



Civil Resistance as a Foundation of Democracy to Be

The Legacy of Nonviolent Struggle in the
Democratization of Poland

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Analytical and Empirical Inquiries

Question:

- Is there a connection between civil resistance and a democratic outcome?

If so...

- how do we study the *impact* of residual effects of civil resistance on political processes after the struggle ends (analytical inquiry)?
- what are the residual/long lasting effects of civil resistance? (empirical inquiry)?

Assumption:

- The kind of civil resistance waged the type of democratic transition occurs.

“How Freedom is Won”

- 50 out of 67 (75%) transitions the last 33 years: the force of civil resistance was a significant factor

Top down transitions (14 countries):

- only 2 of these countries are free (14%), 8 are partly free and 4 are not free.

Bottom up transitions (50 countries):

- 32 of these countries are free (64%), 14 are partly free and only 4 are not free

Note of Caution

- Out of 32 countries that went through bottom-up transition and are now classified as free, 14 of them come from Central and Eastern Europe: its democratic transformation could have been influenced by factors other than the legacy of civil resistance.

Understanding Civil Resistance

- CR is not a mechanized tactics/strategy formula of how to wage a nonviolent struggle or merely a physical contest between oppressed and an oppressor
- CR can be viewed as an 'incubator of democracy'; a school of liberty and democracy; an equivalence of a rule of law; a 'force of (associational) life'
- Civil resistance is thus seen as a set of *interactions* between people as well as an *institution* with its own rules and norms and its own autonomous and non-ephemeral impact on the environment

Civil Resistance as a Social Capital

Elements of social capital (Putnam, Coleman)

- Values, norms, procedures (institutions)
- Human relations (interactions)

Types of social capital

- Bonding Social Capital (getting involved with people like us)
- Bridging Social Capital (getting involved with people who not like us)
- Linking Social Capital (interacting with people in power to win them over)

Civil resistance facilitates formation of all types of social capital

Size of Social Capital and Civil Resistance Tactics

Acts of Commission (higher index of civiness):

- Acts of sizable collectives with denser human interactions across population
- Acts of durable and sustainable effects and constructions
- More material resource needed and mobilized

(e.g. petitions, strikes, demonstrations, building parallel institutions)

Acts of Omission (lower index of civiness):

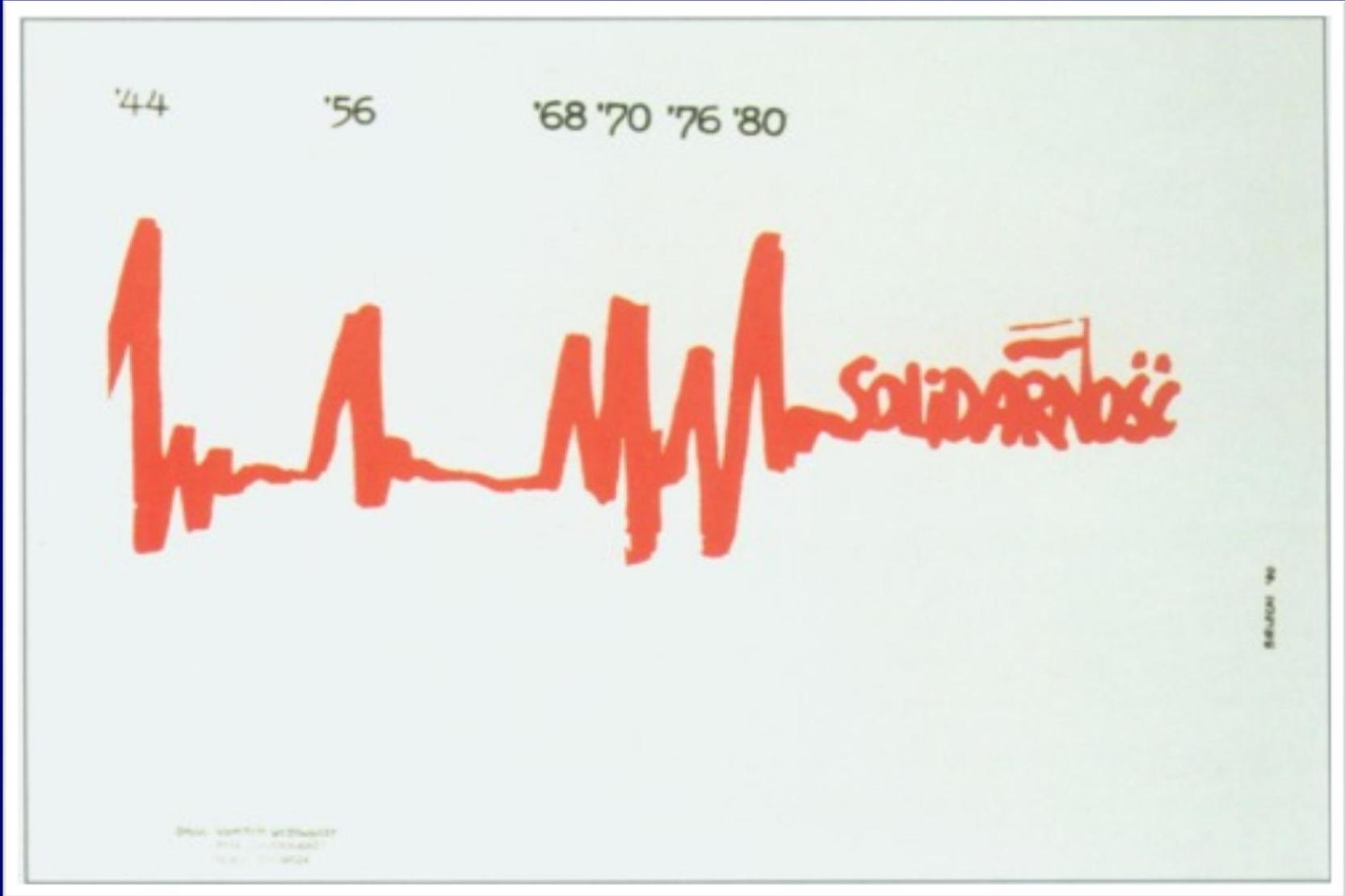
- Acts of individuals with a thinner web of human interactions
- Acts of immediate effects with less institutionalization involved
- Less material resources needed and mobilized

(e.g. conscription or election boycotts, tax refusal, refusal to cooperate with a government)

What Social Capital Can Civil Resistance Generate?

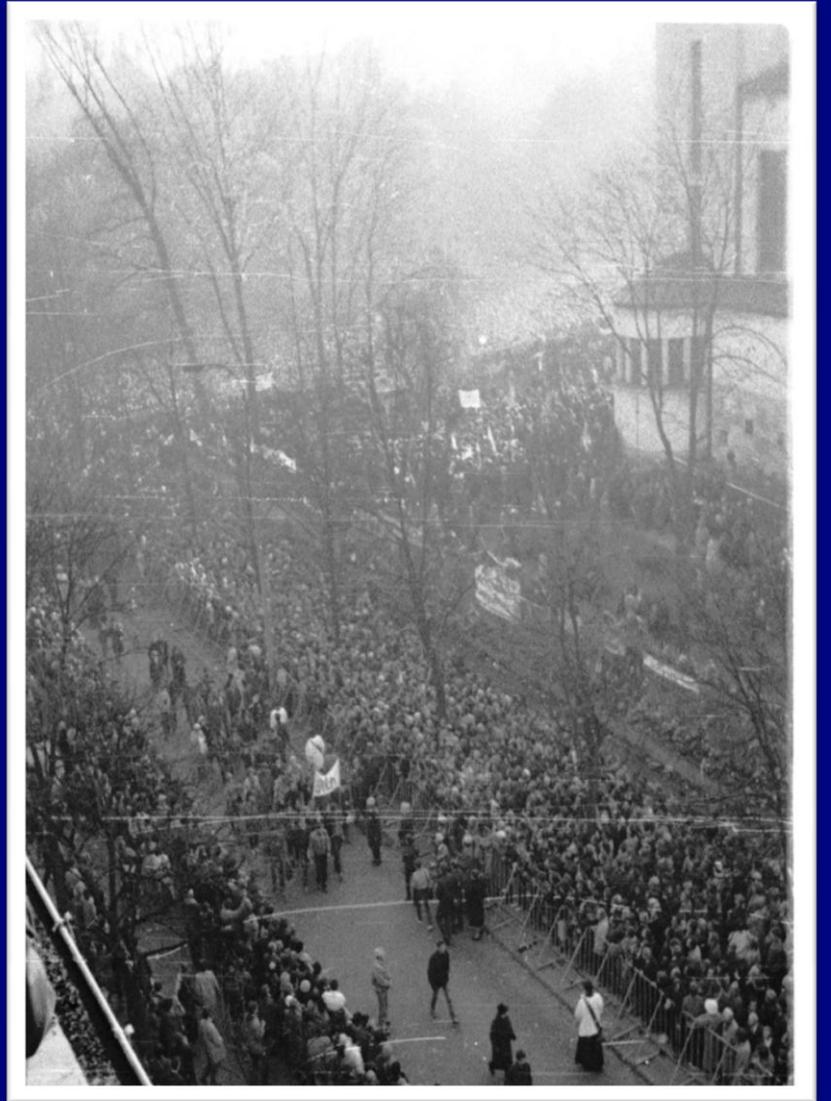
- Social capital (SC) of decentralized and pluralistic governance: a template for future power arrangements;
- SC of self-organization: a template for future institutionalized practices in civic realm;
- SC of individual empowerment, and civic and economic entrepreneurship;
- SC of collective actions: a template for waging nonviolent actions in the future;
- SC of moderation and self-limitation, a “locked-in” path of a contentious behavior;
- SC of worldviews: a template of collective identities.

Historical 'Cardiogram' of Civil Resistance in Poland

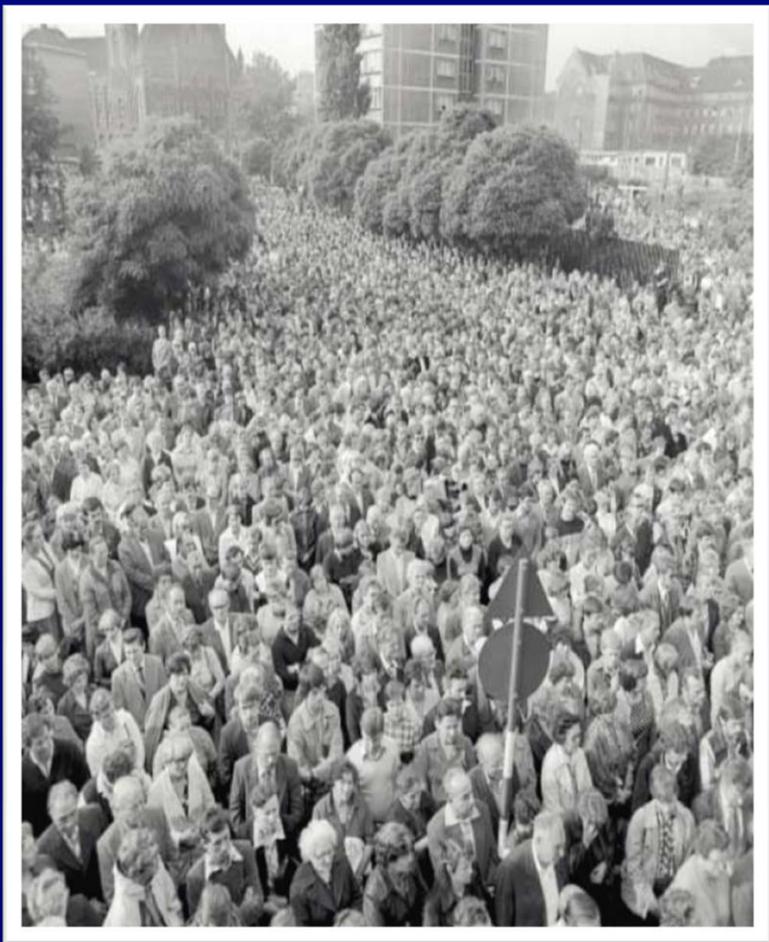


1970s: The Rise of Organized Nonviolent Resistance in Poland

- “Set up your own committees instead of burning down party committees” – building a parallel polis
- Growth of organized mass opposition: intelligentsia, workers, priests, peasants, students, professional groups
- Catalytic events: constitutional amendments in 1975; workers’ strike in 1976; a killing and a funeral of a 21-year old student; election of the Polish pope
 - Committee for the Defence of Workers
 - Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights
 - Association for Academic Courses (underground flying universities)
 - Independent Student Association
 - Autonomous peasants ` associations

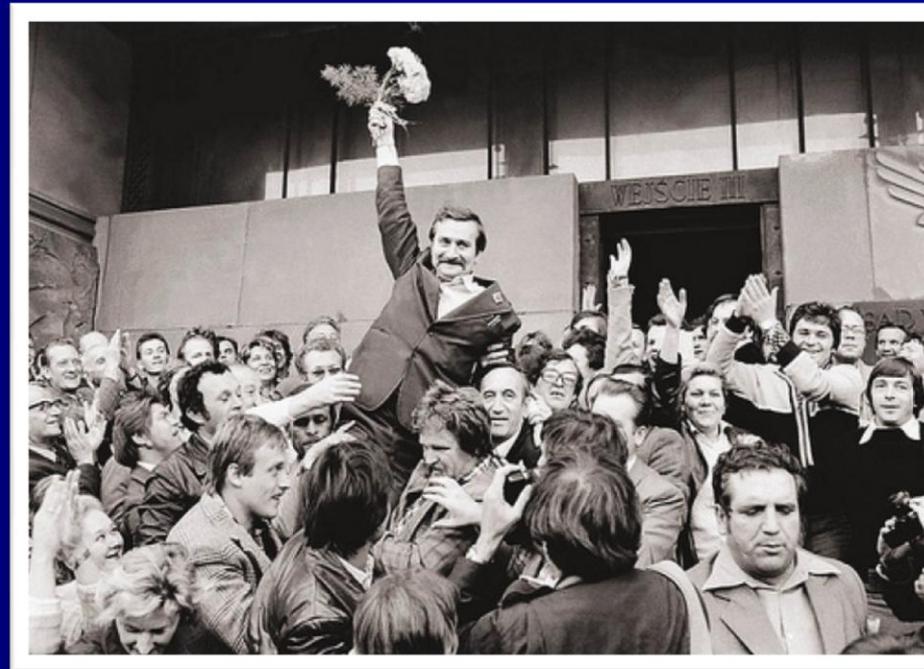


Wielki zjazd na placu Wolności w Warszawie 2 października 1979 r. (Fotografia obłożona w 1979 i zakazem publikacji). (Fot. Ralf-Walter - CAJ)



1980-81: The Rise of Solidarity

- Aug 1980 – workers' strikes & citizens' protests
- Sep 1980 – legalization of Solidarity
 - 9-10 million people joined
 - Solidarity in state institutions
 - Communist party loses 2-3 million members



Phenomenon of Solidarity



- Solidarity – a **collective experience of living within the truth**- mutual responsibility, trust, loyalty, decentralized self-organizing, local autonomy, egalitarianism, individualism, solidarizm, nonviolent discipline, independence tradition, democratic and participatory decision-making. Included people from all walks of life
- Rich tactics of resistance: protest, leaflets, flags, vigils, symbolic funerals, catholic masses, protest painting, parades, and marches, sanctuary, slow-downs, occupation strikes with a catholic mass, hunger strikes, “Polish strikes”, underground socio-cultural institutions: radio, music, films, satire, humor, alternative education and libraries, 2000 regular samizdat publications with millions of copies distributed, including education literature on how to strike, protest, and scheme/plot, underground education, alternative libraries, commemoration of banned anniversaries, emigration, internationalization of Solidarity struggle

1981-89: Developments Continue

- Dec 1981 – martial law – Solidarity goes underground (3000 arrested; 10.000 in 'preventive detention')
- 1983-86 – Solidarity leaders released
- 1982-89 –deterioration of economic situation
- 1987-88 – ongoing anti-communist civil resistance: strikes, demonstrations
- 1989 – round table discussions (Feb 6 – Apr 5)

Round-Table Talks: February 6 – April 5, 1989



Civil Resistance Capital

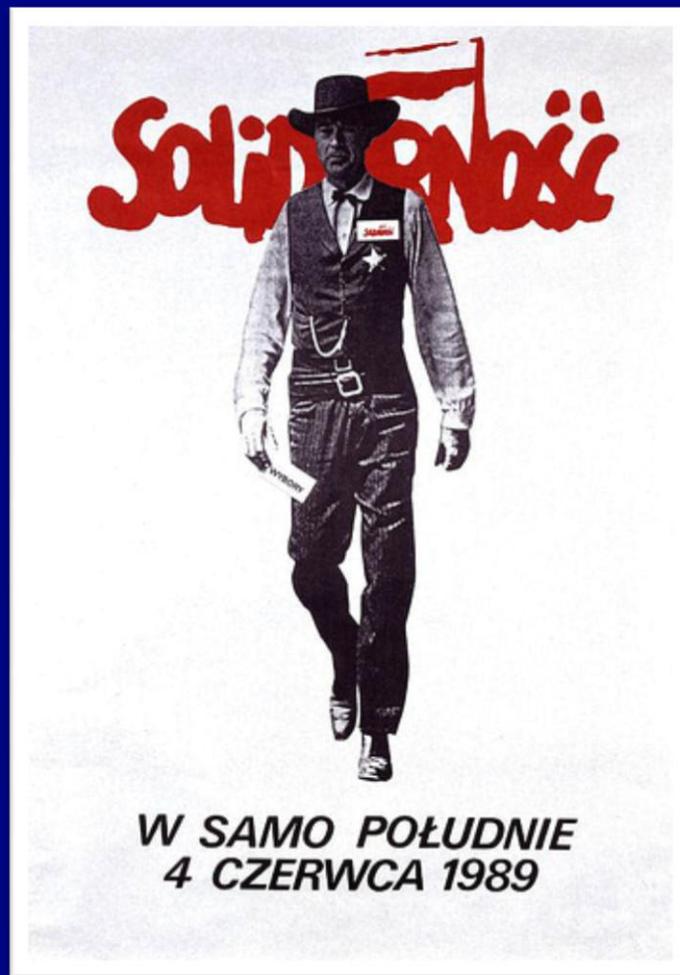
Moderation and Self-Limitation

- Nature of Solidarity rooted in coalition building, compromise, dialogue, and negotiations: led to a pacted transition initiated by a round-table talk (Feb-Apr 1989)
- Solidarity gave a hope to those on the government side that there is a life for them after communism

Self-Organization

- first open election campaign since 1945. Importance of self-organizing experience from civil resistance, including writing/publishing/marketing skills in winning parliamentary elections on June 4, 1989

High Noon – June 4, 1989



Civil Resistance Capital

Individual Empowerment and Entrepreneurship

- Societal desire for economic freedoms (a sizeable second economy under communism)- push for free market economic reforms in 1989/1990 and its eventual success
- High public support for market economic reforms throughout the painful transition: democratization did not unleash anti-marketization forces
- Poland considered more liberal in its economic outlook than France and Germany when it joined the EU in 2004

Civil Resistance Capital

Collective actions and their moderate nature

- Emergence of a self-limited “Rebellious Civil Society” in Poland after 1989
- 1989-1993 – the largest number of protests among all Central and Eastern European states – weak conventional means of channeling public views (parties & interest groups)
- Self-limited nature- a moderate, nonviolent character of the protests that did not aim at a new system of governing but at specific policies

Civil Resistance Capital

Decentralized Governance & Decision-Making

- The 1989 decentralization reform and the establishment of self-governing rural and urban communes with important local competencies and later regional consolidation. A civic organization was made responsible for training and education in governance of local representatives

Political empowerment

- Fragmented political scene - 29 parties after the 1991 elections
- Fragmentation did not weaken democracy but strengthened it by increasing a (parliamentary) space for representing/voicing diverse interests in the democratic process of deliberation & decision making in the first crucial years of transition

Civil Resistance Capital

Civic empowerment and self-organization

- A rapid rise of a number of civil society organizations: from 50 per year in the 1980s to 300 annually at the beginning of the 1990s
- Solidarity empowered women - women's growing engagement in opposition after 1981. Foundation for a rapid rise of the Polish feminist movement in after 1989.

Civil Resistance Capital

New Worldview: Poland's European Identity

- Solidarity – a return of Poland to the European community of democratic nations; a thousand year of a cultural linkage with Europe
- 1989- re-discovering of a new Polish identity within the European one - a strong European direction in the Polish foreign policy
- Solidarity surmounted a narrow-ethnic Polish nationalism by a wider appeal to more universal principles such as freedom, human rights, international peace, solidarity and community of democratic nations

QUESTIONS?

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