COMPARATIVE STUDIES

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CUBA AND POLAND:
AN OUTLINE OF COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF TOTALITARIAN REGIMES

INTRODUCTION

The political regime in Cuba from 1959 has been compared many times with those in other Latin American countries, such as Paraguay in Alfred Stroessner's time (Sondrol, 1991), or Nicaragua (Harries, Bataillon, Jaffrelot, 2017). These comparisons were justified not only by the similarity of the regimes but also geographical and cultural proximity. After the Soviet system's implosion, researchers examined the possibility of the collapse of the totalitarian regime in Cuba and, in this perspective, compared the situation on this island with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (López, 2002; Mujal-León, Busby, 2001). These works allow us to understand the transformation dynamics of undemocratic political regimes and to explain why the directions and nature of these changes vary depending on certain factors. This research approach is worth developing.

A comparison of the political regimes prevailing in Poland (in 1944–1989) and Cuba (from 1959) can be cognitively valuable mainly because it can help understand their decline and duration. Both regimes were characterized not only by different trajectories of their transformations but also by numerous similarities of these societies. Slavery in Cuba was only abolished in 1886 (Corvin, 2014; Scott, 2009). The serfdom in the Russian partition, which covered most of the Polish lands, was abolished in 1864 (Rauszer, 2017; Leszczyński, 2020). Slave and serf mentality continued for at least the next several generations, and thus it was one of the factors influencing the political behavior of the next several generations. The Cuban and Polish nations are predominantly Catholic. In both cases, Catholicism is a significant component of the rural community identities, and to some extent, also national identities (Crahan, 2017; Chu, 2011; Eberts, 1998). Therefore, Cuba and Poland shared cultural patterns and culture-based identity.

In both cases, the totalitarian regime formation took place over several years. One can speak of a developed totalitarian regime in Poland only from 1948, i.e., the destruction of private trade and the Polish United Workers' Party's creation from the Polish communist party's merger and its allies calling themselves socialists (Kersten, 1991). The Cuban revolutionaries initially used radically democratic slogans. In both cases, it was Soviet-type totalitarianism, although the reasons for it were different. Polish lands were taken over by the USSR's armed forces in 1944–1945, and in the Cuban

case, there was a severe threat to the existence of the regime from the United States (Krogulski, 2000; Breuer, 1997).

Why, then, did the political processes in post-war Poland become one of the many factors accelerating the implosion of the Soviet system? Why did the Cuban regime survive in almost unchanged form for the next decades? The article's main argument is that differences in totalitarian regimes' functioning in Poland and Cuba determined totalitarianism development dynamics. The article aims to identify these significant differences between the Cuban and Polish totalitarian regimes, which were responsible for keeping them in a state of equilibrium or led to their disintegration in the framework of increasing bifurcation processes (Kuznetsov, 2013; Seydel, 2009).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The key to examining the strength of the above argument is the operationalization of totalitarianism as an ideal type that would allow for the analysis of extremely undemocratic regimes, such as communist states. Simultaneously, the presentation of all definitions of totalitarianism is abandoned, as the subject literature is sufficient (Jänicke, 1971; Jesse, 1996; Žižek, 2002; Kamenka, 2017; Brzechczyn, 2011; 2012; Bäcker, Rak, 2021).

Juan Linz presented the most interesting approach to totalitarianism (1975). After the necessary modifications, it is also relatively easy to operationalize. Linz distinguished the following four essential features of totalitarianism: (a) the existence of a party with an articulated and distinguished political subjectivity, in other words, a party of the order type according to Maurice Duverger (1955), (b) the significant role of ideology (Weltanschauung) and the lack of relations between official and private languages, (c) controlled and managed mobilization, treating the population as a resource at the disposal of the rulers, and (d) legally unregulated terror.

The last feature cannot be treated as essential of any regime. The choice of means and the intensity of social control may be extreme, but they are always secondary to maintaining a given social group's cohesion. Later, Linz did not mention this fourth trait (Linz, 2000: 70).

The concepts of ideology and worldview (Weltanschauung) commonly used in the philosophical literature are often ambiguous. Moreover, their semantic fields are too broad to reflect the essence of totalitarian thinking accurately. A much more accurate solution is to use the category of political gnosis quite thoroughly described in the scientific literature, starting with Eric Voegelin (1987) and Alain Besançon (1986). In general, gnosis is a type of belief that salvation is possible through knowledge. According to the followers of political gnosis, the holders of this knowledge are the creators of the imagined subject. Only the creator can perform apokatastasis, that is, restore the original perfection and sinlessness of the whole creation (Acts, 3: 21). For this purpose, however, it is necessary to overcome objective enemies' aspirations. Regardless of their will and intentions, enemies interfere with the salvation (Rossbach, 2005; Rak, 2017).

Constant, massive, and controlled mobilization is a condition for creating a stable vision of salvation in the imagined subject's social consciousness. Mobilization maintains the state of the commonly shared illusion of population unity and the party-state apparatus, which is very important for the regime's stability. Mobilization of this type additionally eliminates the possibility of expressing any objection and uncontrolled social self-organization emergence (Etzioni, 1968). In terms of its forms, it resembles civic participation. However, it is the opposite of civic participation due to its non-voluntary and extrinsic nature.

Following taking power in the state, the party of a new type (order) becomes the party-state apparatus's core. Through the staffing system (nomenclature) (Voslensky, 1991) and the monopoly on making decisions essential for the regime's functioning, the latter constitutes the ruling class in its entirety. It is a political sovereign whose keystone is the one-person (or less often collective) leader of the nation. The monopoly of the party-state apparatus's rule is most often determined by the scope of control over economic or institutional entities (belonging to the social sphere). It can also be additionally determined by the range of control over private life or the scope of the possibility of creating social myths. The permanence and coherence of the party-state apparatus in classic totalitarian regimes are usually insured by the rapid rotation of their regional and sectoral elites (e.g., through evaporation as defined by Orwell, 1990). We can also point to several other mechanisms blocking or hindering the emergence of the relationship of the advantage of a coterie or fractional loyalty over the entire apparatus's coherence. The most common ones include territorial relocation, institutional reorganization, and total surveillance (Bäcker, 1992; 2011).

Therefore, in this article, totalitarianism is understood as a regime characterized by the fulfillment, at least to a significant extent, of the three following essential features: hegemony or at least the dominance of the party-state apparatus, the prevalence of political gnosis, and controlled social mobilization.

A regime close to the ideal type of totalitarianism understood in this way emerges when all these three features are met almost wholly. Then, a strong totalitarian regime occurs when the above features are realized to a great extent. Finally, a weak totalitarian regime appears when these features are met to any degree.

METHODS AND SOURCES

The study of the totalitarian regime state and changes can be carried out thanks to the operationalization of its three essential factors: the party-state apparatus, controlled and managed mobilization, and political gnosis.

The scope of the power of the party-state apparatus can be measured by the size of social groups under the direct authority or indirect control of this apparatus. If the entire population is included in direct supremacy, we can speak of an ideal type. The emergence of specific social niches subject to indirect control proves the existence of a substantial scope of power, i.e., hegemony. Dominance occurs when direct authority or indirect control covers only critical social groups. Only when this apparatus is

no longer able to perform its functions is it necessary to treat it as a façade protecting another social group's domination.

The mobilization of the masses by the party-state apparatus can be determined firstly by its scope. It can be measured by the level of participation in the so-called voting for a unique electoral list or participation in mass actions organized by officers of that apparatus. It is also possible to examine the scope of mobilization by measuring the level of variation in mobilization forms and the amount of free time of each subject absorbed by these forms, e.g., demonstrations of support, voting, and academies in honor.

Political gnosis is the belief that salvation is usually temporal and through the efforts of the imagined subject despite the obstacles created by the objective enemy. The occurrence of these three elements indicates the full, mature form of political gnosis. The absence of one of these elements means the incomplete gnosis. However, if only a semantic resource is used without faith in the necessity of any of these features, then a façade functioning of political gnosis occurs.

The comparative analysis draws on the desk research method and a critical analysis of source materials, both produced by party-state apparatuses in the countries and "witnesses of the epoch." In any case, it is necessary to exercise particular caution both in selecting sources, studies and in their interpretation.

Many studies rest upon unverified data due to their authors entrusting the party-state apparatus on the one hand, or, on the other hand, their opponents or enemies. Researchers often accept one of these biased perspectives. The misunderstanding of totalitarian regimes' specificity is even more frequent by analyzing them with theoretical categories typical of democratic regimes and open societies.

Moreover, it is necessary to approach critically the sources created by the party-state apparatus, regardless of its type or location. Much of the data, even numerical, is unreliable because it is deliberately distorted to create the best possible image of their rule for the masses and external use. There is a need to obtain the best possible place or the ability to survive in a constant struggle with other parts of this apparatus. Creating embellished images of reality, peculiar "Potemkin villages" (Allina-Pisano, 2008), becomes an essential need for all party-state apparatus officers. The processes of creating a positive image are typical of all institutions. Still, in the case of totalitarian regimes, they take place in the conditions of a communication monopoly and a prerogative state (opposite to the rule of law). Thus, these processes cannot be controlled, and data verification is impossible. A characteristic feature of these regimes and uncivil societies (Bayat, 2012) is a very high level of ambiguity and inadequacy to the norms in force in civil society and democratic regimes. Zinoviev was right when he wrote that no one is a delator of particular services in this type of structure and, at the same time, everyone is their informant (Zinoviev, 1983). Everyone, regardless of their will and knowledge, can be used at any time as a tool by totalitarian secret services. Caution in selecting and interpreting sources is a necessary condition for conducting the research.

Critical analysis will cover the most important primary sources produced by party-state apparatuses, including Fidel Castro's speeches and program documents of both countries' ruling parties and the most valuable monographs by the best specialists on specific issues.

PARTY-STATE APPARATUS IN
CUBA AND POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

According to the Cuba Constitution, the Cuba Communist Party (PCC) was "the leading force of society and the state" from 1965. Earlier, for precisely three years, it was the United Party of the Socialist Revolution. Until October 3, 1962, the name of the monopolistically ruling party was the United Revolutionary Organizations. This organization was formally established in 1961 as a result of the merger of Cuba's original Communist Party, the July 26 Movement, and the Student Revolutionary Directorate. These three organizations allied during the so-called revolution, and more specifically, a guerrilla war that ended with the capture of cities and thus taking over the whole of Cuba in 1959 (Farber, 1983).

In the beginning, the July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro was primarily a military structure. However, with its first military successes, it also began to create administrative, medical, and educational facilities, i.e., para-state structures (Guerra, 2019: 79–80; Kozameh, 2019). It was a modern order-type party that at the same time fulfilled the characteristics of a community-type party in Duverger's meaning (1955). At the same time, Castro could use the resources of other organizations unfavorable to Batista's government. Such a genesis of the party-state apparatus, combined with the cultivation of the long-standing tradition of guerrilla fights, had to create robust ties that significantly hindered the formation of divisions within this group.

An additional factor increasing the cohesion of the Cuban party-state apparatus was a significant sector expansion. Within a dozen or so months after gaining power, state institutions were seized and all enterprises, including American ones. Private lands around 1000 acres were nationalized and transformed into state cooperatives (Peñalver, 2000). On the one hand, the number of functionaries of the party-state apparatus increased. On the other, all independent socio-economic strata disappeared.

In 1960–1961, the independence of the Catholic Church was marginalized and destroyed by arresting the leaders of Young Catholic Workers, numerous priests and bishops, nationalizing Catholic schools and institutions, banning Catholic public gatherings, liquidating religious orders, and forcing non-Cuban priests to emigrate (Holbrook, 2010).

From the end of 1961, Cuba's party-state apparatus had a monopoly in all sectors of state, social and economic life. Tensions and potential cracks within the party-state apparatus were marginalized through external expansion. The most famous example is Bolivia's recent life mission by Ernesto "Che" Guevara, a key figure in guerrilla warfare in the 1950s that held many vital functions in the Cuban government (Anderson, 1997). Furthermore, Cuba provided the so-called medical assistance for 107 countries, including several Latin American nations (Kirk, 2015), using the medical personnel of nearly 135,000 people in 1961–2009. The number of people sent on this type of foreign missions from 2005 started to exceed 20,000 significantly, so it was higher than ever before (Erisman, 2012). There were also military missions to over a dozen countries worldwide, including Nicaragua, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Angola (Cuban troops numbered around 30,000 soldiers in this country) (Dominguez, 1986). Besides, Cuba sent soldiers and educational missions to Africa (Hatzky, 2015).

The second way to reduce tensions within the entire system was to exclude people expressing their non-conformism to the political system. In 1959–1993, about 1,173,000 Cubans left the island, usually fleeing to Florida (almost a million people). It was about 10% of the population (Pedraza, 2007). The death toll of the regime, especially in the first period after gaining power, is estimated from several hundred to several thousand. The estimated number of imprisonments was considerably higher, and compulsory "treatment" in psychiatric hospitals and "re-education" camps. The latter, especially in the 1960s, were intended mainly for "strangers," i.e., homosexuals, Jehovah's witnesses, conscientious objectors, and dissidents (Sweig, 2016; Lumsden, 2010). These were standard tools of totalitarian structures forcing people to conform to the regime.

Natural social bonds of a supra-family nature and all social groups were destroyed. Furthermore, Cuba's extremely durable feature is a very high deliberation towards neighbors, colleagues, or friends. There also occur the will to cooperate and loyalty to the regime. It is impossible to say whether the dominant motive is the fear of repression or the interiorization of the regime's operating rules. However, these are undoubtedly the two most important reasons.

After a short period of liberalization in the early 1990s and the selective opening of borders to tourists, there was a relatively clear social division into groups operating in the tourism sector and others (Sharpley, Knight, 2009). Those working in tourism gained the opportunity to increase their revenues. Thanks to food distribution through the card system and free health care, others had survival stability. This type of social diversification allowed the separation of two distinct personality types distinguished by Vilfredo Pareto: conservative "lions," who liked order and hierarchy, and "foxes," quickly identifying new opportunities and prone to change (Fordahl, 2020). Consequently, "foxes" are preoccupied with achieving a better material position and have no resources or capacity to self-organize, much less to organize the masses. It significantly hinders the formation of counter-elites and gains social support by individual dissidents at a lower level.

The party-state apparatus's functionaries have a material status similar to that of the rest of the population, and the level of their corruption is very low (for a case description, see Neagle, 1989). If we add to this the domestic method of apparatus creation, we can assume that the entire apparatus is highly durable.

In 1943, Stalin started creating the Polish party-state apparatus. It expanded significantly after the Soviet Army conquered Polish lands in 1944. Initially, many of this apparatus's functionaries were ethnic Russians with Polish surnames (the so-called Acting Poles) and Jewish origin people (Tomaszewski, 2012). It strengthened the feeling among Poles that it was a foreign apparatus, not their own. However, the rapidly expanding apparatus staffing needs were so strong that already in the second half of the 1940s, the vast majority of the officials were Poles (Krajewski and Łabuszewski, 2005; Kersten, 1992).

The nationalization of industry was the simplest and even imposing solution since all factories were in either the German state or directly German companies. The nationalization of trade and small industry was completed in 1948. One year earlier, the parliamentary opposition was liquidated. The fight against the armed underground did not end until 1950 (Paczkowski, 1993).

Land collectivization was carried out in 1948–1956, and as a result, around 10,000 Agricultural Production Cooperatives (in Polish *Rolnicze Spółdzielnie Produkcyjne*, RSP) were established, usually pretending to farm 20% of the arable land. Several bishops and many priests were imprisoned, Primate Stefan Wyszyński was interned, a Catholic education was liquidated. Supported were the so-called patriotic priests declaring their acceptance of the new regime. The bishops have repeatedly declared their loyalty to the "socialist system." However, neither priests were utterly obedient to the ruling party, took control of the Episcopate, or forced the faithful to stop religious practices, including public processions. The failure of collectivization and the Catholic Church's incomplete subordination did not result solely from the power of social resistance. The determining factor was the attitude of many functionaries of the party-state apparatus. Very strong family and neighborhood ties outweighed the system's insufficiently gratified loyalty (Bäcker, 1999).

The post-Stalinist thaw (Dobson, 2009) in two satellite states, Hungary and Poland, resulted in mass popular revolts in 1956. In Poland, they were peace revolts, consisting of mass rallies in public squares, factories, and institutions, combined with the articulation of not too strongly aggregated demands. The driving force was young people belonging to the ruling party and its youth organization (Rykowski, Władyka, 1989). The permanent results of the Polish October '56 were the dissolution of almost all Agricultural Production Co-operatives (the so-called collective farms) and Wyszyński's return from internment. The latter meant that the Polish Church gained independence and the relative autonomy of people of culture, art, and science. From 1956, the repressions against oppositionists were also significantly reduced, and no severe repressions were used against those who criticized the rulers. At the end of the 1970s, about 500 opposition activists were relatively free, and after the pilgrimage of John Paul II in 1979, the Church was commonly considered an authority (Friszke, 1994). It is estimated that during this period, about 80% of the ruling party members, including the majority of full-time functionaries of the party-state apparatus, were more or less practicing Catholics. This phenomenon was called the Zacchaeus brothers' appearance after the tax collector coming to Jesus (Osęka, 2006).

Mass strikes in the summer of 1980 ended with signing agreements between the government and the strike committees' representatives. As a result, the Independent Self-governing Trade Union "Solidarity" was established with 10 million members. It was 80% of those employed in the nationalized sector. A similar support level had the agricultural and student organizations established in 1980–1981, independent of the ruling party (Holzer, 1990). A two-component structure of the political system emerged. It consisted of the ruling party and "Solidarity." The party-state apparatus lost a significant part of the institutional sphere mediating relations with the population, a kind of "buffer zone" (Arendt, 1973), and was unable to influence the rapidly empowering social masses. The ruling party drastically reduced its number from about 3 million to 2.1 million (Paczkowski, 2006). Many of the latter remained in this organization primarily for fear of maintaining their own positions in the power apparatus.

On December 13, 1981, the martial law introduction did not destroy the masses' self-organizational potential. The initially widespread underground movement and the counter-effective use of mass repression forced the rulers to seek new ways to stabilize

the system. The inevitable consequence of martial law was the military and Security Service officers' domination in the power apparatus. The atrocity and marginalization of the "buffer zone," inability, and reluctance to act by the ruling party members were the most important features of the façade nature of the entire party-state apparatus. Merely the state functioned, mainly its violence apparatus. In the 1980s, in Poland, there was a façade party-state apparatus with the de facto domination of the broadly understood "junta," functionaries of the power structures.

The evolution of the party-state apparatuses in Cuba and Poland was completely different. While in Cuba, from 1959, the rapidly unifying party of a new type had a stable monopolistic rule, in Poland, after 1944, the level of volatility was much higher. The incomplete hegemony of the party-state apparatus existed only in 1948–1956. Until 1980, this apparatus dominated. After the martial law introduction, social structures related to the state apparatus typical of an authoritarian regime started to dominate.

The reasons for this difference are not only the exo- and endogenesis of these apparatuses. The Polish party-state apparatus's beginning had the external source, i.e., the Soviet Union perceived as hostile to the Polish nation and a worse civilization. The Cuban apparatus derives from the local guerrilla warfare. In post-war Poland, conflicts and clashes between the apparatus fragments were a constant phenomenon. In turn, in Cuba, tensions within the apparatus were eliminated before they took the form of organized groups. In Poland, a significant part of the officers had very strong family and neighborhood ties, which outweighed systemic loyalties. They were additionally strengthened by rites of passage (e.g., baptism, first communion, wedding, funeral), which were purely religious. In Cuba, it was the other way around. Many years of guerrilla warfare, at least starting with the landing of the "Granma" ship in December 1956, and then the more or less real threat from the US created robust group ties overwhelming all others (Gonzales, 2014).

LEVEL OF SOCIAL MOBILIZATION IN CUBA AND POLAND

The level of political mobilization in Cuba, especially during the seizure of power, was extremely high. The civil war forced citizens to take sides in the conflict, and organizations fighting the Batista regime enjoyed the support of the vast majority of the population in the late 1950s (Doma-Nguez and Dominguez, 2009).

The primary manifestation of the high level of mobilization was very high turnout in popular votes. In Cuba, into 1993 it amounted more as 99% and from the point steadily declined to 97% in 2008, and in 2013 – 91% (*Cuba vota*, 2010; August, 2014). However, it is impossible to determine to what extent the official data is distorted.

Typical for communist Cuba were mass rallies of support, the critical element of which Castro's long speeches were. One of the longest, delivered on February 24, 1998, after the president's re-election, was seven and a half hours. Those gathered in the squares and in front of radio and TV sets had to listen to these speeches in full. The scope of mobilization was high.

The cadre Communist Party of Cuba started to transform into a mass party in the 1970s. It was a manifestation of the so-called revolution institutionalization, which

also included the parliament's first popular vote from 1959. In 1975, the Cuba Communist Party had 211,642 members, 434,143 in 1980, and 523,639 in 1985 (Leogrande, 2007: 5). In 2016, it had 670,000 party members, belonging to approximately 54,500 Party units (*7th PCC Congress*, 2016). It means that almost 6% of Cuba's population belonged to the Communist Party. On average, one party organization had around 12 members, which is typical of small social groups. Thus, it was possible to subordinate the communist party members to internal organizational rules.

The "buffer" organizations were mass trade unions, which included 96% of the working population, and a communist youth organization with 600,000 members, a student association at primary school level modeled not so much on scouts as on Soviet pioneers (Organización de Pioneros José Martí) (Fernández and Leyva, 2005). The reach of "buffer" organizations was very high.

As observed by Juan J. Lopez (2002), the mobilization level began to decline in The Special Period in Time of Peace (Período especial). The economic crisis and mass hunger in this period were caused, among others, by the loss of ties with Moscow after the implosion of the USSR in 1991 (Hernandez-Reguant, 2009). There is a natural routine with the passage of time of every activity, including unchanging political participation forms. A factor strengthening this process was Fidel Castro's withdrawal from public activity in the years before his death in 2016. His brother Raúl Modesto Castro did not continue the custom of long public appearances, nor did he have his older brother's charisma. In the latter period, the regime's mass participation level was between the ideal types of mobilization and social apathy.

The level of controlled and managed mass mobilization in Poland in 1948–1956 was very high due to the forced membership in the only youth organization and communist trade unions. Participation in May Day parades, academies commemorating the anniversary of the Bolshevik seizure of power, and occasional rallies in factories and institutions were obligatory. Until 1956, compulsory training and lectures were often held for the staff (Jarosz, 2000). The scope and extent of mobilization were extremely high.

According to official data, participation in voting was very high. In the elections to the Seym, it ranged from 1952 to March 1980 between about 95% and 99%. However, according to estimates, the actual turnout was lower and oscillated between 80 and 90% (Siedziako, 2016). Local party committees deciding, among others, about the staffing of electoral commissions were responsible for a turnout. When they were unsuccessful in persuading or coercing people to vote for one list, they falsified the results. It took place at every level, including the commissions at polling stations. As a result of the boycott of the elections announced in 1980 by the opposition, the turnout in some large cities was, according to incomplete data, about 25% lower than usual (Dworaczek, 2014).

Until 1956 the level of mobilization was very high, and in the following period, it decreased. However, the mobilization range was still significant, involving a large proportion of young people, to a lesser extent, employees in state-owned enterprises, and to the smallest extent, retirees and farmers. After the martial law imposition, attempts to mobilize (e.g., to participate in the march on May 1) were mostly unsuccessful and sometimes turned into demonstrations of "Solidarity." As a result, even a single mobi-

lization was abandoned. Thus, from 1982, the rulers enforced social apathy, mainly to avoid mass protests. They avoided trying to mobilize the masses (Paczkowski, 2006).

The range of mobilization in Cuba during Castro's rule and in Poland in 1948–1956, i.e., in the so-called Stalinist period, was similar. Participation in the party-state apparatuses' actions was compulsory and concerned everyone, from schoolchildren to retirees. The scope was also comparable, although, in Poland, there were usually no rallies of support lasting as long in the city streets as it was in Cuba. After 1956, Poland's mobilization scope significantly decreased, but the coverage was still at a comparable level as before. Since martial law was imposed in 1981, the rulers started introducing a general state of apathy.

This different mobilization trajectory in Cuba and Poland results mainly from the difference in ties between the masses and the ruling class. While in Cuba, these ties are very strong; they were based primarily on mass conformism and the masses' objectification in post-war Poland. When, from August 1980, the masses began to acquire subjectivity, any form of mobilization ceased to be effective.

TOTALITARIAN GNOSIS IN CUBA AND POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

In Cuba, totalitarian political gnosis reached a semantic maturity in the early 1960s. The imagined subject leading to apokatastasis was the revolution personified in the Communist Party of Cuba. For many years, the motto of the party's daily Granma was Castro's famous phrase: "Men die, but the Party is Immortal" (in Spanish "Los Hombres Mueren, pero el Partido es Inmortal") (Alamo, 2019). The PCC was treated as an immortal being due to the enormity of the tasks it faced, i.e., building communism on the island and bringing about a revolutionary breakthrough (or helping it) in all Third World countries, especially Latin America and Africa. The Cuban Communist Party was the main creator of the imagined being, the Third World's progressive nations, especially Cuba. The ultimate goal was to build a world without capitalism, with perfect equality and universal happiness. The main enemy was the capitalists represented by the US, an imperialist power that wanted to prevent communist Cuba from carrying out its historic mission. This way of thinking was present at the congresses of the Cuba Communist Party. In the program declaration, at the first congress of this party, the final goal was as follows: "The ultimate goal of the Communist Party is to build communism. To do so, the Communist Party of Cuba draws on the Marxist-Leninist doctrine about the two phases of communist society: socialism or lower phase and communism or higher phase." (in Spanish, "El objetivo final del Partido Comunista es la construcción del comunismo. Para el logro de este propósito el Partido Comunista de Cuba se basa en la doctrina marxista-Leninist acerca de las dos fases de la sociedad comunista: el socialismo o fase inferior y el comunismo o fase superior" (*I Congreso*, 1975: 36)). These assumptions came from the Soviet version of totalitarian political gnosis. In a mild, contemporary version, in the capitalist world, the hegemon was financial power, which, through violence or seduction, wanted to stabilize its rule. The only way to defend, and therefore survive, was to build a broad front of consensus by all progressive social forces (Pogolotti, 2020).

This figure of the objective enemy was strengthened by historical experiences, including slavery, military expansion, economic exploitation, and the support of comprador regimes, i.e., those whose task was to facilitate the exploitation of the local population by American capitalists. The tradition of fighting American imperialism involved repelling the Bay of Pigs (Triay, 2003). The unsuccessful attacks on Castro were also often mentioned (Skierka, 2014). The dislike or even hostility towards "American imperialists" did not have to be induced by the Cuban party-state apparatus. It was enough to strengthen it.

However, a careful analysis of Castro's speeches allows for slightly different conclusions. Castro said: "We are acting with reason and right on our side. They are acting against reason, right, and history" (Castro, July 11, 1960). On the one hand, there were we, the Cuban people, led by revolutionaries. On the opposite side of goodness, reason, and history, there were the American imperialists. No wonder that one of the most frequent Castro slogans was "Fatherland or death, we will vanquish!" (Castro, October 28, 1969). Castro contrasted revolutionary Cuba with imperialist, aggressive America. The former was assessed only positively, the latter negatively. The worlds of goodness and evil were opposite. This black and white image of the world did not contain apokatastasis figures, an imaginary subject, and an objective enemy. Therefore, it was peculiar to fundamentalists, not totalitarian thinking.

Totalitarian political gnosis in Cuba, and its increasingly more relaxed version, functioned as the official language allowing for identification with world allies. However, to maintain the regime's cohesiveness, i.e., the possibility of communication between the party-state apparatus and the masses, a more acceptable fundamentalist language occurred with the world's black and white definition and the besieged fortress.

Totalitarian gnosis in Poland was transferred mainly from the Soviet Union after World War II. Much of the semantic resource of the Stalinist version of totalitarian gnosis was translated directly from Russian. The duplication of language patterns and vocabulary was inevitable because a large part of the party-state apparatus management came from the Russian military and officials. Moreover, some Poles stayed in the territory of the Soviet Union during the Second World War. However, part of this resource was taken over from pre-war Polish left-wing organizations. It was the case, for example, with the famous phrase "spitfire dwarf of reaction," which was first used by Józef Piłsudski, who ruled Poland in 1926–1935 (Kamińska-Szmaj, 2005; Woźniak, 1982). This specific language acquisition resulted from the "intellectual" experiences of Polish communists in the interwar period and the ease of this assimilation. At least until World War II, the mutual perception of Polish socialists and nationalists was comparable to the death struggle of two besieged camps.

After 1956, it was possible not to use this language in specific social niches, mainly Catholic circles, culture, and art. However, a significant change occurred when Edward Gierek was appointed the Polish United Workers' Party's first secretary in 1970. The process of détente with the Western countries began. In the 1970s, the Stalinist version of political gnosis was still used in public communication, but the objective enemy was not treated in substance. Until the end of the 1960s, the main enemy was Western Germany, treated as a continuator of fascism. From 1970, after recognizing Poland's western borders by Germany, the rhetoric changed. The

same language was used as before, but with one notable exception, the West's negative judgment was drastically reduced. Democratic states were no longer the enemy wishing to destroy "us." It was assumed that beneficial cooperation was possible, and the goal could be to catch up with the Western European standard of living. The consequence was a very significant ritualization of the official language and thus treating it as the language of formal identification. Although the ruling party activists used this language in a public sphere, it did not determine their thinking structures (Borodziej, 2005; Ożóg, 2016).

The period of the legal "Solidarity" (1980–1981) was the time of creating a new, bottom-up shaped political language (Staniszkis, 2019). Since then, Stalinist political gnosis's key concepts, such as the proletariat's power, were counter-effective in stabilizing the political regime. Workers were associated with "Solidarity." Thus, talking about the working class rule was considered a call to destroy the totalitarian political regime. As a result, the party-state apparatus began to increasingly shift to the language of conservative statocratic stabilization and geopolitical realism. The Stalinist language survived only in semantic phrases, allowing the state apparatus functionaries to identify themselves and no longer fulfill other functions (Jeziński, 2009). Ultimately, it completely disappeared before 1989. The ruling party activists used pragmatic or social-democratic language in the last period of its operation.

The changes in the political thinking of the ruling camps in Cuba and Poland were initially similar. Gradually, the dual perception of the world (in Cuba, "we versus imperialists and compradors," and in Poland, "we versus fascist Germany") shifted to the level of tough totalitarian political gnosis. Then the process of conventionalization, routine, and gnosis softening began. In Cuba, during more than 60 years of the political regime's existence, it was a prolonged process (Aguirre, 1984). There are still basic elements of this thinking, although without many clear semantic turns. However, in addition to totalitarian political gnosis, a fundamentalist language was used in parallel. The latter type of thinking appeared primarily in public language and served to communicate with the masses. In Poland, the evolution was abrupt and resulted from a fairly frequent exchange of political elites, i.e., leaving during the so-called political breakthroughs in 1956, 1970, and 1980 of successive generations of Polish communists. They were replaced by increasingly pragmatic politicians and fewer adherents of the Stalinist or nationalist political gnosis version. The turn of 1980–1981 caused the abandonment of thinking and partially sticking to its semantics. The last generational change in 1989–1990 resulted in the abandonment of this vocabulary.

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Bearing in mind different classifications of political regimes in Cuba (Mujal-León, Busby, 2001: 6) and Poland (Walicki, 2000), if we adopt the proposed definition of totalitarianism, we can confirm the occurrence of totalitarianism in both countries. However, the transformation trajectories of totalitarian regimes in Poland and Cuba were completely different. In Poland, the totalitarian regime went from the offensive and hegemonic to the stabilizing and dominant stage in 1956. After the establishment

of "Solidarity" in 1980, the essential features of totalitarianism disappeared, and the previous regime was replaced by authoritarianism that existed until 1989.

The totalitarian regime in Cuba, which started taking shape in 1959, was much more permanent. The basic institutions of the party-state apparatus, especially thanks Castro's long-rule and the institutionalization of the 1970s, operated stably. The range of the controlled and managed mobilization was high, although its scope was decreasing for several years. It was evident after Castro's gradual departure. Despite the changes in the early 1990s and progressive routinization, the national version of totalitarian political gnosis still exists, but the dominant public communication tool is fundamentalism.

The differences between the systems result from their different exogenous and endogenous origins and compatibility with society. At this point, it is worth recalling the thesis of Juan J. López about the considerable social support for the Cuban regime (López, 2002). The most important reason for the totalitarian regime's durability is the appropriate level of its adequacy to the structure, awareness, and expectations of societies. The Cuban party-state apparatus is closely linked with society due to the same cultural codes and national tradition. The root cause is the very high level of objectification of the masses living largely on a vegetative level and lacking resources to initiate empowerment processes. In Poland, the processes of empowerment of political nation were possible thanks to the reconstruction of the national tradition, Catholic identity strengthening, and the myth of the West. Poles created and maintained a lasting pre-civic awareness due to the pervasive and massive distribution of illegal books and press from the late 1970s until the fall of the Polish People's Republic.

Civil society exists in Cuba only in a basic form and rather imagined than structural, mainly amongst professions. Until 1980, civil society functioned in Poland on the level of ideas and dreams of being the West rather than on structural and social practice. However, it covered the vast majority of the Polish nation. From 1980, a pre-civil society emerged and survived the repression after the martial law imposition. Following Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika (reconstruction) process, a newly emerged social structure effectively led to the Polish People's Republic's fall in 1989. Thus, it effectively implemented the militant democracy strategy (Rak, 2020) against the undemocratic regime. This strategy was based on non-violence, building independent communication channels, i.e., underground circulation of magazines and books, creating a robust national tradition and an open, inclusive civil society.

At the beginning of the 1960s, in Cuba, the uncivil society had a hegemonic position. In the 21st century, its position changed from hegemonic to dominant, closely linked with the totalitarian party-state apparatus. The Cuban political regime slowly evolved from strong to weak totalitarianism. In Poland, objectification and passively submitting to uncivil society's power apparatus existed until 1956, and then it began process of empowerment of political nation in specific niches and marginally autonomous. In 1980, the process of its rapid and mass empowerment began. Consequently, the survival of the political regime resulted from its appropriate transformations. In post-war Poland, the political regime evolved from strong to weak totalitarianism to become authoritarian after 1980, with the party-state apparatus serving as a façade.

In Poland and Cuba exogenous factors were of much less importance than endogenous ones. The above analyzes are preliminary and not entirely precise. It is not possible in qualitative research and, in addition, in comparing such different social systems.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to find the similarities and differences between Poland and Cuba by comparing them totalitarian regimes. The research problem consisting in determining the importance of exogenous and endogenous factors favoring the regime or disintegrate it. In this case, the method of desk research is appropriate. The comparison was made using the same and operationalized criteria (hegemony or domination of the party-state apparatus, the intensity of political gnosis, and the scope and extent political mobilization) based on Juan Linz's modified concept of totalitarianism. At the beginning of the 1960s, in Cuba, the uncivil society had a hegemonic position. In the 21st century, its status changed from hegemonic to dominant, closely linked with the totalitarian party-state apparatus. The political regime slowly evolved from strong to weak totalitarianism. In post-war Poland, the political regime evolved from strong to weak totalitarianism, to become authoritarian after 1980 behind the façade of an inoperable party-state apparatus, and in 1989 it collapsed. In both cases, exogenous factors were of much less importance than endogenous ones.

Keywords: totalitarianism, political regime, Cuba, Poland

KUBA I POLSKA. ZARYS ANALIZY PORÓWNAWCZEJ REŻIMÓW TOTALITARNYCH

STRESZCZENIE

Celem artykułu jest poprzez porównanie reżimów totalitarnych Polski i Kuby znalezienie podobieństw i różnic między tymi dwoma państwami. Dzięki temu możliwe jest rozwiązanie problemu badawczego polegającego na określeniu znaczenia egzogennych i endogennych czynników sprzyjających tworzeniu i rozpadowi tego typu reżimów. Zastosowano w tym przypadku metodę analizy źródeł zastanych. Porównanie zostało dokonane przy pomocy jednolitych i zoperacjonalizowanych kryteriów (hegemonia lub dominacja aparatu partyjno-państwowego, intensywność gnozy politycznej oraz zasięg i zakres mobilizacji politycznej) opartych na zmodyfikowanej koncepcji totalitaryzmu Juana Linza. Na początku lat 60-tych XX wieku społeczeństwo nieobywatelskie i tym samym aparat partyjno-państwowy na Kubie miały pozycję hegemoniczną. W XXI wieku jest to dominacja. Kubański reżim polityczny powoli ewoluował od silnego do słabego totalitaryzmu. W powojennej Polsce reżim polityczny ewoluował od silnego do słabego totalitaryzmu, po 1980 r. stał się autorytarny za fasadą niesprawnego aparatu partyjno-państwowego, a w 1989 r. upadł. W obu przypadkach czynniki egzogenne miały o wiele mniejsze znaczenie niż endogenne.

Słowa kluczowe: totalitaryzm, reżim polityczny, Kuba, Polska