imposed on legislative candidates, young democracies often employ some form of lustration, excluding members of the pre-democratic elite from holding office, usually for a set period of time. In what concerns the level of decentralization, regional parties or local branches of national parties may have a say over who becomes a minister. Additionally, many ministers may have held office in local governments, as mayors, councilors, members of the local legislative or executive, etc., and this factor may impact the selection of executive elites on the central level. Lastly, the actual method of selection differs significantly from country to country. The method of selection is mostly determined by the political system in place, meaning that in a presidential system, characterized among other features by a presidential cabinet, the selection of ministers is entirely the responsibility of the head of state, while in a parliamentary system, it is the legislative that forms the cabinet, after negotiations within the governing coalition. Semi-presidential systems feature a mix of both ministerial selection methods, whereby the head of government is typically nominated by the head of state, and the legislative has the responsibility of confirming or rejecting the cabinet proposed by the head of government. The manner of selection dimension also includes an

additional factor that can influence who is selected as minister, namely the fact that in parliamentary and semi-presidential systems, if the legislative is unable to confirm a cabinet within a certain period of time, the legislative is dissolved, thus introducing a sense of urgency in the selection process.

Next I tackle issues specific to countries undergoing democratic transition, which may have an impact on the relationship between ministerial elite recruitment and the quality of democracy. The assumption of my paper is that if there is no break in continuity between pre-democratic elites and the elites of the democratic regime, then the process of democratic consolidation is less successful. The reasoning behind this assumption is that the political elites are likely to largely continue some practices of the previous regime, and market liberalization, especially in the case of former communist states, may provide opportunities for the political class to use their political influence to gain undue economic advantages. Moreover, it is possible that, if the previous elites are still in power, they may not wish to fully continue the transition process, or even want to reverse it. This is one of the reasons for which lustration laws are quite often employed by young democracies, in order to avoid problems that arise from elite continuity.

It is therefore the assumption of this paper that political elites perpetuate the values and norms they have been socialized into as elites. In other words, young democracies that exhibit a change in the structure and background of their political elites from those of the pre-democratic elites also manifest changes in policies and the rate with which new policies are implemented. It is not just the continuity of individual elites that impacts the implementation of new, democratic policies, but also continuity in terms of the recruitment and the political and social background of elites.

The reason why in this thesis I focus on post-communist countries rather than other countries transitioning towards democracy from authoritarian regimes is that, as much of the literature

points out, elite continuity after the change of regime is a characteristic of Eastern European countries (Fettelschoss and Nikoleny 2009). When observing democratic transitions and democratic consolidation in Europe, there is a noticeable difference in terms of elite continuity between former communist states and the Southern European states that experienced democratic transition (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece). Whereas the countries in Southern Europe are characterized by a large degree of elite discontinuity, former communist states (except perhaps the Czech Republic) are characterized by a large degree of continuity, with a large percentage of executive elites that had participated in the communist regime in one way or another (Fettelschoss and Nikoleny).

### ***3. Methodology***

In order to test my hypothesis, I employ a combination of statistical analysis and comparative case studies, both focusing on Poland and Romania as representative examples of post-communist democratic consolidation. Poland is known as a classic example of a pacted transition to democracy, a country where the Round Table talks were the first step and the defining feature of democratic transition, therefore presenting an opportunity for the preservation of pre-democratic elites and institutions. Romania was chosen due to the characteristics of its communist regime and its subsequent fall. Distinguished by the absence of an organized opposition to the regime, thus preventing the development of a non-communist political elite before the regime change, and being the only Eastern Bloc country to have experienced a violent revolution, which also created opportunities for the communist political class to survive after the implementation of democracy, Romania also exhibits features that allowed for a high degree of elite continuity.

The comparative case analysis shall look at the process of democratic consolidation in each of the two cases and see how executive elites, as politically relevant actors, impacted the success or failure of the implementation of a stable democratic regime in each of them. This part of the thesis shall use primary political sources (mainly the constitutions of the two countries), as well as information gathered from the relevant literature concerning democratic transition and democratic consolidation in Poland and Romania. The comparative part of my thesis shall look at the relative influence that members of the executive have on the political system as a whole, after a brief overview of the circumstances and characteristics of the democratic transitions in the two countries. The case study part shall also observe the types of political system introduced after the regime change, within a historical analysis of the transition and post-transition periods in the two countries. I shall compare the influence that the pacted transition had on Polish political continuity as opposed to a transition lacking this characteristic in Romania. Moreover, in this part I shall also analyze the role played by reformed communist parties in democratic consolidation, seeing that they are the most likely vehicle for the continuation in office of communist-era political elites after the transition to democracy.

The statistical part of this paper shall see, via both descriptive statistics and regression analysis, whether and how elite continuity affected democratic consolidation in each of the two countries. To do so, I compiled a database of all post-communist (from 1990 to 2012) and communist (between 1945 and 1989) ministers in Poland and Romania, containing information on their career background and, for post-communist ministers, their prior affiliation with the pre-democratic regime and its institutions. The data was gathered from official governmental sources containing the biographies of the ministers in question.

The model I use to demonstrate the hypothesis of this research is democratic consolidation as a function of the two continuity variables, namely political continuity and socioeconomic

continuity, and additional control variables, viz. the rule of law and Gross Domestic Product per capita. Since, as mentioned above, democratic consolidation is ill-defined and not clearly conceptualized, I shall employ a definition of democratic consolidation that describes it as the acceptance of the rules and norms of democracy by all politically relevant actors. The primary independent variable used in this research is elite continuity at the executive level; this variable shall further be divided into two variables, namely the level of political continuity (referring to the number of post-communist ministers that had close ties with the communist regime) and the level of socioeconomic continuity (referring to the number of ministers that have a similar or identical social and economic background as those under the communist regime). GDP per capita is used as a control variable to account for the structural explanations of democratic consolidation, more specifically the theory that economic growth is a strong predictor of the consolidation of democracy. Rule of law, the other control variable, is used to account for the other main structural explanation of democratic consolidation, namely the institutional approach to the concept.

In this paper, democratic consolidation is primarily measured by the Polity IV democracy score, complemented by the democratization score presented by the Nations in Transit reports published by Freedom House. The hypothesis shall then be tested using a number of ARCH time-series regressions with the model mentioned above, first for each of the two countries separately, then for the two of them together. The time-series regression shall verify whether the two continuity variables (political and socioeconomic continuity) have a significant impact on democratic consolidation, and see whether their effect, if present, is stronger than that of the control variables.

## **Chapter II – Executive Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Poland and Romania**

The early literature on the prospects of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe was largely pessimistic on the survivability of the newly established democratic regimes (Wasilewski 1998). Transition to democracy happened unexpectedly, and using the analytical tools developed for previous democratic transitions, these authors believed that democracy in post-communist countries could not survive for long. The fact that Central and Eastern European democracies were in fact established and managed to achieve a certain degree of consolidation thus needs to be explained. The numerous theoretical explanations of the durability of post-communist democratic regimes range from structural to behavioural; many of them focus on external actors, such as, primarily, the USSR, and later on the European Union.

Overall there is a consensus that the transition from communist regimes to liberal democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and their subsequent consolidation was to a large degree the result of a conscious decision taken by the elites existing within the regime. Characterized by a lack of political violence (with the exception of Romania), these regime changes are remarkable in that the political elites gave up power with relative ease. This is especially obvious in the fact that, in most cases, the overthrown high-ranking elites of the communist regime did not suffer punishment or trial once the regime change occurred. In fact, many in the middle echelons of the party, bureaucracy, and the military, who were among those who profited the most from communist rule, not only abdicated, but some even tried to re-legitimize their positions by participating in democratic elections. In fact, with the exception of the Czech Republic, none of

the Eastern European regimes completely replaced their pre-democratic political elite (Wasilewski 1998 :167).

This lack of resistance to regime change (again, with the exception of Romania), was certainly motivated by a number of extraneous factors, not least of which was the withdrawal of Soviet support to the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the regime change was effected within the existing legal framework, and all major constitutional changes, including the rules and regulations on the selection of ministers, were approved within the existing parliaments. Moreover, in most of the post-communist countries reformed communist parties continued to exist, and very often managed to once again gain power in democratic elections. In fact, with the major exception of reformed communist parties, there was no example of political party institutionalization in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, therefore democratic consolidation in these countries largely happened without the influence of political parties, which remained marginalized actors for much of the early period of democratization.

Upon examining the conditions and process of democratic consolidation in the two examined parties, it seems that the main difference between their differing success in consolidating their democratic regimes is the nature of democratic transition. Whereas Poland experienced a classical type of “pacted transition”, in other words a negotiated settlement between reformist elements of the communist era elites and the elites of the opposition, Romania was the only case of a violent transition to democracy.

### ***1. Poland***

A major characteristic of democratic consolidation in Poland is represented by the existence and high level of organization of Solidarity (Solidarność), the Polish anti-communist trade union

formed in 1980. Solidarity could thus act as a source of alternative, non-communist, political elites after the regime change. However, due to the pacted character of Polish transition, which experienced the Round Table talks in 1989 between the Communist Party and the Solidarity, there was a major opportunity for communist era political elites to retain access to power after the regime change.

Because Poland was the first of the Eastern Bloc countries to experience a transition to democracy, its first efforts at democratic consolidation were rather timid. Soon enough however, of all post-communist European countries to have undergone a transition to democracy, constitutional changes were most radical and frequent in Poland. The Small Constitution of 1992 established a semi-presidential regime, whereby the head of government was selected after a series of votes between the President and the Parliament. The President was the first to appoint a Prime Minister, who then nominated his cabinet, which was to be approved by the legislative. Failure to do so resulted in a second round of voting, whereby it was the Sejm (Poland's legislative) that would nominate a Prime Minister and vote on the Cabinet, which would have to be approved by the President. Should the Sejm be unable to agree upon any Cabinet, the President could either dissolve the legislative, thereby calling for early elections, or he could once again nominate a new Prime Minister (Wasilewski 1998).

The 1997 constitution modified this process, by introducing shorter deadlines for parliamentary approval of the Cabinet and by removing the presidential power to appoint a Cabinet that failed to obtain a vote of confidence. The balance of power between the head of government and head of state was also altered, with the powers of the Prime-Minister significantly increased. The head of government could now change any ministers, with the approval of the President. The Cabinet also gained the power of controlling its own affairs, free from the previous dependency on the Sejm (Wasilewski 1998).

The roots of Polish elite (dis)continuity lie in the Round Table Talks held in 1989, where the ruling elite seems to have hoped to integrate part of the opposition within the government, and thus increase the legitimacy of the communist regime and prevent its collapse (Castle 2003: 62). However, the consequence was the legitimation of the opposition elites and opening their path to political office, and thus to the regime change. The reason for which Poland had a negotiated transition to democracy was that neither of the two players could single-handedly end the Polish crisis, while each of them had a number of crucial advantages. The communist party was in control over state institutions, to which the opposition needed access if it wanted to pursue reforms, while the opposition enjoyed potentially large social support. Because of this, Poland is characterized by a division in continuity, whereby post-communist elites originate, to a large extent, from both the political elites of the old regime, and from the leadership of Solidarity (Wasilewski 1998), and the interplay between the two actors is a major feature of the first years of Polish democracy.

Eventually the Polish United Workers' Party, Poland's communist party, was succeeded by two reformed versions of itself, namely the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland and the Polish Social Democratic Union, continuing to remain a major player in the Polish political system. Solidarity, on the other hand, did not survive long as an organized political force, and very soon fractured into a number of political factions, each claiming the heritage of the trade union. Nevertheless, one can say that the strategic interplay between the two actors in Poland, democratic and anti-democratic, ended in the victory of the former, as Polish democracy is one of the most consolidated and stable among post-communist countries, as the non-democratic actors were eventually converted to the rules and norms of the democratic game.

Another major actor that played a central role behind Polish transition to democracy and its subsequent consolidation was the Catholic Church (Borowik 2002), due to its opposition to the

communist regime and the characteristics of its institutional structure. As the Catholic Church had a foreign-based hierarchical organization, it could not as easily be brought under the control of the regime as was the case with the autocephalous Orthodox churches in other Central and Eastern European countries. The election of a Polish Pope in 1978, who frequently criticized Poland's communist regime, offered another incentive for the development of the Church as one of its major opponents, in addition to the Church's importance within Polish national identity (Borowik 2002).

Apart from the elites of the communist regime and the opposing elites, there are a number of other factors that can be used to explain the success of democratic consolidation in Poland. One of these is the higher degree of economic development. As Poland was one of the most economically developed countries of the Eastern Bloc, this may have had a significant impact on the consolidation of democracy. Indeed, the theory that economic development is closely linked to democratic consolidation is one of the most popular in the relevant literature. Another possible explanation focuses on institutions instead, arguing that there was much institutional continuity in Poland as a result of its pacted transition. This theory argues that institutional stability is one of the core requirements of democratic consolidation, so that the pacted character of the Polish transition led to the temporary preservation of pre-democratic institutions which could then be converted into democratic institutions.

Other explanations for the success of democratic transition and consolidation in Poland focus on external actors. Poland's transition to democracy began as a consequence of the Soviet Union's decision to not support the government of General Jaruzelski's desire to continue its suppression of Solidarity. Thus, because Poland was already characterized by an organized opposition movement and the existence of an influential reformist element within the communist party, the withdrawal of Soviet support for the regime offered it no choice but to liberalize and to

legalize opposition, which ultimately led to the Round-Table talks and the eventually the collapse of the communist regime, initiating the other revolutions in the Eastern Bloc. Later on, another influential foreign actor behind Polish consolidation of democracy was the European Union (Bandelj and Radu 2006), which, due to the economic incentives for integration offered to Central and Eastern European countries and due to its requirement of a stable democracy as part of the Copenhagen Criteria, was a major factor behind the democratization of Poland as well as other former communist countries.

Overall, one can say that Poland experienced conditions both for elite continuity as well as a break with the communist past. Both the elites of the communist regime and those emerging from its opposition managed to survive and thrive into the new background created by the implementation of a democratic regime, and both eventually adopted the rules of the democratic game. Among the Central and Eastern European countries, Poland could be considered a success story in the process of democratic consolidation.

## ***2. Romania***

Romania is the only case of a violent regime change in Eastern Europe, whereby the communist regime was ended as a result of popular uprising, followed by the trial and execution of communist leader Nicolae Ceaușescu. Nonetheless, Romania exhibited a large degree of elite continuity. The first post-communist government was dominated by second-ranking members of the Communist Party, who formed the new post-communist political elites of the country. Also, due to the lack of an organized opposition movement during communist rule, there was no alternate source of political elites. Moreover, Romania was the only communist country that did not experience any form of round-table talk or elite negotiations, which did not prevent the first

post-communist governments from being largely comprised of reformed communists. It is therefore not surprising that Romania exhibits more elite continuity than other post-communist countries, which can also account for its difficulties on the path of consolidating democracy.

Due to the lack of an organized opposition to the communist regime, there was little opportunity for the emergence of a new democratic political elite that could gain power after the change of regime. Similarly to the case in Poland, Romania's transition had characteristics that could lead to both elite continuity, because of the lack of an alternate source of political elites from within opposition to the communist regime, and elite discontinuity, in this case the violent overthrow of the communist regime which allowed for the development of new political institutions, not directly derived from those before the regime change.

However, during the first years of transition the chances for elite continuity seemed higher. The first two elections, in 1990 and 1992, and the resulting governments, were won by second-ranking leaders of the communist party. While the National Salvation Front (FSN) was not strictly speaking an institutional descendant of the communist party, it was founded and led by members of the communist-era elite. The causes of this lack of alternate opposition elites during communist rule may be found in the "sultanistic" (Linz 1996, p. 344) character of the Romanian communist regime. Subordinating all potential sources of alternate elites (such as the Party, the military, the Church) to the leader's rule, the development of a second culture, let alone of an organized opposition, became virtually impossible in Communist Romania. This then explains why there was nothing similar to a negotiated or "pacted" transition to democracy in Romania. With no alternate sources of political elites, there was nobody that the communist elites could negotiate with.

This lack of break with the communist past seems to have had a negative impact on democratic consolidation in the first years after the regime change. Political violence was not

unseen, most notably expressed through the Mineriads (a violent confrontation between miners loyal to the new regime and the democratic opposition). Corruption and the lack of an independent judiciary were other features that negatively impacted Romania's democratic consolidation. And as the entire Romanian political system had been subordinated to Ceaușescu, the lack of an organized civil society prevented the emergence of new, democratically-minded political elite. When such an elite did eventually emerged, it suffered from the same problem as Solidarity in Poland, namely the inability to remain organized and united.

The Romanian method of minister appointment also functions within the framework of a semi-presidential political system. The Prime Minister is nominated by the President, after consulting with the majority party or, when no political party could claim majority, all parliamentary parties. The nominated candidate would then nominate his cabinet, which is to receive the approval of Parliament. Failure to vote in favour of the new cabinet twice results in the legislature's dissolving by the President (Fettelschoss 2009).

Another major actor that may have influenced Romania's democratic consolidation was the Church. The Romanian Orthodox Church was subordinated to the communist regime for most of its existence (Stan and Turcescu 2010), thus preventing it from providing an alternate source of elites or from forming an effective opposition to the regime, as was the case in Poland. This is due to its organizational structure, similar to other Eastern Orthodox Churches, where its autocephaly (administrative independence) could be used by the regime to its advantage. Romania is distinguished from other Orthodox-majority former communist nations, where Church membership declined significantly after years of state atheism (Stan and Turcescu 2010), in that the Church retained high levels of popularity and adherence after the fall of communism. This was partly the result of government policy of having one church per ethnic group (Stan and Turcescu 2010), hence the forceful merger of the Greek Catholic Church with the Orthodox

Church in 1947. This lack of opposition to the regime from the Church meant that it could not become a source of either opposition to regime or of alternate political elites after its collapse, providing another explanation for the lower levels of democratic consolidation in Romania as opposed to Poland.

Similarly to the Polish case, external actors also played an important role in democratic transition and consolidation in Romania. Although the revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe were initiated with Poland's transition, Romania was one of the last to experience a regime change. Because to Ceaușescu's distancing from the Soviet Union, his regime was less dependent on foreign support as was the case in other Eastern Bloc countries, which can account for the belated regime change in Romania as well as the violent nature of the transition.

The European Union was another external actor that had a large impact on democratic transition and consolidation, with the same role as played in Poland. Romania's desire to become integrated in European structures gave it an incentive to further democratize, not least due to the requirements set forth by the Copenhagen Criteria.

## Chapter III – Data Analysis

In order to test the hypothesis, I estimated a set of time-series regressions on the dependent variable using different models. The benchmark model was the Auto-Regressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity model (ARCH), chosen due to the existence of time-varying volatility clustering, primarily for the socioeconomic continuity variable.

The regression model uses the following equation:

$$DC_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PC_{it} + \beta_2 SC_{it} + \beta_3 GDP_{it} + \beta_4 ROL_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where DC stands for Democratic Consolidation

PC stands for Political Continuity

SC stands for Socioeconomic Continuity

GDP stands for Gross Domestic Product per capita (logged)

$\varepsilon$  stands for the error term

### ***1. Data***

#### **a) Sources**

The dependent variable is democratic consolidation, measured using two indices, namely the Polity IV democracy scores between 1990 and 2012 for the two countries, as well as the democratization score used in Nations in Transit, published by Freedom House, between 2003 and 2012. The Freedom House Nations in Transit index measures various governance indices for post-communist countries from the beginning of democratic transition to this day, in annual reports. As the democratization scores published by Freedom House within the Nations in Transit

database are not readily available for the years before 2003, those values will not be used in this paper. Instead, most models I use employ the Polity IV index.

The independent variable, used to test the main hypothesis, is elite continuity, defined by two dimensions, namely political continuity and socioeconomic continuity. Data on each continuity variable was collected for both individual countries for each of the years from 1990 to 2012. For the purposes of this paper I compiled the data for the elite continuity variable from official sources, primarily biographies or *curricula vitae* published by national institutions (primarily the governments of the two countries), but also international institutions, such as for instance the European Parliament, where background information concerning those ministers that were also at some point or another MEPs can be found. From these biographies I compiled data with information concerning the respective ministers' career background, meaning their primary career prior to becoming politicians, and, for post-communist ministers, whether they had close ties to the communist regime (meaning more than just membership in the communist party). For this research I examined the biographies of 258 post-communist ministers in Poland, out of which 3 values were missing, 287 Polish communist era ministers, with 17 missing values, 192 post-communist Romanian ministers, with 44 missing values, and 309 Romanian communist ministers, out of which 117 values were missing.

The paper shall use two control variables in the regression analysis, both of which are expected by current theory to have an effect on democratic consolidation. As economic development is often presented in the relevant literature as an important driver behind the consolidation of democracy, I will use logged GDP per capita as a proxy for this variable. The data was collected from the World Bank database and is measured in US. The second control variable used by this paper is included as a proxy for the institutional causes of democratic consolidation, as predicted by much of the literature. The indicator that I used is rule of law,

measured by the Worldwide Governance Indicators of the World Bank. The rule of law score used by the World Bank represents the implementation of and adherence to constitutional and legal norms, and annual data is available from 1996 to 2012. Because for the years 1997, 1999, and 2001 no data on the rule of law was published by the World Bank, I assigned the same score as that given in the previous year for each of the respective countries.

## **b) Measurement**

The dependent variable, as stated above, is measured by the scores offered by the Polity IV and the Freedom House Nations in Transit projects. The Polity IV score covers all independent countries and territories from 1800 to 2012, and is measured from a scale of -10 to 10, where -10 is a totalitarian system and 10 is a strongly consolidated democracy. The Polity IV score is calculated by the evaluation of a country's elections in terms of competitiveness, openness, and participation level. The Freedom House Nations in Transit scores measure the level of democratization of post-communist countries, and are measured from a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 represents the highest level of democratization and 7 the lowest. The Nations in Transit score is computed based on evaluations on seven categories, namely electoral process, civil society, independent media, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence, and corruption.

Political continuity measures the number of ministers within each year that had close ties to the communist regime. To calculate this variable, each minister during the post-communist era that had close ties with the communist regime is rated positively, and those that did not are not. Political continuity is encoded as the percentage of ministers with close ties to the communist government that were in cabinet during each observed year in each of the two countries. For the

purposes of this paper, close ties to the communist regime refers to holding positions of authority within the state or the communist party (and, in Poland, its satellite parties), at least at a local level; simple membership in the single party is not considered sufficient to grant a positive score to a certain minister, due to the pervasiveness of membership and its necessity for non-political reasons, such as career advancement. A major caveat for this variable is that it is only possible to find confirmation of close ties with the communist regime, while the absence of such ties cannot be demonstrated. For that reason, where no information could be found in a certain minister's biography concerning their political activity before the regime change, I shall assume the lack of such ties. Thus this variable potentially understates the true continuity of ministerial elites.

The other variable measuring elite continuity, namely socioeconomic continuity, is measured by the amount of overlap between the career backgrounds of post-communist ministers and their communist counterparts for each given year in each of the two countries. To measure this, each profession was granted a numerical code, after which the numbers assigned to the ministers in cabinet in a given year in each country were correlated with the numbers assigned to all communist ministers in each country that were in power between 1945 and 1989. The resulting correlation is then considered the socioeconomic continuity score.

### **c) Limitations**

As mentioned before, this data suffers from a series of limitations; many of the biographies that can be accessed lack information that may be essential for the purposes of this paper. There is a limited amount of data that can be found about the political and social background of ministers in the concerned countries, meaning that for Poland and Romania the paper uses data specifically compiled for the purposes of this paper. The data concerning the ministerial elites of the analyzed countries was compiled from official governmental resources presenting the

biographies of cabinet members, as published by each of the countries analyzed in this paper. This does in itself present a number of limitations. For instance, officially published biographies of ministers might fail to mention information that would be crucial in any analysis of executive elites, such as whether they participated in any way in the governing structure of the pre-democratic regime. Furthermore, official biographies might offer limited information on the social background of ministers, as such biographies are concerned more with their political career. These limitations notwithstanding, there is a plethora of data available on communist and post-communist ministers in both countries, which allowed me to compile sufficient resources in order to test the main hypothesis of this paper, namely that elite continuity, both in physical terms but also in terms of socioeconomic background, has a negative impact on the consolidation of democracy.

## ***2. Analysis***

### **a) Summary statistics**

First, summary statistics shall be presented for both countries. According to Tables 5 and 6 (in the Annex), there is a significant difference between Romania and Poland in terms of the number of post-communist ministers who had close ties to the communist regime. While for Romania the percentage of cabinet members that belonged to the pre-democratic elite ranges from 28% to 7%, there is greater variety in the case of Poland, where up to 89 % of cabinet members in 1994 had belonged to the communist elite, which holds true for only 8% of the ministers in 2011. Overall, there appears to be much greater elite continuity in the case of Poland than in the case of Romania. The highest number of ministers with a communist background in Romania are to be

found in the first two years after the regime change (1990 and 1991), when 28% of ministers had close ties to the communist regime. After a considerable decline to 7% in 1993 and 1994, the number increased steadily until it reached values close to the highest ones between 2000 and 2004, after which the number once again declined. Poland began with half of its cabinet having a communist background in 1990, and after a brief decline between 1991 and 1992, the number increased to its highest value, 89%, which was reached in 1994, remaining above 80 percent until 1997, when the number once again began declining. In 2002 the number increased again to 70%, only to drop steadily until 2011, when it reached the value of 8%.

In the case of the socioeconomic continuity variable there is wide variation within and between the countries. According to Table 2 in the Appendix, whereas during the communist era Polish ministers were mostly recruited from among economists (26.7%), engineers (24.1%) and the military (11.5%), the regime change meant that the most important backgrounds of Polish ministerial elites became the academia (26.9%) and law (15.4%), with economists declining but retaining a central role (16.1%), according to Table 1 in the Appendix. In the case of Romania, the focus of recruitment moved from workers (19.3%), the military (14%) and economists (12.7%) according to Appendix Table 4, to engineers (25%), economists (21.1%), and academics (16.3%), as shown in Table 3 in the Appendix. After running correlations between the career backgrounds of post-communist ministers in Poland and their communist counterparts (Appendix Table 7), the socioeconomic continuity scores fluctuated from the highest value of 0.792 in 1998, meaning a relatively high degree of overlap in career choices, to -0.260 in 1999, showing a very different occupational background of ministers in that year when compared to ministers in communist Poland. In the case of Romania (Appendix Table 8) a relatively similar socioeconomic continuity score can be observed, ranging from 0.346 in 1996 to -0.378 in 2001.

For most of the years observed there was negative correlation between the professional backgrounds of communist and post-communist ministerial elites in both countries.

## b) Romania

Table 1 ARCH regression for Romania

|                      | Democratic consolidation | Coef. | Std. Err. | z     | P>z   | [95% Conf. Interval] |       |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| <b>Democrat</b>      |                          |       |           |       |       |                      |       |
| <b>ic</b>            |                          |       |           |       |       |                      |       |
| <b>consolidation</b> |                          |       |           |       |       |                      |       |
|                      | Pol. continuity          | 0.195 | 0.4021    | 0.49  | 0.627 | -0.592               | 0.983 |
|                      | Soc. continuity          | 0.122 | 0.118     | 1.03  | 0.302 | -0.109               | 0.353 |
|                      | GDP/cap (log)            | 0.589 | 0.028     | 20.97 | 0     | 0.534                | 0.644 |
|                      | _cons                    | 3.625 | 0.267     | 13.58 | 0     | 3.101                | 4.148 |
| <b>ARCH</b>          |                          |       |           |       |       |                      |       |
|                      | L1.                      | 1.672 | 0.909     | 1.84  | 0.066 | -0.109               | 3.454 |

An ARCH time-series regression was first estimated using the data from Romanian ministers from 1990 to 2012 on the democratic consolidation variable measured by the Polity IV democratization score, using political continuity, socioeconomic continuity, and GDP per capita (logged) as independent variables (Table 1). The variable that has the strongest effect is GDP per capita, with a coefficient of 0.589 ( $p > 0.001$ ). Political continuity and socioeconomic continuity both have a positive effect, with coefficients of 0.195601 and 0.122038, respectively; however, none of them is statistically significant. The regression presented in Table 2 shows that adding the rule of law variable as an independent variable, and thus restricting the data to 1996 to 2012, logged GDP per capita remains the strongest predictor, with a coefficient of 0.599 ( $p > .001$ ). Political continuity does have a significant effect, with a coefficient of -1.027 ( $p > 0.01$ ). The coefficient on social continuity is not significant as in the previous regression.

**Table 2 ARCH regression for Romania (2)**

|                                 | Democratic consolidation | Coef.  | Std. Err. | z     | P>z   | [95% Conf. Interval] |       |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| <b>Democratic consolidation</b> |                          |        |           |       |       |                      |       |
|                                 | Pol. continuity          | -1.027 | 0.595     | -1.73 | 0.084 | -2.193               | 0.138 |
|                                 | Soc. continuity          | 0.002  | 0.114     | 0.02  | 0.981 | -0.221               | 0.227 |
|                                 | GDP/cap (log)            | 0.599  | 0.021     | 27.61 | 0     | 0.556                | 0.641 |
|                                 | Rule of law              | -0.065 | 0.233     | -0.28 | 0.78  | -0.521               | 0.391 |
|                                 | _cons                    | 3.724  | 0.267     | 13.58 | 0     | 3.101                | 4.148 |
| <b>ARCH</b>                     |                          |        |           |       |       |                      |       |
|                                 | L1.                      | 3.030  | 1.715     | 1.77  | 0.077 | -0.331               | 6.391 |

### c) Poland

Conducting the same regression on the data from Poland (Table 3), first without the rule of law variable (and thus from 1990 to 2012) again produces logged GDP per capita as the most significant factor, with a coefficient of 1.761 ( $p > 0.001$ ), and political continuity too has a positive effect on democratic consolidation, with a coefficient of 0.087 ( $p = 0.119$ ). The other main independent variable, socioeconomic continuity, does have a negative effect as predicted by the hypothesis, with a coefficient of -0.042, but it is not statistically significant. When repeating the same regression with the inclusion of the rule of law variable (and thus dropping out the years 1990 to 1995), logged GDP per capita once again emerges as the most significant variable, with a coefficient of 1.113 ( $p > 0.001$ ); political continuity also produces a significant positive effect on democratic consolidation, with a coefficient of 0.710 ( $p > 0.01$ ), and socioeconomic continuity

once again fails to reach levels of statistical significance, but it does have the expected negative effect.

**Table 3 ARCH regression for Poland**

| Democratic consolidation | Coef.  | Std. Err. | z     | P>z   | [95% Conf. Interval] |       |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| <b>Democrat</b>          |        |           |       |       |                      |       |
| <b>ic consolidation</b>  |        |           |       |       |                      |       |
| Pol. Continuity          | .0872  | .0560     | 1.56  | 0.119 | -0.022               | 0.197 |
| Soc. Continuity          | -0.042 | 0.043     | -0.98 | 0.329 | -.129                | 0.043 |
| GDP/cap (log)            | 1.761  | 0.319     | 5.51  | 0.000 | 1.135                | 2.387 |
| _cons                    | -0.004 | .002      | -1.69 | 0.091 | -0.009               | 0.000 |
| <b>ARCH</b>              |        |           |       |       |                      |       |
| L1.                      | 3.661  | 1.278     | 2.86  | 0.004 | 1.155                | 6.168 |

#### **d) Poland and Romania**

In order to further test the hypothesis, I conducted a Random-effects GLS time-series regression on data produced from both countries, using democratic consolidation as a dependent variable and political continuity, socioeconomic continuity, and logged GDP per capita as the independent variables, using data from 1990 to 2012. The overall R-squared produced by this regression is 0.725. Again, logged GDP per capita produces the strongest effect, with a positive coefficient of 1.730 ( $p > 0.001$ ); neither socioeconomic nor political continuity produce the expected negative effects. Including the rule of law variable (and thus eliminating data from

between 1990 and 1995) results in an estimate with an overall R-squared of 0.876. The logged GDP per capita variable again proves to be significant and creates a positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.824 ( $p > 0.001$ ), and the same holds true for the rule of law variable, which produces a coefficient of 0.475 ( $p > 0.01$ ). Political continuity has a slight positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.862, while socioeconomic continuity generates the expected negative effect, with a coefficient of -0.09171 ( $p > 0.5$ ).

The same regression was then run with the Freedom House democratization score replacing the Polity IV variable. When first conducting the regression without the rule of law variable on data from between 1990 and 2012, the produced R-squared is 0.8197. Since the Freedom House variable is measured from 1 to 7, with 1 being the highest score and 7 the lowest, therefore the coefficients need to be interpreted accordingly. Logged GDP per capita produces the expected negative effect of -1.199 ( $p > 0.001$ ), while political continuity produces a strong negative effect of -3.069 ( $p > 0.001$ ) and socioeconomic continuity produces the expected positive effect of 0.257, which is not, however, statistically significant. After removing the data from before 1996 and adding the rule of law variable to the regression, the resulting overall R-squared is 0.953. This time, logged GDP per capita produces a slight positive effect, with a coefficient of 0.191, but it is not statistically significant. Both political continuity and socioeconomic continuity produce significant negative effects, contrary to expectations.

### ***3. Interpretation***

Reviewing the regression models analyzed above, it seems that both independent variables do have a negative effect on democratic consolidation, as predicted by the hypothesis. However, that effect is small, and in most models, not statistically significant, which is to be expected

considering the small sample size (only two countries observed for only twenty-three years). For that reason, it is difficult based on the analyzed data to establish a solid causal argument according to which high levels of ministerial elite continuity is a significant factor in delaying the consolidation of democracy. Moreover, there is a number of issues with the data gathered and analyzed; most notably, the suspiciously low number of ministers with ties to the communist regime in Romania, especially when compared to the generally much higher numbers in Poland, seems to be more the result of scarcity of information in the matter than of genuine discontinuity in the recruitment of executive elites in Romania. As mentioned above, official biographies can be unreliable sources of information, especially when such information is potentially damaging to the political career of political elites in new democracies. Thus the data collected on the two countries needs to be taken with a grain of salt.

Nevertheless, in some of the estimated models both political and socioeconomic continuity do negatively impact democratic consolidation. Political continuity seems to have a higher effect in Romania, while in Poland it is socioeconomic continuity that appears to not bode well for the consolidation of democracy. That negative effect of socioeconomic continuity on democratic consolidation persists even after grouping the two countries into a single set of data, showing that its effects are relevant, but not nearly as strong as the effect of GDP per capita, however, partially confirming the structural explanations of democratic consolidation.

These results, while difficult to generalize for other post-autocratic countries undergoing a process of democratic consolidation, or even for other post-communist countries, are still in line with the theoretical expectations of this paper and much of the existing literature on the topic. Socioeconomic continuity is of particular relevance, as it brings a new source of observing the negative effects of elite continuity in addition to the more general observation that the physical presence of elites is harmful for the consolidation of democracy.

These findings imply that political elites, and especially ministerial elites, have a significant impact on the process of democratization in post-communist countries. This would help further understand the process of democratic transition in other countries, by highlighting the role of executive elites in transitions to democracy.

## Conclusion and discussion

The findings in this paper seem to confirm its main hypothesis that the continuity of political elites, not only physically but also in terms of their social and economic background, has a harmful influence on the development of a democratic regime in countries that underwent a transition to democracy. Permanence of communist-era elites is an important factor behind delaying democratic consolidation in Poland and Romania, while commitment to democratic reform on the part of democratic elites is essential for democratization. Thus a clear break with the norms and practices of the communist past and especially a change in who the politically relevant actors are in the young democracy is more likely to lead to a consolidated democratic regime. Further, as neither of the two countries analyzed experienced changes in the democratic nature of the regime from the moment of democratic transition onwards (such as coups or revolutions, for instance), they can be considered consolidated democracies according to the minimalistic understanding of the concept, i.e. the short and long-term survival of democratic norms and practices. They did however experience democratic reversals or stagnation from the initial establishment of the democratic regime to this day, most notably prevalent corruption, lack of a fully independent judiciary, or restraints to the implementation of the rule of law.

This paper also finds that, while there is criticism of the view that economic development is essential for democratization, the existence of a more advanced democracy does have an important effect on democratic consolidation. However, one needs to adopt a nuanced view on the matter. While economic development is indeed relevant for the success or failure of democratization, it needs to be combined with a clear break from actors created by the autocratic system in order for its positive effects to be felt.

In order to prove this paper's main hypothesis, the analysis derived the theoretical framework of democratic consolidation, a relatively new field in democratization studies. The theoretical part of this thesis offered a definition of democratic consolidation according to which it is understood as the process whereby a democratic regime, implemented as a result of democratic transition, is able to survive crises and challenges to its legitimacy and short- and long-term survivability, due to the acceptance of democratic institutions, both formal and informal, by all politically relevant actors, and where no important actor uses significant resources in the pursuit of changing the nature of the regime. The theoretical part of this paper also examined the factors most often understood as leading to the process of democratic consolidation, broadly categorizing them into behavioural, attitudinal, and structural factors. Then I presented a brief outline of the theory of democratic elitism used by this paper, arguing that political elites are the most relevant actors behind the process of consolidating democracy. I further argued that among the most politically relevant elites are executive elites, due to the more stringent selection process for members of the executive as compared to legislative elites, and their relatively higher influence within the political system, as a result of their position often being the culmination of political careers of aspiring professional politicians.

The empirical part of this paper was based on two-fold analysis of the role of executive elites in the process of democratic consolidation in Poland and Romania, first by case-by-case studies and then by statistical analysis. The case-by-case part of the thesis observed that while there is some difference between the two countries in regards to the manner in which they consolidated their democratic regimes, there is also much similarity in the manner in which members of the executive are appointed and their relative importance in the political system. The differing role of political elites in democratic consolidation in the two countries stems in part from the varying processes of democratic transition; whereas Poland experienced one of the classic manners of a

pacted transition, Romania's transition was violent and sudden, leading to a differing role of pre-democratic elites within the political system.

The statistical analysis part of this paper found that, although a strong causal link confirming my hypothesis is hard to establish, there is some evidence on the importance of removing elite continuity, both political and socioeconomic, in order for a democratic regime to become consolidated. The time-series regression models conducted on each of the two countries found that political continuity, meaning the physical continuity of former communist political elites in office, has a negative effect on democratic consolidation in Romania, while socioeconomic continuity, meaning continuity in terms of the career background of ministerial elites, has a negative effect on the consolidation of democracy in Poland.

It is difficult, proceeding from these results, to make generalizations that apply to other countries undergoing democratic consolidation, but there is still a visible effect of elite continuity on the consolidation of democracy. Although the effect is not as strong or as universal as predicted by the hypothesis, I can still conclude that elite continuity does in fact matter, but is not the most important factor behind democratic consolidation. Perhaps with a larger sample, that would include more than two countries, and a more reliable database one could more clearly observe the importance of elite continuity for the survivability and consolidation of democratic regimes. As stated above, there are several methodological issues with the data this paper used, not least of which being the untrustworthiness of official biographies in providing reliable accounts of the politicians in question, especially when their relation with the pre-democratic regime is concerned. The fact that a large number of ministers in the two countries had little to no information available concerning their political and career history is another major issue with the data used by this paper.

Still, in spite of the limitations and caveats of this research, I did find some evidence for the importance of elites and their continuity for the consolidation of democracy. While this result may not be fully applicable to other post-communist or post-authoritarian countries, it does show that for a young democratic regime to have chances at short- and long-term survival, it needs to break away from its pre-democratic past. There are, nonetheless, several difficulties in applying this result to countries that transitioned away from other types of autocratic regimes; the particular nature of the process of democratic transition experienced by the countries of Central and Eastern Europe meant that many of them had to struggle with the challenge of nation-building and market liberalization in addition to implementing democratic institutions. In post-authoritarian countries, elite continuity may affect democratic consolidation in an altogether different manner or with different strength.

The type of democratic transition may also influence the role that political elites have on democratic consolidation. Countries that experienced a pacted transition, for instance, may experience higher levels of elite continuity than those that did not, which may, on the one hand, have negative consequences for democratic consolidation as it may entrench previous norms and practices within the democratic regime, but on the other hand may be beneficial for democracy, due to the general acceptance of democratic rules by all actors involved in democratic transition.

Additionally, while this paper did find evidence pointing out to the importance of political elites in the process of democratic consolidation, elite continuity may manifest itself in other areas. Although a country may experience a change in terms of political elites, the elites of the pre-democratic regime may continue playing an important role by moving into another field. As democratic consolidation theory shows, in order for a democratic regime to be considered consolidated all relevant actors must accept democratic rules. This means that a country may experience low elite continuity in the political system simply because the elites of the previous

regime migrated into other spheres, such as, for instance, economy or the military, and can thus still have a powerful impact on the consolidation of democracy.

This effect of elite continuity on the consolidation of democracy requires further research, with both more in-depth qualitative assessment of the role played by authoritarian elites in the process of democratic consolidation within a comparative framework, and a richer quantitative assessment of the same effect, using a wider range of data than that employed by this paper.

## References

1. APPEL Hilary, *Anti-Communist Justice and Founding the Post-Communist Order: Lustration and Restitution in Central Europe*, *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 19. No. 3, 2005, pp. 379-405
2. BANDELJ Nina, Radu Bogdan, *Consolidation of Democracy in Postcommunist Europe*, Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California, Irvine, 2006
3. BEST Heinrich, John Higley (eds.), *Democratic Elitism: New Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2010
4. BORCHERT Jens, Jürgen Zeiss (eds.), *The Political Class in Advanced Democracies*, Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 2003
5. BOROWIK Irena, *The Roman Catholic Church in the Process of Democratic Transformation: the Case of Poland*, in *Social Compass* 49(2): 239–52, 2002
6. DAHL, Robert A.. *Polyarchy. Participation and Opposition*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971
7. DIAMOND, Larry, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999
8. Di PALMA, Giuseppe, *The Study of Conflict in Western Societies: A Critique of the End of Ideology*, Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, 1973
9. DOWDING Keith, Patrick Dumont (eds.), *The Selection of Ministers in Europe. Hiring and firing*, Routledge, London, New York, 2009
10. EISENSTADT S. N., *The Breakdown of Communist Regimes*, in Vladimir Tismăneanu, ed., *The Revolutions of 1989*, London, Routledge, 1999

11. ELSTER, Jon, Claus Offe, Ulrich K. Preuss, with Frank Boenker, Ulrike Goetting, and Friedbert W. Rueb, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at Sea*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1998
12. FETTELSCHOSS Katja, Csaba Nikoleny, “Learning to rule: ministerial careers in post-communist Democracies” in Keith DOWDING, Patrick DUMONT (eds.) *The Selection of Ministers in Europe. Hiring and firing*, Routledge, London, New York, 2009
13. GUNTHER Richard, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, “Introduction.” Pp. 1–32 in *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, eds. Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995
14. HAZAN Reuven Y., Gideon Rahat, *Democracy within Parties Candidate Selection Methods and Their Political Consequences*, Oxford University Press, 2010
15. HIGLEY John, György Lengyel, *Elites After State Socialism*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2000
16. HIGLEY John, Jan Pakulski, Włodzimierz Wesolowski (eds.), *Postcommunist elites and democracy in Eastern Europe*, London, Macmillan, 1998
17. HUNTINGTON Samuel, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991
18. LIJPHART Arend, *Constitutional Choices for New Democracies*, in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds., *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996
19. LINZ Juan J., *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, Boulder & London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000

20. LINZ Juan J., Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996
21. TAVARES DE ALMEIDA P., A. C. Pinto, N. Bermeo, *Who Governs Southern Europe? Regime Change and Ministerial Recruitment 1850-2000*, Frank Cass, London, Portland, 2003
22. O'DONNELL Guillermo, Scott Mainwaring, J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1992
23. PAKULSKI Jan, András Köröseyi, *Toward Leader Democracy*, London; New York, Anthem Press, 2012
24. PARETO Vilfredo, *The Transformation of Democracy*, Translated by Renata Giola, edited by Charles H. Powers, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1921/1984
25. SCHUMPETER Joseph. 1942. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, New York, Harper & Row, 1942
26. SCHEDLER Andreas, “Measuring Democratic Consolidation”, in *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Spring 2001, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 66–92
27. STAN Lavinia, Lucian Turcescu, *The Romanian Orthodox Church and Post-communist Democratisation*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52:8, 2010
28. WASILEWSKI Jacek, *Elite Circulation and Consolidation of Democracy in Poland*, in Higley, Pakulski and Wesolowski, 1998
29. WEBER, Max, *Politics as a Vocation*, in H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (eds), *From Max Weber*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1958

30. WEBER, Max, *Economy and Society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich,  
Berkeley, University of California Press. 1920/1978

## **Appendix 1**

## **Data sources**

Dependent Variable:

Freedom House Nations in Transit score: <http://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2012>

Polity IV score: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/>

Independent variables:

## **Politicians**

[www.premier.gov.pl](http://www.premier.gov.pl)

<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl>

<http://ludzie.wprost.pl>

<http://www.gov.ro>

<http://www.presidency.ro>

<http://hartapoliticii.ro>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/map.html>

## **Control variables**

Rule of Law index: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx>

GDP per capita: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>

## Appendix 2

| Profession    | N   | Percentage |
|---------------|-----|------------|
| academic      | 68  | 26.8       |
| artist        | 7   | 2.8        |
| business      | 8   | 3.1        |
| civil servant | 15  | 5.9        |
| diplomat      | 1   | 0.4        |
| doctor        | 16  | 6.3        |
| economist     | 41  | 16.1       |
| engineer      | 22  | 8.7        |
| farmer        | 6   | 2.4        |
| journalist    | 16  | 6.3        |
| lawyer        | 39  | 15.4       |
| manager       | 1   | 0.4        |
| military      | 3   | 1.2        |
| sport         | 2   | 0.8        |
| teacher       | 6   | 2.4        |
| worker        | 3   | 1.2        |
| <b>Total</b>  | 254 | 100        |

**Table 1:** Social background of post-communist ministers in Poland

*Academic refers to those that teach at the level of higher education or are researchers; the category does not include economists, in order to highlight the large number of ministers with that profession. Teacher includes those that teach at the pre-university level. Lawyer includes everyone with a law-related profession, such as attorneys, prosecutors, judges, etc. Doctor refers to all those who have a medical background.*

| <b>Profession</b>    | <b>N</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>academic</b>      | 28       | 10.4              |
| <b>civil servant</b> | 1        | 0.4               |
| <b>diplomat</b>      | 10       | 3.7               |
| <b>doctor</b>        | 8        | 3.0               |
| <b>economist</b>     | 72       | 26.7              |
| <b>engineer</b>      | 65       | 24.1              |
| <b>farmer</b>        | 3        | 1.1               |
| <b>journalist</b>    | 12       | 4.4               |
| <b>lawyer</b>        | 18       | 6.7               |
| <b>manager</b>       | 2        | 0.7               |
| <b>military</b>      | 31       | 11.5              |
| <b>scout</b>         | 1        | 0.4               |
| <b>sport</b>         | 1        | 0.4               |
| <b>teacher</b>       | 5        | 1.9               |
| <b>worker</b>        | 13       | 4.8               |
| <b>Total</b>         | 270      | 100               |

**Table 2:** Social background of communist elites in Poland

*Academic refers to those that teach at the level of higher education or are researchers; the category does not include economists, in order to highlight the large number of ministers with that profession. Teacher includes those that teach at the pre-university level. Lawyer includes everyone with a law-related profession, such as attorneys, prosecutors, judges, etc. Doctor refers to all those who have a medical background.*

| <b>Profession</b>    | <b>N</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>academic</b>      | 24       | 16.3              |
| <b>artist</b>        | 4        | 2.7               |
| <b>architect</b>     | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>business</b>      | 2        | 1.4               |
| <b>civil servant</b> | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>diplomat</b>      | 5        | 3.4               |
| <b>doctor</b>        | 7        | 4.8               |
| <b>economist</b>     | 31       | 21.1              |
| <b>engineer</b>      | 38       | 25.9              |
| <b>journalist</b>    | 4        | 2.7               |
| <b>lawyer</b>        | 19       | 12.9              |
| <b>manager</b>       | 3        | 2.0               |
| <b>military</b>      | 5        | 3.4               |
| <b>sailor</b>        | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>sport</b>         | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>teacher</b>       | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>Total</b>         | 147      | 100               |

**Table 3:** Social background of post-communist ministers in Romania

*Academic refers to those that teach at the level of higher education or are researchers; the category does not include economists, in order to highlight the large number of ministers with that profession. Teacher includes those that teach at the pre-university level. Lawyer includes everyone with a law-related profession, such as attorneys, prosecutors, judges, etc. Doctor refers to all those who have a medical background.*

| <b>Profession</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>academic</b>   | 16       | 10.7              |
| <b>architect</b>  | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>artist</b>     | 3        | 2.0               |
| <b>business</b>   | 1        | 0.7               |
| <b>diplomat</b>   | 6        | 4.0               |
| <b>doctor</b>     | 6        | 4.0               |
| <b>economist</b>  | 19       | 12.7              |
| <b>engineer</b>   | 27       | 18.0              |
| <b>journalist</b> | 5        | 3.3               |
| <b>lawyer</b>     | 12       | 8.0               |
| <b>military</b>   | 21       | 14.0              |
| <b>politician</b> | 2        | 1.3               |
| <b>teacher</b>    | 2        | 1.3               |
| <b>worker</b>     | 29       | 19.3              |
| <b>Total</b>      | 150      | 100               |

**Table 4:** Social background of communist elites in Romania

*Academic refers to those that teach at the level of higher education or are researchers; the category does not include economists, in order to highlight the large number of ministers with that profession. Teacher includes those that teach at the pre-university level. Lawyer includes everyone with a law-related profession, such as attorneys, prosecutors, judges, etc. Doctor refers to all those who have a medical background.*

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Political continuity</i> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1990        | 28%                         |
| 1991        | 28%                         |
| 1992        | 15%                         |
| 1993        | 7%                          |
| 1994        | 7%                          |
| 1995        | 8%                          |
| 1996        | 11%                         |
| 1997        | 15%                         |
| 1998        | 19%                         |
| 1999        | 19%                         |
| 2000        | 23%                         |
| 2001        | 26%                         |
| 2002        | 26%                         |
| 2003        | 27%                         |
| 2004        | 24%                         |
| 2005        | 10%                         |
| 2006        | 10%                         |
| 2007        | 7%                          |
| 2008        | 11%                         |
| 2009        | 10%                         |
| 2010        | 13%                         |
| 2011        | 19%                         |
| 2012        | 12%                         |

**Table 5:** Percentage of ministers with a communist background in Romania, by year

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Political continuity</i> |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1990        | 50%                         |
| 1991        | 23%                         |
| 1992        | 16%                         |
| 1993        | 57%                         |
| 1994        | 89%                         |
| 1995        | 83%                         |
| 1996        | 82%                         |
| 1997        | 57%                         |
| 1998        | 14%                         |
| 1999        | 12%                         |
| 2000        | 14%                         |
| 2001        | 38%                         |
| 2002        | 70%                         |
| 2003        | 68%                         |
| 2004        | 68%                         |
| 2005        | 44%                         |
| 2006        | 30%                         |
| 2007        | 22%                         |
| 2008        | 12%                         |
| 2009        | 10%                         |
| 2010        | 9%                          |
| 2011        | 8%                          |
| 2012        | 12%                         |

**Table 6:** Percentage of ministers with a communist background in Poland, by year

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Social Continuity</i> |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1990        | 0.112593                 |
| 1991        | 0.045116                 |
| 1992        | -0.09915                 |
| 1993        | -0.11713                 |
| 1994        | 0.127951                 |
| 1995        | -0.11819                 |
| 1996        | -0.18035                 |
| 1997        | -0.08351                 |
| 1998        | 0.79232                  |
| 1999        | -0.26002                 |
| 2000        | 0.175479                 |
| 2001        | 0.002927                 |
| 2002        | -0.09613                 |
| 2003        | 0.184335                 |
| 2004        | 0.258981                 |
| 2005        | -0.10043                 |
| 2006        | 0.282121                 |
| 2007        | -0.09763                 |
| 2008        | 0.165748                 |
| 2009        | -0.08318                 |
| 2010        | -0.13762                 |
| 2011        | -0.15283                 |
| 2012        | -0.16393                 |

**Table 7:** Correlation between career backgrounds of post-communist ministers in Poland (by year) with all communist ministers

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Social Continuity</i> |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1990        | 0.023584                 |
| 1991        | -0.14179                 |
| 1992        | -0.35868                 |
| 1993        | -0.22131                 |
| 1994        | -0.17846                 |
| 1995        | -0.17268                 |
| 1996        | 0.346764                 |
| 1997        | -0.19477                 |
| 1998        | -0.35178                 |
| 1999        | -0.31622                 |
| 2000        | 0.054941                 |
| 2001        | -0.37836                 |
| 2002        | -0.37836                 |
| 2003        | -0.34915                 |
| 2004        | -0.37704                 |
| 2005        | -0.01281                 |
| 2006        | -0.03449                 |
| 2007        | 0.198018                 |
| 2008        | -0.04829                 |
| 2009        | 0.072786                 |
| 2010        | -0.05858                 |
| 2011        | -0.2318                  |
| 2012        | 0.090379                 |

**Table 8:** Correlation between career backgrounds of post-communist ministers in Romania (by year) with all communist ministers