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Endgames? Late Communism in Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present

EDITED BY JULIANE FÜRST, SILVIO PONS AND MARK SELDEN

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Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present*

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Reform Communism

SILVIO PONS AND MICHELE DI DONATO

What Was “Reform Communism”?

Communists never used the notion of “reform communism.” From World War I, their identity was built in opposition to “revisionist” tendencies among the socialist parties. They used the term “reformism” as a negative label and a synonym of right-wing “degeneration.” Right up to 1989 their political culture upheld Marxist revolutionary references as a way to differentiate themselves from social democracy. Nevertheless, the lexicon and practices of a reform approach did emerge in the communist world after the death of Stalin. In the Soviet Union and in Europe, de-Stalinization and “peaceful coexistence” implied a change that could be interpreted in different ways, but clearly leaned toward gradualism and nonviolent transformation more than revolutionary thrusts. Although far-reaching ideas of reform were rapidly shelved, prospects of peaceful change still left their trace among communists, and ideas inspired by “socialist humanism” did not simply disappear.

This legacy was most evident among the Czechoslovak reformers who led the Prague Spring of 1968, which would rapidly turn into a founding myth for “socialism with a human face.” Its repression after the Soviet-led intervention of August 1968 represented a lasting shock for those who held hopes of democratic renewal, leading many East European reformers to embrace dissent and opposition – even though reformist tendencies did also survive in some establishment circles. Defeated in the East, the ideas of reform communism found new focus on the other side of the Iron Curtain. In Western and Southern Europe, Eurocommunism emerged in the mid 1970s as a movement aimed at defending the legacy of the Prague Spring, assuming human rights as a component of socialist ideals, offering

alternatives to the waning appeal of Soviet socialism and challenging the Cold War order both domestically and internationally. Eurocommunists tried to provide criticisms of the Soviet model that were inspired by democratic values, thus differing crucially from revolutionary Maoist and leftist critics. Theirs proved to be a lasting, if ultimately unsuccessful endeavor.

These failures and frailties notwithstanding, Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms would have been unthinkable without the legacy of the Eastern and Western communist reformers. By the late 1980s, the "new thinking" in international relations and the drive toward change in domestic affairs had established this legacy also within the Kremlin. Gorbachev's vision incorporated reform communism's appeal for the reassertion of humanistic ideals and its idea of nonviolent transformation as opposed to the Stalinist legacy. He adopted interdependence as a category for interpreting global processes, which made both "world revolution" and the Cold War obsolete. However, the new Soviet leadership also inherited all the basic contradictions of reform communism. While in the West Eurocommunism had lost momentum, crisis and collapse in Eastern Europe and the USSR sealed the fate of reform, which proved unable to sustain itself as a credible alternative path in communist history.

This chapter proposes to analyze reform communism as a historical phenomenon that cannot be equated with *perestroika* alone, even if its historical meaning should primarily be understood in light of Gorbachev's reforms. Reform communism had three distinctive features. First, it was never a consistent movement equipped with definite ideas and strategies. Rather, it was a divided and fragmented transnational set of concepts and practices aimed at reform from above. It partially emerged in the aftermath of de-Stalinization and then took shape as a form of cultural and political renewal in specific chronological and national contexts, influencing groups of intellectuals and party officials in several countries. Second, ideas of reform were formulated in terms of recovering the "original inspiration" of communism and Marxism, which they construed as a humanistic tradition. Although reform communists increasingly interacted with social democracy, they did not want to change their own identity, even when their priorities and agendas became more similar to those of social democrats than to those of other communists. Third, reform communism was essentially a European and Russian phenomenon that failed to exert substantial influence over communists outside Europe. Ideas of peaceful change were not devoid of global reflections, particularly in India and Latin America, but the violent context of the Cold War prevented their spread. This geographical

localization notwithstanding, reform communism captured and epitomized broader historical trends and transformations. In particular, its encounter with the issue of human rights should be understood in a global perspective, as it crucially revealed the exhaustion of the European legacy of political revolutions. Reform communism was an essential part of the metamorphosis of this tradition, which became manifest in the peaceful collapse of 1989.

Transnational Change from Above: De-Stalinization and “Socialism with a Human Face”

After the death of Stalin, ideas of reform found various advocates among the communist leaderships. In private and public discourse, uneven elements of change surfaced between 1953 and 1956 which would become archetypes for reform communists at a later stage. An entire set of measures and statements indirectly contested the Stalinist legacy of terror, forced Sovietization in Eastern Europe and even the Cold War. However, neither were these initiatives unified into a political project, nor did any single communist figure come to embrace a coherent reformist platform.

We now know that there were elements of truth in the “legend” of Lavrentii Beria as a reformer in 1953. Indeed, he and his ally Georgii Malenkov did show their readiness to undertake change in Soviet domestic and foreign policy, particularly by envisaging the rehabilitation of repressed individuals, adopting welfare measures, reducing Cold War engagements and even negotiating the reunification of Germany. Power struggles in the Soviet leadership and the upheaval in East Germany in June 1953 thwarted more significant change.¹ After Beria’s arrest and execution, Malenkov tried to carry on the same agenda for some time before himself being marginalized in 1955 – as were his partners in Eastern Europe, beginning with Imre Nagy in Hungary. In the Soviet Union, many of their ideas were picked up by Malenkov’s rival Nikita Khrushchev, who turned de-Stalinization into public discourse and a collective shock for all communists. The Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956 would long be regarded by many reform communists as a harbinger of unfulfilled promises of change. Yet this change from above hardly inspired a consistent shift away from the Stalinist legacy, and it again lost its hold when the perspective of liberalization began destabilizing the communist regimes. The Soviet repression in

1 Mark Kramer, “The Early Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and Upheavals in East-Central Europe: Internal–External Linkages in Soviet Policy Making,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1, 1 (1999), 3–55 (part 1); 1, 2 (1999), 3–38 (part 2); 1, 3 (1999), 3–66 (part 3).

Hungary of November 1956 followed the imperatives of Cold War *Realpolitik* and destroyed new ways of political thinking within communism.²

The rebellions against Soviet rule in Eastern Europe took on the character of fights for national independence, but they also exhibited a transnational effect. Especially among the younger generations, hopes of democratizing socialism had taken the place of the drive for anti-fascist and socialist transformation shared by European communists at the end of World War II.³ The communist establishments, still speaking the language of civil war inherited from the first half of the twentieth century, failed to understand the meaning of this shift from revolutionary to reform thinking and instead saw the risk of a catastrophic “domino effect” led by anti-communist forces. Even leaders such as Josip Broz Tito in Yugoslavia and Palmiro Togliatti in Italy – who, unlike Khrushchev, had both denounced the “bureaucratic degeneration” of Stalinism – perceived developments in Hungary as a threat, although they would later acknowledge the popular character of the uprising.⁴ As Nagy was tragically left alone to speak the language of socialist democracy in his writings from prison, this language became a form of dissent.⁵ The repression in Hungary initiated a shock wave within the communist world. The prospects of reconstructing its political culture so as to consistently include ideas of reform dissipated, while in both East and West prominent intellectuals who had believed in the “humanist potential” of communism turned into Marxist dissidents – as in the cases of Leszek Kołakowski and E. P. Thompson.

In the aftermath of the drama of 1956, de-Stalinization and “peaceful coexistence” proved to be irreversible, if ill-defined processes. The change they entailed meant different things to different people, even among communists, and the tension between conformism and dissent persisted. The establishments’ adaptation measures, aimed at reconstructing the regimes’ social bases, firmly excluded any far-reaching idea of political reform. Whenever these ideas emerged, they were interpreted as intolerable dissent – as was the

2 See Jörg Baberowski, “Nikita Khrushchev and De-Stalinization in the Soviet Union 1953–1964,” in Norman Naimark, Silvio Pons and Sophie Quinn-Judge (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Communism*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), vol. II, ch. 5; Mark Kramer, “The Changing Pattern of Soviet–East European Relations 1953–1968,” *ibid.*, ch. 6.

3 Vladislav M. Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).

4 Jonathan Haslam, “I dilemmi della destalinizzazione: Togliatti, il XX Congresso del PCUS e le sue conseguenze,” in Roberto Gualtieri, Carlo Spagnolo and Ermanno Taviani (eds.), *Togliatti nel suo tempo* (Rome: Carocci, 2007), 215–38.

5 Jonás M. Rainer, *Imre Nagy: A Biography* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009).

case with Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski in Poland, who in 1965 argued from a Marxist standpoint in favor of political restructuring.⁶

The only sector in which reformist concepts could be openly debated and even experimented with, if only to a very limited extent, was that of economics – as the accomplishment of postwar reconstruction increasingly raised the problem of efficiency and productivity. The result was on the one hand the politicization of this realm, and on the other the reduction of any form of political change to administrative measures. Criticizing the Stalinist legacy of the hypercentralized command economy, reformers looked back to the NEP (New Economic Policy) and to the ideas of Nikolai Bukharin as alternative models for organizing a socialist economy. Economists such as Yevsei Liberman in the USSR and Ota Šik in Czechoslovakia translated these inspirations into schemes for adopting decentralizing measures and a regulated amount of market-inspired and efficiency-enhancing principles, while leaving in place the planned economy system. However, reform ideas and projects hit a brick wall whenever their political implications became too broad or too manifest.⁷ The same was true of Yugoslav self-management, which attracted some interest especially in Poland but again encountered opposition from establishments disquieted by its potential political consequences.

In the USSR between 1957 and the mid 1960s economic reforms were mainly a question of decentralization to the regional level. This was supposed to allow more autonomy for local actors and enterprises negotiating their own interests with the central authorities. However, these measures were poorly implemented as they met with bureaucratic resistance. An intermittent restructuring practice never affected the traditional primacy given to military spending and an industrial structure dominated by large state-owned enterprises. Even the most important policy initiative in this realm – the 1965 reforms endorsed by Aleksei Kosygin – represented only a timid attempt at making the planned economy less inefficient, by promoting limited institutional devolution.⁸ The political and intellectual climate would soon become even less favorable

6 Barbara J. Falk, *The Dilemmas of Dissidence in East-Central Europe: Citizen Intellectuals and Philosopher Kings* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2003), 13–18, 184–92.

7 Moshe Lewin, *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates: From Bukharin to the Modern Reformers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

8 Mark Harrison, “Communism and Economic Modernization,” Warwick University, Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy, Working Paper Series 92 (Jul. 2012); Pekka Sutela, *Economic Thought and Economic Reform in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

to debates on economic reform. Ideas of economic renewal surfaced again briefly in Czechoslovakia and faded away in the aftermath of the crushing of the Prague Spring, out of repression or disillusionment.

The change in the communist view of international relations proved even more ambiguous. Although adopting the doctrine of “peaceful coexistence” and pursuing détente policies seemed to indicate adaptation to a polycentric world, as against uncompromising anti-imperialist positions, no common analytical revision took place, and unorthodox voices remained marginal. Malenkov and Togliatti had proposed innovative reflections on the unprecedented nature of nuclear warfare as early as 1954. Their observations were, however, never developed, since in interpreting nuclear warfare as a threat to the survival of all humanity they introduced concepts that could undermine the “two camps” doctrine and delegitimize the communist Cold War. Togliatti’s vision of “polycentrism” also remained entirely theoretical as a pattern for acknowledging diversity within the socialist camp and adopting flexibility in relations among communist parties in various areas of the world. Both the Soviets and the Chinese maintained a state-centric vision of world communism. The idea of “unity in diversity” was mainly used by Western communists – though by the Italians much more than the French – as a framework within which to restore the “national roads” to socialism they had proposed at the end of World War II.⁹

In the space of a few years, the conflict between the Soviet Union and China would dwarf many other developments within the communist world as a catalyst of political and ideological concerns. Since Mao opposed both de-Stalinization and “peaceful coexistence,” the unity of international communism was definitively compromised, and could not be repaired even after Khrushchev’s fall from power. As a consequence, Moscow and the East European establishments placed ever-greater emphasis on the ideological cohesiveness of pro-Soviet communism, with any detachment from established dogmas becoming anathema as the Soviet leaders faced a Maoist challenge to their global ambitions.¹⁰ Nonetheless, with all its limitations, the challenge posed by the perspective of a peaceful change in communist political culture survived and developed in the 1960s. Even if the basic assumption underpinning the concept of peaceful socialist transformation was state-centric

9 Carlo Spagnolo, *Sul Memoriale di Yalta. Togliatti e la crisi del movimento comunista internazionale (1956–1964)* (Rome: Carocci, 2007).

10 See Sergey Radchenko, “The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance 1949–1989,” in Naimark, Pons and Quinn-Judge (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Communism*, vol. II, ch. 10.

and geopolitical – the idea that a reversal in the postwar “correlation of forces” between the “two camps” was underway, which could make the world “safe for historical change”¹¹ – this perspective took on wide-ranging meanings that could hardly be constrained within Moscow-controlled frameworks. This was especially true of the coupling of the perspectives of peaceful transformation and practices of legality and democracy. This association was one of the threads of the experience of the communist parties in the West and was crucial to their legitimization strategies. However, its implications in terms of reform thinking remained largely ambiguous, as these parties continued to claim allegiance to their own revolutionary calling. Prospects of peaceful change also emerged in the global South in spite of the predominant influence of different approaches, such as Maoist and Castroite anti-imperialist guerrilla movements or the drive for national liberation represented by Vietnam – and also in spite of the bloody repression of an important mass party such as the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965. In 1967–68 Indian communists took over government legally as part of united front coalitions in Kerala and West Bengal. In 1969 a left alliance between reformists and revolutionaries was formed in Chile around the socialist Salvador Allende, which in 1970 became the first coalition including a strong communist party to win democratic elections in the postwar era.¹²

For a very brief moment in the late 1960s the emergence of a reform experience in the most advanced country of the socialist camp – Czechoslovakia – seemed to open up new political paths for communism, with potentially global echoes. From this point of view, the repression of the Prague Spring by the Soviet Union in August 1968 and the US-influenced *coup d'état* against Chile's Unidad Popular in September 1973 can be seen as two related events of the global Cold War that also prevented more significant change in communist history. After these defeats, peaceful perspectives of socialist democracy left the global scene, though ideas of reform communism did maintain a role in Europe.

The Legacy of the Prague Spring

The legacy of the Czechoslovak experience was crucial to the persistence of a reform communist tradition in Europe. The Prague Spring demonstrated

11 Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American–Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1994), 53.

12 See Hari Vasudevan, “Communism in India,” in Naimark, Pons and Quinn-Judge (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Communism*, vol. II, ch. 20; Victor Figueroa Clark, “Latin American Communism,” *ibid.*, ch. 16.

that the incoherent post-Stalin change from above could develop into a political project. Once again, a movement that was born of national factors assumed transnational implications in Eastern Europe. Alexander Dubček kept his project within the boundaries of the Cold War divide and exercised the moral persuasion of gradual change from within the establishment. Unlike Nagy, he and his entourage avoided radical moves toward political pluralism or away from the Warsaw Pact. Their idea of one-party democracy was an incongruity and a paradox founded on a naive understanding of Leninism. But it was a paradox capable of reviving hopes and initiative from below, stimulating pluralism in society, crossing borders – especially by fueling turmoil in Poland and Yugoslavia – and obtaining the support of Italian, French and Yugoslav communists. In spite of their peaceful advancement, Dubček's reforms triggered a transnational backlash that eventually resulted in repression. For most East European leaderships, the language of socialist democracy represented a threat of contamination and dangerous subversion. From this standpoint, the division between hawks such as Władysław Gomułka of Poland and doves such as the Hungarian leader János Kádár was scarcely significant. For Brezhnev and his partners, if reform meant democratization, there could be no talk of reform at all.

The Prague Spring was part of a global movement that by 1968 brought the intersection of anti-authoritarian activism, demands for civil rights, and individual and collective protest against the Cold War order.¹³ In the communist world, the Cultural Revolution in China and the Prague Spring in Europe seemingly offered two alternative transnational hubs for rethinking Marxism and the communist experience. The opposition between these two poles was never to be reconciled. Maoism was short-lived as a global phenomenon, in spite of its initial Third Worldist appeal, and soon China dropped its internationalist calling and focused on national interests. The Czechoslovak reformers originated one of the symbolic legacies that would help the peaceful reconnection of the two Europes twenty years later. Even the rediscovery of unorthodox Marxism became part of a vision that recovered a unitary concept of European civilization. Among the Czechoslovak reformers, Zdeněk Mlynář was the outstanding personality in this respect.¹⁴ He was the exponent of an entire generation in Eastern Europe as well as in the Soviet Union that had shaped its own identity by

13 See Pavel Kolář, "Reform Undercurrents and the Prague Spring," *ibid.*, ch. 7; Robert Gildea, "The Global 1968 and International Communism," in this volume.

14 Maud A. Bracke, "1968," in Stephen A. Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 161.

trusting in de-Stalinization, overcome the shock of 1956 and found itself marginalized or forced to dissent in the aftermath of 1968.

The protagonists of the Prague Spring could hardly convey their experience to a new generation, as the massive purges of the Czechoslovak party swept away the only communist establishment in which reform attitudes were deep-rooted. Their ideas had not been fully put to the test, and their contradictions had not clearly emerged. What they left was a myth that communists could construe either as a dream or as a nightmare. The Prague Spring had a major ambivalent effect on communists on both sides of the continent. In the East, its violent crushing provoked an exacerbation of disaffection regarding the possibility of reforming Soviet-type systems. Hopes for a purified humanistic socialism melted away even in Moscow. Only limited circles of nonconformist officials and intellectuals maintained an underground sympathy for “socialism with a human face,” but the realist logic of détente imposed silence on the contested implications of Dubček’s reforms. Reformist foreign-policy officials (*mezhdunarodniki*) in the Soviet Union, such as Anatolii Cherniaev, could hardly exercise any influence on Brezhnev’s ruling group.¹⁵ Openly defending the Prague Spring meant joining the dissidents, as was the case with certain isolated personalities such as Roy Medvedev in the Soviet Union or Rudolf Bahro in the German Democratic Republic (GDR).¹⁶ Even if there still was a certain ideological proximity between reform-minded people within the establishment and socialist dissidents outside it, the major trend in the networks of dissent and opposition became disillusionment with any concept of state socialism and reform from within the system. This was the path taken by exponents of 1968 countercultures such as Adam Michnik in Poland.¹⁷ Ideas of a reformed communism increasingly yielded to different political cultures and, even more, to “nonpolitical” and postideological thinking that advanced the concept of “civil society” in a dichotomous opposition to totalitarian regimes. This was especially the case in the aftermath of the Helsinki conference of 1975 and the rise of human rights as a transnational issue. The legacy of the Prague Spring came to be transformed, reinterpreted or simply dismissed.

15 Anatolii Cherniaev, *Sovmestnyi iskhod. Dnevnik dvukh epokh, 1972–1991 gody* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010).

16 R. Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy* (New York: Norton, 1977); R. Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (New York: Verso, 1978).

17 Adam Michnik, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

The Western Perspective: Eurocommunism and the Search for a New Legitimacy

It was in Western and Southern Europe that “socialism with a human face” could be openly adopted as a source of inspiration for communists. In many ways, during the 1970s reform communism in the West rediscovered the support from below that had characterized the Prague Spring and then had been lost in the East. In terms of political culture, the legacy of anti-fascism represented a key bridge between the two experiences. Anti-fascist language had been distinctive to reform-oriented criticism of the communist states in 1956 and 1968 – even if it was an ambivalent language, which was also employed by the regimes for their own legitimization. In the aftermath of 1968, anti-fascism lost any critical function in Eastern Europe.¹⁸ However, it still represented a powerful tradition among the Western communists. While not contesting the Eastern regimes’ propaganda image, they had long presented anti-fascism as a core element of European democratic identity, and thus as a source of political legitimization that went back to the pre-Cold War era.

The impulse for keeping alive the invented tradition of “socialism with a human face” came from the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano, PCI), the only major party to uphold the dissent originally expressed against the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia. The leader of the PCI from 1972 onward, Enrico Berlinguer, followed Togliatti’s legacy of polycentrism in defending the party’s autonomy, but widened his criticism of the Soviet model as inadequate to Western conditions and strengthened the reference to democratic values characteristic of Italian communism. The post-1968 decay of the appeal of the Soviet Union, especially among young generations, was crucial to the development of ideas openly focused on communist renewal.

In his effort to find a key for involving communists in government and overcoming Italy’s “blocked democracy,” Berlinguer tried to propose a linkage between national and international change. On the one hand, he launched a strategy for a “historic compromise” with Italy’s ruling Christian Democratic Party. This moderate project, inspired by the repression of Allende’s government in Chile, seemed a plausible one as Italy’s economic and political crisis increasingly shifted popular support in favor of the communists. On the other hand, the Italian communists supported European

¹⁸ James Mark, *The Unfinished Revolution: Making Sense of the Communist Past in Central-Eastern Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 137–52.

détente between the blocs and definitively accepted West European integration. Their aim was to build a new Europe – one that was “neither anti-Soviet nor anti-American,” as their catchphrase had it – which could become a third force in world politics. Accordingly, they supported the German Social Democrats’ *Ostpolitik* – which they interpreted as a key step toward the creation of a new context for political change in Europe – and rejected the Brezhnevite dogma that the repression of the Prague Spring had been instrumental to launching détente in that it had stabilized the Soviet sphere of influence. What the Italian communists hoped for was a “dynamic” scenario that combined détente and change.¹⁹

Connecting the PCI’s national bid for power to a transnational strategy, Berlinguer proposed Europeanism and support for “dynamic” views of détente as the cornerstones of a Western communist alliance based on democratic and pluralist approaches to socialism. Presented as the only credible proposition for social and political change in the West, this renewal was expected to boost the Western communists’ standing while at the same time providing impulses for renovation in the whole of the communist world. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the oil shock of late 1973, Berlinguer saw the emerging economic crisis as an opportunity for rethinking what socialism might mean in a setting of “advanced capitalism.”

The French communists, who represented the only other mass party in Western Europe, adhered only half-heartedly to what would be later defined as the “Eurocommunist” project. Their attitude to the “founding myth” of the Prague Spring was ambiguous at best, as their dissent over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had lasted for just a few months. While affirming their “autonomy” within the communist movement, the French proposed a vision that was entrenched in the concept of national sovereignty rather than European integration, and showed little interest in détente. Nonetheless, just like the Italians, they recognized that a shared Western communist perspective could become an effective instrument for gaining legitimacy in their domestic context. No other West European communist party proved willing – or able – to participate in the Eurocommunist project, except for the Spanish Communist Party, which represented a smaller force engaged in its own country’s democratic transition. Unlike France’s Georges Marchais, the Spanish leader Santiago Carrillo fully supported Berlinguer’s

19 Silvio Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 2006).

views, and he went even further than his Italian counterpart in criticizing the Soviet model.²⁰

In fact, not all the Eurocommunists were, at the same time, reform communists convinced that socialism and democracy were inseparably linked. The Portuguese Carnation Revolution of 1974 became a key test for their attitudes. The Portuguese communist leader Álvaro Cunhal caused wide international concern as he insisted on his party's alliance with the revolutionary elements of the military and demonstrated less commitment to the defense of pluralism than to the old model of "people's democracy." Berlinguer and Carrillo criticized this stance, adopting arguments that closely resembled those of the main social-democratic parties, which were by then actively supporting their own local allies in the Portuguese and Spanish transitions.²¹ This position met with negative reactions not only in Moscow, but also within the French Communist Party. Marchais sided with Cunhal and his Soviet partners, revealing how difficult it was to establish a cohesive Eurocommunist movement. Furthermore, the other Western communist parties remained predominantly pro-Soviet, sectarian and electorally insignificant. Even the British and the Belgian parties, which had opposed the repression of the Prague Spring, became mired in exhausting internecine disputes over Eurocommunism and were unable to check their historical decline. The new intellectual influence of Antonio Gramsci's thought – increasingly reinterpreted, particularly in Britain, from the perspective of a theory of "hegemony" suited to the complexity of Western societies – was of limited help to the Eurocommunist project, even if it did encourage a revival of anti-orthodox thinking in Marxist milieus.²² The Marxist scene was mainly occupied by "New Left" groups that opposed the "revisionist" trajectory of reform communism and, in any case, experienced a rapid decline in the second half of the 1970s.

Paradoxically, Eurocommunism was altogether more popular among East European communists. Berlinguer's address to the pan-European communist conference held in Berlin in June 1976 seemingly revealed plural voices within

20 Marco Di Maggio, *Alla ricerca della terza via al socialismo. I PC italiano e francese nella crisi del comunismo (1964–1984)* (Naples: ESI, 2014); Gregorio Morán, *Miseria y grandeza del Partido comunista de España, 1939–1985* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1986); Santiago Carrillo, *Memorias* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2006).

21 Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, *El amigo alemán. El SPD y el PSOE de la dictadura a la democracia* (Barcelona: RBA Libros, 2012); David Castaño, "'A Practical Test in the Détente': International Support for the Socialist Party in the Portuguese Revolution (1974–1975)," *Cold War History* 15, 1 (2015), 1–26.

22 Derek Boothman, Francesco Giasi and Giuseppe Vacca (eds.), *Gramsci in Gran Bretagna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2015).

the movement and helped expand the spaces of autonomy in the Soviet bloc. In the East, interest and sympathy with Eurocommunism grew, though they remained underground. The Hungarian establishment in particular proposed a cautiously positive reception of Eurocommunism. The Italian communists had several contacts with reform-oriented officials such as Gyula Horn and Rezső Nyers, as well as with other “moderate” officials in Poland, the GDR and even the Soviet Union.²³ The PCI also established a partnership with the Yugoslav leadership. Although Tito and his entourage were skeptical about influencing change in the Soviet bloc – and scarcely inclined to accept the democratic implications of reform thinking – this relationship reinforced the emergence of Eurocommunism as a factor in world politics, as the Yugoslavs had influence both in Eastern Europe and in the nonaligned movement in the Third World. Cultivating wide ecumenical ambitions, the Italian communists built relations with national liberation movements in the Middle East, in Africa and elsewhere – putting forward views that opposed radical attitudes, especially those held by the Cubans.²⁴ Nevertheless, the relevance of Eurocommunism to renewing communist political culture in non-European countries was effectively limited to Japan, where the idea of a socialist project aimed at a context of advanced capitalism exercised a certain attraction on the local communist party. In the global South, anti-imperialist traditions prevented reform communism from holding sway – with the partial exception of Brazil.²⁵

Reform Communism and the European Left: Offensives and Retreats

The Eurocommunist alliance ended up gaining more foes than friends. After the movement was definitively established at the meeting of the Italian, French and Spanish communists held in Madrid in February 1977, the Soviet Union started an ideological counteroffensive that targeted Carrillo, but mainly pursued the goal of dividing the partners and preventing any spillover of their ideas in Eastern Europe. One of the most delicate aspects was the Eurocommunists’ defense of human rights and dissent in the East.

23 Antonio Rubbi, *Il mondo di Berlinguer* (Rome: Napoleone, 1994), 93.

24 Marco Galeazzi, *Il PCI e il movimento dei paesi non allineati 1955–1975* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2011).

25 Peter Berton, “Japanese Communist Party: The ‘Lovable’ Party,” in Ronald J. Hrebennar (ed.), *Japan’s New Party System* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 253–99; Marco Aurelio García (ed.), *As esquerdas e a democracia* (Rio de Janeiro: CEDEC, 1986).

Although rather inconsistently pursued and mainly oriented to defending only socialist dissidents, this stance signaled the diminished legitimization of the Eastern bloc regimes and the growing pressure exercised, even within the communist movement, by a new universalist discourse on human rights epitomized by the Helsinki conference. However, the Eurocommunists' partial adoption of the language of human rights did not suffice to earn them political legitimization in the West. The administration of President Jimmy Carter tried to revise the USA's traditional hostility – as epitomized in previous years by the positions of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger – but continued to look at the communist parties as a potential threat to NATO, especially as the PCI had entered a “national solidarity” parliamentary majority in 1976 and drawn close to government. The governments of Western Europe, including the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in West Germany, shared these reservations.

Relations between Eurocommunists and European social democrats were problematic even in the case of the PCI. The Italian communists had initiated an informal dialogue with the SPD centered on *détente* as early as 1967. While undergoing many ups and downs, this relationship decisively contributed to influencing the PCI's international outlook at the moment it devised the Eurocommunist strategy. The Italian communists reconsidered their view of *détente* as a tool for altering the European political order in the short term and converged with the SPD position which interpreted the process as involving only a strictly gradual change. It was within this framework that the PCI came to accept Italy's membership of NATO, which was reappraised as a precondition to the maintenance of the East–West equilibrium that underpinned *détente*. In the same way, a positive assessment of the social democratic governments and parties' international initiatives was instrumental to fashioning the PCI's own peculiar Europeanist position. The Italian communists' network of relations with social democratic parties significantly expanded during the 1970s, and by the end of the decade it included virtually all of the European members of the Socialist International.

However, in spite of the more open attitude of a transnational faction of left-wing social democrats, the mainstream leaderships remained cautious over the ideological evolution of Eurocommunism, and generally hostile when confronted with the perspective of communist participation in any Western government. Driven as it was by a complex set of international, domestic and ideological concerns, this fundamental position – which aimed at preserving East–West equilibriums, reaffirming the ideological distinction between communism and social democracy, and containing the proponents

of radical responses to the economic crisis of the 1970s within the Socialist International – saw hardly any significant evolution. For its part, the PCI had never interpreted its relations with the social democrats as a step toward the abandonment of its communist identity and criticism of the heirs of the Second International. The advocates of historicist schemes for shaping a “third way,” overcoming both the orthodox communist and the social democratic traditions, the Italian communists systematically belittled the achievements of the post-1945 social democratic governments, emphasizing how they had yielded to the “logics of capitalism.”²⁶ The Spanish Communist Party likewise tried to build up a network of relations with European social democratic parties, but it was limited in this effort by the active support the latter were providing to Felipe González’s Socialists in Spain. In spite of its engagement in a formal alliance with the French Socialist Party from 1972 to 1977, the French Communist Party’s international relations with European social democrats were nearly nonexistent. As the Union of the Left in France grew increasingly fractious, the communists missed hardly any opportunity to restate in ever-sharper tones their ideological distinction from social democracy and denunciation of the European social democratic governments’ involvement in the “international strategy of imperialism.”

Eurocommunism was eventually unable to escape a defeat that depended on basic lack of cohesion as well as on shortcomings suffered by its three founding members in their national strategies. The American (and West European) veto on communist participation in Western governments, on the one hand, and Soviet ideological hostility, on the other hand, were strong enough to contain the PCI. As détente waned and the most important Western communist party went back to opposition in early 1979, the entire transnational strategy fell apart. Moscow’s harsh reaction against Eurocommunism was effective in forcing the French communists to step back from their vague dissent stances, and all the more so since they were affected domestically by the rise of the socialists. The Spanish Communist Party was unable to challenge the socialists and suffered from internal splits, also fueled by the Soviets. Not only was the movement defeated, but within a few years all Western parties were greatly reduced in their membership and electoral support. Having been contained in its national challenge, the PCI lost the international resonance it had gained in the previous years. The “second Cold War” brought about by the Euromissile crisis and the

26 Michele Di Donato, *I comunisti italiani e la sinistra europea. Il PCI e i rapporti con le socialdemocrazie (1964–1984)* (Rome: Carocci, 2015).

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was hardly a favorable environment for its projects. Eurocommunism had exposed the exhaustion of international communism, but failed the test of trying to bring about a new pole.²⁷

Nevertheless, although the Italian communists had to renounce the perspective of building a new movement, they still represented a major national force – as well as the only mass communist party in Western Europe. The PCI leadership defended their party's evolution by condemning the Afghan war in 1980 and Wojciech Jaruzelski's 1981 coup in Poland. It was this latter event that provoked Berlinguer's famous declaration that "the propulsive capacity for the renewal of the societies – or at least of some of the societies – that have been created in Eastern Europe has been exhausted."²⁸ The implications for political culture were important, as Berlinguer and other Italian communist leaders – particularly Giorgio Napolitano – rejected both appeals to loyalty to the Soviet Union based on "class" principles and any accusation of "counterrevolution" leveled against Solidarność in Poland. They knew that in Moscow people like Cherniaev spoke a very similar language, even though they were cut off from decision-making. In any case, the Polish crisis of 1980–81 represented the historical moment when some of the crucial dilemmas of reform communism came to light, even before Gorbachev. The Italian communists still hoped for some time that Stanisław Kania could undertake "reform from above," but they eventually had to concede that the pattern of change from below represented by Lech Wałęsa had prevailed. The reference to the myth of the Prague Spring came into question, while for the first time since Stalin's death reform ideas had apparently lost their transnational character.

It was precisely in the early 1980s that the Italian communists intensified their dialogue and exchanges with left-wing social democratic forces. They showed their common attention toward the new issues emerging in the political culture of the European left, such as the dismissal of bipolarism as an outdated order; the idea of an increasing centrality of North–South relations; and interest in themes advanced by the environmentalist and feminist movements. In many ways, this encounter with social democrats epitomized a significant transition for the reform communists. Some of the traditional distinctions between the two groups were losing their significance: In spite of their differences, both stood for détente, the mixed economy and the state's

27 Silvio Pons, "The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism," in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. III, *Endings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 45–65.

28 Antonio Tatò (ed.), *Conversazioni con Berlinguer* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1985), 271.

active role in society and the economy, as well as the need for a politically led restructuring of the international economic order. Specific themes of their dialogue would soon demonstrate their crucial significance – for instance, the ideas of “common security” and “nonoffensive defense” advocated by the German and Swedish social democrats and endorsed by the Italian communists would have a decisive impact on Gorbachev.²⁹ However, both social democrats and Eurocommunists were now forced into a defensive position. They both suffered the impact of the emerging globalization process, which required a rethinking of the most successful aspects of their national political experiences and economic recipes, and hence limited their ability to rally consensus support.

Eurocommunism had failed both as a tool for political legitimization and as a pole of attraction, and by the early 1980s even the Italian communists ceased using the term. Still, they maintained reform communism as a discursive framework, allowing them to break out of Cold War constraints and as a way to modernize communist culture and practices by restoring a link between socialism and democracy. The notion of a “third way” between social democracy and Soviet socialism became central to Berlinguer’s political discourse. Aiming at preserving the revolutionary tradition while at the same time opening the way to integration into the European left, this idea entailed both criticism of social democracy and an enduring trust in the possibility of peaceful structural changes in the West. At the same time, although they criticized Soviet-type socialism as “backward,” Italian communists considered it still capable of maintaining its place in late twentieth-century modernity, by virtue of its anti-consumerist qualities and potential for self-renewal. They refused to acknowledge the depth of the crisis of communism and kept faith in the “reformability” of the system. Their discourse and testimony were marginal in the context of 1980s Western Europe, but still resonated among what was left of reform-oriented officials and thinkers in the East as signposts of a political culture that could provide an effective alternative to worn-out revolutionary rhetoric.

In the West, the 1960s and 1970s Marxist projects of radical transformation had dissolved, and while the PCI rejected the spectre of “social-democratization” it followed longstanding reformist practices in its local administrations. In this respect, post-1968 reform communists experienced from within the contradictory transformation of the key revolutionary

29 Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 160–62, 184–87.

tradition of the twentieth century, as the changes made in their political culture increasingly conflicted with their defense of their identity.

“New Thinking” and the Path Not Taken

When he came to power in March 1985, Gorbachev did not hold coherent reform ideas, let alone a clear-cut political strategy. Historians have probably overestimated the coherence of his ideas and the extent of consensus within the Soviet ruling class on projects for change. However, a significant elite of reform-oriented officials, representing the de-Stalinization generation, did emerge around him. They shared common ideals of openness, liberalization and transformation from above. Many of them had an important international background of relations, thinking or diplomatic activity, and this in itself formed an experience completely different from those of the older political elites.³⁰ In a short time, Gorbachev and his leading group were ready to launch a radical attack on the main domestic and international categories of the Soviet Cold War, such as the application of class principles to international relations, the perception of permanent Western hostility, the preeminence of military defense over any political concept of security, and the “Brezhnev doctrine” of limited sovereignty in Eastern Europe. In this respect, Gorbachev was a child of “new thinking” much more than its creator – although the role of his personality in the rapid development of the concepts and practices of reform was crucial.

The genealogy of “new thinking” depended on various sources and experiences. It was a heterogeneous set of ideas accumulated over three decades, some of which were borrowed from the West, interlaced with Soviet peace rhetoric. The Soviet reformers looked to “purified” Marxist inspirations – believing in the myth of Leninism and the NEP as an alternative to Stalinism – as well as ideas of interdependence debated in Western political and intellectual circles, social democratic notions of common security for Europe and even critiques of “actually existing socialism.”³¹ However, there were hierarchies of sense among their sources. Their most direct inspiration came from “socialism with a human face” and Eurocommunism. In fact, the

30 Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

31 Robert D. English, “Ideas and the End of the Cold War: Rethinking Intellectual and Political Change,” in Silvio Pons and Federico Romero (eds.), *Reinterpreting the End of the Cold War: Issues, Interpretations, Periodizations* (London and New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 117–36.

transnational legacy of the Czechoslovak and West European communist reformers represented the only model they had for translating intellectual and political visions into concrete projects and policymaking. The repression of the Prague Spring and the condemnation of Eurocommunism were touchstones of an underlying conflict with the older generation of Soviet leaders. In this respect, the symbolic meaning of Gorbachev's personal attendance at Berlinguer's funeral in June 1984 can hardly be overestimated. The authentic popular participation demonstrated a deep-rooted PCI influence that was unimaginable for communists in power, and which made a strong impression upon Gorbachev.³²

The reform communist tradition's influence on Gorbachev and his leading group can be detected in the memoirs of protagonists such as Mlynář and Cherniaev.³³ What is less well known is that personal encounters with Italian communist leaders were also significant for the evolution of the Soviet reformers' ideas. Even after Berlinguer's death, the Italian communist leaders acted as a cosmopolitan group who still had a mass influence in their own country. They had come to the conclusion that communist internationalism no longer made sense, as only the ideas of a "third way," Europeanism and "humanistic socialism" could offer viable renewal. Theirs was the only discourse Gorbachev could hear within the communist movement that sounded consistent with his own concern for change and innovation. Not by chance, his relationship with the Italian communists became stronger from mid 1987 onward, in parallel with the radicalization of his reform attempts – whereas he instead experienced increasingly icy relations with most other parties, including the French Communist Party.³⁴

Gorbachev's project to put an end to the Cold War in order to liberate resources for domestic reform was closely connected with an ideal relegitimation of the Soviet Union and communism. Not only did his initial view of *perestroika* seeking to prevent decline evolve into radical reform, as he perceived conservative resistance at home and in Eastern Europe. In his view the very notion of reforming the Soviet system was also always linked to the perspective of recovering a mission that could be said to represent

32 Cherniaev, *Sovmestnyi iskhod*, 566.

33 Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdenek Mlynář, *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Anatoly Cherniaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym* (Moscow: Progress, 1993; available in English translation as Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev* [University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000]).

34 Silvio Pons, "Western Communists, Mikhail Gorbachev and the 1989 Revolutions," *Contemporary European History* 18, 3 (Aug. 2009), 349–62.

universal aims. The two plans clearly came to interact in late 1987. The turning point was Gorbachev's speech made in November 1987 upon the seventieth anniversary of the October Revolution, in which he declared that "it is now impossible to examine global developments exclusively from the point of view of the struggle between two opposing social systems." He thus dropped the "two camps" theory that was central to the Soviet Cold War, and instead embraced the perspective of interdependence. This was something that Eastern reformers had imagined and Eurocommunists had to some extent theorized. This was a move away from the dichotomous communist worldview that had shaped revolutionary identity for decades, and that dated back to the 1920s. Gorbachev's stance implied increasing attention toward social democracy as well as a mounting discontent with the state of the communist movement. He emphasized the crucial importance of social democratic delegations' participation in a Moscow meeting of November 1987.³⁵ However, the encounter and exchange with social democratic languages did not mean transformation of communism into social democracy.³⁶ It was, rather, an attempt at imagining a postrevolutionary identity for communists and at founding a new pluralist left in Europe. Gorbachev's "common European home" was designed not only to claim Russia's place within this home, but also to open the way for socialist renewal.

It can be said that during 1988 Gorbachev and his leading group implemented domestic reforms inspired by "socialism with a human face" – basically aiming at expanding the post-Chernobyl campaign for "transparency" (*glasnost*) into full acceptance of the concept of human rights, while defining plans to abolish ideological censorship, separate the party from the state and launch market-oriented transition. At the same time, they carried out in their own way suggestions that Western reformers had made – particularly the idea of the "third way" and the definitive shift from class-based "peaceful coexistence" to a new concept of interdependence that made communist internationalism a historical relic. In July 1988, Cherniaev wrote a note to Gorbachev stating that after many years of inertia the time had come to get rid of international communism "as a political category."³⁷ Gorbachev's leitmotif now still further insisted on the idea that the failure

35 V Politbiuro TsK KPSS. *Po zapisami Anatoliia Cherniaeva, Vadima Medvedeva, Georgiia Shakhnazarova (1985–1991)* (Moscow: Al'pina Biznes Books, 2006), 273.

36 For a different view, see Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 175, 248.

37 Pons, "Western Communism," 355.

of *perestroika* would mean not only Soviet decline but also a predicament for socialism worldwide. This argument was a vital motivation – if one posed in implicit terms – for the speech he gave at the United Nations in December 1988, intended as an attack on “the foundations of the Cold War.”³⁸ The virtual end of the Cold War and the promise to abandon the use of violence in Soviet relations with Eastern Europe deprived conservative communist establishments of the main protective umbrella Moscow provided, and exposed them to the alternative between sudden change or inexorable crisis.

However, there was no way to renewal. Change in Eastern Europe came mainly from below, while the paralysis of the establishments led to their collapse. As it turned out, Gorbachev’s reforms made this collapse peaceful but could not ultimately prevent it. An irresolvable contradiction emerged between his visions of reform and their compatibility with Soviet-type systems. Gorbachev demonstrated that he was ready to pay the highest price in terms of power – giving up the European sphere of influence established by Stalin – in order to avoid the use of violence from above. He rejected Deng Xiaoping’s Tiananmen model of bloody repression, such as Erich Honecker might have imported to Europe in 1989. By remaining committed to peaceful conduct inspired by “humanistic socialism,” he provided a decisive contribution to deterring any apocalyptic outcomes. He consistently ensured that resorting to force would be a senseless choice.³⁹

Such consistency waned when it came to sustainable political projects. Even in the Soviet Union, by late 1989 the wave of liberalization had gone well beyond the bounds of one-party democracy, with a polarization between radicalized democratic reformers increasingly distrustful of Gorbachev’s caution, and the blind resistance of an establishment frustrated by the “loss” of the European sphere of influence. In the aftermath of the fall of the East European regimes, the Soviet reformers’ plan to separate the party from the state came to look old-fashioned and delegitimized. The same went for economic reform measures. Although Gorbachev’s plans went far beyond the failed pattern of 1965, at the same time they were hardly realistic – and unsuitable for facing the mounting crisis – given that direction and enforcement still relied on centralized institutions.⁴⁰ The Soviet reformers were

38 V Politbiuro TsK KPSS, 426.

39 Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

40 Mark Harrison, “Coercion, Compliance, and the Collapse of the Soviet Command Economy,” *Economic History Review* 55, 33 (2002), 397–433.

isolated. Even before 1989, not only communist establishments in Eastern Europe, but also almost all the other communist parties opposed *perestroika*, with the PCI being the only major exception. This was particularly true in the Third World: Castro's manifest hostility when Gorbachev visited Cuba in April 1989 epitomized a longstanding aversion toward the European reform communists.⁴¹ Projects for cultural rapprochement with social democracy had not produced an alternative set of political alliances. The landscape was no better after 1989, in spite of Gorbachev's illusory view that the postcommunist regimes would maintain some kind of socialist orientation and friendly relations with Moscow. In fact, the pattern of change in Eastern Europe ruled out any socialist perspectives, and paved the way for a European order that marginalized the Soviet Union. The West did nothing to support the Soviet reformers' agenda and contributed to undermining them.⁴²

Destabilization, however, came essentially from within, and radical reform was its key driver. Gorbachev's reforms proved to be unsustainable for the system – all the more so as he declared in February 1990, before being elected head of state, that the monopoly of the communist party should be removed from the Soviet constitution. In many ways, the end of the Cold War deprived the Soviet system of a fundamental cohesive factor, while “humanistic socialism” was insufficient for building a new legitimacy. This problem was understood by conservative opponents of “new thinking” both in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, where they increasingly tried to influence Gorbachev and then opted to get rid of him. The Soviet reformers feared the menace of an authoritarian *coup d'état* but did not really consider the scenario of collapse on the pattern of the East European regimes.

Conclusion

The fatal failure of the Soviet reformers evidenced underlying contradictions. Reform communism had never defined the balance between visions of change and the preservation of a specific political identity. The problem was that “humanistic socialism” could lead to a fundamental alteration of the revolutionary identity and, consequently, delegitimize the very sources of the communist experience. By the end of the 1980s, the idea of recovering the purity of Leninism, characteristic of reform communism's invented tradition

41 V Politbiuro TsK KPSS, 468–69.

42 Archie Brown, *Seven Years That Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

and its anti-Stalinist narrative of history, was no longer plausible. Gorbachev understood this problem. In November 1990, he told Cherniaev that, for all its historical meaning, the October Revolution had “divided the world” while “our current revolution unifies it, opening up an era of a great and real common civilization.”⁴³ In other words, he imagined a post-Leninist scenario and, at the same time, could not help portraying himself as a revolutionary. He and his leading group represented the ultimate evolution of reform communism, and came to see how “new thinking” meant change not only for political ideas and projects, but also for communist identity as such.

As the final expression of reform communism, the Soviet reformers’ “new thinking” also symbolized the exhaustion from within of the twentieth-century revolutionary tradition in Europe and Russia. From their own experience they drew the lesson that state violence had hardly served any cause of social progress. Even if Marxism’s legacy was still important for them in terms of devising grand designs drawing on an elevated idea of politics as the crucial transformative force of society, they acknowledged the importance of human rights to global civilization and tried to embed it into a vision of universalist socialist politics. However, they failed to see that human rights marked a fundamental rupture in the continuity of modern revolutionary thinking and served to displace declining utopian ideas.⁴⁴ Particularly in Eastern Europe, human rights were associated with disbelief in politics and new ideas of moral and “apolitical” transformation. It was the latter that emerged as the main discourses in 1989 and its aftermath. The reform communists and their language of “socialist humanism,” conversely, epitomized the fading away of any vision of modernity influenced by the Marxist revolutionary tradition.

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43 Cherniaev, *Shest’ let s Gorbachevym*, 379.

44 Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

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For coeval literature and memoirs witness to reform communism's endurance after the repression of the Prague Spring, as an underground current within the establishment in the Soviet Union, see particularly the diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, *Sovmestnyi iskhod. Dnevnik dvukh epokh, 1972–1991 gody* [Joint Exodus: A Diary of Two Epochs, 1972–1991] (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010); and also his memoirs: Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000). On reform communism as a component of left-wing dissent, see as prominent examples Roy Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1975), and Rudolph Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (New York: Verso, 1978). The influence of cosmopolitan reformist officials on the making of Gorbachev's "new thinking" is analyzed by Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); see also Robert D. English and Ekaterina Svyatets, "Soviet Élites and European Integration: From Stalin to Gorbachev," *European Review of History – Revue européenne d'histoire* 21, 2 (2014), 219–33. For a personal account of the tradition of reform communism and Gorbachev's political culture, see Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdeněk Mlynář, *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). More broadly, see also Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), and Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). On the Soviet leader's interactions with the Western left, see Silvio Pons, "Western Communists, Mikhail Gorbachev and the 1989 Revolutions," *Contemporary European History* 18, 3 (Aug. 2009), 349–62; and also, though with an excessive tilt toward "social-democratizing" Gorbachev, Archie Brown, "Did Gorbachev as General Secretary Become a Social Democrat?," *Europe-Asia Studies* 65, 2 (2013), 198–220.

Roma, 30 marzo 2018

Noi sottoscritti Michele Di Donato e Silvio Pons dichiariamo di essere gli autori del saggio “Reform Communism”, contenuto in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons and Mark Selden, vol. III, *Endgames? Late Communism in Global Perspective, 1968 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 178-202.

Il saggio è frutto di ricerche e riflessioni collettive dei due autori. Conformemente al modello seguito dalla casa editrice, il testo pubblicato non riporta indicazioni circa la divisione del lavoro fra i due autori.

Per tutte le finalità necessarie, indichiamo:

- **Silvio Pons** come autore delle pagine 178-184 e 195-199 (paragrafi: What Was “Reform Communism”?; Transnational Change from Above: De-Stalinization and “Socialism with a Human Face”; “New Thinking” and the Path Not Taken).
- **Michele Di Donato** come autore delle pagine 184-195 e 199-200 (paragrafi: The Legacy of the Prague Spring; The Western Perspective: Eurocommunism and the Search for a New Legitimacy; Reform Communism and the European Left: Offensives and Retreats; Conclusion).

Il saggio bibliografico a pp. 200-202 è opera collettiva dei due autori.

In fede,

Michele Di Donato

Silvio Pons

