Czechoslovakia 1989 and Rational Choice Theory: A General Model of Regime Change

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Abstract: This work adds to the existing research on regime change by exploring the political history of Czechoslovakia in 1989. Using an integrative approach of agency and structure, game-theoretical models founded on rational choice theory, and the political process model are employed to describe politics in communist Czechoslovakia. The classical works on democratisation by Moore, Przeworski, and Huntington as well as the 'transitologist' and 'post-totalitarian' concepts are discussed. Moreover, an original consolidative model for interpreting actors and institutions in a non-democratic regime is presented. Finally, this work proposes a new rationality-based model of regime change and suggests that the concept of democratic equilibrium has been undervalued in the existing research, arguing that its role is of crucial importance in the study of regime change.

Keywords: Communist Czechoslovakia; 1989; regime change; democratisation; revolution; transitology; *rational ch*oice theory;game theory; theory of moves; democratic equilibrium; political process model

1. Introduction

If a modern state's success was measured in the years the state spent as a full-fledged democracy, Czechoslovakia would, in comparison to West European states, come out on the losing side. Out of 74 years of its existence, the Czechoslovak state may be considered democratic, in total, for no more than twenty-six. In the short course of four decades after the Second World War, Czechoslovakia experienced three revolutionary regime changes: the Communist seizure of power in 1948, the 'interrupted revolution' of 1968, and the 'velvet' end of Communism in 1989.

In this paper, I present a general model for analysing regime changes such as those that took place in post-war Czechoslovakia. Since the model is designed for comparative political science, sacrifices had to be made regarding some historical details – a model is always a simplified abstract of the more complex reality. The paper is divided into three parts: first, the existing literature and theories related to the study of regime change and non-democratic regimes are shortly reviewed. Second, a new model based on these theories and on the basic assumption of rationality is constructed. Third, this model is applied to the events of 1989 in Czechoslovakia.

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2. Existing Theories

The first modern theory of non-democratic regimes, inspired by perceived similarities between Communism and German national socialism, is enshrined in Hannah Arendt's seminal volume (1951) in which she explained the totalitarianism of both pre-war and post-war Eastern Europe as a psychological response to the social damage inflicted upon people by modern industrialism. Arendt's theory was valuable for two reasons: firstly, it provided insights into the social origins of non-democratic regimes, and secondly, it emphasised the similarities between these two ideologically distinct regimes. Thus, Arendt laid foundations for two different-but-intertwined groups of scholars:

Figure 1: Two Strands of the Study of Regime Change (selected works)

Modernisation / Structuralist school	Lipset 1960; Friedrich – Brzezinski 1965; Moore 1966; Therborn 1978; Luebbert 1991
Transition / Voluntarist school	Rustow 1970; Gurr 1970; Linz – Stepan 1978; Di Palma 1990; Przeworski 1991

Source: Author

Together with the works of Jürgen Habermas (1962) or Elias Canetti (1960), totalitarianism emerged as a comprehensive concept which could also be applied in many respects to the situation in post-1948 Czechoslovakia.

Following Stalin's death and the end of personal dictatorships in the USSR and other Communist countries, the totalitarian model lost much of its appeal to younger scholars. Some rejected the parallel between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as such (Adler and Patterson 1950: 1046); others began to question the notion of a monolithic political system in Soviet-type regimes (Solomon 1983). At the end of the 1960s, in order to capture more precisely the new dynamic political reality of Soviet-type and other non-democratic states, Juan J. Linz proposed a classification of 'totalitarian' and 'authoritarian' regimes (Linz 1964). In line with classic conceptualization of Arendt, he identified the necessary dimensions of 'ideology', 'pluralism', and 'mobilisation' (Linz 1975: 1988–1989). After the collapse of the Eastern bloc, Linz added two more types called 'sultanistic' (Linz 1975) and 'post-totalitarian' (Linz and Stepan 1996), with a continuum varying from 'early' to 'frozen', where the latter applies also to Czechoslovakia from 1977 to 1989. Linz's typology was used to analyse post-war Czechoslovakia by Balík (Balík et al. 2003), later supplemented by Civín (2005).

While the spatial range of the study of non-democratic regimes was expanding beyond the borders of Soviet and Nazi-type totalitarianisms, further development of the methodological basis was slowed by the previously mentioned bifurcation of the research agenda. The structuralist school (Moore 1966; Almond and Mundt 1973) constantly pursued the socioeconomic circumstances of democratisation which determine political outcomes, whereas the voluntarist school (Davies 1962; Calvert 1970; Gurr 1970) stressed the significance of the process by which regime change occurs and political contingency. If the first attached

importance to long-term continuous social development, the latter came with the thesis that short-term decisions by elites during transitions bring about a new regime. Since both groups ultimately based their concepts on the classic volumes by de Tocqueville (1848), Marx (1859), or Weber (1925), it was inevitable that the mainstream study of democratisation would soon become interconnected with the study of revolutionary movements (Brinton 1938; Stone 1966; Skocpol 1979) and collective action (Tilly 1964; Olson 1965). Thus, rational-choice theory (Granovetter 1978), political economy (Lichbach 1987) and social-mobilisation theory (Cohen 1985; Offe 1985) merged with the methodology of democratisation studies.

The "third wave of democratisation" (Huntington 1991) gave the study of non-democratic regimes and regime change a new impetus. At the end of the 1980s, academic discussion over differing concepts and discord over theory reached its peak. Firstly, there was the ongoing debate between the proponents of voluntarism on one side (Di Palma 1990; Przeworski 1991) and structuralism on the other (Luebbert 1991; Rueschmeyer et al. 1992). Secondly, as a sub-issue of the first debate, area specialists (Jowitt 1992; Bunce 1995) began to argue over the relevance of structural factors with 'transitologists' (O'Donnell 1994; Karl and Schmitter 1994 and 1995). Especially the latter debate, even though only a derivative of the first, inflated so much as to almost obscure new research approaches emerging within the field of study.

Among the most prominent of these new approaches figure mechanism-based models of political processes (Tilly 1978; Klandermans et al. 1988; Tarrow 1989) that compare cases of regime change not in the terms of a universal law but rather as historical concatenations of common causal processes. This theme was in subsequent years picked up by several scholars (Yashar 1997; Collier 1999) and with these applications at hand, in his last works, Tilly revived his earlier 'polity model.' In that model, he offered a mechanism-based explanation of regime development (Tilly 1978 and 2003), enriched the study of regime change with a set of process-oriented criteria defining democracy, and identified four general processes causing democratisation and de-democratisation (2007b). In the mid-1990s, when the majority of works on regime change had already been customarily synthesising voluntarist and structural approaches (Karl and Schmitter 1991; Collier and Collier 1991; Huntington 1991), the entry of the social movements agenda accelerated the evolution of a common methodology for research into both informal and formal 'contentious politics' (McAdam et al. 2001). Moreover, the need to evaluate these new research tools compelled scholars to reopen the ancient debate about a consensual and widely applicable definition of democracy (Tilly 2003 and 2007a).

This debate is a detour by which the students of political processes and social mobilisation re-joined adherents of mainstream non-democratic theory, i.e. the totalitarian-authoritarian paradigm. Linz's epigones had meanwhile uncovered another fiendish puzzle: how to classify the new, ambiguous regime types that had emerged after the third wave of democratisation? In other words, how to label the regimes that had adopted "the form of electoral democracy" (Diamond 2002: 22), but failed to meet other necessary criteria of full-fledged democracy? To answer these questions, scholars either modified Linz's older typology of authoritarianisms (Merkel 1999; Shevtsova 2004; Balík and Holzer 2007), or re-modeled the old paradigm into new terminological derivates (Levitsky and Way 2002; Diamond 2002). As a third option,

some chose to re-conceptualise the very notion of non-democracy and start from scratch (Levada 2004; Snyder 2006).

Already after this very short review, it seems more than legitimate to ask: is there a common basis to these varying methodologies and approaches, a common point of origin from which it would be plausible to formulate a general model for the study of non-democratic regimes and regime change? The following paragraphs endeavour to answer positively. A basic model that may be employed to study these historical phenomena is proposed and, subsequently, applied in an analysis of the events of 1989 in Czechoslovakia.

3. Agency

At the centre of the research issue, there are two crucial concepts that need to be defined: *regime* and *regime change*. The term *regime* is different both from *state* and *government*. The most commonly used definition of *state* is that of Max Weber's: "a political entity that [successfully] claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (Gerth and Mills 1970: 77). This political entity functions via its *government*, which comprises both the political and administrative apparatus of the state (Stone 1966: 159). In the literature of the study of regime change, *regime* is usually synonymous with the concept of a 'form of government' (Bobbio 1989). In Gerardo Munck's paper, "a political regime is defined… by the procedural rules, whether formal or informal, that determine the number and type of actors who are allowed to gain access to the principal governmental positions, the methods of access to such positions, and the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions" (1996: 8). This tripartite definition actually mirrors Linz's three dimensions of authoritarianism (1975), i.e. pluralism (number and type of actors who gain access), ideology (method of access), and mobilisation (rules for making decisions). However, by juxtaposing both Linz and Munck to the works of Snyder (2006) and Tilly (2007b), one dimension is found to be missing. Richard Snyder (2006: 227) indeed asks four questions that ought to be answered if one seeks to fully analyse a regime at hand: (1) who rules, (2) why do the rulers rule, (3) how do they rule, and (4) how much do they rule? Similarly, Tilly (2007b: 15) identifies two principal dimensions of regimes: 'democracy' and 'state capacity.' The latter dimension obviously corresponds to Snyder's fourth question. Therefore, the complete set of variables that describe a regime goes as follows:

a) the number and type of ruling actors;
b) the method of access to the ruling positions;
c) the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions;
d) the scope of publicly binding decisions.

The next step is to define the concept of *regime change*; in this case particularly, the type termed *revolution*. According to Tilly (1993: 8), "a revolution [is] a forcible transfer of power over a state in the course of which at least two distinct blocs of contenders make incompatible claims to control the state, and some significant portion of the population subject to the state's jurisdiction acquiesces in the claims of each bloc." Whereas Munck's definition of regime is tripartite, Tilly's definition of revolution is quadripartite: it refers to the environment (state), the type of actors (blocs of contenders with popular support), and the

form (use of force) of the event at hand (transfer of power). Karl and Schmitter (1991) use the same characteristics as Tilly for their four-cell matrix of ideal types of modes of regime transition:

Figure 2: Karl and Schmitter's Modes of Transition (and Level of Uncertainty)

Actors / Strategies	Compromise	Force
Elites	*Pact (Low)*	*Imposition (Middle)*
Masses	*Reform (Middle)*	*Revolution (High)*

Source: Author

The use of force and mass mobilisation may sometimes be 'contained' (McAdam et al 2001) but its presence is, in some form, required even in the case of a 'revolution from above' (Trimberger 1978). Some scholars introduce yet another characteristic feature of revolutions: they transform regimes into a qualitatively different type. Theda Skocpol (1979: 4) distinguishes between social revolutions, i.e. "rapid transformations of a society's state and class structures…" and political revolutions that "transform state structures but not social structures, and they are not necessarily accomplished through class conflict." There always remains the requirement that revolutions transform state structures; this distinguishes them from *coup d'états* that "change only leadership and perhaps policies" (Huntington 1968: 268). Skocpol thus proposes what may be called a *strong* and a *light* version of revolution. I consider both versions to be revolutions in their true sense because, from the historiographical point of view, they present breaks in the historical continuity of regimes (Sztompka 1996: 116). Conflict over values corresponds to the 'identification process' (McAdam 1982) in social mobilisation; collective action's primary goal must be to change the existing state structures, not only to overthrow the incumbent leadership or to change particular policies. This is the main distinguishing feature between revolutions and *rebellions*. Revolution is thus a political event characterised by the following features: mass mobilisation, the goal of changing the existing regime, the use of force, and transformation of political, or both social and political structures. The general variables of a political change are therefore:

a) the number and type of actors involved;
b) the ideas and motivation behind it;
c) the form of the change;
d) the scope of the change.

The variables of *regime* and *regime change* evidently are not dissimilar. Both sets of variables describe basically the same things: the identity of actors, the motives and internal rules of the actors which they follow, the form of action derived from these motives and rules, and the scope and scale of the action. Indeed, in order to encompass both the concepts of regime and revolution and to join studies of non-democratic regimes and revolutions, Snyder's (2006) four basic questions may be thus reworded:

Figure 3: Four Basic Dimensions of Non-Democratic Regimes & Regime Changes (in comparison with Linz's model)

1) Who acts?	(actor's character)	*pluralism*
2) Why do they act?	(actor's legitimisation)	*ideology*
3) How do they act?	(form of action)	*mobilisation*
4) How much do they act?	(scope of action)	

Source: Author

4. Structure

Every case-study dealing with a change of regime must, with satisfactory precision, identify the involved actors. Political actors in general may be divided into two categories: formal and informal. Or, as the polity model puts it, 'polity members' and 'challengers' (Finer 1997). However, I follow the new 'contentious politics' model (McAdam et al. 2001: 45) and make the assumption that the line between formal and informal politics is in reality blurred and even more so during times of regime change. It therefore generally treats formal and informal political actors as equal and assigns them significance according to the four dimensions discussed in the previous part. The process, how an actor comes about, is common for both formal and informal actors:

Figure 4: Model of Actor's Emergence

Structural Change →	*Attribution of Threat / Opportunity* →	*Organisational / Social Appropriation* →	*(Re-)Forming of the Actor*
1) What caused the actor (A) to emerge?	2) How A reacted and how did it change A's shape?	3) How much A reacted and to what extent?	4) Who is A at the final stage?

Source: Author

Now, it is appropriate to turn to the social changes, threats, and opportunities themselves and to explain them in the terms already used here. It should be nonetheless noted that the order of the discussion is, ontologically, more or less accidental. Putting aside the arguably merely analytical distinction between agency and structure,[1] the very purpose of the processional relationship described above is to bridge a potential gap between structural and voluntarist explanations in this study. This mechanical base of a model of regime change, I argue, is a tenable methodological tool how to link structure and agency; in other words, how to 'flip the coin' of the 'duality of structure' (Giddens 1984: 375–376).

4.1 Incentives & Rationality

In the literature on regime change, scholars describe regimes that find themselves in one of two different situations: *stable* or *unstable*. The unstable situations are called variously: 'situations of uncertainty' (Colomer 2001), 'times of instability' (Alt et al. 1988), disequilibria

(Tvedt 1997), or revolutionary situations (Tilly 1993). The meaning of these generally similar terms slightly varies, depending on the focus of analysis of a given author; it may relate to economic or cultural conditions, the state of political institutions, the emergence of political opposition, or to rulers' relations with the military. As Tilly points out, the notion of "revolutionary situation" comes directly from Leon Trotsky and his conception of 'dual power,' a situation which entails multiple sovereignty, i.e. "two or more blocs [that] make effective, incompatible claims to control the state, or to be the state" (Tilly 1993: 10). Periods of instability are those times when various incentives of a cultural (Weigle and Butterfield 1992) or economic (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006) nature may sway actors to challenge the legitimacy of existing regimes. Comparative political scientists of the structuralist school recognise a broad set of political, social, and economic conditions that may set off a political contest; scholars of social movements speak of different paths how actors come to appreciate their grievous situation.

The environment in which actors act does not cease to have a direct impact on the actors once they emerge. It provides them with threats and opportunities, to which they react, and with political tools, which they employ. No actions are taken in a social vacuum, and all dimensions that describe actors are determined by structural conditions. As Laura Desfor Edles argues, "explanatory factors cannot be reduced to subjective residual categories of elites, like pragmatism or leadership skills" (1995: 356). Yet, these residual categories are important because actors select in their repertoires of action those actions that are, in the actors' views, best for reaching their goals. The majority of contemporary political scientists, even those who do not commonly make use of rational-choice methodology, assume that human activity is goal-oriented and instrumental, and that individual and group actors try to maximise their goal achievement. Tsebelis (1991: 6) calls this fundamental assumption the 'rationality assumption.' Indeed, this assumption, which ultimately binds actors' choices, brings agency closer or even to the position of structural explanations (Tsebelis 1991: 4; Hay 2002: 103).

However, some argue that actors' actions are also influenced by non-rational means, such as 'ideological impulses' (Boudon 1986), 'false consciousness' (Engels 1968), 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1979), or 'national culture' (Almond and Verba 1963). In the proposed game-theoretical model, I formally assume that in pursuing their goals, actors always select the best of the available options; they nevertheless may sometimes act irrationally, as will be shown, owing to the influence of the environment. The assumption of rationality is thus sometimes weakened and it is acknowledged that the "historical and cultural setting in which contention occurs significantly affects its mobilisation, actors, trajectories, outcomes, and concatenations of causal mechanisms" (McAdam et al. 2001: 23). Sill, the rationality of actors constitutes the link between the two key concepts of the study of democratisation (i.e., regime and regime change) that were discussed above and a third one: democracy.

4.2 The Democratic Equilibrium

Since the times of Aristotle or Plato, there has never been a perfect consensus on a general definition of democracy; however, today's predominant view turns away from the antique triadic classification of regimes based on differences in political franchise and the concept of

the government of many, instead the prevailing definition combines Shumpeter's procedural requirement of 'competition for the people's vote' (Schumpeter 1947: 269) and Dahl's notion of democracy as "being almost completely responsible to all its citizens" (Dahl 1971: 2). Political scientists of the Schumpeterian school believe that democracy is a political institutional arrangement whose hallmark is *responsiveness* – democracy responds to the needs of society. In the same vein, Tilly writes that "a regime is democratic to the degree that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation" (Tilly 2007b: 13–14). Perpetual responsiveness of the state is supposed to be guaranteed through two political tools: one being the democratic tradition, the other the liberal tradition. Free, fair, and competitive elections are the first tool, personal freedoms "that make [elections] truly meaningful" (Diamond 2002: 21) along with limited government are the second. These tools ought to secure that democracy is truly rule by the people based on electoral legitimation and its underlying premise of equal individuals. Equality and disbelief in the natural inequality of entitlement to rule, ideas that came with the liberal thinking of the Enlightenment, thus constitute the moral foundation of modern democracy.

In the democratic tradition, any existing power structure is thus not predetermined by differing inherent characteristics of individuals, but brought about by differing circumstances in the outer world, i.e. by the present distribution of power resources. It logically follows that if the distribution of structural resources and threats was perfectly equal, all individuals would enjoy the same equal share of political power. If this is the case and democracy really is a natural equilibrium of structural resources in society, how can the existence of non-democratic regimes be explained? Why is it that in the history of humankind, democracy has never been the standard, or even the prevailing form of government? A plausible answer is that the distribution of resources that may be employed to gain political power was, for most of the time, unequal. However, as the distribution of material, intellectual, and other resources became more and more equal, political systems needed to adapt to new social conditions; power structures adapted to resource structures.

This Darwinian conception of democracy has been advocated by many political scientists who assert economic development leads to democratisation (Marx 1958; Lipset 1960; Moore 1966; Collier and Collier 1991). As Tatu Vanhanen argues, "political structures and behavior patterns have evolved in the struggle for existence and have become adapted to variable environmental conditions" (1992: 19). The concentration of resources therefore leads to authoritarian regimes, whereas a wide distribution makes the sharing of power and democracy possible. "Democratisation will take place under conditions in which power resources have become so widely distributed that no group is any longer able to suppress its competitors or to maintain its hegemony" (Vanhanen 1990: 51).

At the same time, the majority of regime change studies proclaim the belief, albeit again and again tested both theoretically (Colomer 2001; Greif and Laitin 2004) and empirically (Przeworski et al. 2000; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Benhabib and Przeworski 2006), that democracy is a more stable type of regime than authoritarianism. This belief derives from rational choice theory; democracy is ultimately considered to be a self-enforcing equilibrium of political institutions for self-interested actors, despite its apparent ('Pareto inferior') suboptimality (Przeworski 1991: 17 and 24). Rustow (1970), Di Palma (1990), and Przeworski (1991) argue that democratisation is primarily a policy alternative for political leaders, i.e. a

regime's change to democracy is a function of actor choice driven by perceptions of preferences and relative strengths. In their conception, democratisation is a short-term political process consisting of the breakdown of the old regime, a period of rule making, and the installation and consolidation of the new democracy. Political agency during transitions moves regimes from the state of an old equilibrium, which no longer exists, to the state of a new equilibrium. In the field of political philosophy, this 'self-enforcing equilibrium' theory is grounded in the concept of the Rawlsian veil (Rawls 1971).

4.3 The Emergence of Non-Democracy

From the characterisation of democracy drawn above, it follows that non-democratic regimes may be defined, in a minimal, procedural way, as those unresponsive to the general will, without electoral legitimation and without limited government; the worst breed of these regimes are totalitarian. Whereas democracy is considered to be one end of the spectrum of political regimes, totalitarianism is considered the opposite. The moral assumption of democracy that all individuals are entitled to rule is inverted in totalitarianism: only one individual alone is the lawful and legitimate ruler. In the dimension of liberal freedoms, totalitarian inversion means that the ruler has all-embracing control.

If democracy represents equilibrium of political institutions and reflects a wide distribution of power resources, in non-democratic regimes, power resources are distributed unequally. Historically, the vast majority of states have been built under the circumstances of high-level inequality. However, as the modernisation thesis postulates, economic development leads to increased education and enlarges the middle class, which in turn expands "receptivity to democratic political tolerance" (Lipset 1960: 83–84). It would that at some point, where the distribution of power resources is equal enough and the middle class sufficiently enlarged, all regimes should turn and ultimately remain democratic. How then can the emergence of non-democratic regimes in previously democratic states be explained?

The first cause of such turns away from democracy is the *stateness* problem. Following Weber's (Gerth and Mills 1970: 77) classic definition of the state, Tilly argues that "an organisation which controls the population occupying a definite territory is a state in so far as (1) it is differentiated from other organisations operating in the same territory; (2) it is autonomous; (3) its divisions are formally coordinated with one another" (1975: 70). Linz and Stepan (1996: 16–37) plausibly distinguished two distinct parts of Tilly's definition. First, the prerequisite of international recognition of the territorial sovereignty of a state; second, a sufficient level of national identity, i.e. the process of nation-building reaches the stage when, as Weber writes, "it is proper to expect from certain groups a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups" (Whimster 2003: 146). The fact that democratisation may sometimes be hindered by deficits in nation-building has been widely acknowledged after the fall of Soviet-type regimes in the late 1980s and 1990s (Offe 1991; Przeworski et al. 1995; Dawisha and Parrott 1997; Leff 1999). A problematic nation-building process may put an end to state-building and thus severely diminish the degree of 'state capacity' (Tilly 2007b). In essence, the problem of stateness is one of legitimacy. No matter how responsive, i.e. democratic, a regime may be, no matter how much it fulfils the procedural criteria of democracy, "the people cannot decide until somebody decides who are the people" (Jennings 1956: 56). In Linz and Stepan's view,

"democracy is a form of governance of a modern state. Thus, without a state, no modern democracy is possible" (1996: 17).

The second cause of a modern non-democratic regime is its possible *fittingness* into the contemporary international order. It also includes the case where a larger state exerts pressure on its smaller neighbour by stirring up irredentist or separatist aspirations among some groups of the population. In most cases, nevertheless, the pressure put on a state to either democratise, or on the contrary, to give up democratic practices and install an authoritarian regime, is of a direct economic or military nature and its justification varies. A wide range of international factors is present among the variables affecting democratisation: 'colonial rule,' 'intervention,' 'cultural diffusion,' 'demonstration effect,' (Diamond et al. 1990) or 'snowballing effect,' (Huntington 1991). Douglas Chalmers even proposes the concept of 'internationalised domestic politics' with 'internationally based actors' (1993: 1). Even though Ulfelder and Lustik find little evidence in their statistical analysis that the international environment has some effect on prospects for a transition to democracy, they themselves admit that it is principally because there is no precise method of measuring (2007: 368). Direct military pressure from abroad, international resources and support for domestic actors, cultural diffusion, zeitgeist; all these factors play a prominent role in regime change and therefore ought to be incorporated into its theoretical model.

4.4 Regime Stability

What then constitutes a stable regime? The three dimensions of regime stability that should be in equilibrium are:

(1) Responsiveness
(2) Stateness
(3) Fittingness

In the proposed model, the process of how actors emerge stands at the centre of a regime's stability. All social changes that bring actors may be and, indeed, later are, divided into the three categories above. In other words, all social changes which the following case study expressly or implicitly describes constitute threats to regime stability; for its purposes, there is no reason to take into account other, non-destabilising changes.

What is most curious about this three-dimensional model is that only one dimension, *responsiveness*, refers directly to the degree of democracy in a regime. The degree of responsiveness is covariant with the degree of democratisation. In the dimension of *stateness*, the form of regime is only of lesser importance, although democracies usually cope better with irredentism and challenges to state legitimacy; the democratic framework is supposed to be more flexible and open to the demands of national minorities (Ekiert 1991: 290–1; Linz and Stepan 1996: 233), whereas some totalitarian systems cannot be reconciled with national identities at all (Schöpflin 1993: 143). The logic of the relationship between state and regime is obvious: if the state is not legitimate and stable, neither is the regime. As regards the third dimension, *fittingness*, the international environment may sometimes render democratisation utterly impossible. In the past democracies simply did not fit into the global political system as it was and the super-powers put an end to any democratisation in their neighbourhood. On the other hand, the recent trend might well be quite the con-

trary, whereby democracy comes to be imposed on some part of the world (Enterline and Greig 2007).

5. Model of Regime Change

A regime's stability is thus tri-dimensional and all structural changes that cause actors to emerge fit into one of the dimensions. Only when a new actor emerges, or when one that has so far been politically irrelevant increases its power, is the stability of regime is threatened. "Democracies [and other regimes] are created not by causes but by causers" (Huntington 1991: 108). In this model, every regime change is a politically driven transition from one class to another. Correspondingly with the assumption of rationality, actors choose those structural resources that will enable them to reach their goals with the highest efficiency – these goals are contingent on the four-dimensional characteristics of each actor. Based on the preceding line of reasoning, i.e. on the assumption of rationality of both structure and agency, the following classifications are proposed.

First, a classification of actors, i.e. agency, according to their relation towards the existing regime:

Figure 5: Four-Dimensional Classification of Actors of Regime Change

1) Who acts? *(numerical dimension)*	***I. Individuals***
	II. Cells (< 100 individuals, approx.) small clusters of close relations, face-to-face interaction, common goal or collective body in structure
	III.Networks (100+ individuals) indirect ties, generated by joint involvement in specific activities, without face-to-face interaction
2) Why do they act? *(motivational dimension)*	***I. Hold*** maintain status quo
	II.Shift partial/gradual change of regime
	III.Break complete break with existing order
3) How do they act? *(behavioural dimension)*	***I.Passive*** representing a group or preference, no direct interaction with other actors
	II.Active characteristic for formal actors (parties), persuasing other actors, argumentation
	III.Violent coercion of free will of other actors, 'via revolucionara'
4) How much do they act? *(spatial dimension)*	***I.Political*** drive for political control only
	II.Politico-Economic drive for control in politics and economy
	III.Politico-Economico-Cultural power monopoly over the entire society, totalitarian ideology

Source: Author

Second, a classification of regimes and regime changes, i.e. structure:

Figure 6: Typology of Regime Changes (Based on the Dominant Actor)

		Who	Why	How	How Much	
1	Status Quo		Hold			
2	Pact	Cell	Shift	Active	P	move by 1 regime class
3	Reform	Cell/Net	Shift	Active	P(/E)	move by 1–2 classes
4	Coup	Cell	Shift	Violent	P(/E)	move by 1–2 classes
5	Rebellion	Network	Shift	Violent	P(/E)	move by 1–2 classes
6	Revolution	Network	Break	Violent	P/E	move by 3–6 classes
7	Great Revolution	Network	Break	Violent	P/E/C	move by 3–6 classes

Typology of Regimes

		Incentives for Civic Mobilisation	Rules of Political Process	Extent of Control	Ruler
1	Liberal Democracy	Active	Hold	P	Network
2	Electoral/Authoritarian Democracy	Active	Shift	P(/E)	Network/Cell
3	Semi-Authoritarianism	Passive	Break	P/E	Network/Cell
4	Authoritarianism	Passive	Break	P/E	Cell
5	Mobilising/Totalitarian Authoritarianism	Violent	Break	P/E(/C)	Cell
6	Quasi-Totalitarianism	Violent	Shift	P/E/C	Cell/Individual
7	Totalitarianism	Violent	Hold	P/E/C	Individual

Source: Author

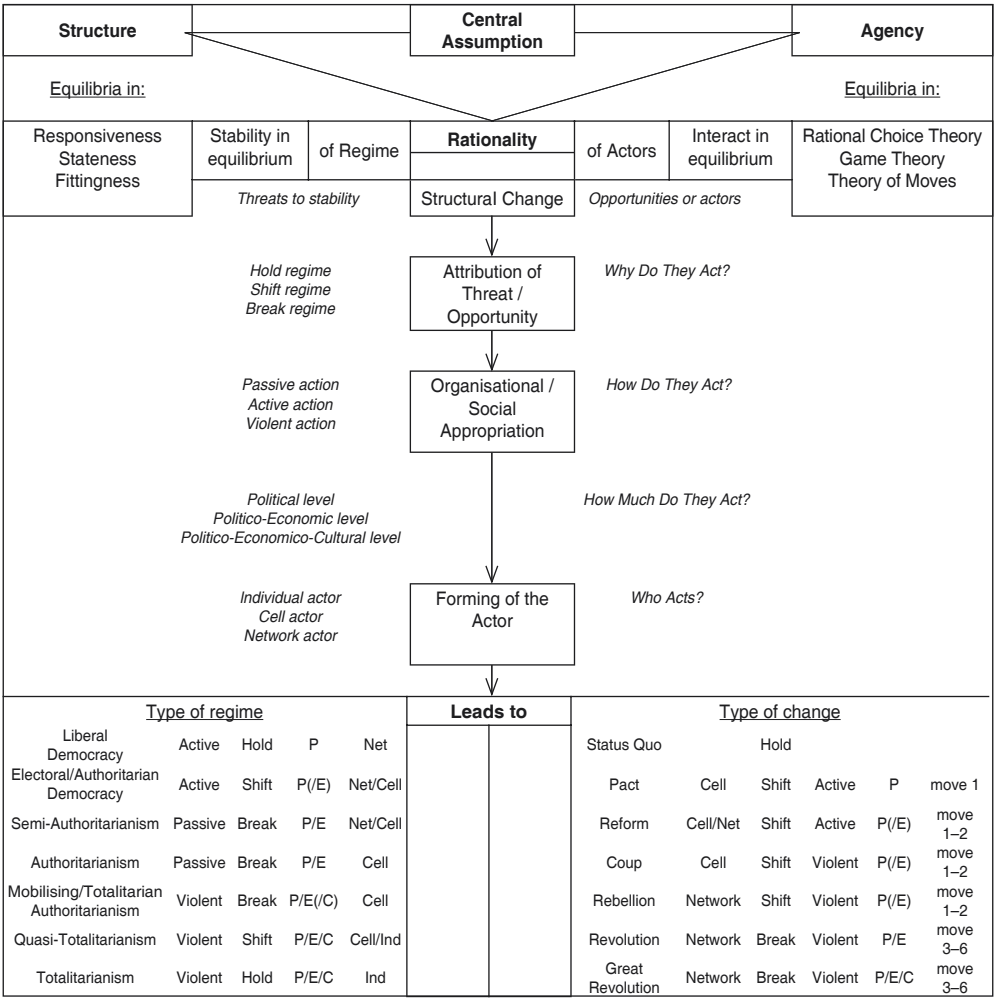
Whereas regime changes are classified according to the dominant actor of the change and different types of political change as observed by Huntington, the classification of regimes is based partially on Linz's taxonomy of authoritarianisms, partially on general terms commonly understood by the scholars of non-democratic regimes. Since the presented model aims to describe regime changes and not regimes themselves, some blurred categories from other typologies, i.e. electoral democracies and ambiguous regimes in Larry Diamond's typology of hybrid regimes, and Linz – Skilling's subtle distinctions between post-totalitarianisms, are in the proposed classification merged into one class; for its purposes, seven classes suffice. These two classifications of regimes and regime changes are employed in the following case study of Czechoslovakia in 1989, where they provide its structural framework.

To complete the model, only one step remains: to select a formal methodological framework through which the rational behaviour of actors in a regime may by analysed. I employ game theory for its analytical rigour and its theoretical potential to achieve a "prediction regarding the outcome of interaction among human beings using only data on the order of events, combined with a description of the players' preferences over the feasible outcomes of the situation" (Rubinstein 1991: 923). The actors choose their strategies to maximise their outcomes, while trying to reach the equilibrium of the game. In a game, any state is defined as the set of strategies and eventually of beliefs held by the actors. An equilibrium state is defined as a steady state, i.e. a stable state in the absence of external perturbations. Equilibria are the recurring theme of this paper as functioning democracy is considered to be a regime in equilibrium. Behavior in equilibrium means that the actors involved in a course of action are considered as not having any incentives to deviate from this course. This assumption supports

the rationality assumption in the way that, "if a rational actor had an incentive to deviate (that is, to improve his or her condition) from the previous behavior, that behavior was by definition not optimal (Tsebelis 1990: 41)." In addition to classical game theory, Steven Brams's 'theory of moves' (1990: 101–136), in which actors have knowledge of the starting state of the game and make sequential and alternate, rather than simultaneous, moves is put to use in order to explain more precisely the complicated nature of actors' behaviour during a regime change.

Graphically, the proposed model then may be depicted this way:

Figure 7: General Model of Regime Change



Source: Author

6. Czechoslovakia, 1989

After the Prague Spring of 1968 and the subsequent invasion, Czechoslovakia underwent a process of 'normalisation' of the regime: in 1969, 40,000 functionaries, policy-makers, and technocrats labelled by Moscow as counterrevolutionaries were screened and half of them ultimately dismissed. In 1970, during the exchange of Party cards, 326,000 CPC members were refused a new card, among other reasons to secure Husák's re-election as First Secretary at the 14th CPC Congress in May 1971. Finally, in the days before the November 1971 Parliamentary elections to the re-organised Federal Assembly, the might of the Husák regime fully hit Czechoslovak society in order to silence what remained of the public opposition.

The federalisation of Czechoslovakia was to become one of the few, and probably the most significant, remaining feature of the liberalization of the 1960s. The pro-reform Slovaks were indeed in 1968 driven at least to the same degree by their aspiration to balance Czech dominance in the state as much as by a desire for economic reform; most probably, even more by the first than the latter (Leff 1988: 124). Because economic reform was essentially a Czech-devised enterprise, and the most liberal ideas emerged in the Czech lands, the Czech elite was persecuted more than the Slovak, with "the result that the Czech intelligentsia was pushed into dissent, while the Slovaks compromised and collaborated with the regime" (Eyal 2003: XX). More than 80% of the 136,000 high-ranking functionaries that had quit or been expelled before January 1970 were Czechs and the 9,000 local pro-reform Party cells abolished in 1969–1971 were almost all in Czech lands (Williams 1997: 233 and 235). Moreover, the temporal coincidence of the Soviet invasion and the federalisation "was widely interpreted as a sign of Soviet imposition "of the constitutional arrangement (Elstner 1995: 110) and reduced its legitimacy in the Czechs' view. The *stateness* problem of Czechoslovakia that had troubled the country since its birth therefore remained unresolved and was bound to press the regime for years to come.

After the initial silencing of the opposition in the early-1970s, the 'normalised' regime adopted the post-totalitarian strategy of a 'social contract' with the population. In addition to fulfilment of the Slovak desire for national recognition, with all its benefits, symbolic and political, the whole Czechoslovak society was to be appeased by economic measures and material rewards, a strategy similar to that of the Polish or Hungarian model.[2] Indeed, the economy seemed to gain new impetus by the late-1960s economic reform steps. Those steps however were all abandoned after a governmental decision in July 1971 and the Czechoslovak economic system returned to the point where it had started seven years before (Kyn 1975: 113). This reversion not only led to a gradual rise of popular discontent with the performance of the economy in Czechoslovakia, which arguably never reached the level triggering a Daviesian 'revolutionary action' (Davies 1962), but, with a striking resemblance to the 1960s, resulted in a widening gap between the interests of business elites on one side, and the political elites on the other. As Turek (1995: 68) argues, the renewed over-centralisation of economic planning led to a situation where the interests of low and middle-level management became identical with the demands of the workers; in other words, they all wanted the lion's share of centrally allocated resources. Lest its ideological basis and legitimacy should be challenged, the Husák regime was delimited by the pre-1968 economic system and could not carry out any substantial reform. The looming rift between economic and political elites ought to be noticed as a ticking time bomb and an indicator of the lack of *responsiveness* of the regime.

Many economists that studied regime changes in East Central Europe (Adam 1995; Mlčoch 1990) believe that the reason behind the diverging views of elites was the waning ideological commitment of managers to the Communist idea of mass collectivity. This was a phenomenon that in Czechoslovakia extended over the society at large. If the Novotný regime was weakened by the thought that Socialism in Czechoslovakia may be improved, its errors retrieved, wrongs righted, and the system reformed, by the era of Husák as First Secretary, Marxism-Leninism had become bankrupt and the perversion of the concept of Socialism during normalisation deprived it of any constructive meaning. From the early 1970s, the society was in a state of resignation from politics. For ordinary Czechoslovak citizens, accepting the regime and publicly showing their loyalty meant making a sacrifice which would lead to a peaceful life (Havel 1990). The strategy of appeasing society with material benefits and turning a blind eye to the blatant exploitation of patronage meant a constant drain on the Czechoslovak economy and led to a wide-spread cynicism towards the state. Between the rulers and the ruled, an unspoken agreement was formed, in which the latter promised to behave and follow the orders as long as they did not have to work hard and still be relatively well-off.

Nonetheless, material benefits and consumerism alone would not have been enough to secure public order and conformity with an authoritarian and, moreover, externally-imposed regime. The CPC leadership between 1968 and 1989 perfected the use of carrot and stick alternately. Even though the regime did not employ excessive, large-scale violence as in the 1950s, the Party exercised its control over society by the more subtle, but no less coercive means of constant police surveillance, officially-sanctioned bullying and persecution of not only political opponents themselves, but also their friends and family members. in 1974, the Federal Assembly adopted the new National Security Corps Act which identified as the principal mission of the police "to protect the Socialist constitution of Czechoslovakia" (Churáň 2000: 315). A major share of the activities to control the society was carried out by State Security: between 1968 and 1989, the number of collaborators with the State Security ranged from 11,000 to 13,000 (Milan 2000: 35), with virtually every even potential cell of regime opposition infiltrated. What is more, the ghost of the invasion of 1968 still loomed large both over the society and the political leadership, with a Soviet army of 85,000 troops remaining in the country and the Czechoslovak Army fully under the control of the Warsaw Pact command. After the purge of the early-1970s, there was hardly any real political opposition against the regime in Czechoslovakia itself. Quite the contrary, the people of Czechoslovakia apparently resigned themselves to the life under Soviet control and in the years 1971–1975 and 1976–1981, the CPC's ranks increased by another 334,000 and 321,000 members, respectively (Renner 1988: 110).

In the early post-1968, regime opposition consisted mostly of former pro-reform politicians and intellectuals, who wanted to salvage all that remained from 'Socialism with a Human Face.' After mass arrests in 1972, these opposition centres were crushed and dismantled for good, and between 1972 and 1975, voices of dissidence could be heard only from exiles and foreign broadcasts, but not from Czechoslovakia itself. In the mid-1970s, the 'Socialist' opposition was thus superseded by the 'Civic' opposition, rallied from 1977 onwards around the Citizens' Initiative Charter 77 and human rights issues (Otáhal 2002: 68–69). Once again, intellectuals, academics, and artists, "the groups most handicapped by the normalisation" (Otáhal 1994: 21) backfired under the regime's pressure and step-by-step formed the core

of the opposition. It was the identity and framing potential (Glenn 1999: 201) of the Charter that brought about the almost hysterical response of the regime. Even though six months after the publication of Charter '77 the number of its signatories had not yet reached 750 (Renner 1988: 120) and had not exceeded 2,000 before late-1989 (Bradley 1992: 21), with most of the signatories furthermore opposed to the idea of transforming the movement into a structured organisation with clear political goals (Tucker et al. 2000: 425), the Chartists still, at the end of the 1980s, emerged as a significant political actor, a *cell actively* promoting a *political shift*, threatening the unchangeable foundations of the normalised regime.

That the Charter eventually came to the position of the main anti-regime force was the result of subtle, evolutionary changes both in Czechoslovakia and abroad. Firstly, in the mid-1980s, the societal climate of resignation in the country began to change as the new generation, not branded by the actual experience of the '68 Prague Spring and its consequences came of age. The new generation found the system of the Czechoslovak social contract highly unsatisfying (Možný 1999: 74–78), which manifested itself in the rise of student movements and various independent post-material initiatives (Vaněk and Otáhal 1999: 17). The youth represented a natural ally to the opposition groups from artistic and intellectual circles; not restrained by day-to-day worries of family life, as a Prague body of the CPC stated in one of its weekly reports, "students were not afraid to criticise" (Otáhal 2003: 63).

As the opposition movement of Charter 77 and related civic groups was predominantly a Czech affair and did not stretch beyond the borders of Bohemia and Moravia, the situation in the Slovak republic was incomparably less favourable to regime change than in its Czech counterpart. Former pro-reform politicians and academics therefore did not play such a substantial role in the post-1968 opposition in Slovakia; independent artists and writers filled their places (Kmeť 2005: 42). Another major difference between the Czech and Slovak opposition was the significant presence of the Catholic Church in the latter. The Church in Czechoslovakia was effectively paralysed during normalisation and cannot be rated among opposition centres until the late-1980s. Still, there existed an underground network of anti-regime activities, disguised by the official image of a state-subjugated Church (Cuhra 2005: 70), which had in time evolved into an important part of the Czechoslovak opposition movement. In a study of the 1989 regime change in Czechoslovakia, both the youth and members of the Catholic Church ought to be therefore marked as threats to regime stability and burdens on the regime's *responsiveness*, that later set grounds for the *network* of actors *actively* seeking a *change* in the *politico-economic-cultural* form of the regime.

However, these factors alone would not have brought down Husák, if it had not been for a concurring major development in the *fittingness* dimension of the regime. Indeed, that development directly affected all the emerging political actors that would be involved in the upcoming power struggle. Basically, two types of external factors that had an impact on the regime in Czechoslovakia in the mid and late-1980s can be distinguished: first, those originating inside the Socialist bloc of Eastern European countries, second, those coming from the West. These factors were, to a greater or lesser degree, common to all regime changes in East-Central Europe (Ladrech and Wegs 1996: 235).

In the late-1970s, a public opposition formed in Poland and, to a lesser extent, in Hungary. The opposition criticised the one-party political system and demanded economic liberalisation. In Poland, the situation culminated in open protests and the birth of the Solidarity trade

union in 1980. This encouraged the opposition in neighbouring countries as well, and anti-regime movements emerged throughout the whole region. Nevertheless, the wheels of regime change had not been turning until 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev took the office of General Secretary of the Soviet Communist party. As a response to the critical Soviet economic performance, Gorbachev introduced perestroika and glasnost, giving his blessing to liberalisation in Eastern Europe. Lastly, in 1989, Gorbachev proclaimed a policy of nonintervention (Cipkowski 1991: 10). The snowballing effect of the political development in Poland and Hungary (Huntington 1991: 45) and the 'Gorbachev' factor (Saxonberg 2001: 127) thus were the two most important stimuli from the Eastern bloc that put pressure on the Husák regime in the late-1980s.

From the other side of the Iron Curtain, two other factors significantly contributed to regime change: the newly-adopted democracy-promoting policy of the Vatican helped the clergy of the Socialist bloc to overcome obstacles imposed on them by state control (Huntington 1991: 58). From a 'Church of catacombs,' (Renner 1988: 157) with small clandestine communities developed in the late-1980s, a mass movement emerged publicly demanding a change in the treatment of believers and human rights policies.

Figure 8: Emergence of Actors – Czechoslovakia 1989

CS89	Responsiveness	Stateness	Fittingness
Why	Rigid legitimacy; Economic crisis; Ideological dissent	Federal constitution	Economic crisis; Second Vatican Council
How	Material incentives; Police control; Cultural opposition	Minority veto	Perestroika; Active policy; Liberalisation
Much	Rigid control over society; Cells of dissent at all levels	Potentially obstructed formal political process	Snowballing effect; Revival of Church in Eastern bloc
Who	Hardliners; Reformists; Dissidents; Youth	Czechs	Gorbachev's leadership; Vatican; Poland & Hungary

Source: Author

A second major factor that came from the Western world was the increasing flow of information which exposed Czechoslovak governmental sources as releasing inaccurate data, to say the least, about the relatively poor living standards in the country. That only added to the growing public discontent over the state's handling of social and human rights matters and incompetent bureaucracy; the social contract no longer had any meaning if one party did not perform its obligations (Brown et al. 2000: 15).

Not all of the Party officials were ignorant of the threat that economic decline posed to the regime though. After Gorbachev's rise to power and his first pro-reform speeches at the Party Congress in February-March 1986 (Gill 1991: 239), in which he advocated greater enterprise autonomy and used terms such as "perestroika," "self-management," or "democratisation" (Saskwa 1990: 6), the Czechoslovak reformists saw their chance to take over the Party leadership and introduce a new economic policy.

No later than in March 1986, after the 17th CPC Congress, divisions appeared inside the Party, giving rise to four distinguishable factions:

- the young genuine reformists, who had not taken part in the purges of the normalisation, were not bound by the anti-reformist legitimacy of the Husák leadership and endorsed Gorbachev's call for perestroika and glasnost without reservation,
- the technocrats from the Federal Government, led by Prime Minister Štrougal, who were responsible for national economic performance and felt the need for economic reforms more urgently,
- the pragmatic apparatchiki like Ladislav Adamec, who also owed their careers to the normalisation purges, but remained in the shadow of more prominent figures of the regime and may have been willing to support moderate reforms,
- the orthodox hard-liners around Biľak, Indra, or Kapek, those most involved with the unchangeable foundations of the normalised regime, who were the least enthusiastic about following the Soviet example.

Figure 9: Actors in Czechoslovakia 1989 (5: Totalitarian Authoritarianism)

Actor	Type	First Preference	Second Preference	Move to Type of Regime
Adamec Camp (AC)	Cell	Hold	Shift	Type 4
Štrougal Camp (SC)	Cell	Shift	Hold	Type 4
Jakeš Camp (JC)	Cell	Hold	Break	Type 6
Civic Forum (CF)	Network	Break	Shift	Types 1–2
Marián Čalfa (MC)	Individual	Shift	Hold	Type 3

Source: Author

The conflict between the pro-reform group and the conservative hard-liners escalated in mid-1987, when the expectancy of a change in the office of First Secretary rose noticeably higher. The choice of who would succeed aging Husák was to indicate whether Czechoslovakia would follow the rest of the Socialist bloc in their reform steps, or maintain its conservative attitude. Since January 1987, when minor changes in the federal economic policies were vigorously pushed through by the Prime Minister (Stenographic record 1988: 8), the reformist had championed Štrougal, whereas the hard-liners had agreed on the Presidium's Economic Secretary Miloš Jakeš as their candidate for the highest post. When Gorbachev's visit to Prague in April 1987 did not answer the question who would be a more acceptable successor to Husák, and the Soviet leader refused to openly support reforms in Czechoslovakia (Sakwa 1990: 340), the decisive clash came in November-December 1987, when Husák was finally forced to resign his Party post. As it turned out, the pragmatists now turned the scales. Firstly, on November 18th, Adamec himself proposed the resignation of Husák, arguing that a new political course demanded that a new person would hold the Party's leading position. Husák, evidently caught off guard by Adamec's unprecedented enterprise, eventually gave up and agreed with the Presidium members that there would be a new man-in-charge (Suk 1999: 25–27). At that moment, Adamec stepped in for the second time and nominated Jakeš, to the annoyance of the Štrougal camp and the benefit of the hard-liners. The change in leadership was sanctioned a month later, at a Central Committee meeting on December 18th.

Game 1: Adamec Camp's 1st Move

SH: reformist position, favoured by society
SS: reforms carried out by Štrougal's government
HS: reformists weakened
HH: status quo, no reforms
HB: rupture between CPC and society
SB. Jakeš crushes opposition, Adamec's ouster

(equilibrium, **reality**)

Jakeš Camp (JC) Preferences

1: HH	2: HS	3: BH	4: BS

	Break	Hold
Hold	3; 2	**4; 4**
Shift	1; 1	2; 3

Adamec Camp (AC) Preferences (pre-/post-Nov-87)

1: HH	2: HB	3: SH	4: SB
1: SH	2: HH	3: SS	4: HS

Hold	Shift	
3; 2	4; 1	Hold
1; 3	2; 4	Shift

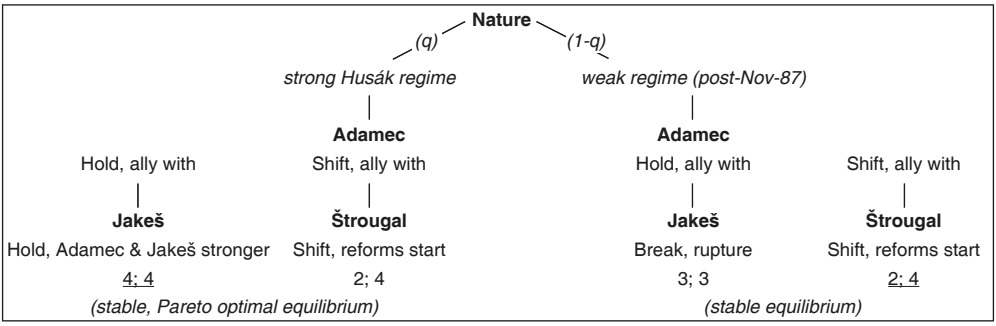
Štrougal Camp (SC) Preferences

1: SS	2: SH	3: HH	4: HS

Source: Author

Why did Adamec side with Jakeš and not with Štrougal? And was there a chance that – under different circumstances – he would have supported the reformists? Game 1 shows the reasoning of Adamec when supporting the Biľak camp (with the old guard of hard-liners Hoffman, Indra, Kapek Kempný) against the pro-reform faction (Colotka Pitra, Štrougal). The characteristics of the respective *cells* of actors were as follows: whereas the hard-liners favoured *holding* the status quo, and since 1968 had never shrunk from using *violent* means to keep the existing regime unchanged, the technocratic-reformist group proposed a moderate *shift* in the *politico-economic* circumstances in Czechoslovakia (with the young reformists being in favour of a more radical shift), arguably, not willing to employ more than an *active* form of action. Lastly, the pragmatists had already proved during the normalisation that they were capable of *violent* suppression of the opposition and could therefore readily join the ranks of the anti-reform politicians, discarding for the moment the needed *politico-economic* shift and opting for a *political* solution of the crisis in the Presidium: a *shift* from a divided leadership to a united leadership of hard-liners:

Game 1: Situation pre- and post-November 1987 (extensive form)



Source: Author

Once again, Bayes's Theorem is used in the model with Nature deciding over two possible states of the world. The right-hand subgame shows the situation when the Husák regime appeared strong enough to survive the immediate crisis of legitimacy and growing public discontent, without any reforms taking place. Analogously, the left-hand subgame would be played if the un-reformed regime faced an inevitable breakdown and was forced into a violent conflict with society. If the former was the case, Adamec had a chance to oust Štrougal, assume his position in the Party hierarchy and still reserve the option to carry out necessary reforms at some time in the future (HS). However, if the regime was about to collapse, there existed a chance that those who would help to successfully transform Czechoslovakia in a less authoritarian state, would later benefit from the outcome. For Adamec the choice of supporting reforms was thus the more profitable the more likely the regime was to break down. What nonetheless ought to be stressed is that, according to the presumption of rationality and the equilibria of the game, the *second-least* desired outcome for the pragmatists, if they chose to back the reformists, had to equal or surpass the *best* outcome if they chose not to. In November 1987, actually only a few events indicated that Czechoslovakia was at a turning point toward a non-Communist regime (Wheaton and Kavan 1992: 25). Open public expressions of mass regime opposition would not occur until 1988 and even Gorbachev's visit might have been interpreted as a case for Jakeš (Smith 1992: 326). Opinions about the degree of economic crisis distinctly differed (Saxonberg 2001: 77). The probability of (1-q) might have therefore appeared considerably low.

However, a few weeks later, Adamec's assessment of the actual state of the world might have already been different. In December 1987, first demonstrations of mass public discontent appeared and the process of organising a large-scale opposition against the regime was gaining momentum, to which the hard-line regime responded with police brutality. During 1987–1989, the crisis of public discontent was escalating, displays of regime opposition were now in Czechoslovakia practically a daily routine and, prompted by the October-November 1989 development in neighbouring East Germany, the Czechoslovak citizens finally took to overthrow the regime in the well-documented November 'Velvet Revolution'.

Figure 10: Levels of opposition Mobilisation Preceding Regime Concessions

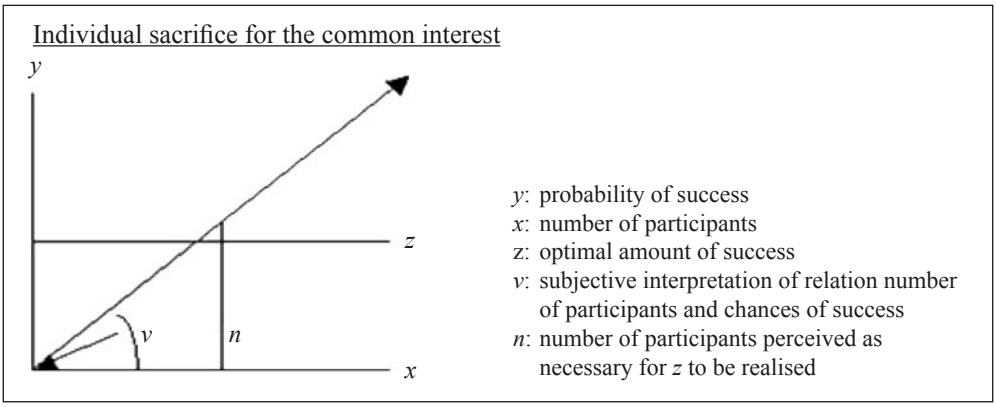
Concession	Cumulative opposition in percent of population
Regime stops arrests of Chartists	1.03
Government resigns	11.42
Husák resigns, CPC surrenders power	61.08

Source: Francisco (1993: 669)

What moved students and ultimately the whole population to cease to obey the social contract, go on strike, and form a revolutionary *network*, calling for an abrupt *politico-economic break* of the regime, employing economic *violence* as its form of action? Students were aware of the need for support of their demands, should the strike succeed. Even if they could persuade their fellow-students outside the independent organisations (which they could) and involve academics, intellectuals and artists in the strike (which they also did), would they be

able to attract an apathetic civil society, especially the workers – the Marxist-Leninist cornerstone of Communist power? In the end, they were able to do so because of the simplest reason: even for the working class, in the fall of 1989, "the cost of toleration [of the regime] was greater than the cost of intervention" (Dahl 1971: 15). The situation was sufficiently desperate for a participant in the strike to presume that any outcome of this violent action would be better than the initial state; in such a case, the individual's highest payoff and personal preference is the common good he wants to achieve:

Figure 11: Rationality of Mass Movement

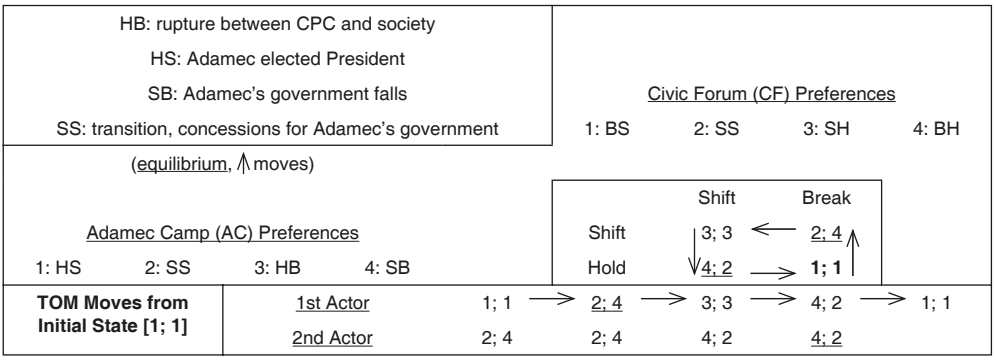


Source: Lervik (2001)

When a mass demonstration took place on Monday, 20 November, the Party leadership was stunned and incapable of action. The Presidium did not meet until later that day and resolved nothing but to call an extraordinary Central Committee meeting for Friday, 24 November. On Tuesday, the Politburo decided to call in the People's Militia, yet without giving any orders to act. A military solution nevertheless constituted a threat to the opposition, together with a potential intervention of Soviet troops in the country. At the Friday Central Committee meeting, Prime Minister Adamec ultimately came to the conclusion that whatever he would do, he had to do it without the unrealistic Party leaders and take the initiative in the ruling bloc (Suk 2003: 44).

Meanwhile, the Civic Forum (CF) had become the centre of the opposition and absorbed all anti-regime groups, including the Student Strike Committee. The key role in this organisation was played by Czech dissidents, artists, ex-Communists, and the Chartists in particular, under the unquestionable dominance of Václav Havel. Together with students and the Church, they formed a loosely connected, regime break-seeking network, where the leading cell (i.e. the so-called 'Coordinating Center') had to face the radical demands of the revolutionary ranks on one side, and the political reality of the CPC's remaining power to suppress society by violent means on the other. Thus, they entered into a negotiation game with Prime Minister Adamec, standing up for him against the radical opposition camp and maintaining its policy to treat him as "the current representative of the ruling bloc" (Suk 2003: 46).

Game 2: Adamec Camp vs Civic Forum



Source: Author

In this classic game of Chicken, which took place between 26 November and 3 December and ended in the '15 Communists + 5 non-Communists' new government, the worst possible outcome for both actors would unarguably be a violent suppression of the opposition by the CPC, crushing the CF as well as stripping Adamec from his momentary position of power as the man-in-charge (HB). A better pay-off for Adamec and the CF in the game would be secured if both actors opted for moderate reforms, i.e. a gradual regime change with the incumbents in charge, a solution similar to Poland or Hungary (SS). However, thanks to the nature of the game, which offers two pure strategy equilibria, a different one preferred by each actor, the game resulted in Adamec's 'treachery' towards the CF (HS). In early-December, the Prime Minister preferred to hold the status quo and put the CF under more pressure, probably to strengthen his bid for the Presidential office, which he had at that time already chosen to be his 'principal' game arena (Suk 2003: 119).

Thus, the CF was caught off guard. So far, the talks were held mainly about the Federal and national governments. The Presidency was a delicate issue – the person who filled the post would represent the direction of transition: either toward a new Prague Spring, or to reintegration into the West. To take up a particular historical legacy was crucial, for 'the Velvet Revolution' "was characterised by an almost complete lack of progressive, prospective ideas" (Habermas 1990: 162). On 7 December, Adamec resigned from his post and stood as the new head of the CPC. An important problem emerged before the CF. For a transition by agreement is necessary "…the weakness or absence of maximalist actors…because their participation causes disequilibrium and political instability" (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 19) and the Party's activity thus posed a menace to democracy. Suspicions about conspiracy arose in the opposition (Suk 2003: 210–211) and the contest for the presidency affected its unity, for "the one group more likely to be divided against itself than the leaders of a decaying authoritarian government are the opposition leaders who aspire to replace them" (Huntington 1991: 157). The gap between the Czech and Slovak opposition widened and culminated in an internal conflict about the CF's presidential candidate. Václav Havel, or one of the '68 reformists, Alexander Dubček?

Also the change in the post of Federal Prime Minister contributed to the fact that the former was selected for the candidacy in the end. Adamec's protégé and successor Marián Čalfa was a

Slovak and, customarily, the Presidency and the federal head of government were supposed to be divided between both federated nations. And, in the sequel, Čalfa was by the CF regarded as a suitable Prime Minister for all the transitional period.

How could a man from the Adamec camp become the Prime Minister of the transitional government? Čalfa officially governed the country from 10 December, the very day of Gustáv Husák's resignation from the Presidency, thereby becoming head of the State Security Council, the armed forces, and co-administrating the Ministry of Interior. Moreover, as the executor of specific presidential powers, he was competent to grant a pardon to Havel, who was still under probation, and thus to remove the last official barrier for Havel's presidential nomination. During a secret meeting, Čalfa furthermore offered Havel a very tempting prospect – he believed that he could persuade the MPs of the Federal Assembly to co-opt new members from the opposition and elect Havel as President. The Assembly was still under Communist control and thanks to the complex constitutional framework, the CF needed almost 90 per cent of seats to pass important acts and secure Havel's victory. And now, Čalfa promised it would happen before Christmas (Suk 2003: 226):

Game 3: Čalfa's Game

BS: revolution, no concessions to CPC
SS: regime change, concessions to Čalfa's government
SH: CF held back, potentially Polish scenario
BH: crisis prolonged

(equilibrium, **reality**)

Marián Čalfa (MC) Preferences			
1: HS	2: SS	3: HB	4: SH

Civic Forum (CF) Preferences			
1: BS	2: SS	3: BH	4: SH

	Shift	Break
Shift	**3; 3**	1; 4
Hold	4; 1	2; 2

Source: Author

Čalfa was a pragmatist, who understood the point of student demands in November very quickly. He was originally a member of the Adamec camp, but diverged from its hold-the-regime preference. When Adamec selected Čalfa as his successor, he was not aware of the fact that he had chosen a reformist, who would eventually end Adamec's political career. Čalfa, who saw the unstoppable CF's drive for power, deliberately abandoned the 'Polish model' of power transfer and, according to the contingent strategy he agreed on with Havel during their meeting on December 15th, 1989, settled for the second best outcome. If an iterated game is considered, Čalfa could have changed his strategy and reached his preferred outcome within a Pareto optimal strongly stable equilibrium, when the other actor has no intention to change his or her strategy. In an iterated game with the CF, he would have only caused a cycle-game, if we consider one with infinite iterations. His information was complete, which led him to make the move he did. In a classic Prisoner's Dilemma game, he settled for the position of leader of a transitional government and, by mutual cooperation with Havel, reached the desired outcome of a radical regime change with concessions for the leaving incumbents (SS).

Thus, in the formal matrix, even the last move of the whole series of games that constituted the 1989 regime change in Czechoslovakia did not deviate from the assumption of individual

rationality, which lies in the basis of the proposed model – and without this rationality, the regime change would apparently prove much more problematic and knotty.

Notes

1. For a lengthy contemplation of this issue, see e.g. Hay (2002: 93–134).
2. For an interesting discussion on differences between these strategies, see Gitelman (1970: 235–264).

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