

## **La Germania, la fine della guerra fredda e l'Europa**

### **Editoriale**

*di Gaetano Quagliariello e Victor Zaslavsky*

Tra le più serie conseguenze geopolitiche prodotte dal secondo dopoguerra e dalla guerra fredda, va senz'altro annoverata la divisione di nazioni preesistenti – Germania, Cina e Corea – ciascuna in due nuove entità statuali, inglobate in sfere d'influenza contrapposte. Per tutta la durata del conflitto bipolare, queste «nazioni divise» hanno rappresentato alcuni dei punti più caldi della politica internazionale. E il superamento della guerra fredda ha lasciato in eredità la questione – tra le più spinose – proprio della riunificazione di quelle nazioni, e dei metodi attraverso i quali consolidare un nuovo processo di state-building. I saggi e i documenti pubblicati in questo numero offrono, a tal proposito, la possibilità di un'utile comparazione storico-politologica tra la riunificazione tedesca, realizzata con successo, e quella cinese, che invece pende come una incombente minaccia sulla scena internazionale.

I contributi sulla Germania mettono in risalto, innanzitutto, gli attori principali del processo di riunificazione tedesca. In primo luogo Helmut Kohl, con il suo partito e il suo governo, mossi dalla convinzione che la riunificazione incarnasse l'interesse nazionale tedesco al suo apice e, per questo, dovesse ritenersi il compito storico di ogni governo della Germania Occidentale. D'altro canto, tutta la stagione della ostpolitik e, più in generale, i rapporti con i sovietici erano stati impostati alla luce di questa definizione dell'interesse nazionale. Subito dopo va considerato il ruolo svolto dalla popolazione tedesca, in particolar modo quella della Rdt. Lo chiarì bene, nell'aprile del 1990, de Maizière, il successore di Honecker al vertice della Rdt, quando nel corso di un incontro con Gorbaciov affermò: «La schiacciante maggioranza del popolo desidera che la Germania sia riunificata prima possibile». Non si può ignorare, inoltre, il ruolo svolto dai governi dell'Europa Occidentale. La loro politica fu, per l'essenziale, una non politica. A differenza degli americani, che appoggiarono la politica di Kohl essenzialmente al fine di rafforzare gli strumenti comuni della sicurezza occidentale (vi era la prospettiva di scacciare dal centro dell'Europa mezzo milione dei militari sovietici e di assicurarsi l'entrata della Germania unita nella Nato), gli europei l'avversarono. Il loro atteggiamento negativo fu motivato sia dall'esperienza storica sia dal timore di vedere sorgere sul vecchio continente un temibile concorrente. La realtà è che nessuno in Europa voleva la riunificazione, ma nessuno osava dirlo apertamente. L'unica eccezione a questa reticenza fu rappresentata dall'allora

ministro degli Esteri italiano Andreotti, che cinque anni prima del crollo del Muro di Berlino, in un momento di rara franchezza, affermò nel corso di un dibattito inserito nel programma di una «Festa dell'Unità»: «il pangermanesimo deve essere superato: esistono due Stati tedeschi e tali devono rimanere!». Ostacolare apertamente la riunificazione, da un certo momento in poi, avrebbe però significato andare contro tutti i principi democratici, violare la volontà del popolo tedesco e infrangere l'intera struttura dei rapporti dell'alleanza atlantica. L'Europa rimase così spettatore impotente, incapace di influenzare il corso degli avvenimenti. E quell'impotenza, determinata dal prevalere di preoccupazioni nazionali, avrebbe simboleggiato l'impossibilità di guadagnare un'autonoma e unitaria configurazione politica, nonostante la fine delle alleanze obbligatorie indotte dalla persistenza del pericolo sovietico. Infine, va considerato proprio il ruolo che giocò l'élite politica sovietica nel crepuscolo dell'Unione. Il problema è trattato esaustivamente nel saggio di Mikhail Narinsky. Esso ricostruisce, innanzitutto, il duro scontro che si svolse in seno alla leadership sovietica tra il gruppo di Gorbaciov e coloro i quali si opponevano alla riunificazione. E chiarisce come la maggioranza della classe politica sovietica, impreparata sia psicologicamente sia concettualmente al crollo dell'Impero, non potesse abbandonare d'un tratto l'antico orgoglio imperiale, né tanto meno mettere in discussione il ruolo di grande potenza. La sua proposta, per questo, fu di utilizzare il contingente militare sovietico in Germania come strumento di pressione politica sui leader dei due Stati tedeschi, «tirare sul prezzo», bluffare e mercanteggiare senza il minimo rispetto per la volontà popolare dei tedeschi.

Questa disposizione degli attori politici consente di apprezzare come, nella congiuntura data, il modo nel quale Kohl e Gorbaciov esercitarono la loro leadership divenne un fattore decisivo. Kohl agì con coraggio, determinazione e immaginazione. Percepì le turbolenze socio-economiche dell'Unione Sovietica e vide con chiarezza lo scontro interno alla sua nomenclatura. E intuendo la fragilità della posizione di Gorbaciov, puntò su una riunificazione in tempi rapidi. Due principali linee direttive guidarono questa sua politica: convincere il leader sovietico del collasso totale del regime della Rdt e dei rischi del caos conseguente; promettere di soddisfare le richieste sovietiche di prestiti al fine di finanziare il ritiro delle truppe dalla Rdt, la smobilitazione di gran parte degli ufficiali e l'alleviamento delle conseguenze dell'imminente catastrofe economica. Egli, d'altro canto, rifiutò con forza l'irrealistica proposta sovietica di una doppia adesione della Germania unificata alla Nato e al Patto di Varsavia.

L'importanza del ruolo di Gorbaciov in quanto riformatore la si può apprezzare a partire proprio dal 1989, quando egli, seppur da una posizione di minoranza, si rifiutò di continuare a percorrere la strada della guerra fredda, di utilizzare la forza per definire i rapporti con i paesi dell'Europa Orientale, e di opporsi all'unificazione della Germania. Fu questo risoluto rifiuto dell'uso della forza a permettere al cancelliere Kohl, con l'appoggio americano, di sfruttare le circostanze, divenute improvvisamente favorevoli, per realizzare l'antico obiettivo della politica estera di Bonn. La divisione della Germania si rivelò d'un tratto superabile. Al cospetto della forte volontà politica dimostrata dal cancelliere tedesco Kohl e dal presidente americano Bush, ma ancor più dalla popolazione della Germania Orientale, di porre fine alla divisione della Germania, di abbattere il Muro di Berlino per uscire dal fallimentare «campo socialista», Gorbaciov prese la decisione più importante di tutta la sua politica estera: cedere davanti alla volontà popolare e lasciare la popolazione della Germania Orientale libera di scegliere il suo futuro. Egli in tal modo sfidò le certezze dei politici e dei diplomatici dell'Europa Occidentale, basate sulla difesa ferrea dello status quo della divisione dell'Europa e della Germania e sull'intangibilità degli accordi di Yalta.

Sfidò anche – e non solo in patria – influenti leader del suo stesso campo. L'irriducibile Eric Honecker aveva preso le distanze dal corso della perestrojka in modo spettacolare e, con un famigerato gesto, aveva approvato la strage sulla piazza Tien-an-men. Al cospetto delle manifestazioni oceaniche di Dresda e Lipsia, davanti all'esodo di massa dei tedeschi orientali e all'ormai imminente sollevazione popolare, chiese con una grande insistenza il permesso sovietico per usare le truppe contro i dimostranti, nonché di poter contare sull'appoggio militare dell'Urss per stroncare la sollevazione popolare. Durante la visita a Berlino Est, il 6 e 7 ottobre 1989, Gorbaciov ammonì Honecker che «la vita avrebbe punito i ritardatari» e gli comunicò che l'esercito sovietico non sarebbe intervenuto per aiutare il regime, come aveva fatto nel 1953. Le truppe sovietiche ricevettero l'ordine di astenersi da qualsiasi azione repressiva contro i dimostranti.

Si possono avere pareri differenti ed anche fortemente scettici sull'opera complessiva di Gorbaciov e sull'illusorietà della sua riforma del comunismo per linee interne. Non gli si può negare, invece, il merito enorme di aver riformato la politica estera sovietica quando questo mutamento risultava tutt'altro che scontato. Se il presidente dell'Urss avesse agito diversamente, il governo di Honecker non avrebbe esitato di organizzare una nuova Tian-an-men nel cuore dell'Europa, prolungando così al prezzo di migliaia di vite umane l'agonia del blocco sovietico. L'averlo evitato vale a Gorbaciov un posto nel Pantheon dei maggiori statisti del secolo.

Una delle principali lezioni da trarre dalla riunificazione tedesca è, dunque, l'importanza di leadership in possesso di una chiara visione dell'interesse nazionale, nonché della volontà di risolvere i problemi in modi pacifici, consensuali e democratici. Oggi che il mondo si trova al cospetto di un altro problema ereditato dalla guerra fredda – i tentativi del vertice della Repubblica popolare cinese di riappropriarsi dell'isola di Taiwan e la conseguente esplosione dell'independentismo taiwanese – questa lezione torna d'attualità. Nel suo ricco e informato articolo Jiang Yi-huah, professore dell'Università di Taiwan, descrive una manifestazione di protesta contro la minaccia cinese di usare la forza militare nel caso Taiwan avesse dichiarato l'indipendenza. Si è alla fine del febbraio 2004: una catena umana di oltre due milioni di persone, con il presidente Chen a capo, attraversa l'intera isola. A un'ora preordinata i dimostranti si sono voltati verso la Cina e hanno gridato «No!». Poi, si voltano verso l'interno dell'isola e gridano «Si!». I nazionalisti taiwanesi chiedono il riconoscimento internazionale di Taiwan come stato sovrano. Jiang Yi-huah analizza l'estrema complessità del problema dell'identità nazionale taiwanese, ma sottolinea che il numero degli abitanti dell'isola che si sentono cinesi diminuisce rapidamente, mentre quello dei «taiwanesi» aumenta costantemente. Una maggioranza crescente si esprime a favore dell'indipendenza piuttosto che della riunificazione anche se, realisticamente, di fronte alla prospettiva dell'uso della forza da parte della Cina preferisce lo status quo: un'indipendenza di fatto senza riconoscimento internazionale.

In questa difficile situazione, negli Stati Uniti sia la componente democratica che quella repubblicana condividono la medesima politica: proteggere l'isola di Taiwan con la forza militare – la Sesta flotta si trova sempre nei pressi – ma, nel contempo, dissuadere l'élite politica taiwanese dal bruciare le tappe verso l'indipendenza, si da mantenere lo status quo il più a lungo possibile. La Comunità europea, da parte sua, potrebbe trovare lumi per la sua politica verso Taiwan nell'esperienza della riunificazione tedesca, tenendo presente però una differenza cruciale del valore della riunificazione nei due casi. Nel caso tedesco «riunificazione» ha significato promuovere la democrazia, mentre nel caso di Taiwan potrebbe significare una annessione e una palese violazione della volontà popolare. Soltanto da un auspicabile processo di democratizzazione del sistema autoritario cinese potrebbe pervenire l'indicazione che è giunto il momento nel quale il problema della riunificazione tra la Cina e Taiwan può trovare una soluzione pacifica e conforme alla democrazia. I paesi democratici, d'altro canto, posseggono un chiaro indicatore dell'evoluzione democratica della Cina: il trattamento che la sua leadership riserva a Hong Kong. Come ha dimostrato Peter Baehr nel suo articolo, proprio l'atteggiamento verso la democrazia di Hong Kong permette di indicare la direzione generale dello sviluppo politico cinese. Finché il governo di Pechino conserverà l'ordine democratico di Hong Kong

(anche se solo per dimostrare che il modello «uno Stato due sistemi» può funzionare), il timore di Taiwan di perdere le libertà democratiche non sarà giustificato. Viceversa, ogni attacco alla fragile democrazia di Hong Kong dimostrerebbe a Taiwan e a tutto il mondo l'impossibilità di una riunificazione democratica, rafforzando le forze indipendentiste.

Ancora una volta, la promozione dell'ordine democratico appare l'unica possibilità per contribuire alla risoluzione di conflitti così difficilmente risolvibili come quello tra la Cina e Taiwan. Gli Stati Uniti lo hanno capito. Sarebbe importante che la nuova Europa unita non li lasciasse soli in questa difficile operazione, che è contemporaneamente di «tenuta» e di «cambiamento». Vi sono due miopie che, in tal senso, vanno combattute: quella di ritenere lo sviluppo economico della Cina più importante ed influente del suo sviluppo politico in senso democratico; e quella di ritenere questi problemi lontani e, per questo, fuori dalla propria giurisdizione. Queste due tendenze corrispondono a delle precise, ricorrenti tentazioni dell'Europa: privilegiare l'interesse più prossimo al benessere immediato, e per questo rifugiarsi in un inedito isolazionismo (salvo poi contestare ad altri presunti «unilateralismi»). Sono tentazioni che vanno sconfitte. Alla luce di ciò, o l'Europa riuscirà a comprendere quanto la Cina sia, in tutti sensi, vicina, o scriverà da sé l'ennesima pagina della propria ineluttabile decadenza.

*di Gaetano Quagliariello e Victor Zaslavsky*

## **L'Italia e la prima transizione della Germania occidentale**

*di Federico Niglia*

Quello dei rapporti tra l'Italia e la Germania nel secondo dopoguerra non rappresenta un terreno di studio particolarmente battuto. Mentre per quanto riguarda alcuni momenti particolari, come ad esempio il periodo delle dittature, la produzione storiografica si presenta ampia e permette di ricostruire le vicende in modo pressoché definitivo, lo stesso non si può dire per altre fasi, non meno importanti, della storia dei due paesi. Al pari del periodo weimariano, relativamente al quale la produzione, per quanto pregevole, risulta quantitativamente ridotta, anche per il secondo dopoguerra persistono ancora ampie lacune. Solo recentemente hanno fatto la loro comparsa, anche grazie all'accessibilità delle fonti archivistiche, contributi che affrontano i nodi del periodo in questione, e grazie ai quali si sta aprendo un proficuo filone di ricerca. Soprattutto sul versante della storia delle relazioni diplomatiche tra i due paesi si segnala l'importante studio di Maddalena Guiotto[1], il quale, colmando un vuoto da tempo esistente, per primo affronta il problema con completezza. Bisogna poi segnalare l'avvio di un dibattito sull'interazione delle forze profonde nei rapporti italo-tedeschi, nel quale si cerca anche di comprendere le componenti ideali e materiali sulle quali si è sviluppato il dialogo tra i due paesi nel secondo dopoguerra. A tal proposito non si può fare a meno di richiamare il recente studio di Gian Enrico Rusconi[2], il quale, nell'analisi di lungo periodo dei rapporti italo-tedeschi, offre spunti di riflessione originali e suggestivi.

Inserendosi in questo filone analitico, questo breve contributo prenderà in considerazione l'arco temporale che va dalla fine della seconda guerra mondiale alla normalizzazione delle relazioni ...

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## **La Repubblica Federale Tedesca e l'integrazione europea: la caduta del muro di Berlino e il processo di unificazione europea**

*di Gabriele D'Ottavio*

### **Introduzione**

Da cinquant'anni a questa parte, la storia della Bundesrepublik e la storia dell'integrazione europea s'intrecciano di continuo l'una con l'altra, al punto da costituire «due facce della stessa medaglia». Come è noto, infatti, sia la creazione della Repubblica Federale Tedesca che la nascita dell'impresa comunitaria procedono direttamente dal sistema delle relazioni internazionali emerso all'indomani della fine della seconda guerra mondiale: si può anzi dire, pur consapevoli della semplificazione, che il binomio Bundesrepublik-integrazione europea è un evidente prodotto della «guerra fredda». Come la creazione dello stato tedesco occidentale fu una diretta conseguenza della logica del bipolarismo e della divisione dell'Europa in due sfere di influenza, così le prime invenzioni comunitarie, la Ceca, la poi fallita Ced e, infine, la Comunità europea nacquero, anche e soprattutto, dall'esigenza delle potenze occidentali vincitrici della seconda guerra mondiale di trovare una soluzione al «problema tedesco» nell'ambito di una più ampia logica integrazionista: dinanzi alla gravità dello scontro con l'Urss, gli Stati Uniti, per primi, ritenerlo, infatti, opportuno sostituire nei confronti della Germania Ovest il principio di subordinazione con quello di soprannazionalità.

Nella prima metà degli anni '50 la Repubblica Federale si trovò così, ancor prima di disporre di una certa autonomia nella formulazione e nell'attuazione della propria politica estera, saldamente inserita all'interno delle principali istituzioni internazionali occidentali, ivi comprese quelle europee. E tuttavia, nell'ambito della più ampia strategia di piena integrazione nel sistema occidentale (Westintegration) e al di là della sua natura coatta, l'integrazione europea si presentò, agli occhi della leadership tedesca, anche come una scelta razionale, dal momento che prometteva di servire efficacemente al conseguimento di una serie di obiettivi fondamentali di politica estera...

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## **Mikhail Gorbachev e la riunificazione della Germania**

*di Mikhail Narinsky*

Il problema tedesco costituì il fulcro della politica estera di Mosca tra il 1989 e il 1990. La questione della riunificazione della Germania prese un'accelerazione straordinaria, che il governo sovietico, così come d'altronde i leader delle altre potenze, non si aspettava, e si collocò in primo piano nella vita internazionale[1].

I rapporti tra l'Urss e la RFT durante la perestrojka avevano un carattere contraddittorio. Certo, i due paesi annodarono gradualmente un dialogo. La visita di M. S. Gorbaciov nella RFT nel giugno 1989 ebbe un'importanza cruciale. Il leader sovietico intraprese il progetto di trasformare Bonn, in un frangente di "pausa" nei rapporti con l'amministrazione americana di George Bush, in partner privilegiato di Mosca. Nella dichiarazione congiunta firmata a conclusione della visita, vennero delineati i contorni della nuova Europa e il ruolo di entrambi i paesi nella sua costruzione. Vi si prevedeva una cooperazione concreta su più livelli tra i due paesi, su una base di fiducia, reciprocità e mutuo beneficio.

Detonatore della situazione fu per la questione tedesca la crisi politico-sociale nella RDT. Giunto a Berlino all'inizio di ottobre per festeggiare il quarantesimo anniversario della Repubblica democratica tedesca, Gorbaciov sottolineò l'importanza della RDT per l'alleanza socialista, l'Europa e il mondo, ma concluse con questa osservazione: "La vita punisce i ritardatari". Il paese era attraversato da problemi sociali, non esistevano reali libertà politiche, la RDT stava chiaramente perdendo la competizione con la RFT. Il regime di Honecker bloccava la realizzazione di cambiamenti ormai maturi. Scrive il diplomatico sovietico I.A. Kvishinskii: "Proprio nel corso di quell'estate un nervo vitale della RDT si spezzò, o fu reciso. Ad ogni modo, dopo la visita (di Gorbaciov nella RFT) a Bonn si concluse che sarebbe stato possibile accrescere l'influenza sul regime di Honecker, che aveva apertamente dimostrato il proprio malcontento nei confronti del nuovo corso di Gorbaciov, la perestrojka e le riforme interne"[2]. Allorché nell'estate 1989 il governo ungherese decise di aprire la frontiera con l'Occidente, migliaia di tedeschi orientali si riversarono attraverso quel passaggio nella RFT. Il 18 ottobre Honecker fu costretto a ritirarsi dalle cariche di governo. I suoi successori non furono in grado di controllare la situazione, sempre più destabilizzata.

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## **The historiography of east Germany: an overview**

*di Catherine Epstein*

In the wake of German reunification, the novelist Stefan Heym feared that East Germany might become a “mere footnote to world history.” He need not have worried. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, thousands of monographs, memoirs, essay collections, editions of documents, and journal articles have been published on the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). By the early 1990s, almost all of the archives of the East German state, as well as those of the GDR’s ruling communist party, the Socialist Unity Party (SED), were open to researchers. Historians were quick to exploit the situation. Their work, however, took place amidst highly charged debates about German history and identity. GDR history thus became extraordinarily politicized[1]. This is particularly evident in the two dominant approaches to East German history, political and social history[2]. At the same time, research on the GDR’s most notorious institution, the Ministry of Security (MfS or “Stasi”), provides much insight into East German history. What, then, are the most salient developments in the historiography of the GDR? Which debates drive the research agendas of scholars studying East Germany? And what do research findings about the Stasi say about GDR history more generally?

### **Political history**

All political history of East Germany tends to emphasize the dictatorial character of the SED regime. This history assumes that the SED Politburo and/or other leading party institutions directed East German politics and society. This is history from the “top down”. Historians, however, disagree about whether East Germany was totalitarian. Since 1989, there has been a renaissance of totalitarianism theory. The GDR shared the features that Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski included in their famous model of totalitarian states: a one-party state that relied on an all-encompassing ideology to mobilize its population, a terroristic secret police, a monopoly on information and weapons, and a centrally planned economy. In particular, post-1989 revelations concerning the extraordinary surveillance activities of the Stasi have lent credence to the notion that East Germany was totalitarian.

Although Anglo-American historians generally shy away from the term “totalitarian,” German scholars have staked out various positions on this matter. Some have argued that totalitarianism captures the essence of the SED regime. The political scientist Klaus Schroeder, for example, is one of the strongest advocates of labeling East Germany totalitarian. He has been at the forefront of a bitter campaign to discredit left-liberal social scientists who questioned the usefulness of totalitarian theory for the GDR in the 1960s. Such scholars, Schroeder argues, downplayed the terroristic aspects of the SED regime and, instead, focused on those features of the GDR that appeared “modern.” In the process, Schroeder alleges, they helped to legitimize East Germany by portraying it as a modern industrial society similar to that found in parliamentary democracies. Schroeder believes that totalitarianism theory should never have been abandoned. He chooses to label East Germany as “a paternalistic and surveillance state of a late totalitarian variant”[3]. Others scholars, however, argue that the GDR had some totalitarian aspects, but was not actually totalitarian. Eckhard Jesse, for example, writes that the GDR was a hybrid regime with authoritarian and totalitarian features; in his words, it was an “autalitären” (“autalitarian”) dictatorship[4].

Critics of totalitarianism theory argue that such analyses obscure more than they explain. They argue that the totalitarian model is unable to account for change. They question why, if this regime was so totalitarian, it did not use force to uphold its power in 1989. They also believe that totalitarianism theory minimizes the differences between the Nazi and SED regimes. Nazi Germany left behind mountains of corpses, East Germany mountains of Stasi files. And finally, such critics claim that historians who use the totalitarian approach unfairly demonize the GDR so as to make up for West Germany’s failure to come to terms with its Nazi past in the first decades after 1945. This debate, however, is less about totalitarian dictatorship than it is about perceptions of Western democracy. Those conservatives who place the Western order on a sacred pedestal draw a sharp distinction between parliamentary democracy and all other political regimes (and thus more readily lump the SED and the Nazi dictatorships together in one totalitarian model), while those more critical of the Western order place it and all other regimes on a more nuanced political continuum. Closely linked to totalitarianism debates are those concerning the comparative dictatorship approach. Scholars of the GDR who work in a comparative dictatorship vein tend to compare East Germany with Nazi Germany. Critics of this approach argue that it implies the equation of the two dictatorships; that it relativizes Nazi crimes; and that its findings are not meaningful because the two regimes’ historical features were so different (the Nazi regime, for example, was “homegrown,” whereas the SED regime was imposed by a foreign power). In response, Günther Heydemann and Christopher Beckmann have defended the comparative dictatorship approach—and particularly comparisons between the Nazi and SED regimes. They insist that by definition comparison involves the study of similarities and differences, and not the equating of whatever is compared. They also assert that

despite historical differences, comparison of the Nazi and SED regimes can shed much-needed light on topics such as everyday life under dictatorship. And finally, responding to those who argue that a comparison of the two regimes minimizes Nazi atrocities, Heydemann and Beckmann suggest that if anything, comparison of the two regime involves a different (and equally unacceptable) pitfall: the minimization of SED crimes[5].

While debates concerning totalitarianism and comparative dictatorship have raged, many political historians working on East Germany have focused on the specific modalities of SED rule. In the process, they have broken down the earlier monolithic view of East German politics. Before 1989, East German leaders were generally viewed as hapless puppets who simply executed Soviet wishes. Instead, it is now clear, they disagreed with Soviet officials over Soviet reparations policy, the dismantling of factories for transport to the Soviet Union, the founding of East Germany, and later, the building of the Berlin Wall[6]. Similarly, it was long thought that Soviet and East German authorities imposed communism in East Germany in a smooth and orderly manner. In fact, the process was utterly chaotic. The SED faced a desperate shortage of trained cadres who could staff central and local bureaucracies. It experienced a constant outflow of the younger and most talented segments of the population to Western Germany. It competed with institutions that were either “left over” from the pre-1945 period or were founded shortly after World War II. And it never secured popular legitimacy. Despite these difficulties, Soviet and SED officials deployed forceful persuasion and outright coercion to force the Stalinization of Eastern Germany[7]. Whereas earlier studies hinted at tensions among SED leaders, post-1989 research has confirmed a surprising degree of conflict within the SED Politburo[8]. This is particularly true of the early years of the regime when party leaders disputed economic measures, agricultural policy, the pace of Sovietization, and Deutschlandpolitik (policy vis-à-vis Germany as a whole). The most surprising research findings pertain to Ulbricht, his longtime protégé, Erich Honecker, and their contrasting policies in the late 1960s[9]. It was long thought that Ulbricht, the quintessential Stalinist leader of the 1950s, continued his hardline policies into the 1960s. But in fact, Ulbricht changed tack after the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Eager to modernize GDR society, he came to advocate not only significant economic reform but also much improved relations with West Germany (even against Soviet wishes). Honecker, however, hewed to Soviet orthodoxy on both counts. In 1971, he convinced Leonid Brezhnev to depose his erstwhile mentor. This new research alters long-held views on East Germany’s two leaders. In a striking historical rehabilitation, Ulbricht is no longer viewed as a dogmatic, dyed-in-the-wool Stalinist. And Honecker’s historical reputation has plunged. Even though Honecker tried to cultivate an image of himself as a people-friendly leader, he is now increasingly portrayed as an inflexible communist apparatchik[10].

While political historians of East Germany have written some excellent studies of SED decision making, they have generally either ignored GDR society or portrayed it as a passive object on which the SED successfully imposed its will. Neglecting the East German population has had its costs. Political historians have been unable to capture the rich, varied, and contradictory ways in which dictatorship shaped East German social life.

## **Social history**

Social historians believe that GDR history has focused too heavily on political institutions. Instead, they explore how East German society functioned under Soviet-style dictatorship. They ask a set of questions very different from that of political historians. What was the interaction between the SED dictatorship and East German society? Which elements of society (such as traditions, institutions, classes, and generational dynamics) posed limits to the party's dictatorship? And how did individual East Germans perceive and assert their interests vis-à-vis the regime? To answer these questions, social historians have developed their own vocabulary. They often refer to the GDR as a "pervasively ruled society" (*durchherrschte Gesellschaft*). At some level, of course, this notion refutes their agenda; social historians generally wish to emphasize social rather than political determinants. But the phrase underscores what social historians cannot deny: the political sources of social processes in East Germany[11]. SED power reached into many areas of everyday life, even the most private. Social historians nonetheless argue that GDR society undermined the party's totalizing claims. They thus tend to describe the "limits to dictatorship" (*Grenzen der Diktatur*)[12]. And, deploying a concept invented by Alf Lüdtke, they write about the "sense of one's own interests" (*Eigen-Sinn*) that allowed individual East Germans to forge meaningful lives under conditions of dictatorship.

As with political history, the social history of the GDR has involved some bitter academic debate. The most important controversy hinges on the notion of whether "society" existed in the GDR. In an influential 1992 work, Sigrid Meuschel, a West German sociologist, argued that the SED ultimately "leveled" or "homogenized" East German society, that is, it eliminated virtually all classes or other independent groupings (described in German as *Entdifferenzierung*). Over decades of SED rule, GDR society thus "died away" and became unable to foster initiative independent of the political regime[13]. Meuschel's critics believe that such a view represents a terrible distortion of GDR society. They argue that in a variety of ways East Germans—both as groups and as individuals—challenged the SED regime. Sociologist Detlef Pollack, for example, argues that Meuschel's approach "tends to overlook tendencies that go against a clear-cut sense of the distribution of power and underestimates conflicts, resistances, individual scope of action, cultural areas of immunity, niches of

communication, forms of refusal, and the act of seeming to come to terms [with the regime]"[14]. For Pollack, Meuschel's analysis leaves out all the areas in which GDR society could assert autonomy.

Some of Meuschel's sharpest critics, including Pollack, are former East Germans. In their view, East Germans were not hapless pawns of an omnipotent regime, but strong actors who resisted dictatorship. This sort of argumentation is intended to restore a certain dignity to East Germans and their biographies[15]. Former East Germans and historians Armin Mitter and Stefan Wolle have written the most popular work of this sort, *Untergang auf Raten* (Decline in Installments)[16]. Such analysis was not necessarily to have been expected from former East Germans. They might instead have adhered to totalitarian analyses to absolve themselves and their countrymen of personal responsibility; after all, individuals can hardly be held accountable for what they did or did not do under terroristic conditions. In any event, neither stark image of GDR citizens—as longtime resisters or very passive subjects—is historically accurate.

The history written on East Germany—and particularly its social history—has focused heavily on the first and last years of the SED regime[17]. This imbalance has skewed the portrayal of GDR society. Social historians who explore the limits to the SED's dictatorship have found considerable evidence to support their claims—for the first years of the regime. Numerous professional groups opposed and thus slowed the Sovietization of their professions. Workers hardly viewed the GDR, a self-proclaimed "workers' and peasants' state," as representing their interests; they put up some of the most spirited resistance to the regime, including the uprising on June 17, 1953[18]. A host of local studies show grassroots resistance to the imposition of SED rule; indeed, the party was often unable to control even its local cadres[19]. Initially, then, many segments of the population did circumvent the party's dictatorship. But this was hardly the case once the party routinized its domination after the Wall was built in 1961. By neglecting the 1960s, social historians ignore the time period that calls into question their major findings; it was then that the SED finally overcame many of the obstacles that had earlier circumscribed its power. Social historians of the GDR have generally employed one of three different methodologies: traditional social history (with an emphasis on social structure), life history (with an emphasis on close readings of life history narratives), and everyday history (with an emphasis on the assertion of personal autonomy). In a traditional social history of the Catholic church, for example, Wolfgang Tischner argues that the Church, in an attempt to preserve its autonomy, adopted the very characteristics of the institution it was vying against, the SED. In the early postwar years, the Catholic Church in East Germany became ever more hierarchical and centralized[20]. Practitioners of the life history approach have engaged in fascinating analyses of oral history interviews. These interviews frequently highlight the complicity of East Germans in upholding the SED regime—for reasons ranging from youthful political fervor to outright opportunism[21]. Interestingly, many former East Germans

now view themselves as victims both of the SED regime and of an unforgiving post-1989 German political culture (in which many lost or were ineligible for employment due to their past complicity in the GDR)[22].

The most innovative of the social history methodologies is the everyday history approach. Thomas Lindenberger, a leading practitioner of such history, argues that the German term “Alltagsgeschichte” (history of everyday life) is a catch-all term for a variety of kinds of history that at one time challenged traditional West German social history. In Lindenberger’s words, Alltagsgeschichte explores “subjectivity, agency, micro-history, oral history, ways of living and culture (in the anthropological sense)”[23]. Lindenberger argues, however, that Alltagsgeschichte has been modified through the encounter with GDR history: historians who practice it have had to bring politics into the forefront of their studies. For GDR history, it is essential to “account for the interrelationship of top-level structures and decisions and the agency at the ‘bottom’ of society”[24]. Lindenberger believes that the concept of *Eigen-Sinn* is particularly useful for interpreting the interaction between state and society. GDR history now boasts a rich array of studies on everyday life. Such studies show not only how GDR citizens asserted their interests in the work place and other areas of society, but also how they adapted themselves to the SED regime to further their life goals[25]. Was 1989 a revolution?[26] 1989 involved little violence and even less bloodshed. It did not spawn a radical new ideology. Indeed, it was something of a failure of imagination: the dissidents who peopled the citizens’ movement were unable to articulate a compelling new vision of society. Bärbel Bohley, an important GDR dissident, once summed up her disappointment with 1989: “We expected justice,” she quipped, “but we got the Rechtsstaat instead”[27]. The rule of law, though, represents a radical transformation of Eastern German society. And it was people power that effected that transformation. Labeling 1989 a revolution is ultimately a matter of definition—or politics. Those who valorize the protests of the East German population will call 1989 a revolution. Those who emphasize the non-revolutionary results of the revolution (the wholesale takeover by West Germany) will use other terms, such as *Die Wende* (the turn-about). And then there are the unrepentant Stalinists. In a 1994 interview with Alfred Neumann, a longtime Politburo member, I inadvertently spoke of 1989 as a revolution. Neumann bellowed back, “Girl, Girl, that was no revolution—that was a counterrevolutionary uprising”[28].

The social history of the GDR places too much emphasis on the “limits of dictatorship” and it fails to give developments in the 1960s and 1970s due attention. But it has nonetheless effectively captured the complexities of life under dictatorship. GDR society was rife in contradiction. Although pockets of autonomy persisted, these very pockets took on some of the features of the SED regime. Many GDR citizens found ways to assert their *Eigen-Sinn*, but they also made life choices in conformity with the

dictates of the SED regime. And even though many East Germans helped to uphold the SED dictatorship, after 1989 they came to view themselves as victims of the regime. GDR social history can offer insights to students of dictatorship the world over.

## The STASI

The facts: 178 kilometers of archival material. Personal files on six million individuals. 40 million index cards. One million pictures and negatives. Thousands of human scents stored in glass jars. 91,015 full-time employees. 174,000 “unofficial” informants. The highest surveillance rate (agents to population) in history. Husbands spying on wives. Colleagues snitching on co-workers. Informants posing as dissidents. State officials harboring Red Army terrorists. “Romeo” agents preying on hapless West German secretaries. Commandos kidnaping alleged traitors from West Germany. Agent provocateurs infiltrating literary groups and church circles. These revelations about the Stasi electrified the German public and underscored its reputation as one of the world’s most ruthless, efficient, and omnipotent secret police. Alone among the formerly communist states in Eastern Europe, the East German secret police files were opened. There is now a very large literature on the Stasi. Much of it involves institutional studies written by political historians, but many social historians have also concerned themselves with the Stasi. The most important debates about the MfS concern the function of the Stasi in the SED regime, the collaboration of unofficial informants, the degree to which the MfS penetrated West Germany, and the extent of the Stasi’s power. As with the rest of East German history, work on the MfS is highly politicized. Many authors have explicit political agendas: to restrict or provide access to the Stasi files, to justify or condemn individual past actions and, most important, to defend or delegitimize East Germany.

Founded in 1950, the Stasi became an enormous operation that included a bewildering array of main administrations, departments, and other sections. Some of its units focused on the classic task of foreign espionage. But most Stasi activity was directed toward domestic surveillance: bugging telephones, spying on army and police forces, monitoring dissident and church groups, and controlling the fulfillment of economic plans. In addition, the Stasi maintained its own prison system, guard unit, academy, medical service, bank branch, and professional sports league. By 1989, the Stasi employed some 91,000 full-time workers, who staffed the Berlin headquarters as well as 15 provincial and 216 district MfS offices. Given the Stasi’s remarkable size, some historians now argue that the MfS came to exercise “a historically new form” of power. Besides carrying out the classic repressive functions of a secret police force, the Stasi came to exert “comprehensive concealed control and manipulation functions”[29]. The MfS, it is suggested, infiltrated all aspects of society so

as to smooth over the pitfalls of dictatorship. In the absence of an independent public sphere, the MfS provided the SED leadership with information on the mood of the East German population[30]. And in the absence of market conditions, the MfS intervened to ensure the provision of supplies, parts, or other necessities that kept factories and other economic entities up and running. One historian has thus labeled the MfS the “lubricant of society”[31].

Other scholars claim that the Stasi was a “state within a state.” In the words of historian Klaus Bästlein, the “MfS was ‘state in state’—with its own disciplinary rules, its own medical service and even its own bank branch”[32]. These features, though, hardly constitute the core features of a state. The Stasi, for example, did not have a monopoly on the use of force, Max Weber’s classic definition of a state. Most historians disagree with Bästlein. They argue that Erich Mielke, the Stasi chief from 1957 to 1989, neither subverted the SED leadership nor its intentions. Moreover, Mielke fairly scrupulously adhered to the party’s dictum that the Stasi not spy on full-time workers in the SED apparatus[33]. Historians also point to the events of 1989 to dispute the “state within a state” notion. In the absence of strong guidance from the SED, the Stasi simply crumbled; it did not try to preserve itself independent of the SED regime[34]. The MfS recruited an extraordinary number of unofficial informants (IMs). In 1989, there were approximately 174,000 IMs—one snitch for every 80 to 160 East Germans[35]. Some 85% to 90% of these were men, and at least 10% of the adult “intellectual” population served as IMs[36]. To many observers, the fact that so many male, well-educated East Germans had snooped on colleagues, neighbors, friends, and relatives suggested the true depravity of the SED regime. IMs had placed fellow citizens at the mercy of a strong, repressive state. They had made possible the regime’s assault on privacy, honesty, and truth. And they had betrayed that elemental trust that allows meaningful human interaction.

A variety of motivations led individuals to collaborate with the Stasi. In some cases, psychological reasons played an important role. Sascha Anderson, an IM posing as a literary dissident, provides a particularly intriguing case of Stasi collaboration. Despite being a Stasi informant, Anderson was a key actor in the forging of a vibrant alternative literary scene—precisely what the MfS wished to prevent. Anderson appears to have had an oversized ego that could not be satisfied by the limited opportunities offered by GDR society[37]. Most unofficial informants, however, cooperated with the Stasi out of political conviction[38]. In addition, some worked for the Stasi for more prosaic reasons: to earn some extra cash, to avoid career setbacks, or to ensure future travel to the West. Scholars have observed that most IMs routinized their Stasi activity; it became a normal part of their everyday lives. This, perhaps is the most disturbing feature of the Stasi: too many East Germans were led to engage in activities about which they should have had moral qualms.

The Stasi placed as many as 20,000 to 30,000 agents in West Germany[39]. From 1953 to 1986, Markus Wolf ran the Main Administration Reconnaissance (HV A), the Stasi's foreign espionage operations. Wolf was long something of a legend; he reputedly served as the model for John Le Carré's 1963 *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*. Under Wolf's leadership, the HV A not only infiltrated countless West German institutions, but also tried to manipulate events in the Federal Republic. This has led historians to question whether the Stasi played a decisive role in West German historical developments. In 1972, for example, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt faced a parliamentary vote of no confidence. At this time, the SED leadership apparently feared Brandt's fall from power. The Stasi thus bribed a conservative deputy, Julius Steiner, not to vote against Brandt; this was just one of two votes that kept the chancellor in office. In 1974, however, Brandt resigned his position after it became known that a close aide, Günter Guillaume, was a longtime MfS spy. For the Stasi, nothing failed like success. Historians have used Stasi material to make comparisons among East Germany, Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and the post-1945 states of Eastern Europe. The Gestapo, the Nazi secret police, had 7000 employees in 1937, and 31,000 in 1944; the latter figure includes Gestapo personnel throughout Nazi-occupied Europe. Why was the Stasi so much larger than the Gestapo? For one, it was the only East German institution that specialized in state persecution[40]. In addition, the Gestapo remained fixated on repression, while the MfS came to perform many other state functions. And the MfS, unlike the Gestapo, could not rely on spontaneous denunciation; it thus formalized denunciation through the creation of a vast network of unofficial informants[41]. The upshot of the comparison: while the Nazi regime was more brutal, the SED regime was more insidious.

How did the Stasi compare with security agencies of other communist dictatorships? In contrast to the Soviet GPU-NKVD of the Stalinist era, the Stasi appears almost benign. In East Germany, there was no Great Terror, no vast Gulag, and no mass repressions of nationalist partisan movements. But in comparison to the other post-1945 Eastern European communist security agencies, the Stasi proves more threatening. It had the highest ratio of employees to population: one full time employee for every 180 East German citizens. The Soviet KGB had one employee for every 595 Soviet citizens, the Czechoslovak StB one for every 867 citizens, and the Polish SB one for every 1,574 citizens[42]. Scholars have not adequately explained why the Stasi was so exceptional in terms of the high numbers of its personnel. Was it Mielke's paranoia? A German propensity to thoroughness? Did the SED leadership feel particularly vulnerable because East Germany was part of a divided country? Or does some other factor explain this Stasi peculiarity? Historians still differ widely in their assessment of the Stasi's power. After 1989, revelations concerning the extraordinary number of Stasi officers and IMs, the infiltration of dissident groups and church circles, and the high numbers of Stasi spies in West Germany all suggested that the Stasi had been even more ruthless and

omnipotent than previously believed. But sustained historical research has cast doubt on this view. The Stasi did little to smooth over economic difficulties faced by the SED regime; regardless of its interventions, the East German economy continued its inexorable decline. IMs often proved difficult to control; they were frequently inactive, ineffective or, as in the case of Anderson, fostered precisely what the MfS wished to prevent. The Stasi had little success in undermining West Germany; on the contrary, for many East Germans, the other German state proved an alluring temptation. Most importantly, the MfS failed in its primary task, preserving the SED regime; during the 1989 revolution, it was positively impotent. This all suggests that the Stasi was not an omnipotent behemoth, but rather an ineffective colossus.

One should not underestimate the Stasi. As some observers have argued, the Stasi's real power lay not in its actual, but rather its perceived, omnipotence. The novelist Jurek Becker, for example, once stated that "one of the [Stasi's] greatest successes was that one often suspected that it was present when in fact it wasn't"<sup>[43]</sup> Similarly, the historian Charles Maier has written, "the Stasi provided the regime with its *arcana imperii*, the power of mystification and secrecy on which its capacity to corrupt independent action, stifle dissent, and preclude the emergence of a public realm depended"<sup>[44]</sup>. Because the Stasi seemed omnipresent, individuals modified their conduct accordingly. The illusion of MfS strength was thus perhaps its most important source of power. Recent research findings on the Stasi are highly illuminating. Most importantly, they underscore the totalitarian strivings of the SED regime. The Stasi tried to infiltrate and manipulate all aspects of East German society. But its success was limited. If the GDR was totalitarian, it was so in its aims, but not in its actual practice. The Stasi literature also points to the moral complicity demanded by the SED dictatorship; indeed, the regime's most repugnant feature was that it created an environment in which individuals regularly betrayed their countrymen. Finally, the literature suggests that while other fascist and communist regimes were surely more brutal, the East German regime was perhaps the most insidious. Fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the wide-ranging literature on the GDR offers an unparalleled, if disputed record of the workings of communist dictatorship.

## Hong Kong, Mainland China and the SARS Outbreak: The Predicament of Authoritarian Toleration

di Peter Baehr

Since Hong Kong's return to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in July 1997, the previous British colony is facing three transitions of shorter and longer duration. As a Special Administrative Region of the PRC, Hong Kong must adapt itself immediately to a new sovereign that remains a one party state jealous to preserve its monopolistic prerogatives. The historical anomaly is striking. While countries in Central Eastern Europe, and in the former Soviet Union, have for the most part relinquished the domination of the Communist Party, Hong Kong is in the unique position of having recently been delivered to its mercies. Accompanying this sovereign-to-sovereign transition, are two others that are internal to the new regime. First, Hong Kong's Basic Law – the legal template that governs Hong Kong-China relations – allows in principle the evolution of the territory to full political participation: the election of the Chief Executive and all seats of the Legislative Council (Legco: Hong Kong's lower chamber) by direct and universal suffrage. Yet, second, the Basic Law itself is a framework of limited duration, destined to expire in 2047, and thus presaging a movement beyond the status quo into entirely uncharted political territory.

Hong Kong has a global importance disproportionate to its size of 980 square kilometers and population of 6.82 million (mid-2003 government figures). A logistics hub that has become simultaneously a disease hub, transporting pathogens such as the SARS coronavirus around the world, Hong Kong's condition cannot be one of indifference to the international system as a whole. Moreover, besides being an impressive economic player in its own right[1], Hong Kong remains one of the hinges of China-America relations, its irregular status as a "non-sovereign entity" recognized by an act of Congress (1992) that obliges the United States to "fulfill its obligations to Hong Kong under international agreements as long as Hong Kong reciprocates, regardless of whether the People's Republic of China is party to the particular international agreement"[2]. Hong Kong falls, indirectly, under the scrutiny of the Congressional Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China[3]. And for the United States' government under both Democratic and Republican administrations, China's promise to respect the "one nation, two systems" formula, by which Hong Kong rules itself under a common law judicial system and as a market economy, is the acid test of the PRC's capacity for pragmatism and reform. Yet what if Hong Kong were to become, in China's eyes, ungovernable under current arrangements or a seat of sedition? Mass protest in the territory on July 1st, 2003 has already precipitated the resignation of two government ministers, prompted defections

from the Executive Council (cabinet) and forced Hong Kong's Chief Executive, Tung Chee-hwa to withdraw a controversial security bill. The November 2003 District Council elections saw major gains for the democratic parties. If "one nation, two systems" were to fail - if, in other words, one of the systems were to prove incompatible with the other and "the nation" as a whole under Communist Party rule - this would not only be a tragedy for Hong Kong; it would also vindicate the misgivings of those in Congress who look on China as a major strategic threat, inflaming the ever-combustible debate about American China policy[4].

In addition, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is supposed to be a model for the "renegade province" of Taiwan (the Republic of China). In the lore of both the Communist Party and the Taiwanese Nationalist Party (Guomindang, KMT) a time will come when China will once more be fully united. As long as that fiction remains, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seems prepared to desist from taking Taiwan by force, hoping that the island's population will gradually realize the benefits, and perhaps the inevitability, of full integration into the motherland. Increasing economic ties between the territories, and the continued diplomatic isolation of the island, are two factors that, the CCP believes, may tempt Taiwan back to the fold. Adding menace to inducement, high ranking People's Liberation Army officials and mainland leaders, such as the former president Jiang Zemin (now head of the powerful Military Commission), have made it clear that any obvious move towards formal Taiwan independence would be the trigger for war. Presently, Taiwan is a de facto American protectorate despite recent administration warnings to President Chen Shui-bian, leader of the (anti-Guomindang) Democratic Progressive Party, to cool his independence rhetoric. If the "one nation, two systems" experiment fails in Hong Kong, or is seen to fail, the Taiwanese independence movement is likely to press even more insistently for official national autonomy; the dangers of a regional, or even a Pacific, military conflict are real[5].

In this article, I examine key aspects of Hong Kong's political arrangements to determine what kind of situation the transition so far has produced. The Basic Law enshrines a hybrid of one party autocracy and "negative" liberty – let us call it authoritarian toleration – that makes freedom dependent on good behavior from Hong Kong denizens. Allowing a great deal of latitude, this peculiar configuration of liberty on a leash enabled Hong Kong people, as distinct from their government, to emerge from the SARS outbreak with a sense of added strength and confidence. As a result, expectations for democratic reform have increased in recent months. Yet it is evident that the drive to fuller republican participation in Hong Kong is likely to lead to a clash with Beijing because it is inconsistent with one party rule - however "generously" exercised. It follows that authoritarian toleration is productive of ambivalent and oscillating outcomes. On the one hand, it offers the current reality of extensive civil rights and a rule of law, together with the prospect of political evolution towards full

and direct universal suffrage for the more important posts of governance. On the other, China's control over legal interpretation of the Basic Law via the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress means that Hong Kong's political future rests on little more than a promissory note whose redemption can be delayed indefinitely or simply withdrawn altogether at the behest of the sovereign. In consequence, political liberty can be choked back at the very threshold of a republican achievement. The result is not the outright repression of Hong Kong people but a slow drip of lesser and greater frustrations or humiliations erratically visited upon them[6].

If that much is obvious about Hong Kong's predicament, authoritarian toleration is also capable of springing surprises that have escaped the attention of usually astute commentators. I will use the example of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak of the winter and spring of 2003 to show why, in key respects, Hong Kong's government fared worse than the mainland's: why, paradoxically, a government ruling under authoritarian toleration in a pluralist society could lose political capital while a repressive government – the mainland's – could secure more of it. The argument may appear counter-intuitive but its plausibility is not difficult to demonstrate.

## **Transition made in Spain. Il successo universale del modello della transizione democratica spagnola**

*di Encarnación Lemus*

«[In Uruguay] la giunta militare presieduta dal generale Alvarez, in seguito alle pressioni della popolazione, entrò in contatto con i rappresentanti delle forze democratiche favorevoli a realizzare una transizione pactada, che permettesse al paese di uscire dalla dittatura. I contatti subirono molti momenti di stallo. Ci trovavamo in un periodo di grandi difficoltà. Avevamo dato istruzioni alla nostra ambasciata di Montevideo affinché, nel pieno rispetto della non ingerenza negli affari interni di uno Stato, cercasse di spingere l'opposizione verso una soluzione non violenta. La nostra rappresentanza diplomatica aveva cercato di promuovere l'avvicinamento tra le diverse posizioni dei gruppi democratici (successivamente io stesso, insieme al segretario di Stato Shultz, coordinai l'azione della rappresentanza spagnola. Noi e gli americani lavorammo insieme nella fase finale dell'accordo). [...] Ciò che avrebbe convertito per gli uruguiani la nostra presenza in un evento storico, è senza dubbio il ruolo svolto dalla Spagna nella restaurazione democratica di quel paese. I leader delle principali formazioni d'opposizione alla dittatura si riunirono nell'ambasciata di Spagna. Esse erano composte di una trentina di uomini; alcuni appartenevano alle forze politiche uruguayanee esistenti nella fase precedente all'instaurazione della dittatura, altri a partiti di recente formazione. Fuori per la strada migliaia di persone li acclamavano e invocavano la presenza del re. Juan Carlos ascoltò i politici e li incoraggiò a realizzare un processo di transizione capace di sanare le ferite del popolo uruguiano. [...] Tra le forze politiche, i membri del Partito colorado, guidati da Sanguinetti, si impegnarono a fondo in un dialogo con i militari, mentre i Bianchi di Wilson Ferreira Aldunate erano scettici rispetto alle possibilità di riuscire a raggiungere un compromesso con l'esercito. A queste formazioni bisogna aggiungere anche il Fronte ampio e i socialisti. Tutti avrebbero in seguito dichiarato che la visita del re di Spagna aveva dato una spinta fondamentale alla democratizzazione»[1].

Questo testo costituisce un buon esempio del modo in cui ha funzionato il modello spagnolo. L'obiettivo del presente saggio sarà in primo luogo quello di analizzare il processo di formazione di tale modello, per soffermarsi poi sui principali snodi che regolano il suo meccanismo politico. Cercheremo inoltre di cogliere le ragioni dell'interesse verso la transizione spagnola, «tanto acclamata» sia in ambiti tradizionalmente e culturalmente vicini alla penisola iberica, come l'America

Latina, sia in Europa orientale, dove i processi di transizione hanno avuto origine da realtà politico-sociali molto diverse da quella spagnola....

*(continua)*