

**The Constitution of Critical Intellectuals:  
Polish Physicians, Peace Activists  
and Democratic Civil Society**

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The post-communist system in Eastern Europe will be distinguished by the quality of its civil society. The market will cast civil society's construction in one mold, but a democratic civil society will depend on the constitution of critical intellectuals, or the making of individuals with the inclination and capacity to understand their personal situation to reflect a public condition, and to understand the public condition as constituted through potentially transformed power relations. In order to illuminate this general process, this paper rethinks the distinction of intellectuals and considers two important cases of the making of critical intellectuals in pre-transition Poland. Physicians in 1980-81 and peace activists in 1985-88 illustrate how instabilities create opportunities for new groups of people to become critical intellectuals and how critical intellectual work can create new possibilities for social transformation. By illuminating these processes, this paper hopes to contribute to the expansion of critical intellectuality in and about Eastern Europe.



THE CONSTITUTION OF CRITICAL INTELLECTUALS:  
POLISH PHYSICIANS, PEACE ACTIVISTS AND DEMOCRATIC CIVIL SOCIETY\*

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The manner in which changes have swept Eastern Europe in 1989 was not predicted by any theory. Indeed, the drama of demonstrations, negotiations, political revolutions and social transformations in this region reinforces the idea that the social theory that claims to be a predictive science will be obliged to excuse itself from the field of world historical change. But that does not mean that social theory must resign itself to interpreting the past and translating the cultural other.

If social theory adopts a critical epistemology, it also can be understood as part of the historical project, rather than an apparatus banished to prediction or explanation. Such an outlook distinguishes itself from forms of explanation based on prediction and control or interpretation and communication by understanding its role as one of facilitating emancipatory transformation (Habermas, 1971). As such, critical social theory confirms its utility not by predicting accurately changes in East Europe, but by contributing to progressive change. Critical theory also can suggest its future utility by drawing lessons for subsequent transformations from those that have occurred already.

In what follows, I should like to illustrate the utility of this critical approach by considering the way in which the formation of civil society in Eastern Europe has depended on the activities of critical intellectuals, and how civil society's continued democratization depends on the proliferation of this quality of participation.

I begin by describing the role of civil society in the transformation of Eastern Europe. I follow this with a discussion of the relationship between intellectuals and civil society, given that the democratic version of civil society appears to elevate the intellectual to a privileged position. I next rethink the distinction of intellectuals, arguing that the delimitation of intellectuality to specific social groups undermines the democratic project. Instead, we should focus on how ordinary individuals become critical intellectuals, for it is on this foundation that a democratic civil

society can be constructed. I then illustrate the utility of this focus on the constitution of critical intellectuals with two examples. I explain how normally apolitical practical Polish physicians nevertheless were able to create a critical intellectual community in 1980-81. The work of Polish peace activists is another good example of the critical intellectual function, but not only for their constitution. They also realized influence in 1985-88 without any institutional credentials for legitimating their knowledge within a culture that has traditionally given little value to peace movements.

Both physicians and peace activists are important examples for understanding the constitution and consequence of critical intellectuality. They illustrate that 1) instabilities create opportunities for new groups of people to become critical intellectuals and that 2) critical intellectual work can create new possibilities for social transformation. Both conclusions suggest that a democratic civil society in Eastern Europe depends on a new critical intellectuality that makes the creation of critical intellectuals not an artifact of crisis, but a recurrent part of the emergent post-communist order. It is my hope that by illuminating these processes of personal and social transformation involving physicians and peace activists, this paper can contribute to the expansion of critical intellectuality in and about Eastern Europe.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY, MARKETS AND DEMOCRACY

Although certainly the transformations of 1989 were rooted in structural crises of economy and state, the changes we have witnessed also were made by people working within a framework that recognized "civil society" to be both an actor and normative goal (Arato, 1981; Judt, 1988; Keane, 1988; Kennedy, 1990). There are many different models of civil society informing actors in these transformations, however. Charles Taylor (1989) identifies two basic "streams" in Western discourse. The Lockean current views society as more than, or prior to, the state. The stream associated with Montesquieu does not elevate society over the state, but does emphasise state limitation through the rule of law grounded in a pluralism of autonomous agencies and organizations. The Lockean perspective has been the more influential of the two, with itself

yielding two basic alternatives: one where freedom is guaranteed by marginalizing politics, as in the marketization of democracy; and the second where the social interest constituted outside the state opposes politics as practiced in the name of some general will or public opinion.

For several decades, Eastern Europe has been subjected to the domination of a perverted version of Rousseau's general will, where the Stalinist party claims to act in the historical interests of a universal class or non-antagonistic social system. Thus Stalinism destroyed both public opinion and society outside the state, by striving to eliminate their autonomy from that state. The emancipatory struggle has been based, therefore, on the effort to restore an autonomous sphere of social relations known as civil society. This struggle for civil society can yield two basic forms, however.

Classical liberalism informs one struggle for civil society. Here, civil society is a marketized society. The main transformative actors are private entrepreneurs who struggle to introduce market rationality into an etatist economy. They also are to bring civilized virtues to communist authorities. Politics is not an especially important part of this civil society project. Indeed, many actors from this school argue that economic freedom has to be established first before democracy and open politics can be practiced rationally. Thus, the principal allies in this civil society project are entrepreneurs and state administrators who are committed to the economic project. Independent trade unions among industrial workers are especially undesirable actors in this framework, as this introduces a socialist element into the struggle for a marketized civil society, and institutionalizes an monopolistic constraint onto the labor market in the economic alternative (see Walicki, 1988; Ost, 1989).

Another version of civil society is based less on marketization and more on democratization and social pluralism in order to realize a truly public opinion. Where in the past public opinion was something to be discovered through the survey of private opinions, public opinion in this democratic civil society is something that is constructed through an open discussion among a variety of positions (Habermas, 1961). This civil society is derived more from Montesquieu than

Locke because freedom is measured less in the rollback of the state and the expansion of a private economy, and more in the vigor of public debate and the scope of its influence over the state.

Concerns for economic rationality cannot be dismissed in Eastern Europe given the severity of crisis in production and distribution, but this alternative democratic vision of civil society suggests that the state should not be subordinated to the demands of the marketplace either. Replacing dictates from Moscow through the Polish Politburo with those from the IMF through the Sejm does not mean democratization, but a circulation of elites. Nevertheless, in the move to escape the Party's "substantive rationality" (Feher, Heller and Markus, 1983), many have raced to embrace market rationality. How might these market principles and a vital public opinion relate?

On a practical level, economic reform in Eastern Europe, and especially Poland, can succeed only if it is coupled with an open public discussion of the choices and constraints facing these societies. Decisions that have the appearance of being imposed from above, or from without, will generate resistance and opposition that will undermine any efforts to construct an economically and socially rational system in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland. The coercive construction of capitalist economies in the West and the Third World cannot be so easily replicated in Eastern Europe. Where in the former capitalists were organized first, in the latter, workers have been organized and instructed in socialism for decades before private enterprise returns to rule. The construction of an economic alternative will have to be based on a wide and vigorous public sphere if market reform is to have chance of success. Thus, a democratic version of civil society might actually enhance the chance for economic reform, if reform becomes a collective decision established through public consensus, rather than another diktat from without.

Nevertheless, this democratic project for civil society's constitution faces more immediate barriers than the project favored by classical liberalism. Those most powerful in the world system structure options so that the market project appears most feasible, and the democratic one nice but utopian. The very possibility for reaching public consensus also depends on accepting general rules, and when economies are in tailspins this is more difficult than ever. Finally, to place so

much emphasis on public discussion seems to privilege intellectuals above all others, for they are the ones whose (pre)occupation is words and debate.

There are probably many more reasons why the project for a democratic civil society will be deemed impossible or undesirable in contemporary Eastern Europe. But social scientists should not only be in the job of identifying constraints. They also can help to construct emancipatory alternatives. If the democratic project is made more difficult by declining economic fortunes, political scientists and economists should explain how western financial and technical aid can help offset the condition that makes consensus impossible. If "market rationality" is the prevailing logic guiding western policy makers, students of public policy should provide alternative formulations that facilitate the expansion of democracy, not its replacement with the freedom to buy and sell. For a sociologist, the problem of intellectuals and civil society is a considerable one, as our profession has traditionally been constructed around the theme of equality. To argue that a democratic civil society provides the best frame for establishing a normative foundation for sociological inquiry invites justifiable skepticism, especially if the elevation of the public sphere's importance is merely a means for elevating the importance of the intelligentsia.

In this paper, I should like to address this last problem by arguing that while a democratic civil society depends on debate among intellectuals, intellectuals are not an exclusive category. Indeed, the very construction of civil society as opposition in Eastern Europe has depended upon the constitution of a new broader category of critical intellectuals who are outside the creative intelligentsia or dissident community. The future of an East European democratic civil society also depends on the continued expansion of this critical intellectuality.

#### THE DISTINCTION OF INTELLECTUALS

"Intellectuals" and intelligentsia are among the most controversial terms in East European discourse, but when I began to concentrate on this subject in the beginning of the decade, I did not find the ambiguity in their use so appealing. When I wanted to discuss "specialists with higher education" (specjaliści z wyższym wykształceniem) in their own terms, many of my readers

wanted me to discuss the intelligentsia (inteligencja). They wanted me to address who is the true Polish intelligentsia and how that is understood in relation to the Polish nation; or what distinguishes an intellectual from someone who has a higher education; or whether the intelligentsia is or is not a class in statu nascendi; or why we can or cannot speak of professionals in systems where there are limited if any opportunities for professional control over the conditions of occupational practice and reproduction. These are all very important and interesting issues, and I have tried to deal with some of them elsewhere (Kennedy, 1990; Kennedy and Sadkowski, 1990). In general, however, I tried to clarify the differences and minimize the ambiguities of concepts in order to distinguish my own intervention. Here, I wish to praise ambiguity, for ambiguity distinguishes the intellectual from other groups.

Social scientists typically do not use ambiguity to define the intelligentsia. Sometimes they use substantive characteristics of the ideas associated with them. The old Polish and Russian intelligentsia are typically distinguished by their culture and values (Gella, 1971; Kagarlitsky, 1988). In the end of the 1970s, too, these cultural or value based distinctions of the intelligentsia were reintroduced to Polish politics in order to move the intelligentsia to assume its traditional role as the moral government of the nation (Hirszowicz, 1980).

The other principal approach to defining the intelligentsia is to deny its substantive distinction and introduce more a ~~more~~ formal identity associated with the professional use of "knowledge." This is typically associated more with industrial societies, whether socialist or capitalist. For instance, Jan Szczepanski (1962, 1971) distinguished the post-war Polish intelligentsia in terms of its professional qualifications as creators of culture, as organizers of social, civic and technical activities and as those who apply scientific knowledge. Seymour Martin Lipset and Richard Dobson (1972:137-38) argued similarly, defining intellectuals in the USA and USSR as those "who are considered proficient in and are actively engaged in the creation, distribution, and application of culture." The substance of culture depends on the environment.

The greatest distinction of intellectuals is, however, their ability to redefine their own distinction. Intellectuals are not able, of course, to define their distinction ex nihilo. They must

work within the social context available to them. To take an absurd example, one could not have a nuclear engineer in nineteenth century Poland; to take another example from not so long ago, a Polish peace activist was considered a contradiction in terms. In any case, it seems important to keep in mind that we should not try to establish a category of intellectuals based on the "intrinsic" nature of their activities.

Antonio Gramsci (1971:8) considered intellectuals to be understandable only within the ensemble of the system of relations in which intellectual activities have consequence. There are "historically formed specialized categories for the exercise of the intellectual function" (p.10). Although both are "intellectuals," the fifteenth century theologian is fundamentally different from the twentieth century industrial engineer because of the different "function" each has in the reproduction or transformation of their particular order.

Gramsci's general orientation seems, then, to be a good starting point for an inquiry into East European intellectuals. And to understand such people in the last decade demands that we turn our attention to their relationship to the making of civil society in the Soviet-type system. What is the intellectual "function" in the constitution of this set of social relations?

Those who find civil society's formation in Soviet-type systems to be the consequence of modernization find the normal activity of professionals a sufficient contribution to this transformation (Lewin, 1988). In this logic, professional specialization and occupational discourse create the conditions for greater pluralism and more public debate in these systems. But in East Central Europe, civil society seemed to be defeated by the "normal" operation of professional life (Hirszowicz, 1980). To accept the set of functions organized by occupations that were themselves constructed by actors seeking to reproduce the system meant accepting the categories and questions the authorities considered safe and useful. Only by becoming an "intelektualista" rather than "inteligent" could questions about the transformation of the Soviet-type system be broached (Baranczak, 1986-87).

Moral responsibility therefore becomes an important aspect to identifying the distinction of the Polish intellectual in this epoch. But presumably this moral responsibility is also tied to the use

of critical reason to ascertain the foundation for this moral responsibility. If intellectuals do not use this reason to establish their moral position, they betray their very identity as intellectuals (Kolakowski, 1972). If intellectual roles are made through the exercise of this combination of individual reason and morality, intellectual roles cannot simply be filled therefore. A sociology of Polish intellectuals should focus then not only on their relation to other groups, or to social change, but also on the very constitution of intellectual identity. How in practice do individuals fulfill a function as intellectual?

This emphasis on agency has not only analytical consequences for the study of intellectuals, but also political consequences of the kind Kolakowski (1972) discusses. It is designed to heighten the responsibility of intellectuals to go beyond their prescribed role. In particular, it is a call to intellectuals to redefine their own relationship to power, a task made more difficult in a world in which universal questions have lost appeal.

Foucault (1977) argues that modern intellectuals are "universal" in a new way, based on their being increasingly "specific." The old exemplar of intellectual status was the writer, who concerned himself with universal questions. In the new age, it is the expert, epitomized by the atomic scientist. He can generate "knowledge" because of his specific expertise, but at the same time the specificity of his knowledge achieves universality because of the breadth of consequence his intervention into the world yields. But herein lies the tragedy: as the consequence of intellectual contribution grows, the tendency of the intellectual to address general questions recedes. Intellectuals use their capacity for reason, but remain completely outside the universal questions which at one time distinguished the intellectual.

Foucault's ideas certainly seem more appropriate to Western than Eastern Europe, given the greater even if declining prominence in the latter of "old world" intellectuals, as Jane Curry (1989) calls them. But even these politically engaged historians, philosophers and playwrights seem to agree with Foucault that no individual intellectual could embody, or represent, universal reason, and that specificity can lure intellectuals away from moral responsibility. It is also likely that they would find Foucault's means of realizing the specific-universal intellectual bridge appealing.

Foucault suggests that "truth" can remain relevant to the work of the specific intellectual, if s/he detaches "the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" (Foucault, 1977:75). This is not some anachronistic theology or marxism coming back. This is not the faithful challenge to heresy or the "scientific" critique of ideology. Instead it is a call for intellectuals to unlink truth from power by obliging them to ask how power shapes their discourse and their identities. In this sense, individuals complete their intellectual identity when they use their abilities not only to pursue reason, but also to defy power by clarifying how it abuses truth. This quality of critical intellectuality is always context bound by specific discourses, but nevertheless moved by a general appreciation for the importance of recognizing how power shapes discourse and identity.

### CRITICAL INTELLECTUALS

As a working definition, I propose that we understand critical intellectuals as individuals with the inclination and capacity to understand their personal situation to reflect a public condition, and to understand the public condition as constituted through potentially transformed power relations. In the face of the New Left at the turn of the 1960s, Lipset and Dobson (1972) described such people as "rebels and critics." At the turn of the 1980s, former rebels and critics are makers of new systems in Eastern Europe. But their new status as part of governments does not diminish the significance of the expansion of critical intellectuality.

For democratic civil society to work, critical intellectual capacities will have to be preserved, and expanded. This preservation and expansion does not refer only to the honing of skills among those who are already so inclined, but rather also their extension to new groups and new activities. One of the greatest barriers to a democratic civil society is to assume that critical intellectuality is the province only of those with intellectual jobs, or even those with "creative intellectual" occupations, as Lipset and Dobson (1972) apparently do.

We prefer to emphasize the much smaller category of "creative intellectuals" whose principal focus is on innovation, the elaboration of knowledge, art and symbolic formulations generally. Included in this group are scholars, scientists, philosophers, artists, authors, some editors, and some journalists, as distinguished

from the more marginally intellectual groups who distribute culture, such as most teachers, clerics, journalists, and performers in the arts, as well as those who apply knowledge in the course of their work, such as practicing physicians, lawyers, and engineers. The creative intellectuals are the most dynamic group within the broad intellectual stratum: because they are innovative, they are at the forefront in the development of culture, and the other marginal groups are dependent upon them for the ideational resources they use in their work. A qualitatively more exclusive group is the "critical intelligentsia" whose members are recruited from the ranks of the intelligentsia. The critical intelligentsia is composed of those who not only have the ability to manipulate symbols with expertise, but who have also gained a reputation of or commitment to general values and who have a broad evaluative outlook derived from such commitment.

These very categories act in ways contrary to the distinction of intellectuals. Although Lipset and Dobson's distinctions appear to be based on the ways in which individuals use ideas, they in fact establish their categories by arguing that individuals are "categorized" by the social or professional construction of their identity. Practicing physicians are less likely to be "creative" because they "apply" knowledge; editors and journalists can be either creative or marginal; scholars and philosophers are most likely to be creative, because that is their job. The "critical" intellectual is identified by socially defined reputations or commitments. The critical intellectual is generally derived from the creative category, presumably because that creative intellectual must be innovative, and those who distribute or apply culture need not.

Lipset and Dobson thus apparently resolve the inherent ambiguity of the category intellectual by introducing a measure of certainty with social causality. One can define terms in both their essence and their cause. The "essence" of the intellectual is the individual capacity to manipulate ideas; but the cause for that ability, in their definition, depends on structural features. Hence, the agency, and distinction, of intellectuals is reduced by their social, or occupational, determination.

No sociologist would dare argue that individuals are not constrained by their social identity. But no sociologist, especially one who wishes to understand the distinction of intellectuals, should argue that these social constructions are stably defined. In particular, instability can redefine who are intellectuals, and who are creative and critical; and intellectuals themselves can help generate the instability and social transformations which redefine the categories we use to understand them and their context.

## THE CRITICAL INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

How does the capacity for cultural manipulation enable intellectuals to induce political instability or contribute to social transformation? After all, before the power of the state, intellectuals are weak. As a group, they are easily silenced in any system, as evidenced by US McCarthyism and by the normalization of the Prague Spring (Malia, 1972). On the other hand, such political coercion might, argues Lipset and Dobson (1972:163), create just such a critical intelligentsia by alienating intellectuals from the state. But harboring critical sentiments does little to promote instability, unless one were to find adequate the Frankfurt School's belief that the maintenance of a critical spirit is all that one can accomplish in the era of complete state and cultural domination. What, beyond maintaining a "flicker of hope," can intellectuals do?

Lipset and Dobson (1972:175) argue that intellectuals

have the potential for the "restructuring" of man's conception of himself and his society. Beyond that, they may be able to apply sanctions to motivate others to act toward their favored ends. The sanctions which they possess are principally three: power derived from the threat of withholding needed services, influence derived from its possession of high prestige and value commitments generated through the elaboration of ideology.

Polish intellectuals, broadly understood, cannot "withhold services" to realize their aims, because they are themselves poorly organized. Even in 1980-81, engineers were not independently organized as a profession so much as they were organized by enterprise in alliance with workers. Physicians have a greater capacity for professional organization, but their strike threatens society more than the authorities, given that the authorities retained their own loyal physicians and society perceived a medical strike to be against the social interest. Strikes by Polish journalists and theatrical performers may endanger the health of the population less, but it is not obvious that their boycott of official periodicals and events contributed as much to progressive change as did their more positive contributions to the elaboration of an underground culture. Polish intellectuals also have had considerable prestige, and were sought by the communist authorities to legitimate their programs. But whether this association brought professionals influence or whether that claim to influence was an illusion professionals maintained

to justify their compromise with the authorities is another issue better left for elsewhere (for elaboration of some of these points, see Kennedy, 1990). What remains is the capacity to elaborate ideology, which is not usefully discussed in isolation from the restructuring of conceptions. Ideology is after all a set of social definitions that contributes to the reproduction or transformation of social relations based on redefinition of the relationship between truth and power. How, then, have new concepts and identities contributed to the formation of social movements and alternative institutions that have transformed East European power relations?

KOR's contribution to the formation of Solidarity is the best known Polish example of the intellectual contribution to social movements. In their efforts, KOR intellectuals helped to overcome what was one of the most important barriers to society's cross-class opposition to the authorities. Conceptually, they helped construct a new workers' identity with their "Charter of Workers Rights" (in *Robotnik* nr. 35, August, 1979; reprinted in Lipski, 1985:492-500).<sup>1</sup> More important, through their "service" to workers, they helped to create a new relationship between classes founded on a common interest in civil society.

KOR may be the best known and most respected example of critical intellectuals reshaping conceptualizations of social relations, but by the end of the 1980s, intellectual reconstructions were also occurring among the authorities. Indeed, were it not for critical intellectuality on both sides, the Roundtable Agreements could never have been reached.

According to Polish United Workers Party Politburo member Janusz Rejkowski (1989a, 1989b), in 1983 neither opposition nor authorities were prepared for negotiation. They could not agree on any superordinate goal. The authorities still believed that Solidarity could be repressed while the Party realized reform, and Solidarity believed that negotiations with the regime were impossible. But as economic, social and political crisis continued to escalate, and as perestroika undermined the viability of a Party hard line position, negotiations became more attractive. In the beginning of 1989, the Magdalenka meeting of authorities and opposition agreed to establish a common aim of realizing change in the political system without generating destabilization. The final April agreement itself depended on several more fundamental reconceptualizations of power

and social relations. Rejkowski (1989a) recalled several such conceptual shifts in the political roundtable talks that he chaired with Solidarity representative Bronislaw Geremek.

First, the definition of the other side had to be recast. The authorities initially viewed Solidarity as an imposter seeking power, and thus approached negotiations from the standpoint of containment. Solidarity considered itself the true representative of society, and thus sought to impose its view of change on the authorities. To conceive of the other as a partner in negotiation rather than as an enemy to be whittled down allowed the talks to proceed. Indeed, a change in the concept of the talks themselves, from one of bargaining to one of cooperative problem solving, facilitated negotiation. The point of negotiations also had to be recast from one assessing responsibilities for past traumas to one of resolving pragmatic issues for the future.

Thus, the Roundtable Agreements themselves were able to proceed because of the construction of new definitions of actors and power relations. Instead of conceiving of the other as enemy, they were constructed as partner. Instead of defining the aim of relations to be destruction or cooptation, they were constructed as cooperation toward building a consensus. This negotiation itself was built upon a set of power relations different from that which existed before 1980, however. The authorities negotiated because there was now an autonomous actor with whom to negotiate: civil society. Without the constitution in civil society of this new common identity for workers and intellectuals, there could have been no such roundtable talks. But doesn't the cast of this roundtable agreement, and those of KOR before, confirm that the reconstruction of civil society in Eastern Europe is a project of the intelligentsia, with workers at most playing a supporting role?

True to Lipset and Dobson's (1972) formulation, these critical intellectuals were most often from the "creative" intelligentsia. Janusz Rejkowski is a well known social psychologist. His partner in the political roundtable was the medieval historian, Bronislaw Geremek. The intellectual advisors to Solidarity are now the most prominent figures in government. The Prime Minister himself, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, is a Catholic intellectual and editor by occupation. KOR members were also overwhelmingly from the creative intelligentsia. The modal occupation was

literary or linguistic figures with 9, followed by 6 historians, 4 lawyers, 3 social scientists, 2 philosophers, 2 priests and 2 physicists, plus individuals in a variety of other occupations (Lipski, 1985:50-58).<sup>2</sup> The pattern identified by Lipset and Dobson fits: by and large, these "critical intellectuals" came from the creative sphere.

The relationship of critical intellectuals to a democratic civil society is different, however, from the relationship upon which most intellectual projects are built. In contrast to the Leninist project where the collective intellectual as Party speaks for the universal class unable to realize its historic role, the critical intellectual of civil society is not a vanguard. A democratic civil society can succeed only to the extent that its citizens also can become critical intellectuals. It also requires that the character of intellectual discourse provides the means for the privilege of the intellectually credentialed to be undermined (see Gouldner, 1979). In this, the critical intellectual of civil society is much like Gramsci's organic intellectual in the class struggle: both are significant actors in the emancipatory effort, even while both are derived from ordinary people. And the more broadly this intellectuality spreads, the better.

If the constitution of democratic civil society is about the constitution of critical intellectuals, our focus should be to discover how ordinary people become critical intellectuals rather than demonstrate how a delimited category of people are likely to demonstrate certain critical intellectual capacities. Indeed, I should like to argue that the transformation of Poland, 1980-1989, occurred not only because creative intellectuals could define new identities and social relations, but also because a much larger group of people began to ask questions that challenged the established relationship between truth and power.

The Solidarity movement of 1980-81 was constituted by the alliance of workers with all sectors of society, but especially with professionals, those who normally "apply" knowledge. And it was these "non-creative" intellectuals who helped to create the new categories enabling the formation of a social movement and new type of political instability. Our understanding of civil society and intellectuals can be enhanced, therefore, if we consider different sorts of intellectuals who also redefined categories and alliances and created new possibilities for social transformation.

In particular, physicians, who "apply knowledge," created the occupational culture for a new activist mentality among formerly apolitical physicians, and a new understanding of the relationship between truth and power in health.

#### ACTIVIST PHYSICIANS AS CRITICAL INTELLECTUALS

Before 1980, most physicians in People's Poland were apolitical, like the majority of physicians in the rest of the world. Most of them were "marginal intellectuals" in Lipset and Dobson's framework, because they "applied" knowledge. When they were "creative," they were typically creative within narrow, occupationally defined spheres. In periods of political instability they might become more critical, but typically limited their critique to occupational matters. Why were physicians not more part of the broad critical intelligentsia? Consideration of two groups of "critical intellectuals," in KOR and DiP, can clarify this.

Although no physicians publically declared themselves members of KOR, some physicians cooperated with KOR to publish the first broad, empirically informed, critique of Polish health care (Lipski, 1985:293-99). But they remained anonymous. At about the same time, the group *Doświadczenie i Przyszłość* was organizing itself. Before 1980, it was suggested that a DiP health commission form in order to provide a broader and more open discussion of the problems facing health care. But in this case too, physicians were not willing to participate openly in such "subversive" activity. In this, physicians allowed power to define their public truths about the adequacy of health care. After 1980, however, ten physicians worked with journalist Jerzy Zieliński to form just such a public health commission that would challenge the regime's authority for rendering the truth about health care. Physicians resisted public critical roles before because they remained dependent on the authorities for fulfilling their medical responsibilities, but with the establishment of Solidarity, their opportunities for independence increased (Kennedy, 1990).

These cases nevertheless reinforce the stereotypical image of critical intellectuals. Those physicians who became public and critical in DiP were not the typical practicing physician, but rather medical researchers and leaders in their medical specialities. They already were "creative

intellectuals," but they could not, or would not, become public critical intellectuals without the emergence of "political instability," where Solidarity could offer them some kind of protection. Critical intellectuals thus do not just contribute to instability. Instead, we should emphasize that instability creates opportunities for creative intellectuals to become critical intellectuals.

"Critical physicians" were not limited to these luminaries in DiP, however. Many more critical physicians were found in the Health Commission of Solidarity. Physicians became critical intellectuals when they were able to move beyond their occupational sphere and to define publically problems and solutions in that sphere in terms of broad philosophical, social and political transformations. Where before they might criticize the resources allocated the system or the wages they were given, in 1980-81 they defined the health care crisis politically, in terms of the power relations of the Soviet-type system.

Physicians actively sought to overturn the power relations of the health system. They defined membership in existing professional associations as unprofessional, whereas they had been members in them before, despite crisis after crisis. They declared membership in Solidarity, the oppositional trade union, as professionally necessary. They even defined participation in professionally specialized and independent associations, like the Trade Union of Polish Physicians (Związek Zawodowy Lekarzy Polskich), as politically and therefore professionally irresponsible.

Symbolic actions were sometimes more powerful than these declarations. The most spectacular example of this is seen in the way health section activists sought to turn buildings used by the secret police and military over into buildings used for public health. In this sense, these activist physicians helped redefine the nature of the health crisis: it was not the consequence of poor personnel in the system, as so many Polish citizens believed. Instead, it was the consequence of the existing system of power relations, demonstrated so powerfully by the wealth of the coercive apparatus and the poverty of public health.

Although the success of the Health Section leads us to think this "translation" of political oppression into medical crisis is natural for Poles, it was not so apparent in the beginning of Solidarity. In the fall of 1980, critical physicians were very cautious and emphasized time and

again that they were doing nothing to endanger the health of society. They also emphasized that all of their political activities were for health care and patients, even though many of the most contested demands concerned wages and benefits for health care workers. Thus, these activist physicians accomplished something which is typically the mark of "critical intellectuals": they were able to establish new social definitions that reshaped the alliances of Polish society and helped redirect the subsequent outcomes of political instability.

Who were these activist physicians, these "critical intellectuals"? Many of them were medical researchers and leading physicians, but even more were "practicing physicians." I have no representative sample, but leading activists in this health commission were from all sectors. I interviewed sixteen activist physicians, whose specialties included industrial health, radiology, anesthesiology, hematology, internal medicine, pediatrics and medical research. Some worked in hospitals, but others were employed in outpatient clinics. This mass democratic movement of health care workers was led by physicians, but not by those who would previously have been defined as part of the "creative" sphere. Instead, many critical physicians came from the realm of "applied culture." Thus, not only does political instability allow "creative" intellectuals to become critical, but it also encourages those on the "margins" of intellectual life to use their relatively untapped innovative capacities to become critical.

I intentionally write that instability allows some intellectuals to become critical, rather than write that instability causes intellectuals to become critical. It was not apparent in the 1970s that physicians would become so prominent in redefining the possibilities of transformation in Soviet-type society. But they created that option by virtue of their own ability to define new categories and new alliances for physicians and health care. Indeed, they created a coherent "adversarial culture," the typical product of critical intellectual work. This culture even persisted after martial law. Critical physicians contributed to the extensive underground culture with such publications as the Zeszyty Niezależnej Myśli Lekarskiej. They were also among the most uncompromising in the face of the regime's attempts to normalize and coopt. At the 1987 meeting

of the Society for Internal Medicine, a Party member said in a speech that only about 150 of a potential pool of 70,000 physicians belonged to the new trade unions.<sup>3</sup>

What does this example of activist physicians do for our understanding of intellectuals and instability?<sup>7</sup> First, it reminds us that crisis and political instability must be defined as such; crisis in any sphere does not automatically mean political crisis. Individuals must translate social problems into public issues for change to occur. Otherwise they will remain private problems, or they will be assumed to be inevitable products of an inevitable system, or that they are remediable in reform.

Second, any sphere can potentially be turned into a politically sensitive area if individuals can define the problems of that sphere in political terms. Health care problems were not automatically perceived as political, but rather understood by the public as the consequence of either incompetent personnel or corrupt physicians. Critical physicians were able to translate the health crisis into a political crisis by unlinking their own identities and expertise from the old authorities.

Third, critical intellectuals need not be professional dissidents or radical activists. They need not even be "creative" intellectuals as Lipset and Dobson understand the term. The case of these activist physicians suggests that even those most insulated from politics and engaged in applying or distributing culture can become critical intellectuals under certain conditions.

Indeed, it does a disservice to the very nature of critical intellectual work to distinguish types of knowledge on the basis of the way in which one uses it, as in distinguishing between distributing, applying or creating knowledge. Creativity is in large part the consequence of combining cultural items in new ways. Critical work is the application of that creative process to social problems. Those who "apply culture" might even be better situated for critical work, because it is their regular obligation to make abstract concepts meaningful to resolving the problems of everyday social life. To the extent that they come to recognize that moral and political questions are also their province, they are more likely to become the critical intellectuals we seek to understand here. Gramsci's (1971:9) point that "all men [sic] are intellectuals, but not

all men have in society the function of intellectuals" is important. People can distinguish between truth and power, but power constantly strives to deny them the possibility of using that capacity.

These activist physicians are a different sort of critical intellectual because they act in a sphere that we do not normally associate with politics and social transformation. But it is testimony to the power of the critical intellectual that the health sector can become part of the problem which motivates questions of truth and power.

Nearly all of us would identify what these physicians seek as universally good, and that they are capable of defining how that good might be achieved. Thus, while we would not expect these physicians to be active and critical, once they are most of us would rejoice in adding them to a list of critical intellectuals because we accord them the scepter of truth in medicine.

These physicians were not challenging power in every sphere, however. These critical physicians were themselves constrained by the power relations of the system which obliged them to maintain good relations with Solidarity. This is not to say, of course, that this alliance diminished the significance of their critical intellectual activity. But many physicians have argued that their "dependence" on nurses and worker made them propose reforms that were not "sensible" from a physician's point of view. To argue for unpopular reforms would, however, diminish the solidarity of the opposition, and play into the hands of the authorities.

Professional dependency on Solidarity thus "distorted" professional discourse, but this is not the same kind of distortion as that induced by the authorities. If the aim of Solidarity was, as most believe, the creation of a civil society in which pluralism, legality and publicity flourish, professional dependency on workers is a strategic and temporary phenomenon. Presumably, in a democratic civil society, physicians will be able to articulate their vision of truth without compromise, even if this does not mean they will "control" the health sector.

Power does not disappear in the creation of a democratic civil society. Instead, a wider variety of power resources is distributed more equally. This means that although discourse should become more open, and visions of truth less compromised, intellectuals do not rule. Because all

individuals are capable of understanding argument and making decisions, professionals must convince clients and public of their wisdom, and not just assert it with credentials on a wall.

Intellectual status is, however, usually associated with just such credentialing, and this is the ultimate irony in intellectual responsibility. If critical intellectuals are obliged to unlink truth and power, does this not mean that the institutional forms associated with expertise, universities, research institutes and other forms of higher learning, must themselves be critically appraised? This is, of course, a major theme of Foucault's intervention, and is part of the critique of professional domination in health care that we see in the USA. It presumably will become more common in Poland too as the dichotomous politics of civil society vs. the authorities is replaced with civil society being the context of conflict itself. Such challenges to institutionally based expertise appeared even before the 1989 reforms.

The political and military authorities of all systems traditionally have claimed their "expertise" in matters of war and peace. Peace activists, to the degree that they are independent of military and political authorities, challenge this basic assumption. In this sense, they aspire to unlink truth and power. Hence, although every political authority wants to deny the peace activist the status of intellectual, in their attempt to rethink categories of social life most dear to political and military authorities, peace activists exemplify the critical intellectual function. The Polish peace activist might merit this status even more than peace activists in other systems.

#### THE PEACE ACTIVIST AS CRITICAL INTELLECTUAL

The peace movement in Eastern Europe and the USSR has come a long way from the official peace groups sponsored by the political authorities. Indeed, it has made this progress in large part by virtue of critical intellectual work.

Much as the authorities in the Soviet-type system have appropriated the language of marxist liberation by using it as an ideology to cloak their own domination, they also appropriated slogans of "peace." Under socialism, the authorities of Communist Party led societies argue, "the aims of foreign policy and the peace efforts of the governments coincide with the peace interests of

the peoples" (George Grasnik of the GDR; cited in Ramet, 1984). In the past, this produced two kinds of reactions. Those who place "peace" above other political values could be coopted into commissions sponsored by the authorities. In Czechoslovakia, Josef Hromadka, a priest of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, established the Christian Peace Conference in 1958. Although the 1968 invasion destroyed Hromadka's hopes for its potential, the Conference was reorganized under the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church and Hungarian bishops and continues to exist (Hall, 1986). Those who could not accept the legitimacy of the authorities were led to treat "peace movements" as tools of Soviet interest. The Western peace movement was considered at best naive about Soviet intentions. When some in their number argued that "human rights has nothing to do with a proper focus on disarmament," "peace" became a message from Moscow, not something East Europeans could support.

Solidarity, although non-violent in its tactics, was not a "peace movement." There were a few appeals for disarmament and protests against violence, but by and large Solidarity was not "anti-militarist" or "pacifist." Indeed, for most Poles, pacifism connotes the passivity of 1938 Munich (Tymowski, 1984). The western peace movement appeared to Poles to be an ally of the Communist authorities. The peace movement was praised in the early 1980s in the official communist press. The Pugwash Conference, a peace group founded by Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell, met in Poland in 1982 despite martial law and the violent suppression of peaceful protest. When Solidarity activists would speak to western peace movements, western activists would unceasingly criticize the Polish movement for its "antagonism" toward the Soviet Union and its upsetting detente (Tymowski, 1984). The matter changed slightly when western peace activists began to support Solidarity and other opposition movements without qualification. Although the Greens and END claim this unstinting support at the time of martial law (Kelly, 1982; Thompson, 1982),<sup>4</sup> it was not until later that Poland began to develop its own "independent peace movement."

Independent peace movements in Eastern Europe emerged more readily in the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary than they did in Poland. Swords into Ploughshares, Charter 77 and

the Peace and Dialogue group formed their arguments on peace with traditional cultural factors providing some of their foundation. But in Poland, the military political culture and romantic national tradition worked against the formation of any kind of independent peace movement. Nevertheless, a way was found which illustrates the significance of critical intellectual work in reshaping categories and forming new alliances.

The generation of sympathy for the Western peace movement began in 1983 with articles in the underground journal KOS. Western peace activists contributed articles, and KOS itself clarified the difference between Western and Eastern grass roots movements. For those in the East, there are not two equal evils, and certainly the US is not the main threat to peace. The Soviet Union is the principal danger for peace and justice, and a divided Europe is as threatening to peace as are nuclear missiles. The idea of an independent peace movement in Poland nevertheless remained unpopular, as it failed to construct an identity that also could make Polish independence and democracy sufficiently prominent in its agenda (Tymowski, 1984). The major change came with the formation of the movement, *Wolność i Pokój* (WiP) or Freedom and Peace. The very name connotes the creation of a new type of peace movement.

WiP began after martial law,<sup>5</sup> when a few young men refused to take an oath and/or accept their military conscription. Those who refused the oath after martial law were sentenced to prison. This oath was objectionable in large part because it obliged the soldier to "defend the rights of the working class enshrined in the Constitution, to relentlessly safeguard People's Power, and to remain faithful to the Government of the Polish People's Republic." They also require that the soldier promise to "steadfastly protect the freedom, independence and borders of the Polish People's Republic against imperialist encroachment, to relentlessly safeguard peace in the fraternal alliance with the Soviet Army and other allied armies ..." In this sense, the oath obliged soldiers not to defend a nation or a legitimate state, but to defend a system and set of alliances that many considered immoral. It was also unequal: Soviet soldiers were not obliged to pledge to defend Poland.

On January 15, 1985, former members of the Independent Student Union (Niezależny Związek Studentów) sent a letter of protest to the Council of State, claiming that refusal to take an oath does not deserve the same punishment as refusing military service, and that therefore Marek Adamkiewicz should be released from prison. After receiving inadequate replies, twelve people began a week-long hunger strike on March 17, during which the establishment of an independent peace movement was planned. WiP was formally organized on June 14, 1985 when 21 people in Krakow signed a founding declaration that read:

the fundamental aim of the movement is to propagate the true, unadulterated idea of peace and to draw wide support from Poles for this cause. ... Peace in the political life of states and nations is conditional upon the freedom of all people. ... We want to collaborate with all movements, institutis, and persons in Poland and abroad, whose activities are intended to achieve peace on the basis of freedom ...

With this juxtaposition of freedom and peace, a peace movement could "make sense" in the Polish context. But without subsequent critical work, it would not be especially meaningful, or inspiring.

The imprisonment of Adamkiewicz for refusing to take an oath of military service was elaborated and used as a model to establish the meaning of an independent peace movement in Poland. In particular, WiP emphasized that his refusal to follow orders of authorities on personal ethical grounds exemplified the "pacifist attitude." Peace could not occur where human rights are not respected and nations and individuals are oppressed. In this light, they proposed three basic provisions to the July 1985 END conference:

- 1) to permanently include the justice and freedom of citizens in the notion of peace; to treat the struggle against totalitarian systems as equal to the efforts for disarmament;
- 2) in view of the existence of two military blocks, no demands aiming at unilateral disarmament should be advanced; realistic possibilities of disarmament verification should be taken into account because, in the Soviet bloc, this is particularly difficult since information is under government control;
- 3) we propose the strategy of regional demilitarization; it seems the possibility of demilitarization of Central European countries is realistic.

To pressure the domestic authorities on behalf of Adamkiewicz, by September of 1985, 30 young men had returned their military documents to the Minister of National Defense in protest.

This "identity" for a Polish peace movement helped create what once seemed a contradiction in terms. These peace activists were able to construct a conceptual space in Polish politics which identified individual conscience with peace, and independence with disarmament. Their really innovative maneuver came, however, with Otto Schimek.

Otto Schimek was a 19-year-old Austrian soldier who was killed in 1944 by the Wehrmacht because he refused to shoot Polish civilians. In 1973, Cardinal Kenek from Jedyń wrote about Schimek in Tygodnik Powszechny, and thereafter people occasionally visited his grave in Machowa in order to lay flowers to his memory. But these visits became controversial when WiP, on November 17, 1985, used the anniversary of his death to announce their "Declaration of Principles," which included the non-violent struggle for human rights, liberty of all nations, the right to conscientious objection against military service, international disarmament and protection of the natural environment (see Across Frontiers, Spring 1986).

The authorities responded harshly. On that occasion, the militia in Tarnow detained 14 WiP activists for several hours. On February 19, Jacek Czaputowicz and Piotr Niemczyk were arrested and charged with "founding and directing an illegal association known as Wolność i Pokój, cooperating with representatives of foreign organizations and intended to do harm to Poland's interests." On March 16, another week-long hunger strike, this time by nine women, protested their imprisonment. On May 4, 1986, a march to Schimek's grave to commemorate his birth resulted in the detention of 50 activists for a few hours. Again on November 15, 1986, a march to Schimek's grave resulted in temporary detentions. In response to an international seminar organized by WiP, government spokesman Jerzy Urban said on May 12, 1987,

Freedom and Peace is an illegal organization whose program and activities are aimed against Poland's defenses, the development of which are both the constitutional and the moral and patriotic duty of every Pole. ... they understand the struggle for peace as a struggle against the political system... In a divided world the aspiration to reduce the defenses of one's country is tantamount to acting on behalf of the obvious interests of the military alliance opposed to the Warsaw Pact.

Except perhaps for Moczulski's Confederation for an Independent Poland, in 1987 this small peace group has earned the most antagonism from the authorities for relatively minor

symbolic statements. Why? "Political" instability is more likely associated with intellectuals than is economic instability, because of the greater importance of social definition for the former's integrity. Military policy is even more dependent on social definition, as there are few external standards, except the absence of war, against which one can measure systemic rationality. Thus, very few individuals can generate instability by managing to redefine the meaning of military power. But this requires considerable skills of symbolic manipulation and conceptual transformation, for which the Schimek symbol was essential in Poland.

The Polish authorities seemed to fear praise for Schimek, a man who defied Nazis to save Poles. But why? Czaputowicz writes in an essay called "Why the Authorities Fear Otto Schimek" (also in Across Frontiers, Spring 1987),

The stand taken by Schimek, a soldier who refused to obey an order, is unacceptable to Communist officials regardless of the specific historical circumstances of the refusal. Although every state requires obedience from its soldiers, this is particularly important to Communists. The army must be fully reliable, because one of its fundamental functions is to stand guard over its own people. ... Another source of discomfort for the authorities is Schimek's nationality. For decades, the stereotype of the "evil German" has been foisted on Polish society ... This way of inflaming national resentments, and the fear and hatred of one's neighbors, is an important tool in the hands of the state. One of WiP's aims is to fight against nationalism, and that includes unmasking exactly these sorts of stereotypes.

The use of Schimek to construct a Polish peace movement is brilliant precisely because it allows these activists to use subordinate tones of Polish culture to overcome those dominant strains which are antagonistic to peace movement discourse. The nationalist militarist strains of Polish culture are overwhelmed by this example of a Austrian pacifist defending Polish life. The only attack on Schimek that can be made is with reference to his being charged with "desertion" or "cowardice," as the Polish authorities claimed. But what kind of desertion and cowardice is it, WiP asks, when the military one serves represents nothing legitimate? Thus, WiP requests, individuals must not serve in the military without considering what this power represents. Indeed, the very ambiguity surrounding Schimek's death invites individuals to reflect on general values and apply them to their own daily life.<sup>6</sup>

Not only does WiP therefore represent critical intellectual work, but it also illustrates how intellectuals can use "social judo," to use the power of the authorities against itself. WiP was tiny, composed of relatively unknown young people. In 1987, WiP had probably 50 regular members, with a couple hundred more who might also be considered activists. They were in Krakow, Warsaw, Wroclaw and Gdansk, but were spreading to other cities too. This was a new generation of activists, those who were not in Solidarity but were likely members of the NZS. Although they were relatively insignificant on the landscape of the opposition, they provoked among the strongest reactions.

Authorities unwittingly aided their cause. Official media portrayed these groups as "terrorist," "anarchist" and "anti-socialist" youth, but by portraying them at all, they helped to spread the group's identity and aims. WiP's views were popularized further when its activists were interviewed for ridicule, as WiP spokesperson Jacek Szymanderski was in the army journal Zolnierz Wolności. Thus, the more WiP activists provoked official reaction, the more they spread their influence. But why did the authorities react so strongly?

WiP attacked the weakest "link" in the authorities' identity. By charging the authorities with pursuing a military policy that was dependent on the USSR, they put the authorities into an unwinnable position. If they attacked WiP, the authorities would confirm WiP's indictment and thus increase WiP's influence; if they did not challenge WiP, more young people could respond to the call for alternative service. Indeed, the authorities feared that if WiP became more influential, one of the authorities' greatest possible sources of legitimacy, its army, could lose its prestige. Or perhaps even worse, its soldiers would become more like Schimek, and evaluate the morality of the orders they receive.

The construction of a peace movement thus represents critical intellectuality at its height. Not only does it defy power in its search for truth, but it also creates new categories and identities which allow others to formulate new questions. Indeed, the movement is based on making ordinary persons critical intellectuals, as Lipset and Dobson (1972) define the category. Based on a commitment to general values, WiP activists, mainly students and young intellectuals, have

manipulated symbols with expertise in order to evaluate military policy. Although not every person can be expected to innovate as skillfully as those who made Schimek a symbol of the Polish peace movement, each person becomes more obliged to evaluate military service in the relative freedom created by the alternative WiP has sought to establish.

## CONCLUSION

The two types of critical intellectuals discussed above, activist physicians and peace activists, encourage us to reconsider critical intellectuals and social transformation. Instead of intellectuals merely recognizing change, in these cases intellectuals helped to construct the change by redefining health and peace with new frames of power and truth. Such an emphasis on the social construction of reality raises the stature of the intellectual, for it is the intellectual who generally fashions the categories of our imagination. But who are the intellectuals?

We normally rely on some structural definition to distinguish the intellectual, but this is really a contradictory ambition. If intellectuals are understood by their capacity to manipulate ideas and symbols, understood by their very agency, then to define them categorically minimizes this very capacity. This "ambiguity" in the intellectual's definition has special relevance in the case of critical intellectuals and social transformation.

Normally we look to creative intellectuals, prominent philosophers, sociologists, writers, or professional dissidents for our accounts of instability and change. They provide our explanations, and they provide our social causes by defining the problems. But is that entirely adequate? If we look at debates in the Polish opposition, we find the "true" intellectual featured quite prominently. In the years preceding the Roundtable Agreement, more specific but also prominent intellectuals were apparent in consultative councils, new journals and so on. And certainly the Roundtable Agreements themselves were constructed by both leading general and specific intellectuals. But is this critical intellectuality only possible, or important, for the prominent?

Physicians are not known for their critical intellectual activity, or at least they were not so known in the past. With the instability of 1980-81, however, rank and file physicians began to

ask questions publically that were outside the narrowly defined sphere of occupational expertise, questions about the adequacy of various political economies and sets of power relations for the public health. In 1980-81 in Poland, physicians created the very "adversarial culture" indicative of critical intellectuality. In this case, these "marginal intellectuals" were able to become critical, and ask how the truths of their sphere were affected by the powers that envelope them. By so doing, they transformed the medical profession and health service in Poland.

Peace activists are even more marginal intellectuals than physicians, as they have no credential which assigns them institutional legitimacy. Indeed, the very reason for their activity is that those with the institutional legitimacy to decide matters of war and peace are blinded by the power which envelopes them. But because peace activists seek to establish a new relationship between truth and power, they certainly merit the identity of critical intellectual.

Whether or not they earn such a label, it is another matter as to whether they can achieve much influence. Indeed, in Poland, the political culture was such that the typical discourse of peace movements made them traitorous to "society." Despite this apparent incompatibility, critical intellectuals were able to refashion concepts and ideas which could take away from the Communist authorities the claim that they were on the side of peace and therefore the "true" allies of Western peace movements. By 1988, the authorities rarely portrayed Western peace movements on television, because there came to be a new alliance: between independent peace movements in the East, and independent peace movements in the West. This new alliance, and new potential for political and social transformation, came about through critical intellectual work.

But what is this "intellectual" work? It sounds quite elitist, and indeed it would be were it not for who these critical intellectuals are. Both activist physicians and peace activists are not the most prominent Polish intellectuals, but rather people who felt obliged to ask new questions about the relationship between truth and power. To return to Gramsci (1971:9):

Each man [sic], finally, outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a "philosopher," an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought.

By saying that certain categories of individuals are those from which the critical intellectual is recruited, or in which critical intellectuality is located, we are implicitly reinforcing the very structures which make the critical intellectual a rare figure. Instead, if we emphasize the capacity, and indeed, the responsibility of all individuals to become critical intellectuals, and show how this personal transformation occurs, we do more analytical justice to the ambiguity of the "intellectual" as category. We also fulfill the political responsibility the term intellectual invokes: we are asking each individual to unlink the chain between truth and power so that discourse can be more open and decisions better informed.

Such an emphasis on critical intellectuality seems very important in the present East European conjuncture. As Communist Parties fall from power and as these societies establish new relationships to the capitalist world system, new structures of domination are emerging. Civil society is being constituted, but it is not clear how the democratic and market aspects of civil society will be related, especially as economy and politics become more segmented.

Polish economic life in the 1990s likely will be characterized by private enterprise and unemployment with elite boutiques and soup kitchens. The extremes of poverty and plenty characteristic of the third world will likely be played out on the East European stage. Most economists argue that such a dramatic increase in inequality is unavoidable, even if its extremes might be mitigated by the degree to which states are inclined, and have the resources, to provide a safety net for the unemployed, the retired and the impoverished.

Politics will likely respond to this situation with its own fragmentation. I don't have in mind here the proliferation of political parties (with some 30 in formation in December 1989), but rather the creation of "mainstream" and "fringe" elements, with the contents of the former defined by the working understanding among, or practical alliance between, international financial organizations, western governments and East European state authorities. In November, Adam Michnik (1989) defined the mainstream by support for the Mazowiecki government. The fringe included the old leadership of the Wrocław-based Fighting Solidarity (*Solidarność Walcząca*) and of the Workers Group around Anna Wałetynowicz and Andrzej Gwiazda. He said that the former is

still in hiding from the Mazowiecki government, and the latter stand no chance of influence if they remain a separate group from the mainstream of Solidarity. Although Adam Michnik has represented the most democratic of traditions in the constitution of Polish civil society, his situation illustrates perfectly the new dangers facing the continued democratization of Polish civil society.

Critical intellectuality is not a "natural" outcome of everyday life or formal education. It can sometimes be cultivated, but is more often generated in crisis. The crisis of 1980-81, and the subsequent preservation of an adversarial culture, laid the foundations for a very wide critical intellectual culture in Poland. Critical intellectuality is, however, easier to maintain in a condition of opposition, even while its necessity grows when the opposition becomes authority. And when the opposition becomes authority in the conditions like those facing Poland, the appeal of critical intellectuality appears to decline even more.

Critical intellectuality is certainly not the byproduct of the kind of market society the West represents, and the kind it is promoting in Eastern Europe. The ideology of the market destroys this intellectuality by elevating the market to a sacred or natural status, by stating that markets are neutral forms of exchange and not expressions of power relations.

The explosion of critical intellectuality in Poland 1980-89 is thus in danger of being destroyed. Over this decade a growing number of Poles came to understand their personal position as a reflection of a social condition which was itself constituted through a set of transformable power relations. But in this post-communist period, a new intellectual impoverishment looms. Unlike the communist authorities for whom ideology mattered little so long as military power guaranteed order, the capitalist demands faith in the magic of the marketplace. For the mainstream of Polish politics to receive capitalist financial assistance, they must pronounce their faith. And this pronouncement bodes ill for the creation of a democratic civil society in Eastern Europe.

The impoverishment and exploitation that make communist politics and promises attractive are not eliminated in this marketplace, especially with the kind of third world capitalism

that faces Eastern Europe. And instead of approaching this disastrous economic future with the same critical intellectuality that they faced the communist authorities, many Polish intellectuals are being forced to espouse a new orthodoxy. And while this orthodoxy may satisfy their alliance with western finance, it will not help to build the democratic civil society so many East Europeans struggled to construct. Indeed, East European critical intellectuals should not only be looking at Western Europe for their models of civil society, but also to the capitalist third world where civil society is defined by conflict between a "mainstream" defined by international metropolitan alliances and the fringe defined by an articulation of popular needs which the mainstream is obliged to define as irrational and unrealistic.

East Europeans and especially Poles have demonstrated a remarkable capacity for developing critical intellectuality in opposition to communism. But to the extent the Polish "mainstream" promotes in domestic discourse the sanctity of capitalist claims about markets and society, it will destroy the very resource which enabled it to transform peacefully an oppressive system into a chance for something better.

If the authorities move the construction of civil society on market foundations without discussing openly the power relations that underlie it, conflict between mainstream and fringe will intensify to such a degree that the authorities will face no other option than some dictatorial solution for the 1990s. On the other hand, the authorities could discuss the impending changes not as "needs" of some natural system, but as politically necessary even if undesirable responses to the set of opportunities and constraints presented to Poland by those with resources in the capitalist world system. The "inevitable" belt tightening will thus emerge less as a constraint imposed on workers from without, and more as a consensus realized by public discussion. But what kind of public discussion?

East Europeans cannot look to western, especially US, civil society for such an example. Our public discussion consists of sound bytes and irrelevant video images designed to suppress discussion and undermine critical intellectuality. The public sphere is overwhelmed by strategies of manipulation, not communication. The new authorities in Eastern Europe will be encouraged to

create just such a manipulative form of public discourse as the immiseration of the new order is felt more and more. But if they do that, they will destroy the breadth of critical intellectuality the struggle against the communist order has bred. Is there an alternative?

To the degree the new order is discussed as a necessary response to a system of international power relations rather than a natural system to which people must simply adjust, critical intellectuality might be preserved. And with that, a democratic and egalitarian alternative future for the 1990s, or at least the next millenium, might be discovered. But that can only occur if critical intellectuality is encouraged by the authorities in the new post-communist order, and not considered simply a relic of the opposition to communism.

## NOTES

1. Roman Laba (forthcoming) argues that KOR's role in the formation of Solidarity is generally overstated, however, and rather that Solidarity emerged out of working class experience in opposition to the authorities.
2. Lipski (1985) lists these occupations representing KOR members:
  - a. nine literary or linguistic figures (Andrzejewski, Barańczak, Lipski, Rybicki, Zawadzki, Kowalska, Ficowski, Nowacki, Wosiek)
  - b. four lawyers (Cohn, Pajdak, Steinsbergowa, Kaczorski)
  - c. six historians (Kuroń, Macierewicz, Szczypiorski, Borusewicz, Onyszkiewicz, Michnik)
  - d. an economist (Lipiński)
  - e. a biochemist (Naimski)
  - f. two priests (Zieja, Kamiński)
  - g. a technical editor (Ziemiński)
  - h. an actress (Mikolaska)
  - i. a chemist (Chojecki)
  - j. a journalist (Morgiewicz)
  - k. three social scientists (Śreniowski, Blumsztajn, Celinski)
  - l. an agronomist (Kielanowski)
  - m. a mathematician (Bielinski)
  - n. two philosophers (Kolakowski, Kęćik)
  - o. a computer scientist (Lityński)
  - p. two physicists (Romaszewski, Wujec)
3. See Kolankiewicz (1988) on inclusion attempts after martial law. For sources on physicians, see Kennedy (1990).
4. For examples of how the Western peace movements did support Polish Solidarity see Kelly (1982:53-56) and Thompson (1985:153-60).
5. This account of WiP is based on the "Chronology of Freedom and Peace Movement" and other essays found in the May 1987 WiP English language pamphlet, "Freedom and Peace Movement,"

as well as interviews with two leading activists from that movement, Jacek Czaputowicz and Jacek Szymanderski.

6. Two independent Austrian journalists also have established evidence that he was merely a "deserter." But this historical controversy is less important, David Warszawski argues in "Set an Example," than are the reasons for why he refused to obey orders. Whether or not he acted in defense of Polish life, he deserted out of religious belief. This kind of inspiration may be that which the authorities most fear.

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