

## **Power, Privilege and Ideology in Communism's Negotiated Collapse**

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"Who gets what and why?" The American sociologist Gerhard Lenski framed this most succinct question in the study of social stratification.<sup>1</sup> He argued that, over the course of history, there have been two basic answers. The conservative thesis, defending the status quo, explains "the existing distribution of rewards as just, equitable, and frequently also inevitable." The radical antithesis is critical, "denouncing the distributive system as basically unjust and unnecessary".<sup>2</sup> Lenski himself offers a synthesis of these two viewpoints in the explanation of inequality in human societies over the course of their existence.

The Polish Round Table negotiations of 1989 suggest a different synthesis. While only a few months in a single country, these talks nevertheless altered the course of human history by providing a model for the radical, but peaceful, negotiation of fundamental differences in the collapse of communism. The making of communism's negotiated collapse depended on communists and liberals coming together to articulate, along with leaders of the Catholic Church, a common need to compromise and develop a more open and pluralist, if more unequal, Poland. It also depended, however, on the loss of power across the board.

In this essay, I shall draw on various reflections on the Polish Round Table talks of 1989, most especially a conference my colleagues and I organized at the University of Michigan on April 7-10, 1999 for some of the principal participants in these talks that ended communism.<sup>3</sup> I shall begin, however, with additional reflections on the

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<sup>1</sup> Gerhard Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984 [1966]), 2. Lenski cautioned that this should be thought of less as a question of structure, and more a question of the distributive process.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years After" took place at the University of Michigan, April 7-10, 1999. Conversations with participants in that conference, and my fellow conference organizers – Brian Porter, Marysia Ostafin, Piotr Michałowski, Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka and Zbigniew Bujak – have been invaluable to this paper. I

relationship between ideology and inequality, for we cannot understand power, privilege and the Round Table without understanding how ideology functions in shaping inequality.

### **Ideology and Inequality**

The conservative position on inequality represented in Lenski's writing is hardly apparent in American sociology today, but at the time, American sociology had an important functionalist perspective. The functionalists portrayed social inequality as "an unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons."<sup>4</sup> Talcott Parsons put values to the center of his functionalist approach and argued that those most rewarded in a society held qualities that were a reflection of that society's values.<sup>5</sup> Marxist social theory was only beginning to assert itself in mid-1960's American sociology, but C. Wright Mills and others around him articulated a similarly radical perspective. This "conflict" school argued that inequality was the result of the "struggle for valued goods and services in short supply."<sup>6</sup>

These differences between functionalist and conflict paradigms rested, in turn, on other more fundamental assumptions about human societies. Lenski identified eight such differences.<sup>7</sup>

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appreciate very much the contributions made to enabling that conference from the University of Michigan, LOT Airlines, American Airlines, McKinley Associates/Ron and Eileen Weiser, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C., Video Studio Gdańsk, the Earhart Foundation, the Kosciuszko Foundation, Robert Donia and Monica and Victor Markowicz. Also, funding from the United States Institute for Peace and from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research has enabled me and my colleagues Brian Porter and Andrzej Paczkowski to conduct additional interviews beyond the conference itself. The transcript, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999), is available at <[www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html](http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html)>. Page numbers in footnotes referring to the Round Table transcript correspond to the original printed version of the transcript, which was provided to the contributors to this guide for reference. These page numbers may not correspond to the transcript currently available on the web or to subsequent printed versions.

<sup>4</sup> Lenski draws upon Kingsley Davis, *Human Society* (New York: MacMillan, 1949), 367.

<sup>5</sup> Talcott Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," in Reinhard Bendix and S.M. Lipset, eds., *Class, Status and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification* (New York: Free Press, 1953), 92-128.

<sup>6</sup> Lenski, 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

- 1) Conservatives distrust human nature and believe that institutions should constrain that disposition, while radicals distrust those institutions and are optimistic about human nature;
- 2) Conservatives think that societies have needs, while radicals think about society as a setting in which struggles take place;
- 3) Conservatives find a small role for coercion in explaining inequality, while radicals emphasize it;
- 4) Conservatives minimize the role of inequality in generating conflict, and radicals emphasize it;
- 5) Conservatives see legitimate means as the source of privilege, while radicals emphasize the illegitimate;
- 6) Conservatives see inequality as inevitable, while radicals see it as something that might be changed.
- 7) Conservatives view the state and the law as a means to the common good, while radicals see them as instruments of oppression.
- 8) Conservatives think of class as a heuristic device to describe, while radicals see class as real social groups.

Lenski developed a synthesis of these views. Based on a wide-ranging review of the history of inequality in human societies, he argued that there were elements of truth to both perspectives. He found the conservative perspective most convincing in its assessment of human nature, but the more radical perspective was more reasonable in its approach to the nature of society, especially at more advanced technological levels. As technological developments create greater societal surpluses, the distribution of power within the society is more likely to shape the distribution of privilege in that society. Those who rule get the most, and those who successfully struggle within that system get more than those who don't. By contrast, in less technologically advanced societies, where people are more interdependent, more conservative functional arguments make sense. The needs of society might appear more prominent in the allocation of goods and services where people are more beholden to one another, and coercion is less effective.

Like Lenski, Polish sociologist Stanisław Ossowski explained variations in the conception of inequality, distinguishing dichotomous from gradational and both from functional approaches. He did not, however, offer a synthetic theory of social inequality in human societies. Instead, he emphasized the significance of ideology in inequality's interpretation. He wrote, "The choice of a scheme of class structure in a particular instance is symptomatic either of the problems which interest those who apply the scheme or of their views on the reality which they are describing."<sup>8</sup> For instance,

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

Ossowski noted that dichotomous visions, simply distinguishing rulers from ruled, are rarely adequate in describing the complexity of inequality, especially in modern industrial societies. However, they become quite important when they help to produce useful visions in the mobilization of social conflicts.<sup>9</sup>

Lenski also notes the importance of ideology, and even the personalities of leaders, for understanding the distribution of privilege in human societies, especially those with more sophisticated technologies.<sup>10</sup> While both Lenski and Ossowski note the importance of ideology in the pattern of inequality, Ossowski's view is grounded in a sociology of knowledge that elevates not only the interpretations of political leaders, but also the interpretations of class analysts, whether they are academic or political in their mission. Ultimately, he argues, the interpretation of class structure becomes social facts, which in turn influence societies and the practical policies that shape them.<sup>11</sup> If one argues that inequality is based on gradational differences, for instance, one helps to atomize groups organized around inequality; if, on the other hand, one paints a dichotomous portrait with fundamental differences between two classes in a society, then one helps to create conditions for their conflict.

The Polish Round Table of 1989 offers a terrific opportunity to extend the insights of both of these theorists of status and power. To be sure, the meaning of the Round Table, and its relationship to inequality in Polish society, is not empirically self-evident. Ossowski's argument about the importance of perspective and interpretation certainly needs to be applied here. At the same time, Lenski's synthetic ambition is appealing, but its application to the Round Table requires a certain twist. While Lenski drew on the entire history of human societies, this essay focuses on a single moment in history, within a single country. However, this "critical moment"<sup>12</sup> in human history shows how the association with power and privilege might be refashioned to develop a new possibility in human history. Not only should this "negotiated revolution"<sup>13</sup> alter

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<sup>9</sup> Stanisław Ossowski, *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 33-34.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 437-38.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 172, 174.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Giddens describes a "critical moment" in *The Constitution of Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

<sup>13</sup> For my approach to this revolution, see Michael D. Kennedy, "Contingencies and the Alternatives of 1989: Toward a Theory and Practice of Negotiating Revolution," *East European Politics and Society* 13:1(1999): 301-10. I am not the only one to suggest such an approach, of course. Among the most useful examples of this kind of analysis are Rudolf Tokes, *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); David Stark and László Bruszt, "Remaking the Political Field: Strategic Interactions and Contingent Choices," in *Postsocialist Pathways* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 15-48; Andrzej Paczkowski, "Polska 1986-1989: od kooptacji do negocjacji: Kilka uwag o wchodzeniu w proces zmiany systemowej," Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa, 1997.

the ways in which we think about radical social change,<sup>14</sup> and the meanings of conservatism and radicalism. It also might lead us to think differently about the ways in which the association between power and privilege ought to be viewed in the making of radical, but peaceful, change.

### The Making of the Polish Round Table

Nobody who knows Poland can begin the story of the Round Table in 1988 or 1989. For the opposition, the story must go back at least to August 31, 1980, when the Solidarity movement was born. For nearly fifteen months, an independent trade union and social movement of over nine million men and women transformed Poland and promised to alter communism itself. On December 13, 1981, martial law was declared and most of Solidarity's leadership was interned. That period and its culmination in martial law helped to make a "dichotomous" class structure in Polish society: a view of society of "us" and "them."<sup>15</sup>

With that dichotomous view embedded in political contest, the relationship between the authorities and society could not be settled. International conditions helped maintain that instability. Awarding Lech Wałęsa the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983 put an international stamp of approval on Solidarity, and awarded Wałęsa and the movement for which he stood a measure of prestige and esteem that opposed the system of values around which communist Poland was organized. The American government itself used its resources in both international politics and trade to isolate Poland and pressure the authorities to negotiate with the union. This American influence within the Polish class system was apparent even in everyday life, when American Ambassador John Davis and his wife Helen Davis entertained leaders of the opposition at their private residence.

On the other side, the Soviet Union's leaders would speak of a Polish virus and the need to stop it at all costs. The constant threat of Soviet intervention bolstered, in an odd way, the status of Polish leaders. These leaders could point to how bad it was in other countries, and argue to their citizens that this Polish communist leadership offers

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Andrew Arato, "Revolution, Restoration and Legitimation: Ideological Problems of the Transition from State Socialism", in Michael D. Kennedy, ed., *Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 180-246.

<sup>15</sup> Teresa Torańska's books, *Them* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987; first published in Polish as *Oni*), based on interviews with former communist leaders, and *My* (English translation: "Us") (Warsaw: Most, 1994), with Solidarity's leaders, exemplifies this. For a review of class approaches to this original Solidarity period, see Chapter 5 of Michael D. Kennedy, *Professionals, Power and Solidarity in Poland: A Critical Sociology of Soviet-type Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

the best of all possible worlds, in a world divided.<sup>16</sup> Although it is hotly contested, the man who imposed martial law in Poland, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, argues that he had to impose martial law to prevent Soviet invasion. Using the imagery of Solidarity leader Jacek Kuroń, General Jaruzelski said that Solidarity in 1981 was like a train without a conductor accelerating ever faster. The General said he imposed martial law not to destroy the union but rather to “freeze it,” so that negotiations might be held later, when the international conditions were right.<sup>17</sup>

It is of course difficult to imagine that Generals Jaruzelski and Kiszczak would imagine in 1981 that five or six years later the Soviet Union could support the generals in their search to negotiate with Solidarity. Polish society was itself skeptical of such overtures, seeing in referenda and other offers to dialogue efforts to co-opt and divide the opposition.<sup>18</sup> As late as February 1988, one of Solidarity’s principal public intellectuals, Adam Michnik, said this in response to a question about Jaruzelski’s “peace initiative”:

Talk of Jaruzelski’s peace initiative is a joke – as misplaced as if it had come from General Pinochet or the South African president. General Jaruzelski could make a genuine peace by seeking a peaceful rapprochement with his own nation. But so far he hasn’t done so.... The important question for me is whether or not General Jaruzelski intends to abolish our apartheid system by fostering equality among our citizens. This would require the destruction of the power of the *nomenklatura*, which is comparable to the white population in South Africa. So far, Jaruzelski shows no signs of wanting to abolish our form of apartheid. Everything he does preserves the power of the ruling group called *nomenklatura*.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, negotiations were officially begun on February 6, 1989 and lasted for two months. Over 400 people participated in the various talks. There were three main tables – on political reform, economic reform and on organizational pluralism – which concerned primarily the legalization of Solidarity. There also were eleven sub-tables devoted to questions of the media, health care, mining, youth and other issues.

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<sup>16</sup> See, for instance Mieczysław Rakowski’s comments, *Communism’s Negotiated Collapse*, 21-22, and Janusz Reykowski, *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Wojciech Jaruzelski, October 1998. This interview and several others cited in this paper were conducted with support from a contract from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER), under the authority of a Title VIII grant from the US Department of State, for the project, “Negotiating Revolution in Poland: Conversion and Opportunity in 1989.” Neither NCEEER nor the US Government is responsible for the views expressed here. See also the comments of Stanisław Ciosek in *Communism’s Negotiated Collapse*, 41.

<sup>18</sup> See Paczkowski.

<sup>19</sup> Adam Michnik, “Towards a Civil Society: Hopes for Polish Democracy,” in *Letters from Freedom: Post-Cold War Realities and Perspectives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 98-99.

Negotiations were surprisingly easy on the question of Solidarity's legalization; but they were especially difficult in the political realm, for both sides recognized that they were negotiating the future political architecture of Poland. In addition to public meetings, private meetings among the top negotiators were held at Magdalenka, a resort outside of Warsaw. In these entirely unrecorded meetings, the most profound obstacles were overcome. Compromises were finally reached, but the outcomes of those negotiations were not as most expected.

The opposition was frankly surprised by how much was accomplished in the negotiations. Beyond Solidarity's legalization, completely competitive elections were arranged to be held on June 4, 1989 for a new Senate; thirty-five percent of the seats in the lower house of Parliament, the Sejm, would also be contested. The rest were allocated to the governing alliance. The Parliament was assigned responsibility to elect the President. With communists and their allies assured most of the seats, the negotiators assumed that Parliament would elect General Jaruzelski as President with relatively unspecified powers.

The election results surprised everyone. The authorities anticipated that Solidarity would at the most win forty percent of the seats in the Senate, and not 99 out of 100 as they ultimately did. They did not expect that so few communists and their allies would get the minimum number of votes necessary to enter parliament in the first round of elections. They were shocked at how little support they won.<sup>20</sup> With the votes cast, and tanks rolling into Tiananmen Square in China, Poles waited to see whether the election results would be honored. Even some of those who negotiated for the communists were worried that the election results could be annulled.<sup>21</sup> Instead, the electoral results were honored and the communists struggled to form a government.

With this terrific vote of opposition from society, even those formerly allied with the communists began to rethink their allegiances. The movement of Peasant Party and Democratic Party legislators away from the Communists toward Solidarity, in fact, made the election of General Jaruzelski as President seem especially uncertain. Had several Solidarity delegates not absented themselves from voting, General Jaruzelski would not have been elected president. Had he not been elected, some fear that the chances for peaceful change could have been lost.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, President Jaruzelski asked General Kiszczak to form the first government, but Kiszczak could not; Solidarity delegates explained to him that they

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<sup>20</sup> In fact, part of their problem was that the communists chose a particular kind of electoral system – majority runoff rather than a single transferable vote system – that magnified the communist defeat. See Marek Kamiński, "Jak Komuniści Mogli Zachować Władze po Okrągłym Stole: Rzecz o (nie)Kontrolowanej Odwilży, Sondażach Opinii Publicznej i Ordynacji Wyborczej," *Studia Socjologiczne* 145:2(1997): 5-34.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Janusz Reykowski, April 10, 1999. See also *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 112.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Andrzej Gdula, October 10, 1998.

could not take charge of the economic portfolios in his government, and he could not form a government without them. The society voted for change, and to form a government with the old ruling alliance would be impossible. Turning to those magic words provided by Adam Michnik on July 3, 1989 in his newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*, General Jaruzelski (“your president”) finally asked Tadeusz Mazowiecki (“our prime minister”) to form the government on August 24.<sup>23</sup> That dichotomous view of status and power nevertheless yielded a government based on a grand coalition of all leading political forces.

The Round Table laid the foundation for this peaceful translation of dichotomy into a provisional national and democratic unity. The Round Table also provided a model for the transformation of other communist-led countries. Its lessons do not end there, of course. My colleagues and I organized a major conference assembling those from around the Polish Round Table at the University of Michigan in 1999 to reflect on the meaning of 1989.<sup>24</sup> One question that inspired our interest was how a society, whose political contest was grounded in a dichotomous view of society, between “us” and “them,” could have peacefully negotiated an end to the system. After all, most sociologists who study radical social change, especially with lenses that emphasize dichotomous portraits of social inequality, tend to view the polarization of society, and the collapse of the state, as critical for making radical change. The negotiated collapse of communism was different. But that is also a matter of perspective, as Ossowski would remind us.

### Radical Conservatives and Conservative Leftists

One of the most important differences in opinion around the “negotiated revolution” lies in the assessment of system breakdown. One of the conference speakers, Wiesław Chrzanowski, an early Solidarity advisor, one of the founders of the Christian National Union and a former Marshall of the Sejm, argued that the Round Table was a consequence of the system’s collapse, not a cause of the system’s decomposition. After all, he notes, “several months after the Round Table, together with the fall of the Berlin Wall, other communist regimes in Central Europe, except for Romania, collapsed peacefully.”<sup>25</sup> This Round Table was not, in his opinion, a means to end communism, but rather a way for some groups to improve their position in communism’s collapse.

The movement in opposition to communism, he argued, was the more important thing causing that system’s fall, alongside a weakening of support from the Soviet

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<sup>23</sup> “Your President, Our Prime Minister” is reprinted on pp. 129-31 of *Letters from Freedom*.

<sup>24</sup> The website with the transcript from that conference is <[www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html](http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html)>.

<sup>25</sup> *Communism’s Negotiated Collapse*, 28.

Union. The communist authorities developed this idea of the Round Table to co-opt that opposition and smooth their anticipated fall from power. The authorities thus tried to shape their partners in negotiation, so that they could get the best deal. The opposition itself saw this as an opportunity, too. To be sure, these negotiations would lead to some of the goals they held: "broadening the margin of freedom, restoration of legal Solidarity and...preventing some sort of frontal collision."<sup>26</sup> Chrzanowski also saw, however, that this was an opportunity for the "leftist opposition," which did not include Chrzanowski, to "eliminate or limit the influence of the right wing of the opposition," by which he meant nationalist or Christian Democratic elements.<sup>27</sup> Alongside this political advantage comes some privilege, some "advantages,"<sup>28</sup> what Chrzanowski later in the conference called "frosting"<sup>29</sup>:

...as a result of the discussed agreement (the Round Table), the pre-June government camp (the communists), instead of capitulation and punishment for the past, found its place smoothly within the new order of parliamentary democracy and retained its material and organizational assets. The accepted formula of state law often serves as a cover from punishing lawlessness. Among gains of the other partner was the ability to make personnel decisions regarding the negotiated one-third of the 1989 Sejm seats...As for taking over important mass media, it's enough to mention *Gazeta Wyborcza*, presently Mr. Michnik's paper, the publication of which was a concession from the government to Solidarity arranged at the Round Table.<sup>30</sup>

Although Chrzanowski is a conservative lawyer and political leader, his account draws quite clearly on a "radical" portrait of society in its linkage of power and privilege. He very clearly identifies a dichotomous view of society, which of course was hardly limited to the right-wing opposition. But his assessment of the Round Table is more specific to the right wing and akin to radical pictures of inequality in their direct linkage between power and privilege. Radicals tend to believe those in power whom they oppose act in a fashion that produces selfish benefits. Chrzanowski quite clearly attributes this motive to the communists' Round Table participation, but he also implies that his former, lefter, colleagues in Solidarity had some of the same ambition.<sup>31</sup>

Adam Michnik, however, was quite disturbed by Chrzanowski's charge. Michnik countered that Chrzanowski was creating a "black legend" associated with the Round Table, by arguing that this agreement was made for the profit of those who

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>31</sup> Although he acknowledges that these subsequent advantages were not "foreseen" at the time. See *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 123.

negotiated, rather than for the good of Poland. It is true that Michnik's newspaper is one of the most successful papers in Poland, and in Eastern Europe broadly, but Michnik's witty reply to Chrzanowski suggests one reason for its success: "You worry that I have 'frosting' from *Gazeta* and I'm happy that Poland has a good newspaper. And I'm happy that no other post-communist country has a good paper like that. And I wish you and your political friends could make another such daily and we will have two best newspapers."<sup>32</sup>

Wittiness aside, this exchange cuts to the heart of one of the most politically delegitimizing issues with the Round Table. Was this a "secret deal" cut between communists and certain parts of the Solidarity opposition to produce advantage for all of the negotiators? Even the Bishop who was most closely associated with the negotiations of the Round Table, Alojzy Orszulik, could express disappointment with the Round Table's allocation of privilege ten years after. After all, he said, the transformations of the last ten years have hurt the workers and the peasants the most. They are the victims, they are the poor, of this transformation. And in contrast,

Some people from the (communist regime), well even a lot of them, have remained well off, in a good situation, not just because they kept their apartments, but also because of their salaries and opportunities to get employed in some other lucrative work. I remember when Mr. Sekuła (a former leading communist) was leaving, immediately the Japanese offered him the position of an expert, I think one hundred fifty thousand zlotys a month. Today, I'm looking at myself in retrospect, and as a seventy-seven year old, having been formally employed at the Secretariat of the Episcopate for thirty-three years, I have a pension of, I think, about four hundred and thirty zlotys before taxes, and after taxes three hundred and ninety-six zlotys. So, that's some act of injustice too.<sup>33</sup>

Those who adopt a "radical" perspective on the Round Table negotiations, and examine the link between the interests of the powerful and the process of change, and the link between power and privilege, are likely therefore to find something less than heroic about the Round Table. But it is important to try to distinguish between the results of the Round Table, and the making of that negotiated revolution.

Another conference participant, Lech Kaczyński, spoke about the Round Table in similar terms as Bishop Orszulik. Both the Bishop and the politician would agree that the Round Table was a very positive means to develop, peacefully, an independent and democratic Poland. It legalized Solidarity and it opened the way to democratic elections. On that foundation, Solidarity succeeded and won the elections. They even took advantage of that victory and managed to form a government, led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki. But after communism collapsed in the rest of the region, Kaczyński

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<sup>32</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 126.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

believes that the Solidarity government should have moved quickly to deepen changes, to privatize industry more rapidly, to introduce civil liberties and democratic procedures more quickly, to build a new state, and to restructure society more fundamentally. Kaczyński argues that after the collapse of communism throughout the region there should have been a more aggressive move to establish justice, to punish those who committed gross crimes under communist rule and certainly to end their privileges.<sup>34</sup>

This perspective might be identified with Chrzanowski's radicalism, but Kaczyński clearly sees this Round Table compromise as "necessary." With communism's collapse throughout the region, however, that compromise should be lifted and those who were privileged in the old system should not receive privilege in the new. In this sense, Kaczyński is rather more like Lenski than Chrzanowski, for he argues that we must view the conditions in which power and privilege are distributed. Sometimes inequality might be for the good of the society, but in other times, it is the result of injustice. Compromise with communists was good when it was unclear whether communism could return; once it was dead and gone, those deals should be rendered invalid.

The man against whom most of these conservative and moderate figures argue is Adam Michnik, whom Ira Katznelson has called "Eastern Europe's emblematic democratic intellectual."<sup>35</sup> While he is often pointed out as a man of the left, he resembles much more a conservative, in Lenski's sense of the term. He paints the Round Table as a political device that served the values of Poland, not of any one particular group. And embedded within its method of transformation lay an alternative model of society that was worth emulating.

Of course Michnik believes that each side had a strategic goal. The communists "sought to gain a new legitimacy for communist rule in Poland and abroad, and allowing some form of legalized opposition was to be the price for that. The strategic goal for the Solidarity opposition, on the other hand, was the legalization of Solidarity and launching the process of democratic transformation."<sup>36</sup> There were no secret deals, much as Lech Kaczyński and others also affirmed, but it *was* a compromise. And as Michnik noted, all compromises produce subsequent accusations of betrayal by "extremists."<sup>37</sup>

Michnik believes that while this Round Table negotiation didn't produce an ethos, it was embedded in a different kind of climate "that made it possible for the two worlds, which spoke two different languages, to communicate."<sup>38</sup> Indeed, he learned in

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 238-39.

<sup>35</sup> Ira Katznelson, *Liberalism's Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 10.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 108.

that context that while this communist viewpoint was certainly reprehensible in some ways, it was also far more influential than he or his colleagues would have admitted. These communists, he argued, even those who

accepted the communist government for their own benefit are a component of the Polish nation, which cannot be excluded from Poland, unless one wants to destroy the Polish national community. And this is what I learned at the Round Table. There are two philosophies. Today, we can either say to those people, who used to be my enemies then, and who used to lock me up in jail...we can say, 'You have an opportunity either to become friends of democratic independent Poland, a Poland which is oriented toward the West and has a free market economy, or you can make a conscious choice and opt for the status of an enemy of the new Poland.' In other words, there are two philosophies faced by any group reaching out to participate in the government after the times of the communist, totalitarian or paratotalitarian dictatorship. Two logics. The logic of re-conquest and the logic of reconciliation...re-conquering the country is a deeply anti-democratic logic in the sense that it really undermines the pluralistic character of our society.<sup>39</sup>

In this sense, Michnik seeks to elevate a certain value that he learned at the Round Table and a different way of thinking, a different identity for the Polish state.<sup>40</sup> This identity, based on a philosophy of agreement, presumes that "those who fought against the People's Republic and those who served the People's Republic" are both part of a democratic future.<sup>41</sup>

This "defense" of the status quo produced by the Round Table is certainly conservative. Moreover, it produces a kind of radical resentment not only of the privilege associated with some of those who sat around the Round Table but equally for the fact that this Round Table is now being made into a heroic legend. If this is pluralism, it is also injustice. Radicals on the right, and those in the center, argue that Michnik is imposing a vision of Poland that is in fact one born at the Round Table, in the deal made between the "reds and the pinks." And here is the irony. The conservatives in Polish politics are most closely associated with the "radical" tradition in Lenski's terms, while the functionalists are painted as pinks. But truth be told, the old reds look even more conservative.

### **Conservative Post-Communists**

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 16.

At this conference, Mieczysław Rakowski offered the most familiar of conservative arguments defending the relationship between power and privilege. He didn't return just to the Round Table, but went back to 1945, and especially 1956, to recast the rule of communists and their service to the Polish nation. Polish communist authorities sent nine and one-half thousand graduates of Polish universities, most of whom were Party members, to the West to study, and on their return, they created a new atmosphere, one much more open-minded.<sup>42</sup> The Polish communists also defended private farming after 1956, enabling Poland to be the only country under direct Soviet rule to have such a "parking orbit"<sup>43</sup> for the entrepreneurial spirit.<sup>44</sup> Gomułka, Poland's leader between 1956 and 1970, was especially concerned about preserving Poland's sovereignty against a new agreement between the Germans and Russians, and did what he could to preserve it.<sup>45</sup> Even that most anti-Semitic of Poland's communists, Mieczysław Moczar, helped to build up the national factor of Polish communists.<sup>46</sup> In short, Rakowski argued, the communists, for all their negative factors, did what they could to enhance freedom within Poland and defend its sovereignty. One should not think of their Round Table participation, therefore, as anything strange, but rather consistent with doing what they could to extend freedom and sovereignty and rationalize the economy. And it was this relatively gentle rule by communists that enabled the opposition itself to form.<sup>47</sup> Of course most Party leaders believed that they could, and should, do without the opposition even up through the end of 1988. But Rakowski argues that it was the communists who, in the end, *enabled* this change to take place, and in fact, it was the change in attitudes of Polish communists that led to communism's own end. Stanisław Ciosek, another former communist leading figure, who subsequently became Ambassador to Russia, offered another argument along the same theme: the communist authorities' principal concern was to avoid civil war.

The system could have been crumbling for a long time, and in quite a bloody way. It's a cliché, but before something really ends, it can go many different ways. History is not always going forward. Poland was not doomed to compromise....Everything that happened in Poland was really illogical. It was contrary to conclusions drawn from previous experiences. It really had no right to happen, yet it happened anyway...Maybe this was Divine Providence...that was watching over our moves. According to common sense, and according to

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>43</sup> Ivan Szelenyi et al., *Socialist Entrepreneurs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), uses this term to describe those social spaces that allow the preservation of the entrepreneurial spirit under communist rule.

<sup>44</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 20.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>47</sup> Note as well how Janusz Reykowski invokes this comparison to defend the positive role of liberal communists (*Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 111).

conclusions drawn from the history of the system, this should have led to bloody confrontation. It would have been enough for other options to have won in the Soviet Union and in Poland, and then without excessive imagination, we can assume attempts at reforming the economy without any changes in the political system, even including a possibility of passing through this Tiananmen Square...in China....This was real, this fear of civil war; it really motivated us.<sup>48</sup>

To be sure, there were bloody confrontations between Polish communist authorities and workers and others in the past. Polish communists have a hard time convincing many of their former victims that this kind of confrontation was inconsistent with their values. Indeed, it is likely the case that this was consistent with at least some communist values. Many communists resisted the idea of compromise, recognizing in it the end to their power and privilege. For example, Janusz Reykowski, one of Poland's communist negotiators, described that sense of betrayal he himself faced. On the day the Polish communist party was dissolved, "a young man approached me, reached out his hand and, with a grimace of rage on his face, said, 'Well thank you very much for destroying the party.'"<sup>49</sup> For Reykowski, on the other hand, his principal loyalty, he argued, was to "the state, the country, and not any specific political formation."<sup>50</sup>

With a radical view of power and privilege in communist-ruled societies, it is difficult to entertain the idea that any communist would see their affiliation with the powerful and privileged as a matter of loyalty to the nation or the country. Radicals cannot imagine that those in power use their influence for the societal good. Even those who emphasize the religious inspiration to love one's enemy, like Bishop Bronisław Dembowski, have strong reasons to distrust communist claims to legitimacy. As he recalled his own life, he offered one particularly moving moment, when as a

(m)ember of the "Grey Ranks" (Szare Szeregi), a private in the seventy-second regiment of the Home Army Radom Region, oath of allegiance in 1943, at the age of sixteen, a participant of the Action Storm from August to November 1944. In April of 1945, in Radom, I saw posters, "Away with the Home Army bandits," and "the drooling reactionary dwarf." And that was the reward....I have tears in my eyes now...this was the reward for the boy who was ready to die for Poland..."The drooling reactionary dwarf?" I apologize, well, can you see how it's still alive, it's all coming back?<sup>51</sup>

For those who suffered so horribly at the hands of communist authorities, the radical view, that dichotomous view of "us vs. them," comes easily. One might argue that

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<sup>48</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 42.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

contrary to conditions where radicalism is a minority view and conservative ideas are hegemonic, in Poland radicalism was dominant, and that radicalism, that "anticommunist culture," is what articulates the view of justice in the allocation of power and privilege. One cannot allow very easily that communists would act on behalf of the nation. The claims of people like Mieczysław Rakowski or Stanisław Ciosek are not easily accepted because they don't fit with the culture of revolution, unless, however, this is a different kind of revolution, based on a different sense of power.

### **Powering Peaceful Revolution**

The "radical conservative" view of communism's collapse fits most easily with most conventional theories of revolution. On the one hand, the system was weakening through its own internal contradictions, and on the other, the opposition was growing stronger and stronger. It is, however, important to note how this movement was trying to grow stronger.

Zbigniew Bujak, a leader of the underground resistance from 1981 through his capture in 1986, described the movement's strategy. It was not interested in street confrontations and demonstrations. Each time they tried to "overcome the other side with armed struggle," they would lose. Hence, they decided that "fighting without violence was best." Of course there were other possibilities.

...in the very first days of martial law, some young people decided to get arms. They tried to take arms away from a policeman, a shot rang, and that policeman was dead. The uniform police was not our opponent and we didn't really fight against them. Our real rival was the secret police. So that was a dramatic and unnecessary death. However, of course, the young people who were active in the underground structures were in fact getting armed. They were simply buying weapons, buying grenades... We did succeed, however, to persuade those young people that that wasn't the right way to follow. If we entered that path, we would lose. Because the other side really wanted this. And we also know that this provocation to push us into the terrorist position had been prepared. But we managed to defend ourselves from this, and I'm going to be honest about it, it took a real effort. These weapons I've mentioned were actually sunk in the Vistula River and it was all thanks to the people who were at the head of those underground structures understood our strategy....<sup>52</sup>

Bujak identified Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. as the movement's models.<sup>53</sup> Of course they also had their national religious inspiration.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 39.

Not everyone was Roman Catholic in the Polish opposition, but the Roman Catholic Church was clearly supporting Solidarity in its peaceful struggle. The Church served as a “witness” to the negotiations, but everyone knew whom the Church supported. Pope John Paul II even supported Solidarity over and above an attempt to introduce unions expressly affiliated with the Church, recognizing that the communists sought to divide and thereby weaken the opposition.<sup>54</sup> Before they would go to Magdalenka to negotiate in private, the opposition, both of Catholic and non-Catholic orientations, would assemble at the Episcopate. Bishop Orszulik recalled, “one time, there we go, we go downstairs, myself, Bishop Gocłowski, all the others. We are almost approaching the door and Mazowiecki says, ‘Listen, but we have to go to the chapel first to pray.’ And all of us turned back, all of us knelt down, and all of us prayed. And that was unity. One team, one squad.”<sup>55</sup> This was more than a ritual. Solidarity, as a value, meant something profound. As Orszulik described it,

There was only one value for us, Solidarity. And within Solidarity, there was everybody, people of various political orientations. Therefore, we took great pains during the early encounters with the government side, when there were attempts to exclude Mr. Michnik and Mr. Kuroń, to...we were against that, just as Wałęsa was at that time, believing that there was need to create a broader societal spectrum, background, so that the success of those talks would be more real. So, nobody painted the left as Trotskyites, dangerous for the Church, and by the way, at the Round Table we were not concerned with the Church itself. Our concern was focused on the nation, the country, changes in the country, improvement of the situation in Poland, the life of the people. That was our concern and not dividing people into those we liked and those we didn’t like.<sup>56</sup>

This was solidarity. Not only the collective organization necessary to advance the cause of the powerless against the powerful, but also a moral value, an ethical principle animating peaceful struggle. Bishop Dembowski illustrated some of that ethic in his recollection on the meaning of “enemies” for the Church. He was quite impressed by the words appearing at the beginning of one of John Paul II’s pontificates: “The Church has no enemies, even though there are many people who consider the Church their enemy.” The Bishop painted the communist authorities likewise: they were not his enemy, but “the authorities placed themselves in opposition to society by imposing a socio-economic system and atheism.”<sup>57</sup> In this sense, a vision of solidarity was generated that was open to those who would repent and join society. In this sensibility, born of St. Paul and reproduced by Father Józef Tischner, solidarity is to “bear one another’s burden.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-49.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

It is difficult to imagine bearing that burden belonging to communists, but perhaps it is imaginable in terms of bearing the burden of compromise, and of dialogue.

I asked Janusz Reykowski to serve on a panel that addressed ethics. This world-renowned social psychologist initially resisted the idea, thinking that his contribution would be negated by the fact that he negotiated for the communists. Those who suffered most, and who look more like saints than he, could hardly give him ground to be ethical, he feared. He was, furthermore, one of increasingly few liberals in the communist party who believed in dialogue. When the authorities imposed martial law in 1981, many reformers left the Party. He did not, and there were quite a few communists who opposed this compromise with the enemy. This view has even survived and gained some strength with the last ten years. One prominent figure from the communist regime told him about the reason for the Round Table.

“The wrong people were in power. Had we removed them on time, had we got rid of Jaruzelski, Rakowski and Ciosek, and replaced them with real socialists and real patriots, then the whole Round Table would not have been necessary. Look,” he said, “what has happened, how many people have been pushed into poverty now, and how many fortunes have been made by stealing state property, both by the former *nomenklatura* and the new *nomenklatura*.” ...there was a moment, that was between the sixth and eighth of June, when people who were thinking along those lines mobilized and flooded the Politburo and the Secretariat with their demands to annul the election results, when they prepared an experts’ report that the only solution was to annul elections. And there was a dramatic struggle caused by that report, and an effort to neutralize that kind of thinking. If you say, ladies and gentlemen, as Marshal Chrzanowski has said, that the army would not have supported that kind of demands, I will say, well, it’s better that we didn’t have to check that out.<sup>59</sup>

This view of the Round Table as treachery, of betrayal, can thus be found on both the communist and conservative side. Both of them believe in the rightness of struggle, and the importance of avoiding compromise with the enemy. In confrontation with one another, they could produce the very violence that motivated Reykowski to struggle for negotiation and Bujak to throw the weapons in the river. Although Bujak and Reykowski were on the opposite sides of the table, they did share at least one value: the peaceful resolution of their fundamental differences. How does this value of dialogue fit, however, with the picture of power and privilege painted in most works on class analysis? It sounds, after all, like a conservative justification for the status quo, where power is exercised for the good of society.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 112.

## Power, Privilege and Negotiation

Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of Poland and a former negotiator for the communist side, offered an intriguing thesis for the relationship between power and negotiation. The Round Table was

caused by weakness. The Party was weak, the government was weak, and Solidarity was weak. And the Soviet Union was weak, too. Everybody was weak. On the other hand, it resulted from the strength of the people who thought that a breakthrough was possible and that it could be done. Adam Michnik mentioned Mr. Wałęsa and Wojciech Jaruzelski. And I think we owe our respect to these two people, since at that particular moment, when there were so many unknown factors and unclear spots, they undertook the effort whose results neither they themselves nor any of us, who participated in the Round Table, could foresee. But that showed the strength, the strength which I would say was the result of the Polish experience...So on the one hand, the weakness, and on the other hand, the strength to make a decision of historic caliber, as we now can see.<sup>60</sup>

The argument is critical. Neither side could “force” its own solution on the other, and considerable portions of Polish society “distrusted” the others. Even Lech Wałęsa was distrusted by more than forty percent of the Polish public, and those from the Solidarity underground who once organized the Ursus factory, like Zbigniew Janas, could no longer mobilize a strike there.<sup>61</sup>

This “weakness” does not mean, of course, that they were obliged to negotiate. Provocations were possible, and violent confrontation was, of course, one way out of the impasse. In both cases, however, Jaruzelski and Wałęsa were able to exercise enough leadership over their own forces to prevent a violent encounter in the late 1980’s. This case might suggest, then, that this negotiated revolution depended on a condition of dual power within a country, with each side having a clear and undisputed leader, but with each having the disposition to negotiate a compromise, rather than impose a victory. And this bears directly on Lenski’s argument about the conditions when “functionalist” arguments make sense in talking about power and privilege.

In hunting and gathering societies, Lenski argues, the measure of inequality is small because there is limited “surplus” in the society. There are thus limited means with which any one group or individual can exercise power over others. In these societies, the distribution of goods and services tend to be distributed on the basis of need.<sup>62</sup> In other societies, an argument from power reigns. One might, however, extend this argument to say that in those conditions where power is widely distributed, and no

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 246.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>62</sup> Lenski, 46-47.

single hierarchy of power reigns, the contest among powers might lead to compromise that serves a broader interest. Where everyone is weak, or shall we say interdependent, the chance that societal needs will reign over group needs increases.

Certainly this suggestion needs to be augmented by ideology in two ways. First, without an ideology that motivates compromise on behalf of all, the "compromise" might only work on behalf of those groups directly negotiating for power. In order for the compromise to be in a broader interest, that compromise must be embedded in an ideology with broader value and social consequence. The ethos of solidarity, to bear the burden of others, may have been that very value, but the outcome of the last ten years, and its measure of inequality, suggests that the Round Table might have been the vehicle to the enrichment of some, and the impoverishment of most. The ethos of solidarity, while effective for resisting communists, might not be enough to compensate for building capitalism.

Although the Round Table was motivated by social concerns, it operated quite autonomously from classes and their conflict. It was, for the most part, an argument among intellectuals.<sup>63</sup> There was certainly little attention to any conception of gender inequality. Grażyna Staniszevska, for instance, noticed no discrimination in these negotiations (even though her region felt a bit ashamed that a woman represented them!).<sup>64</sup> Janina Jankowska was more critical of this dimension of inequality, and agreed that women were "invisible" in the transformations, even though the entire network of conspiracy "rested on women's shoulders."<sup>65</sup> The rural sector was also not prominent in the negotiations. According to one of its leading figures, Gabriel Janowski, the peasants stood outside the building in which the Round Table was being negotiated, protesting and demanding good pay, and ten years later, they are doing the same thing.<sup>66</sup> The working class was more prominent in the negotiations, especially those in the mining sector. They had their own round table, whose differences were never resolved completely.

In general, however, while support for Solidarity and change was motivated by dismay with the social conditions of life, neither the leaders of Solidarity nor of the communists had an economic plan that would extend the ethos of solidarity into capitalism. And the workers, peasants and marginalized women left it to the experts to figure that out. As Grażyna Staniszevska suggested, the rank and file thought this to be more of an experts' game, a negotiation for the elites and leading intellectuals, one that would "establish some beachheads that would enable us to function later on."<sup>67</sup> To legitimate union pluralism was, at that time, a big step ahead, and a chance to defeat the

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<sup>63</sup> For elaboration of this argument, see Michael D. Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism* (forthcoming, University of Minnesota Press).

<sup>64</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 152.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

communists through electoral means was the foundation for Solidarity's extraordinary support in the June 4 elections.

Both pluralism and anti-communism animated the Round Table and its consequences. There was little in the Round Table about equality per se. There was, however, a great deal of concern in that Round Table about how to assure a peaceful process toward democratic change. Solidarity was thought of only in political terms, not in social terms, and that is one powerful basis for the Round Table's critique today. The radical conservatives, and the many fewer radical communists, can argue that the Round Table has destroyed the social basis of solidarity with the magnification of inequality.

Some dozen years after the publication of *Power and Privilege*, Gerhard Lenski argued that with inequality's durability in advanced societies, any attempt to reduce economic inequality will tend to increase political inequality.<sup>68</sup> In one more extension of Lenski's thesis, one might consider here that the chance to level the political playing field with democratic reform required that kind of neglect of economic inequalities. That, at least, was the ideological unity that brought together communist reformers and Solidarity, in opposition to the official trade union which tried to destroy the Round Table accords by making more radical demands in the indexation of wages.<sup>69</sup> In short, this equalization of the political field was accompanied by a magnification of inequality in the social field. It is difficult to say whether this was sociologically necessary. It was, however, ideologically necessary.

The peaceful negotiated revolution may have succeeded because the negotiators were losing their power in society overall, becoming weaker and weaker, and more and more dependent on one another for generating a new basis for power. Their legitimacy could not easily depend on their old constituencies, especially as the logic of negotiation and compromise produced a new constituency for both sides: one another. The power of the negotiators ultimately came to depend on supporting the legitimacy and value of the compromise.

One might argue, therefore, that the Round Table provided a new "value" on which those who would negotiate could draw status. This new value, part of a new Poland, was one based on compromise with their enemy and the right of everyone to figure out their own place in a more open, and perhaps more unequal, society. This new value could also differentiate the negotiators from those who would insist on a complete victory for one side over the other and the illegitimacy of this new inequality. While it might appear that the negotiators valued society less, and thought about themselves

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<sup>68</sup> Gerhard Lenski, "Marxist Experiments in Destratification: An Appraisal," *Social Forces* 57 (1978): 364-83.

<sup>69</sup> Alfred Miodowicz, the leader of the OPZZ, or All Polish Trade Union, saw the negotiations between communists and Solidarity as a threat to his own position, and was one of the most serious opponents to this accord among the communist authorities.

more, one might also note that those who emphasized inequality's illegitimacy and the importance of complete victory also think little about the conditions of *peaceful* change. And here we come to the significance of interpretation and the challenge of power and privilege.

### **Conclusions: Radicalism, Conservatism, Power and Privilege**

The study of inequality in introductory sociology is still organized around discussions of conservatism and radicalism, of functionalist and conflict theories. These alternative portraits were primarily made in capitalist societies, and when they were extended to communist-ruled societies,<sup>70</sup> the distinctions were still sensible. The ruling class tended to discuss inequality in conservative terms, and those who would identify oppression would use terms from the conflict school. When we think about power and privilege during times of radical change, however, the relationship between power, privilege and justice is not so clear, especially when those changes are associated with communism's negotiated collapse.

Radicals rarely imagine that power and privilege can be organized around a compromise with former rulers, based on values for the whole of society. The Round Table, however, depended on that imagery. Those negotiating had to conceive of their role as one for the whole of Poland, for their constituencies doubted that dealing with the enemy could ever produce anything other than betrayal. One might argue, therefore, that a more conservative view of power and privilege, one in which its distribution serves a societal good rather than a group's interest, is necessary for peaceful change to take place. Radicalism is critical for organizing resistance to injustice, but more conservative views that emphasize common values might be critical to imagining legitimate negotiations.

The success of these negotiations might in turn depend on a radical reconstruction of the "real" empirical conditions of inequality. Both sides must recognize that their power in relation to one another, and to their more fundamentalist opponents, is decreasing and that the only way in which they can increase their power is to draw on a new resource: their opponent. When that happens, a new value is introduced to the discussion of power and privilege: the question of peace.

This in turn, however, requires the generation of a different set of core values, one that finds something in their former enemy more valuable than what their enemy's previous demonization might have served for the mobilization of core constituencies. How can one imagine an enemy as an opponent, or even a partner, in the making of a new order? The Round Table suggests that answer.

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<sup>70</sup> Note Alvin Gouldner's portrait in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), as well as Ossowski's discussion.

On the one hand, the communists had to elevate one of their identities, as the maximizers of the *nation's* good, not the Party's well being. That required that they recognize Solidarity's potential for producing a peaceful change. On the other, Solidarity had to adopt a vision of solidarity that could be linked to the Pope's vision, one where the good don't make enemies, but rather, evil makes enemies of others. Both sides could therefore recognize in the other the potential for good faith negotiations, where in order to realize their ethical mission, they needed the other to serve the nation, or to serve a higher order.

This new core value based, as Michnik has said, on a democratic nation including "those who fought against the People's Republic and those who served the People's Republic"<sup>71</sup> can be attacked by linking this emphasis on pluralism and mutual recognition to an unjust allocation of privilege. To point to the wealth of former communists, or to the success of Michnik's paper, is a method for undermining the negotiators' claims of national devotion and ethical solidarity. It is striking, of course, that in this very charge one must ignore the risk of violence.

The Round Table is therefore the object of very different interpretations, and Ossowski's reminder to attend to ideology in the assessment of inequality is important. Critics on both the right and the left can articulate a radical critique by linking the negotiation to subsequent unjust privileges, while the Round Table's defenders instead emphasize the values it produced for the nation as a whole. Lenski's approach to radicalism and conservatism and his search for their synthesis remains, however, a useful guide for thinking about how to judge this debate. One might look to see just how much the negotiators have benefited from this deal in order to decide whether a conservative or radical viewpoint is most useful for interpreting the Round Table. Alternatively, one might also ask something else. How great was the risk of violence? Or what should be the price of peace? Do the values of the Round Table contribute to the possibility of a society based on the peaceful negotiation of important differences? If so, functionalist thinking might deserve more attention in the making of radical, but peaceful, change, and the ideology attending class analysis might address not only the value of equality, but the ways in which its portrait of society contributes to a peaceful approach to the negotiation of difference.

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<sup>71</sup> *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 16.