COSMOPOLITAN PRIMING FOR CHANGE:
TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN COMMUNIST EASTERN EUROPE

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by

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Abstract
by
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Social movement scholars have argued that social movement mobilization at the micro level is a sequential multi-stage process but have ignored the first stage of this process, the creation of a pool of supporters from which movements can potentially draw participants, when analyzing the Eastern European protest wave of 1989. I question the assumption that such a pool of potential participants was ready-made and ask how it was formed. To address these concerns, I analyze the mobilization context in which the successful protest wave of 1989 developed. I contrast it with the mobilization contexts of the unsuccessful Chinese and Albanian cases. My concrete research question is: What were the societal institutional environment and the political culture in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s within which protest movements could gather mass support and within which democracy could take root? I argue that the Eastern European democratic impetus was grounded within a cosmopolitan world culture. I also argue that Eastern European transnational social movements were major cosmopolitan actors in creating and promoting this culture over more than a decade. Thus, cosmopolitanism served as a
mobilization potential while the development of cosmopolitanism appears to have been
the first stage of the protest mobilization process and subsequent democratization in
Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. My evidence comes from various sources, including a
dataset on transnational social movement organizations around the world from 1953 to
2003, the World Value Survey, data on movement membership and reach, and semi-
structured interviews with members of the most prominent movement in the region, the
Esperanto movement, in four Eastern European countries.
This is for my parents who have given me everything.
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Without the Eastern European Esperantists who graciously agreed to talk to me, this work would not have been possible. Thank you!

Finally, I would like to thank the following Notre Dame institutes for their generous grants: the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, which allowed me to do my study.
CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

Social movement scholars have argued that social movement mobilization at the micro level is a sequential multi-stage process (Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Beyerlein and Hipp 2006). The first stage of the mobilization process is “becoming part of the mobilization potential,” referring to the people in society who have a positive stand toward the movement and could potentially be mobilized (Klandermans and Oegema 1987). An entire branch of social movement theorizing, the frame alignment theory (Snow et al. 1986; Benford and Snow 2000), partially focuses on this first stage. Analyses of the Eastern European protests of 1989, however, take the first stage of the mobilization process as given (e.g. Opp and Gern 1993). I argue that this assumption is problematic and propose to address this problem. The level of the mobilization potential favoring engagement in a social movement is not constant but varies over time. Larger mobilizing potentials imply larger pools of potential movement participants. Movements, however, cannot rely on having a ready-made supportive base from which to draw potential participants.

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1 Italics are mine.

2 The second stage is “becoming target of mobilization attempts”; the third stage is “becoming motivated to participate”; and the fourth stage is “overcoming barriers to participate” (Klandermans and Oegema 1987: 519).
Looking at the values and attitudes prevalent in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, I uncover widespread cosmopolitanism. I speculate that cultural processes involving the preservation and gradual intensification of cosmopolitan values and attitudes among Eastern Europeans constituted an enormous mobilization potential for the protest movements of 1989 and for the subsequent democratization in the region. I contrast Eastern European countries with China, where protests also occurred but where cosmopolitanism did not develop similarly. At the macro level, a widespread individual disposition represents a political culture. Thus, I argue that a cosmopolitan political culture gained prominence in Eastern Europe during the 1980s, which turned out to be a fertile ground for the 1989 protests and for subsequent democratizations.

Cosmopolitanism is important for the mobilization potential because it represents a political project that imagines a different social order. Imagining a different social order brings individuals and organizations closer to working for social change. Cosmopolitan values can thus be the foundation of political activism.

In this paper, I begin to trace the institutional foundation and the underlying processes behind the development of the cosmopolitan democratic culture in Eastern Europe. I focus on societal mobilization or cosmopolitanism from below (Kaldor 1996). My quantitative analysis uncovers a growing field of transnational social movements throughout Eastern Europe during the 1980s. Within this field, the Esperanto movement was the most prominent Eastern European and Chinese transnational social movement in terms of number of organizations (Figures 1.1-1.6). It was also very important in Western transnational social movement fields (Figures 1.7 and 1.8). A qualitative analysis

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3 According to the *World Value Survey*. 
involving the Esperanto movement provides evidence for a process of development of a cosmopolitan disposition. I therefore argue that this movement played an important role in preserving and cultivating a cosmopolitan political culture in Eastern Europe which in turn contributed to the rise of protest movements.

A comparison with China also raises a question about what explains the different government response to protests in Eastern Europe and in China in 1989. Why didn’t Eastern European governments crush protests the way the Chinese government did? One possible answer is that the governments in Eastern Europe were afraid of the popularity and mass support of the demands for change among their populations and did not think repression could succeed. Another possible answer is that the governments themselves or parts thereof were in fact supportive of the demands for change that the protesters raised. Examination of a cultural movement supported by the communist governments, such as the Esperanto movement, can begin to shed light on the prevalence of a cosmopolitan disposition.

I proceed as follows. First, I discuss what cosmopolitanism is and how prevalent it was in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. Second, I offer some background information on the Esperanto movement. Third, I present the theoretical considerations and hypotheses that guide the study. Fourth, I outline the methods of analysis. Fifth, I present and discuss my quantitative findings. Sixth, I present and discuss my qualitative findings. Finally, I trace the Esperanto movement until the present day and draw conclusions.
Figure 1.1. Eastern European transnational social movement organization field by issue, 1953-2003, Bulgaria.

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CHAPTER 2:
COSMOPOLITANISM

Cosmopolitanism has a “multilayered character” (Vertovec and Cohen 2003: 3). Cosmopolitanism can refer to

- a political project
- a new type of politics
- individual characteristics

As a political project, cosmopolitanism is a form of “a political or cultural universalism, giving priority to world order over that of a specific state or nation” (Waterman 2001: 49). In particular, cosmopolitanism can be “a vision of global democracy and world citizenship” (Vertovec and Cohen 2003: 1). Both cosmopolitanism as a new type of politics and cosmopolitanism as an individual characteristic are founded upon cosmopolitanism as a project or vision.

As a new type of politics, cosmopolitanism is a “non-communitarian, post-identity politics of overlapping interests and heterogeneous or hybrid publics in order to challenge conventional notions of belonging, identity, and citizenship” (Vertovec and Cohen 2003: 1). Kaldor (1996) distinguishes between (a) cosmopolitanism from above,
which involves international organizations, complex partnerships and cooperative agreements between states, and (b) cosmopolitanism from below, which involves new transnational social movements.

As a set of individual characteristics, cosmopolitanism refers to “individual behaviours, values or dispositions manifesting a capacity to engage cultural multiplicity” (Vertovec and Cohen 2003: 1).

Cosmopolitanism as an Individual Characteristic

Cosmopolitanism as an individual characteristic can relate to dispositions (subjective outlooks and attitudes) and practices (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004). Cosmopolitanism, both as disposition and/or as practice, reflects “a conscious openness to the world and to cultural differences” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 117). Commitments to openness can be manifested in multiple ways: in the intellectual and aesthetic domains as well as in the emotional and moral/ethical domains (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 127). Cosmopolitanism can be experienced, felt, or imagined (Appadurai 1996; Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 121).

Cosmopolitan practices relate to various flows, of people, of ideas, images, and technologies (Appadurai 1996). Cosmopolitan practices thus amount to a type of cultural capital. Kanter (1995: 22-3), for instance, identifies as cosmopolitans the members of a “world class” who possess the “three C’s,” concepts, competence and connections. Historically, Waterman (2001) identifies two types of privileged cosmopolitans: the pre-industrial European intellectual elite for whom cosmopolitanism “implied the domination of the world by European bourgeois liberal values and structures” and modern “European
or Westernized intellectuals sharing both the old and modern values of the cultured, linguistically skilled and travelled elite” (Waterman 2001: 50). Cosmopolitan practices, however, can also be “used by ordinary people to bridge boundaries with people who are different from them” (Lamont and Aksartova 2002:1).

Of greater interest to this study are two other historical types of cosmopolitans that Waterman (2001) identifies, the socialist cosmopolitans and the nineteen-century internationalist revolutionaries. Such cosmopolitans would have had a better image in communist Eastern Europe. Together, they combine a revolutionary potential and socialist outlook, something I would imagine was present in the region and particularly strong in the late 1980s. This type of cosmopolitanism manifests a cosmopolitan disposition that is “a progressive humanistic ideal” and even “a tool for radical social imagination and radical projections of cosmopolitan democracy” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 115-6). “The cosmopolitan, then, becomes the micro-unit, or the agent of change, in a move to a new form of global government” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 124). Cosmopolitans therefore must be driven to “defend the right of others to live in democratic states with rich possibilities of association within and across their borders” (Appiah 1996: 29). “It is these distinctly ethical commitments that drive much of the contemporary environmental, anti-war and anti-globalization [sic.] movements” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 128).

“[E]mbedded in the structural conditions of modernity,” however, cosmopolitanism “recognizes the validity of two enduring characteristics of the modern era: the nation-state and citizenship” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 116; for a parallel analysis of the nation-state as an important aspect of world culture, see Meyer,
Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez 1997). As a lived experience, cosmopolitanism “does not necessarily shy away from particular, local forms” (Skrbis, Kendall, and Woodward 2004: 123). Similarly, when discussing transnational activists, Tarrow (2005) talks about “rooted cosmopolitans.” While they may be involved in transnational mobilization, they remain linked to the societies, places, and networks from which they originate.

Cosmopolitanism as an Individual Characteristic of Eastern Europeans

To measure the cosmopolitan disposition of Eastern Europeans, I use data from the World Value Survey\(^4\), administered for the first time in several Eastern European countries in 1990\(^5\). This round of the survey asks a series of questions about the respondent’s approval of transnational social movements. I look specifically at the approval rates of four movements, which have been indicated in the literature as conveyers of cosmopolitan democratic values: the human rights movement, the disarmament movement, the ecology movement, and the women’s movement. The possible answers include: 1 Strongly approve, 2 Somewhat approve, 3 Somewhat disapprove, and 4 Strongly disapprove. I consider “strong approval” (answers 1) of these movements as one indicator of a cosmopolitan disposition. The human rights movement promotes the values behind the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The disarmament movement promotes peaceful coexistence with other peoples around the world. The ecological movement promotes the protection of the earth, which is common to all. Finally, the women’s movement promotes one particular set of rights, those of women. A longitudinal analysis comparing individual countries across time would be the

\(^4\) Accessed online on December 13, 2009, at: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org

\(^5\) In Romania, it was administered in 1993. In Albania, the first World Value Survey was not administered until 1997; therefore, it is not part of this particular analysis.
most appropriate method for showing time variation. However, such data is not available. Therefore, my analysis relies on a cross-sectional comparison between countries based on the percentage of respondents who strongly approve a movement. Data for Albania is not available at this round. Therefore, I compare four “successful” cases of Eastern European transitions, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania, with China, Sweden (as a representative of a Western European country), and the United State (another Western country).

The World Value Survey also asks respondents how much confidence they have in various institutions. The possible responses include: 1 A great deal, 2 Quite a lot, 3 Not very much, 4 None at all. Data is available for respondents’ confidence (combining answers 1 and 2) in two international institutions, the European Union and NATO. I use these questions as another indicator of a cosmopolitan disposition, recognizing that it is an imperfect one, given the different meanings these two institutions may have for the Eastern Europeans and for the Chinese.

I also consider a series of World Value Survey questions related to the demand for change as a measure of revolutionary potential. The World Value Survey asks whether respondents agree that the economic system needs fundamental change. It also asks whether respondents agree that the government should be made much more open to the public. One question asks respondents if they think that society must be radically changed or gradually improved be reforms.

Finally, I consider two questions asking about the ideal principles of governance according to the respondent. One question offers respondents a ten-point scale to evaluate the level of government responsibility that they find appropriate. Another question probes
respondents’ comparative ranking of freedom and equality as guiding principles of social organization.

My findings concerning the presence of a cosmopolitan disposition are presented in Table 2.1. With regard to strong approval of transnational social movements, I find that a strong majority of Eastern Europeans had a strong cosmopolitan disposition in 1990. Strong approval of the human rights movement ranged between 62% in the Czech Republic and 79% in Bulgaria. Strong approval of the disarmament movement ranged between 55% in the Czech Republic and 70% in Bulgaria. Strong approval of the ecology movement ranged between 56% in Romania and 75% in Bulgaria. On average, in 1990, the Eastern Europeans were much more cosmopolitan than the Chinese. Strong approval for transnational social movements in China ranged between 27% for the human rights movement and 55% for the ecology movement. Sweden and the United States, two cases included as controls, were somewhere in the middle with regard to strong approval of the human rights movement, but lagged behind China with regard to strong approval of the disarmament and of the ecology movements. The pattern of strong approval for the women’s movement was less clear. However, on average Eastern Europeans showed more support for this movement than the Chinese, the Swedish, and the US respondents. With regard to support for transnational social movements in 1990 in general, Eastern Europeans appeared much more cosmopolitan than both the Chinese, and the citizens of two Western countries.
## TABLE 2.1
COSMOPOLITAN VALUES AND ATTITUDES ACROSS COUNTRIES, ACCORDING TO THE WORLD VALUE SURVEY IN 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bulgaria</th>
<th>Czech Republic</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Romania</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Movement Approval</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong approval of the human rights movement</td>
<td>79.40%</td>
<td>62.00%</td>
<td>70.40%</td>
<td>72.60%</td>
<td>26.60%</td>
<td>59.30%</td>
<td>50.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong approval of the disarmament movement</td>
<td>69.90%</td>
<td>55.20%</td>
<td>67.80%</td>
<td>59.70%</td>
<td>41.10%</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
<td>26.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong approval of the ecology movement</td>
<td>74.50%</td>
<td>56.60%</td>
<td>63.20%</td>
<td>55.50%</td>
<td>55.60%</td>
<td>40.80%</td>
<td>44.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong approval of the women's movement</td>
<td>45.90%</td>
<td>21.50%</td>
<td>39.50%</td>
<td>32.00%</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
<td>20.70%</td>
<td>32.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in the European Union</td>
<td>50.10%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>58.80%</td>
<td>47.60%</td>
<td>29.60%</td>
<td>58.10%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in NATO</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
<td>42.40%</td>
<td>38.30%</td>
<td>46.80%</td>
<td>22.10%</td>
<td>35.90%</td>
<td>51.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand for Changes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely agree that the economic system needs fundamental changes</td>
<td>73.10%</td>
<td>65.10%</td>
<td>67.70%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>45.50%</td>
<td>32.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely agree that the government should be made much more open to the public</td>
<td>73.70%</td>
<td>51.00%</td>
<td>55.60%</td>
<td>42.80%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>55.60%</td>
<td>33.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society must be radically changed</td>
<td>22.10%</td>
<td>44.80%</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
<td>6.10%</td>
<td>6.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideal principles of governance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose responsibility? (average based on the following scale: 1-People should take more responsibility…10-The government should take more responsibility)</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality above freedom</td>
<td>49.20%</td>
<td>40.60%</td>
<td>42.80%</td>
<td>45.90%</td>
<td>64.80%</td>
<td>28.10%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6 In the case of Romania, the earliest World Value Survey was conducted in 1993.
Confidence in the European Union and in NATO was also much stronger among the Eastern Europeans than among the Chinese. In China, 30% of respondents expressed confidence in the European Union. In Eastern Europe, confidence in the European Union ranged between 48% in Romania and 59% in Poland. Only 22% of the Chinese expressed confidence in NATO. In Eastern Europe, confidence in NATO varied a lot but was higher than in China. It ranged between 28% in Bulgaria and 47% in Romania. With regard to confidence in international institutions, more Eastern Europeans had a cosmopolitan disposition than the Chinese. Eastern Europeans’ confidence in international institutions was at similar levels to the levels of confidence in these institutions of Western respondents.

With regard to revolutionary potential, in 1990, Eastern Europeans appeared much more cosmopolitan than both the Chinese and Western respondents as well. While the vast majority of Eastern Europeans, on average, completely agreed that the economic system needed fundamental changes and that the government should be made much more open to the public, less than half of Western respondents thought so. These two questions were not asked in China. Eastern Europeans also appeared much more radical than others. While less than 7% of both Chinese and Western respondents thought that society must be radically changed, between 16% and 45% of Eastern European respondents thought that radical change was the way to go.

In terms of support for transnational social movements, confidence in international institutions, and revolutionary potential, Eastern Europeans showed much higher levels of cosmopolitanism in 1990 compared to citizens of China and of two Western countries. However, the attitudes of Eastern Europeans bore traces of the
socialist political culture of their recent past. Eastern Europeans were similar to the Chinese with regard to deciding who should bear more responsibility, the government or individuals. They believed that the responsibility should be split, with a little more falling on the government side. Eastern Europeans, however, were divided on the question of what the guiding principle of their countries should be. Eastern Europeans were split into two almost equal halves between those who believed that freedom should be above equality and those who believed that equality should be above freedom. This was in contrast to the Chinese respondents, the vast majority of whom ranked equality higher than freedom as well as in contrast to the Western respondents, the vast majority of whom ranked freedom higher than equality. Thus, Eastern European cosmopolitanism did appear to be unique, combining democratic values represented in transnational social movements with revolutionary potential and a socialist-influenced outlook valuing government responsibility and equality.
CHAPTER 3:
THE ESPERANTO MOVEMENT (BACKGROUND)

Readers may not be familiar with the Esperanto movement, so before I continue with the theoretical consideration behind this paper, I offer some background information. The Esperanto movement is a cultural movement centered on the practice of the Esperanto language. Esperanto is considered to be the most widely spoken constructed international language with estimated 2 million speakers\(^7\). Esperantists write books, publish periodicals, and communicate with each other in the language. Esperanto is a constructed language created by L.L. Zamenhof between 1878 and 1887 with the goal of serving as a universal second language that allows people from different ethnic backgrounds to understand each other (Harlow n.d.). Zamenhof was born in Bialystok, now Eastern Poland but at the time part of the Russian Empire, where multiple ethnicities - Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, and Jews – lived much less than harmoniously together. Creating a neutral language was young Zamenhof’s strategy for resolving their conflicts.

Esperanto is classified as a European language. It is phonetic and uses the Latin alphabet. Its 28 sounds come from the Slavic languages. Eighty percent of its vocabulary roots come from the Romance languages. Most of the rest are Germanic. Esperanto is considered to be simple, logical, and flexible. In terms of word formation, almost any

\(^7\) According to Ethnologue: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=epo
root can turn into any part of speech using appropriate suffixes. Esperanto grammar consists of sixteen rules and no exceptions.

According to Harlow’s account of the history of Esperanto, the 1920s were the decade of its heydays when even the League of Nation was considering promoting its introduction in school curricula of member states. The proposal was struck down by the French who at the time had international ambitions for their own language. In the 1930s and 1940s, both Hitler and Stalin outlawed the use of Esperanto, persecuted Esperantists, and almost eradicated the language and its speakers. Hitler, reportedly, considered it part of the Jewish conspiracy to conquer the world. Supposedly, according to Stalin, it was creating cosmopolitan opposition to the communist international. The movement started to slowly pick up again after the recognition of Esperanto by UNESCO in 1954. However, it was not until the late 1970s, with a new leadership of the World Esperanto Association, the largest Esperanto organization that serves as an umbrella to various national and other smaller organizations, that the Esperanto movement started to significantly grow again (Harlow n.d.).

Esperantists have developed several practices that allow them to communicate with each other. In addition to publishing and circulating materials in Esperanto, Esperantists have regular local, national, and international meetings where they can communicate face to face in Esperanto. The largest gathering of Esperantists is the World Congress of Esperanto organized annually by the World Esperanto Association. The Esperanto popularity in Eastern Europe during the communist era is also manifested in the size of the World Congresses in Eastern Europe: the three largest World Congresses of Esperanto after World War II took place there. The World Congresses of Esperanto in
Varna, Bulgaria, in 1978, in Budapest, Hungary, in 1983, and in Warsaw, Poland, in 1987, gathered 4414, 4834, and 5946 participants respectively (World Esperanto Association website). Another popular practice among Esperantists is the pen pal service. Yet another one is the Esperanto hospitality service, which allows traveling Esperantists to find a host and a place to stay for free in almost any country they visit.
Analyses of the Eastern European 1989 transitions have focused on economic factors, on the political opportunities that allowed change to happen, and on the role of elites. Economic arguments suggest that communism in Eastern Europe failed because of the intrinsic economic and/or institutional inadequacy of the socialist system (Kaminski 1991; Staniszkis 1991; Misztal 1993). The coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s is said to have created political opportunities for the events of 1989 to take place. The new Soviet leader was committed to openness and change and his policies of glasnost and perestroika influenced the entire Soviet bloc (Horn 1993; Kux 1993). The ensuing divisions between political elites destabilized the communist regimes and opened the way for the “new guard” leadership to oust the “old guard” (Higley and Paukulski 1992; Kux 1993; Misztal 1993; Kis 1999). Cultural elites, the dissident intellectuals, are often cited as the promoters of change (e.g. Cushman 1993; Joppke 1995; Torpey 1995). Society, in these arguments, is assumed to have followed its leaders. I find this assumption problematic and suggest that societal processes, as an independent factor, must be added to the account of the Eastern European transitions.

What was going on in the Eastern European societies prior to the protest mobilizations of 1989 and to the following transitions? We know, for example, that the Polish Solidarity movement developed gradually and was the result of labor organizing
during the 1970s (Laba 1991). With regard to the German protest mobilization of 1989, the prevalent argument is that it occurred spontaneously and was facilitated by sports clubs, churches, and friends’ networks (Opp and Gern 1993). To what extent was this true in other countries? In another account, the success of the Eastern European transitions in East Germany, Hungary, and Romania has been associated with the coalitions that social movements formed across state boundaries and across the East-West divide (Chilton 1994). How did transnational connections matter if they did? While these studies offer starting points for a comprehensive analysis, such an analysis has not been done as of yet. Where the “pressures from below” (Horn 1993) and the mass support for change in Eastern Europe came from remains a puzzle. The goal of this study is to begin to open the black box of the Eastern European communist societies and to begin to trace the social institutions and processes that preceded the 1989 transitions.

The research question that this study addresses in particular is: What was the societal institutional environment in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s within which protest movements could gather mass support and within which democracy could take root? I argue that the Eastern European democratic impetus was grounded within a cosmopolitan world culture. I also argue that Eastern European transnational social movements were major cosmopolitan actors in creating and promoting this culture during the Cold War. Thus, cosmopolitanism served as a mobilization potential while the development of cosmopolitanism appears to have been the first stage of the protest mobilization process and subsequent democratization in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s.
Cosmopolitanism as a New Type of Politics and Communist Eastern Europe

In the past century and a half, international politics has increasingly involved non-state actors. Two organizational forms have become particularly prevalent, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) (Boli and Thomas 1997). IGOs (e.g. the UN system) and INGOs (e.g. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, etc.) are the foundation of what some researchers call an increasingly interconnected world society/world polity (Boli and Thomas 1997). IGOs and a number of INGOs are said to advance a regime of international norms/world culture that favors human rights and democracy and promotes peaceful coexistence (Boli and Thomas 1997; Olzak and Tsutsui 1998; Smith 2008).

The interaction between states and this still developing world society/world polity has reportedly led to convergence in state laws, for example, with regard to constitutions in general (Boli-Bennett and Mayer 1980), to children’s rights (Boli-Bennett and Mayer 1978), and in favor of women’s suffrage (Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997). Norms promoted by world society/world polity have also been found to influence particular outcomes, such as curbing environmental degradation in terms of CO2 emissions (Schofer and Hironaka 2005). Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink (1999) present case studies showing that international human rights norms have even changed state behavior with regard to human rights practices, including Eastern European states.

Non-governmental organizations working transnationally, and, particularly, the subset of transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs), which specifically aim at achieving progressive social change, are the main actors in the emerging cosmopolitan politics (Havemann 2000) and the linchpins of the interactions between states and world

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8 However, these organizations have been criticized for promoting Western interests and ideas.
society/world polity. Movements such as the greens, the human rights movement, the peace movement, and the women’s movement are comfortable with “rights talk” and “promote radical democracy,” “attempting to build new identities in the ‘glocal’ society” (Havemann 2000: 23).

The number of transnational social movement organizations around the world grew over the second half of the 20th century and activism flourished around a number of issue areas (Smith 2004). Smith (2004) finds that the majority of transnational movements dealt with human rights issues, environmental issues, or peace issues. Transnational movements have worked to effect social change in numerous ways. For example, Frank and McEneaney (1999) find that social movement mobilization around equal rights has led to liberalization of state policies on same-sex sexual relations. Similarly, Tsutsui (2009) reports cases of indigenous social movements successfully using human rights discourse to frame their struggles for social emancipation.

However, how prominent were transnational social movements in communist Eastern Europe? It has been shown that transnational social movement mobilization is dependent on prior international connections. Smith and Wiest (2005), for example, find that linkages to the world polity (ties to international governmental organizations/IGOs) facilitate the growth of transnational social movement organizations in a country. Eastern European states have been part of the UN system since at least 1955*. In 1975, all Eastern European states except Albania signed the Helsinki Accords. These accords mandated human rights to become the governing rules for all European states (Thomas 1999). According to Thomas (1999), this was a concession that gave Eastern European human rights activists an opportunity to demand compliance with the concession, which

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* According the UN history as presented at: http://www.un.org/en/members/
eventually led to more concessions and more opportunities to demand compliance, following the so-called “spiral model.” I argue that pressures to avoid international shaming, similar to what Keck and Sikkink (1998) have termed the “boomerang effect,” may have led to a gradual opening of communist Eastern Europe and to a gradual growth of the transnational social movement field following the signing of the Helsinki Accords (Hypothesis 1).

Local enactments of world culture differ from the general models developed in the West and are adapted to the local conditions (for a discussion on the process of glocalization, see Robertson 1995; Boli 2005), incorporating elements of the local political culture (for a discussion on the process of creolization, see Hannerz 1992; Boli 2005). The political culture of communist Eastern Europe would obviously reflect communist ideals, particularly the ideal of equality. I expect that Eastern European cosmopolitan norms manifested in social movement mobilization would reflect the local conditions and culture and movements that reflect this culture would be more successful than others (Hypothesis 2).

The impact of transnational social movements depends on the depth and breadth of the mobilization. Schofer and Hironaka (2005), for example, argue that institutions can be effective in bringing outcomes: 1) if they are highly structured; 2) when they penetrate actors at multiple levels of the social system; and 3) when they are persistent over time. Therefore, I expect that mobilizations with more depth and breadth would have more societal-level impact than mobilizations with less depth and breadth (Hypothesis 3).
Mechanisms for Developing Cosmopolitanism

There are two views of the mechanics of societal mobilization in the Eastern European transitions. On one hand, scholars point out the critical diffusion of Western ideas via societal organizations. For example, in a comparative study of peace and human rights groups in Hungary, GDR, and Romania, Chilton (1994) argues that the transnational linkages of Eastern European groups with similar Western groups were a “catalyst” for change by providing support and influencing the thinking of Eastern European dissidents. Along this line of thinking, *transnational social movements are expected to have served as channels for alternatives ways of thinking amounting to a cosmopolitan disposition to diffuse into Eastern Europe (Hypothesis 4).*

On the other hand, some argue that protest in Eastern Europe was not organized by oppositional groups but occurred spontaneously (Opp and Gern 1993 for the case of East Germany). Decisive for this type of mobilization were critical friends’ networks as well as membership in non-political groups, such as sports groups and churches (Opp and Gern 1993). In the culture field, a few studies have looked into the unintended political consequences of cultural mobilization. Znaniecki (1952) argues that the associations of cultural elites, of “men of letters,” of scientists, of artists, etc., play important roles in creating national identities and serve as the foundation of nationalism. Ikegami (2005) studies aesthetic networks in post-Medieval Japan and finds that these cultural networks bridged across different social classes and contributed to the cohesion of Japanese society and the development of a Japanese national identity. Weber’s classical *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* is based on the idea that a cultural development such as Protestantism can have various kinds of influences on the development of society,
including ideological and institutional. Similarly, social movement scholars interested in culture point out the importance of creating common identities (Taylor and Whittier 1992, 1996; Bernstein 1997; Stryker et al. 2000). Thus, I expect that innocuous non-threatening organizations may have contributed to the development of a cosmopolitan disposition by creating valued personal networks (strong ties/friendship) centered around cultural practices (Hypothesis 5).
CHAPTER 5:
METHODS

The analyses in this paper are conducted within the framework of a comparative design, using the methods of agreement and of difference (Skocpol 1979; Ragin 1989). The design is based on my findings related to cosmopolitanism discussed above. On one hand, I compare the transnational social movement fields within communist countries that experienced mass protests in 1989 followed by a democratic transition, which had high levels of cosmopolitanism (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania). On the other hand, I contrast these countries with countries that experienced mass protest, which was not followed by a democratic transition (China) and which had low levels of cosmopolitanism (I also include Albania although I do not have data on cosmopolitanism in this country. There, the protests occurred later and the transition was slower). The following table summarizes the design:
TABLE 5.1

COMPARATIVE DESIGN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Esperanto impact</th>
<th>High cosmopolitanism</th>
<th>Low cosmopolitanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Successful transition</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bulgaria 1989</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Czechoslovakia 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungary 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poland 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romania 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Esperanto impact</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No transition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Albania 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>China 1989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transnational Social Movement Field in Communist Eastern Europe

Data on the transnational social movement field come from the Transnational Social Movement Organizations (TSMO) dataset (Smith 2004). This dataset covers a 50-year period: 1953-2003 and includes non-governmental organizations from around the world “with members in at least three countries that pursue any kind of social change goal” (Smith 2004: 264). The dataset contains several types of information about TSMOs useful for this study, particularly name, goals and area of interest/social movement issue, and countries that the TSMO had associated members in a given year.

Potential Impact of Transnational Social Movements

Assessing the impact of a social movement is one of the hardest tasks one can take on. To provide a rough estimate of the potential pool of people that members of the most prominent movement in the Eastern European transnational social movement field,
the Esperantists, may have impacted, or the *depth* of the movement, I use a technique developed by Killworth et al. (1998) and used in Moody (2006). This technique estimates the reach of a group within a population. The estimate is based on the following formula:

\[ p_r = 1 - (1 - \frac{e}{t})^c \]

\( t \) is the relevant population size (country population). \( c \) is average local network size (the average number of people in \( t \) that people know). \( e \) denotes the number of people in the event (number of Esperantists in a country). \( p_r \) is the proportion of the total population \( t \) who know at least one person involved in the event (at least one Esperantist). Moody (2006) has developed an online calculator\(^{10} \) for estimating the “affected” population. For the country population \( t \), I use population data from the late 1980s or early 1990 for Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and China. For the average local network \( c \), I use Moody’s (2006) low and high estimates for the average family and acquaintance networks in the world. For further estimates, I use the highest number, the average size of the average American network, because I assume that as joiners and communicators interested in establishing connections with others, Esperantists would have a personal acquaintance network at least as large as the network of the average American. For the number of Esperantists \( e \), I use data on country membership in the World Esperanto Association in 1988 (Table 5.2). This is a conservative estimate because it does not include Esperantists who are only members of their national and local groups and because it does not take into consideration the flow of people in and out of formal organizations who remain associated with the movement, which would make the pool of people to potentially be influenced even larger.

\(^{10}\) Available at: <http://www.soc.duke.edu/~jmoody77/Hydra/scaleupcalc.htm>
TABLE 5.2
COUNTRY MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION IN 1988\textsuperscript{11} (COUNTRIES WITH MORE THAN 500 MEMBERS AND ROMANIA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>9332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>5215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>3706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>3637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>1443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>1264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{11} Based on the numbers published in \textit{Esperanto} 1988, March, p.59
My measure of the breadth of the movement is simply the count of Esperanto TSMOs active in a country. Since both depth and breadth must matter, I assume an additive relationship\textsuperscript{12} and simply add the measures of breadth and depth to compare this new measure with the measure for outcome or cosmopolitan disposition. I look for correlations between the measure of cosmopolitanism and depth, breadth, depth+breadth.

*Mechanisms for Developing Cosmopolitanism*

To identify the mechanisms behind the processes discussed above, I use interview and field research data. I traveled to four Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania, in the period mid-May-June, 2009, to conduct semi-structured interviews (interview script available upon request) (Blee and Taylor 2002 discuss the usefulness of this method for social movement research) with members of the Esperanto movement in these countries. I visited eight cities that have been centers for the Esperanto movement in Eastern Europe (Sofia, Bulgaria; Brno, Dobřichovice, and Prague in the Czech Republic; Poznan, Warsaw, and Wroclaw in Poland; and Timisoara in Romania). I interviewed thirty-two individuals, involved members and former and/or current leaders of the Esperanto movement who have been active in the movement at least since the 1980s, and in most cases, since much earlier. I recorded about 30 hours of interviews, and in the several cases when respondents were not comfortable with being recorded, I took copious notes. I also attended five regular meetings of Esperanto groups in four of the cities, which provided me with additional information about the movement.

\textsuperscript{12} Future research may try to estimate the combined effect of these aspects of movement impact rather than assume it.
CHAPTER 6:
QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

In this section, I show a growth process within the institutional field of transnational social movement organizations across Eastern Europe and the growth of the Esperanto movement in particular, which was the most prominent movement in the region in terms of number of organizations. I argue that the growth of this field was crucial for the development of the cosmopolitan disposition/political culture discussed above. I also estimate the possible impact of the Esperanto movement across countries.

Eastern European Transnational Social Movement Field

Analysis of the transnational social movement organizations (TSMO) field reveals that, contrary to the common belief that Eastern Europe lacked a civil society during the communist era, a number of social movement organizations with transnational linkages (TSMOs) were active in the countries of the region well before democratization (Figures 1.1-1.5; 6.1-6.2). In fact, the population of TSMOs with Eastern European memberships has experienced a steady growth since the 1950s (Figure 6.1), similarly to the pattern of TSMO growth found in Western countries, as the world culture thesis would argue. The growth curves become particularly steep at the end of the 1970s, following the signing of the Helsinki accords, signaling a progressive opening of the region, as hypothesis 1 predicts.
Figure 6.1 Transnational Social Movement Organization (TSMO) Fields by Country, 1953-2003.
Figure 6.2 Esperanto Transnational Social Movement Organizations by Country, 1953-2003.
The growth pattern is similar among the Eastern European countries where mass protest occurred in 1989 and where democratization followed. Growth was highest in Poland and lowest in Romania, a ranking which follows the observed pace of democratization in the region. There are three visible stages of growth: a slow first stage, from the 1950s to the mid 1970s, with the rise of the UN system; a middle stage when growth picks up, from the late 1970s, following the signing of the Helsinki Accords, to the late 1980s; and a third stage of sharp increase in the number of TSMOs from the early 1990s, following democratization, till the 2000s (Figure 6.1). China follows the three-stage TSMO growth pattern of the Eastern European countries with successful transitions; however, the number of TSMOs there is much smaller (Figures 1.6 and 6.1). Albania appears to have been isolationist in terms of the TSMO field as well until the early 1990s (the country did not sigh the Helsinki Accords). Afterwards, following the country’s transition, there is a parallel TSMO growth there as well, although Albania lags behind even China (Figure 6.1).

The TSMO growth trend challenges the “Iron Curtain” metaphor. If there ever was an Iron Curtain, it had been gradually lifted since the mid-1950s and particularly since the late 1970s, well prior to democratization. Of the 562 TSMOs in existence in the world in 1988, 247 or 44% had members in Eastern Europe (Tables 6.1). With an average of 44 ties to countries from around the world, Eastern European TSMOs were much better connected than the world average TSMO, having 31 country ties (Table 6.1). A significant number of these country ties were to Western (OECD) countries, 16.6\textsuperscript{13} ties on average, much higher than the average number of OECD country ties of 11.7 of all world TSMOs.

\textsuperscript{13} Prior to 1990, there were a total of 24 OECD countries.
# TABLE 6.1

RELATIVE POWER/CENTRALITY/NUMBER OF COUNTRY TIES OF THE MAJOR SOCIAL MOVEMENTS BY REGION IN 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TSMO Issues</th>
<th>Average number of ties to Eastern European countries of Eastern European TSMOs</th>
<th>Average number of ties to OECD countries of Eastern European TSMOs</th>
<th>Average number of ties to countries around the world of Eastern European TSMOs</th>
<th>Average number of ties to countries around the world of all world TSMOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment</strong></td>
<td>3.54 (N=26)</td>
<td>16.24 (N=25)</td>
<td>41.23 (N=26)</td>
<td>28.82 (N=60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Esperanto</strong></td>
<td>6.58 (N=57)</td>
<td>16.58 (N=57)</td>
<td>35.58 (N=57)</td>
<td>33.9 (N=63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Rights</strong></td>
<td>3.97 (N=29)</td>
<td>15.48 (N=29)</td>
<td>32.34 (N=29)</td>
<td>23.54 (N=81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peace</strong></td>
<td>2.85 (N=26)</td>
<td>14.88 (N=26)</td>
<td>40.69 (N=26)</td>
<td>31.93 (N=41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialist/</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.27</strong> (N=22)</td>
<td><strong>16.76</strong> (N=21)</td>
<td><strong>60.68</strong> (N=22)</td>
<td><strong>42.44</strong> (N=48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global</strong></td>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>4.13 (N=15)</td>
<td>17.67 (N=15)</td>
<td>61.33 (N=15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All issues</strong></td>
<td>4.64 (N=247)</td>
<td>16.57 (N=243)</td>
<td>43.98 (N=247)</td>
<td>31.01 (N=562)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pattern of growth of different social movements, as distinguished by issue (e.g. Esperanto, human rights, peace, women’s movement etc.), was not identical in Eastern Europe (Figures 1.1-1.5). Prior to democratization, the size of the Esperanto movement organization field was much larger than the size of other movements. This changed with democratization: the population size of transnational Esperanto organizations gradually decreased (Figures 1.1-1.4 and 6.2) while other movements, particularly the human rights movement and the environmental movement, experienced a steep growth throughout the 1990s. The growth pattern of Eastern European movements differed from the average world growth patterns of transnational social movements. However, the Swedish and the US graphs (Figures 1.7 and 1.8) show the Esperanto movement as very important for these countries between 1965 and 1990 as well. This indicates a significance of the movement for East-West transnational relations.

The Esperanto movement organization field in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria reached its peak in the late 1980s (Figure 6.2). In Romania, the peak was reached in the early 1990s; however, it did not reach the levels of the other Eastern European countries. China reached its peak of the size of the Esperanto organization population in the late 1990s. In Albania, while the number of Esperanto organizations also grew, it never came closer to the number of similar organizations in the rest of the Eastern European countries and in China. The growth pattern of the Esperanto movement in Sweden and in the US closely parallels the growth pattern of the movement in Eastern Europe. This pattern of organizational growth shows that the Esperanto movement played a particular role in communist countries wanting openness (in most of the Eastern European countries in the 1980s and in China in the 1990s). This desire to connect with
the West, in particular, appears to have been mutual. Why Esperanto? The vision and practices of the Esperanto movement must have been particularly compatible with the political culture of communist countries. It allowed the establishment and maintenance of transnational connections that could not easily happen otherwise. Therefore, the Esperanto movement requires special attention.

The data also show that, in terms of its connectedness, the Esperanto movement was one of the most “powerful” movements in Eastern Europe during the communist era. It had the largest number of organizations (57) and with its high average number of country ties (6.58 ties to Eastern European countries, 16.58 ties to OECD countries, and 35.58 country ties around the world) was the best connected one (Table 6.1). Breaking down the number of transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs) by country indicates that Esperanto organizations by far outnumbered other groups in each individual country as well. Table 6.2 shows that in 1988, the Esperanto movement constituted one third of the entire transnational social movement field of Eastern European countries (except Albania, where it constituted one fourth of the field) and China.

Esperanto was important not only at the aggregate level, in terms of organizational population, but also at the individual level, in terms of organizational membership. The four countries with the highest number of individual members in the World Esperanto Association were Eastern European: Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary (Table 5.2)
## TABLE 6.2

TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS (TSMOS) BY ISSUE BY COUNTRY IN 1988

(% OF TOTAL AND NUMBER)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region//Major Issues</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Esperanto</th>
<th>Human Rights</th>
<th>Peace</th>
<th>Rights &amp; Peace</th>
<th>Socialist/Global</th>
<th>Economy</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th># All TSMOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
<td>11.74%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>8.91%</td>
<td>8.07%</td>
<td>6.07%</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria (Bulgaria)</td>
<td>5.98%</td>
<td>36.75%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>4.27%</td>
<td>8.55%</td>
<td>10.26%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7.86%</td>
<td>11.43%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>9.41%</td>
<td>30.59%</td>
<td>9.41%</td>
<td>6.47%</td>
<td>7.65%</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
<td>4.12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>4.67%</td>
<td>30.84%</td>
<td>13.08%</td>
<td>6.54%</td>
<td>9.35%</td>
<td>10.28%</td>
<td>5.61%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>23.81%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>23.81%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>7.79%</td>
<td>32.47%</td>
<td>5.19%</td>
<td>6.49%</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
<td>10.39%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>13.86%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>9.57%</td>
<td>7.92%</td>
<td>6.27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>8.94%</td>
<td>13.69%</td>
<td>14.25%</td>
<td>8.38%</td>
<td>9.78%</td>
<td>7.54%</td>
<td>8.38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>10.68%</td>
<td>11.21%</td>
<td>14.41%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>8.36%</td>
<td>8.54%</td>
<td>8.19%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region//Major Issues</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esperanto</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights &amp; Peace</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist/Global</td>
<td>8.91%</td>
<td>10.26%</td>
<td>11.43%</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
<td>10.28%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
<td>7.92%</td>
<td>7.54%</td>
<td>8.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>6.07%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4.12%</td>
<td>5.61%</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>10.39%</td>
<td>6.27%</td>
<td>8.38%</td>
<td>8.19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region//Major Issues</th>
<th># All TSMOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria (Bulgaria)</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Potential Impact

Since the Esperanto movement appears to be so important in the field of Eastern European transnational social movements, it would be important to assess its potential impact. Regarding the depth of the impact of the Esperanto movement in the late 1980s, Table 6.3 offers an estimate of the possible reach of the Esperanto movement across several countries. In Bulgaria, at least 16% of the population likely had a personal acquaintance who was a member of the World Esperanto Association and therefore could potentially be influenced directly by that person. In Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, 10%, 7% and 7% of the populations, respectively, probably knew a member of the World Esperanto Association. These estimates do not include Esperantist acquaintances who were only members of local, national, and other international Esperanto organizations (such as professional or other interest organizations). Considering the possible influence of these individuals as well, the depth of the possible reach of the Esperanto movement in Eastern Europe appears significant.

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14 If this estimate is biased, I assume that it is equally biased across countries, therefore allowing comparison.
### TABLE 6.3

PEOPLE WHO KNEW A MEMBER OF THE WORLD ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION IN THE LATE 1980S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family member was an Esperantist, low estimate based on 26-member family network</td>
<td>134,607</td>
<td>96,070</td>
<td>241,888</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>94,149</td>
<td>31,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member was an Esperantist, high estimate based on 49-member family network</td>
<td>251,993</td>
<td>180,562</td>
<td>454,582</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>176,723</td>
<td>60,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance was an Esperantist, low estimate based on the average network in Oaxaca, Mexico of 192 people</td>
<td>947,556</td>
<td>695,649</td>
<td>1,750,356</td>
<td>5,183</td>
<td>675,452</td>
<td>235,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquaintance was an Esperantist, high estimate based on the average American network of 290 people</td>
<td>1,391,831 (15.55%)</td>
<td>1,038,674 (6.66%)</td>
<td>2,612,440 (6.88%)</td>
<td>7,829 (.03%)</td>
<td>1,003,090 (9.66%)</td>
<td>355,195 (.03%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Romania and China, by contrast, only .03% of the population probably knew a member of the World Esperanto Association. In the Chinese case, the large population size of the country made it difficult for the movement to reach a larger proportion of the population. In the Romanian case, these numbers may underestimate the possible reach of the movement. In 1985, Ceaușescu made all civil society organizations illegal, which explains the low number of official membership in the World Esperanto Association. However, my Romanian interviewees suggest that private Esperanto gatherings continued to occur despite the official ban.

My interviews indicate that Esperantists were well known as such in their respective circles of family and acquaintances, in schools, at the workplace, and even in the military. Receiving a letter from abroad would be an important event for the entire family/community. Esperantists would show the letters, postcards, and magazines that they had received to their acquaintances, which would often provoke discussions about their content, generally of “human interest.”

In terms of its breadth, the Esperanto movement covered a broad spectrum of professional and interest organizations that reached out to many segments of the intelligentsia, the status group often said to have backed up the Eastern European transitions. There were Esperanto organizations for artists, journalists, jurists, medical professionals, postal workers, scientists, teachers, writers, railroad workers, amateur radio enthusiasts, automobilists, chess players, cyclists, handicapped people, homosexuals, naturists, photographers, vegetarians, etc. Table 6.4 offers a list of select Esperanto organizations with Eastern European membership by issue focus. In addition to the groups that organized the professional/intellectual class, there were Esperanto
organizations that promoted peace, human rights, and caring for the environment (most
groups, in fact, included members with a variety of interests, according to my
interviews). There were also groups with religious orientation that challenged the
communist aversion to religion.

The various issue focused groups within the Esperanto movement suggest that
ideas related to peace, human rights, and the environment, which comprise part of my
definition of cosmopolitanism outlined above, could spread throughout Eastern Europe
via the Esperanto movement.
TABLE 6.4
SELECT EASTERN EUROPEAN ESPERANTO GROUPS BY ISSUE, 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peace Esperanto Groups</th>
<th>Human Rights Esperanto Groups</th>
<th>Environmental Esperanto Groups</th>
<th>Religious Esperanto Groups</th>
<th>Professional Associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esperantist World Peace Movement</td>
<td>International League of Handicapped Esperantists</td>
<td>Esperantist Ornithologists Association</td>
<td>Bahai Esperantist League</td>
<td>Association of Writers in Esperanto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Esperantists Club</td>
<td>International League of Blind Esperantists</td>
<td>International Naturist Organization for Esperanto</td>
<td>League of Buddhist Esperantists</td>
<td>Universal Esperantist Artists League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International Association for World Tourism (Through Esperanto)</td>
<td></td>
<td>International League of Esperantist Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>World Esperantist Vegetarian Association</td>
<td></td>
<td>International Federation of Esperantist Railwaymen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International Esperanto Association of Post and Telecommunication Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International Esperanto Association of Jurists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Esperantist Journalist World Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.5 juxtaposes data on the breadth, depth, and the added breadth+depth measures of impact of the Esperanto movement to a measure of cosmopolitan disposition in a country, an average of five individual indicators (strong approval of the human rights, the disarmament, and the ecology movements, and confidence in the European Union and in NATO). A general correlation between Esperanto impact and cosmopolitan disposition in a country becomes apparent, even with the small number of countries. The countries with higher scores on the Esperanto impact measures tend to also be the ones with a higher proportion of their population having a cosmopolitan disposition.

16 Average of % strongly supporting the human rights, the disarmament, and the ecological movement, as well as the % confident in the EU and in NATO.

17 Strongly underestimated. Ceaușescu had forbidden all formal civil society organizations; therefore the official numbers of Esperanto membership in the World Esperanto Organization (used to calculate this %) are low. However, people continued to meet on their own, unofficially.

### Table 6.5
**DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THE ESPERANTO TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS (TSMO) REACH AND COSMOPOLITANISM BY COUNTRY, 1988-90**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Depth (% population reached)</th>
<th>Breadth (# Esperanto TSMOs)</th>
<th>Breadth + Depth</th>
<th>Cosmopolitanism&lt;sup&gt;16&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.03</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>0.03&lt;sup&gt;17&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33.03</td>
<td>56.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>55.66</td>
<td>54.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>58.88</td>
<td>59.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>9.66</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61.66</td>
<td>60.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>15.55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>58.55</td>
<td>60.28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
end are Bulgaria and Hungary with the highest scores on Esperanto depth, breadth+depth, and cosmopolitanism. On the other end is China with the lowest score for Esperanto breadth, breadth+depth, and cosmopolitan disposition. Romania’s cosmopolitanism score looks “anomalous” but it can be explained by the fact that it was measured in 1993, more than three years after the transition, after Romania saw its peak in the number of Esperanto organizations in 1991. Another possible explanation for this “anomaly” is the underestimated depth score discussed above. A third potential explanation is the possible unique effect of other mobilizing institutions in the Romanian case, such as minority churches (Hall 2000). In any case, Romania was different from the other Eastern European countries which experienced mass protests in 1989 in that its transition was violent. This suggests that cosmopolitan dispositions may be of different quality. These findings provide circumstantial evidence supporting my third hypothesis, which suggests that mobilizations with more depth and breadth would have more impact than mobilizations with less depth and breadth. The discussion of the mechanisms of development of a cosmopolitan disposition within the Esperanto movement in the following section further strengthens these findings.

The following table summarizes the findings so far:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Esperanto impact</th>
<th>High cosmopolitanism</th>
<th>Low cosmopolitanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Peaceful transition and democratization</em></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bulgaria 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Czechoslovakia 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungary 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poland 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Esperanto impact</td>
<td><em>Violent transition and slow democratization</em></td>
<td><em>No transition</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?Albania 1990s</td>
<td>China 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?Romania 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 7:
QUALITATIVE FINDINGS: PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT OF A COSMOPOLITAN DISPOSITION

Channels for Diffusion

I found support for the fourth hypothesis suggesting that Esperanto organizations served as channels for alternatives ways of thinking to diffuse throughout Eastern Europe. Three factors appear to have been particularly important: the respect for and desire to get knowledge about the world held by Eastern Europeans; the formation of personal communication networks facilitated by the various Esperanto organizations and services; and the unintended consequences of facing situations that exemplified violations of human rights and dignity.

a. Knowledge transmission

Knowledge and learning was a major focus for most interviewees and for the activities of all groups. Most interviewees said that they were self-recruits driven by curiosity to learn an “international” language and learn about the world and about other people. Interviewees were excited to learn about other cultures and many mentioned the letters and postcards they had received from their international pen pals. Magazines sent from Esperantists abroad offered windows into how others lived not only for Esperantists
but also for their social circles. Topics of interest varied from cinema and art to cars and machinery.

Books were another often mentioned objects of interest. Many of the interviewees mentioned their involvement in translation and/or publishing projects, mostly classical works of literature, general and specialized dictionaries, and linguistic texts but occasionally even rarities such as works on the environment.

Esperantists were also interested in advancing knowledge about linguistics and international communication (e.g. Esperantists developed a field called interlinguistics and organized major scientific conferences around it, for example by “the young Esperanto leaders” in Poland). Advancing knowledge more broadly through Esperanto was another interest for Esperantists (e.g. the creation of the San Marino Academy where university-level education and examinations occur in Esperanto). Curiosity for learning about the world was thus a major vehicle for trans-societal diffusion.

b. Personal communication

As discussed in the next section, one of the major factors that motivated people to remain involved with the Esperanto movement were the contacts and communication with Esperantists from around the world. Eastern European Esperantists could meet foreign Esperantists through the pen pal services, the language courses, the host service, and at Esperanto gatherings. Eastern European Esperantists could also make contacts with other Esperantists along professional lines via the many professional Esperanto organizations discussed above and talk about their professional fields. Similar contacts existed along other interest organizations. A member of the Bulgarian Association of the
Blind Esperantists for example told me that at Esperanto meetings she could learn and share information about the situation of the blind across different countries. Esperanto organizations and meetings thus enjoyed the legitimacy and respect of specialized and professionalized arenas for communication.

c. Changing hearts and minds via stories of human interest

International Esperanto gatherings put people in situations where they encountered human experiences that challenged their ways of thinking. For example, a Polish Esperantist told me the story of a Soviet girl who after attending a language summer camp was mortified about forgetting to get an attendance stamp: she feared for her life. A Czech Esperantist told me how he learned what borders meant and how one cannot cross them without repercussions. He was attending another summer language camp, located by a river-border. There was a boy across the river with whom the kids in the camp wanted to play. After an unsuccessful attempt to cross the river followed by harsh bodily punishment, they kept looking at each other from a distance, across the river, without ever being able to talk to each other. A Bulgarian Esperantist remembered facing questions asked by foreign Esperantists about the renaming of the Bulgarian Muslims initiated by the communist government. He also remembered an old man crying in the train for being forced to take a Bulgarian name and not understanding why he could not keep using the name Ali by which he had been known his entire life to his children and grandchildren. Such stories of human interest made the notions of right and of rights very concrete and urged people to make judgments unfavorable to the
communist regimes. Stories got shared through family and friends’ networks, and gradually could affect the hearts and minds of the larger community.

**Valued Personal Networks**

I found support for hypothesis 5, which suggests that the Esperanto movement contributed to the formation of broad networks of strong and cherished personal friendships centered on the cultural practices of the Esperanto movement. All interviewees claimed that they participated in the movement because it allowed them to form close and meaningful friendships. Unlike most Eastern Europeans who found traveling and transnational exchange difficult if not impossible, Esperantists could travel and make friends with people from abroad. Other friendships mentioned included friendships with people from other parts of the respondents’ country, and/or from the same community. The good times and the fellowship at Esperanto gatherings were among the most vivid memories people kept about their involvement in the Esperanto movement.

Several non-hypothesized findings related to cosmopolitanism deserve attention:

**Rejection of institutionalized politics**

Not only interviewees claimed that the Esperanto movement as a whole was apolitical but also the vast majority of them said that as individuals they were not engaged in conventional politics either. They were not directly involved in politics nor did they like politics. The claim that the movement is apolitical is not surprising because this stand allowed it to survive the Cold War and include people of all kinds of political
orientations, within Eastern Europe and in the rest of the world. It is somewhat surprising that individual Esperantists claimed to be apolitical, given our understanding of what the response to political oppression ‘should’ be (and oppression there was for Esperantists, albeit of different magnitude). There are at least three explanations for this “anomaly.” In the communist-era Eastern European context being political meant being involved with the communist party, so being apolitical was (and still is), in fact, an act of opposition and protest. The example of the young Esperanto leaders in early 1980s’ Poland who opposed the “old guard” of the movement reportedly connected to the communist party and focused on linguistics research and academic conferences points to this explanation. An alternative explanation relates to a political sensitivity and disillusionment resulting from the hurtful political debates and ugly name-calling that occurred in Eastern Europe after the transitions. One Bulgarian interviewee recalled the painful quarrels with former friends who stopped being her friend because she was “a dirty old communist grandma” while they had turned into “blue [democrat] grandpas.” Finally, for those opposed to the regime, being apolitical may have been a strategy of not appearing threatening to communist elites.

*Esperanto meetings as potential forums for political discussions*

Given the rejection of politics, at first it was surprising for me to observe political discussions at the Esperanto group meetings I attended. A few respondents told me that the meetings were “pretty much what they ha[d] been like for the last 30 years.” This gives me enough confidence to argue that local Esperanto club meetings served as forums for conversations and debates during the political transitions of the late 1980s and early
1990s. Since the Esperanto clubs were and are open to all, communists, socialists, and others, these discussions must have been quite heated, which would be evidence for the second explanation for individual rejection of politics presented above. These forums, however, appear to also have contributed to practicing tolerance, an important democratic value.

Promoting universal values

The Esperanto movement enacted the world cultural values of progress (of the individual through knowledge) and justice (interpersonal and international particularly as it relates to communication). However, these enactments differed from the general Western models and were adapted to the local conditions (see Robertson 1995 and Boli 2005 on glocalization), incorporating elements of the local political culture (see Hannerz 1992 and Boli 2005 on creolization). For Esperantists, the ideals of the movement were not something abstract but a real experience through regular practices and/or unique experiences that marked people’s understandings of the world.

As argued above, Esperantists valued personal friendships and interpersonal communication with people from around the world. Through these interactions, Esperantists appear to valorize each human being regardless of nationality, race, gender, or religious tradition. They show generosity through the practice of gift giving and other exchanges (books, visits).

World Congresses, conference, and other Esperanto gatherings represent what Esperantists call “Esperantujo” or the Esperanto state, spaces and times when Esperantists live up their ideal of international understanding and friendship based on a
single neutral language. All the individuals I interviewed shared their excitement and fondness of such gatherings, remembering in particular the good times of socializing.

Esperantists tend to trust other Esperantists much more than non-Esperantists. Most interviewees shared stories of hosting or helping or being hosted or being helped by strangers who were Esperantists. Many interviewees argued that being an Esperantist shows a quality of the person that immediately opens hearts and homes.

Realist cosmopolitanism

Despite their generally positive attitude toward others, Eastern European Esperantists appear to be realists as well. They are aware of the position of their respective country in the hierarchy of states in the world. Hence, the importance of a “neutral” language that allows just and equal communication. The visits and exchanges through the Esperanto movement allowed people to naturally engage in cross-country comparisons of life experiences and living conditions and figure out where their country stood. The unfavorable comparisons were sources of grievances.

An interesting manifestation of this awareness of position in the world hierarchy were what one interviewee called the “shopping trips” via Esperanto. During their travels abroad, Esperantists had a chance to compare and buy various products. An interviewee from Poland, for example, told me that Bulgarian Esperantists bought Polish gramophones because they found them to be better than the Bulgarian ones. He, on the other hand, during a visit in Western Europe, left his old guitar there and bought a new one, thus revealing a hierarchy of perceived product quality that mirrored the hierarchy in the system of states. The issue of the consumer “shopping trips” via the Esperanto tourist
agency in Poland was such a major issue that it caused a schism in the Polish movement. One side argued that everybody, not just Esperantists, should have a chance to travel abroad, particularly if the tourist agency was to make profit. The other side had doubts that such “shopping trips” were really promoting the cause of Esperanto.

_Cultural patriotism, national pride, and individual dignity_

As a response to their awareness of the position of their countries in the world system hierarchy, I would argue, Eastern European Esperantists were not only cosmopolitans but also patriots. One of the primary tasks of the national Esperanto associations, according to interviewees, was to translate classical works of literature of their respective national languages into Esperanto so that others could read and appreciate them. Many interviewees proudly informed me that they were either directly involved in such translation projects or supportive of it, including financially. Interviewees also showed pride in other national cultural activities, such as the Esperanto theater troupes in Bulgaria and Poland, and Esperanto university programs in Poland and Romania, among other achievements. A sense of individual dignity was also evident in several people’s refusal to talk to me in a Western language and in the insistence that I learn Esperanto, a neutral language, that would put us on an equal footing.

_State-civil society accommodation and synergy_

In addition to the complex relationship between the Esperanto movement and opposition discussed above, I found another non-hypothesized characteristic of the Esperanto movement that relates to the question of the relationship between the
communist leadership and cosmopolitan culture. I identify a relationship between the communist state and civil society, represented by the Esperanto movement, that ranges between accommodation and synergy. First, at the organizational level, the Eastern European Esperanto associations played some role in Cold War politics on the side of the communist regimes. The national Esperanto associations could not oppose the official positions of their governments in order to be able to exist. Esperanto leaders in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Poland\textsuperscript{18} told me that the organizations had to follow the main party line, so they did. Several Esperanto leaders in Bulgaria and Poland, whom I did not have a chance to interview\textsuperscript{19}, were said to be particularly close to the communist leadership. Also, Eastern European Esperanto publications distributed abroad, such as the slick magazine \textit{Contemporary Bulgaria}, often promoted the achievements of socialism. This translated into the conditional trust that the communist regimes had for Esperantists perceived to be in line with communist party politics, which allowed members of the movement to travel more freely abroad, including to Western countries.

Second, at the individual level, the movement was an outlet for involvement from both communists and non-communists. Among both groups, many interviewees mentioned reasons for participation that resonated with the communist ideas. The one person who openly identified as a communist from the interviewees emphatically pointed out that her communist ideals were completely compatible and complementary to the ideals of the Esperanto movement. When asked about the value of Esperanto or why they have engaged in the Esperanto movement, most interviewees in all four countries argued that Esperanto is a “neutral” language that places all people on an equal footing.

\textsuperscript{18} The Romanian association was officially forbidden although unofficial Esperanto gatherings did occur and transnational Esperanto organizations indicated that they had Romanian membership.

\textsuperscript{19} Some were dead while others were unavailable.
Interviewees often contrasted Esperanto to English, which several interviewees described as an “imperialist” language. On several occasions, in different countries, I was told, for example, that a foreigner could never learn English as well as a native speaker and that while a native speaker must only think about the subject matter of a conversation, a foreign English speaker must think both about the subject matter and about how to express him- or herself, which puts him or her at a disadvantage. No such references were made with regard to Russian, even when I specifically asked about this language. Several potential respondents even refused to talk to me because I had offered to conduct the interviews in English, French, or Spanish. I was told to first learn Esperanto and then return to ask questions. In fact, when I was finally able to speak some Esperanto and conduct interviews in this language (which occurred in Poland, the last country I visited), the response rate was much higher.20

In addition to being trusted to travel and “represent” the communist bloc, the Esperanto movement received significant material contributions from the state, which, however, varied across cases. The support was strongest in Bulgaria and weakest in Romania. Esperanto organizations had to register with their respective ministers of culture who determined the budgets of these groups and dispersed the necessary funds. In a way, the Esperanto organizational growth can be understood as an extreme case of the political process model. The most ideal case was Bulgaria where the Esperanto movement enjoyed the benefits of having its own educational and recreational facilities, of having Esperanto teacher salaries paid by the ministry of education, and of having its own publishing house, among other things. Bulgarian Esperantists of all political

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20 This last fact, however, can be interpreted simply as a matter of feasibility: people may just not have been able to speak any of the languages I had listed.
persuasions speak of the 1980s as the heyday of the movement. After the fall of communist, state support stopped: the movement had hard time recovering and never reached its previous standing. A reminder of the old days’ synergy between the state and the movement is the present day collaboration between the Esperanto association and the city of Poznan in Poland in producing an art fair.

A movement cannot be taken outside of its political context. In order to be able to mobilize and grow under a restrictive regime, the Eastern European Esperanto movement used the strategy of proclaiming political neutrality. Eastern European Esperanto organizations had to strike a difficult balance between somewhat keeping up with their proclaimed political neutrality and maintaining a relationship of mutual accommodation and even synergy with the communist regime. The proclaimed neutrality, albeit limited, offered opportunities for participation from individuals with various attitudes toward politics. Some were communists; others proclaimed to be apolitical, although apolitical did not mean apathetic but rather non-involved with communist politics. Thus, the Esperanto movement appears to have provided a space for the development of a culture of covert if not overt dissent and of tolerance for political differences.

These findings provide some evidence for the popularity of cosmopolitanism even among communists, including the communist leadership.
CHAPTER 8:
CODA

Both quantitative and qualitative evidence points to the decline of the Esperanto movement in Eastern Europe and in the West following the fall of communism. The number of organizations decreased, which suggests that few if any new organizations were formed and many old ones ceased to exist (Figures 1.1-1.5 and 6.2). My interviewees often mentioned the difficulties Esperanto organizations have maintaining their membership levels. These groups no longer have the support of the state and have to find other ways to finance themselves. Some members, particularly the retired, cannot afford membership fees and drop out. Due to the existence of other opportunities to travel, to get to know the world, and to be involved, not many new recruits join the movement. The Internet, however, is creating new opportunities for people to learn the language through free online courses and engage in virtual communication. The movement is also advocating for the use of Esperanto as a language of the European Union to avoid the exorbitant price of translation from and into the languages of all members of the EU. As of 2003, the Esperanto movement is the third most prominent movement in terms of number of organizations in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Poland (Figures 1.1-1.3). In China (and in Cuba), it remains the most prominent one (Figure 1.6). It is much less important for Sweden and the US (Figures 1.7 and 1.8).
Protest waves do not appear in a vacuum but arise from particular socio-political contexts in particular historical trajectories. The Eastern European protest wave of 1989 followed what I call “cultural mobilization” involving the development of a mass cosmopolitan disposition and a cosmopolitan political culture. Transnational social movements and the Esperanto movement, in particular, were major actors in the development of this widespread cosmopolitan disposition among Eastern Europeans. I argue that this process in fact represents the first/preliminary stage of the protest mobilization and democratization processes occurring in Eastern Europe in 1989 and after. Eastern European cosmopolitans comprised a large pool of supporters for change among whom protest movements could draw potential participants.

I argue that the Esperanto movement, in particular, cultivated, and helped sustain and promote cosmopolitan values and that, as an unintended consequence, it indirectly facilitated the Eastern European protest wave and democratic transitions of 1989. (I am NOT arguing that leaders and most participants in the 1989 protests were Esperantists.) I suggest, therefore, that mass cultural mobilization may be a prerequisite for the emergence of a mass protest wave and potential political change. The first stage of a political mobilization process involves cultural mobilization work to create a pool of supportive potential movement recruits. As the Eastern European example indicates, this
cultural mobilization work may be done by a movement different from the movement that mobilizes for protest.

Culture matters for politics. Culture is produced within the framework of social institutions. This research points out the complex and positive role civil society organizations play even in non-democratic societies, even when these organizations are not political in nature. In fact, I need to reiterate Opp and Gern’s (1993) conclusion that, in repressive settings, it is this kind of organizations that channel citizens’ concerns. Cultural work matters for social movements through the unintended consequences it may have.


