The Revolutions of 1989 in Poland, Romania and China
Overview

- Important Dates and Photos
- Poland, Romania and China in the 1980s
- Comparison Between Eastern Europe and China
Poland

The Polish Round Table Talks

Warsaw
From February 6 to April 5, 1989
The Polish Round Table Talks
Round Table Talks

Warsaw
From February 6, to April 5, 1989
• The Polish Communist Party V.S The "Solidarity"
• Peacefully Ended the Communist Monopoly
• Legalization of the "Solidarity"
Romania
- December 1989
- People Willing to Risk Their Lives
- Violent Revolution
- The Execution of Ceaușescu on Christmas Day 1989
China

- June 4 1989, Beijing
- Gorbachev visited Beijing on May 15 1989
- Martial Law
- Tiananmen Massacre
- The Tank Man
- A failed "Revolution?"
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Coincidence in History

June 4 1989
• The First Semi-free Election in Poland
• The Tiananmen Massacre in China
• "I will never forget coming back to a newspaper office in Warsaw that afternoon, with elated Polish friends, and noticing on a television screen the first grainy footage of the bodies of Chinese protesters being carried on makeshift stretchers down the streets of Beijing" ----- Timothy Garton Ash
The Question
For the 1989 Revolutions

Why the Chinese Communist Party still stayed in power while the Communist states in the Eastern Europe started to fall apart?
Overview

Poland, Romania and China in the 1980s
Economy

- Central Planning Economy was unable to handle the oil crisis and worldwide economic recession effectively.
- Poland relied heavily on foreign debt.
- The dependence of the economy on imported Western materials, components, and machines led to large trade deficits.
- Economic stagnation.

An Empty Meat Store in Poland in the 1980s
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Economy

- "Shortage Economy" (János Kornai) --- Demand exceeds supply --- Shortage of consumer goods
- Inflation
- Economic failure led to social instability

A Queue in front of a Shop
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Society

- The rise of civil society
- Anti-Communist sentiments
Solidarity Congress, Gdansk, September-October 1981
• The rise of civil society
• Anti-Communist sentiments
A wave of strikes started in August 1980 in the Gdansk Shipyard

Important Power Base of 1989 Revolution --- The Workers
Romania in the 1980s Economy

- Foreign Debt
  - "[Ceausescu regime] borrowed the rope to hang itself" — Stephen Kotkin
- Austerity Policy — Debt Reduction Policy
  - To cut imports
  - To increase exports at the expense of the domestic market
  - In 1981, a rationing system for basic foodstuff
  - To reduce domestic electricity usage
Economy

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A queue for cooking oil, Bucharest, 1986
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In order to save energy, electricity and heating were often stopped.

"Rational Eating Program" --- To reduce the calorie intake
- "It permitted, per month, 10 eggs, 1/4 pound of butter, 2.2 pounds of cooking oil and 2.2 pounds of meat--- though he did not say how these items were to be found in the empty markets." --- (Flora Lewis 1987)
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• Shortage of Consumer Goods
Chinese Economic Reform began in 1978
  - The "Reform and Opening"
- Reform Started from Rural Area
  - Decollectivization of agriculture
    - To increase agricultural output
  - A gradualist reform

The First Free Market in Rural China 1978
China in the 1980s Economy

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The "Reform and Opening"
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Coca Cola Re-entered the Chinese Market in 1979
Figure 10  Farmers’ income and agricultural labor productivity

- Farmers’ income per capita/national GDP per capita
- Agricultural productivity/national productivity
Eastern Europe vs China

Chinese Economic Reform in 1980s

= "Reform Communism"

Tiananmen Square Protests of 1989

= Prague Spring in 1968 & Hungarian Revolution of 1956
The First Black-and-White Television in China 1979
• Eastern Europe in 1980s
  • Economic stagnation
  • Food shortage
  • Foreign debts
  • Low income
  • Social disstability
• China in 1980s
  • Economic reform
  • Government-led Reforms---A gradualist reform
  • Chinese consumers were able to buy more than enough to eat from a growing variety of food items
  • Rise of consumerism
  • Income↑
  • Standards of Living↑
• People were satisfied with their lives in the 1980s
Eastern Europe vs China

Pope John Paul II in Poland 1979
• Eastern Europe in 1989
  • An alternative public sphere—Church
  • Solidarity in Poland—the rise of civil society
  • Power Base—Workers+Intellectuals+Greengrocers
  • Anti-Communism
• China in 1989
  • Power Base—Students+A small group of intellectuals
  • The reform of socialism
Eastern Europe vs China

To Shoot or Not to Shoot

Romania was the only Eastern Bloc country which had a violent revolution, but they succeeded.

Why?
To Shoot or Not to Shoot

Posttotalitarianism in China and Eastern Europe

Mark R. Thompson

- Eastern Europe
  - Frozen Posttotalitarianism
    - Weak party legitimacy vs Stronger civil society
    - Low (social) mobilization constraints
    - Paralyzed leadership collapses in face of dissidence
    - Post-revolutionary leadership generation
    - Loss of support after economic decline and ideological decay
- China
  - Early Posttotalitarianism
    - Strong party legitimacy vs Weak civil society
    - High mobilization constraints
    - Decisive leadership represses revisionist opposition
    - Revolutionary legitimacy, collective security, and economic growth make decisive leadership possible

Gorbachev visited Beijing a month before the Tiananmen Massacre
To Shoot or Not to Shoot

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Thank You