



AN ANALYSIS OF POLAND AND HUNGARY AS EXAMPLES OF MEHTER DEMOCRATIZATION*

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Abstract

With the end of the Cold War, the effort to exist in the international system has revealed the need to accelerate the democratization process and create new political structures by internalizing Western systems. The formation of democracy and modernization in societies pertain to different realities of political cultures. This does not mean that every state will advance the democratization process linearly because of the cyclical changes and the political culture codes and cultural structures of that country. This study examines post-Cold War Poland and Hungary while focusing on developments and constitutional steps in the democratization process. The change in the historical process experienced by the two countries will be examined in the post-Cold War era and explained through the Mehter democratization conceptualization. The study assumes that adopting democracy and the progress called democracy is not suitable for uniformization. On the contrary, it establishes a structure knitted with differences. In this respect, as a different conceptualization, Mehter democratization is chosen.

Keywords: *Poland, Hungary, Democracy, Political Culture, Constitution*

MEHTER DEMOKRATİKLEŞME ÖRNEKLERİ OLARAK POLONYA VE MACARİSTAN'IN İNCELENMESİ

Öz

Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesiyle, yeni devletler için uluslararası sistemde var olma çabası sadece demokratikleşme sürecini hızlandırma ve aynı hızla tamamlamaya bağlı olarak değil, Batılı sistemleri içselleştiren yeni siyasi yapıları da elzem hale getirmiştir. Toplumlar da demokrasi ve modernleşmenin oluşumu, siyasal kültürlerin farklı gerçekliklerine aittir. Bu durum her devletin demokrasisini doğrusal olarak ilerleteceği anlamını taşımaz. Zira konjonktürel değişimler ilgili ülkedeki siyasi kültür kodlarını da etkilemekte ve önemli hale gelmektedir. Çalışmada, bu olgu Soğuk Savaş sonrası Polonya ve Macaristan'da gelişmeler ve demokratikleşmeyle bağlantılı atılan adımlar ekseninde ele almaktadır. Bu ülkelerin tarihsel süreçte yaşadıkları değişim, Soğuk Savaş sonrası demokratikleşme bağlamında mehter demokratikleşme kavramsallaştırması olarak tanımlanacaktır. Çalışmanın varsayımı demokrasinin benimsenmesi ve demokrasi olarak adlandırılan ilerlemenin tek tipleşirmeye uygun olmadığı, aksine farklılıklarla örülü bir yapı kurduğudur. Bu açıdan farklı bir kavramsallaştırma olarak mehter demokratikleşme seçilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Polonya, Macaristan, Demokrasi, Siyasi kültür, Anayasa.*

*The main purpose of using the Mehter concept in Turkish is to prevent the loss of meaning in translation.

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Introduction

Changes in the international arena led to significant breaks in states' domestic policies and political lives. During the Cold War, the influence and interventions of the Soviet Union in Eastern and Central Europe were in question. The democratization processes that started after the collapse of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe had difficulties reflecting the political culture-based transformations of the historical heritage. This is because both in Europe and the former Eastern Bloc countries, the transition of democracy and the Western identity creation model were worn as large/small size clothes for these countries. The influence of the Soviet Union in Hungary and Poland between 1945 and 1990, when the bipolar system divided the world into two ideological poles, is remarkable. These two countries experienced similar processes within the same ideological group and followed similar democratization movements after the end of the bipolar system. In addition, when the imperial histories of Hungary and Poland are considered, Eastern influence can be seen more clearly in the system instead of a Western affiliation. Remarkably, these two countries followed democratization movements after the Cold War period and the end of the bipolar system.

Hungary and Poland, the two European countries of the Eastern bloc, have started to take essential steps toward joining North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) since the 1990s. These two countries became EU members in 2004, during the EU's fifth enlargement round. In this respect, the examples of Poland and Hungary can be seen as successful examples for the West in the first stage. However, the institutional results revealed in these states lead us to question their success regarding democratic transformation. This acceptance means that the adoption of articles initiated for the first time following the end of the Cold War within the scope of the 1992 EU values and strengthened the respect for the rule of law, democracy, and fundamental rights.

Today, the Hungarian and Polish governments are often criticized for failing to meet democratic standards (Holesch & Kyriazi, 2021). Although the questioning of democracy in Poland and Hungary is called "democratic backsliding," it is seen as an essential place to understand this situation with a domestic conceptualization. This situation is interpreted as the illiberal democracy process throughout the world. After 2007, it was seen that some countries in Central Europe acted in this way. Along with the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland remained a little far from the goals of Euro-Atlantic integration in this process (Kubas, 2020). In this respect, within the scope of the study, the democratization steps taken in the post-Cold War period through the examples of Hungary and Poland will be called "military democracies." The steps taken in the name of democratization and democratization processes can move back and forth quickly, just like in the Mehter march. However, this situation may not reflect a process in which democracy ends or declines. On the contrary, it can help to internalize democracy in different ways. As a result, every country's democracy or modernization tendencies are not the same.

Within the scope of the study, my basic assumption is that these countries continue to internalize and perceive democracy differently from the Western tenets within the existing democratization process. It should be noted that historical factors in democratization affect the chances of new democracies of previous regimes (totalitarian, authoritarian or military dictatorship) (Pridham, 2000, p. 30). In this respect, it is essential to see how historical heritage affects attitudes and behaviours in explaining and shaping democratization steps. In this respect, there is no reference in any pejorative sense on the axis of conceptualization. The questions sought to be answered in this study are:

1. What is the historical background of these countries' political cultures in the context of their imperial past?
2. Were the steps of democratization and constitutionalization (Dahl, 1998) taken so that their return to the system after a while excludes political culture?
3. Can the democratization process change the social and political structure after the Cold War?

In the study, firstly, the transformation process of Poland and Hungary in the historical process will be discussed. Afterwards, reading on the concepts of democracy and political culture will be presented to define

the conceptualization of Mehter democracy. Finally, the latest situation in Poland and Hungary will be discussed. The aim here is to set a precedent for the conceptualization of Mehter democracy in the case of countries with shared characteristics and similar cultural and political codes over the sample countries.

1. IMPERIAL HISTORY OF POLAND AND HUNGARY

Looking at history, the first question should be asked: “Where is Eastern Europe?”¹ The aim of this question is to position Poland and Hungary as belonging (East or West), not geographically. In this respect, a quote can be made from the Austrian statesman Metternich in the 1820s. According to Metternich, “Asia begins at Landstrasse” which was the royal highway leading from the east of Vienna into Hungary (Sowards, 1996). Does the historical definition also give us the boundaries of east and west? During the Cold War Era, Hungary and Poland (which are located in the region called Eastern and Central Europe) had relations with the Soviet-made Eastern countries. Today, these countries are taking place in the West, within the scope of EU membership. Historically, these two countries were left alone by the European great powers in the context of the modern period, especially in the post-World Wars period and Cold War era. Therefore, their relations with authoritarian and totalitarian regimes historically made it a tough and compelling process for them to realize and change themselves. So, this case is reflected in their political culture: democracy or authoritarian; West or East problematic change their not only perspectives but also their foreign affairs with other countries. Because of this historical dilemma, I have dealt with the past of these countries by starting from the imperial periods.

Given the different imperial histories of Hungary and Poland, Poland faced assimilation in the shadow of the Russian Empire when Hungary joined the Austrian dynasty with a dual monarchy. Starting from the principality period of the Ottoman Empire, the Balkan region had an important place in the conquest movements. In the context of the region’s transition route to Europe, the territory of Hungary also has an important place. Notably, in the 14th century, Hungarian and Latin regional domination is remarkable. In this period, it is seen that the Ottomans followed a consistent policy in the dissolution of the Balkans, and they were a vital political element in the region in terms of military power and central authority. İnalçık drew attention to the existence of states or factions ready to cooperate with the Ottomans, as well as those in alliance with Hungarian or Latin Christians in the Balkan states in the 14th century (İnalçık, 2003). In this respect, the power of the Ottoman Empire in regional policy is seen as a system of alliances.

The Battle of Mohacs, which took place in 1526, has an important place in the history of Hungary. Hungarians, one of the powerful kingdoms of the Middle Ages, became a crossroads between two great powers territorially after their defeat in the Battle of Mohacs. In this respect, the history of the Hungarians, who defeated the Ottoman Empire after the war, turned into a period of subordination rather than a period of kingship. In the 16th century, the power struggle between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs affected Hungary for about 150 years. When this situation is considered within the scope of the conquests of Suleiman the Magnificent, it appears as a period when the Ottoman Empire began to take an active part in European politics. The Habsburg dynasty continued the hegemony race with the Ottoman Empire in Central and Eastern Europe. In this respect, the Habsburgs, as the successor of the Holy Roman Empire as its northern and northwestern neighbours, took part in a direct struggle with the Ottoman Empire. Hungarian lands have also been a vital intersection area in this struggle, which has enabled certain features to settle in its political culture.

However, unlike in Europe, the general ideological approach in Hungarian lands is more conservative. In the 19th century, although there were attempts for independence with the effect of the nationalism that emerged from the French Revolution, it took its place in the system as the Austro-Hungarian Empire with a dual monarchy. When the conservatives emerged on the political scene, more than forty per cent of the country’s population was part of the Habsburg empire and a feudal monarchy (Denes, 1983, p. 847).

The most critical situation that should not be forgotten in the conservative emphasis here is undoubtedly the effect of the Coalition Wars period in which Europe lived after the French Revolution of 1789 and The Congress of Vienna, of which Metternich was, in a sense, the guarantor. The idea of nationalism spread with the French

¹ Also we need to describe Europe. There are several theories of the Europe origin. But the history began with the ancient Greeks who divided the world by Europe, Asia, and Libya (see. Wallenfheldt, “Where Does the Name Europe Come From?”)

Revolution and showed its effect on the Hungarians. However, the fact that the Austrian statesman Metternich was against the intellectual movements that emerged with the French Revolution and that could displace the monarchies also impacted the Hungarians. With the 1815 Congress of Vienna, Metternich created a weak France without Napoleon, in which the ancient regimes were preserved and remained strong. The European revolutions in 1830 and 1848 showed the weakness of this system. In this context, the revolt of the Hungarians for their independence was the clearest example of the internal decay of Metternich's approach to protecting monarchies in Europe. Hungarian conservatives at the time described themselves as "progressive conservatives," but this nomenclature is fraught with ambiguity. This is because there are differences in their attitudes towards power relations and values that have traditionally characterized Hungarian society. If it is thought that this period has the pains of transition to capitalism, the social and economic environment in Hungary has revealed two approaches; it is either to be a protector of serfs and an open enemy of economic change or to adopt the right to personal and national self-determination (Denes, 1983). Therefore, Hungarians had to redefine their identity and position themselves within the capitalist system and Western modernization.

On the one hand, throughout history, Poland was a region that could not be shared between the great powers in Europe, just like the Hungarians. After the rule of Augustus, the country had a weak central structure, and its lands were separated as independent regions. In the middle of the 18th century, during Wettin's Saxon dynasty II and III, especially in the period following the French Revolution, the interest of Austria, Russia, and Prussia in the region drew attention. Here, the attempts of the Russians to invade the country are the most crucial aim of constantly annexing the country. With the Enlightenment movement, the influence of the Great Empress Catherine of Russia is essential in the Polish lands under the control of Russia. However, opposing approaches rather than reform were implemented in the country. This situation created a situation where internal conflict, the growing power of noble families, and corruption among the elites, the neighbouring powers increased their influence on Polish political life and eventually caused the collapse of the state (Koryś, 2018, pp. 44-45).

On the other hand, the Austrian-controlled Polish territories are not much different. From 1772 to Austrian rule in Galicia, there was economic stagnation and the exclusion of Poles from public office. Austria expanded its control of the country with the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, which was expanded with the annexation of Kraków in 1846, and parts of the Duchy of Teschen (Cieszyn), where a Polish proletariat lived. In Austria, the famine increased and even reached a hazardous point.² Interestingly, all traces of the commonwealth system created in Poland ended with these shares. Prussia quickly built new institutions in these new lands, removing parts of the old commonwealth's administrative system that were not fully integrated into the system. German became the dominant official language in the country, and critical administrative institutions fell into Prussian hands.

Although there was a revival in Poland with the Duchy of Warsaw by Napoleon, the new order after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 resulted in the distribution of Polish lands again. Accordingly, the Russian border extended to the Warta River. The Russians had the most extreme Western border in Eastern Europe, and the Kingdom of Poland emerged under Russian auspices in most of the territory of the Duchy of Warsaw. Prussia also expanded its territory against Poland in this process. Although the Grand Duchy of Posen was given some autonomy at that time, the influence of Prussia increased (Koryś, 2018, p. 77). During the 19th century, the sharing and significant power effect in the lands of these two countries draw attention. The link between the territories of both countries with Austria is particularly concerning. Austrian and Ottoman influence on Hungarian lands does not reveal as much disintegration in its political culture as Poland experienced in its proximity to Western Europe.

The Concert of Europe period, which started after the Vienna Congress, ended in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War. At this point, militarism, nationalism, colonialism, industrialization, scientific and technological progress, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, and the Conflicts over Alliances were the leading causes of the First World War, which started a war centred on Continental Europe at the first stage. The World system was

² That cases of cannibalism, such as cholera and typhus, were reported in 1847 (R. F. Leslie, *The History Of Poland Since 1863*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 8.)

divided into two alliance groups before the war: The Allies (France, Russia, and Great Britain) and The Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary). However, this situation soon entered an all-out war, including the Asia-Pacific (Japan, USA) region. After the war, the structure of the system and actors changed in world politics.

After the World War, Poland and Hungary gained their independence. The liberation of these two countries was not due to their initiatives but due to a vacuum created in the system. Poland was partitioned between Prussia, Russia, and Austria after the Coalition Wars. Therefore, it could not be a fully independent state. However, this situation changed with the Fourteen Points. President Wilson set down the Fourteen Points for international peace. So, among these principles is the establishment of an independent Poland ("The Fourteen Points", yty).

On the other hand, the problems in the Habsburg Empire still needed to be fully resolved with the declaration of dual monarchy in the 19th century. Nationalist ideology was still influential in the empire. With the end of the World War, the Austro-Hungarian empire also collapsed. In 1919, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Allied powers signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain. Also, with the Fourteen Points, minorities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire were granted the right to self-determination ("The Fourteen Points", no date). As a consequence of this point, in 1920, Hungary signed the Treaty of Trianon with Allied powers.

After the First World War, for about 20 years, states attempted to create a liberal and peaceful system in the international arena. England and France have a crucial influence on the European Continent. During this period, the situation of Poland especially draws attention. The reason for this is that Poland was established with 14 Principles and took its place as a new state in the system. While Poland's connection with the Baltic Sea was directly provided by a piece of land, the corridor that will be referred to as the "Polish Corridor" in this state became a corridor separating the West of Germany and East Prussia. Since there was a prominent German population in that part of Poland called Danzig (i.e. Gdańsk today), it has been a very critical matter for Hitler's foreign policy. After the First World War, Germany was limited by the Treaty of Versailles³. So, Hitler's foreign policy aimed to end this Treaty and seize the German regions with the *lebensraum* policy. Hungary, on the other hand, implemented an irredentist policy during this period. Hungarian foreign policy turned to nationalists by 1938 and allied with the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan).

On the one hand, allowing Hitler to expand German territory in the 1930s was known as Britain's "appeasement policy."⁴ It was a pragmatic policy, but in the end, Hitler's expansionist aims became real. Most importantly, in 1939, Munich Agreement, which allowed Germany to acquire the Sudetenland (which is in western Czechoslovakia), was negotiated by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Also, The Russians did not view the Munich Agreement as irreversible despite the fact that it dealt crucial damage to global security. Because the unilateral pledges made by Chamberlain to Poland, an unexpected coup on the international stage, were a considerably more significant precursor to the war (Gorodetsky, 1990: p. 28).

On the other hand, The Republic of Poland signed two non-aggression pacts with the USSR (1932) and the German Reich (1934). With these agreements, Poland intended to do this in order to solidify the peace and the Polish-German and Polish-Soviet frontiers. Also, Germany and Soviet Russia signed a non-aggression pact among themselves, which also allowed to partition of Poland (INR,2020). The agreement was signed on August 23, 1939, before the war. The agreement was signed by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov. Ironically, by forcing Hitler to battle in the West, the guarantees, intended to safeguard Poland, actually eliminated the threat to Russia (Gorodetsky, 1990: p. 29). After canceling the 1934 statement, the German Reich invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. With Hitler's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, World War II began. After then, the Soviet Union violated the 1932 agreement and invaded Poland on 17 September 1939 (INR,2020).

While the territory of Poland was shared between Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviets, Hungary was shared between the United Kingdom and the Soviets in 1944 with the Percentages Agreement. The most exciting indicator

³ The Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28 June 1919 between Germany and the Allied powers. This agreement signed at the Palace of Versailles. Historically, the German Empire was defeated where it was founded.

⁴ There were some reasons why appeasement was preferred. First, the British people were eager to stay out of another international war. And the second, as its empire's police force, Britain was overburdened and unable to fund significant rearmament. Moreover the third, many Britons felt sympathy for Germany, which they believed had been unfairly treated after its defeat in 1918 (IWM, "How Britain Hoped...").

of this is Churchill's half-share proposal to Hungary in the Percentages Agreement, which was later changed to 80 percent in favor of the Soviet Union (Resis, 1944). Under the Nazi-era totalitarian regime, no centers of power challenged the authority. According to Juan Linz (2000), totalitarian parties are eager to maintain their entire power without losing it. So this issue is bound with political creation and the nature of totalitarianism. Because whether pluralism of organizations exists gets its legitimacy from that center which is mostly mediated by it. So the power is not monolithic neither the regime nor the party. And the regime is a one-party system that rules the country (Linz, 2000). Especially in the totalitarian structure, there are reflections of the Nazi party leadership, which is expressed as "pure totalitarianism". So, a pure totalitarian system took place mainly within the organizations in Poland and other countries. During this period states were politically influenced by the Nazi system. (Linz, 2000, p. 89). But this totalitarian influence did not end with World War II. The main reason was the Soviet hegemony and policies. Therefore, while the Soviet influence came to the fore in Poland and Hungary, they became the "other"s of Europe. So, nothing changed after World War II. Since these two countries became a part of the Soviet system: the Eastern Bloc. Until the end of the Cold War, periods of occupation and coups were experienced. However, what is essential for us is the history of these two countries in the Soviet world. The geostrategic Central European positions of Poland and Hungary caused them to remain as the "other" in terms of Western European membership. Following the Second World War, the democratization process has changed in the axis of processes such as fascism, totalitarianism, and authoritarianism. The irredentist foreign policies of Italy, Germany, and Japan in the post-1920 period ended after the Second World War. However, this time, there was the totalitarian policy and hegemony of the USSR in the international arena. And, in order to influence the system, USSR needed to have some traits. And these were totalitarianism and domination.

After the Second World War, the Cold War began, and the international system was divided immediately into two parts. This geopolitical tension was between the United States and the Soviet Union. So, other states had to take positions between or within the Western and Eastern Blocs. The conflict between the two blocks was based on ideology, and the Eastern Block was led by the Soviet authoritarian dominance; on the contrary, the US dominance led the Western. When the US and its allies created NATO, USSR also formed the Warsaw Pact in return. With these organizations, the world was also militarily polarized. The aggressive policies followed in the Stalin Period drew the reaction of many Eastern Bloc countries. The Soviet Union prevented possible anti-communist movements and attempts in these countries with its right to intervene in Warsaw Pact countries. The Soviet-style one-party system excluded independent civil society; the system was against civil society. Because of that, civil society in Poland and Hungary only emerged in the late 1970s.

On the other hand, the death of Stalin changed everything not only in Soviet history but also in world politics. So, the crisis started in Eastern Blocs. In 1956 Khrushchev's "secret" speech denouncing Stalin was the breaking point. According to Linz (2000), The totalitarian structure remained stable despite these signs of crisis (s.6). Because in the Soviet regime, one-party rule the system and the Eastern Bloc. So, with the tendency to secure and expand public space, the Soviet Union intervened in Hungary in 1956. Also, Poland took steps to change its politics and attempted to establish Solidarity in 1980. As a result of World War II, the structures established by the Soviet army in search of security in Eastern Europe were kept under constant control with interventions. However, in Eastern European countries, the system was not the result of internal transformations but rather a system created by the communist ruling elite. Therefore, the dominant political culture had a decisive influence on the shape of this system that emerged through interventions. However, it could not prevent the existence of a dual political culture under socialist rules in Poland and Hungary. The resulting situation has been the difference between the dominant political culture of the population and the official political culture of the *ruling elite*.⁵ There is a confusion of Eastern political cultures close to the West (Frentzel-Zagoska, 1990: 760-761).

⁵ In the classical sense, the limited meaning of elitism -which refers to the ruling minority- began to change after post-World War II. In the 1970s, non-governmental organizations and other civil initiatives emerged besides political parties. As a result of this situation, people who stand out from the masses with their skills and abilities in society have also started to come to the fore (Aslan, 2010: 110).

2. DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL CULTURE, AND MEHTER DEMOCRATIZATION

2.1. Democracy and Political Culture

The primary purpose of this section is not only to read democratization theories but also to understand the Mehter democratization process. Instead, it is to study the situation in conjunction with democracy and political culture, which are the main items of democratization. To analyze the concept of “democracy”, etymologically “cracy” is derived from the Greek word “kratos”, meaning power, and also, “demos”, means the masses of the people. So the word democracy means the rule of the people. The concept of democracy is a “respectable concept” dating back to Ancient Greece. The main issue is that democratic regimes can control power through the popular vote. Until the 19th century, the concept of democracy, which was given derogatory meanings, was seen as the rule of the mob. After the US Civil War in 1864, the definition of democracy has survived to the present day as “government of the people for the people” (Heywood, 2013, p. 102). However, the definition of democracy is not that simple. It varies according to the geography and time of democracy. Even the same democracies do not exist at the same time. Then, the changing nature of the concept of democracy may affect the elected rather than the people and affect the waves of democracy in the global system.

It is essential to examine how and in what way democracy will support development in the modern era. The principle of accountability is closely related to many definitions of democracy, and the definition of the concept varies for everyone. Otherwise, according to Fukuyama, if we cannot talk about a democratic regime in the state, then the existence of institutional control against situations created by greed and incompetence should also be questioned. The role of political parties comes to the fore again in terms of democracy becoming a control tool and citizens exercising their voting rights (Fukuyama, 2018). On the other hand, Habermas defines the framework of democracy. He draws it as a non-dominated public space where equal and free citizens come together to discuss common issues. This situation can be mentioned in the development of democracy and the political rights of citizens on the axis of civil liberties. Therefore, Habermas foresees that the ideas of individual autonomy and public autonomy will continue to affect each other. In this respect, democracy increases citizens’ legally-established sphere of influence. According to Habermas, the function of democracy is to establish the law-making procedure (Habermas, 1996).

On the one hand, accountability, individuality, and political rights are fundamental values in conceptualizing democracy from the historical context. In this respect, Møller and Erik ask, “Are Bulgaria, Chile, Malaysia, Moldova, Nicaragua, Senegal, and Taiwan all democracies? (Møller & Skaaning, 2013, p. 142)” Furthermore, it sought to define democracy. Møller and Erik analyzed countries according to their democratic status based on socio-economic, ethnic origin, bureaucracy, and oil wealth criteria. Here, they also created a typology of political regimes using the Freedom in the World Research to examine the extent of the functioning of democracy in a particular country and included elections, political freedoms, and the rule of law in their research in the context of 2011 within this typology. Thus, based on these criteria, they extract four types of democracy: Minimalist Democracy, Electoral Democracy, Polyarchy, and Liberal Democracy (Møller & Skaaning, 2013, pp. 143-145). Based on these foundations, information about how it is applied in which country or will be applied is also available in political-cultural readings. Political culture studies started with new behavioural analysis techniques, especially towards the end of the 1950s. In this context, the most striking work in the political culture we first encounter is *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963) by Almond and Verba. Almond and Verba surveyed five countries: the United States of America, Mexico, Italy, West Germany, and the United Kingdom. The study revealed three types of culture at the point of the harmony of the political system and political culture: subjects, local/community, and participatory political culture. The theory offers a reading based on the civic obligation of the democratic process and the virtues of democracy, which also reveals the levels of mutual trust between the government and the citizens (Almond & Verba, 1963). Although reading civic culture through these examples has been criticized, the authors renewed their theories in 1980. It is difficult to explain and make sense of pure psychology and political culture. When human characteristics are considered, it becomes even more challenging to put forward a purely objective model. In this respect, the search for rules, indispensable for universal approaches in political culture studies, is a vicious circle in every country.

On the other hand, according to Marx, culture is part of the “superstructure,” and people adopt the values of their group. The superstructure here actually tends toward the social existence that determines people’s consciousness rather than the consciousness that determines the existence of people in connection with the political culture, which brings us to the second dimension, the political culture and even the civic culture. According to Heywood, this is a bourgeois ideology (Heywood, 2013, p. 266). However, superstructure consists of institutions (political, legal, educational, cultural, etc.) and “specific forms of social consciousness” (political, religious, ethical, philosophical, aesthetic, cultural, etc.) produced by these institutions, and this includes the determination of relations and boundaries in sub-units (Storey, 2018).

We can evaluate the current concept of political culture in domestic politics, and it is possible to read it with the theory of dependency in foreign policy. Because the constitution-making processes in Poland and Hungary, which we chose as model states, were somehow shaped by foreign political influences. What is seen here is the hierarchical picture of anarchy, which is accepted to exist in the international arena with the differences in the level of development between political systems. Because of the developed world’s impact on underdeveloped or developing groups harms the understanding of state sovereignty (Cordellier, 1998); Acemoğlu & Robinson, 2013; Amin, 1992). The effects of the Dependency Theory are discussed economically and politically, focusing on the political aspect within the scope of the study. At this point, based on Amin’s definition of the capitalist world refers to real-world capitalism as a static system (Amin, 1992). In connection with the effect of capitalism and the change it creates, the economic aspect that Acemoğlu and Robinson draw attention to gains importance.

For this reason, it is crucial to read about economic development in the context of the difference between developed and developing countries. Because the transition from authoritarian management to democratic management and democratic consolidation has an impact on economic determinants (Acemoğlu & Robinson, 2013), on the other, Wallerstein draws attention to the existence of cycles in which the states are holding the capital accumulation created by the capitalist world economy to secure the system (Wallerstein, 2011). In that case, it can be said that the examples of Poland and Hungary, the constitution-making, and the EU adventures after it are the results of Continental Europe’s search for democracy. While this situation necessitates preserving the capital and the system in the economic sense for the Western states, it also provides the goal of creating a semicircle through new democracies. What is overlooked, however, is the differences in political culture.

The last issue we should mention is undoubtedly the transitions regarding democratization. The democratization process is essentially the transformation of a non-democratic regime into a democratic one in a country. The process here may be in a chaotic structure that does not progress with a linear system. Democratization is both a multi-stage and multidimensional process. During the transition phase, liberalization, and the end of the authoritarian regime, the turn comes to democratic consolidation in the system. Democratization is also achieved when the consolidation is completed (Pridham, 2000). However, that does not mean the process is linear. As it is known, the transition process to democracy is different in every country.

Political culture or cyclical situations in real politics also impact them. Particularly in the context of international relations, in the rapidly changing structure of the conjuncture, the processes also affect the states resulting in system changes. In this respect, Huntington’s democratization processes in his work *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* is essential. According to Huntington, the first wave of democracy occurred between 1828 and 1926, during which many new democratic countries emerged in the international arena. However, with World War II, this wave reversed. The second wave emerged between 1943 and 1962, and as a result, the number of democratic countries increased again. The most striking thing is undoubtedly the emergence of a strong organization in the international arena with the establishment of the United Nations in 1946. Of course, the effect of post-colonialism on this period should be remembered. In this period, economic changes have also been experienced in new states with the welfare state model. However, between 1958 and 1975, a second adverse wave was experienced, and military governments began to come to power (Huntington, 1993).

2.2. Mehter Democratization

Dahl mentioned that the structures far from democracy ended in the 20th century. Also questioning the situation in Latin America, Dahl states that despite being wholly discredited due to their failures, the military dictatorships in the region have adopted a so-called democratic outlook (Dahl, 1998, p. 1). Interestingly, this period also emerged when the bureaucratic authoritarian theory was put forward in Latin America (Klein, 2010). Finally, the third wave began in 1974 but was seen after 1989, after the reunification of East and West Germany. In this period, Dahl states that antidemocratic regimes (Communist, Fascist, Nazi) ended with War, and the Soviet Union collapsed internally (Dahl, 1998). With the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the world will now be a world of democracies. It was seen that the world turned to be a sort of world of democracy.

In dealing with the post-Cold War in the world of democracies, we encounter the question of democracy, especially in countries where the political culture codes created by the old imperial legacies are hidden. So, the first thing to be stated in conceptualization is objectivity. The concept indicates a "situation", not a subjective approach. Hence, it does not express a positive or negative situation. In this respect, it is focused on fundamental political developments.

Reading the political cultures of states is necessary for democracy and democratic culture. This issue aims to understand which democracy was established and when it happened. In this respect, I want to use the Mehter democratization conceptualization to show the state's democratization process. So, this notion shows similarities and main differences. The democratization process is part of the political culture. This is reflected in the political and social ontologies of states. Therefore, the concept of mehter democratization refers to the past of political culture. Political changes that took place centuries ago or recently are practical tools for the mehter democratization. So I choose to use this Notion to emphasize these historical tides. These tides were like in Ottoman Empire's mehter (janissary band), which travelled with the army during wartime. The history of the Mehter and Mehterhane seen in the 19th-century Ottoman documents is based on the Gökürks (Özcan, 2013: 545-549).⁶ Even though there is a backward reference in the progress of the Mehter band in the context of backward and forward progress, the ultimate goal is to achieve the goal. This situation can also be read in the context of the internalization of democracy. However, this situation may not reflect a process in which democracy comes to an end or disappears. On the contrary, it can help to internalize democracy in different ways. This concept expresses the difficulties experienced by countries trying to internalize democracy. Also this concept, especially regarding the problems created by the democracy movements in successive Eastern Bloc countries, can be accepted as a transitional period and the emergence of old political and social memories in specific periods. The internalization situation can be seen as the essential dimension of the Mehter democratization. This situation can not be seen as a setback or an end but as part of the internalization process. While the historical democracy and constitutional processes of the UK, USA, or France can be read through revolution-evolution and learning, we see these processes as periods that are tried to be internalized after autocratic or totalitarian experiences.

Therefore, this situation cannot be explained only by economic development or bureaucratic authoritarianism and transitions to democracy. It becomes essential to include historical factors and experiences here. In this respect, time and historical factors have come to the fore in recent studies, especially in democratization and consolidation. In the context of Schmitter and Santiso's *Three Temporal Dimensions to the Consolidation of Democracy*, the analysis of the "cursed time factor" draws attention (Schmitter & Santiso, 1998). Here, history becomes a qualitative phenomenon in democratization, referring to timing, tempo, and time constraints on the bumpy road to democracy. Therefore, this temporal phenomenon makes it easier for us to read the progress and regressions in the democratization process of Mehter. At this point, transitologists have drawn attention from the beginning to the "flight trajectories" of previous experiences with democratization in the temporal situation. Because the time here is compressed, there are also significant differences in how the transitions begin. There are differences, especially between Central-Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Schmitter and Santiso

⁶ The *drum* or *kös* played around the tent of the khan, which is seen as a reflection of the dominance of the Gökürks and XI. century Turkish-Islamic states. Also, this decisive issue was used in the wars in the Ottoman Empire as a means of courage for one's soldiers and fear of the enemy (Özcan, 2013: 545-549).

pointed out that few democratization efforts among about 50 countries from 1974 to 1998 openly regressed to the autocratic status quo (Schmitter & Santiso, 1998, p. 70).

Finally, whether there are full returns in terms of the Mehter democratization process should be considered. The main aim is to see a political change associated with democracy in the past states. For example, in Poland, the process is shaped by the domination of authoritarian and totalitarian states. Again, Hungary has a similar history. There is no significant change in terms of a century or two centuries ago. This is the result of due diligence showing that the transition to democracy is proceeding on a trajectory that is not merely linear. Besides the time factor, each part affects the whole, but social genes are decisive in the last point. What happens in society's political or social gene pool affects their adoption of the rights or regimes given to them in the following process. Therefore, there are several essential changes in countries with collective constitutions.

3. The Process in Hungary and Poland as Mehter Democratization Examples

The main aim of this title is to search for democracy in the historical past of Hungary and Poland. Regarding the Mehter democratization process, it is vital to show the transition to democracy in Poland and Hungary's history. Thus the main breaking point is the realpolitik and the reality of the political cultures of these states. In the first years of the post-Cold War, both countries have similar and different aspects. First, both countries suffered for years under the influence of the economic crisis and socialist regime before the transition. There was a transition period for Hungary and Poland until the 1990s. The process in these two countries did not happen overnight, like in Czechoslovakia and East Germany after the collapse of the socialist system. It was not as violent as the revolution in Romania. It progressed with its unique characteristics, and with the semi-free elections held in June 1989, these two societies built new socio-political and economic systems (Frentzel-Zagorska, 1990, p. 759). Another similarity between Hungary and Poland is in the context of political change. In Poland, political liberalization was initiated by the gradual political reforms of Kádár (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), while the government experienced heightened social tensions with a new wave of strikes. After the overthrow of János Kádár in May 1988, party reformers and independence supporters began to pursue political efforts to focus on economic structures. However, at the last point, the idea that economic changes should be seen together with some changes in the political institutions of the country came to the fore in the troubled process (Bruszt & Stark, 1991, p. 210).

It should be remembered that the impact of cyclical effects on countries during this period should be noticed. As discussed earlier, time is significant in democratic transitions. In this respect, we must see the "times we live in." Schmitter and Santiso drew attention to the fact that even in liberal democracies settled in this period, the efforts of politicians to manipulate the political business cycle in their favour can sometimes be interrupted by unfortunate coincidences. In this respect, economic, social, cultural, and political change processes directly affect the system (Schmitter & Santiso, 1998, p. 77).

In both countries, the real change of the socialist regime was not from above but from below, where the most extraordinary effects of economic and social problems were experienced. At the same time, social turmoil has accelerated the reform processes. Particularly the transitions to adapt to a world without a Cold War and to take part in the US and the capitalist world, the only dominant hegemon of the new international system, are thought-provoking. In this context, starting from the macro scale, the development of the opposition and the role of civil society in both countries have not been the same. In Poland, the emergence of a self-organizing civil society, while in Hungary, the self-organization of society was controlled by a reformist leadership. In this respect, it is the most crucial difference between the Polish and Hungarian reform models (Frentzel-Zagorska, 1990, p. 760).

Political parties are an indispensable part of democratic life in the modern period. However, in the post-Second World War period, the political party system can be questioned in many states, especially the Eastern Bloc. During this period, the view of Eastern Europe had to face "weak states faced weak societies" truth. According to Bruszt and Stark (1991), powerful party states had inefficient bureaucracy (s.202). In Poland, the opposition formed a robust common front under the umbrella of the Solidarity Movement, while in Hungary, before the change, the opposition forces were very fragmented and lacked a general message. Therefore, limited sovereignty and

a weak civil society profile in achieving their stated goals are the main problems for these countries at the first stage (Bruszt & Stark 1991, pp. 204-205). In Poland in the late 1980s, the socialist Polish United Workers Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR) decided to meet with the opposition represented by Solidarity (Solidarność). It focused on seeking a solution to the deepening crisis in Poland at that time. In 1991, the semi-free parliament was dissolved, and the first free elections were held for the Polish parliament (Kubas, 2020, pp. 15-17). This period appears to be a transitional period for Poland until 1997.

On the other hand, both countries' constitution-making and change processes should be studied in connection with the political system's transformation. As Dahl stated, there is no single "democratic" constitution (Dahl, 1998, p. 36). The roots of constitutions that guide the functioning of the state can be traced back to antiquity. While the constitutions regulate the domestic legal system, they also determine the life rules of the state in a sense. The changed constitution shows us the existence of new power. However, the critical point here is that in contrast to the primary founding power's role in making a new constitution, the secondary founding power is the power to change the constitution (Gözler, 2008).

According to Dahl, constitutions have significant differences even among so-called "democratic" countries. While the United States Constitution includes a strong executive in the presidency and a strong legislature in Congress, we encounter a parliamentary system in Europe where the parliament elects the prime minister (Dahl, 1998, p. 36). Therefore, implementing democracy within the existing regime and the constitutional structure forms a linked normative value system. In this context, while the system was changing through the founding powers after 1989 in the examples of Poland and Hungary, new constitutions were put forward, and the regime was implemented within this system.

First, it should be noted that the elites of the socialist era were replaced by new elites within the scope of shock therapy during this period. In Poland, the communist reformers made an agreement that was not subject to the uncertainties of electoral competition. On the other hand, the old elites in Hungary tried to use electoral competition as the most crucial tool to stay in power (Bruszt & Stark; 1991, p. 204). The economic problems experienced by Hungary and Poland distracted attention from the constitutional reform in this period. On the advice of Western experts led by Sachs, the Polish government turned to a one-shot strategy toward a market economy. Poland's economic reform focused on the goals of liberalization, stabilization, and privatization. However, the reform did not go as desired. In 1991, budget revenues decreased in Poland. As a result, from January 1990 to the end of 1991, unemployment rose to 11% and the inflation rate to 70% (Ludwikowski, 1993).

On the other hand, in 2000, the Polish Left was more united, and the Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, SLD) won the 2001 elections. After a four-year hiatus, SLD has started to gain strength again. In addition, the Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska, PO) and Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS) emerged as two new parties and won seats (Kubas, 2020, p. 18). This period lasted until 2005 and can be the first step of democratic consolidation.

Another point is that different democratic movements of both states reveal different constitution-making experiences. Therefore, YMG in Poland has prepared a text for reconciliation. Thus, the text determined the route regarding the changes in the 1952 Constitution. The most crucial step, of course, is the termination of the privileges of the Communist Party. In addition, the constitutional ground for private property and a free-market economy has also been prepared, and until 1997, the process continued. In this process, unlike Hungary, in addition to making a new constitution, Poland has also prepared the steps to be taken in the context of democracy in the country. Because in the case of Hungary, the deterioration in the economic field as of 1988 caused a decrease in public support against the socialist regime. Although the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party was in power, there was a change in the leadership staff. This move aimed to gain the support of the public (Gülener, 2011, pp. 205-206). However, although this support search has simultaneously caused the work on the new constitution to remain in the background, they are confidently trying to continue the steps taken in the name of democratization.

Hungary was the only post-communist state that did not accept a new constitution immediately after the regime change. The 1989 Constitution continued to be a modified version of the 1949 Communist Constitution.

It has been tried to provide the necessary constitutional provisions for Hungary to function as a democratic state within the scope of the rule of law. It also provided a politically neutral constitutional framework for a pluralistic state and society, according to Law No. 20 of 1949. Although the making of a new constitution has not been the subject of the political agenda in 20 years (Ludwikowski, 1993, p. 231), conservatives brought the post-socialist transition to the political agenda in 2010. They brought constitution-making back to the agenda (Vincze & Varju, 2012, p. 439). In Hungary, the Radical Nationalist Party Jobbik (Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom - A Better Hungary Movement), which received about 17% of the 2010 elections, holds the third position. The rise to power of the centre-right Fidesz in 2010 also revealed that the right-wing tendency in Hungary has strengthened. In the first stage, 2010 can be seen as the beginning of the march backwards, in a sense, during the democratization phase of the Mehter in Hungary. In 2015, the process reached a similar turning point with PiS in Poland. It can be said that the policies followed by Orbán's cabinet in Hungary since 2010 started to be implemented systematically by PiS led by Kaczyński in Poland in 2015 (Zamecki & Gledid, 2020, p. 60).

Kelemen pointed out that PiS's decision to replace the Constitutional Court is in line with Viktor Orbán in Hungary and will contribute to the goal of establishing a populist electoral authority in Poland (Kelemen R. D., 2016). In fact, in 2017, the Commission adopted Article 7(1) of the EU Treaty, a sanction mechanism for member governments that violate basic norms such as human rights and the Rule of Law for the first time in EU history. It has brought the article to the agenda, and it has been claimed that even being transparent is not enough (Kelemen, 2017). Within the scope of Article 7, the EU has decided to implement the sanctions to play an essential role in ensuring the democratic functioning of the member states, and their implementation has been started (Euronews, 2017). According to Friedman, there are two reasons why the EU is so sensitive to significant crises in these states. First, these states are European in the context of the Maastricht Treaty, which is essential in enlargement after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. The second concern is the far-right political tendencies, which are seen as contrary to the EU ideology, which has been continuously going on for a long time with the immigration crises. In addition, both regimes gave the idea that nationalism is a legacy with the rise of nationalist regimes in sub-texts. Therefore, nationalism is considered in the context of developments in Poland and Hungary in Europe (Friedman, 2016)

However, it is necessary to add a fourth point by opening a parenthesis here. The same is true for far-right parties and attitudes in France, the National Front in Germany, the German Alternative Party in Germany (Goziev & Ozcan, 2020), and many other EU member states. Therefore, this can be perceived as a weakness in seeking to break away from ties with the past and a supranational structure that emphasizes modern concepts such as democracy and human rights.

On the other hand, democratization and constitution-making include the political cultures and codes of the states. The steps taken to adopt the examples of rapid democracy, on the other hand, allow the examples of Hungary and Poland, which are the subject of this study, to form a sense of belonging to a certain extent. Because no matter how much time passes, historical ties can continue in social genes. In this respect, the issue that we need to draw attention to is the desire for a change of these newly transformed states within a history of about 30 years. The answer to these questions can be seen to some extent in the research conducted by the IRI (International Republican Institution) in 2017 when we look at how much the state of carrying Western values has been achieved with EU membership or how far these states have distanced themselves from the Soviet mentality. In Poland and Hungary, the desire for change is relatively strong. "What more is needed right now [in your country]?" The answer to the question was the change with 53 per cent in Poland and 49 per cent in Hungary. Asked in the same study, "What do you think is the highest ongoing cost due to [your country] becoming a member of the European Union?" The answer to this question was increased prices by 35 per cent in Poland and Hungary and increased economic competition from other member states" (International Republican Institution, 2017). Therefore, even though these states became members of the EU before they could completely cure the economic problems of the post-Cold War period, these problems persisted in society.

Another issue we should add is the approaches and policies of populist and right-wing party formations in these countries towards religious populations like Muslims and Jews, ethnic groups like Roma, sexist minorities like LGBT, and civil society leaders. The acceleration of xenophobia in the European public, especially against

immigrants and refugees, has blurred the borders between parties in mainstream politics. In addition, in the constitutional regulation on marriage, especially in the Hungarian constitution in 2020, the definition of the institution of marriage and the definition of the family were made simultaneously (Kucuk, 2020). Also, Poland's nationalist PiS party also made homophobia a key plank of its campaign despite European Union criticism. Accordingly, Hungary is talking about marriage, which is realized between a woman and a man and is formed on a voluntary decision. This institution is established, and attention is drawn to the family bond, a basic unit for the nation's survival. Here, the reflection of the emphasis on family concepts based on religion and conservative structure on the axis of Christianity is observed (Dunai ve Komuves. 2020).

One of the events that marked 2021 was the increasing protests against the curfew in Poland. The existence of protests during the closure process experienced worldwide with Covid-19 can be considered events that are taken for granted. However, the situation in Poland can be evaluated as a situation that points to a different aspect of the constitutional amendment made in Hungary in 2020. In this respect, the protests surged in 47 cities in Poland, directly targeting constitutional change. In Poland, where the majority of the population is Catholic, the government has decided to ban abortion and sided with the Catholic Church, which is vital in the country and shows the direct influence of the church in the decision-making context (Adamska, 2021).

Conclusion

History only progresses linearly for some states. Wars, ups and downs, and the hegemony of great powers in the system have always shaped states and societies. Democratization is also a stage within this existing realpolitik. In the context of democratization and consolidation, the constitution-making for the establishment of democracy in countries and the execution of the system include the political cultures and structures of the states. Nevertheless, the form of democracy is between people and authority. In this respect, there are many different forms of democracy in the modern world, and none are the same. So freedom, open elections, voting, etc., do not always mean democracy.

Moreover, this notion is far more than just those features. Thus after the Cold War, the EU has become an area of attraction for many Eastern and Central European countries in terms of democratization. Every country has taken essential institutionalization steps to take part in this union. However, the steps taken to adopt rapid examples provide a unique opportunity for Hungary and Poland, the subject of this study, to establish a sense of belonging. Historical bounds can persist in social genes no matter how much time passes. In this respect, we need to draw attention to the demands for change in these newly transformed states, which have a history of about 30 years. On the other hand, the current constitutional amendment processes, like the constitution-making and establishment processes, differ in both states.

Therefore, the movements considered historical ties or the search for alliance created by the transition can be seen in the combined effects of the Cold War under the pressure of the upper political culture. The phenomenon of time has again revealed instability at the point where adoption will be achieved after an unstable transition process in these countries, the first stage of democratization. There seems to be an understanding of democracy that cannot be resolved through constitutional changes or crises in the two countries. In this respect, changes will be inevitable in establishing the democratic process in these states. It is essential that the logic of "not all democracy needs to be liberal (Janjevic, 2018)" as stated by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban in 2015, through military democratization. The reflection of this expression can be seen in the history of countries. As I focus on this paper, the states' political cultures are connected with their powers and the past. The effects of freedom or great powers could affect the democratization process and culture. For this reason, the mehter democratization explains the process of their path.

Finally, it might be claimed that these developments, which they believe they control and which are viewed as "illiberal democratic" transitions, actually represent a more rigorous democratic process. Indeed, Mehter democracy is directly related to the past political culture. However, being "other" is also vital in the system created by the artificial east-west approach. In this context, authoritarian, totalitarian, or imperial state histories have influenced this process. Different realities for each state and nation affect the democratization process in the long term. For this reason, the examples of Hungary and Poland should be considered as mehter

democracies with their history and people. The main reason is that totalitarian and authoritarian regimes shaped the political structure of their past.

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