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SHORT ANALYSIS OF THE FALL OF COMMUNIST REGIMES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE 1989 AND THE DOMINO EFFECT

Scurtă analiză a prăbușirii regimurilor comuniste în estul și centrul Europei în 1989 și efectul de domino

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Abstract: The year, 1989, was the most important historical moment after the Second World War because it represented the „liberation” from the yoke of the communist totalitarian regimes. It was a moment of special significance which was marked by the triumph of the West before the Soviet Union. In the present study we propose to analyse the meaning of 1989 for countries in Central and Eastern Europe that were under Moscow’s sphere of influence, starting from the consideration that the communist regimes could no longer maintain their rule. The domino effect was felt stronger, due to the fact that once communism fell in Poland, this could not be credited to other members who were in the soviet bloc.

Key word: democratization, 1989, antitotalitarian revolution, communism, USSR.

25-year anniversary of the fall of communism in most countries of Central and Eastern Europe, we decided to analyze this event and also removed soon. Communism as totalitarian regime is a *dark part* of history because of the brutal methods and the large number of victims that he has made over time. A black stain could not be removed many years after the implosion of the totalitarian regime and who are still feeling the mentality.

In terms of symbolism 1989 is the year of issue of the communist regime fell in the states of Central and Eastern Europe. As the domino effect in all states under the umbrella of a current totalitarian regime felt that generated the desire for freedom that has resulted in a sequential decommunization. Why use the term „domino”? The mere fact that once the regime has shown signs of weakness in the state, losing its legitimacy, could not resist in other states. The effect has been that once communism fell in Poland, not to be able to withstand in other states.

1989 year considered *liberation year* from totalitarian dictatorship, can be understood as a *year of renovation* companies perceived as a struggle between the old and new leaders between totalitarianism and democracy-building desire. Also, this year we can see a chain of events, perceived as an interrelation between the Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe. For example, in the same period the Warsaw and Budapest established a new regime giving up the Communist regime in Moscow could see a trend towards liberalization when the new Congress of People’s Deputies is constituted different groups with accepting Mikhail Gorbachev. Regarding the interrelation, Karoly Grosz argued that „*the collapse of the regimes in Eastern Europe has led to the collapse of the*

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USSR, but vice versa", but this statement can be perceived in a different way so we can say that „*the collapse of the USSR was driven by falling regimes communist Central and Eastern Europe*”, which is more plausible. Why not support Grosz’s statement? Because it would mean to say that all states in the US are conducted in a totalitarian way, but the US is under the umbrella of democracy. Based on this, we stress that the USSR disintegrated because of the implosion of communism and the democratization of the Soviet bloc. But the only thing we can attribute to Moscow is the impetus given regarding changes¹ Perestroika.

The collapse of communist regimes in the Soviet bloc, says Vladimir Tismăneanu² have accelerated the disintegration of the Soviet Union that arose otherwise necessary conditions for creating a new global organization (given the winner of the Cold War and the destruction of global bipolarism).

Timothy Garton Ash commented in an absolutely inspired when he raised revolutions antitotalitarian in Central and Eastern Europe, pointing out that they were based on the number ten: ten years in Poland, ten months Hungary, ten weeks Czechoslovakia ten days RD Germany and ten hours Romania. However, the Romanian case remains questionable when talking about the ten o’clock recounted Garton Ash, but we will discuss this at the end of our scientific approach. Regardless of the length of the events and products aside from their losses, the result was the same: the destruction of the communist regime, changing the economic system, the introduction of pluralist democracy, western³ values orientation.

But the question that arises is the following: *the events of 1989 can be considered truly revolution?* The question is pertinent given that the Cold War had not yet ended and the battle between capitalism and socialism was ongoing. Specifically we support that the West wanted to destroy communism and its replacement by democracy, so it is fair to say that they had some involvement in events in late 1989. But to what extent can question the revolutions? What were they if not revolution? For example, in the case of Romania, 25 years after the events of 1989 created discussions on the subject of revolution or coup still could not draw a conclusion. Various historians, as Alex Mihai Stoenescu, consider that in 1989 was a coup but not of the same opinion, and Vladimir Tismăneanu which starts from the idea that the events were just discontent of the people against the totalitarian regime and the leadership of excessive torque dictatorial and believes that „*transformation of the main countries of Central and Eastern Europe were political revolutions that caused decisive and irreversible change of regimes in the region. Instead of ideocratic system dominated by a single party,*

¹ Jean-Francois Soulet, *Comparative History of communist states from 1945 until today*, Iași, Polirom, 1998, p. 312.

² Vladimir Tismăneanu, *1989. About Shipwreck utopia*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2009, p. 142.

³ Florin Garza, *Renaissance of Europe*, Bucharest, Odeon, 1999, p. 179.

revolutions have created pluralist political entities. They allowed ideological despotisms been subject to regain natural and civic rights and to become involved in building open societies”.⁴

In Fukuyama’s essay of 1989 can feel a slight hyperbole and a strong liberal enthusiasm that spread among experienced politicians and media commentators when he referred to the *end of history* and ideology. Stephen Holmes said the review he had made Fukuyama’s book, that „*worldwide postcommunist see waves of radical change which so far looks like a liberal revolution*”. „*It is not a liberal revolution most significant fact of contemporary political life?*”.⁵ Maybe so, says Jeffrey Isaac Bruce Ackerman identifies the year 1989 „*the return of democratic liberalism revolutionary*” and Ralf Dahrendorf, calling for democracy, pluralism and citizenship, wrote that „*in essence, the European revolution of 1989 is the rejection of a reality unbearable which, as we have seen, could not maintain and, moreover, is the reaffirmation of old ideas*”.⁶

But from our point of view, the most well-articulated thesis is that of Timothy Garton Ash⁷ who stresses that European revolutions do nothing to bring to the fore, replacing the communist regime of totalitarian ideas that actually are not new but familiar and time-tested in different environments: the rule of law, human rights, freedom of association, parliamentary government, multi-party system, independent judiciary, etc. Specifically, the idea that the West, which was a template for Central and Eastern Europe, has fought successfully demonstrated successfully that it folds into a state.

The fact is, contrary to Fukuyama, these changes represent a transformation liberal complex led to the rehabilitation of liberalism, and according to the writings of Gale Stokes „*their revolution was not a renewal of the total, but rather abandoning a failed experiment in favor of a model already existing pluralist democracy*”.⁸ Totalitarian regimes find their extent in much of history and arose in different forms since ancient times. However it is natural to support the view of Stokes he considers communism experiment? Still we are talking about four decades and not just a few years. Perhaps the proper term would be to primitive given that it was not able to overcome the third stage of development, however, experiment or not, its legacy is felt in more than two decades after its implosion.

In his recent book *1989. Romania between revolution and coup d'état* Adrian Gorun appeals to the interpretation that gives Peter Calvert period of

⁴ Vladimir Tismăneanu, *1989. About Shipwreck utopia*, p. 143.

⁵ Stephen Holmes, „The Scowl of Minerva, The New Republic” (23 March 1992) cited Jeffrey C. Isaac, „Significance of 1989” in Vladimir Tismăneanu (editor) *1989. The revolutions in the past and the future*, Iași, Polirom, 1999, p. 142.

⁶ Jeffrey C. Isaac, „The meanings of 1989”, in Vladimir Tismăneanu (editor), *1989. The revolutions in the past and the future*, pp. 142-143.

⁷ See Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*, New York, Random House, 1990.

⁸ Gale Stokes, *The Walls Come Thumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Easter Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 260.

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revolution and that is where the revolution is a social process that has real meaning dependent on the relevance of the process for participant and observer, namely „*the fundamental problem, both for us and for others, it is why the revolution is a social process. It follows that its true meaning is determined not by some abstract and general standard measurement, but on the relevance of participant and observer process. Some argue that this thing called revolution not exist. Revolution is not a fact or a series of occurrences, but a mental construction, a creation of the human mind and therefore has no objective existence*”.⁹ Regarding revolutions, Eric Selbin believes they are first human creations-with dirt inherent in such statements-and less natural processes inevitable. Therefore, the focus should be on people, not on structures on options, not determinism and the transformation of society, not merely transitional.¹⁰

The dramatic revolutions not just the result of the events and processes that succeed and lead to radical changes, but also the meaning that revolutions have for the actors directly involved, meaning you and circumscribe a myth that the revolutionaries believe and you want it done: that the revolution is a turning point in history. However, the drama of a revolution comes and consequences, often unexpected that we produce. How else do you explain that the French Revolution gave France a dictatorship powerful that the Bolshevik revolution in Russia led to the killing of millions and tens of millions of deportations, that the revolution in Nicaragua has generated economic chaos, the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the regime allowed a religious despot (Ayatollah Khomeini) to deprive a people humble hard scored gained freedom for mankind, women in particular, „a huge step backward”?¹¹

Besides the failed attempt to reform the economy, other communist countries have played an essential role. Having said this, we want to talk about and explain the *domino theory*. When communist rule began to crumble in a country, its legitimacy has been affected in all others. Credibility communism was based in part on the claim that embodies the need, that is the logical product of historical progress, a fact of political life, an inevitable presence in the modern landscape. Once this has proven blatantly false-in Poland, for example, where Solidarity succeeded, as it were, to put history in reverse-how to believe in Hungary and Czechoslovakia?¹² The communist regime came to power in the Soviet bloc in a very short time and lasted for more than four decades. Confidence in this regime has degraded very quickly run and at the end of the 80 he suffered an implosion. Communism was seen as a colossus

⁹Adrian Gorun, Tiberiu Horațiu Gorun, 1989. *Romania between revolution and coup d'état*, Bucharest, Pro Universitaria, 2015, p. 151.

¹⁰ Mărcău Flavius-Cristian, *Romanian Revolution from 1989*, Târgu-Jiu, Academica Brâncuși, 2011, p. 6.

¹¹Adrian Gorun, Tiberiu Horațiu Gorun, 1989. *Romania between revolution ant coup d'état*, p. 153.

¹² View widely Tony Judt, *The postwar era. A History of Europe after 1945*, Iași, Polirom, 2008.

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but have not been observed feet of clay. Domino theory is based on the domino game. It was first used by US President Eisenhower, during a press conference (April 7th 1954) and consider employment Indochina by communists, and if comes to power became able to take turns Burma, Thailand and Indonesia. Theory creates a similarity between occupation and raising parts. In our case, the domino theory provides their collapse. Once a piece has been pushed all will fall from inertia.

In conclusion, the revolutions of the Central and Eastern European countries are events that marked the end of the century and which can be regarded as the most important after the Second World War because they have succeeded in a very short time lead to change the totalitarian communist regime in the former Soviet bloc states. Why are these events important? First Communism has not been able to pursue the economic crisis which deepened and that could not be dealt with and shortages becoming more pronounced created a permanent state of dissatisfaction of the population to the regime and his leaders. The inevitable happened, so that the antitotalitarian revolutions was possible to change the dictatorial regime with a democratic one.