No Compromise - No Democracy

Pacts, Threats and Nested Games as Approaches to the Belarusian and Russian Transitions

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Et kompromis er kunsten at dele en kage, så alle tror, at de har fået det største stykke

Winston Churchill

Abstract

Belarus and Russia entered simultaneous transitions as the Soviet Union broke down at the end of 1991. As most other former Soviet republics Belarus and Russia did not end up with democratic regimes as a result of transition. However, the Russian regime can be regarded far more liberal in character than the Belarusian. The main question to be answered is why one can observe this difference in regime type in two otherwise similar countries. This question is addressed by applying actor-oriented transition theory and game theory to analyse the interaction about regime type during transition.

I conclude, by focusing on actors, that the main explanatory factors for this observed difference can be found in the variation in the games of social interaction about the issue of constitution occurring during transition. Belarus experienced a lower pressure for change amongst elites and the population than Russia. Furthermore, Belarusian elites hindered the impact of the phase of liberalisation, leaving the country worse prepared for transition than Russia. Due to various reasons no compromise which could have secured democracy or a liberal regime was reached in either of the countries. This left them with sub-optimal conflicts outcomes as a result of transition.

None of the countries managed to escape the sub-optimality of the transition through cooperation or pacts. In Belarus an inconclusive compromise about national independence hindered cooperation about regime type resulting in a situation of nested games. In Russia a compromise was hindered by disagreement about the threatening power of the ruling fraction during transition leaving the actors in a situation of sub-optimality.

Key Words: Belarus, Russia, Transition, Liberalisation, Democratisation, Actors, Game Theory, Threats, Pacts, Sub-Optimality and Nested Games.

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1. Introduction

Two decades have passed since Mikhail Gorbachev opened the Soviet Union for change. His politics in the late 1980s led to the largest wave of roughly simultaneous regime changes seen so far. Few scholars had predicted the collapse of communism and the events came as a surprise upon most observers as the dictatorships of Eastern-Europe broke down when people in country after country rose against injustice and suppression. Yet, these simultaneous transitions have produced a large variety of outcomes with regard to regime type. Countries have ended up with regimes varying from closed dictatorships to new democratic regimes. Only seldom, compromise and democracy have been the outcome of post-Soviet transitions.

These simultaneous regime changes in over two dozen countries, with relatively similar contexts, constitute a "*unique laboratory to isolate causal patterns*" as McFaul (2002: 212) puts it. This unique data which has been created by these transitions opens new possibilities to apply transition theory in order to gain further knowledge, empirically as well as theoretically.

Research questions

The central task which I have undertaken is to explain the variety of regime type as outcomes of transition in Belarus and Russia. For this purpose the phase of transition is closely analysed in order to uncover the factors which have contributed to the outcomes of transition. The main focus is upon actors, their engagement in social interaction about specific conflict issues and the effect these factors have on the regime type which is seen as a result of this interaction. The similar context of the chosen cases makes it useful to de-emphasize, but not ignore, the impact of structural and historical variables.

The central questions I ask in this work are; what games were played and how are they influenced by differences in context? As argued by Larsen (2000: 480-81) similar games arise from similar transition contexts, which again are "structurated" in the same way. By choosing cases with a similar macro-structural context it is possible to point to the circumstances and the variety which are believed to have influenced the variation in regime types. Despite the similarity of context and structures Russia and Belarus differ in size, in historical circumstances and they have different identities. These factors and their effect upon the micro-level decisions taken during the social interaction are firmly elaborated before the transitions are discussed. From these discussions, actors, conflict issues and actors' position

towards these conflicts are derived. This again produces different games. In time this study is defined by the interval of transition in the two countries, which starts with the breakdown of the Soviet Union and ends by the founding elections in respectively late 1993 for Russia and in 1994 for Belarus.

When studying the regime outcomes several other question arise as being of interest in connection with the main research question. These are of interest both theoretically as well as in order to understand the empirical outcomes in the two countries.

Transition theory has been claimed by area specialists such as McFaul (2002) or by Melville (2000) to be inadequate as a theoretical framework to understand post-Soviet transitions because of the lack of empirically observable pacts. I will in this thesis contradict their assumptions. Attention will be devoted to the possibility, functions and need for pacts in relation to the outcomes of the games. Contributions are added to the understanding of the concept of pacts in transition theory both as formal or informal, known or unknown agreements amongst the relevant actors. But it is important to bear in mind that pacts are neither sufficient nor necessary conditions for application of transition theory.

Rustow (1970) points to a single pre-condition for transition to democracy. This is that the majority of the population in a given country recognises the present state-formation as the only legitimate entity for their statehood. A similar argument is made by Linz and Stepan (1996) who also claim that the former Soviet states possess particular challenges due the problem of "stateness". I discuss the challenges which are created by simultaneous processes of state-building, nation-building, economic reforms and democratisation. Challenges created by the conflicts which arise from these processes can re-enforce and further complicate situations in which the actors have conflicting interests. Multiple conflict issues can create situations of nested-games and leave actors with sub-optimal outcomes as results of transitions. The challenges arising from these conflicts are brought into the analysis in order to further enlighten the background of the sub-optimal choices of actors. Furthermore, I contribute to the theories on democratisation by introducing these challenges in a genuine actor-approach and not only as contextual or historical macro-structures.

I apply Tsebelis' (1990) framework of nested games to the case of Belarus in order to enlighten multiple arenas of conflict, the way they are nested together by the actors and the challenges created by decision making on one conflict dimension when decisions cannot be taken independently upon this dimension alone. Apparently irrational or sub-optimal behaviour of the Belarusian actors can be explained by this approach. In the case of Russia I have introduced the framework of Hovi (1998) on the efficiency of threat to bring further

insights to the discussion of the Russian transition and the apparent sub-optimal outcomes produced by the interaction. In addition to enrich the theoretical framework of transition theory this approach also unites aspects of international relations with aspects of comparative politics in order to unite the knowledge build in both disciplines and thereby accumulates further theoretical and empirical knowledge.

Choice of cases and motivation

By comparing Russia and Belarus I have chosen a most similar systems design with regard to selecting cases. As mentioned earlier the two chosen countries are relatively similar with regard to contextual and structural factors. Both Russian and Belarus are former Soviet republics, they are major east-Slavic countries and have shared historical experiences. This makes it possible to de-emphasize several structural and historical factors and instead turn the intention towards the choices of actors and differences in conflicts.

During the 1990s a difference in the development in regime type can be observed in both countries. Neither country can be said to fully comply with democratic standards. The regime in both countries manipulates the political game to such an extend that they cannot be classified as democracies. However, Russia grants a considerable larger degree of freedom to its people than Belarus. On the Freedom house survey of 1996 Belarus was classified as "not free" while Russia was classified as "partly free".[1]

Belarus is often referred to as the last dictatorship of Europe. With regard to regime type Belarus shares more similarities with its former union partners in Central-Asia than with it neighbouring countries. Aleksander Lukashenka has established himself as a charismatic dictator with powers which echo the past. This sole position of Belarus as the least free country in Europe makes it especially interesting for a comparison with regard to regime type and transition to uncover if the games during transition can help to explain the movement toward dictatorship which is observed.

Furthermore, very little attention has been devoted to the study of Belarus by western scholars. Also in politics in general, Belarus seems to be the forgotten country of Europe. According to Silitski (2003) little attention have been devoted to the study of the role of actors in the Belarusian transition. The few studies conducted have mostly been oriented in the

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[1] www.freedomhouse.org

structural approach. Therefore, a bit more attention has been devoted to Belarus than to Russia in my study. Amongst the few actor-oriented studies conducted are the studies of Silitski (2003) and Mihalisko (1997) which I build upon and develop further. The limited amount of literature on Belarus in English and Scandinavian languages has restricted the number of sources available and therefore I build upon a few main sources, while taken other relevant literature into consideration when available. However, I have not found this restriction to be a hinder for my work on Belarus.

The second case which I have chosen for comparison is Russia. The development with regard to regime type seems still un-finished in Russia today. The development in Russia has had and still has an important influence on its neighbouring countries. Russia has recently shown that they have greater ambitions for their political influence in both Europe and the world in general. Through its huge amount of natural recourses Russia has again gained considerable influence, something which has been experienced not only by countries as Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus but also by EU members as Poland and Estonia. Also Norway has experienced the Russian use of trade links as political pressure. Russia is without doubt the most important and influential country in the former Soviet Union.

Understanding the political development and the political system of Russia is of decisive importance for the future political interaction with Russia. The political system in Russia today is largely inherited from the Yeltsin era and the political games played during transition have had profound influence on how Russian politics are conducted today. It is therefore important to build theoretical well founded knowledge about the events during transition to understand the authoritarian tendencies which can be observed today and which are of growing concern to western observers. The formal and informal institutional design of present day Russia, which opens for these tendencies, is a direct result of the outcome of transition with regard to regime type.

When visiting both Russia and Belarus I have found these countries and their post-Soviet development to be of great interest. I believe that by truly understanding the transitional development in these two important countries we can add valuable knowledge to transition and regime theory.

A framework for understanding democracy and its alternatives

For a study of democratisation and regime change it is important to have a clear and useful definition of the concept of democracy. There exist several different suggestions on how

democracy is to be defined. When one defines democracy in a study one should in addition to providing conceptual clarity also bare in mind that the definition is to fulfil a purpose in the study. Different definitions may fit different purposes. In large-N studies minimal definitions are often found to be most useful as in the study by Przeworski et al. (2000). On the other hand an expanded definition can be useful in case studies which seek to classify a regime in accordance with a number of characteristics of democracy as in the case of McFaul et al. (2004) who follow an expanded definition given by Diamond (1999).

I define democracy in accordance with the definition set forward by Dahl (1971) in his classical work of Polyarchy. Dahl sees democracy to be an ideal type which might not be found in the real world, but which functions as model of a regime which allows the citizens to formulate their preferences freely, to signify these preferences to other citizens and the government by individual or collective actions and finally to have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of government (Dahl 1971: 2). From these three assumptions two dimensions are formed. These create a scale in which it will be possible to order different political systems. The two dimensions which constitute the framework for defining political regimes are the dimension of *contestation* and the dimension of *participation* (Dahl 1971).

Contestation reflects to what extend a regime allows the citizens to compete, through elites, freely and without limitations about representing the citizens. And it also reflects to what extend a regime secures institutions and procedures in order to equally allow publicly the creation and distribution of opinions. Furthermore it displays to what degree the procedures and institutions secure equal representation of the preferences and opinions which the citizens formulate. The dimension of contestation measures to what extend a regime has allowed the development of an arena for public competition, organised or not, in which elites can compete for the support of the citizens on an equal basis. This includes, amongst others, therefore rights of freedom speech, freedom to organise, equal access to information and channels of information. However, this dimension alone is not sufficient to define political regimes.

Participation reflects on the other hand to what extend a regime allows the citizens to equally take part in the political process. This does not only include to what extend the regime allows the citizens to participate in voting or the right to run for offices but also to what extend a regime allows citizens to fully and equally participate in all arenas of the public contestation. Within this framework for defining political regimes developed by Dahl (1971) democracies are regimes which to the largest extent grants both contestation and participation to its citizens.

Outline of the thesis

In the following chapter I briefly discuss different theoretical approaches to the study of democratisation and regime change. Then I undertake the task of constructing the theoretical model to be used further on. Here the concepts of nested games and threatening power as tools to understand multi-dimensional conflict situations during transitions are introduced. In chapter three I point to the strength of applying a formal model to the study of transitions and the most important game theoretical concepts used are discussed.

Chapter four, five and six are the analytical chapters. In chapter four I start by discussing the historical and contextual features of Belarus which I believe to have influenced the formation of actor's preferences during transition. Relevant conflict issues are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter five builds upon chapter four when modelling the games of social interaction during transition in Belarus and it discusses actors, preferences and effects of multi-dimensional conflicts upon the possibility of escaping sub-optimality.

Chapter six follows the frame of the previous two chapters. Here I discuss historical and contextual backgrounds of the Russian transition before turning to modelling the games of social interaction during the Russian transition. This includes a discussion of relevant conflict issues, actors and their preferences. Finally, this chapter applies the framework of threats as a tool to understand the possibility to escape from sub-optimality.

To conclude I sum up major findings, draw comparative conclusions and implications to theory. Furthermore I discuss the theoretical implications of this work and outline future challenges.

2. Theory

In the beginning of this chapter I discuss different approaches to the study of democratisation. Following this the model applied to this study is discussed. This includes the core concepts of transition theory, proposal of hypothesises and introduction of the challenges created when democratisation occurs concurrent with economic transition and state- and nation-building. Approaches which I apply to study these challenges will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Approaches to the study of democratisation

Study of regime change and democratisation often distinguished between two basic approaches, a structural and an actor oriented. The structural is emphasising structural, socioeconomic and cultural requisites for democracy. Most attention is given to change in long-term macro-processes to explain regime change (Colomer 2000). The actor-oriented approach gives attention to the actors and their choice of strategies during social interaction. The choices are stressed as explanatory factors for regime changes. In this approach political regimes and regime change are seen as the outcome of strategic interaction.

The role of socioeconomic and cultural structures as explanatory factors for the stability of political regimes were suggested after observation of contextual differences between the stable Anglo-American democracies and the failure of many continental democracies during in the interwar period (Colomer 2000: 133). These studies became the dominant approach in the 1950 and 1960. Lipset (1959: ; 1960) made an important contribution to this approach in which he suggested some requisites and conditions for the survival of democratic regimes. This led to the conclusion that the break down in the continental regimes in the interwar period was due to backward socioeconomic structures (Colomer 2000). Similar structural approaches have been made by Huntington (1968), Almond and Verba (1963: ; 1989), Skocpol (1979) and Moore (1967) stressing classes, political culture, modernisation and social structures as determinants of regime change, regime stability and regime breakdown.

However, the relationships deducted from these studies have showed to be neither sufficient nor necessary conditions for establishment, consolidation or breakdown of democracies (Colomer 2000: 134). Empirical cases such as India, Portugal or the Eastern-Europe communist regimes have shown that democracies can come about despite

unfavourable social and economic conditions. Furthermore, countries as Norway and Holland remained politically stable in the interwar period despite economic depression also in these countries (Colomer 2000). Linz and Stepan (1978) shows that the unsolvable problems of regimes are the work of the regime elites and not the work of financial instability. Moreover, Przeworski (1991: 96) says that in such structural approaches the formulation of the outcomes are uniquely determined by conditions, and history goes on without anyone ever doing anything.

This thesis builds upon the actor-oriented approach and holds that the democratisation, liberalisation, transitions, regime change and regime breakdown are a consequence of different constellations of actors interacting in specific strategic situations. Actors represent different interests or segments in a country either this is specific elites, classes or groups. The actors will act rationally according to their preferences in order to maximise their utility. By interaction in strategic situations during a process of democratisation the actors will seek to maximise their utility according to their preferences, relative position and strength. This does not mean that actors act in a structural and historical vacuum. The preferences, the position and strength of the actors are formed by the historical and structural situation which they interact within. On the other hand the period of transition and liberalisation are in the longer perspective rather short term processes in which the normal rules of the political game are altered for a period. It is clear that democracies or dictatorships are not created by invisible macro structures, but by people (McFaul 2002: 214). Hence, the role of actors is particularly important to explain the outcome of democratisation, especially in cases with relatively similar contexts. The outcome reached as a result of transition whether it is democracy, dictatorship or some kind of a mix of these is the direct result of the actors' social interaction about specific conflict issue, primarily the issue of constitution of a new framework for political interaction. The key to achieving a democratic outcome of this interaction lies therefore in actor's ability to compromise upon the implementation of democratic reforms.

The main theoretical concepts of liberalisation, transition, opening of the regime, regime deviations and pacts which create the foundation of theoretical tools for the analysis are based on the seminal work of O'Donnell, Schmitter, Prezeworski and Whitehead.[2] I also bring into the theoretical model the work of Przeworski (1991: ; 1992) and Colomer (1991: ; 1995: ; 2000) who apply formal game theoretical model to the strategic interaction of both the phase of liberalisation and the phase of transition. Micro-oriented studies, including the

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[2] O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (1986a: ; 1986b: ; 1986c: ; 1986d)

application of game theory, have also been applied to the study of democratisation by Geddes (1991) in South-America, Tvedt (2000: ; 2004) in the case of DDR, Altermark (1998) in the Russian transition, Batty and Danilovic (1997) to the Russian liberalisation and Colomer (2000b) to the Polish transition.

Finally this thesis takes into account the work of Rustow (1970) and later on Linz and Stepan (1996: ; 1996b) as well as the methodological framework of Tsebelis (1990) and Hovi (1998) in an attempt to construct a model which takes into account the challenges created by simultaneous democratisation, state- and nation-building and economic reforms. The democratisation of non-democratic regimes can be divided into two distinct processes or periods.[3] The first process is the opening and liberalisation of the former regime. This process is followed by the period of transition. However, the two processes are closely connected and the transition depends on the developments during the time of liberalisation. I will proceed by first discussing the concepts of liberalisation and transition followed by the actors and their possible strategies. Finally I will focus upon potential challenges of simultaneous multiple conflict issues during transition.

Liberalisation

The process of liberalising a dictatorship "takes off" when the authoritarian regime for some reason or another starts to tolerate that civil society organises outside the official channels which the regime previously has established[4]. New actors are granted the possibility to organise without meeting random suppression by the regime or its sympathisers (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 7). It is this change in politics that often is referred to as the opening of the non-democratic regime.

The opening is often being regarded as a signal of a fractionalisation of the elites within the regime (Przeworski 1991: 55-6). The fractionalisation is a result of the fact that parts of the ruling elites start to recognise that the regime is facing some sort of a crisis. This crisis can be of political, social, ideological or economic character and will of course depend on the context. The fractionalisation of the regime is the reflection of a situation in which parts of the regime recognises this crisis, while other fractions do not recognise the condition

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[3] After these two distinct phases follows a phase of consolidation of democracy if the outcome is the result of a democratic compromise.

[4] This phase somewhat corresponds to the "prepatory" phase in Rustow (1970)

of the regime as being in a crises. The regime crisis clarifies and expedites the fragmentation of the regime. The fractions can be divided in two main groups. These groups are the hardliner fraction and the softliner fraction (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). Hardliners is the group within the regime who believes that it is possible and desirable to uphold the status quo. By taking this position they do not recognise that the regime is facing some sort of a crisis. On the other hand the softliners believe that the ruling regime cannot survive the forthcoming crisis without expanding the social bases of the regime, reforming society and the economy and by obtaining legitimacy through more or less democratic procedures and elections (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 16; Przeworski 1991: 59-60; Colomer 2000). Without this fragmentation the regime will not be opened and therefore not tolerate an opposition. The softliners must also to some extend dominate or control the hardliners before they are able to open the regime. The hardliners are in favour of status quo and do not recognise the need for change. Hence, the softliners must be the dominating fraction within the regime or be able to reach some sort of compromise with the hardliners to be able to open the regime.

By these measures the regime hopes to be able to increase the regimes legitimacy, be able to survive the crisis and thereby uphold the regime. To expand the social basis of the regime the softliners want to open for organising in the civil society. If they manage to control the hardliners in such a way that they are able to promote an opening towards the civil society the regime will start liberalising from above (Przeworski 1991). The motivation for granting the possibility for organising autonomously from the regime to new groups can be found in the wish of the softliners to be able to cooperate with them at a later stage and over time integrate these new organisations into the regime. By doing so, they will be able to expand the social basis of the regime by including new segments of society into the ruling elites. When including new segments they also hope to be able to increase the legitimacy of the regime. This process of liberalisation does not have to start from above, but can also be initiated from below. If starting from below, segments in the civil society will start to organise and experience that they are no longer being repressed by the regime (Przeworski 1991: 56-7). The fact they are allowed to organise reflects that a fractionalisation has occurred in the regime and that the regime hopes to be able to interact with the autonomous elites. No matter how the liberalisation starts it is a process of the interaction between more or less organised autonomous actors in civil society and fractions of actors with the regime (Przeworski 1991: 57).

This interaction will presumably increase the expected utility of actors on both sides. The civil society actors get the opportunity to promote their preferences, goals and ideas

during the interaction with the regime actors. During the same interaction the softliners can alter the balance of power between the actors within the regime to their advantage by allying with the non-regime actors (Przeworski 1991: 57). Doing so they can get the opportunity to promote the reforms they believe is necessary to secure the survival of the regime and overcome the crisis they are facing. The fragmentation of the regime and an alteration of the balance of power give the autonomous organisations an increased scope for organising and a better opportunity to pursue their goals even through cooperation with regime fractions.

When the regime chooses to open and liberalise this gives civil society the possibility to organise. If the regime allows this it must be because they believe that they have the possibility and capability to control the organising in the civil society. If they have this capability it is possible for them to incorporate the autonomous organisation into the regime and thereby to create a broadened dictatorship[5] (Przeworski 1991). The outcome of liberalisation does not have to end with the expansion of regime legitimacy, the strengthening of the social basis and regime survival. The process of liberalisation is in itself an unstable process (Przeworski 1991: 58). It sparks several unforeseen processes that can lead to the breakdown of the non-democratic regime. The opening sparks organising in different segments of society. If the regime is not able to incorporate the newly formed organisations into the formal regime structures this opens the possibility to continue organising outside the regime and to pursue their goals without the regime being able to control the process (Przeworski 1991: 59). When the organisations stay autonomous and continue to promote their goals outside the regimes channels the softliners of the regime will not achieve their goal of increased legitimacy and increased social basis. In stead the organisations will, through their continued mobilisation, challenge the regime's authority and legitimacy. By continuing to organise instead of being incorporated the autonomous organisation has the opportunity to create a real and possibly more legitimate alterative to the ruling regime.

The creation of a political opposition that promotes alternative political ideas and which has an alternative political regime, than the present non-democratic regime, as its first preference opens for the possibility of the breakdown of the authoritarian regime. But only when a present regime is challenged by a real alternative with a larger degree of legitimacy and the incumbent regime no longer is willing or capable to use force to suppress the alternative the present regime may break down (Przeworski 1986: 52). The breakdown of a regime will lead to a regime transition. On the other hand it is possible for the regime to cling

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[5] A broadened dictatorship corresponds to a large extend to the result of the hybrid regime strategy

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to the power by confronting its opponents by the use of force. This will lead to a violent clash in which the outcome is determined by the relative strength of the involved parties. To avoid a confrontation or a transition the regime therefore has to incorporate certain groups into the regime structures and suppress all other groups that do wish to be incorporated or that the regime does not wish to incorporate (Przeworski 1991: 60).

Przworski (1991: ; 1992) presents a game model for analysis of the phase of liberalisation. The model shows four possible outcomes of a started liberalisation, when status quo no longer is an option. All outcomes mark the end of the first phase of democratisation, the liberalisation phase. If the regime manages to incorporate certain groups into the regime structures and at the same time suppresses other groups denying them the possibility to develop a real alternative to the current regime the liberalisation ends with the outcome which was intended by the softliner fraction. The result of this is referred to as a broadened dictatorship (BDIC) (Przeworski 1991: 62).

Figure 2.1   **The Game of Liberalisation**
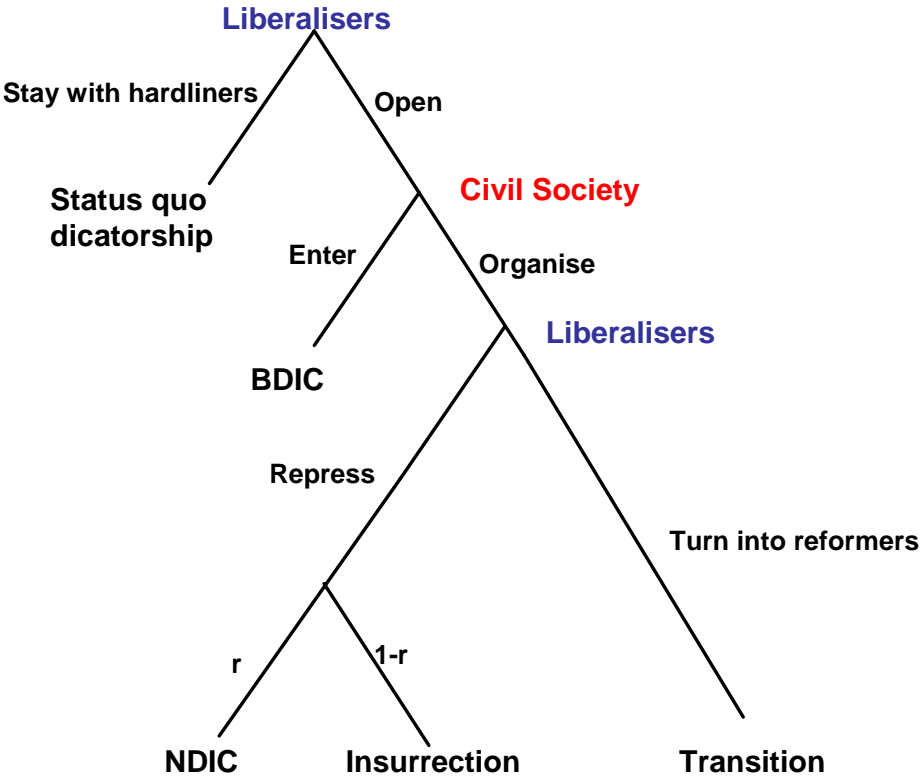
If on the other hand the new organisations do not accept this strategy of being consumed by the regime or the regime does not repress them sufficiently the opposition can answer this attempt by organising and mobilising for further rights. In this phase it becomes possible for autonomous organisations to form a real alternative to the existing regime. The

more democratic the alternative is the greater is the legitimacy. If a further mobilisation is chosen by the autonomous organisations the regime can respond to this action in two ways. They can either attempt to repress the mobilisation or accept the demands for a new regime. A repression will mean the use of force by the regime. This action will therefore lead to a direct confrontation between the regime and its opponents. The outcome of a repression will be uncertain and dependent on the relative strain of the two parties. If an oppression of the challengers is successful (r<0.5) a narrowed dictatorship (NDIC) will be the result as the regime removes its opponents (Przeworski 1992: 111). If the challengers are the stronger party (r>0,5) the confrontation will lead to an insurrection with an uncertain outcome with regard to regime type (Przeworski 1992: 111). If the regime is not willing to or not able to oppress such a mobilisation by civil society the outcome of the liberalisation will be a regime transition (Przeworski 1991). If this strategy is chosen by the regime actor they have changed from liberalisers to reformers. The transition is the next process of democratisation and will be described in greater detail in the next section.

The period of liberalisation of a non-democratic regime lays the foundation for the processes which are to come about later during the transition. It is in this period that the relevant actors for the transition process manifest themselves. The number of actors can be limited by the character of the liberalisation and the character of the previous regime. It is believed that totalitarian regimes which to a large extend control all segments and spheres of society, including private, economic and public spheres, as well as heavily limit the contestation can have a negative effect upon the numbers of actors who are relevant during the transition period. This implies that in transitions from totalitarian dictatorships, as in the former Soviet Union, one cannot expect to have interaction between all actor categories described in the transition literature. The transition games produced as a result of the liberalisation therefore often have a limited amount of the actors to be described in greater detail later in this thesis. As a further consequence, as this thesis has argued earlier, this will have an effect upon the outcome of the games, because the actor constellation is decisive for the outcome of transition.

Transition

The transition phase, which is the second part of democratisation that follows liberalisation in time, is defined by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 6) as the interval between one regime and

another. [6] This definition clearly defines the process is in time. The transition starts when a non-democratic regime breaks down as a result of the liberalisation. The transition ends when the rules, institutions and procedures of a new regime have been established and starts functioning. The period of transition is characterised by the absence of rules and predictability. The rules of political interaction are not defined during transition (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 6). But the rules of the game are constantly changing and are often contested by the actors in the transition. Hence, the actors in the transition are now acting in an undefined interval characterised by extreme uncertainty. The uncertainty of transition reflects that it is not possible to predict the outcome of the transition and the position of actors, classes groups or the future institutional framework ex ante to the phase (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 4-5). Hence, the phase of transition takes place under great uncertainty and as well as the suspension of the normal rules of the political interaction.

In this process the actors do no longer only represent segments of society or specific elite interests but they are also going to define the further rules of the political game. By participating in this process they are deciding who are to be the future political winners and losers in the process that is yet unknown. During the interaction between different actors in the transition it is decided which actors are to be allowed to enter the political game as well as which means and resources are to be legitimate to employ to the political process. In the phase of transition the outcome of the interaction as well as the future political rules are not yet known to the actors. Hence, it is not possible for them to know with certainty their own position in the future regime. This assumption is valid for all actors in the transition, but if there is any actors that can alter the distribution of uncertainty during the transition this must be in the hands of those controlling the state structures, hence the incumbent or former authoritarian rulers. These actors have due to their control over the state structures, the possibility to use these structures and the power they thereby possess to attempt to control, reverse or limit the transition. This does not mean that they will succeed in such an attempt, but it gives them a lager degree of influence than their opponents outside of the regime.

Karl and Schmitter (1991: 274-7) identify four modes or paths of the Latin-American transitions, by pact, reform, imposition or revolution. They specify the modes by distinguishing between actors as elites or masses as well as outlining two different strategies as either compromise or force. In other words the actors can choose between a multilateral strategy as opposed to an unilateral strategy. If the dominant actors in the transition are elites

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[6] This phase somewhat corresponds to the "decision" phase in Rustow (1970)

who follow a multilateral strategy, this will produce a transition which is labelled as pacted. This happens when elites cooperate and reach a compromise among themselves. If they on the other hand choose a unilateral strategy the transition will be an imposition from above in which some elites dictate their preferred outcome upon the other actors. When the actors are masses that decide to follow a multilateral process of non violent mobilisation they thereby impose a reformed transition. If the masses decide to follow the unilateral strategy in a violent uprising this will lead to a revolutionary transition. These four different modes of transition are ideal types. It is possible to have transitions which follow mixed strategies as well as transitions that consist of both elite and masse actors. The pacted mode is suggested by Karl and Schmitter (1991: 280-1) to be most favourable to a democratic outcome of the transition while mass actors with a unilateral strategy are the least likely one to lead to a democratic outcome. The approach suggested by Karl and Schmitter falls into the same fallacy as Przeworski (1991: 91) criticises the O'Donnal and Schmitter approach; while focusing upon actors, elites and strategies they are being stuck in the macro language of modes, classes and "pacts of dominations". By doing so they fall short of adopting a genuine micro-perspective and an ahistorical approach to transitions, even though it seems to be the intention to form a micro-approach distinct from the structural approach.

Pacts are defined by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 37) as an explicit agreement among a selected set of actors that seek to define rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the vital interests of those actors entering into it. Even though pacts are to be explicit in form they need not to be known to the public. This thesis will argue in the later chapters that pacts can be important and in *some* cases necessary in order for actors to reach compromises. This is because pacts can secure the vital interests of some actors and thereby help actors to move from sub-optimal conflict situations to optimal compromise solutions. Pacts can help actors to reach a compromise of democracy. Even though pacts in transition theory are suggested to have a positive impact upon democratisation they are neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for democracy to appear. And thereby pacts are under no circumstances a necessary condition for the application of transition theory which seems to have been imagined by some area specialists such as McFaul (2002) or Melville (2000) who claim that transition theory cannot be applied to post-Soviet transition due to the lack of public known pacts in these transitions.

These suggestions reflect that elite interaction and cooperation during the transition are most likely to give a positive outcome with regard to democracy. In other words democracy is thought to be a result of a compromise between competing elites interacting

under great uncertainty in the phase of transition to secure the best possible outcome for the actor who ends up in the worst position under the new rules of the political game. Tvedt (1994) has shown how it is rational for actors to take this position when interacting about the future rules of the game under the Rawlsian veil. The Rawlsian veil suggests that the actors, due to uncertainty, are not able to predict their future position in the political system and are also unable to know their future strength or support. In this situation each of the conflicting rational actors will seek to establish institutions that provide some sort of guarantees against temporary political adversity, unfavourable tides of opinion and contrary shifting alliances (Przeworski 1991: 87). And thereby they secure their vital interests even if they end up in an unfortunate position after the transition. Such an outcome is believed to be a democracy. If the transition leads to the establishment of a democracy then the transition period often ends up with what is known as the founding election. The founding election marks the agreement on new rules of the game and new framework for political interaction. New institutions will then be in place.

Przeworski (1991) discusses two distinct conflict issues which can be identified in a transition to democracy, one concerning extrication from the authoritarian regime and another concerning constitution of democracy. The conflict of extrication arises between the supporters and the opponents of democracy. To bring about democracy the supporters of democracy must unite against segments that support authoritarianism (Przeworski 1992: 116). Hence, actors who support democracy whether they are reformers from the former regime or segments in civil society must put their differences aside and unite in the struggle against authoritarian forces. This becomes especially important if authoritarian actors possess power over institutions of repression such as the military, the secret police or the other groups that possess power used to repress political opponents. During the process of extraction these groups are put under effective civilian control and are no longer used to suppress political opponents. This can either be the result of a failed military adventure or a failed coup d'état that was supported by some of these segments or as a result of actors reaching a compromise where guarantees are given to groups from the former regime to secure their position after the transition. Such agreements on protection of certain actors' positions and privileges as well as agreements on how to constitute the institutions are often described as pacts (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). The existence of pacts are widely agreed upon to have a positive impact of the establishment of democracy as well as the later consolidation of democracy.

The second process during transition that are mentioned by Przeworski (1991: 79-80) is the constitution of the institutional framework for the post authoritarian political system.

During this process the actors which are present during the transition engage in cooperation about the rules and structures of the future political game. Decisions are made about questions such as to choose between a presidential, a semi-presidential or a parliamentary system, whether to choose a proportional representation or majority representation in elections, how to divide electoral districts and to define the role of institutions such as courts and the role of interest groups and political parties. Constitution also includes the democratisation of the regime (Przeworski 1992). A democratic outcome resulting from a transition always involves negotiations between segments of the former regime and segments of the newly formed civil society organisations about which form of system that are to become the outcome of the transition (Przeworski 1991: 80).

The actors in the transition do know the effect that the different political institutions can have on representation. It is no secret to them that single member districts and first past the post systems tend to produce two party systems. Or that proportional representation in large electoral districts with a low threshold will give small interest groups the possibility for representation. It is therefore possible for the actors to form political goals and ideas about the outcome of the transition process. They can also rank their preferences about possible outcomes. Political institutions and arrangements can alter the distribution of both economic and political resources. Hence, the design of institutions and procedures that are the outcome of the transition can alter the relations between actors by making some actors better off than others. What determines the outcome of the interaction of the actors is suggested by Przeworski (1991: 81-2) to be the degree of uncertainty and the relative position of the actors during the transition. Hence, it is a matter of whether the balance of power between the actors is evenly or unevenly distributed and if this distribution of power is known or unknown to the actors.

From these assumptions tree hypotheses can be derived about how democracies come about during transitions. If the distribution of power is known and uneven this will lead to the establishment of institutions and procedures that are custom-made for the actor who is the most powerful actor during the phase of transition (Przeworski 1991: 82). This will lead to a regime that clearly favours one party over the others, and puts this actor in a position to widely use the power apparatus in his favour. On the other hand this design is believed only to be stable as long as the distribution of power remains stable in favour of that actor or actor group. Instability will occur when the distribution of power is altered and its relations become known to the actors. *(This hypothesis can explain both the transition and revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine).* A second condition happens when the balance of power also is known

but evenly distributed. Przeworski (1991: 83) describes this as the most complex situation. With actors having strong preferences about alternative ways of organising the political game the situation has no equilibrium in pure strategy and the interaction is therefore locked into a constant conflict between actors. An outcome is only possible when the actors observe that no solution can be obtained unilaterally. Then actors can solve the conflict situation by accepting suboptimal compromises (Przeworski 1991: 84). The third situation that can be derived from the assumptions is a situation in which the relations of power are not known to the actors during transition. This situation reflects the one earlier described in which a transition is characterised by great uncertainty in which actors make decisions under the Rawlsian veil. This situation is believed to be the most favourable for a democratic outcome of the transition.

The two conflicts that are described above are not necessarily the only two conflicts present in a transition. Conflicts about economic reforms or the future structure of state can also be present or even be dominate issues during transition. I will return to this later when discussing the possibility for nested games in the post-Soviet transition.

Outcomes of transitions

Outcomes of regime transitions have shown not to be uniform. Even though the third wave of transitions has lead to significant more political freedom in the world far from all transitions ends up with a democratic regime. It is therefore fruitful to divide the outcome of transitions into several groups. This thesis will argue for a tripartition for classifying political regimes as outcomes of transitions. Within these groups there are a great variety of institutional designs or political procedures. Within a group of democracies it is possible to identify several subgroups such as parliamentary democracies, presidential democracies or consociated democracies. Also non-democratic regimes can be further divided into for instance authoritarian, totalitarian or sultanistic regimes.[7] To classify the countries specifically into different subgroups of regimes are beyond the scope of this thesis. However, to reflect the recent findings and theoretical discussions about regimes which seem to have ended in a "gray zone" between democracy and dictatorship this thesis will adopt tree broad categories of regimes types as outcomes of transitions and possible strategies for actors.

The first category of regime outcomes is the establishment of a democratic regime according to the definition adopted from Dahl (1971) and discussed in an earlier section.

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[7] See for instance Linz (2000), Linz and Stepan (1996), Rose et al. (1998) or Chehabi and Linz (1998)

Democracies, no matter how they are organised with regard to institutions, elections or procedures, all allow a large extend of both participation as well as contestation. At all times democracies has to some extend violated this assumption. But what is characteristic of such violations of either participation or contestation in a democracy is that they are random, non-systematic or unintended as well as regarded by all significant players to be unacceptable incidents in general.

On the opposite end of the scale we find classical non-democratic dictatorships as the Soviet regime. Such regimes do significantly limit the dimensions of participation and contestation. Even though some regimes may allow a certain degree of participation in election or organisation this is always in control of the regime and without sufficient choice of alternatives. Other regimes have tried to imitate contestation by allowing supposedly alternatives to exist but without ever being able to constitute a real and independent alterative to the incumbent rulers.

In the last years still more attention has been turned to the outcomes of transitions that does not fit into the classic concepts of non-democratic regimes. Regimes which holds elections, tolerate some pluralism and competition, but at the same time severely and systematically violates and manipulates the dimensions of democracy has appeared as a result of transitions (Schedler 2002a: 36). The systematic way that the rules of the game are manipulated, often in advantage of the incumbent rulers, makes it difficult to classify them as democratic. At the same time these regimes do not regularly use repression to stay in power. In stead they try to attain legitimacy by imitating democratic institutions and procedures, such as elections, without seriously allowing the uncertainty of the democratic procedures that are a premise for democracy. By doing this they effectively alter the rules of the game in favour of the incumbent rulers. Regimes which fit this description have been given different names by different authors often reflecting specific features of specific regimes. These regimes can as authoritarian regimes or democratic regimes be divided into several subgroups by describing the specific way that or to what degree the dimensions of contestation and participation are manipulated. An example of how this is done can be found in Schedler's (2002a) article on the "menu of manipulation". For the purpose of this thesis it is found useful to group the regimes matching the above description into one category. I have chosen to label this group by the typology first used by Karl (1995) and later by Diamond (2002) and name them "hybrid regimes". This reflects that they draw upon features from both democratic regimes with regard to attaining legitimacy from democratic procedures and from non-democratic regimes when showing that they are willing to systematically manipulate and alter

the rules of the game.

Figure 2.2

Classification of regimes
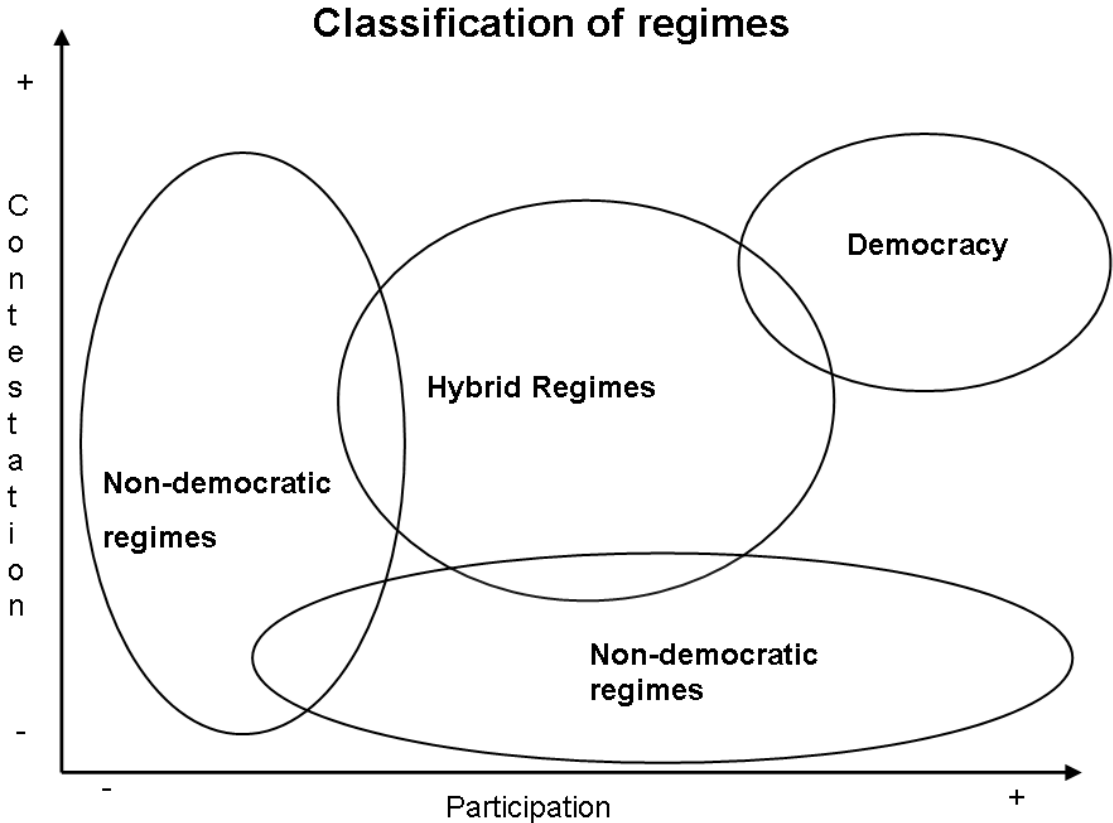
While the democratic regimes aim to maximise the degree of both the dimensions of participation and contestations non-democratic regimes score poorly on either one or both. The group of hybrid regimes places themselves in the "grey zone" in between the regimes classified as democratic and the group of regimes that falls into the category of non-democratic regime. They score significantly lower on both dimensions than democracies due to the willingness of system manipulation. But at the same time they score significantly higher than authoritarian regimes since they attempt to gain legitimacy by imitating democracy. The liberal character and higher tolerance of contestation and participation of these hybrid regimes make them more vulnerable to further regime change which has been experienced in Ukraine, Georgia, Yugoslavia and Kirgizstan. Within this framework of regimes I expect Russia to possess the characteristics of a hybrid regime while I expect Belarus to have turned towards a more non-democratic regime type.

The specification of three categories of regime outcome of a transition makes it possible to differentiate between strategies available to actors when engaging in social interaction about the future character of a regime. This thesis argues for the availability of three broad strategies to actors as alternative strategies to the conflict issue of constitution of

new institutions during a transition phase. These three strategies reflect the three outcomes which have been discussed previously. A similar approach have been made by Colomer (1991: ; 1995: ; 2000) with different terms but reflecting the same strategies. The first strategy is the strategy of democracy which reflects an actor's wish to establish a democratic regime. The second strategy available is the strategy of status quo which reflects the actor's wish to return to a non-democratic regime as previous to the phase of liberalisation. The final strategy available to the actors is the strategy of a hybrid regime which reflects the wish for broader and reformed dictatorship imitating democratic features to gain legitimacy while manipulation the political game in order for the incumbents to remain in power.[8] By using this division of strategies and the distinction between hardliner, softliners and actors in civil society it is possible to create a typology of six distinct actor fractions interacting in a transition.

Actors in transition

As earlier mentioned the start of the process of democratisation is a result of a fragmentation of actors within the ruling regime. The set of actors which becomes visible as a result of the opening of the regime is most often referred to as hardliners and softliners (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 15-7). The group of softliners can be divided from the hardliners by their recognition of the coming crises the regime is facing. They recognise that to stay in power the regime has to expand legitimacy and introduce reforms. The goal for this acknowledgement is to be able to stay in power and avoid crises and a possible breakdown of the authoritarian regime, not to introduce democracy. The hardliners do not recognise that the need for change is necessary to be able to uphold the authoritarian system. They believe that the status quo is both possible and preferable to reforms.

The opening of the regime and the following liberalisation open the possibility for actors outside the regime to organise and create alternatives independently of the regime. These actors who are not members of the regime are often referred to as the opposition. The opposition actors are believed to prefer the introduction of a democratic system. Under a democratic system they will have the possibility to compete for the support of the people and if being able to win power. This will not be possible for the actors in the opposition under

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[8] The strategy of *a hybrid regime* is a reflection of the same goals as the strategy of *a broadened dictatorship* in Przeworski (1991: ; 1992),the strategy of *intermediate regime* in Colomer (2000) and the strategy of *reform* in Colomer (1991: ; 1995)

non-democratic rule. Hence, the opening and later liberalisation of the non-democratic regime may allow a gradual formation of a variety of actors with different strategic options and different preferences to the question which are central to the liberalisation, to which degree the rules of political game shall be changed (Colomer 2000: 31).

Colomer (2000) further divides these three main groups of actors into two subgroups radical and moderate actors within hardliner, softliner and opposition segments. A division between radicals and moderates does not necessarily reflect a division of interests or goals but do to a larger extend reflect the actors risk aversion (Przeworski 1991). In general moderate actors tends to avoid risks to a larger extend than the radicand they are more risk averse. A moderate will try to avoid confrontation, and are more willing to compromise. The moderate actor fears their opponents to a larger extend than the radical actors. This opens the possibility for pressuring moderate actors to cooperate and compromise by threatening with alliances with other players if they do not acquiesce. In this way softliners can for instance pressure moderate segments in the opposition to enter into agreements with them by threatening to ally with hardliners if they to not enter. Since radical actors are willing to confront their opponents they will not be scared by such threats. Radical are willing to take the risk of a confrontation, and believe that they can win a confrontation with other actors. This makes them less willing to compromise.

A characteristic that divides the groups of opposition actors from the groups of actors originating in the regime is the clearly asymmetrical relation between the number of actors on each side, their organisation, their access to recourses, hence their relative strength. The regime actors control over the state structure for a longer period have given them an advantage with regard to organising and positioning themselves concerning the future changes (Colomer 2000: 38). Similarly, actors in the opposition suffer from the lack of possibility to organise in a totalitarian society prior to the phase of liberalisation. Opposition organisation has often occurred simultaneous to persecution and suppression by regime institutions leading to an asymmetric power relation between the regime actors and opposition actors in a transition phase as well as internally between opposition actors. The relatively weaker position of the opposition groups can, according to Colomer (2000: 38), pave the way for a unification of opposition forces in defence of democracy during transition. Since the opposition actors possess relatively less power than the regime actors in the transition phase it is rational to expect that they are in danger of ending up in the worst position after the transition if the regime actors are willing and able to utilize their relative stronger position in the democratisation process. Hence, it is rational for a weaker opposition actor to support a

political system that secures the position of the ones which end up in the worst position after the transition; this is believed to be a democratic political system.

The division of the actors described above creates a set of six groups of actor that can be identified in a process of democratisation. In the transition phase of democratisation, during the process of constitution, the actors face the question on what kind of regime that is to be the outcome of the transition. As earlier argued it is possible to identify three logical outcomes of the transition. For each actor the outcomes can be ranked from the most preferred outcome to the least preferred. This ranking of the outcomes constitutes the different actor groups strategies on the question of regime outcome. The set of strategies that is connected to each group of actors does not bind the actors to a specific ideological position, but determines only the actors attitude towards the present and their preferences for the future regime (Colomer 2000: 37).

The first priority of the actors determines which of the three main group of actors that they belong to (Colomer 2000). The two opposition actors both prefer democracy as an outcome over all other outcomes. The softliner groups of actors recognise the need for change, but are not entirely willing to subject to the uncertainty of democracy. They wish to be able to extract legitimacy from democratic institutions and procedures but are not willing to introduce uncertainty that can send them out of office. They are therefore willing to manipulate the system and prefer a hybrid regime to all other outcomes. Hardliners on the other hand do not recognise the need for change. They believe that it is both possible and desirable to return to a status quo dictatorship as before the process of democratisation started.

Within the opposition group the distinction between moderates and radicals is reflected in the outcomes that are regarded as the second and third best outcomes. The moderate actor is less willing to take risks than the radical actor, and fears to a larger degree his opponents. The moderate players tend therefore to avoid confrontation and are more willing to enter into compromises and agreements with other actors in the transition. The moderate actor is willing to accept a compromise that only partly fulfils the actors goal. By prioritising a hybrid regime in favour of a return to dictatorship the moderate player believes that a hybrid regime might open a opportunity for them to promote further change at a later stage (Colomer 2000: 39). Schedler (2002b) further develops this logic in a nested game of post transitional democratisation, showing how actors accept suboptimal strategies when seeing the outcome of the interaction as a final outcome. The radical actor will rather see a return to a dictatorship than accepting the half way solution that a hybrid regime represents. Hence, they prioritise status quo dictatorship over hybrid regime. This also reflects their

greater willingness to accept risks. They are not afraid of confronting their opponents, even if it means loosing the confrontation.

Softliners are the group within the regime that recognises the need for change, most often by foreseeing and accepting forthcoming crises of legitimacy which need to be met by expanding the legitimacy of the regime. They are the architects of the reforms during the liberalisation phase and are a necessity for opening of the regime and the following democratisation. The goal of the change is not democracy, but to overcome the crisis so they can stay in power. The moderate softliners fear democracy to a larger degree than the radicals. Faced with the threat of democracy the moderate softliners will attempt to ally with hardliners to rescue their position and hinder democracy (Colomer 2000: 39). Moderates do not believe that they will succeed under democracy. Radicals on the other hand consider their own chances under democracy to be greater. They regard the risk of loosing elections to be less costly than to abandoning the reform. They strongly believe that the regime will go under without reform. They are also willing to threaten hardliners with joining the democrats if they do not enter into compromise with the softliner fractions (Colomer 2000: 39). While the radicals are willing to accept the risks that are associated with the democratic system the moderates tend to try to avoid them. Radicals regard reforms as more important than the danger of being voted out of office in democratic elections.

The hardliner fractions wish to preserve their position in the regime and therefore attempt to return to the dictatorship and the status quo. They do not recognise the need for change or that a crisis of legitimacy is forthcoming. But the moderate hardliner, like other moderate actors, are less risk adverse than radical players. They act to reduce the risk of interaction. Hence, they are more willing to compromise than to confront opponents. By entering into compromises with softliner fractions they may be able to avoid the risk of confronting the opposition or an alliance between softliners and opposition segments promoting democracy. Moderate hardliners can enter into compromises of a hybrid regime when facing external pressure (Colomer 2000: 40). If they do so it will be to secure their privileges, interests and to avoid the fear of democratic change. The moderate hardliners have a hybrid regime as their second strategy and democracy as their worst. The radical hardliners do not fear their opponents to the same extend as the moderate hardliners. They think that they can win a confrontation with other actors. Hence, they believe to have more to gain from a confrontation than from igniting in compromises and cooperation with other actors. To save their positions they are willing to seek conflicts believing that conflict can save the dictatorship (Colomer 2000: 40). Hence, they have democracy as their second strategy and

hybrid regime as their worst. It is very likely that attempts to stop or reverse the process of democratisation or liberalisation by coups or plots will come from the radical segment within the hardliners (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 16). The strategies of the actors in the process of constitution under transition are outlined in the table above.

Table 2.1

Actors and strategies during transitions

Strategy	Opposition		Softlinere		Hardlinere	
	Radicals	Moderates	Moderates	Radicals	Moderates	Radicals
1.	Democracy	Democracy	Hybrid regime	Hybrid regime	Status Quo	Status Quo
2.	Status Quo	Hybrid regime	Status Quo	Democracy	Hybrid regime	Democracy
3.	Hybrid regime	Status Quo	Democracy	Status Quo	Democracy	Hybrid regime

All of these actors may not be present in the process of transition. There are many factors that can limit the number of actors in the transition. The process of liberalisation may be interrupted by a sudden claps of the authoritarian triggered by a critical event before all actors has emerged. Linz and Stephan (1996: 55-66) argue that the former type of non-democratic regime can influence the actor constellations during transitions. They argue that the limited autonomy of civil society within totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes can have a negative effect on development of strong opposition groups. This can result in games with fewer actors or different actors than transitions from non-totalitarian dictatorships.

Explaining maximalist strategies

To make a further distinction between actors we can investigate how they grade the outcomes of the transition in their different strategies. The three outcomes argued for earlier can be

ranked with regard to the degree of change from the former regime. When doing so democracy will represent the largest degree of change from the dictatorship, while the re-establishment of a dictatorship will represent the least degree of change from the former non-democratic regime. The outcome of a hybrid regime is placed between these two extremes with regard to change from the former regime. Actors that grade their preferred outcomes according to the degree of change in their strategies can be characterised as gradualists (Colomer 2000: 40). This means that if they cannot obtain their first preference in a situation of strategic interaction with other actors they will prefer the outcome that is closest to their initial priority compared to the one that are farthest off. The rationality of such a choice is rather straightforward, a gradualist actor that cannot get all will rather settle for half than nothing. The moderate hardliners, moderate softliners, moderate opposition as well as the radical softliners all have gradualist strategies. This makes four of the six actors gradualists.

This leaves two players with a maximalist choice of strategies. The radical hardliner and the radical opposition both prefer the two extreme outcomes over the middle course. The maximalist actor will prefer the outcome that represents either the largest degree of change or lowest degree of change. This somewhat odd choice of strategy may seem irrational at first sight. To uncover the rationality in the strategy of a maximalist actor a closer elaboration is needed. Not until we understand all aspects of how the actor forms his strategy the rationality of the actor can be illuminated.

According to Colomer (2000: 42) maximalist behaviour can be explained in two ways in a rational analysis, either as a question of risk aversion or as an expression of a more or less veiled multi-dimensional conflict structure. If explained by the willingness of taking risks, as earlier attempted, the actor's tendency to risk depends on the actor's subjective estimate of the success attached to the relevant strategies in combination with their expected utility gains attached to the strategies. The more relative power the actor possesses the larger is the actor's estimates of winning a confrontation over less powerful actors. Hence, the estimate of success attached to a particular strategy is larger. Actors both in the regime and in civil society possess power, even though the concrete nature might differ. The larger the degree of utility that an actor attaches to a strategy compared to the other strategies the higher the cost of abandoning the strategy. If the relative cost of abandoning the most preferred strategy in favour of the second best strategy is high, the actor is more willing to enter into conflict than if the costs are low. This is the situation when actors attain much higher utility from their most preferred strategy than from other strategies. Hence, the more to loose the more there is to fight for. These two factors combined decide the actors risk adversetion.

The second explanation suggests understanding maximalist strategies as caused by situations in which more than one conflict issue is present simultaneous. Actors give different attention to the different conflict issues or dimensions. However, the existence of more than one conflict dimension can, under certain circumstances force actors to take choices on several dimensions simultaneously. This creates what Tsebelis (1990) describes as a *nested game* situation. Strategic interaction about more than one issue simultaneously can force actors to make apparently sub-optimal choices or follow suboptimal strategies. Hence, actors apparently have a maximalistic behaviour when only one conflict issue or dimension is considered alone. The most salient conflict dimension for the maximalist actors influence the creation of strategies on the underlying dimension which is regarded as the most important by the other actors (Colomer 2000: 44). In such a situation apparently sub-optimal strategy choices become rational and optimal when attention is turned towards all relevant issues and strategies that are a part of the nested game situation. It is only when the dimensions are kept separate that the strategies will cause confusion and appear irrational.

As argued earlier actors in control of the state apparatus, the incumbent regime actors, have a larger possibility to affect the agenda during democratisation. They might, at least for a period, be able to control and impose a selection of issues to be dealt with during transition (Colomer 2000: 45). Actors with low influence on the agenda setting are then forced to play on the agenda set by the actors close to the incumbent rulers even if they regard other issues more important. They easily end up as losers in the transition and may turn to actions such as boycotting the existing agenda or if they possess the necessary power to overthrow the agenda setters by a coup d'état or by mass mobilisation. If they are left out of the compromises and interaction during transition maximalist may create instability not only during transition but also long after the transition phase.

Multi-dimensional conflicts in post-Soviet transitions

An actor oriented approach to understand democratisation implies, unlike more structural approaches, very few request or preconditions for development of democracy. Rustow (1970: 350-2) argues for only one single background condition for transition model. He claims that the only precondition for a country to become democratic is that the vast majority of the citizens in the country has no doubts or reservations about to which political community they belong (Rustow 1970: 350). This means that the majority of the people living within the

borders of a given country, that are going through democratisation, must regard this country as the only legitimate unity for a sovereign state structure on the territory. Without this precondition intact the political processes and institutions undergoing change have no legitimacy and therefore neither any relevance over time. The process of establishing national unity has taken place very differently in time in different countries. To avoid any negative effects on the chances of democratisation the process of creating national unity must be finished by the time democratisation starts. A simultaneous process of democratisation and establishment of national unity can cause problems for the transition and later consolidation of a democracy.

A similar argument is made by Linz and Stepan (1996: 16-37) under the term of "stateness". They point to the distinction between the concepts of nations and states and the problem that may arise when the two are not coincident. The core of their argument is that when nations and states become conflicting logics this can create problems for transitions to democracy as well as for consolidation of democracy. The conflicting logic between nations and states can arise from a situation where two or more nations live in the same state or where nations live in separate states. The problem arises when a larger group within one of the involved nations no longer recognises the state they live in as the only legitimate unity for a state formation. They may wish to join another state, as the Serbs and Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina or the Albanians in Serbia or wish to form their own state as the Basks in Spain. If these requests and alternative state ideas win the support from larger segments of the members that regard themselves as members of a specific nation and thereby wish to exit from the state to join another state or form a new state this can serious undermine the legitimacy of the state in transition. Lost of legitimacy can undermine the existence of the state and without a unit to build a regime in this is truly difficult.

Furthermore, Linz and Stepan (1996b: 23-25) go thoroughly into the possible obstacles proposed by stateness. Difficulties may arise when nation building and democratisation becomes conflicting logics during the phase of transition. The creation of national identity often happens in conflict with democratic principles. The issues of nation-building, state-building and democratisation can only be addressed with success if almost all of the residents of the state identify with the same idea of the nation and the state and this idea virtually coincides with the state (Linz and Stepan 1996b: 24). Neither can there be any significant irredentism from other states. The greater national diversity and the more competing identities existing in a state the more challenges are present for the elites during the transition and later consolidation, especially if these issues arise simultaneously. Hence, in

nations with severe stateness issues the processes of nation- and state-building can appear as obstacles to democratisation when these conflicts create identities which become conflicting ideologies or conflicting identities to democracy and democratisation.

Linz and Stepan (1996: 367) state that severe problems of stateness are found in the democratisation of the Soviet Union. Also in Rustow's terms the transitions are believed to be influenced negatively by the lack of consensus about which political community the republics should belong to. In both Russia and Belarus this question about the future structure of the state and which political and territorial community it ought to belong to was brought to the top of the agenda during the phase of liberalisation and it followed the political agenda into the phase of transition. The debate was slightly different between the two countries but was in essence about the same question; how to define the future nature of the state. The essential question in Russia was whether to build a Russian nation state or aim for a Russian dominated imperial state including Russia and several other Soviet republics. The question in Belarus became relevant after the collapse of the union and focused on whether to build a strictly Belarusian nation state or to seek to re-establish the Soviet Union in some form or another. This thesis will return to these specific conflict dimensions in later chapters. These conflicts rose to become the central conflict dimension at the latest stage of liberalisation in the Soviet Union, overshadowing all other conflicts (Szporluk 1991: ; Marples 2004)

This thesis will apply the concept of a nested game to the analyses of Belarus in the following chapter. To understand democratisation in Belarus as a situation of a nested game it will be useful to uncover what may appear as sub-optimal choices, strategies and outcomes and not as irrational behaviour but as an effect of a multi-dimensional conflict structure during the process of democratisation. In the case of Belarus the conflict created by nation-building and multiple identities is examined closer by the application of these techniques. According to Tsebelis (1990: 7) what is often observed as sub-optimal behaviour is often a result of a disagreement between observer and actor about which arena or dimension the actors strategies and preferences are formed. One reason for this is that the observer often fails to recognise that the dimension of primary focus, for instance the process of extrication or constitution during transition, may not be the only one the actor is forming his preferences and strategies on. Other dimensions may have considerable influence on the actor's behaviour. Sometimes actors even regard this conflict as more urgent than the conflict of primary attention. The choices will only remain sub-optimal when one dimension or arena is considered separately (Tsebelis 1990: 7). When taking into account all arenas and conflicts that are relevant for the actor's formation of preferences choices will no longer appear

suboptimal. It is therefore important to bring these conflict dimensions into an analysis if aiming to uncover the strategies of the actors.

A second reason for observation of suboptimal behaviour can be that the actors are involved in a game about the rules of the game (Tsebelis 1990: 8). The number of available options is limited when considering the primary arena alone. The actor is taking suboptimal choices as steps to expand the number of available choices. By taking steps to change the rules of the game the number of possible choices increases and optimal choices become possible. The actor is involved in both the game in the primary arena as well as a game about the rules of the game in which the rules may be variable but in which the set of possible choices are considerable larger. Within this larger framework of games the actor is offered better choices than within the primary game. I will return to the specific techniques suggested by Tsebelis (1990) when building the specific game models in the analytical chapters of the two countries.

In the case of Russia this thesis applies a different technique to examine the apparent suboptimal choices of the actors. To survey the possibility for achieving Pareto-optimality in that case the threatening power of the actors participating in the final interaction is discussed in further depth. Threats and threatening power can in this particular situation be used to further investigate the outcomes of the social interaction. A threat can be defined as:

> "*a contingent assertion signalling an intention to hurt somebody –physically, economically or otherwise – unless that somebody acts in the way prescribed by the threatener. The threatened damage may be inflicted on the target directly or indirectly."* (Hovi 1998: 11).

This definition of a threat includes both threats in which the threatener attends or do not attends to carry out the threat. The real intention of the threatener does not need to be known for a statement to be regarded as a threat. The purpose of a conditional threat is to change the behaviour of the threatened in the way the threatener intended when setting forward the threat. The threat is conditional when it will only be put into effect if the threatened fails to comply with the demands of the threat. On the other hand an unconditional threat will signals an intention which is to be carried out regardless of the action of the threatened (Hovi 1998: 13). The threats considered in this thesis are regarded as being conditional since they are set forward in order to change the behaviour of one of the actors in order to reach a Pareto-optimal outcome.

If the threat leading to a change of behaviour in accordance with the threatener's

desire the threat can be regarded as being effective (Hovi 1998: 13). According to Hovi (1998) five criteria must be fulfilled for the threat to be effective. The threat must be relevant, severe, credible, complete and clear to be efficient. The relevance of the threat refers to that the threat can have an impact upon the outcome of the interaction. For this to be possible the target must have the freedom to change its behaviour in accordance with the wish of the threatened desire and the target must also have the initiative to act contrary to the threatener's desire (Hovi 1998: 13-14). There is no need to threaten someone who already behaves in the way one wishes and a threat is not effective if proposed to someone who is not able to change their action anyways. The second condition refers to the threat to be severe enough to make a difference for the target (Hovi 1998: 14). If the threat is not severe enough it will not make the target change its behaviour. Hence, the threat must be of such a character that the target will be inflicted costs to such a degree by not acquiescing to the wish of the threatener that they will prefer the change their behaviour.

Further the threat needs to be credible to be effective. The credibility of a threat refers to which extend the target believes the threat is to be carried out if they do not yield to the demands put forward. No matter how severe the threat is it is not effective if the target knows with certainty that the threat is not going to be carried out by the threatener (Hovi 1998: 15). The target must believe that the threatener is capable and willing to enforce the threat for it to be effective. Fourthly the threat must be complete. A threat is complete when the target believes that if he changes his behaviour the threat will not be carried out (Hovi 1998: 15). If the threat for sure is to be carried out anyways it will make no sense for the target to change his behaviour and only to be punished by the further costs of the threat. The final condition for a threat to be efficient is that it is adequately clear (Hovi 1998: 16). This condition refers to that the targets must understand the intention of the threatener and the consequences of not yielding to the demands put forward by the threatener. If the target does not understand the threat or how he can change his behaviour to comply with it the threat cannot be effective.

3. Methodology and Game Theory

Section one of his chapter discusses the usage and strengths of the application formal of models for analysis while section two outlines some basic feature of game theory used in the analytical chapters that follows. The function of this chapter together with the previous chapter is to construct a comprehensive model that can be applied to the study of transitions where ever they should appear in the world. The methodology is to function as a tool for the analysis and as a bridge between the theoretical framework and the empirical observation, and thereby to contribute to the accumulation of knowledge both theoretically and empirically.

The strength of a formal model

In the theory chapter this thesis strongly argues for an actor oriented approach towards the study of democratisation in the phases of liberalisation and transition. Regime change is argued to be processes in which actor's strategies, actions and their options under the uncertainty of transitions determine the outcome of democratisation. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) refer to "poker games" and "several sets of chess games" as key events during democratisation. These "games" refer to the interactions between the actors with conflicting interests in the phases of democratisation. Such strategic situations are believed to be key moments in transition in which actor's collective interaction forms the outcomes.

Social situations, such as transitions, involve interaction of individuals or groups of individuals and the transition paradigm suggests these interactions to be determinants of the outcome of transitions. To analyse these strategic interactions by individuals or groups we need a theory that explains how actor's decisions are interrelated and how these decisions and the interaction produce collective outcomes given the social context and uncertainty in which they are taken. Such a theory or method can be found in game theory (Morrow 1994: 1). Game theory represents a methodological tool which is well suited to analyse interdependent collective interaction amongst actors with conflicting interests about specific issues in which the interaction leads to concrete outcomes of social situations. Game theory can be applied to social interaction in which actors are conscious that their actions affect one another (Rasmusen 2007: 11). The decisions made by the actors are not taken in a vacuum but affected by context and social settings. Both structures as well as institutions can influence the possible strategies of actors as well as preferences of actors. Through game models it is possible to formalise the effect of such contextual and structural factors and incorporate their

effect upon the outcome into the analysis. By specifying which choices the actors face, how these choices lead to specific outcomes and how actors assess the outcomes one can also incorporate the influence of macro structures into the analysis (Morrow 1994: 1). The choices taken by actors depend upon other actor's choices as well as the changing influence of macro structures as they are described by the theories and models of social sciences. At the same time as a game theoretical model takes social structures into consideration the model does also specify that it is not the macro structures themselves that create the outcomes of social strategic interaction but individuals and actors that do so.

A distinction can be made between cooperative and non-cooperative game theory. A cooperative game is a game in which the players can make binding commitments, as opposed to non-cooperative games, in which they cannot (Rasmusen 2007). In cooperative games threats and promises are always believed to be binding, while non-cooperative games only take into account credible threats and promises (Hovi 1998: 4). All games modelled in this thesis are non-cooperative.

Game theory is a branch of mathematical analysis that is developed to study decision making under conflict situations. Conflict situation implies that actors have conflicting or opposing strategies and alternatives solutions to conflict issues. Game theory gives the possibility to build formal quantitative models for analysis of social phenomena in contrast to qualitative analysis. There are several advantages with such an approach. A formal model forces precision of arguments in the analysis because assumptions, derivations and conclusions must be explicit in the model (Morrow 1994: 302). By doing so, all conditions, effects, assumption as well as outcomes become open to inspection and critique by the reader and it is not possible to hide weak logic. The model also shows with clarity why the conclusions follow from the proposed arguments whether these conclusions are of a general or a more specific character. The model gives an explicit logic for how the conclusions and outcomes are derived from the premises and assumptions in the model. Consequently, it is possible to see the impact of each premise or assumption in the model as well as it opens the possibility to see how the conclusion change by removing, changing or adding premises and assumptions (Morrow 1994: 303). By establishing the links between assumptions and premises explicit in a formal model it is possible to eliminate conclusions that contradict with the formal model as well as uncovering inconsistencies. The focus on explicit assumptions adds additional clarity to the relationship between the broad theory that creates the foundation of the analysis and the model developed to study a specific social phenomenon (Gates and Humes 1997: 6). A game theoretical model also provides us with the possibility to examine

alternative outcomes. Through the logical structure of the model it becomes possible to derive alternative outcomes which can be deduced from the same set of arguments. This opens for empirical tests not only of the specific model but also of the theoretical framework which it builds upon. At the same time as a formal model has these advantages it also helps us to discipline our intuition. According to Morrow (1994: 303) intuition is central to our understanding also in modelling, but he underlines its unreliability as the only foundation for assumptions. Brought together with theory and a formal model it can be a strength for an analysis. The formal model gives a clear guidance to what one should look for in an analysis through the key components of a formal rationality model which are actors, actions, the consequences of each actions, actor's preferences as well as access to information (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 18). Collectively, these elements are known as the rules of the game and it is the modellers objective to describe social interaction in term of these rules to explain the interaction leading to specific outcomes (Rasmusen 2007: 12). In addition to these factors the context and social settings should be uncovered and central conflict issues identified when building the model.

The strength of formal models can be summed up by their clarity and parsimony, which give strength to an analysis by outlining the relationship between variables in a clear, explicit and logical way that opens the model for critical examination by the reader. Formal models are especially useful to make questions and hypnotises more precise (Colomer 2000: 6). Hence, game theory makes it possible to isolate the most relevant variables and factors and to analyse their presumed effects upon the dependent variable and distinguish the more relevant factors from the less relevant. The basic orientation of game theoretical explanations is towards the development of general explanations including the development of theory (Gates and Humes 1997: 7). The goal of using game theory combined with transition theory is in this thesis not just to take the cases of Belarus and Russia and develop games in which the payoffs lead to outcomes which correspond to the empirical reality, but also to develop a comprehensive model and a set of methodological tools that together can explain transitions regardless where in the world they appear or whatever outcome they produce. Such a model which can explain regime changes in one part of the world must have a general character that allows it to be applied to other cases of regime change no matter where they appear. However, it must be noted that is not the method that is to explain the variety of empirical outcomes, it is the function of the theoretical framework. The function of the game theory is to bridge between transition theory and the empirical cases by showing how the post-Soviet transitions can be understood by a general theory in contrast to an "area specific approach".

Core concepts of Game Theory

Game theory is founded on a rational choice assumption in which actors are goal directed. This implies that individuals or groups of individuals have goals which they will attempt to achieve by choosing different strategies that are available to them. Hence, actors must have choices, even thought they might be constrained by various factors, they always have some choices which they can use to best pursue their goals. When actors have goals and the freedom to pursue these goals through their available strategies it is furthermore believed that actors actually do so. Rational choice is a method to understand actors preference for one outcome over another and game theoretical models explain how individual choices are interrelated and thereby how different social outcomes come about (Gates and Humes 1997: 10). The models developed from these assumptions are simplifications of reality. Simplifications of the real world is a necessity to direct the focus towards certain elements of social interactions and to lay bare how motivations and actions are interrelated and determinants of outcomes (Morrow 1994: 8).

The core concepts of game theory were in the previous section described as the rules of the game and include actors, actions, strategies, preferences and information. The actors in a game model are individual or groups of individuals who take part in interaction about a given issue in the game model by possessing the possibility to act in the game. Actors, or players, are goal oriented and seek through their actions to maximise their individual utility. When actors are modelled as groups of individuals in this thesis it is presumed that they act as a uniform fraction entirely sharing a common mind set, the same utility function and a shared belief system (Underdal 1984: 67; Hovi and Rasch 1993: 29-30). Following these presumption groups of individuals can be modelled as unitary actors jointly pursuing a common goal.

A strategy describes a plan which gives a direction for all situations that can occur in the game and can not be a response to other actor's actions (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 37). Actions on the other hand can also be responses to other actor's actions that have already taken place. In other words, actions and strategy generally correspond in static games while this is not necessarily the case in dynamic models. In a dynamic model actions are contingent strategies, depending upon previous actions and the timing of the action. If a given strategy always represents an actor's strictly best response regardless which strategy his opponents might choose the strategy is said to be strictly dominant, on the other hand if the strategy always makes the actor at least as well off as any other strategy against all possible strategies

chosen by other actors the strategy is weakly dominant (Gates and Humes 1997: 35). Dominant strategies are also known as pure strategies, while a deviation of strategies is known as a mixed strategy (Varian 1996: 483-84). Action does in some instance coincide with strategies when actions are not results of actions already taken by other actors.

The combination that possible strategies represent, when one combines one strategy of each player, is the possible outcomes of the game (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 38). Hence, the number of outcomes in a game depends upon the number of players and the number of strategies available to the players. The outcomes are final results or the consequence of the social interaction amongst the actors. Outcomes are exhaustive and mutually exclusive; hence, only one of the outcomes can occur (Morrow 1994: 17). The outcome is only combinations of strategies, and it is up to the modeller to fill these outcomes with substance so that they correspond with situations that can be observed empirically.

Actors who are goal driven can distinguish between the outcomes and between which outcomes of the social interaction that are most preferable to them. Hence, actors can regard one outcome to be preferable to another outcome, thus constructing a strong preference relationship (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 99; Morrow 1994: 18). However, the actors can regard the outcomes to be equally rewarding which would result in a situation of indifference. The ordering of outcomes is constructed in accordance with the payoffs or expected payoffs that the actors connect to the different outcomes. The more rewarding an outcome is regarded to be the higher the payoff is assigned to it.

The payoffs are the utility that an actor either receives as a result of the social interaction or the utility expected to be received as a function of the strategies chosen by relevant actors (Rasmusen 2007: 13-14). Utility is used in the model to express the preferences of each set of actors in the model. Nash (1950: 156-58) argues for the use of numerical utilities based upon utility functions in the construction of game models with two or more actors. These utility functions are constructed in accordance with the assumption that the utility of the outcome assigned to an actor is the product of collective interactions and not only based upon a single actor's strategy as in decision theory. Flood (1958: 6) points to the problem of finding suitable operational measures of utility when game models are applied to empirical cases. In this thesis ordinal values are given to reflect the utility of the outcomes. Applying ordinal values as a utility measurement implies that actors can rank the outcomes from the best to the worst, including being indifferent to outcomes. Hence, they can decide if they prefer outcome A to B and outcome B to C. And when actors are expected to be rational it is then presumed that an actor also will prefer outcome A to C. The assumption of

transitivity goes as follows:

If, A > B and B > C then A > C

It is important to notice the difference between preferences towards outcomes and the preferences towards strategies or actions. Outcomes are the final result of collective social interactions while strategies are reflections of actor's goals. Ordinal preferences are in this thesis represented by numbers. The larger the number the more preferred is the outcome. Equal numbers reflect indifference to the outcomes. The numbers assigned to the outcomes are the actor's utility or expected utility, which is the result of the utility functions of the actors. Ordinal values do not predict the distance between the outcomes only the ranking of the outcomes. Hence, if an outcome A is given the utility 1 and outcome B is given 2 this does not mean that outcome A doubles the utility of the actor, only that A is more preferable. It is not meaningful to determine the interval between utilities assigned ordinal values. To do so utilities must be reflected in numbers on an interval or numerical measurement level. Ordinal values reduce the difficulty assigning real numbers to the utility.

The access to information is decisive for how the game is modelled. An important distinction is drawn between perfect (or imperfect) and complete (or incomplete) information in a game model. Complete information refers to situations in which all players' payoff structure is known to the other players (Morrow 1994: 63). Hence, incomplete information occurs if one or more player's payoffs cannot be determined with certainty or is completely unknown to other actors. Perfect information occurs in a game when all information sets are singletons (Morrow 1994: 63). Perfect information reflects that all players in the game know all previous actions taken in the game. Hence, games with imperfect information are games in which some or all previous actions are not known with certainty. The concepts of perfect or imperfect information refer to information concerning actions of the other players, while the concepts of complete or incomplete information refer to the knowledge actors have of his opponents preferences (Fink, Gates and Humes 1998: 11, 18).

Games modelled as static form games are games with complete information because all players know the other players preferences but with imperfect information due to the fact that strategies are chosen simultaneously. Games are referred to as extensive form games if one or more of the players are able to observe the other actor's action and react to this as a consequence of this observation (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 39). Extensive form games are modelled as game trees in which nodes represent points in the game in which actors choose from available actions and end nodes correspond to the outcomes to which actors can attach different utility. The different nodes in the game are assigned to the different players and

provide us with information about the possible actions of this actor, the sequence of the game, the possible path of the social interaction as well as the access to information at different levels of the game. Extensive form games are also known as dynamic games and can be modelled with both perfect or imperfect information as well as complete or incomplete information. Modelling extensive form games with imperfect information is done by drawing a dotted line between the information sets marking that actors beneath this line cannot determine the previous moves with certainty. To model extensive form games with incomplete information one can introduce the concept of nature. Nature is a pseudo-player which is introduced into the game to function as a player that takes a random choice at a given point in the game (Rasmusen 2007: 13). The choice of nature is specified by a given probability which can be know or unknown and determines the further action in the game. The concept of nature can fill several purposes. It can be used to model incomplete information in extensive form game by being modelled as a player taking the first action in the game which is unobserved by at least one player in the game and thereby being determining a player's type, strategy set, information partitions and utility distributions (Gates and Humes 1997: 45-6). As shown by Tsebelis (1990: 52-61) nature and games with variable payoffs can also be used to model situation of multi-dimensional conflicts or nested games.

The outcomes reached by actors when pursuing their goals through actions or strategies are referred to as outcome equilibriums. There exist several different concepts of outcome equilibriums. An equilibrium concept is a rule that defines an equilibrium based upon strategy profiles and the utility functions (Rasmusen 2007: 18). Mainly three equilibrium outcomes are of interest in this thesis, the Nash equilibrium, Pareto-optimal equilibrium and subgame perfect Nash equilibrium. The Nash equilibrium was described by Nash (1951) and reflects an outcome in which none of the actors have the initiative to unilaterally deviate from the given equilibrium strategy and is in that sense stable. However, the Nash equilibrium neither has to be the best outcome to the actors nor to be a fair outcome. An equilibrium outcome is Pareto-optimal when no players can be made better off by changing strategy without other players are made worse off (Morrow 1994: 118). Hence, Pareto-optimality reflects a situation which is the best that could be reached without disadvantaging any other players and is stable in the sense that no one can change strategy without making other actors worse off. Finding the equilibrium in dynamic games is done by applying backward induction to the game tree. One starts at the last nodes in the game by deciding which action that maximises the utility of player assigned to that node and then moving upward in the game tree. Using this technique we can determine all players' optimal

choice and the outcome found by backward induction is always a Nash equilibrium (Morrow 1994: 124-27). Unlike the Nash equilibrium, backward induction judges the rationality of the moves off the equilibrium path and therefore Nash equilibriums are reached by irrational moves not regarded as outcomes when found by backward induction. The game tree can be broken down into subgames. A subgame is a game consisting of a node which is singleton in every player's information partition, that node's successors, and the payoffs at the associated end nodes (Rasmusen 2007: 109). The subgame perfect Nash equilibrium consists of strategies that constitute the best answer of the players in all possible subgames (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 71). Or, a strategy profile is a subgame perfect Nash equilibrium if it is a Nash equilibrium for the entire game and its relevant action rules are a Nash equilibrium for every subgame.

I this thesis I discuss the movements within the framework of static games. This logic follows assumptions of Brams' (1994) *theory of moves*. The theory of moves implies that a game has an initial state. The actors can further react and counter react to each others moves before the game ends (Tvedt 2004: 86). This contradicts the conditions of a static game model by introducing the logic of repeated or dynamic games to the model. This logic is not without controversy and Brams has been criticised by amongst others Stone (2001) and Hoffmann (2001). I bear this in mind as I have applied this logic to the games. The assumption of moves within a static game is applied because I have found it useful in order to emphasise the discussion of pacts, sub-optimality, threatening power and multi-dimensional conflicts. This does not necessarily imply that the static games should have been dynamic or actually describe dynamic interaction. It is applied in order to explain sub-optimal choices, lack of compromise, absence of pacts and the failure of transition to democracy.

Section one of this chapter has summed up the main arguments in favour of using formal models, including the transparency of a formal model opening it for critique and the strict logical nature of the augments ruling out weak and hidden logic. Some basic features of game theory have been outlined in section two. These and additional features specific to the games presented in later chapters will be discussed in greater detail when used in the analysis. Game theory consists of a much larger set of tools than the one outlined here, but it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss features of game theory that is not used in the following chapters.

4. Belarusian History and Identity

In this chapter I discuss the historical and contextual background which is believed to have influenced the preferences of the actors during the phase of transition. Of special importance is the timing of the processes of industrialisation, the state- and nation-building, the lack of national consciousness and the limited impact of liberalisation. I start with a historical background, discuss the development of national identity and treat finally the phase of liberalisation by elaborating the conflict issues and actors in Belarus.

Early History

Belarus is geographically located close to the centre of Europe, however politically and economically the country occupies a much more peripheral role. Little attention has been devoted to the country's political development both from a political as well as from a scholarly point of view. Brandt-Hansen et al. (1997: 249) refer to Belarus as the unknown and invisible country. The country is land locked and situated between Russia in the east, Latvia and Lithuania in the north, Poland in the west and Ukraine in the south. After Lukashenka became president in the country's first election in 1994 it has moved in a still more authoritarian direction. Today the country is often referred to as the last dictatorship in Europe and Lukashenka as the last dictator in Europe.

Even though that Russians, Lithuanians and Poles all, in different epochs, have made claims of the territory that today constitutes the Republic of Belarus historical Belarusian references go as far back as the 10th century. Being trapped between states with imperial ambitions Belarus has been subject of these states rivalry for influence in the area. This location of the country has left little or no room for both national independence and development of a national consciousness. The historical circumstances have had great effect on the attempt of forming a national identity and a reconstruction of Belarusian history, as well as a national opposition in Belarus. There is a large contrast between the historical understanding of the Belarusian nationalists and the historical perspectives of Poles, Russians and Lithuanians and the struggle about Belarus past has never been sharper than today (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 99). The disputed historical legacy has an effect both on the formation of a distinct Belarusian identity as well as on the political developments in the early 1990s. The struggle about the past has also become a struggle about the future of Belarus. This discussion will only point to some central moments in Belarusian history that have had

influence on the development of national identities in Belarus today. A broader examination of Belarusian history is beyond the scope of this thesis[9].

The Belarusian nation has inhabited the territory of Belarus for centuries, but it is only in the last fifteen years that a sovereign strictly Belarusian state has existed, except for some brief months in 1918. However, Belarusian culture and language is supposed to have played a significant role in the state formation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Rus and Samogitia. The Grand Duchy occupied most of the territory of today's Belarus as well as Lithuania, parts of Ukraine and Russia. This state formation lasted from 1386 and Belarusian language played an imported role as the language of the chancellery, courts, diplomacy and literature in the Grand Duchy (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 100). Several laws written in Belarusian exist from these times and were in function until the incorporation of Belarus into the Tarist Empire after the 1830 rebellion. The Grand Duchy entered into a political union with Poland in 1569 and formed a commonwealth. This leads to gradual expansion of Polish influence in Belarus and the decline of the relative autonomy that Belarus had enjoyed as a part of the Grand Duchy. The creation of the Uniate Church in 1596 brought the religious influence of the Vatican to Belarus at the expense of the Russian Orthodox Church (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 100).

During the 15th century the Moscow based Russian state began expanding westwards. This brought Russian into confrontation with Poland on, amongst other, the territorial control over Belarus. Both Poland and Russia regarded Belarus as a legitimate unit of their states and promoted religious, cultural and political influence over the areas they controlled at different times (Ibid). In late 18th century the Belarusian lands were incorporated into the Russian empire as a result of the dismembering of the Polish Commonwealth by Russian, Prussia and Austria (Mihalisko 1997: 228). At this time the nobility of Belorussia was strongly connected to Poland and had accepted Polish language and culture in addition to the Roman Catholic Church in form of the Uniate Church. However, parts of the upper strata of the Belarusian population still had a close connection to Lithuania (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 100). This meant that Belarus was without any aristocracy to promote a Belarusian identity at this time. The annexation of Belarus by the Russia where followed by period of strong and large scale Russification, especially under Tsarina Catherine II and Belarusian language, culture and the Uniate Church were severely suppressed during the tsarist rule. However, already under Tsar Alexander I (1801-1825) the suppression was relaxed, and Poland once again influenced Belarus, especially in the sector of education. The University of Vilnius became a centre for

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[9] See for instance Vakar (1956) for a detailed examination of Belarusian history.

Polish cultural influence in the old Grand Duchy. It was also at this university that the foundation for Belarusian national thought was laid in the beginning of the 19th century. A group of professors had assembled a collection of documents written in Belarusian which sparked the idea of autonomy for the unity that had constituted the Grand Duchy (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 101). The incipient national awareness was brought to an end after a rebellion against Russia broke out in 1830 in the western regions where Belarus to a large extend supported the Polish aspirations. Following this uprising the tsar introduced a harder line against foreign influence in the western regions. This had severe consequences not only for Polish influence on Lithuania and Belarus but also for Belarusian identity and culture. The university in Vilnius was closed, Russian became to replace Polish as educational language and in government, the Uniate Church were forbidden and even the term "Belorussian" was abolished (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 101). Belorussia was now to be known as Western Russia and the features that had distinguished the "White Rus" from the "Great Rus" was now to be seen as only features of artificial Polish influence in the region. The land of "With Rus" was to be *reunified* with the rest of the Russia. In despite of these devastating results of the rebellion for the creation of Belarusian identity the national trends in the early 19th century had given birth to a distinct Belarusian national idea. National consciousness was renewed after the Polish uprising in 1863. However, Belarus had no aristocracy or elites to promote the culture outside the cities and the city population mostly consisted of non-Belarusian nationalities like Russians, Poles and Jews showing little or no interest in promoting Belarusian national interests (Mihalisko 1997). During the 19th century the national oriented movement remained weak and an agitator for reunification with Poland and Lithuania. In a century in which many other, both western and eastern, nations developed distinct national identities and saw the merging of cultural and political nationalism across Europe creating demand for establishment of new national states, Belarus only managed to produce a small and weak elite advocating national ideas and identities of Poles and Lithuanians.

However, this is not an expression for the non existence of the Belarusian nation or a proof of the Belarusian nation in fact is Russian. It is rather an expression of a very low degree of development in Belarus at the end the 19th century and the composition of different nationalities and the position they occupied in society. As can be seen from the table below ethnic Belarusians constituted 63.5 percent of the total population in 1897. However, no more than 2.6 percent of the ethnic Belarusian population lived in the cities. Of the one million urban population more than half was of Jewish origin followed by Russians with 19 percent. Belarusians were the third largest group with almost 14 percent closely followed by Poles

with 12 percent of the urban population. According to Hammond (1966: 10-11) differences in nationality often coincide with difference in class in Eastern Europe. This means that the rural peasant population of Belarus consisted of mainly ethnic Belarusians while the urban merchants were Jewish or German and the landlords and autocracy were mainly Polish or Lithuanians. When a nation develops a distinct national identity with the creation of a national literary language, associated literature and creation of national myths often begin within a small intellectual elite (Hammond 1966: 13). The creation of the Belarusian national identity amongst intellectuals at the University of Vilnius is an example of this. To expand the national identity beyond the national elites there must exist a basis for the nation that can be reached by the elite. Spread of the national identity needs a literate nation. This means that the spread of the national identity from the national elite to the national population often coincides with the spread of education, urbanisation and industrialisation in which peasants leave countryside and take over the cities that formerly were dominated by other nationalities and thereby create the basis for the awakening of the national identity (Hammond 1966: 13).

Table 4.1

Nationalities in the five Belarusian provinces of the North-western Region in 1897				
Nationality	Population	Percent of Population	Population in Towns	Percent of Urban Population
Belarusians	5 408 420	63,46 %	137 608	13,18 %
Jewish	1 202 129	14,11 %	553 997	53,08 %
Russians	492 921	5,78 %	185 027	17,73 %
Ukrainians	377 487	4,43 %	9 461	0,91 %
Poles	424 236	4,98 %	122 785	11,76 %
Lithuanians	288 921	3,39 %	5 201	0,50 %
Latvians	272 775	3,20 %	3 843	0,37 %
Germans	27 311	0,32 %	13 365	1,28 %
Tatars	8 448	0,10 %	5 094	0,49 %
Others	19 658	0,23 %	7 293	0,70 %
Total	8 522 306	100,00 %	1 043 674	100,00 %

(Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 103)

Later on the merging of cultural and political nationalism creates the basis for demands of formation of a national state. After the development of the Belarusian identity by

the national elites it was not possible to spread it to the national population. Belarus did not see a spread in education and neither urbanisation or industrialisation before long into the 20th century. At the same time as these preconditions were not present the country faced severe suppression as a result of the 1830 and 1863 uprisings. Hence, the congruence between social class and nationality and the low degree of development in Belarus hindered both the fission of nationalities and the development of a distinct Belarusian identity in the 19th century. The few national oriented intellectuals and groups faced large difficulties when trying to awaken the vast majority of illiterate Belarusian peasantry and national initiatives were to a large extend left to the nobilities and the autocracy who were oriented towards either Poland or Lithuania, while the Belarusian peasants kept referring to themselves as only the locals (Vakar 1956: ; Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 103).

Even though they continued to face these difficulties a small group of Belarusian intellectuals formed the first party in 1902, the social democratic Socialist Hramada in St. Petersburg. The increased political tension in the beginning of the 20th century Russia had sparked political activism also amongst the few Belarusian intellectuals. And as the result of the liberalisation following the 1905 revolution they started to publish their own organ Nasha Niva (Mihalisko 1997: 231). Despite, the 20th century national awakening had a strictly limited impact on forming a national awareness it laid the foundation for the establishment of the All-Belarusian Congress in the aftermath of the collapse of the Romanov Empire in 1917.

This lead to the establishment of the first strictly Belarusian state, the short lived Belarusian National Republic. The Belarusian National Republic was established on March 25th 1918 after the collapse of the Russian Tsar Empire. However, The Red Army occupied the country in December the same year and put an effective end to the new independent national aspirations in Belarus and incorporated the National Republic into the Soviet Union together with Lithuanian in 1919 and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR) was established on January 1st 1919 (Mihalisko 1997). However, western parts of the country came under Polish control after the Treaty of Riga put an end to the Polish Russian war. But the country kept growing during the 1920s as eastern parts of today's Belarus was included into the BSSR and the population increased from 1.5 millions in 1921 to 5 millions in 1926 with more than 80 percent of the population being ethnic Belarusians. However, the 8.2 percent Jews and 7.7 percents Russians played an important role in both the economy and urban life controlling most of the economy of the republic in the early years (Mihalisko 1997: 232). The republic was one of the four founding republics to establish the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on December 30th 1922. In 1939 the western part of today's Belarus was

re-occupied from Poland by the Soviet Union and included into the Belorussian SSR. The area that had been under Polish rule in the twenties and thirties had undergone harsh suppression and the Hamada, which had promoted Belarusian distance, was destroyed (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 105-06). The time under Polish rule did not have a positive effect upon the formation of a distinct Belarusian identity in the western areas, it rather lead to the destruction of the intellectual elites.

Even thought the establishment of Belorussian SSR was not a nationalistic project it had some positive effect upon nation building and the formation of a national identity in the 1920s. Establishment of a Belarusian state with, even though it was not independent, state structures and institutions distinct from those of Russia, Poland and Lithuania created legitimacy for the creation of a distinct national identity as well. Unlike the Polish suppression in the western parts of Belarus, the new communist regime in the 1920s did promote national culture through national campaigns and official support to Belarusian literature and culture (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 106). The Belarusian culture also stated to reach larger segments of the titular population through literacy campaigns. For the first time a national Belarusian identity did spread beyond the national intellectual elites. This had, without doubt, a positive effect on Belarusian national identity and culture in the 1920s. But it was only to last until Stalin's repression (the natsdemy) began in 1929. Stalin's crimes of the 1930s put an effective end to Belarusian national aspirations and wiped out the new intelligentsia. According to Mihalisko (1997: 232) no less than 2 million Belarusians were killed during the purging, deportations, forced collectivisation and starvations until the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War in 1941. The war became a new disaster for Belarus killing another 25 percent of the population and practically wiping out the country's entire infrastructure and industry, including the city of Minsk where only a few buildings were left. Some 100 000 Belarusians formed a partisan resistance against the German invaders creating new national heroes.

These historical happenings left the Belarus with a very weak national identity in the post-war era. After the war a strong attempt of creating an all Soviet identity where launched by the central authorities. At the same time as the country experienced rebuilding, modernisation, urbanisation and industrialisation it also underwent a process of Sovietisation (Mihalisko 1997: 233; Marples 1999). Hence, the processes that are discussed by Hammond (1966: 13-14) to have a positive effect upon the spread of the national identity from the intellectual national elites to the national population did to a large extend first take place in the post-war period or the pre-war Stalinist era. A universal Soviet identity was attempted to be introduced to the Soviet peoples during this time where the processes of urbanisation,

industrialisation and the spread of literacy became evident in Belarus. Russian language and culture were given a central role in the creation of the Soviet identity as being universal identities in contrast to the national identities within the republics. In Belarus the Soviet identity became closely connected to the positive contribution made by the Soviet state by rebuilding and modernising Belarusian society, economy and culture. The heavily Russian influenced culture became attended with positive, modern, urban and progressive values, while Belarusian culture and identity were attended with more negative identities as backwardness, old-fashioned and rural values. Imitations of Russian language became the norm in the urban cities while the majority of the Belarusian speaking population remained in the countryside. Nowhere else in the Soviet Union the creation of a universal Soviet identity was to be met with greater success than in Belarus.

The post-war years became an era of great change and development to Belarus. The country was benefited by a rapid industrialisation and rebuilding. Alongside the modernisation and rebuilding came a process of rapid urbanisation and growth of the share of the population employed in industry and the service sector (Mihalisko 1997: 234). Within a few years the country changed from a backward agriculture society to a modern industrial society. Both the general living standards and the level of education were raised significantly. As the education level and the urban population rose, Russian language also gained ground at the expense of Belarusian. Ultimately Russian became the dominant language in the education system especially in higher educations and in city schools.

At the end of the 1980s the Belarusian SSR was one of the most industrially advanced republics in the USSR with an economy closely interconnected with the other republics. The income level, GDP and educational level were amongst the highest in the Union. In the 45 years from the end of the Second World War until 1990 Belarus was completely transformed from a rural agricultural society to a modern Soviet state (Marples 1999: 23). This transformation created very favourable conditions for the creation of a new identity. This identity is often mistaken as being Russian, maybe because of the dominant role of Russian language. Belarusians do not consider themselves as Russians but they have severe problems to define a distinct Belarusian identity outside of the Soviet context (Mihalisko 1997: 236). Even today most Belarusians tend to remember the Soviet past with great nostalgia, as a time of security, growth and prosperity (Marples 1999: 23). If Belarusians identify themselves with an identity other than a Belarusian it is not a Russians but a true Soviet identity.

Belarus under glasnost and perestroika

The impact of Gorbachev's reform politics of both glasnost and perestroika was much more limited than in the other European and Caucasian republics. This phase of liberalisation had a late and restricted impact upon Belarusian politics. This might reflect that the crises that became visible to the central leadership of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s both on the economic level but also on a more ideological level never became so pressing in Belarus during these times. On the economic level the republic performed at the top end of the republics of the Soviet Union. The population enjoyed a relative high living standard compared to other republics. The industry of Belarus was heavily connected with the economy of the other member states and Belarus delivered industrial products to these states. As earlier argued the ideological dimension of the country was marked by a great success in the creation a distinct Soviet identity. Many Belarusians had benefited from the modernisations in the post-war period. The ideological crisis that became eminent on the union level seems much less eminent in Belarus than in the other European and Caucasian republics as well as on the state level. There can not be traced a clear and noticeable split within the ruling fraction of Belarusian regime in this phase of democratisation, as it can on the Soviet level or in Russia. During the phase of liberalisation in the Soviet Union the Communist Party of Belarus stayed remarkably unified in the support of the hardliner fraction lead by Liegachev in the Politburo (Mihalisko 1997: 239). During this phase the softliner fraction in Belarus remained weak, insignificant and isolated. No concession or compromise were made between the hardliner fraction lead by first secretary Sakalau and the reform friendly fraction within the Communist Party. Belarus was widely seen as an impeder of the processes of glasnost and perestroika and a supporter of the status quo especially by reformers and supporters of glasnost in the Soviet Union. The Belarusian leadership actively attempted to limit and disturb the impact of the Moscow lead liberal reform programme on Belarusian institutions, media and political life (Mihalisko 1997: 239). The ruling elites of Belarus were very well integrated into the Soviet nomenklatura structures being loyal clients of the central level elites without specific national characteristics or interests to pursue(Belova-Gille 2003: 55). Hence, the impact of liberalisation did not lead to a split of the ruling elite. A real independent or national ruling elite did not arise in Belarus until independence had been achieved, leaving the communist unprepared for independence and without a national interest. This was in contrast to the Ukrainian or Russian elites who developed political strategies and interests which were independent and sometimes in conflict with the ones of the central

government. This means that the liberalisation in Belarus, after the opening of the Soviet Union, was significantly lacking behind both the central union level as well as compared to other republics such Russian or even more the Baltic republics. This development continued all along the phase of liberalisation, making Belarus especially ill-prepared for the later transition phase. However, the hardliners in control of the Belarusian Communist Party were not able to totally hinder organising in the civil society.

The national mobilisation in the civil society of Belarus in the late 1980s were mainly a consequence of three major events or issues, the language question that where brought up as early as 1986, the unveiling of the Stalin era massacre in the Kurpaty forest in the outskirts of Minsk and the uncovering devastating effects upon Belarus by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in April 1986 (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: ; Marples 1999: 49). Especially the two first issues are, according to Marples (1999: 49-50), to have a crucial effect upon the development of a national consciousness and the process of democratisation in the late 1980s Belarus. Together with the attempted veiling of the extent of the Chernobyl disaster these events and issues did help to undermine the authority, legitimacy and the monopoly of CPB and especially the conservative block and their strong bonds with the conservative fraction on the union level. The events gave also the legitimacy to the formation of the Belarusian Popular Front (BNF) as a political party and alternative to the Communist Party.

The spread of Russian language in Belarus was intensified during the Stalin period and Russian became the only urban language to be taught in the city schools. The Belarusians that moved from the countryside into the cities were assimilated into the Russian speaking population. Even though that Belarusian now, as a result of the urbanisation, constituted the vast majority of the urban population this had not resulted in the spread of neither the Belarusian language nor a Belarusian identity to the cities. The use and knowledge of the language were in sharp decline in the mid 1980s. In fear that this should lead to the death of the language and thereby the end of the Belarusian national identity, twenty-eight intellectuals mobilised and appealed to General Secretary Gorbachev to protect the language by law in December 1986 (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 108). The protection of the language became the most important question for mobilisation of the nationally minded fractions in Belarus at the beginning of Glasnost and Perestroika. Appeals by Belarusian youth organisations to follow the Baltic peoples in their struggle for national awakeners were made during this period.

In the middle of the official de-Stalinisation process that was launched as a part of the reform politics of glasnost and perestroika by Gorbachev to rehabilitate victims of Stalin's terror the Belarusian archaeologist and intellectual Zianon Pazinak rediscovered no less than

510 mass graves in the forest of Kurapaty in the suburb of Minsk (Marples 1999: 54). According to Pazinak (1988) the mass graves hold the remains of 300 000 people who became the victims of the NKVDs massacres from 1937-41. His article also gave detailed descriptions of the cruelty in the forest by residents of nearby villages. The exposure of the Kurapaty mass graves lead to a widespread mobilisation and demands that independent investigations were to be made to uncover the full scale of the massacre (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 110). This demand was never fully met by the conservative rulers of the Communist Party and an official commission came to the conclusion that the mass graves contained the remains of 30 000 victims but they were unable to name neither the victims nor the criminals (Marples 1999: 55-56). The official investigation of the massacre was seen as a major attempt to cover up of the actual circumstances and activists created the Commite-58 to conduct an alternative investigation of the cruelty in the Kurapaty forest (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 110-11). The handling of the investigation, the clashes between activist and police and the attempted to cover up contributed, maybe more than any other event, to undermine the legitimacy of conservatives in the Communist Party and their relations to Moscow and their resistance towards reforms. The event also became a direct trigger for the establishment of the BNF. Commite-58 established the group Martyrology of Belarus in October 1988 and at its founding meeting the group established the Belarusian Popular Front for Perestroika, inspired by the Baltic popular fronts, with Pazinak as leader (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 111). As a part of the politics of glasnost and perestroika Gorbachev launched a campaign of de-Stalinisation in the USSR to rehabilitate the victims to of Stalin's crimes and the Gulag. In addition to rehabilitate the victims and mark a break with the past, these politics would also help to generate legitimacy for the new politics of reform, openness and reconstruction hence to legitimise the politics of the moderate softliner fraction in their struggle against the hardliners. However, in Belarus the legitimacy was not generated in favour of the ruling elites but in favour of the newly formed national opposition. The process of de-Stalinisation was identified with the opposition groups of the popular front and especially the Martyrology in Belarus (Marples 1999: 57). These circumstances did threaten to undermine the legitimacy of the Communist Party hardliner rulers in Belarus. To narrow the effect of this they severely tried to hinder or limit the official investigation of the Kurapaty massacre and a campaign in several hardliner Minsk newspapers tried to blame it on German invaders during the Second World War (Marples 1999: 57).

The third major event that contributed to the mobilisation of the opposition movement was the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Belarus' neighbouring republic Ukraine. The explosion

at the Chernobyl power plant located just south of the border between the Belarus and Ukraine had devastating effects on Belarus. As much as 70 percent of the nuclear fallout from the explosion landed on Belarusian soil contaminating large parts of the southern provinces (Marples 1996). The authorities took little or no action towards the crises that affected as much as 2.2 millions Belarusians. Information was suppressed and the population was assured that it had noting to fear, and left people living in contaminated zones (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 111).

These three critical events became the main triggers for organisation in the civil society of Belarus under glasnost and perestroika as well as the formation of the main political opposition group the national oriented Belarusian Popular Front. And the Popular Front successfully managed to connect the ruling conservative communist party to all of these three events in a negative way and undermined, at least to some degree, the legitimacy of the regime while legitimising the creation of a national oppositional fraction independent of the regime. The three critical events also became the trigger for the development or reawaken of a national identity amongst the national minded intellectual elite trying to save the Belarusian nation for what they saw as downfall. The possibility to create a strictly Belarusian identity and spread it to the titular population once again seemed possible in Belarus but this time with an urbanised, industrialised and literate population as receivers. However, a Belarusian identity had to compete with a strongly consolidated and distinct Soviet identity developed earlier in the 20th century.

The formation of the Popular Front as well as the open unveiling of and mobilisation over the three critical events of the Chernobyl catastrophe, the Kurpaty massacres and the struggle for belarusification of the language and culture had never been possible in Belarus with out the liberalisation launched by the central government under Gorbachev. The first signs of mobilisation in civil society in Belarus came with a letter sent to Gorbachev on December 15th 1986 by the 28 Belarusian intellectuals and a new letter to Gorbachev in June 1987 this time sign by 134 leading Belarusians and in December that same year a rally in Minsk gathers young Belarusians and sparked the beginning of a national movement in Belarus (Zaprudnik 1989: 37-9). A vast diversity of small and autonomous civil society groups sprang up all over Belarus during the years of glasnost. According to the City Party Committee in November 1988 there existed 566 amateur and self managed groups in Minsk alone (Zaprudnik 1989: 40). Most of these youth groups or clubs remained apolitical but were engaged in national questions. However, mobilisation in civil society in Belarus culminated in the establishment of the Belarusian Popular Front as the political party of the national

opposition and the Martyorlogy of Belorussia to reawaken the national consciousness.

However, the politics of glasnost and perestroika was not given as warm a welcome amongst the conservative ruling elite of the Belarusian Communist Party as amongst the national minded opposition forces. The leadership of the republic did their best to counteract the growing organisation outside the official party organisations. The Party did sharply differ in opinion with the Popular Front not only in the nationality question but also about future reforms in the republic. As earlier mentioned the Communist Party did affect strong support for the hardliner fractions in Moscow, while the Popular Front appealed for support amongst the softliners associated with Gorbachev. Mihalisko (1997: 238) claims that a sharper dichotomy of ideologies than that between the Popular Front and the Communist Party is difficult to imagine. The ruling elites initiated a counterattack on the Popular Front in an attempt to undermine their legitimacy, after the unveiling and effective association of the Communist Party to the events of the Kurapaty forest, the Chernobyl disaster and the language question.

The Communist Party effectively mobilised its nearly monopoly on mass media to launch a campaign against the newly formed Popular Front. The initiatives by opposition groups were mainly ignored by the leading Belarussian media, and often the opposition of Belarus received greater attention from Russian, Soviet or Baltic reform friendly media than from Belarusian media. At several occasions the official media did try, directly or indirectly, to connect the opposition groups and their symbols to the collaborators during the German occupation between 1941 and 1944 blaming them to spread fascist ideology among the youngsters (Zaprudnik 1989: 45-6). The campaign did not only attempt to connect Belarusian opposition but also the Baltic Popular Fronts with criminal elements. The campaign against The Popular front, Martyology and other independent groups tried to radicalise and de-legitimise the national opposition.

The campaign made it much more difficult for the national opposition to voice their opinion through the media in Belarus than similar groups in other republics such as Russia, Georgia or the Baltics. But the Communist Party apparatus did not limit themselves to censorship and utilisation of their monopoly on information they also at several occasions tried to quell the opposition with force leading to clashes between the supporters of civil society groups and the police. At several occasions supporters of the Popular Front, Martyology and other independent groups were met by riot police and water cannons when trying to organise meetings or commemorate non-communist events (Zaprudnik 1989: 46). Also several opposition gatherings were hindered and had to be held abroad often in Vilnius

in Lithuania, a city with historical ties to Belarus but lost by the Belarusians to the Lithuanians.

All these factors might have hindered the Popular Front and other national or opposition groups in reaching the population with their message of national reawaken and support for the Moscow initiated democratisation. This was especially the instance in the rural areas where the party kept its tight grip of the public opinion and the civil society. As argued by Marples (1996: 47) the Popular Front had its largest support in Minsk and other larger cities and as the other civil society groups they found it particularly difficult to penetrate the countryside and spread it message to the non-urban population. The spread of a distinct Belarusian national identity from the national elites to the population outside the major cities and regional centres was seriously disturbed and hindered by the ruling party and had limited impact on the rural population during the process of liberalisation. The opposition had only limited support outside the major cities and seldom managed to raise candidates for election in these areas.

The twin politics of glasnost and perestroika had a much later impact upon Belarus than upon Russia and the leading hardliner fraction did not favour the reform politics. However, civil society did finally organise in support of the Gorbachev initiated democratisation and in an attempt to renew the national identity and save the nation. The impact of the central government reforms and the episodes in the Baltic states, which Belarus are closely linked to both historically and geographically, could not be retained from Belarus and in 1988 the first opposition party, the Belarusian Popular Front was established. Civil society had finally responded to the 1986 opening of the regime by the central government in Moscow as Gorbachev launched the first initiatives of the glasnost politics.

The regime's response to the mobilisation of the national minded segments of civil society and their attempt to foster a strictly Belarusian national identity to a large extend corresponds to what is described by Przeworski (1991: 61-64) as suppression after the regime has opened for organisation in the civil society and the civil society has failed to be incorporated into the regime but continues to organise autonomously from the regime pushing for further reforms. In the case of Belarus this mainly corresponds to the Popular Fronts and Martyologys attempts to reawaken the Belarusian non-Soviet national identity. They launched a counterattack on the opposition trying to undermined their legitimacy and defended the Soviet identity as well as their monopoly on power and information (Zaprudnik 1989: 45-47). This act may indicate that the hardliner rulers of the Communist Party preferred to establish a narrowed dictatorship in favour of transition and perhaps even in favour of a broadened

dictatorship. Presumably they wished, by their attack upon the opposition, to re-establish the status quo. However, due to the fact that the reform process was initiated by the central government in Moscow it would not be possible for the Belarusian authorities to fully repress the national opposition even if the had wished to do so. Therefore the liberalisation in Belarus brought about an opposition but it had a much more limited effect than the liberalisation of the neighbouring Baltic or Russian republics. The liberalisation also failed to produce a single national identity in Belarus but left the country with competing ideas of nationhood.

Pre-Transitional elections in Belarus

As a part of the process of liberalisation the central government encouraged multi-candidate elections to both the local Soviets, city Soviets and to USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Two elections took place in Belarus in addition to the referendum on the renewed union treaty. Elections were held to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies in 1989 and to the Supreme Soviet of Belarus in 1990. In the 1989 election the Popular Front managed, despite the huge advantage enjoyed by the Communist Party to win eight mandates to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies defeating seven top officials from the Communist Party (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 112). The republican level election to the Supreme Soviet in Belarus was to be the first multi-candidate election the country. However, the election was far from being a free and fair election compared to both democratic standards and to elections in other Soviet republics. As argued earlier the hardliner regime in Belarus tried to limit the impact of the Moscow initiated liberalisation upon the country. Several measures were taken to restrict candidates of the Popular Front from reaching the ballot. 50 of the total 360 seats were reserved for hardliner supporters amongst war veterans and handicapped associations, thereby violating the principle of one person one vote (Mihalisko 1997: 239). The party controlled the nomination process entirely and exploited this possibility fully to hinder hundreds of opposition candidates from running in the election, while Party loyal candidates were easily registered (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 112). The near monopoly on media was also used to favour regime friendly candidates. The incumbent regime was at this time both able and willing to manipulate the electoral competition in their own favour, to an extent that was not seen in the republics of Ukraine or Russia and certainly not in the Baltic republics. They must have feared the electoral strength of the Popular Front that by now counted as many as 100,000 members. As a result of the difficulties which were inflicted to the opposition candidates, the Popular Front won only 7.5 percents of the seats, while the

Communist Party won 86 percent. The Popular Front won most of its representatives in the urban electoral districts and many candidates of the Communist Party were running unopposed in rural districts (Mihalisko 1997: 239). The manipulated character of the pre-transitional election makes it severely difficult both for observers as well as for actors to determine the support and strength of the different actors in Belarus in the late phase of liberalisation and the early phase of transition. This may indicate that the Belarusian actors, at least to a certain degree, were interacting during the transition without knowing their future position or strength. Hence, that they were acting under a Rawlsian veil.

Even though the elections did not contribute to reveal the strength of the actors and secure representation of the opposition in the representative institutions of the republic they did contribute to unveil a fragmentation of the regime that had not been visible before the election. While 86 percent of the representatives were members of the Communist Party only about one-quarter of the deputies were officials from the party or government apparatus and supporting the ruling hardliner fraction. The largest block of communist representatives consisted of intellectuals or technical specialists. The result of this was that the old leadership was unable to fully control the legislative alone. An informal and rather weak communist softliner fraction was created. Even though the ruling elites had managed to hold power their grip seemed far more tenuous than before the election, despite the wide spread manipulation of the electoral process. Together with the Popular Front, that held only 25 seats in the assembly, softliners and supporters joined an informal group called the Democratic Club after it became clear that it was of no prospects to create a pro-perestroika fraction within the Communist Party (Mihalisko 1997: 240; Silitski 2003: 39). Inspired by Boris Yeltsin's exit from the party in Moscow tens of thousands of party members left the party in disappointment about the lack of a reform friendly party wing. The election of the pro-perestroika Stanislau Shushkevich as Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet was a victory for the Democratic Club, whilst the hardliner Viacheslua Kebich became Prime Minister (Silitski 2003: 39). The new parliament also declared Belarus as a sovereign state as a result of a compromise between the hardliners, softliners and the Popular Front. This decision paved the way for the later independence, a surly unintended result for the hardliners.

Independence and transition

The independence of Belarus was clearly not the intention of the dominant hardliner rulers, that clearly favoured a close connection with the rest of the Soviet Union, but rather the consequence of a series of events in Russia and on the Union level. While the struggle for

the power to decide the fate of the nation had just begun in Belarus, this process had proceeded much further in the other European and Caucasian republics of the Soviet Union in the beginning of the 1990s. The Belarusian declaration of sovereignty on July 27th 1990 gave Belarus sovereignty to its national resources, its monetary politics and guarantied supremacy of Belarusian laws in the territory of Belarus (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 113; Marples 1999: 59). However, the decision by the communist hardliners to support the declaration of sovereignty became a sudden change of politics. Actually, it was a result of a consultation with the central government that had approved it as long as their intention was to join the proposed new union treaty (Marples 1999: 59). The communist hardliners hoped that a signing of a new union treaty in practice would nullify the declaration of independence.

However, the regime was facing reduced legitimacy as a consequence of the opening of the society during the process of liberalisation and as a result of the accusation made by the nationalist opposition against the regime. After a period of civil unrest in April 1991, mainly due to rising prices, the party tried for a brief period to improve its legitimacy by adopting a national communist agenda to meet the demands of the civil society (Mihalisko 1997: 241). This agenda was rather quickly abandoned when hardliners in Moscow in August 1991 initiated a coup d'état against Gorbachev who was on holiday at his Black Sea dacha, a dangerous place for unpopular Soviet leaders to spend their spare time. On august 21st a resolution was adopted supporting the State of Emergency Committee by the Central Committee awaiting the Soviet hardliner plotters to be victorious (Mihalisko 1997: 241). It is suggested that several Minsk hardliners knew of the plans to overthrow Gorbachev long before they were realised. The coup unveiled that the loyalty of the Belarusian regime was with the Moscow hardliners and that the coup had the Belarusian regimes full support. They saw it as a possibility to realise their goal of reversing the liberalisation and return to the status quo. The coup d'état became a short-lived triumph for both the hardliners in Moscow and their followers in Minsk. Faced with the popular mobilisation by Yeltsin in Russia the coup soon became a farce and the democratic forces of Russia were victorious. In the aftermath of the coup the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were facing a suspension and the Belarusian Communist Party tried to distance itself from its former comrades in the central party structures to avoid a ban. However, the Communist Party was temporarily suspended from the Supreme Soviet of Belarus following the ban of the CPSU in Moscow (Marples 1999: 59). This ban had only limited effect upon the influence of the old party apparatus and the nomenklatura. The party kept direct control over the cabinet and already 7th of December the same year, the party re-emerged in a new and reformed version, the Party of

Communist of Belarus. Even thought the party managed to control most of the institutions and society the unionist block in Belarus was severely discredited by their support of the hardliner coup and altered the political balance in favour of the nationalist opposition (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 116). The hardliner Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, N. I. Dzemiantsei, was forced to resign making the deputy, Shushkevich, chairman of the parliament. The appointment of Shushkevich to this position gave the softliner fraction the possibility of a more influencing role in Belarusian politics than they had before the coup d'état. Despite these changes it was mostly the same people who had supported the coup d'état that lead the country during the transition.

After the Baltic republics and Ukraine had declared independence in august 1991 Belarus followed their example. They declared independence August 25th after an initiative of the Popular Front but also supported by the communists who tried to regain at least some credibility after their unlimited support to the coup d'état. At that moment the declaration of independence was somewhat superficial. According to Mihalisko (1997: 241-42) the compromise between the Popular Front and the communists allowed the Popular Front to pursue economic and political independence, as opposed to national independence, in exchange for indefinite ban on the Communist Party which allowed them to reorganise. Merely after the new chairman of the Supreme Soviet in December 1991 signed the founding agreement of the Commonwealth of Independent States with Yeltsin from Russia and Kravchuk from Ukraine that effectively ended the Soviet Union Belarus faced independence as a real alternative. Had Shushkevich not become Chairman of the Supreme Soviet in September 1991 this agreement would properly never have been signed, at least not with the support of Belarus. The participation of Belarus was essential for the nullification of the Union Treaty of 1924, where the three Slavic republics were the original founding republics. Shushkevich gave Belarus the independence that not even the national opposition had dared to hope for, and by ending the existence of the USSR and thereby removing the central government the regime of the Soviet Union broke down. Hence, by ending the Union and establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States Shushkevich lead Belarus into the phase of transition. The agreement that Shushkevich signed with the Russian and Ukrainian leaders was later confirmed by the Supreme Soviet of Belarus, only opposed by a single member, later claimed to be the peoples representative Alexander Lukashenka (Mihalisko: 242).

5. The Belarusian Transition

In this chapter I discuss and analyse the Belarusian transition with regard to regime type. I construct three games in this chapter. The two first deal with the social interaction about the constitution of new intuitions while the last game includes the influence of the conflict dimension about national independence. The games show that sub-optimal outcomes are the equilibrium in all games and the nested structure and the hidden agendas of the transition are argued to hinder compromises in Belarus on the regime type dimension. However, first I turn the attention towards conflict dimensions and actors in the Belarusian transition.

Conflict dimensions and arenas of transition in Belarus 1990-1994

The transition of Belarus can be defined in time from starting with the break-up of the Soviet Union in late 1990 and ending by the presidential election in 1994 as the founding election. New institutional arrangements were then established as a consequence of interaction between the major political elites. The transition of Belarus differs from many transitions in Southern-Europe and South-America in a least two aspects, the relative long transitional period as well as it seems clear that the transition was a direct result of the break-down of the Soviet Union. Hence, the Belarusian transition did not start from internal tension between competing elites in the regime and the civil society. However, liberalisation had brought about both opposition as well as fragmentation of the ruling elites as shown above.

The elites that have been outlined earlier are thought to be the central actors in the transition of Belarus. All of them were represented in the Supreme Soviet during the transition phase, and it was the same legislative that was elected in the manipulated or biased election of 1990 that remained intact until 1995. The legislative functioned in close cooperation with the Cabinet of Ministers, being the executive branch of power until the founding presidential election in 1994 (Marples 1999: 60). It seems reasonable to assume that the Supreme Soviet and the Cabinet of Ministers were the main arena for political interaction during the phase of transition in Belarus, holding representatives from all major actors and being legitimate political institutions recognised by all major actors in this phase of democratisation.

Both the legislative and the executive were dominated by the communists and there was never held an early election for the parliament in Belarus after its independence, even though this was demanded by the national opposition. The Popular Front gathered in December 1991 about 440.000 signatures in a campaign to call for a referendum on

dissolution of the legislative and for new elections (Silitski 2003: 40). The majority in the parliament refused to recognise the demand because of supposed violations of the procedures for collecting signatures. The failure to create a new parliament did not only leave Belarus with a Soviet area legislative dominated by communists, but also left the relative strength of the actors and their support in the population to be somewhat unknown to the actors as well as observers of the transition. The Popular Front was clearly a minority in parliament but was very visible in the political arena. However, the failure of the 1991 campaign to call for a new election might, according to Silitski (2003: 40) show that they had overestimated their own strength. A clarification of the actor's relative strength and support did not occur until after the transition defined by the presidential election. It can therefore be suspected that the actors did interact without being able to fully foresee their future political position.

While the political interaction during transition took place within the institutional framework established during the phase of liberalisation several conflict issues were central to the transition phase. Przeworski (1991: 66-88) argues for two central conflict issues during transition, extrication from the powerbase old regime and constitution of a new institutional framework for the political game. Furthermore, in his 1992 reversed article he includes interaction over the economic reform or economic conflict as an issue of conflict during transition (Przeworski 1992: 126-31). In addition to these three conflict issues the reintroduction made by Linz and Stepan (1996: 17-37) of Rustow's (1970) argument under the name of stateness can be highly relevant for Post-Soviet transitions as a conflict issue regarding the future nature of the state. These four potential conflict dimensions have different degree of relevance for the Belarusian transition. This thesis will argue for dominant presence of two of the conflict issues in Belarus during transition, namely the conflict of constitution and the conflict concerning the future nature of the state. The other two conflict issues were only to a limited degree present in Belarus, and were never brought about as central issues by any of the main actors.

The conflict about the future nature of the state is of central importance in Belarus at the beginning of the transition. When Belarus entered a transition there was no consensus on whether Belarus should be a nation state, take part of a commonwealth together with other former communist states or strive for a reintegration with other former Soviet republics in an attempt to re-establish the Soviet Empire in some form or another. Unravelling these choices was of great importance to the Belarusian elites. Even for the Popular Front the idea of a nation state was so remotely from what they had expected possible that they strongly supported that Belarus should join a commonwealth with its neighbouring republics and its

historical brothers (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 116).

The conflict dimension which is central to the question on which regime type that is the outcome of the transition is the constitution of a new institutional framework, and the possible choices for the actors on this dimension are clearly the three broad categories outlined in the theory chapter. It is this conflict that determines the outcome of the transition with regard to regime type, an issue that becomes central towards the end of the Belarusian transition. This issue can be regarded as somewhat problematic to the Belarusian actors since they spent over three years to establish a new regime as well as refusing early elections. An explanation of why this was problematic to the actors of the Belarusian transition and why the Belarusian transition did expand in time can be that the creation of institutions might have unintended effects in arenas other than just the constitution. The creation of national institutions in Belarus might have a positive effect on the solution of creating a new set of rules of the political game in the Post-Soviet context, while producing a negative effect for non nationalistic actors in the national arena or stateness issue. Creating national institutions will in both long and short term perspectives help to consolidate the national idea, and have a positive effect on nation building. Hence, the establishment of a Belarusian presidency will weaken the imperial segments while strengthen the national segments in short term as well as in long term. The cost of the new institutions that can strengthen the national segments and support nation building will be larger for imperialists than for nationalists. As long as re-establishment of the Soviet empire seems a possible outcome, the cost of establishing new national institutions will be more costly for the imperialist than upholding the status quo. As long as the possibility of re-integration with the other republics exists, the short term costs of the inappropriate institutional design and an expanded transition period will be lower than the cost of creating national institutions. This can be one explanation of why it took over three years to establish a new institutional framework in Belarus and why the resistance amongst parliamentary hardliners to an early election was so pronounced. They strived against initiatives that could give legitimacy to a national state. Hence, from this argument it can be seen that these two dimensions had influence upon one another. To understand actor's preferences upon a single dimension it will be useful to take the other into consideration.

With regard to the issue of extraction from the power structures of the former regime Przeworski (1991: 74-5) argues that the presence of this conflict dimension in post-communist transitions is of minor importance due to the fact that the military as a tool for repression to a large extent was under civilian control and placed itself on the sideline of the transitional conflicts serving the nation rather than the regime. However, in the Soviet Union

a complete apparatus for suppression existed outside the military through the police and the KGB. While the military was defined to defend the regime and country against outside enemies a parallel apparatus existed to defend against internal enemies. This apparatus was to a large extend pacified during transition due to their unlimited support of the august 1991 coup d'état. Hence, the extraction was largely ended before the phase of transition started in both Russia and Belarus.

The forthcoming crisis that seemed imminent in the Soviet Union was according to Koktysh (1999) not recognised in Belarus until after independence due to the relative high living standards enjoyed by Belarusians compared to other republics and to the economic structure of Belarus. This factor combined with the fact that no political actors dared to bear the cost of an economic transition effectively hindered this issue from becoming central during the phase of transition. The Popular Front did not affect a transition to market economy or market reforms neither did any segment of the incumbent regime. On the other hand Belarus was and still is heavily depended on other former Soviet republics to allocate its goods and to maintain inexpensive energy supplies. However, the economic conflict was of minor importance during transition and has only become an issue of conflict at later stages.

Actors and preferences

As discussed in the previous chapter, three sets of actors can be defined as relevant in the Belarusian transition. The Belarusian Popular Front appeared during liberalisation mobilising on national and environmental issues. During the phase of liberalisation the regime was dominated by hardliners. However, a fragmentation of the regime became visible after the March 1990 election to the Supreme Soviet of Belarus where a reform friendly fraction was established as a part of the Democratic Club. The softliner fraction was led by Deputy Chairman Shushkevich. This fraction remained weak but took the opportunity offered in the aftermath of the August coup d'état and became influential in the beginning of the transition. The hardliner fraction remain the most powerful actor in the Belarusian transition despite their strong support for the plotters during the 1991 coup d'état. They controlled the executive and were supported by a majority in the Supreme Soviet. The most prominent figure in this fraction after the dismissal of Dzemiantsei as Chairman of the legislative was Prime Minister Kebich.

To analyse the outcome of the interaction between these three actor groups about the two relevant conflict issues one must outline their preferred strategies towards the outcome of

the interaction. As outlined in the theory chapter the strategies considered in this thesis are collapsed into the three main categories of democracy, hybrid regime or a status quo resembling authoritarian regime. As this thesis defines the actor group's strategies towards the constitution of new institutions, it also defines the actor's position towards the question of national independence.

Strategies of the Belarusian Popular Front

The establishment of the Popular Front in 1988 was a direct result of the phase of liberalisation and the glasnost and perestroika politics, to support these developments in Belarus as well as the national reawakening. The Popular Front functioned both as a cultural movement and later as a political party and states itself as having a clearly democratic and national orientation to the political agenda of the transition. As the Popular Front is not a fraction of the incumbent regime, but a result of mobilisation from civil society after the opening of the regime it is reasonable to anticipate that the party can be classified as an opposition group and in support of democracy, hence having democracy as its most preferred strategy.

This is confirmed by the party's own internet homepage. According to the party charter the party had a: *dual objective of the attainment of democracy and independence through national rebirth of civil society, which was destroyed by communists and foreign occupation.* ((BNF) 2000). The pages also outline the Party of the Popular Fronts goals and policies as being the struggle for a independent, democratic and neutral state having good relation with all nation without having …*special ties with gigantic Russia and the strengthening of the semi-colonial status advocated by the communist rulers of Belarus.* (BNF 2000). The party also advocates closer bonds and cooperation with the historical partners in the Baltics, Central Europe and the Black Sea regions claiming them to have a similar mentality, historical experience and economic and political challenges giving hope for a speedy integration into Europe (BNF 2000). Hence, an orientation towards the European Union while keeping good relations with Russia and other former Soviet Republics like the ones adopted by the three Baltic Republics after their independence and transition. The party does not openly speak out for membership of the European Union but mentions … *a speedy integration with pan-European and organizations* (BNF 2000). If the goal of the party is integration into the European Economic Community democracy is an absolute necessity for such a process to take place.

As the above quotation shows the Popular Front has a dual agenda of both democracy

and national independence. As argued earlier, the Popular Front mobilised on the three issues of language, Stalinist crimes and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. All issues were related to national reawakening and national mobilisation of the Belarusian nation and the creation of a new national identity. Independence as well as democracy are to be achieved through national rebirth, hence the creation of a real and distinct Belarusian identity. The dual goals are also confirmed by Marples (1999: 48) as being the establishment of popular authority and the rebirth of the Belarusian nation. The Popular Front are, according to its leader Paznyak, not extremists but committed to the concepts of Christian democracy and conservatism (Marples 1999: 48). In the phase of transition nothing implies that the Popular Front is to take a maximalist or radical position. They are believed to be gradualist on the dimension of constitution of new institutions, hence representing the moderate opposition segment as described by Colomer (2000: 37,49). The prioritising of the strategies of the Popular Front is therefore as follows:

Democracy > Hybrid regime > Status Quo

However, it is worth mentioning the potential for a maximalist strategy structure for the Popular Front as a consequence of its dual goals. As long as the Popular Front has the possibility to pursue its goal of independence and national rebirth independently of its decision upon the dimension of constitution, hence that the dimensions are not interconnected and choices upon them are made separately, the Popular Front will remain gradualists. On the other hand, if it is no longer possible for them to make decisions independently upon the two dimensions and they are forced to prioritise between their twin goals they might be willing to sacrifice democracy over national independence. This holds as long as national independence is considered to be of greater importance than democracy. Hence, the actor's utility is maximised.

Strategies of the centrist reform communists
Stanislau Shushkevich played a strategic role in the first phase of the Belarusian transition as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet and functioning head of state. He represents a centrist fraction in Belarusian politics in the early 1990s and was a leading figure in Belarusian politics in the beginning of the transition. According to Mihalisko (1997: 242) Shushkevich is one of very few politicians to occupy a centric position between the national opposition and the hardliner communists. However, the role played by Shushkevich in the transition is controversial and disputed and he is blamed by some democrats for the failures of the early

transition phase and by taking an active part in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He also became the scapegoat for the hardliner fraction blaming him for all future failures as well (Marples 1999: 61).

Unlike the hardliners he recognises, at least in the long term, the need for economic reforms and restructuring of society. In an interview with the journal Demokratizatsiya in 2004, Shushkevich points to opposition or opponents to his own position from two sides, from the left by communists and from the right by the Popular Front placing himself in a centrist position between the national opposition and the hardliner communists. (Shushkevich 2004: 68). He distances himself from the majority of communists in The Supreme Soviet; "*...where the majority was not of my thinking.* (Shushkevich 2004: 68). He very much put himself in the same situation as Gorbachev did on the central level some years earlier when trying to navigate between the communist majority and the national opposition. Trying to control the transition he shifted alliance between the hardliners and the Popular Front trying to build compromises and promote his own centrist goals.

The softliner actor that occupies the central position in the scheme adopted by Colomer (2000: 37) has a hybrid regime as his most preferred strategy. As Shushkevich is identified as a being in a middle position between the two other actors it is in this thesis presumed that he promotes the intermediate position of a hybrid regime as his most preferred strategy. However, it is hard to determine whether he is adopting the position of the radical or moderate softliner. In the aftermath he claims himself to be a democrat indicating a radical softliner position (Shushkevich 2004). Attempts to cooperate with the Popular Front would also point to such a position. On the other hand many things do indicate a position of the moderate softliner player. He does at several occasions point to the importance of compromising with the communist majority of the Supreme Soviet stressing the danger of confrontation in a society with a week national identity which had still not consolidated the idea of national independence. He promotes moderation towards the former rulers:

> *Besides, we did not attack them, we had just separate incidents. People that all the time had suffered because of the repression of Belarusness, they demanded more, they demanded punishment against those that carried out the reprisals against Belarusness. But we did not go the way of lustration. We were brave enough to understand that you cannot do this in Belarus. (Shushkevich 2004: 67)*

> *No, this was not the Czech Republic, where there was a clear national treachery by the top leadership. It was also not the Baltic republics. In Belarus there was a different system. And we developed certain restraints. More than anything, we achieved independence without shedding a single drop of blood after 200 years of Russian domination. That is why I don't think we could have gone any further. But probably we did not pay enough attention to explanation- it was difficult to explain.(Shushkevich 2004: 67)*

According to Mihalisko (1997: 247) Shushkevich was a meandering moderate at times where bold steps were to be taken to point out the future for Belarus. On the question of an early election in Belarus that was brought forward by the Popular Front, that preceded as much as 440.000 signatures in favour of a parliamentary election in 1992, Shushkevich sided with the communist majority in rejection the proposal and at this time he sided with the majority on many issues (Silitski 2003: 40). Despite his prominent position as speaker of parliament and function head of state Shushkevich failed to put forward any blueprint for democratic reforms in Belarus during the Belarusian transition (Mihalisko 1997: 247). Neither did he show particular interest in the Popular Fronts initiative for an early parliamentary election. Internal rivalry between the Popular Fronts leader Pazniak and Shushkevich weakened the opposition and the Popular Front newer forgave him for his "betrayal" (Silitski 2003: 40). These confrontations with the opposition, his reservations against confrontation with the old regime and his orientation towards cooperation with the communist majority of the Supreme Soviet do indicate a moderate softliner position. Hence, Shushkevich will prioritise the status quo over democracy. The prioritising of the strategies of Shushkevich on the dimension of constitution is therefore as follows:

Hybrid Regime > Status Quo > Democracy

It is very likely that the utility expected by the actor in return from following his second and third strategy is approximately equal. The reason for his ordering of preferences can be the actor's expectation of extraction benefits from cooperation with the majority actor, hence gaining slightly more utility from his second best strategy when played in cooperation with the majority actor. If the strength of the actors change or new and more important issues are brought to the arena he might extract greater utility from changing allies by playing the third best strategy. Hence, he will then gain a greater utility for the third strategy of democracy and the structure of the strategy order will change to the one of the radical softliner.

Such an issue may lead to an alteration of the actor's strategies and be the one described as the issue of national independence. Shushkevich did host the meeting between himself, Yeltsin and Kravchuk at Belavezha in Western Belarus where the three leaders of the founding republics of the Soviet Union put an end to the existence of the Soviet Union and created the Commonwealth of Independent states. The commonwealth was adopted as a civilised form of transition towards independence, much reflecting the earlier views of the Popular Front, that had advocated a commonwealth including Belarus historical companions (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 116-17). Shushkevich was closer to the Popular Front on the

issue of national independence than to the communist hardliners and was committed to independence and sovereignty (Mihalisko 1997: 247). However, he stresses the importance of compromising with the hardliners, creating a broad compromise for independence by including continued work on a Union Treaty while safeguarding Belarusian independence and recognition by Russia (Shushkevich 2004: 68-9). Hence, on this issue he stays with the national opposition but unlike the Popular Front he sees the necessity of making a concession to the hardliners to secure independence.

Strategies of the communist hardliners
The radical hardliner coup d'état attempt in Moscow in August did not only clear the way for softliners like Shushkevich but it also brought Viacheslua Kebich and his fraction into a dominant position as head of the Council of Ministers of Belarus. Kebich had long roots in the communist party and had been a party member for more than 30 years when he became Prime Minister in 1991 (Marples 1999: 60). In the phase of transition he took a leading role in the hardliner fraction due to his position as Premier and head of the executive branch of power in Belarus. Through the Kebich fraction, the old elites and the nomenklarura had a strong grasp on power in Belarus both in the executive and legislative during the phase of transition. They totally dominated the soviet era parliament as well as the government. Real power did not lay with Shushkevich but with the Council of Ministers, hence with the Kebich fraction (Marples 1999: 61). However, the legitimacy of the majority fraction represented by Kebich was seriously damaged by the unlimited support of the Belarusian regime for the August plotters in Moscow and was therefore dependent on cooperation and compromise with other actors for legitimacy. This was at least the case in the beginning of transition when the real strength of the actors in society remained unclear.

According to Marples (1999: 61) Kebich was resistant to a fundamental change in Belarus and a long term member of the ruling soviet elite. During the phase of liberalisation in Belarus the Communist Party was as earlier shown hostile to the reforms that were implemented by the regime in Moscow, trying hard to restrict or hinder implementation of these in Belarus. The regime in Belarus also sided with the plotters during the August coup d'état. Even though the Communist Party of Belarus was forbidden after the coup, a new party emerged in December that same year, the Party of Communist of Belarus. The ban led to some change in the ruling elites, though the major changes in the top leadership were peripheral (Marples 1999: 59-60). The communists were still in control of most spheres of society even after the independence, and as stated by Shushkevich (2004: 66-7) a clear break

or lustration of the communists were neither possible or desirable in Belarus. The communists stayed in power throughout the phase of transition and did to a large extend stay loyal to Kebich and acted as a united group both in parliament and in the Council of Ministers. The main political goals of the communists were according to Marples (1999: 60) to support closer ties with Russia, being hostile and resistant towards economic reforms and privatisation and in favour of a restoration of the Soviet Union, hence a return to the pre-Gorbachev era. This argument supports a structure of strategies of the hardliner fractions as described by Colomer (2000: 37) hence having a status quo as their most preferred strategy.

Even though the leadership of the hardliner communist fraction largely remained the same after the coup d'état and some radical elements as the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet was removed, the most radical elements of the ruling elites was neutralised due to their support to the August coup. This was not sufficient to introduce radical changes in the political elites or leading the majority to adopt new ideas (Belova-Gille 2003: 56-7). However, the most radical elements were pacified, and the prioritising of the strategies for the hardliner actor in the Belarusian transition phase is believed to be the gradualist one, hence the one of the moderate hardliner actor. The prioritising of the strategies of the Kebich fraction on the dimension of constitution is therefore as follows:

Status Quo > Hybrid regime > Democracy

On the aspect of national independence the Kebich fraction differs substantially from both the national opposition and the centric Shushkevich by being strong opponents of national independence as well as the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Some fractions even advocate the re-establishment of the pre-Gorbachev Soviet Union (Marples 1999: 60). The compromise of independence made between the hardliner communist fraction, the national opposition and with Shushkevich as architect opened for the possibility of re-integration with other former soviet republics, work on a new union treaty or development of closer integration within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Such goals were also pursued by the Kebich fraction towards the end of the transition phase.

Preferences of actors towards possible outcomes of interaction in the Belarusian transition

Having outlined the ordering and prioritising of strategies of the actors of the Belarusian transition towards the dimension of constitution of institutions lead us to the next step;

outlining the ordering of preferences towards the possible outcomes of the collective interaction that takes place during the phase of transition on the dimension of constitution. The interaction between two actors within the framework of the three strategies democracy, hybrid regime and status quo produces a total of nine different outcomes (2^3=8). Adding a third actor to the strategic interaction expands the possible number of outcomes to 27 if all three strategies are taken into consideration (3^3=27). However, as stated by Colomer (2000: 47-8) the last strategy of the actor should be considered as a complete defeat or surrender to the predominant actor rather than a strategy of interaction. Since we can expect the actor to extract little or no utility from playing such a strategy the third strategy is not considered a rational option for the actor to play. Hence, the actor will be at least as good or better off by withdrawing from the interaction as by playing the third strategy if the costs of interaction exceed the possible utility of the third strategy. It will then no longer be rational for the actor to participate in the interaction. Hence, actors are not playing their third strategy during the interaction with other actors in the phase of transition. Therefore, including the third strategy in the game model and the preference ordering will not add any explanatorily strength to the model. So, to maintain realism and avoid unnecessary complication of the model the third strategy of the actors is excluded from the model.

To order the actors preferences towards the possible outcomes where the actors involved in the game can choose from their two most preferred outcomes Colomer (2000: 48) suggests a hypothesis in which the actors above all prefer the outcome with a degree of pressure for change that corresponds to the actor's most preferred strategy. Hence, the actors preferring the largest degree of change from the former authoritarian regime, the opposition actors who prefer the strategy of democracy over all other strategies will prioritise outcomes with the largest degree of pressure for change over outcomes with a lower degree of pressure for change. The most preferred outcome for the opposition actor is when all actors play the strategy of democracy and so on. The least preferred outcome for an opposition actor will be one of almost no change where all actors play the strategy of status quo. If outcomes of interaction reflect roughly the same degree of change the outcome that is produced by coincident strategies of actors are preferred to an outcome with consecutive strategies reflecting a conflict outcome (Colomer 2000: 48). This reflects the costs related to a situation of conflict for the actors. If possible, the actors will try to reduce the costs connected with the interaction when the outcomes produce an approximately equal degree of change. Hence, when the actor can extract an approximately equal degree of utility from the outcomes with regard to the degree of change the actor's choice will be determined by the degree of costs

connected with outcomes and the one with the lowest degree of cost is chosen.

Actors choice = Utility of degree of change minus Cost of conflict.

It is possible to have a total of 27 outcomes from interaction with three actors with three different strategies. However, in a static game between the three actors who play their two best strategies that have been examined above there are eight possible outcomes. To make a perspicuous examination of the actor's preferences towards the outcomes relevant for the model only the eight possible outcomes are considered. Only one of the outcomes of the interaction, the outcome where all actors choose a hybrid regime, is a non-conflict outcome. This represents an outcome where the moderate or centric player, here the Shushkevich fraction, intervenes between two distant actors with opposing interests creating the possibility for a compromise that includes all actors in the transition. This outcome where all actors play the intermediate strategy of a hybrid regime represents both a low cost of conflict by compromising and a medium high degree of pressure for change.

All other outcomes represent some degree of conflict either between two actors with coinciding strategies and one actor opposing this, or where all three actors have opposing strategies. No less than six outcomes represent situations where two actors compromise while the third actor is left out. Only two of these six outcomes represent a compromise between the national opposition and the Shushkevich fraction while four outcomes reflect compromises between the Shushkevich fraction and the Kebich fraction. This skewed distribution between actor compromises firstly reflects a situation where the softliner fraction is moderate and, for some reason or another, seeks cooperation with the hardliners. Hence, Shushkevich recognised the dominant position of Kebich as well as the necessity of compromising with this fraction in the phase of transition (Shushkevich 2004). At the same time this argument reflects the relative weakness of the national opposition compared with the hardliners in power. However, it also reflects the distance between the actors on the dimension of the constitution of the new regime. When viewing this dimension isolated the Kebich fraction and the Shushkevich fraction are relatively closer while the national opposition takes a more distant position at least towards the hardliners. It might also reflect the Popular Fronts scepticism towards compromising with the other actors because they fears loosing national independence, hence viewing the interaction over this dimension as a part of a nested game that also includes the national dimension.

Twice does the compromises reflects an outcome where the Kebich fraction and the Shushkevich fraction agree upon the strategy of status quo while the national opposition is left out of the compromise by choosing either democracy or a hybrid regime. Such an outcome

would uphold the authoritarian regime and probably exclude the national opposition from further political participation. These outcomes reflect a low or a medium low degree of pressure for change compared with the former regime. The last compromise outcome excluding the national opposition occurs when both the Kebich and the Shushkevich fractions choose to play their strategy of hybrid regime while the Popular Front plays the strategy of democracy. This situation reflects an outcome similar to the compromise outcome discussed earlier, but where the one actor, the national opposition does not enter into the compromise but stays with its most preferred strategy of democracy. Like the outcomes ending in status quo the national opposition does not take part in the compromise. The crafting of the new institutional framework is left to the two remaining actors. However, unlike the outcomes resulting in a status quo situation a hybrid regime opens for the possibility of limited participation also for the Popular Front. This situation reflects the largest degree of pressure for change of all the outcomes resulting from this interaction.

Two outcomes are reflections of a situation in which the Popular Front enters into a compromise about a hybrid regime with either the Kebich or the Shushkevich fraction while the actor who does not enter into the compromise chooses the strategy of status quo. A compromise between the national opposition and the incumbent ruling fraction would lead to a regime with limited contestation and participation most likely leaving the Popular Front without major influence in politics at first, but still securing them the possibility to continue to press for reforms. A compromise between the Popular Front and the Shushkevich fraction reflects a situation where the two weakest actors in a astounding way manage to outmanoeuvre the ruling Kebich fraction and somehow pacify this dominant actor. Both these changes reflect outcomes with a medium low degree of pressure for change. Schedler (2002b) presents an argument for why actors would settle for this sort of a half way solution which the hybrid regime represents. Shortly his argument is that the actors do not see the founding election as the end of transition as closing the possibility for political changes in the future. Instead the actors see the limited possibilities for contestation and participation as tools to pressure for further political change especially at times of election in a situation of a *nested game democratisation by elections*. This hypothesis can also help explain the recent revolutions in post-communist regimes.

Two outcomes represent situations where all actors play strategies which are opposing each other without any element of compromise between the participation actors. Respectively, when the national opposition plays democracy, the Kebich fraction plays status quo when the Shushkevich fraction plays a hybrid regime or when the Kebich fraction chooses to play a

hybrid regime and the Shushkevich fraction plays status quo. These two outcomes represent situations of conflict between the actors in which actors face the cost of conflict without being able to extract utility from cooperation. The result of such a confrontation during the phase of transition will therefore depend upon the position and strength of the actors. Both conflict outcomes represent a medium high degree of pressure for change from the authoritarian point of departure.

Table 5.1

Outcomes of strategic interaction about constitution

Strategy sets	Outcome description
D,H,H	**Compromise** outcome in which the Shushkevich fraction and Kebich fraction agree upon a hybrid regime **while** the Popular Front presses for further democratic reforms
H,H,H	**Compromise** outcome in which **all** actors agree upon the establishment of a hybrid regime
D,S,H	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue their **most preferred strategy**, no compromise reached as result of interaction
D,H,S	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue conflicting strategies, no compromise reached as result of interaction
D,S,S	**Compromise** outcome in which the Shushkevich fraction and Kebich fraction agree upon a status quo regime **while** the Popular Front presses for further democratic reforms
H,H,S	**Compromise** outcome in which the Shushkevich fraction and the Popular Front agree upon a hybrid regime **while** Kebich fraction presses for a status quo regime
H,S,H	**Compromise** outcome in which the Kebich fraction and the Popular Front agree upon a hybrid regime **while** the Shushkevich fraction presses for a status quo regime
H,S,S	**Compromise** outcome in which the Shushkevich fraction and Kebich fraction agree upon a status quo regime **while** the Popular Front presses for a hybrid regime

Strategies: D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Popular Front, second to Shushkevich fraction and third to Kebich fraction

The eight outcomes can be ordered with regard to the degree of pressure for change from to the former regime. The strategy representing the largest degree of pressure for change is the opposition's first strategy of democracy followed by the softliners first strategy of a hybrid regime representing a medium pressure for change. A low degree of or no pressure for change is represented by the hardliners most preferred strategy of a status quo dictatorship. The ordering of the outcomes is discussed above and is illustrated in table 5.2. The outcome representing the highest degree of pressure for change is a hybrid regime established by the softliner and hardliner actors while the opposition actor keeps pressing for democracy. A medium high degree of pressure for change is present in the outcomes when all actors are compromising on a hybrid regime as well as the two conflict outcomes in which the opposition always pressures for democracy and one of the two other actors will pressure for a

hybrid regime.

The remaining two outcomes that leads to a hybrid regime is ordered together with the outcome in which the opposition goes for democracy while the two remaining actors compromise upon preserving the regime in its pre-transitional form as outcomes with medium low pressure for change. Both these compromise outcomes represent a situation in which the actor excluded from the compromise will press for a status quo dictatorship. While the status quo compromise outcome in which the opposition actor plays the strategy representing the largest degree of change, the strategy of democracy, the two remaining actors press for low or no change in their choices of strategy. One outcome represents a situation with a lower pressure for change than these three outcomes, hence the outcome in which the opposition chooses the medium change strategy of a hybrid regime while the hardliners and the softliners choose to pressure for the status quo pre-transitional dictatorship leading to a low or almost non existing pressure for change compared to the former regime.

Table 5.2

Outcomes ordered towards the degree of pressure for change

High	**D,H,H**		
Medium high	**D,S,H**	**D,H,S**	**H.H.H**
Medium low	**H,H,S**	**H,S,H**	**D,S,S**
Low/non	**H,S,S**		

Strategies: D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Popular Front, second to Shushkevich fraction and third to Kebich fraction

Having discussed the degree of pressure for change connected with the different outcomes it is possible to rank the actor's preference order towards the eight alternative outcomes. This is done in consistency with Colomers (2000: 47-9) hypothesises on how the actors range the outcomes in accordance with their strategies and how to minimise the cost of conflict. However, by ordering the preferences in a three player game after these two

assumptions there will be outcomes in which the actors are indifferent towards the outcomes, hence they are expected to extract the same degree of utility from the different outcomes. The preference structure for the three actors is outlined in table 5.3. The outcomes are given ordinal values of which eight represents the greatest utility while one represents the lowest.

The Popular Front first strategy is as earlier outlined democracy followed by a hybrid regime and status quo as the least preferred. This ordering of strategies defines the preferred outcomes as the ones that represent the largest degree of pressure for change over the ones that represent a lower degree of pressure for change. Hence, as seen in table 5.2 the outcome that represents the largest degree of change is the outcome in which the opposition presses for democracy and the two other actors press for a hybrid regime. Therefore this is the most preferred outcome of the Popular Front. Three outcomes are described as representing a medium high degree of pressure for change. Of these the Popular Front will prefer the compromise outcome in which all actors compromise on a hybrid regime. After that the two conflict outcomes will follow. Here the Popular Front will always press for the most preferred strategy and it is assumed that the Popular Front will be indifferent to which strategy the two other players choose as long as the result is a conflict. Consequently, it is believed that the Popular Front is indifferent to the conflict outcomes that represent the same utility to the actors and it is therefore given the same ordinal value. Of the three outcomes that represent medium low degree of pressure for change the outcome in which the Popular Front press for democracy while the others press for status quo will be the most preferred by the opposition because it is the closest choice of its initial strategy. The two remaining outcomes would according to the two original hypnotises represent a situation of indifference for the Popular Front. The worst outcome for the national opposition would be the situation in which they press for a hybrid regime while the other actors agree upon upholding a status quo dictatorship leaving no room for nationalism or opposition activity. This outcome also represents the lowest degree of pressure for change of all outcomes in the game.

As can be seen from the above table, Shushkevich would prefer the outcomes representing medium high degree of pressure for change over the other outcomes. Hence, the outcome that is most preferred is the one in which all actors compromise on a common solution of a hybrid regime. Of the two conflict outcomes Shushkevich fraction will prefer the one in which he chooses a hybrid regime and the other two actors choose conflicting outcomes over the conflict outcome in which the Shushkevich fraction chooses status quo. These outcomes are followed by those that represent a medium low degree of change. The most preferred outcome among these is that of which both the Shushkevich fraction and the

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national opposition choose a hybrid regime. In accordance to the two hypothesises the actor is indifferent towards the two remaining outcomes representing a medium low degree of pressure for change. It is furthermore assumed that the actor would prefer the outcome representing high degree of pressure for change over the one representing low pressure for change. The Shushkevich fraction which belongs to the softliner group of actors is in favour of changes and does recognise the need for change to avoid a systemic crisis in the future.

Table 5.3
Preferences of the actors in the Belarusian transition

Popular Front	Shushkevich Fraction	Kebich Fraction	Ordinal Payoff
D,H,H	H,H,H	H,S,S	7
H,H,H	D,H,S	D,S,S-H,H,S	6
D,H,S-D,S,H	D,S,H	H,S,H	5
D,S,S	H,H,S	H,H,H	4
H,H,S-H,S,H	D,S,S-H,S,H	D,H,S	3
	D,H,H	D,S,H	2
H,S,S	H,S,S	D,H,H	1

D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Popular front, second to Shushkevich fraction and third to Kebich fraction

The most preferred strategy of the Kebich fraction is status quo. Then follow the strategy of a hybrid regime and finally democracy. This ordering of the strategies suggests an orientation against change and in favour of preservation of the existing social order and regime. Hence, this fraction will prioritise outcomes representing a low degree of pressure for change over the ones representing higher pressure for change. Their most preferred outcome is the one representing low or no degree of pressure for change, the one in which both the Kebich and the Shushkevich fractions press for status quo while the Popular Front presses for a hybrid regime. This outcome is followed by the ones representing a medium low degree of pressure for change in which the Kebich fraction will be indifferent to the two outcomes of in which they are pressuring for status quo while the third outcome in which they are pressing for a hybrid regime would be the least preferred of the three. Of the three outcomes

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representing medium high degree of pressure for change, the outcome representing consensus is the most preferred followed by the conflict outcome in which the Kebich fraction chooses status quo and the least preferred is the conflict outcome in which the Kebich fraction chooses a hybrid regime. The worst outcome for the Kebich fraction is the one which represents the largest degree of pressure for change in which the Popular Front presses for democracy and the two other actors press for a hybrid regime.

The Game of Transition in Belarus 1991-93

The game presented in the figure below is a refection of the political situation in Belarus during the first phase of transition with three actors participating as player in the game of strategic interaction about constitution. As can be seen from the preference structure in table 5.3 the two distant actors possess dominant strategies in the game. The Popular Front has a dominant strategy of democracy while the Kebich fraction possesses a dominant strategy of status quo. This means that these two actors would be better off choosing their most preferred strategy no matter what the two remaining actors choose. The dominant strategy of an actor is unconditionally the best choice the actor can make under any circumstance. Choosing this strategy gives higher utility to both actors. The Shushkevich fraction on the other hand does not possess a dominant strategy, and will therefore be able to change strategy according to the other players choice to maximise his utility. This game is sketched in figure 5.1.

This applied model is a static game theoretic model in which the actors possess full information about their own and their opponent's strategies and payoffs. The actors are expected to act simultaneously not knowing the move of the other actors (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 45). By solving the game it appears that the equilibrium of the game is positioned in the upper left cell of the matrix.[10] This outcome has earlier been described as a conflict situation in which all actors choose their most preferred strategy. This actual outcome is a Nash equilibrium meaning that none of the actors have the initiative to change their strategy unilaterally from the strategies that forms the equilibrium. However, the Nash equilibrium in this game is a Pareto-suboptimal equilibrium because all actors can improve their payoffs by moving from the conflict outcome representing the Nash-equilibrium to the compromise

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[10] The game is solved by dominant strategies for the Popular Front and the Kebich fraction. They will always play their most preferred strategy. The Shushkevich fraction has a mixed strategy which forms the equilibrium in the outcome: DHS.

outcome in which all actors choose hybrid regime as their strategy.[11] Nevertheless, the actors does not manage to end in this outcome, not because they are irrational but because they form their decision based upon individual rationality and not upon collective rationality and as long as an actor possesses a strategy that is strictly dominant it would be irrational to change this strategy to a another one that makes the actor worse of (Midtbø 2003: 127).

Figure 5.1 **Game of strategic interaction about constitution**
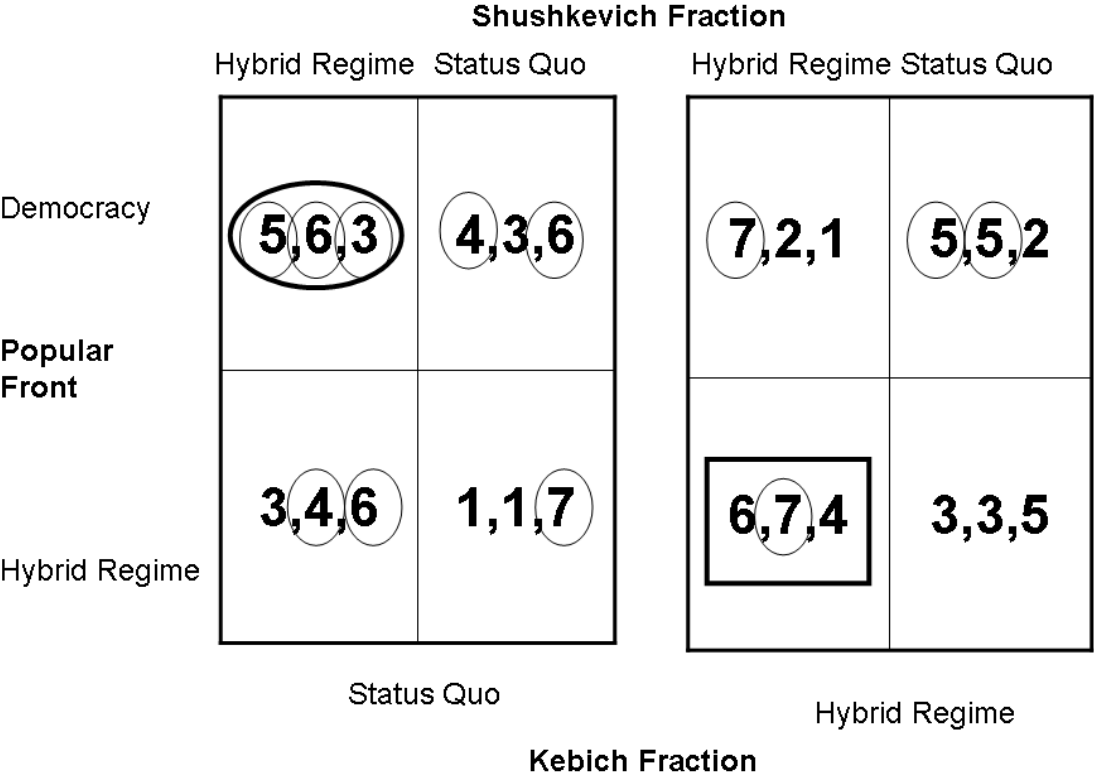
To reach the Pareto-optimal solution of the game it is necessary for both the Kebich fraction and the Popular Front to shift from their strictly dominant strategies simultaneously as a collective action and not as a unilateral move. If one of the actor fractions makes a unilateral change of strategy in expectation of achieving some collective good by inspiring other actors to do the same change of strategy it would most likely face a punishment from the other actor. The opposing actor will extract greater utility by staying in his original position playing his strictly dominant strategy leaving his opponent with a worse payoff than in the Nash equilibrium while he himself extracts a greater utility. This makes the game presented in

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[11] This discussion of change in strategies depends upon the assumptions of Brams' (1994) "theory of moves" in which the game has an initial state and the actors can react and counter react on each others moves before the game ends (Tvedt 2004: 86). Hence, they are entering into a dynamic interaction.

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figure 5.1, a three player variant of the prisoners' dilemma.[12]

Having a Nash equilibrium that is Pareto suboptimal makes the outcome stable towards the actors unilaterally changing their strategy due to the danger of being punished by other actors while being unstable with regard to the actors collectively changing their strategies in order to achieve a better payoff. On the other hand the Pareto optimal solution is which might be achieved by collective action, is unstable precisely because it is not a Nash equilibrium and is therefore vulnerable to actors unilaterally changing their strategy to receive better payoffs. If the Nash equilibrium had corresponded to the Pareto optimal it would not have been possible to change the outcome neither unilaterally nor collectively (Tsebelis 1990: 67). The Prisoners' dilemma does on the other hand open for instability not only in the Pareto optimal solution but also in the Nash equilibrium.[13]

The game in figure 5.1 is modelled as a static game with full information regarding other actor's preferences upon the dimension, but the information is incomplete due to the fact that the game does not specify the sequence of actors' moves. Actors are believed to act simultaneously and not as reactions to choices of other actors. To model the game with full and complete information can be done by changing the game into a dynamic game. According to Gates and Humes (1997: 4) this can at some instants rule out Nash equilibriums that seems unreasonable. In this game actors can respond to previous choices taken by other actors by rewarding or punishing their action (Hovi and Rasch 1993: 68). To investigate whether the sequence of choice can rule out the Pareto-sub-optimality equilibrium in the Belarusian game the game has been turned into a dynamic game as shown in figure 5.2.

In the figure the game is opened by the Kebich fraction that can choose between their two most preferred strategies status quo or a hybrid regime exactly as in the static game. The

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[12] In this game, two distant actors intervene as in the classical two-player Prisoners' Dilemma game. The hardliner and opposition players possess dominant strategies in this game. However, in this game they are joined by an intermediate softliner player who presumably may temper the sharpness of the confrontation or act as an intermediator (Colomer 2000: 147). Despite this, the Nash-equilibrium largely corresponds to that of the two player game.

[13] This game has been simulated in a computer model to examine whether repeated games will influence the equilibrium. For the expected utility of choosing comprise to be approximately equal to that of not compromising the interaction has to be repeated several hundred times. Even when "tit for tat" strategies were applied to the game the number of interaction which was needed to achieve a compromise was way beyond the time frame of the Belarusian transition. Even when taking into account that this is only a simulation, a compromise as result of repeated games seems to be unrealistic in this case. I have neither found empirical evidence for such an assumption.

Shushkevich fraction can chose between his two most preferred strategies which also is status quo and a hybrid regime as a response to the choice of the Kebich fraction. The Popular Front on the other hand chooses between democracy and a hybrid regime which is its two most preferred strategies. The pay-offs and the outcomes of the game fully correspond to the outcomes and utility payoffs determent in the static game.

Figure 5.2

Game of strategic interaction about constitution
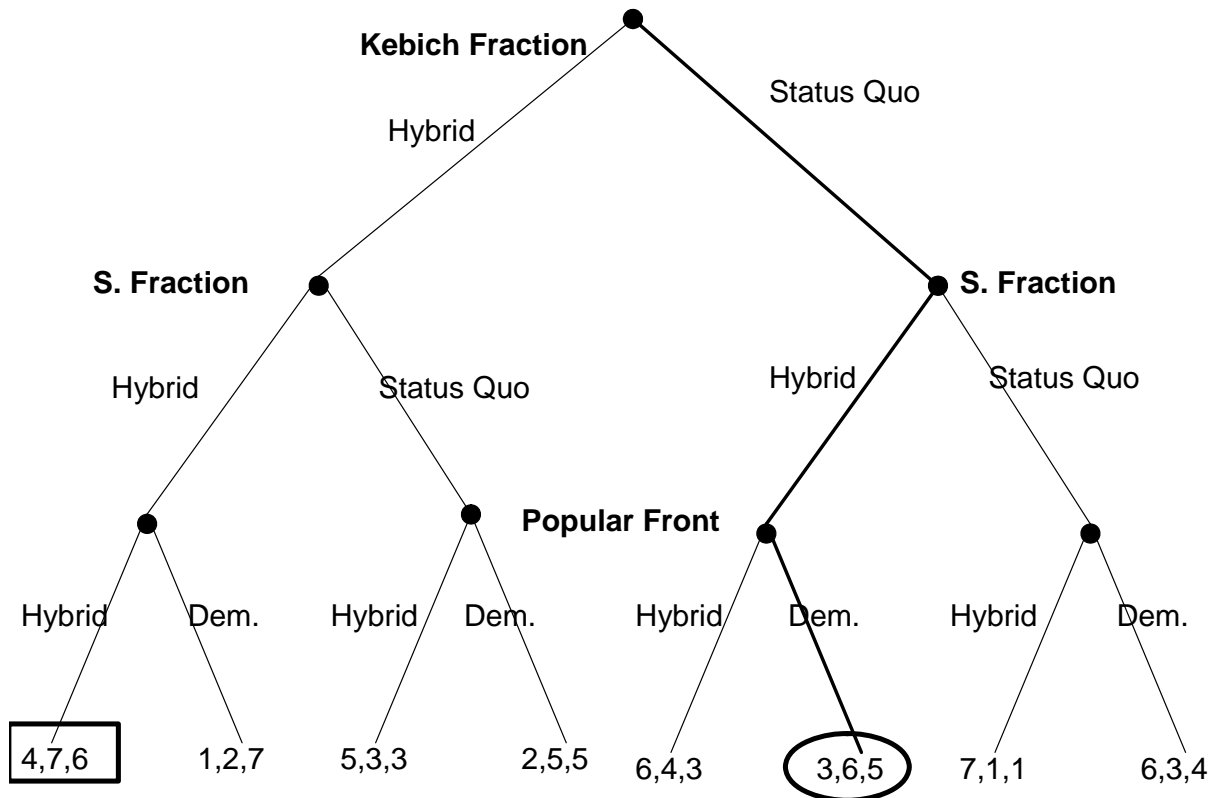
The game is solved trough backward induction by finding the subgame prefect equilibriums. To decide the equilibrium we start by deciding the choices of the last player. This is here the Popular Front which in all cases will choose the action that rewards them with the highest utility. As for the static game this will always be choosing democracy. Hence, no matter the choices of the other actors democracy will always be the most rewarding for the Popular Front. Their dominant strategy of democracy is intact even in the extensive form game. By deciding the choices of the Popular Front we decide the sub game perfect equilibriums in the game. By knowing the Popular Fronts strategies we can rule out four of the outcomes that will not be chosen. Knowing these we can decide the Shushkevich Fractions action in the game. They can choose between equilibriums that are still available. The choice will depend upon the expected utility Shushkevich connects to the outcomes. As in the static game Shushkevich has no dominant strategy but makes his choice based upon the

choice of the other actors. The outcomes not chosen by Shushkevich can be excluded as equilibriums. This leaves us with two possible choices for the Kebich fraction when he opens the game. One in which implies the choice of a hybrid regime and one in which implies the choice of status quo. The strategy of status quo will always reward the Kebich fraction more than their second best strategy due to their position of a dominant strategy which also is existing in the extensive form game. Hence, the strategy of status quo is chosen. The sub game prefect equilibrium that is chosen in this extensive form game corresponds to the outcome DHS. This is the same result as found in the static game. The static game Nash equilibrium fully corresponds to the sub game perfect equilibrium. This outcome is enhanced by the circle. In this game as well there exists a Pareto optimal equilibrium which is enhanced by the rectangle. This also corresponds to the Pareto-optimal outcome in the static game the compromise upon a hybrid regime. The same instability which characterises the static game is also present in the extensive form version.

The game presented above the game was opened by the party in power, the Kebich fraction. The games could be initiated by other actors such as the opposition or the head of state, Shushkevich. However, changing the sequence of the actors choices does not affect neither the outcome nor the instability of the game. Thus, the sequence of choices and actors position can not help us to reach an equilibrium that is different from the instable and sub-optimal Nash equilibrium of the static game. [14]

The prisoners' dilemma game does not hinder actors from reaching the Pareto-optimal solution by moving from the Nash equilibrium to the Pareto optimal outcome, but this have to happen under certain circumstances to avoid punishment of the actor that initiates the change of strategies. To change strategies the actors must be non myopic and able to communicate, to develop what Tsebelis (1990: 68) refers to as contingent or correlated strategies in which actors coordinate their strategies in order to avoid sub-optimality. Contingent strategies can be developed in general situation when actors start to communicate, and they enter into binding agreements known as pacts in the transition literature or when they are able to enter into repeated interaction. Actors contracts, their communication or their behaviour in previous interaction corresponding to the present game, can give actors the possibility to coordinate or correlate their strategies (Tsebelis 1990: 69). By following one or more of these strategies the actors can escape the prisoners' dilemma and avoid Pareto sub-optimality.

Colomer (2000: 146-8) suggests that in a three player prisoners' dilemma game as the

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[14] For games initiated by the Popular Front and the Shushkevich fraction, please refer to the appendix.

one presented above, the softliner actor may temper the sharpness of the confrontation or act as an intermediator. The situation of three players intervening over the issue of constitution reflects a high degree of pluralism over the relevant conflict dimension in the society. The more players the less chance of interaction leading to victory for only one actor according to Colomer. If the Shushkevich fraction in Belarus is to act as a intermediator it would be by virtue of his position as a centric player positioned between the two more distant actors on the conflict dimension of constitution. In such a position it would be possible for Shushkevich to use the threatening power he possesses due to his strategic position as an intermediate player to try to persuade the two other actors to simultaneously change their strategies and achieve the Pareto-optimal equilibrium. As Tsebelis (1990) argues binding agreements can force actors to choose such contingent strategies to reach Pareto-optimality. This kind of binding agreements is known as a pact in transition theory. They are believed to play an important role in transitions as a part of gradually changing the political systems into a more democratic direction. Pacts are explicit agreements, not necessarily public known, which are made between selected actors. A pact is meant to secure actors vital interests by mutual guarantees during transition as well as in the new regime (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 37). Pacts can not only help actors to reach the Pareto-optimal equilibrium in a prisoners' dilemma game, they may also secure that the compromise represented by an equilibrium becomes a stable one by rewarding the actor who keeps the agreement and stays in the equilibrium. It is possible to reach and keep the compromise equilibrium when the pact rewards the actors to such an extend that the cost of breaking the pact by returning to the dominant strategy is larger than the utility increase gained by such an action. Under such negotiated situations it is possible to move to the Pareto-optimal outcome and secure, as long as the pact is functioning, stability against actors leaving the equilibrium unilaterally. It is Colomers (2000) belief that the softliner actors in such games can contribute positively in the effort to achieve such outcomes.

Power struggle and conflict during the Belarusian transition

The game equilibrium is reflecting a conflict outcome where all actors pursue conflicting and opposing strategies. The prisoners' dilemma game suggests that only when specific conditions are achieved it is possible to move from this Nash equilibrium to the Pareto Optimal equilibrium or any other outcomes which reflects a compromise. The conflict between the democratic opposition and the ruling communist fraction has earlier been discoursed under the phase of liberalisation as well as under the early phase of transition. The Popular Front

and the Kebich fraction are distant actors both on the dimension of constitution as well as on the issue of national independence. But conflicts also arose between respectively the Popular Front and Shushkevich fraction and the Kebich fraction and Shushkevich during transition. These conflicts and Shushkevich's failed attempts to act as an intermediate actor between the more distant actors lead to finally lead to the end of his political career early in 1994.

Shushkevich came into conflict with the Popular Front already in aftermath of the August coup d'état when the Popular Front was resistant against compromises with the softliners fraction within the nomenklatura apparatus. The Popular Front pursued a goal of gaining power without building real and lasting political alliances with centric actors (Silitski 2003: 39). The Popular Front believed Shushkevich to be submissive towards the Kebich fraction and was unwilling to enter an agreement on a radical reform program to democratise as well as reorient Belarus towards the West. As a consequence no formal cooperation was established to secure independence or democracy for Belarus among the reform friendly actors. Shushkevich admits such attitudes, claiming it not to be possible due to the strong position in the power apparatus of the Kebich fraction (Shushkevich 2004). He claims that it was not possible or desirable to press for any further reforms as the situation developed in the early 1990. It was not possible for him to break with either the past or the Kebich fraction. Shushkevich's negative attitude towards the Popular Fronts initiative for an early election that could have secured stronger support in the parliament for the reform friendly fraction created a final climate of distrust and hardened the collaboration between the Popular Front and the Shushkevich fraction. Shushkevich did never manage to include the Popular Front in a compromise to solve the issue of constitution of a new political framework.

As the conflict arose between Shushkevich and the Popular Front Shushkevich turned towards Kebich. As said earlier Shushkevich was strongly committed to independence and sovereignty but at the same time he was dismissive of further reforms believing that independence, neutrality and sovereignty were as far as it was possible to push the change in the phase of transition. In the 2004 interview he states:

> *More than anything, we achieved independence without shedding a single drop of blood after 200 years of Russian domination. That is why I don't think we could have gone any further. But probably we did not pay enough attention to explanation- it was difficult to explain.(Shushkevich 2004: 67)*

Judging from his statements he was clearly reluctant towards further change allying him with the hardliner fraction and distances himself from the democratic movement. This choice can indicate a vision of national communism known from the perestroika and glasnost period as well as the early day of the revolution. Such a vision, however, never became an alternative to

democratisation in Belarus (Mihalisko 1997). Shushkevich were quite far from the Kebich fraction on the question of national independence and much closer towards the Popular Fronts position. He was strongly committed to national independence, sovereignty and neutrality. Being the architect behind the compromise of national independence thoughts the declaration of independence in 1991 as well as Belavezha accord he believed that national independence could be secured if more radical reforms including institutional, democratic and economic reforms were postponed. This strategy corresponds to the hypothesis set forward by Schedler (2002b) in which the founding election is not considered an ending point of democratisation by all actors but continuing also after the founding election. The actor's goals must therefore not be fulfilled by the time of the founding election, but can be realised later on at another critical moment, such as elections. Hence, democratic and economic reforms can therefore delayed off in time as long as main goals of actors is secured, especially the goarl of national independence achieved trough the compromise of independence in 1991.

Such a situation will correspond to the outcome DSS where the Kebich fraction and the Shushkevich fraction compromise on a status quo upon the conflict of constitution of a new institutional and political framework while the Popular Front continues to press for democracy but under the conditions of further democratisation as a "nested game of democratisation by elections" following the logic of Schedler (2002b). The outcome HHS would also correspond to such a situation but is excluded because of the Popular Fronts dominant strategy of democracy as a result of their twin politics of democracy and national independence. A compromise in which the Popular Front suddenly changes its strategy to the most preferred strategy of the Shushkevich fraction might have produced new dynamics. For these reasons and for keeping the analys easier to follow the possibility of dual payoffs for this outcome is excluded. To create stability in such an outcome the Popular Front must share the belief of Shushkevich, in which the dimension of national independence is regarded to be the far most important, so important that the actors are willing to put other agendas on hold for a considerable period of time. A change in equilibrium from the conflict outcome DHS, which is the Nash equilibrium in the Prisoners' dilemma game, to the outcome which is sub-optimal to both the Shushkevich fraction and the Popular Front on the dimension of constitution, would need a unilateral change in strategy by the Shushkevich fraction. A unilateral change of strategy would result in an equilibrium in the outcome DSS when both other actors stay on their dominant strategies. One explanation for such a unilateral change in strategy would be that Shushkevich has changed his political orientation with regard to the conflict dimension of constitution in such a way that he corresponds with the ones of the

moderate hardliner or the expected utility of all dimensions must be taken into consideration. In the long term this would result in an amalgamation between the two fractions. I have found no empirical evidence for such a change. In fact a confrontation between the two competing fractions developed during the phase of transition. Another explanation for such a strategy change can be found if both actual conflict dimensions in Belarus are taken into consideration. According to Tsebelis (1990) actors can make suboptimal choices on the principal arena when being involved of games in multiple arenas. Only when the principal arena, here the arena of constitution, is considered separately do the choices appear to be irrational. When both arenas, constitution and national independence, are included in the analysis the real priorities of the actors become visible to the analysis. Suboptimal choices do no longer appear irrational when the context of the principal game is brought into the analysis. The utility of the Shushkevich fraction is changed by an outside factor. Hence, to fully understand the actors choices the national dimension must be included. The Shushkevich fraction could unilaterally change their strategy form hybrid regime to a status quo if the compromise outcome DSS also includes a national compromise that secure national independence and sovereignty. As a consequence, the expected utility of such a compromise would be the product of a function including both the expected utility of DSS and the expected utility of national independence:

$$f(u) = u(DSS) + u(independence)$$

This is true if the expected utility of such a compromise surpasses the utility of the Nash equilibrium and is expressed mathematically by the following equation:

$$u(DSS) + u(independence) > u(DHS)$$

In such a situation it would be rational for the Shushkevich fraction to unilaterally change the strategy to status quo in order to gain the better expected payoff. However, for this to happen one assumption must hold, that the Shushkevich fraction believe that the Kebich fraction is going to stay with 1991 compromise on national independence. A movement away from this national independence by the Kebich fraction would leave the Shushkevich fraction worse off and only receiving the payoff from the DSS outcome which is worse than the payoff in the Nash equilibrium.

Tsebelis (1990: 53-61) suggests games with variable payoffs as a solution on how to model nested games. In this case the variation of payoffs is limited to the Shushkevich fraction to reflect the argument outlined above. To reflect this, the payoffs of the Shushkevich fraction are changed so that they will unilaterally change their strategy if they believe that the Kebich fraction stays with them and the Popular Front on the matter of national independence. To decide whether or not the Kebich fraction chooses that option Nature is build into the

game tree. The new preferences of Shushkevich are as follows:

HHH>DSS>DHS>DSH>HHS>HSH>SHH>HSS

The outcomes are given ordinal values from one to eight for Shushkevich while the other players keep their original values. A model of the nested game with variable payoffs is outlined below.

Figure 5.3
The Nested Game of Constitution and National Independence
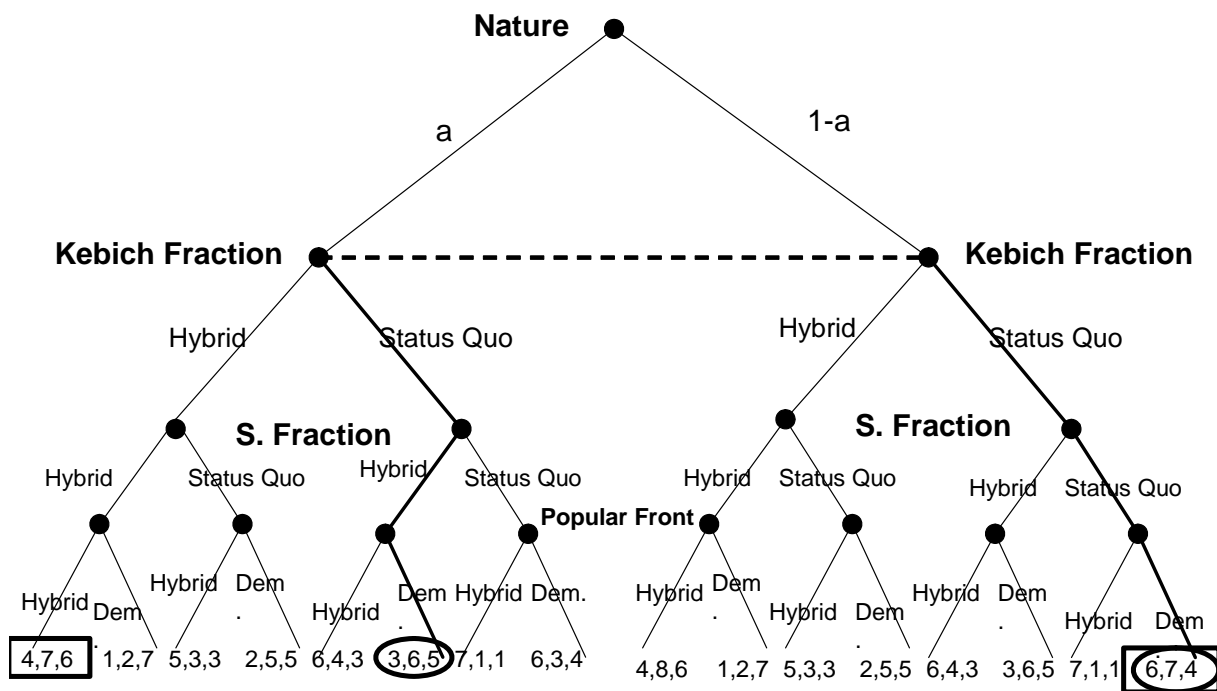
The game is modelled as a dynamic game where Nature makes the first move deciding whether the game is played under a situation where the national compromise is intact or in a situation where the national independence still is contestable. The game tree to the left of Nature corresponds to the prisoners' dilemma game discussed earlier and is an illustration of the transition when the issue of national independence is not clear, because no binding agreement about the future nature of the Belarusian state is included. The right hand side of tree corresponds to the situation in which a compromise of national independence has been negotiated as a binding agreement between the actors and the Shushkevich fraction chooses unilaterally to change their preferences to achieve a higher payoff. Which side of the three that is played is decided by the size of the quantity *a,* which represents the probability of the choice of nature. If larger than 0.5 the game on the left is played and if less than 0.5 the game on the right is played. Unlike the extensive form game presented earlier this game is one with

incomplete information. The incomplete information is a result of the uncertainty of the variable pay-off structure that is build into the game in order to illustrate the multi-dimensional conflict structure of the Belarusian transition. The incomplete information causes that players do not with certainty know the pay-off structure of the other players since it depends upon agreements made on the national dimension. The variation of the pay-off structure is reflecting the multi-dimensional character of the game. To include this uncertainty and the multi-dimensional structure of the transition into the game model the concept of Nature is introduced. Nature is modelled as moving first in the game deciding which side of the game tree is played. Here Nature decides if the national agreement of 1991 is binding or not. This affects the pay-off structure of the Shushkevich fraction. The move of Nature is unobserved by the players and therefore they can only estimate which game they play but not know this for sure.

To solve the game and uncover the equilibriums we solve the game tree on each side of Nature separately by backward induction by finding sub game perfect equilibriums as done in the dynamic game presented earlier. If the game to the left is played the outcome will correspond to the suboptimal Nash equilibrium DHS. This solution fully corresponds to the prisoners' dilemma game discussed earlier. However, if the game on the other hand is played on the right hand side of Nature a different outcome will be the equilibrium. The Popular Front still possesses a dominant strategy in the right hand side of the game and hence, their choice corresponds to that of the left hand side. However, the change in the payoff structure of the Shushkevich fraction has changed strategies to correspond to the choice of the Kebich fraction. They will now choose status quo when the Kebich fraction does, and the same way around with the strategy of a hybrid regime. This is the opposite choices as in the left hand side of the game. The Kebich fraction payoffs are not influenced by the nested game context and they still possess a dominant strategy of a status quo. The equilibrium in this game corresponds to the outcome DSS.

The DSS outcome is a compromise outcome in which the two regime actors agree upon a status quo dictatorship while the opposition continues to press for their most preferred strategy of democracy. This outcome is both a sub game perfect equilibrium as well as it is Pareto-optimal. The instability of the prisoners' dilemma game is not present in this game. The dotted line between the information sets after the choice of Nature indicates that the game is played with imperfect information. Hence, the actors do not know for certain which tree they are playing in, or in other words; they do not know whether the national compromise of 1991 is a binding agreement or may be cancelled in the future. Therefore, the actors make

choices based upon their estimates of the quantity a. The equilibrium in this game depends upon the Shushkevich estimation of the quantity a. If he estimates it to be above 0.5 the game will be played as the prisoners' dilemma and the outcome will be the suboptimal Nash-equilibrium. In the left hand side of the game it will be possible for Shushkevich who possesses a centric position to explore the possibilities to act as a mediator between the two distant actors and attain the Pareto-optimal equilibrium. Such a solution to the conflict in the DHS outcome would imply a pact as described by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 37-48) that secure a simultaneous change of strategy by the two distant actors to achieve the Pareto-optimality and a stable institutional solution. However, if Shushkevich estimates the quantity a to be smaller than 0.5 it will be rational for him to change his strategy unilaterally and secure national independence as a trade off with the Kebich fraction. This will lead to a situation with little or no institutional reforms but secure national independence.

The empirical situation in 1992-1993 does very much reflect such a "nested game" situation. The question is whether the actors take a compromise into exchange on the dimension of constitution for a compromise on the national dimension. Several aspects suggests that Suskevich estimated the size of the quantity a to be smaller than 0.5, hence believing that the compromise made with the communists in 1991 over the declaration was a binding agreement that would secure Belarusian independence while putting the issues of further political and economic reforms on hold. With the national compromise being intact Shushkevich pursued closer cooperation with the Kebich fraction believing to be play on the right hand side of the game. Support for such an assumptions can be found in the 2004 interview with Shushkevich:

And we found a compromise, where we included sufficient precise articles where independence of Belarus was safeguarded. And under those compromise conditions, the communists voted in favour .(Shushkevich 2004: 69)

In Belarus there was a different system. And we developed certain restraints. More than anything, we achieved independence without shedding a single drop of blood after 200 years of Russian domination. That is why I don't think we could have gone any further.(Shushkevich 2004: 67)

As we see from these statements, Shushkevich believes that the compromise with the communists was sufficient to secure Belarus independence and sovereignty. At the same time he states that no more reforms were possible, something indicating a belief of entering the DSS outcome in the right hand side of the game, where independence is traded off against no further reforms.

However, in this period the actors failed to produce new institutions. And at this moment the situation in Russia as well as other republics was still inconclusive. In Russia

Yeltsin contested for power with the hardliners and no real outcome of the power struggle or the transition had yet been decided. Neither was the future role of the Commonwealth of Independent states clear. A victory for the Moscow hardliners would open for a re-integration with Russia which was a goal for the Kebich fraction. This possibility might have hindered an agreement upon the dimension of contestation in Belarus before the situation in Russian was clarified. In summer 1992 Russia moved to secure its interests in Belarus as a response towards Polish presidents Lech Walesa's wish of a NATO security pact for Central- and Eastern-Europe. At the Commonwealth summit in May Russia tried to press both Belarus and Ukraine to enter a security agreement. Shushkevich, strongly committed to independence and believing the national compromise to be binding, refused to do so because it would violate the neutrality and sovereignty of Belarus. Only two month later Kebich was ordered to Moscow to sign a bilateral agreement that created a common political, social, and economic space between Russia and Belarus as well as giving Russia the command over armed forces stationed on Belarusian territory. According to Mihalisko (1997: 248) this agreement gave Russia an effective power to cancel Belarusian sovereignty. Kebich was most likely not hard to persuade to sign the agreement. In 1991 he was in support of the coup d'état against Gorbachev to save the Soviet Union. He stated his future intention about the status of Belarus at a gathering in the eastern town of Homel in September 1993 that he was directing his effort at:

"not toward the resurrection of the Soviet Union – which is practically impossible- but toward its creation in a renewed form" (Mihalisko 1997: 249)

Such goals, if pursued, would represent a break with the 1990 compromise upon independence and sovereignty. This action and the statement quoted above indicate that Kebich had a different perspective of which side of the game tree the game was played. Being willing to break national compromise indicates that the Kebich fraction estimated the quantity a to be larger than 0.5. Hence, the game was with no binding agreement upon national independence. Indication the outcome to be the conflict outcome in which all actors pursue their most preferred strategy corresponding to the DHS Pareto-suboptimal equilibrium.

The signing of the agreement by Kebich as well as the refusal to do the same by Shushkevich were the beginning of the end of the alliance between the two fractions. Reopening the conflict dimension over national independence destroyed the possibility for a compromise solution to the game as described in the DSS outcome of the game. As argued earlier national independence was the motivation for Shushkevich to abandon his preferred

strategy of hybrid regime and to turn to the strategy of status quo. The controversy between the two fractions continued when Kebich in early 1993 proposed the signing of a defence and economic union with Russia before the Supreme Council. It was easily passed despite protest from Shushkevich (Mihalisko 1997: 248-9). This politics was initiated by Kebich as a start of a re-integration and a political union between the two countries. However, with the political situation still unclear in Moscow this was not possible. The future for this project was at best obscure. Close bonds remained between the Minsk hardliner rulers and the Moscow hardliner opposition. A victory for the hardliners in Moscow in the confrontation with Yeltsin would be the best assurance for further integration between the two states. The possibility of an alliance with the Moscow hardliners did not disappear for the Kebich fraction until Yeltsins victory at the White House in the October 1993.

The Yeltsin victory, however, opened an unexpected opportunity for the Kebich fraction with regard to their goal of re-integration. Yeltsin's reformist victory in Russia did not lead to a spread of democratic ideas to its former Soviet counterparts as one might have expected. To balance the influence of the hardliners Yeltsin's politics shifted to the right on the aspect of the near abroad, and foreign intelligence chief Primakov was assigned the task to create a plan for re-integration of the Commonwealth countries (Mihalisko 1997: 249). This was the opportunity the Kebich fraction needed to cancel the 1991 compromise. Even though Shushkevich de facto had little power as speaker of parliament he was a popular figure amongst the Belarusian people during the transition phase well ahead of the opponents Kebich and the Popular Front leader Paznyak on surveys conducted in 1992 and 1993. Only 6,2 percent supported Kebich as head of state as an alternative to Shushkevich while Paznyak received 3.7 percent support in the same May 1993 survey (Marples 1999: 67).

Shushkevich had developed to become an opponent or a threat to Kebich's influence and planes of re-integration instead of being an allied. Together with another new name in Belarusian politics Lukashenka, an allied and open supporter for the Moscow hardliners, Kebich formed a classic Soviet style plot to topple Shushkevich as speaker of parliament. Lukashenka was to lead a corruption committee which ended up with allegations against Shushkevich lead to his dismissal as speaker of parliament in early 1994 (Marples 1999: 61; Silitski 2003: 40). Shushkevich was replaced by Hryb who never became anything else but a tool for communist influence in parliament.

At this stage of transition the Popular Front continued to pursue their twin politics of democratisation and national independence as outlined earlier Their call for an early election as well as collection of signatures in support of such an act imply that their estimation of the

magnitude of the quantity *a* is larger than 0.5 or that they are not included in a national pact. They make serious and real attempts to press for further democratic reforms without considering such actions to have any negative influence upon issue of national independence. Such an action is conflicting with the attitude that Shushkevich expressed in the quotation earlier given. The Popular Front also expressed distrust in the declaration of independence by at first dismissing the agreement due to an article declaring further work upon a union treaty with the commonwealth countries (Shushkevich 2004: 68-9). The Popular Front chose at first to walk out of parliament as a protest against this article. An action criticised by Shushkevich as a show-off and this clearly indicated difference in opinion between the two fractions about the character of the compromise:

> *And we found a compromise, where we included sufficient precise articles where independence of Belarus was safeguarded. And under those compromise conditions, the communists voted in favour. But the Popular Front walked out. And today, the farce of Zianon Pazniak and of his colleagues is that they walked out, and for what? The communists were the ones that voted for it. It was a farce, and there is no other way to describe it. They walked out to demonstrate that they were more radical towards independence of Belarus. Such giant steps are not wanted. We will not achieve nothing if we go on the offensive that quickly. (Shushkevich 2004: 69)*

The action of the Popular Fronts suggests a considerable scepticism towards the real contents of the compromise and the guarantees it gave to provide for Belarusian independence. The Popular Front also earlier expressed negative views on the Commonwealth of Independent States when including Russia. In the late phase of liberalisation the Popular Front had advocated an idea of a commonwealth between Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic republics for geopolitical and historical reasons (Zaprudnik and Urban 1993: 115-16). However, the Popular Front strongly opposed the new Union Treaty in 1990 and saw the Commonwealth of Independent States as a potential threat to Belarusian independence. This is confirmed by Shushkevich (2004: 69):

> *"And Zianon Pazniak and his colleagues also absolutely condemned the Belovezsky agreement – forgetting that for the first time in two hundred years, Russia recognized the independence of Belarus – saying that the agreement smelled of some kind of a Union Treaty…But they screamed "this is a new union Treaty," true, a weaker one. They wanted to show that they are holier than the Pope."*

The Popular Front also saw an article in the compromise of national independence that opens for further work upon a union treaty as a possibility for the Kebich fraction to cancel independence in the future. Hence, the compromise could not provide the Popular Front with the necessary guarantees that the compromise could be a safeguard for Belarusian

independence. Shushkevich (2004: 68) describes the conflict with the Popular Front like this:

> *"It went to an unbelievable scale, that in a month we adopted the declaration of independence. The Belarusian Popular Front, which all its life had embodied the best traditions of the fighters for independence of Belarus, staged a sign of protest by walking out. Why? Because there is an article in that declaration that we will continue working in a Union Treaty. That article was the result of a compromise. The declaration of independence was put forward by a communist."*

These quotations show that there excised not only a severe disagreement between the Popular Front over the approach towards the ruling Kebich fraction and further democratic reforms but also upon the substance of the compromise of national independence and the possibility for this compromise to secure Belarusian sovereignty and independence in the future. These observations indicate that the Popular Front did not have the same calculation as the Shushkevich fractions. Hence, their estimation of the quantity a lead to a larger value than 0.5.

One should also take notice of Shushkevich's negative attitude towards the Popular Front in these quotations. His strong attacks on the Popular Front and their politics further indicates that Shushkevich believed he was playing on the right hand side of the game tree compromising with the Kebich fraction while distancing from the Popular Front. However, there are few indications that either the Popular Front or the Kebich fraction are of the same belief as Shushkevich.

Few new institutions; the outcome transition

With Shushkevich effectively removed from the political arena and the power struggle finally set in Moscow it was time for an adoption of a new Belarusian constitution. Shushkevich had been a popular figure and at the time the only real challenger to Kebich in a contested election. Two major institutional changes were the result of the Belarusian transition. This the formation of a national army and the establishment of a national presidency in which the first was by large the most significant change (Mihalisko 1997: 250). The presidency was created to expand the influence of the Kebich fraction. This fraction was by far the most powerful political actor in Belarus during the transition. They controlled the entire Soviet era state apparatus and were willing to use this in the political struggle against their enemies. The Soviet constitution had not separated the institutional powers and this situation strengthened the position of the Kebich fraction. By creating a presidency after the removal of Shushkevich speaker of parliament Kebich expected to be able to finally unite the position as head of state

with the executive branch of power. This position was clearly intended for Kebich himself. By accusing Shushkevich of corruption the incumbent rulers effectively undermined his legitimacy and his popularity in the population was declining. The candidate of the Popular Front Paznyak did increasingly grow unpopular due to his still more radical nationalism and Russophobic politics which were unpopular among the nostalgic population.

Almost all other institutions in Belarus were left intact whenever possible. This was even the case of most civil society organisations that remained closely connected to the regime. To some degree the national institutions were expanded to compensate for the removal of the all union structures (Mihalisko 1997: 250). The government retained a tight grip on the media upholding its monopoly on the broadcasting and printing facilities and outlets (Mihalisko 1997: 255). This gave the government the possibility to control the media. However, the constitution granted some rights to the population that had been unknown in Soviet times such as equality before the law, respect for human rights, freedom of speech, access to information, the right of assembly and association (Mihalisko 1997). However, most of these rights are still not enforce in Belarus in practice.

With a constitution in place the founding presidential election was scheduled for June 1994. Four candidates received most of the votes casted in the election with Kebich receiving 17 percent, Pazniak 13 percent and Shushkevich only 10 percent (Mihalisko 1997: 254). The corruption campaign that Kebich had initiated against Shushkevich had proven its effectiveness. However, the plan had somewhat backfired because the candidate that received by far the majority of votes in this election was the leader of the parliamentary commission which was to investigate the corruption, Alexander Lukashenka. In this first round he received 45 percent of the votes and in the second round he defeated Kebich with 80 percent of the votes (Mihalisko 1997: 254). Lukashenka was a populist politician who knew how to take advantage of the political atmosphere in the population. He soon started to expand his political power beyond the limits set by the constitution.

The presidential voting process in 1994 was conducted rather democratically and this is taken by several observers to be evidence of a democratic outcome of the Belarusian transition. Amongst these are Marples (1999) and Silitski (2003) who both claim that Belarus experienced a short period of democracy after transition until the mid 1990s when Lukashenka started to alter the power structures. As Snyder (2006) argues elections are a rather poor indicator of regime type. Such a classification does under no circumstances meet the definition of democracy I give in this thesis. At best, a democratic vote constitutes parts of the dimension of participation and is therefore a necessary but by no means a sufficient

criterion for classifying Belarus as a democracy after transition. Marples (1999: 69) points to the fact that several electoral rules gave an unfair advantage to prime minister Kebich. This can put forward serious doubts about the democratic nature of the so-called first and only democratic election in Belarus. Kebich was expected to win by everyone and it was a great surprise not only to Kebich and the communists but also to all observers that he did not win.

It is my opinion that Belarus never became democratic. At best the country experienced a brief period of a more liberal politics by the ruling regime. The political continuity both in leadership, politics and institutions from the Soviet Union era to the post-transitional independent republic is staggering. Belarus saw few institutional changes which were not due to the pressing need to adapt to independence. Furthermore, economic and political reforms stagnated after independence. I therefore conclude that the Belarusian regime to a very large extent remained in status quo after transition only seeing some minor changes which was the result of adoption to independence. At best, Belarus did only for a brief moment in the early 1990s see a more liberal regime, which was close to a hybrid regime and the country has not yet experienced democracy.

6. The Russian Transition

In this chapter I will first discuss the main lines of Russian and Soviet history that have had historical and contextual effect upon the Russian transition from 1991 to 1993. Then the major conflict issues and actors are discussed. Following this the chapter presents three games of social interaction during transition. Two games about constitution of new institutions occurring at different moments of transition. And the final game is about the threatening power of the Yeltsin fraction at the 1993 confrontation.

Early history and revolution

Historical parallels of the present Russian state are often drawn as far back as the Kiev Rus state formation from the ninth century. The city of Kiev was strategically placed on the river Dnieper which functioned as a major the trade route between the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea, the Byzantine Empire and the Persian Empire (Britannica 2007 c: 15). The strategic position of the town made it an important centre for controlling the trade. The Kiev Rus state was established by Vikings as a colonial outpost as a part of their control of the major river based trade route to the Eastern Roman Empire which was in rapid decline. The Kivian Rus adopted orthodox Christianity from Constantinople and became a part of the Eastern Church. During the tenth century Kievan Rus expanded territorially to the east, the west and the north by adding extensional principalities to the dynasty. In 1240 the state was destroyed by the Mongolians as a part of their offensive into the west. This invasion led to the separation of the eastern Slaves. A western part, including present day Belarus and Ukraine, came under control of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rus which is discussed in Chapter 3. The north-eastern part came under control of the Grand Prince of Moscow and the principate of Moscovy action as viceroy for the Mongolians was also known as Greate Rus. Declining Mongolian influence secured independence for the Principate of Moscovy which in the early sixteenth century was given the name of the Russian Empire by Peter the Great. The Russian Empire expanded in all directions creating a modern multi-ethnic empire including the parts of present day Ukraine and Belarus. Today some 70 smaller nations live in Russia (Britannica 2007 a). Peter the Great also moved the capital from Moscow to St. Petersburg and started a program of extensive modernisation and westernisation to make Russia a modern state.

The monarchic power in Russia developed a strong absolute character. The nobility was linked to the Tsar as clients with almost unlimited power over the peasants in the lands

they administrated. But their power was strictly economic while political power was exclusively the domain of the monarch and his will and power was unlimited (Treadgold and Ellison 2000: 9). The system of serfdom seems to have been purified by the Russians leading to an extreme exploration not only by the aristocracy of the peasants but also by the tsar of the aristocracy. No room for political activity or power sharing existed in Russia until the late nineteenth century. The Russian defeat in the Crimean war exposed Russian backwardness compared to its western counterparts and Tsar Alexander II realised the urgent need for reforms and modernisation. Alexander II attempted to reform the old patterns of autocracy and serfdom, opened for local political power sharing and put an end to serfdom at least in theory. This opening of society led to a growth in political opposition to the monarchy and Alexander II was assassinated by revolutionaries. The Great Reforms of Alexander were gradually abridged in the following decades (Treadgold and Ellison 2000: 9). Further reforms came about by the last Russian Tsar Nicolai as a result of the defeat to the Japanese and the political discontent that this brought about in the political arena. The discontent sparked the October 1905 revolution which culminated in 1907 but further political reforms including the establishment of the parliament, the Duma, and a semi-constitutional political system. A programme of modernisation also led to a growing urbanisation and a starting industrialisation in the early twentieth century and the peasants enjoyed a growing freedom. However, at the end for the First World War Russia lacked decades if not centuries behind the western industrial powers.

The entering of Russia into the First Wold War became the end of Russian autocracy. The Tsar had taken political and military control after increased opposition by the Progressive Block in the Duma (Britannica 2007 a). The Russian army was severely inferior to the armies of the central powers. The Russian troops were weak and poorly equipped leading to defeats on the battlefield for. Russia lacked the industry, the infrastructure, sufficient modern military training, military equipment as well as a modernised society to engage and win a modern warfare. The war had also severe negative consequences for the Russian economy after the entering of the Ottoman Empire into the war, by blocking off supplies from their western allies with increased prises and shortages as the result. By entering the war Russia had taken a step closer to a crisis economically, politically as well as militarily. As a consequence riots broke out in both Moscow and Petrograd in November 1917 in which garrisons join the protesters and the tsar was forced to abdicate in March ending the Russian monarchy (Britannica 2007 b). This was the closure of the old aristocratic regime and the start of the Russian revolution.

The Revolution in 1917 brought down the dictatorial monarchic regime. However, a new was soon to be established as the Communist Party consolidated power though a civil war during the 1920s and the Soviet Union was established. During the leadership of Lenin the New Economic Politics brought some positive changes to the Russian population. After defeating the external opposition of the revolution in the civil war Lenin removed the internal opposition by banning fractions within the party (Sakwa 2002: 6). The rule of Lenin's successor Stalin introduced to the Soviet Union one of the most brutal terror regimes ever seen. Through forced collectivisation, political persecution, ethnic cleansing and massacres upon supposed enemies Stalin became responsible for the largest genocides known to history in the 1930s and 40s, the Gulag. The personalitic and brutal rule of Stalin is characteristic of a classical totalitarian regime. Khrushchev followed Stalin as leader of the Soviet Union leading to a period of De-Stalinisation, limited reforms and a return to the original ideas of Lenin (Sakwa 2002). These ambiguous reforms had limited success and by 1964 Khrushchev was outset by hardliners fearing the change. The rule of the successor Brezhnev saw a tightening of the regime. The social contract secured stability and social security for the population while they desisted from political change. Corruption and patronage networks spread and the nomenklatura system became established (Sakwa 2002: 7). Brezhnev was followed by first Andropov and soon after Chernencko who both had limited impact upon the Soviet system due to their rather short remaining expectation of life. High age and bad health were a bad combination for long and lasting rule. However, Andropov attempted to reform the system during his rule while Chernencko restored the glory of the age of stagnation of the Brezhnev area and ended his days in March 1985 (Sakwa 2002: 8).

The Soviet Union in crisis

The election of Mikhail Gorbachev as Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party on March 11th 1985 marks the beginning of a shift in politics from Moscow. Gorbachev portrayed himself as an opponent to Stalin and his brutal totalitarian terror regime but as an admirer of the Lenin politics of the early twenties. During the first one and a half year in office Gorbachev consolidated his power by placing supporters in key positions in the party, as ministers and amongst regional leaders (Marples 2004: 11-12). In the mid eighties it became clear also for the new Soviet leadership that the country was facing a severe and imminent crisis that was impossible to ignore. And for the first time the leadership was

outspoken about the problems the Soviet Union were facing. Gorbachev did believe firmly that the Brezhnev era politics could not continue and he spoke openly of a need for a clear break with the past.

As described in the transition literature, the new leadership in the Soviet Union recognised the crises the country was facing and responded to this by an opening of the regime to reforms. Gorbachev was unusually outspoken about the crisis and did not hesitate to remind both the party and the people about the wretched state of the nation. In November 1987 the rector of the Moscow State University warned in the newspaper Pravda that: "*We were sliding into the abyss and are only starting to stop the slide*" (Bialer 1991: 29). The frankness of the leadership on the issue of the state of the Union is a clear indication that the goal was to increase consciousness amongst the population as well as in the party about the situation and inspire to mobilisation in support for the upcoming reforms of Gorbachev. The opening and the mobilisation attempts also indicate a split within the regime between reform friendly softliners recognising the need for change and hardliners not willing to admit the crisis.

The crisis recognised by Gorbachev was present in almost all sectors of the society and not only being of economic character but of a more systemic character. The crisis was the failure of the political, social and economic system of the Soviet Union in the post-Stalin period. A fundamental change in all three arenas was a necessity to overcome the crisis. If the necessary action was not taken immediately and reforms were implemented and the economy accelerated it would mean the end of the Soviet system and the Soviet Union (Bialer 1991: 30). In the political and social arenas the crisis became visible by a growing distance between the leadership and the general population. The population as well as much of the party were characterised by political apathy and the party had become a bureaucracy for implementation of politics rather than a canal for political participation and mobilisation. The cooperative structures and the clientilism of the party combined with the corruption hindered social mobility based upon effort and knowledge while it rewarded loyalty and corruption.

The economic stagnation was so imminent that the Soviet national income had not increased in real terms in the 20 years previous to Gorbachev's accession to power, with exception of the production of alcohol (Bialer 1991: 30). The Stalinist system of planned economy had remained more or less intact. While this system had functioned rather well during the phase of industrialisation, it had hindered the transformation of the Soviet economy into a post-industrial economy and the Soviet Union increasingly lacked behind its western counterparts. High labour costs, unrealistic price setting and an insufficient infrastructure

together with a drop in prices on raw material in the eighties contributed to the stagnation of the Soviet economy.[15] Militarily the Soviet Union did no longer have the capacity to follow the USA and their allies in the arms rise of the Cold War and a growing portion of the GDP went to military purposes. The gap between the ideological utopian goal of real life communism and the reality that the Soviet people faced could no longer be hidden. The system that was supposed to represent a real functioning alternative to the western capitalist democracies was at the edge of collapse and it became visible to the Soviet leadership, the people and most of their western followers.

Response to the crises: glasnost and perestroika

The response to the crisis by the Gorbachev fraction within the regime was the twin politics of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (reconstruction). Without these reforms the Soviet Union would have faced serious political, economic and social crises (Gorbacev 1988: 15). The perestroika reforms started with a discussion phase from 1987 until mid 1988. An open discussion through the new and more open politics of glasnost brought about a non regime organisation of views on the political, social and ideological situation. The politics of democratisation of society and economic transformation by reform communism were quite openly debated in the Soviet society.

This period in the Soviet Union corresponds to the phase of liberalisation as described in the theory chapter (Sakwa 2002: 10). This phase was to be followed by a phase of implementation of the reforms to form a broadened reformed regime fully exploring the potential of the socialist revolution ready to continue competition with the democratic western alternative and thereby establish what Przeworski (1991) describes as a broadened dictatorship, which is a system with expanded legitimacy and incorporation of new groups and ideas into the regime. Gorbachev (1988: 10) states that the Perestroika politics is a response to the misfortunes of the Soviet system and its problems, and the perestroika is a result of the realisation of the potential of socialism and that this potential had not yet been fully explored. However, rather than strengthening the system by being incorporated into the regime new groups took advantage of the political opportunities created by the opening of the regime and glasnost politics. The limits of the regime's tolerance were challenged by the

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[15] For a more detailed discussion of the Soviet economic crises and economic reforms see Lapidus and Dallin (1991), Marples (2004), Hewett (1991), Schroeder (1991) or Bialer (1991: 30-33)

media, artists and writers leading to a radicalisation of the demands from civil society (Remington 1991). The uncovering of the Stalinist crimes and pressure for more radical political and social reforms helped to undermine the legitimacy of the regime. The introduction of democratic features in the Soviet states such as semi democratic elections and a law governed system inspired to pressure for more radical reforms rather than incorporation into the regime by new actors. The result of the reforms was growing pluralism both within the old party system as well as in the society in general. New conflict dimensions were brought to the political arena, especially a growing nationalism and a centre-periphery conflict materialised.[16] The very existence of the Soviet state in its present form was challenged by the Baltic republics and as well as by Georgia (Sakwa 2002: 11).

In this phase of liberalisation during perestroika and glasnost the Soviet society became more polarised and pluralistic. Fractions of actors became visible both reform communists as Gorbachev, more radical reformists as well as hardliner communists resistant to reforms of the system. New political conflict dimensions were brought to the attention, both in the national republics and on the union level. Reform of the institutional framework, economic reforms together with growing demands for decentralisation or even independence became central political issues in this phase of democratisation all over the Soviet Union. In this new more plural political framework Gorbachev tried to play a role as a centric political figure balancing his power by shifting alliances with the opposing fractions. The adoption of a centric position as a tool to guide reforms in a positive direction has generally been seen as a positive strategy in transition theory (Batty and Danilovic 1997). This was a strategy followed with great success by Suàrez in the Spanish transition (Colomer 1991: ; 1995). However, the centric strategic position showed to lead to sub-optimal solutions both in the case of Gorbachev in the Soviet Union and of Suskevich in Belarus due to multiple games played in arenas. Increased nationalism and separatism finally changed the conditions for Gorbachev to control the reform process and made room for the initiatives leading to the August 1991 coup d'état by the hardliner fraction to the save the Soviet Union (Batty and Danilovic 1997: 100-3). The coup materialised as a farce leading to the victory of radical reformers allied with Russian nationalists. The hardliners attempt to save the union became the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union.

The coup represents the beginning of the last stage before transition, the breakdown of

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[16] For a detailed discussions of the growing nationalism and its consequences see Suny (1993), Dunlop (1993), Maples(2004) Lapidus (1991) and Szporluk (1991)

former regime and the extraction from its power apparatus. The coup led to a rapid de-legitimisation of the central Soviet institutions and the belief of their capability to lead the country through reforms (Sakwa 2002: 32). The standoff between reformers and the plotters lead to a great triumph for the reformers. The Yeltsin lead opposition who took up the fight against the plotters in August increased their legitimacy and promoted the demand for further decentralisation. A wave of declarations of independence followed during and after the coup as several republics followed in the footsteps of Lithuania and Georgia and transformed their declarations of sovereignty into declarations of independence (Sakwa 2002: 32). Even the founding Slavic republics of Belarus and Ukraine declared independence in August. The old central power structures had been more or less destroyed as a result of the coup leaving behind a power vacuum which in Russia gradually was to be filled by newly establish national institutions such as the Russian presidency and parliament. The rise or rebirth of Russia left very little authority for Gorbachev and the central government at the very end. The power struggle between the Russian institution and the central government led to a fear amongst many non-Russian republics that the union centre was to be taken over by Russia on the expense of the republics. The old power apparatus institutions for repression which included first and foremost the KGB but also to some degree the military had been actively supporting the August coup attempt. As these institutions for repression had lost the standoff between Yeltsin and the plotters the Soviet Union broke down in a state of paralysis and disarray and was not able to interfere in the transition (McFaul 2001: 126). Hence, this indicates that the process of extraction was finished before the process of constitution began.

Despite Gorbachev's attempts to form a new confederal union treaty the Soviet Union came to an end by an agreement between the Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the Ukrainian and Belarusian leaders as a result of the Belovezh Accords and the Commonwealth of Independent States was established (Sakwa 2002: 37). These events represent the breakdown of the former Soviet regime and the beginning of the Russian transition.

Russian Conflict Issues

The key conflict to be studied in the phase of transition will always be the constitution of new institutions because this issue is determining the outcome of transitions with regard to regime type. Linz and Stepan (1996: 366) suggest Russia and the other former Soviet republic to represent the most severe problems of their vague concept of the stateness problem. There is no doubt that Russia, Russian language and Russian culture had a unique and dominant

position in the Soviet Union compared to other national and ethnic groups. Russia was often, and for good reasons, erroneously taken to be synonymous to the Soviet Union. However, this did not mean that Russian national interests coincided with those of the Soviet Union. Russian political institutions had been dissolved into the central union structures of the Soviet Union (Sakwa 2002: 16). Russia lacked a national party organisation, a ministry of internal affairs, an independent national government, national media, Russian trade unions, a Komosomol organisation, an academy of sciences and a Russian KGB. There existed no channels in Russia for representation of Russian social and economic interests as there existed in the other fourteen republics. A growing dissatisfaction with the role of Russia spread in the early in the nineties both in Russia and in the other republics. In the republics a growing russophobia spread in response to Russia's leading role as patron nation in the union.

At the same time, the Russians became increasingly dissatisfied by the neglecting of Russian interests in the union. Many Russians felt that all the costs of the union were borne by Russia while all the benefits were extracted by the other republics. As shown in Chapter 3 and 4 Belarus had developed multiple and competing national identities and these conflicting national identities effected the development of the Belarusian transition. A similar question arose in Russia during the phase of liberalisation. However, the conflict issue in Russia is much more tied to the process of state-building than to the question of nation-building such as in Belarus. While the central conflict issue in Belarus concerned the identity of the Belarusian people was the central conflict issue in Russian politics connected to the role of the Russian people and the territorial boundaries of the Russian state. The conflict dimension stands between "nation builders" and "empire savers".

The nation builders argues for Russia as something very different from the Soviet Union as a cultural, historical and geographical entity while the empire savers regard the borders of the Soviet Union as the proper boundaries of the Russian state (Szporluk 1991: 442). The empire savers regard the Soviet state as a synonym with the Russian state and believe Russians to have a special and dominant position in this "empire". The preservation of the Soviet state, as a Russian state, becomes an overall goal for this group of actors. The all-union structures and institutions were seen as sufficient structures for governing the Russian empire since they do not recognise a profound difference between the Soviet Union and Russia. It is easy to see that they believed in continuity from the former Russian empire to the Soviet empire in this position. According to Szporluk (1991: 443) the strongest supporters of the empire savers in the late eighties and early nineties can be found amongst military, the police, the state and party bureaucracies as well as the members of the all-union structures.

These were exactly the same actors supporting the August coup against Gorbachev to save the Soviet Union.

Opposing this view of the Russian state is the nation builders. They wished to establish a Russian nation state separately from the Soviet Union after the patterns of the modern western European nation states with borders that more or less corresponded to the borders of the Russian Soviet Republic. The supporters of this fraction is in the belief that Russia is not benefiting from the union and should establish separate national institutions and even independence from the Soviet Union and that the crisis of the Soviet Union is caused by central Stalinist bureaucracy that controlled the union (Szporluk 1991: 448). The nation builders like empire savers differ in their view upon the institutional arrangements which they prefer, but they have a common goal of establishing a Russian state different from the Soviet Union. [17] Even though some of the nation builder fractions do wish a territorially larger Russia than the present Russia they all agree upon the formation of Russia as a nation state not an imperial multi-ethical state.

The conflict that emerged as a consequence of Gorbachev's liberalisation has the same potential for creation a multi-dimensional conflict structure during the transition phase as in Belarus. The two conflict issues are not directly similar, but have several similarities and both arise as a consequence of state- and nation-building processes. However, the Russian conflict dimension between nation builders and empire savers materialises in Russia and the Soviet Union during the phase of liberalisation and is more or less coinciding with the conflict of extraction from the former regime as the Soviet Union starts to break down and the conflict between Yeltsin and Gorbachev and later Yeltsin and the plotters materialises. This argument is supported by Sakwa (2002: 39) who claims that the insurgency against the communist regime took the form of a struggle for the restoration of Russian statehood (*gosudarstvennost*). It was a dual struggle against the communist party and for institutions and attributes of a nation state. The conflict materialised between the empire savers represented by the August plotters and the nation builders in the democratic opposition led by Yeltsin during the coupe. This conflict was won by the nation builders lead by Yeltsin and within the end of that same year Russia together with Belarus and Ukraine had left the union leading to the final breakdown of the Soviet Union.

Hence, the national conflict in Russia did not coincide with the phase of transition in Russia but with the phase of liberalisation. As shown by (Batty and Danilovic 1997) this

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[17] For a detailed description of the nation builder and empire saver fractions se Szporluk (1991: 442-56)

created a "nested game" situation during the liberalisation phase of democratisation in the Soviet Union. This conflict in Russia together with similar conflict issues in other republics led to the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Marples (2004: 101-11) gives growing nationalism in the republics as the main reason for the collapse of Soviet Union. This does not mean that the borders of the Russian nation state were undisputed or final, but it was clear that the new Russian state was to be a nation state and not an empirical unity. In Russia the national conflict dimension was no longer a dominant conflict issue when transition started leaving the main conflict of transition to be about constitution of new institution and over economic reforms.

These conflicts were treated separately and not simultaneously as in Belarus. As argued above the national conflict was addressed first together with the process of extraction. Later the economic reforms were addressed and finally the constitution of new institutions. This argument is supported by McFaul (2001: 129) saying that the Yeltsin government believed that all these issues could not be addressed simultaneously but were to be dealt with in sequences, first filling the vacuum of power after the breakdown of the union, then begin economic reforms and finally reconstruct a democratic polity.[18] The agendas of economic transformation and the dissolution of the Soviet Union had a higher priority for Yeltsin in 1991 and early 1992. According to McFaul (2001: 154) these two issues demanded immediate attention and Yeltsin and his supporters therefore put off the issue of a new constitution in fear of that this issue would constrain Yeltsin's ability to pursue other agenda items simultaneously. No one had foreseen that the consensus existing in late 1991 between the president and the parliamentary fractions would not last and that a potential for development of a conflict about the issue of constitution existed. However, the conflict about the nature of the economic reforms developed further between Yeltsin and the Communist Fraction in the 1992 and 1993. This thesis will later argue that this third conflict in Russia did contribute to the political stalemate which developed in late 1993. The conflict about the future nature and scope of the economic reforms together with other factors hindered a compromise about future reforms in Russia.

Actors and preferences towards regime type

In the late eighties and early nineties Russian society saw a grooving pluralism, political

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[18] The investigation of the interaction of economic reforms is beyond the scope of this thesis.

fragmentation and debate about several new conflict issues. This included the conflict of constitution of new institutions. This arising conflict issue polarised political actors and elites into different political camps. This section is to discuss the relevant actor's preference to the possible outcomes of transition.

Radical Softliner: Yeltsin fraction

The transition literature suggests that opening of the regime and the later transition is a result of a fragmentation of the ruling elites into fractions of hardliners and softliners (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 19). This split also occurred as a consequence of Soviet liberalisation. The Gorbachev's fraction grew forward as a moderate reformist fraction with opponents who both was resistant to further change and opponents who pushed for more radical reforms (Breslauer 2002: 100). On the radical side of the spectrum the coming Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, pushed for more radical and speedy reforms and a clear break with the hardliner fractions of the communist party. Yeltsin was brought into central level politics by Gorbachev who appointed him to the Politburo (Marples 2004: 146). Yeltsin had followed a party career becoming a Central Committee member in 1981. Yeltsin was introduced to the Politburo to strengthen the position of the reformist fraction. However, Yeltsin came into conflict with his former reform ally Gorbachev over the progress of the reforms. He was removed from the Politburo again in1988 and as Gorbachev in 1990 turns towards the hardliners Yeltsin left the Communist Party (Marples 2004: 72).

Yeltsin was elected as deputy of the Congress of The People's Deputies and later as chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet in May 1990. The conflict between the two softliner fractions grew and Yeltsin finally allied with the democratic nation builder fraction and pursued power through the new institution of the Russian presidency. As president of Russia Yeltsin is the key actor of the Russian transition and after the breakdown of the central power structures he gains control over the remaining power structures. Late in the phase of liberalisation and in the early transition he is closely related to the democratic opposition forces.

Yeltsin was a man of the Communist Party and his professional and political background is not fundamentally different from Gorbachev's (Altermark 2000: 344). They had to a large degree shared the same goals of political and economic reform. His membership of the Communist Party and his close relations with the reform fraction of the party indicate a softliner position of Yeltsin. However, Yeltsin grew increasingly impatient with the speed of the reforms in the Soviet Union, something which brought him into conflict

with both the hardliner fraction and with Gorbachev himself. This conflict does not necessarily indicate that Yeltsin wished to press for democracy, but rather that he can be classified as a radical softliner who sees the need for the reforms as a more pressing matter than other fractions. Following this logic I argue in this thesis for a classification of Yeltsin as a radical softliner while Gorbachev is a moderate softliner. This places Yeltsin within the regime actor category and not in the democratic opposition camp. Furthermore it should be noted that Gorbachev is not regarded as a relevant actor during the Russian transition phase. He is relevant only in the phase of liberalisation due to his dismissal after the August coup.

Yeltsin did both in the phase of liberalisation and in the phase transition favour economic reforms over institutional change (McFaul 2001). The main issue for the first phase of the Russian transition was the transformation of the halting economy through the 500 day plan and shock therapy. Institutional changes came to a larger extend about as a result of a power struggle first with the CPSU hardliners and Gorbachev later on as a result of the conflict with the Russian parliament. The issue of constitutional change did first become an pressing issue in late 1992 when the president came into a deadlock situation with the Communist fraction in the parliament about the further progress and extent of the economic reform program. This indicates that Yeltsin belonged to what Shevtsova (2000: 242) describes as a liberal fraction who favours economic reforms about democracy and who is willing to support some form of authoritarianism for the sake of economic reform. This indicates the preference structure of the radical softliner actors in which the Yeltsin fraction will prioritise a hybrid regime over democracy and the worst outcome will be a status quo situation. This leads to the preferences:

Hybrid Regime > Democracy > Status Quo

Yeltsin was a populist political player who had great success by telling the people what they wanted to hear (Altermark 2000: 345). Having left the communist party Yeltsin had a larger room for political manoeuvring than politicians committed to a party programme. By the establishment of the Russian institution and Russian independence Yeltsin did to a large extend give the people what they had wanted, a distinct Russian identity and a Russian nation once again. These institutions granted him victory over the hardliner in the first round, but he pushed for further reforms when he once again came into conflict with the Communist fraction in 1993.

Democratic moderate opposition: Democratic Russia Movement

As said earlier the politics of glasnost brought about a mobilisation of the civil society in Russia. The new openness of the regime allows fractions outside the regime to form political strategies and goals that differ from the goals of the regime. As long as these goals do not coincide with the goals of the regime fractions these fractions will remain independent of regime and challenge the regime. Such opposition fractions also grew out of the Soviet liberalisation. A real nationwide popular front like in the Baltic States was newer formed in Russia. Only local movements in the major cities were formed but never as a national organisation. The popular fronts also lacked a strategy to challenge the reforms of the regime and rather acted as supporters of the Gorbachev reform fraction.

A new opposition movement known as Democratic Russia was established in 1990 as an electoral pact for democratic minded candidates (McFaul and Markov 1993: 136) This electoral block developed into a parliamentary fraction and later became an umbrella movement in the period after the March election in 1990. Democratic Russia united a wide spectrum of reform forces in Russia and did never develop into a political party. Democratic Russia represented the liberals and democrats amongst the intelligentsia and the new entrepreneurial class benefiting from reforms and the main base of supporters can be found in the larger cities (Shevtsova 1995: 8). The goal of the organisation was according to its charter of October 1990

> "*the coordination of democratic forces, opposition to the state-political Communist Party monopoly, holding of a joint election campaign, parliamentary activity and other actions for the common purpose of creation a civil society*" (McFaul and Markov 1993: 137).

Not being a political party nor a united movement but an umbrella organisation Democratic Russia did not have a clear ideological platform and newer adopted a clear political program. Since the movement lacked a collective programme it can be hard to track a unified political approach towards the tree transitional conflict dimensions identified earlier. This point is underlined by one co-founders of the Democratic Movement Victor Dmitriev (1993 a: 159) when he states that

> "*the only thing that is keeping the Democratic Russia is its anticommunism. This is why, at the time when we were organising the Democratic Russia movement and writing its charter, we initially attempted to unite all anti-Communists. Then, after the downfall of communism in this country we will take different positions in the political arena.*"

Since Democratic Russia was a loosely connected coalition movement, united by the struggle against communism, their views differed upon the central conflicts issues in Russian Politics.

McFaul (2001: 167-8) points to an increasing internal split within Democratic Russia in which several fractions favoured dictatorship over democracy in exchange of economic reforms. These strategies are in this thesis seen as result of multi-dimensional conflict issues where the actors are willing to sacrifice their position on the dimension of constitution for compromises on dimensions that are regarded to be more important. When only the dimension of constitution is considered Democratic Russia is believed to follow a strategy set corresponding to the Moderate opposition. However, it seems clear that some fractions of Democratic Russia might have had a maximalist preference structure as they later left Democratic Russia or actively promoted dictatorship. Democratic Russia expresses in its charter that the movement should be an organisation for promotion of democratic forces and ideas. On the dimension of constitution alone it therefore seems quite clear that the movement is in favour of democratic reforms. The preference structure for Democratic Russia is as follows:

<p align="center">Democracy > Hybrid Regime > Status Quo</p>

The democratic Russia Movement became the leading reform group in Russia during liberalisation. Yeltsin allied with the movement in his struggle first against Gorbachev and later on in the standoff at the White House against the communist plotters. Democratic Russia played a key role in mobilising the protesters coming to the White House to support the reformist and democratic fractions. Democratic Russia was the only political movement with significant influence in the early phase of transition as well as being the political force that had helped Yeltsin to power (Shevtsova 1995: 9). Victor Dmitriev confirms a close relationship with Russian president Yeltsin before the coup d'état and that they had a common goal in fighting the communists:

> *"Today we support Boris Nikolaevich, and he knows it. Most of his following and his aides are from Democratic Russia. So far we have been united – and, I think, will continue to be united – with Boris Nikolaevich, by common ideas about democratic principles."* (Dmitriev 1993 a: 162)

However, The Democratic Russia did fail to build a lasting alliance with the radical softliner fraction and transformed itself into a permanent political force in favour of democratic reforms. Not long after the collapse of communism the alliance started to erode. Without a common enemy and a political program the democratic alliance slowly lost support and influence towards the end of the transition phase. Especially difficult became the issue of Russia's position within the former Soviet Union. Democratic Russia was split between the

<p align="center">105</p>

camps of liberalists and democrats.[19]

Moderate Hardliners: The Re-organised Communist party of Russia and Right wing nationalists

The victory of Yeltsin over the empire savers and the breakdown of the communist party and the Soviet institutions in 1991 had pushed the anti reformist communists into opposition together with the nationalist extreme right wing empire savers. During the first phase of transition the Communist fraction remained weak due to the effect of the ban of the Communist Party and their defeat in August 1991. However, in this period the rhetoric of the communist and the Neo-Bolsheviks became increasingly nationalistic and patriotic and less Marxist in an effort to attract nationalist and Fascist to their protests against Yeltsin (McFaul and Markov 1993: 203) .

The reorganised Communist Party, the Neo-Bolsheviks was in 1992-1993 joined by more radical nationalist, empire saver and the extreme left fractions in a common attempt to seize power, defeat the centre and remove the president (Sakwa 2002: 52). In this coalition of anti democratic forces is in this thesis regarded as a unitary actor in this short period of time due to the fact that they had a common agenda of taking power, removing the president and the restoration of the Soviet Union in some form or another. Two of the leading figures in this Communist fraction were speaker of parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov and Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy (Remington 1997: 74-5). Both had been close allies of Yeltsin during liberalisation and the first phase of transition. Khasbulatov proposed during the crises in 1993 the formation of a parliamentary republic at the central level and the restoration of the powers of the Soviets at the local levels as well as he declared himself in favour of the restoration of a new form of post-communist Soviet power (Sakwa 2002: 50). This indicates a strong commitment to the status quo strategy by one of the most prominent members of the Communist fraction. Even though he might not be in favour of the re-establishment of the Soveit Union in its on it former structures he was clearly in favour of re-establishing Soviet power in the Russian Federation. In April 1993 Khasbulatov declared that he had restored

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[19] Several matters raise serious questions whether Democratic Russia can be regarded as a unitary actor. In this thesis Democratic Russia is regarded as a unitary actor during the first phase of transition. However, when conflicts and splits arise in the movement about central issues such as the constitution of new institutions the movement is no longer regarded as a unitary actor. Therefore the movement is not a relevant actor in the second phase of transition.

Soviet power in the regions and now he would move to restore Soviet power at the national level as well (Sakwa 2002). The preference structure for the communist fraction is as follows:

Status Quo > Hybrid Regime > Democracy

The communist fraction united most of the anti-democratic opposition to Yeltsin during the late phase of transition. According to Steele (1994: 377) the opposition fraction inside the White House in 1993 consisted of a hard core of communists and nationalist deputies, the so-called irreconcilable opposition, who believed that the time had come for a showdown with a regime which they believed had destroyed the Soviet Union. After the erosion of Democratic Russia the Communist fraction led by speaker of parliament Khasbulatov and vice president Rutskoy became the dominant opposition player in Russian politics. Rutskoy had clear ambitions of becoming the next president of Russia (Shevtsova 1998: 41).

Game of social interaction about constitution

Unlike McFaul (1999), who seems to have somehow tangled up the concepts of liberalisation, transition and consolidation ending up calming that Russia has had no less than three transitions from 1987 to 1995, this thesis will argue that the Russian phase of transition started by the breakdown of the former regime in 1991 and ended by a founding election in 1993.[20] This phase of transition is, unlike the previously phase of liberalisation and the following consolidation, characterised by the normal rules of the game, was suspended for a limited period. The shock of the coup and the breakdown of the Soviet Union had removed the former institutions and power structures and left the political actors with ill-defined and variable rules for interaction during the transition. This situation is confirmed by McFaul (2001: 124) who clams that the Russian mode of transition left many rules of the game of the polity ambiguous, unmodified and subject to manipulation. This is exactly how O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 6) describe transitions as intervals between one regime and another in which the rules are in flux and are being contested by the actors involved in the interaction about new rules of the game.

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[20] Mcfaul (1999: 103-4) argues for one transition from 1987 to August 1991 and a second from 1991 to 1993 which both is supposed to have failed, and finally a third in December 1993 and 1995 claimed to be successful. This conceptional confusion may also explain his claim that social sciences lack a comprehensive theory for understanding transitions (McFaul 1999: 103; McFaul 2002)

With the regard to the balance of power between the actors which are suggested by Przeworski (1991) to be determinant for the outcome of transition this seems to be quite balanced between the actors during the phase of transition. Yeltsin had won the presidential election with about 57 percents of the votes in June 1991 (Sakwa 2002: 25). Yeltsin further seems to have gained popularity when standing up against the plotters of the August coup. However, in March the very same year 71 percent had supported a renewed union treaty (Marples 2004: 75). While Yeltsin had received support in the August struggle in the major cities of Russia leaders and the population in most towns and regions seemed to await the situation. The distribution of power seems therefore to be quite balanced and relatively ill-defined (McFaul 2001: 125). An ill-defined balance of power and support in the population suggests that the actors of the Russian transition acts under the uncertainty of the Rawlsaian veil. Hence, they knew little about their real political strength after the transition and may pursue strategies to create institutions that secure their interests even if they should be the least powerful actor.

With regard to the criteria set forward by Przeworski (1991: 67-79) of the extrication from the power apparatus as a premise for the establishment of a democratic regime as the result of transition it seems at best to be unfinished during the phase of transition. The power apparatus of communist regimes differ significantly from the military dictatorships which seems to have created the foundation of the discussion by Przeworski (1991). While the military in most post-communist transitions took a neutral or passive position towards the political this was certainly not the case in the Soviet Union. Many of the August plotters had close connection to the military. However, these forces were pacified by the loss during the August standoff that included most fractions of the KGB which was designed to control the population. On the other hand, the bureaucratic system of power was kept more or less intact. Supporters of the former regime were allowed to remain in key positions in the political and economic system (McFaul 2001: 162). Yeltsin refused to support initiatives taken by Democratic Russia to reorganise the KGB, the army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (McFaul 2001: 157-58). On the issue of removing central supporters of the former regime from their positions Yeltsin expresses doubt about what was to be the right action at the moment but he chooses to not follow the demands of the people and *"crush them"*. On the issue of showdown with the former regime Yeltsin expresses opposition against such a break:

> *To break with everything, to destroy everything in the Bolshevik manner was not a part of my plans. … I still considered it possible to use in government work-experienced executives organizers and leaders…*
> *(El'cin 1994: 110)*

Yeltsin's victory in August 1991 pacified most of the power apparatus of the former regime and the supporters of non-democratic continuity and thereby opened a golden opportunity of a coalition of reform friendly actors to secure reforms or maybe even democracy in Russia. However, by not breaking with the past, including not holding the ones behind the coup d'état responsible he gave the authoritarian forces in Russia the possibility to reorganise at a later stage during the phase of transition.

Phase one of transition

As the Soviet Union ceased to exist in on 1st of January 1992 and with the hardliners pacified as a result of the failed coup in August the year before, Yeltsin had the opportunity to seek a compromise with his allied during the August confrontation Democratic Russia over a new institutional design for the new Russian State. With the hardliners pacified and the communist party prohibited the interaction in the first part of the phase of transition took part between the Yeltsin fraction and the elites in the Democratic Russia Movement who controlled the parliament.

Table 6.1

Outcomes of strategic interaction about constitution

Strategy sets	Outcome Description
H,D	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue confliction strategies, no compromise reached as result of interaction. The Yeltsin fraction presses for democratic reforms **while** the Communist fraction presses for hybrid reforms
H,H	**Compromise** outcome in which **all** actors agree upon the establishment of a hybrid regime
D,H	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue their **most preferred strategy**, no compromise reached as result of interaction. The Yeltsin fraction presses for Hybrid reforms **while** the Democratic Russia presses for Democratic reforms
D,D	**Compromise** outcome in which **all** actors agree upon the establishment of a democratic regime

Strategies: D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to
Democratic Russia, second to the Yeltsin fraction

In addition to the issue of constitution of a new institutional framework for Russia Yeltsin also prioritised the issue of economic reforms through the shock therapy program which was

to transform the Russian economy into a market economy. [21] Neither had Yeltsin build a consensus on the issue of future structure of Russia but Democratic Russia had supported the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Hence, interaction takes place during this phase about the issue of constitution between Democratic Russia and the Yeltsin fraction.

As in the earlier presented games it is expected that the actors do not pursue their lowest preferred strategy during interaction. This leaves us with two actors both having two strategies which as the result of interaction can produce four different outcomes. The strategy most preferred to the Democratic Russia Movement is the strategy of democracy then followed by the strategy of hybrid reforms while the Yeltsin fraction being a Radical softliner fraction will prefer a strategy of hybrid regime to the strategy of democracy. These four strategies can be combined to produce the four distinct outcomes as the result of the social interaction. The outcomes can be seen in table 6.1. The interaction between the actors can produce two compromise outcomes and two conflict outcomes. If both the Yeltsin fraction and Democratic Russia choose to play the strategies of democracy this will lead to a compromise in which the actors agree upon the establishment of a democratic political system as result of the transition. On the other hand if both actors choose the strategy hybrid regime during the interaction the result will be the establishment of a reformed hybrid regime. In both these outcomes the actors strategies coincide. However, the conflict outcomes are a result of the actors choosing conflicting strategies. When the Yeltsin fraction chooses to press for hybrid reforms while Democratic Russia presses for democracy or when the Yeltsin fraction presses for democratic reform while Democratic Russia presses for hybrid reforms such conflict outcomes occur. In a conflict outcome no consensus about the issue of constitution of new institutions are reached during interaction as in the Belarusian example.

To determine the preference structure of the two actors during their interaction about the issue of constitution according to the hypothesis set forward by Colomer (2000: 47-49) it is needed to order the outcome towards the pressure for change. The outcome with the highest pressure for change is the outcome in which both the Yeltsin Fraction and the Democratic Russia Movement press for a democratic change. The result of such an outcome would most likely be the establishment of a new and democratic regime in Russia. The two outcomes in which the actors choose conflicting strategies represent a high degree of pressure for change. While the lowest pressure for change in this interaction is represented by the second

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[21] For more on Russian economic reforms and Russian economy after independence see Ericson (1995: ; 2001) or Sakwa (2002: 227-304)

compromise outcome in which both actors press for a hybrid regime. It is worth noticing that the pressure for change in this game is much higher than in the pressure for change in the game presented in the previous chapter on Belarus. Hence, the strategy sets of the Yeltsin fraction and Democratic Russia represent more radical reformist actors than the actors present in the Belarusian transition.

Table 6.2

Outcomes ordered towards the degree of pressure for change

Very High   **D,D**

High   **D,H**   **H,D**

Medium   **H,H**

D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Democratic Russia, second to the Yeltsin fraction

The ordering of the pressure for change is used to construct the preferences and utility assigned by the actors towards the outcomes. The most preferred outcome for the Democratic Russia Movement is the outcome which represents the highest degree of pressure for change since it corresponds to the actors' most preferred strategy. Of the two outcomes which represent a high pressure for change Democratic Russia prefers the outcome in which they play the strategy of democracy over the outcome in which they choose their second best strategy. The worst outcome for Democratic Russia is the outcome in which both actors choose to compromise about the strategy of hybrid regime. The Yeltsin fraction will also prefer the outcome closest to their most preferred strategy that of a hybrid regime. Of the two outcomes with a high pressure for change the Yeltsin fraction prefers the outcome in which they press for a hybrid regime while Democratic Russia continues to press for democracy. The least preferred outcome for the Yeltsin Fraction is the one in which both actors

compromise upon democratic strategies. The outcomes are assigned ordinal values ranging from one to four where four is the most preferred outcome.

Table 6.3

Preferences of the actors in the Russian transition

Democratic Russia	Yeltsin Fraction	Ordinal Value
D,D	H,H	4
D,H	D,H	3
H,D	H,D	2
H,H	D,D	1

D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Democratic Russia, second to the Yeltsin fraction

The game which takes place between the Democratic Russia Movement and the ruling Yeltsin fraction in the early phase of transition about the constitution of new institutions is a game between two actors with rather close preference structure. Both are in favour of independence and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. On the issue of constitution of new institutions the Yeltsin fraction will always prefer the strategy of a hybrid regime. On the other hand Democratic Russia will always prefer the strategy of Democracy. This preference structure leaves us with two close actors both possessing dominant but conflicting strategies upon the dimension of constitution. These strategies sets are closer than the strategy sets of the Belarusian actors which have been described as distant actors. Following intuition one would instantly believe that two closer actors would easily be able to compromise upon either a democratic outcome or a hybrid regime. However, when construction the game model it becomes visible that exactly because these two actors are so close and posses similar preferences no one possesses the necessary threat power to alter his opponents preferences in order to arrive at a compromise outcome (Colomer 2000: 141-42). The equilibrium of the

game lays in the outcome DH in which the actors pursues their most preferred strategy.[22]

Figure 6.1   **Game of strategic interaction about constitution**

Yeltsin Fraction

	Hybrid Regime	Democracy
Democracy **Democratic Russia**	3,3	4,1
Hybrid Regime	1,4	2,2

The outcome DH is both the Nash-equilibrium as well as the Pareto-optimal solution to the game. None of the actors have the initiative to unilaterally change their strategy to achieve better payoffs. If an actor changes his strategy unilaterally to the least preferred strategy of the two he would end up in his worst outcome while his opponent will receive his best payoff. Thereby none of the actors have the power to threaten the opponent to change his strategy because he by such an action will end up in his worst possible outcome. Threatening to change his own strategy is neither a real threat since this would only benefit his opponent by rewarding him with his best payoff.

In this game there neither exists any initiative for a collective change of strategies. A collective agreement or a pact in which the actors both agree to change their strategies does not reward any of the actors with a higher payoff than the Nash-equilibrium outcome. Such a pact would lead to the sub-optimal conflict outcome HD and there exists therefore no initiative amongst the actors to enter into such an agreement. As long as the actors agree upon the issue of national independence as well as upon the need for economic reforms it is neither possible to include such issues in a pact in order to reach a compromise upon the dimension of

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[22] This game is solved in dominant strategies in which both actors always will choose their dominant strategy.

constitution of new institutions. Hence, it is not possible to extract further utility by any of the actors by offering tradeoffs on other dimensions.

The game is a stable conflict game in which the actors have almost alike strategies which makes it impossible to reach a compromise. What might have seemed a golden opportunity for two close actors to reach a compromise in the early phase of transition will after a closer examination appear to be a frustrating situation in which it became impossible for the actors to reach a compromise. Many scholars have claimed that Yeltsin, on purpose, omitted to solve the constitutional issue when having the chance to do so with democratic Russia (McFaul 2001). He is accused to have prioritised economic reforms over regime change. However, this thesis uncovers, by going beyond the intuition, that a compromise between Yeltsin and Democratic Russia was impossible. This striking paradox is found by applying game theory to the interaction about constitution of new institutions.

The Democratic Russia Movement supported Yeltsin in his struggle against the CPSU hardliners and later Gorbachev. Together, Democratic Russia and Yeltsin defeated the August plotters and dissolved the Soviet Union. Democratic Russia helped Yeltsin into power, organised rallies and mobilised civil society. However, Democratic Russia, unlike Central European movements such as Solidarity or Civic Forum, never gained access to real power under the rule of Yeltsin (Shevtsova 1998: 31). This exclusion from power led to widespread frustration amongst the Democratic Russia Movement. While having relied upon Democratic Russia to gain power Yeltsin wanted to stay independent once he had achieved power. Democratic Russia tried to confront Yeltsin with an ultimatum that unless Yeltsin gave the movement real power and allowed them to take part in the decision-making they would withdraw their support and go into opposition (Shevtsova 1998: 32). One of the leaders of Democratic Russia, Ponomaryov described the conflict with Yeltsin as it became imminent in late 1991 as: *"We have been trying for months to get a meeting with Boris Nikolayevich. He has become inaccessible."* (quoted in Shevtsova 1998: 32). As the game outcome suggests Yeltsin and Democratic Russia failed to enter into a compromise either about the constitution of new institution or about including the democratic opposition into the power structures. Even thought an agreement was signed between the two actor fractions which were to coordinate the President's politics with Democratic Russia a formal collaboration never became functional. Yeltsin more or less ignored the agreement as he feared, probably correctly, that the ideas of Democratic Russia were not shared by the majority of the population (Shevtsova 1998).

The conflict between the Yeltsin fraction and Democratic Russia became a source of

internal division for the movement. Conflict arose between fractions that had managed to get a position within the power structures and the ideological leadership of the movement. Both the further connection to the Yeltsin fraction and a conflict between fractions promoting democracy and fractions willing to submit to strong personality rule or a bureaucratic and clannish style of government in some form of liberal authoritarianism brook out in the open (Shevtsova 1998). This conflict finally split The Democratic Russia Movement into a minority democratic fraction promoting democracy in opposition and a majority fraction supporting the grooving personalistic, bureaucratic and authoritarian rule of the president in hope of being able to control Yeltsin. However, this strategy failed and several prominent members of the latter fraction later joined the Communist fraction in opposition to Yeltsin. Consequently, the split of Democratic Russia led to result that the movement no longer can be regarded as a unitary actor promoting common goals. According to Shevtsova (1998: 33-4) much of the failure of Democratic Russia can be explained in their lack of a program of action and the fact that they failed to become an unified national movement but stayed as an elitist centre movement.

The second phase of transition

While Yeltsin and The Democratic Russia Movement were struggling over power and reforms during the first phase of transition nationalists joined with re-organised communists in opposition to the ruling president. In January 1992 this Communist fraction for the first time took to the streets to protest against Yeltsin's politics (Shevtsova 1998: 34). Soon the newly formed alliance between nationalist empire-savers and communist hardliners from the August coup started to form a parliamentary alliance. As Democratic Russia eroded a new opposition fraction grew forward which united anti-Yeltsin, anti-reform and anti-democratic from all segments of Russian politics.

The main basis of the conflict between Yeltsin and the Communist fraction which became pressing during the death lock situation between the President and the Communist fraction in the parliament was about how Russian society and politics should be organised (Altermark 2000: 360). The conflict regarded what the Russian identity should be and how it was to be ruled in the future. Hence, the main issue which caused the conflict between the President on one side and the majority fraction in the Parliament on the other side was about the issue of constitution of new institutions. The present institutional framework which had been inherited form the phase of liberalisation had its day and did no longer manage to solve

the political conflicts and impel further reforms.

As The Democratic Russia Movement eroded and the Communist fraction grew stronger once again relevant actors in the Russian transition shifted. During transition the central actors became the still ruling Yeltsin Fraction and the Communist opposition now controlling the Russian parliament. The Yeltsin fraction continues to uphold these two most preferred strategies of a hybrid regime followed by the strategy of democracy as in the previous game while the Communist fractions two most preferred strategies are a return to a status quo dictatorship followed by a hybrid regime strategy. This interaction between these two more distant actors also produces four possible outcomes. Unlike the previous game and similar to the game in Belarus there exists only one compromise outcome in this interaction. The three remaining outcomes represent some degree of conflict. The compromise outcome in this game occurs when both actors follow the strategy of a hybrid regime. This outcome will lead to the establishment of some sort of a reformed regime with elements of democratic legitimacy but in which the opportunities for manipulation of the system are still present for the ruling fractions.

Table 6.4

Outcomes of strategic interaction about constitution

Strategy sets	Outcome Description
H,D	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue confliction strategies, no compromise reached as result of interaction. The Yeltsin fraction presses for democratic reforms **while** the Communist fraction presses for hybrid reforms
H,H	**Compromise** outcome in which **all** actors agree upon the establishment of a hybrid regime
S,H	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue their **most preferred strategy**, no compromise reached as result of interaction
S,D	**Conflict** outcome in which all actors pursue confliction strategies, no compromise reached as result of interaction. The Yeltsin fraction presses for democratic reforms **while** the Communist fraction presses for Status quo

Strategies: D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Communist fraction, second to the Yeltsin fraction

Three outcomes lead to conflict in this game. None of the three outcomes will result in a common settlement upon the future nature of the regime. The outcome in which the Yeltsin

fraction presses for democracy while the Communist fraction presses for a hybrid regime represents a conflict outcome in which both actors follow their least preferred strategies. In the second conflict outcome the Yeltsin fraction continues to press for democracy while the Communist fraction follows their most preferred strategy of status quo. The third outcome of the strategic interaction is the conflict outcome in which the two actors press for their most preferred strategies of respectively a hybrid regime for the Yeltsin fraction and a status quo dictatorship for the Communist fraction. The outcomes are outlined in the table above.

The outcomes in this game are ordered towards the pressure for change in order to create a preference structure for the actors during interaction. The outcomes pressure for change is shown in the table below. As can be seen from this table the pressure for change is considerably lower than it was in the interaction taking place between the democratic opposition and the Yeltsin fraction earlier during the phase of transition. The pressure for change in this game corresponds to a larger degree to the situation in Belarus. However, it is still somewhat higher than in Belarus due to the classification of Yeltsin as a radical softliner rather than a moderate softliner.

Table 6.5

Outcomes ordered towards the degree of pressure for change

High	**D,H**	
Medium	**H,H**	**S,D**
Low	**S,H**	

D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Communist fraction, second to the Yeltsin fraction

The outcome that represents the highest degree of pressure for change is the conflict outcome in which the Communist fraction presses for a hybrid regime while the Yeltsin fraction presses for democracy. This outcome represents a high degree of pressure for change. Two

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outcomes represent a medium degree of pressure for change. The first is the conflict outcome in which the Communist fraction presses for status quo while the Yeltsin fraction continues to press for democracy. The second is the compromise outcome in which both actors agree upon the strategy of a hybrid regime. The final outcome in this game represents a low degree of pressure for change and is the one in which the Communist fraction presses for status quo while the Yeltsin fraction press for a hybrid regime.

As in the games analysed earlier the pressure for change is used to construct the preference structure of the actors and assign the ordinal utilities for the actors towards the outcomes. The actors prefer outcomes with a degree of pressure for change which corresponds to the actors most preferred strategy and if more than one outcome have the same degree of pressure for change those in which the actors chooses coinciding strategies are chosen (Colomer 2000: 48). The payoff structure of the actors is outlined in table 6.6 below. The Yeltsin fraction prefers the compromise outcome in which all actors agree on a hybrid regime over all other outcomes. The second best outcome for the Yeltsin fraction is the conflict outcome with the same degree of pressure for change in which the Communist fraction presses for status quo while the Yeltsin fraction presses for democracy. The outcome which is preferred as the third outcome is the outcome which represents the highest pressure for change in which the Communist fraction presses for a hybrid regime while the Yeltsin fraction presses for democracy. The worst outcome for the Yeltsin fraction is the one in which the Communist fraction presses for status quo while he press for hybrid reforms. This least preferred outcome is the one with the lowest degree of pressure for change.

The Communist fraction on the other hand will prefer the outcome with the lowest degree of pressure for change over all the other possible outcomes of the strategic interaction. This is followed by the two outcomes with medium pressure for change. Of these two the Communist fraction will prefer the compromise outcome in which both actors choose the hybrid regime strategy over the conflict outcome. Hence, the third most preferred outcome by the Communist fraction is the outcome in which they press for status quo while the Yeltsin fraction presses for democracy. The least preferred of the four possible outcomes for the Communist fraction is the one with the highest degree of pressure for change, which is the conflict outcome in which they press for a hybrid regime while the Yeltsin fraction press for democratic reforms.

Table 6.6

Preferences of the actors in the Russian transition

Communist Fraction	Yeltsin Fraction	Ordinal Value
S,H	H,H	4
H,H	S,D	3
S,D	H,D	2
H,D	S,H	1

D=Democracy, H= Hybrid Regime S=Status Quo. First strategy belongs to the Communist fraction, second to the Yeltsin fraction

Compared to the game between the Yeltsin fraction and Democratic Russia the later interaction between the Communists and Yeltsin consist of actors with a more distant preference structure. The game which reflects the social interaction between Yeltsin and the communists in the later phase of transition is in several aspects similar to the prisoners' dilemma game. The game is described by Colomer (2000: 143) as a mugging game. The Nash-equilibrium in this game is, as in the prisoners' dilemma game, suboptimal with regard to Pareto-optimality. However, only one of the actors in the mugging game possesses a dominant strategy. As can be seen from the table above the Communist fraction possesses a dominant strategy of status quo while the Yeltsin fraction does not possess a dominant strategy.

The static game of strategic interaction about constitution is modelled above. The Nash-equilibrium is marked by a circle while the Pareto-optimal solution is marked by the quadrangle. For the Communist fraction that possesses a dominant strategy of status quo it will always be more rewarding to choose this strategy as long as this interaction is considered in isolation. Hence, the status quo strategy is the strictly best reply for the Communist fraction no matter the strategy chosen by the Yeltsin fraction. On the other hand, the best strategy of the Yeltsin fraction depends upon the choice of the Communist fraction. If the Communist

fraction plays the strategy of a hybrid regime it is clearly most rewarding for the Yeltsin fraction to enter into the compromise outcome by following their most preferred strategy of a hybrid regime. This is, as earlier discussed the best outcome for the Yeltsin fraction. However, when the Communist fraction chooses the strategy of status quo the best strategy for the Yeltsin fraction will be to play the strategy of democracy because they are rewarded with a utility of three instead of a utility of one if they play the strategy of a hybrid regime. Hence, since the Communist fraction always will choose the status quo strategy the Yeltsin fraction will respond by playing the strategy of democracy.

Figure 6.2   **Game of strategic interaction about constitution**

These two strategies form the Nash-equilibrium of the game which corresponds to the outcome SD. In this outcome none of the actors have the initiative to unilaterally change their strategy. Such an action would lead to the punishment of the actor making such a change because the actors would then receive his worst utility. This situation makes the equilibrium a stable outcome with regard to unilateral change of strategy. However, the Nash-equilibrium of this game is as the prisoners' dilemma game suboptimal with regard to Pareto-optimality. In this case, both actors could improve their utility by changing to the strategy of a hybrid regime.[23] For this to happen, the Yeltsin fraction must first change their action from

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[23] This discussion of change in strategies depends upon the assumptions of Brams' (1994) "theory of moves" in which the game has an initial state and the actors can react and counter react on each others moves before the game ends (Tvedt 2004: 86). Hence, they are entering into a dynamic interaction.

democracy to a hybrid regime. Following this change in strategy, the Yeltsin fraction must further either threaten or tempt the Communist fraction to make a similar change in strategy to further shift the equilibrium to the Pareto-optimal outcome. Without an effective threat or pact the Communist fraction stays with the status quo strategy and punishes the Yeltsin fraction with their worst payoff. The non-myopic Pareto-optimal outcome is further unstable because, without an effective threat or pact the Communist fraction would have the initiative to change their strategy back to status quo to achieve their best utility. As the following empirical discussion will elaborate in greater detail the Yeltsin fraction first proposed a compromise solution for a new constitution for the parliament. When the parliament failed to accept the proposal, Yeltsin set forward a threat to dissolve the parliament.

Confrontation: The October 1993 Clash

The conflict between Yeltsin and the Communist fraction found no solution despite the compromise reached in late 1993. The conflict had developed into a stalemate with direct confrontation between the two fractions. The choice of Yeltsin to prioritise economic reforms over crafting of new institutions had left the country without a coherent framework for further reforms. As the game between Democratic Russia and the Yeltsin fraction shows it was not possible to reach a compromise between the two fractions within the given framework of interaction. And as McFaul (2001) claims the first phase of transition was devoted to economic reforms. By leaving the question about constitution of new institutions unsolved Yeltsin entered into an economic transition without an adequate institutional framework. The deadlock which was created by the confrontation between the Communist fraction and the Yeltsin fraction did in the summer of 1993 threaten to destroy the regime as the parliament continued to issue counter-edicts to every presidential decision (Lapidus 1995: 22-3).

As Democratic Russia had eroded Yeltsin had fallen into a new conflict, this time with the Communist fraction. However, as the game presented earlier shows it is possible to move away from the suboptimal Nash-equilibrium if one of the fractions, in this case the Yeltsin fraction, possesses the necessary threatening power to force the Communist fraction into changing their dominant strategy away from status quo towards the strategy of a hybrid regime in order to reach the Pareto-optimal outcome. If the Yeltsin fraction has the sufficient threatening power to push the Communist fraction to enter into a compromise with the Yeltsin fraction this would solve the deadlock between the president and the parliament. For such a threat to be efficient it must make the target change its behaviour in accordance with the threatener's desires (Hovi 1998: 13). Hence, it must make the parliament to stop issuing

counter-edicts to every presidential decision and enter into a compromise with Yeltsin in which a new institutional framework came into effect. Already during the Sixth Congress in April 1992 Yeltsin had threatened to hold a nationwide referendum on a new constitution, new elections and for the early dissolution of the parliament which term was due to end in March 1995 (Sakwa 2002: 49). However, the deadlock between president and parliament continued for more than a year.

Hovi (1998) have created a game theoretical framework for analysing such conflict situations in which threats are set forwarded. If the Communist fraction is to yield to Yeltsin's threat, and it thereby become effective it must fulfil the five criteria discussed in the theory chapter. Hence, the threat must be relevant, severe, complete, clear and credible (Hovi 1998: 11-17).

In the present case the threat is considered to be relevant, because it would have been possible for the Communist fraction to enter into a compromise with Yeltsin by changing their strategy to their second most preferred of a hybrid regime. The initiative for changing their strategy is also present, since the compromise outcome of HH is more rewarding than the conflict outcome SD. By changing strategy they would be better off as long as Yeltsin also enters into the compromise, an action which is likely when the game is considered. Hence, the threat of dissolving the parliament is considered to be relevant.

The threat is also considered severe because such an action would harm the Communist fraction because the parliament is the main arena for the opposition against Yeltsin. Without the formal institution of the parliament intact the Communist fraction would have no other arena for protest and power than the streets. Or in other words it would leave them without any formal power. An additional argument for the threat to be severe is Khasbulatov's wish for a parliamentary republic. This would probably not be possible with a new parliament which is to be created after the initiative of the president. The threat set forward by Yeltsin is regarded as being complete because Yeltsin did show an initiative to enter an agreement with the parliamentary fraction during the one and a half year from April 1992 until October 1993. Nothing has shown that Yeltsin intended to carry out the threat even of the Communist fraction had yield to it. Finally, the threat can be considered to be clear as the threat was put forward during interaction about a specific issue, the constitution of new institutions, with the goal of changing the behaviour of the majority fraction in the parliament. The intention of the threat is therefore regarded to be understood by the Communist fraction.

However, for the threat to be efficient it must also be credible. For the threat of dissolution of the parliament to be credible it must be believed by the Communist fraction to

be carried out if they do not yield and enter into a compromise. Hence, the Communist fraction must be certain that Yeltsin possesses the power and the willingness to actually dissolve parliament. Before the October confrontation this criteria seems to be unclear. Constitutionally, the referendum was only allowed if one third of the congress or one million members of the public asked for it (Sakwa 2002: 49). And if the necessary signatures had been collected the Supreme Soviet would have to call for the referendum. Further, on December 11th 1992, the Supreme Soviet passed a resolution that banned any plebiscite that could result in a vote of no confidence in any high state body, or which could lead to the dissolution before its term had expired (ibid). In other words, Yeltsin did not possess the legal power to dissolve the parliament.

An alternative to dissolving the parliament by a decree would to be to remove it by force. However, the balance of power between the president and the parliament was unclear and society in general seemed divided (McFaul 2001: 191). Yeltsin could not be certain of the support from neither the army nor the FSB. [24] In August the army had been reluctant towards using force against demonstrators and the former KGB had been a supporter of the hardliners. Many regional leaders were also calm towards Yeltsin and many openly supported the Communist fraction. On the other hand, Yeltsin did in August 1991 manage to mobilise the masses and outset the plotters behind the coup d'état. At that time the army at the end sided with the people and against the plotters. Yeltsin, together with Democratic Russia, showed tremendous power by these actions and he won great respect and legitimacy for defending Russia and the reform politics.

Yeltsin's popularity had partly been confirmed by the April election in which 59 percent of the voters had shown confidence in the president (Sakwa 2002: 51). However, he clearly lacked the legal power to dissolve the parliament and his support amongst the institutions of power seemed unclear in 1992 and early 1993 therefore the credibility of the threat can be seen as contested. Hence, the Communist fraction cannot with certainty decide whether the threat is credible or not. However, it is crucial to judge if the threat is effective or not. If the threat is not effective Yeltsin does not have the essential threatening power to change the outcome of the game.

As the threat set forward by Yeltsin is established by the above discussion to be relevant, severe, complete and clear the only uncertainty connected to threat is whether or not it is credible. To illustrate this situation a game is created in which the threat is considered

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[24] FSB is the successor of the KGB (NKVD and Cheka) and is to deal with domestic security issues.

both to be credible and not to be credible. This uncertainty about threat is build into a game model by introducing the concept of nature and variable preference structure as in the nested game of Belarus.

The game is a dynamic game which is opened by the Communist fraction that can react towards the threat set forward by Yeltsin by either yielding to the threat or by standing firm. If they choose to yield the game ends. In such an outcome the Communist fraction has given in to the Yeltsin fraction's threat. If the Communist fraction on the other hand stands firm the next move of the game belongs to the Yeltsin fraction. As a reaction to this the Yeltsin fraction can choose to either dissolve the parliament or not to dissolve the parliament. By dissolving the parliament we reach a conflict outcome in which Yeltsin removes the Communist fraction from power either by legal means or by force. In this outcome the threat has shown to be effective. If the Yeltsin fraction is not able to do so they will not dissolve the parliament and the Communist fraction will remain in power of the parliament and the situation remains unsolved. In this outcome the threat has shown not to be effective. The Communist fraction will order the outcomes in the following way:

Best:	Stand firm and Yeltsin fraction gives in
Second Best:	Yield and enter into compromise
Worst:	Stand firm and the Yeltsin fraction dissolves the parliament

The Communist fraction will be best rewarded by the outcome in which the Yeltsin fraction gives in as they stand firm. The second best outcome is when they choose to enter the compromise by following the strategy of yielding. The worst outcome for the Communist fraction occurs when they are punished by the Yeltsin fraction for standing firm. If the threat is credible and thereby effective the preferences of the Yeltsin fraction will be as follows:

Best:	The Communist fraction yields and enters into the compromise
Second Best:	Communist fraction stands firm and the parliament is dissolved
Worst:	Communist fraction stands firm and Yeltsin fraction gives in

In this interaction the Yeltsin fraction possesses the necessary threatening power to change the outcome of the game and will be most rewarded when the Communist fraction gives in and enters into the compromise. Since he possesses this threatening power it would be more rewarding to carry out the threat than not carrying it out. If the threat on the other hand is not credible and thereby not effective the preferences will be as follows:

Best:	The Communist fraction yields and enters into the compromise
Second Best:	Communist fraction stands firm and Yeltsin fraction gives in
Worst:	Communist fraction stands firm and the parliament is dissolved

In this game the two least preferred outcomes have swished places. This is due to the fact that

the Yeltsin fraction does not possess the necessary threatening power in order to press the Communist fraction into a compromise. In this game the outcomes are given numerical utilities at an interval scale to allow the estimation of uncertainties and the sub-game perfect Bayesian equilibrium.[25] The game is outlined in the figure 6.3 below. The game to the right of Nature (q) is the game in which the threat is considered to be credible and therefore effective while the game to the left (1-q) is the one in which the threat is not regarded credible and the threat is not effective.

Figure 6.3
The Russian threat game

In this game it is the Communist fraction that does not know for certain if the threat is credible or not. The Yeltsin fraction on the other hand knows whether he is able and willing to carry out the threat. It is possible to estimate the value of the quantity q in order to find out the Communist fractions expectation of the credibility of the threat. This is done by creating an expression of the expected utility of the respective strategies of "*yield*" and "*stand firm*". From these expressions one creates an inequality and calculates the estimated size of the

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[25] These utilities are given empirically and assume that a defeat and a loss of face are connected to a negative utility while victory is connected to a positive utility. Continued conflict is granted a more neutral utility.

probability.[26] The quantity q is calculated to:

$$E(\mu)_{|STAND\_FIRM} \geq E(\mu)_{YIELD}$$
$$-25q \geq -10$$
$$q \leq \underline{0.4}$$

With this estimation of the quantity to be smaller or equal to .4 one can presume that the Communist fraction estimates the threat to be not credible. Hence, that if they stand firm to Yeltsin's demand of entering into a compromise expecting that he will give in and not have the necessary power or not being willing to dissolve the parliament. Following this logic the Communist fraction will choose the action of standing firm to the threat. However, this does not mean that the threat is not credible, but only that the Communist fraction estimates the chances of it to be credible to be less than 40 percent. The equilibrium found by this technique is the one in which the Communist fraction stand firm and the Yeltsin fraction gives in. This equilibrium is a sub-game perfect equilibrium found on the right hand side of the game tree marked by a circle.

The Deadlock

The first real attempt to adopt a new set of rules for the political game after the collapse of the Democratic Russia Movement took place in April 1992. The Congress of Peoples Deputies failed in the Sixth Congress to adopt a new constitutional framework for Russia. The disagreement which had developed between the president and the parliamentarian majority about the economic reform programme further developed into a conflict about the structure, development and organisation of the Russian political system (McFaul 2001: 186). It was during this session of the congress that Yeltsin set forward the threat to dissolve the parliament. However, the first real clash between the Yeltsin fraction and the Communist controlled parliament did not take place before the Seventh Congress in December 1992. At this session the parliament tried to limit the presidential power through several constitutional amendments and by curtailing the president's power to rule by decree. This power had been granted Yeltsin for only one year and was to expire in December 1992 (Sakwa 2002: 49).

The parliament had seriously challenged the leading role of the president in the reform process and tried to hinder any further reforms. The changes would have given the parliament

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[26] For a detailed calculation of the quantity q, please refer to the appendix of this chapter.

expanded authority on behalf of the president. This continued confrontation with the president indicates that the parliament did not regard the threat set forward by Yeltsin to be credible. Dissolution of the parliament was not legal and the Communist fraction counted on support from the regions and must have doubted Yeltsin's popularity in the population. This action indicates that the Communist fraction instead of yielding to the president's demands so they continued to stand firm.

The conflict between Yeltsin and the Communist fraction did first and foremost result in growing scepticism by the opposition toward the radical reform program which had been launched by Yeltsin and which was lead by his Prime Minister Gaidar. Even though, Yeltsin approved the replacement of the reform friendly prime minister Gaidar with the more restrictive Chernomyrdin he did not approve the restriction of his power (McFaul 2001). Yeltsin feared that the dominant Communist fraction in parliament would act as a resistor against further economic reforms and promote further political instability. Yeltsin saw the congress as an obstacle to further reforms:

> *"In my opinion, it is an artificial, supra-parliamentary entity. Its very existence is a permanent basis for disrupting the balance of power between the legislative, executive and judicial branches. (Sakwa 2002: 49)*

Yeltsin had lost the confidence in the Congress of Peoples Deputies and as a reaction to the attempts to limit his powers he threatened to call for a referendum to decide who should have the power to reform the economy and the political institutions. Yeltsin claimed that the Communist fraction had obstructed the reforms and "*What they failed to achieve in August 1991, they decided to repeat now and carry out a creeping coup.*"(Sakwa 2002: 49). However, for the moment the Yeltsin fraction and the legislative managed to reach an agreement to put off the referendum until April. The April referendum was to decide the balance of power between the Yeltsin fraction and the Communist dominated Congress deciding who was to have power to control the reforms. The referendum gave stronger support to Yeltsin than expected, with 59 percent of the turnout expressing confidence in the president (Sakwa 2002: 51). The referendum also expressed confidence in the economic politics and called for new elections for both president and parliament. However, the demand for elections was not binding because they failed to reach the required 50 percent of the registered voters (Ibid). This referendum was at least a partial victory for Yeltsin and strengthened his position against the parliament.

Despite the result of the referendum the parliament did not yield to the president's threat. The conflict only intensified during summer and radicalised the parliament. The

leading figures, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi used the summer to gather support from the regions in their struggle against the president. According to Sakwa (2002: 52) the parliament over-estimated its strength by misinterpreting Yeltsin's moves as signs of weakness. The constitutional crises turned into a struggle about power. Rutskoi openly spoke of his ambitions of becoming president. Yeltsin interpreted the April referendum as a renewed mandate from the people in the struggle against the hardliner fraction and in July he had a new draft for a constitution ready. However, his draft was blocked by some regional leaders. The Communist fraction had once again showed that they had no intentions to yield to the threats. It had become clear that there was no legal way of adopting a new constitution (Shevtsova 1995: 22).

As the parliament continued to stand firm and confronted the president denying entering a compromise the president took a risky action. He issued Decree 1400 which dissolved the Supreme Soviet, called for new legislative elections and a vote on the new draft constitution on December 12th (Shevtsova 1995: 23). However, the parliament did not give in to this move peacefully. Not only had they miscalculated the credibility of the president's threat they did still not believe that Yeltsin had the necessary power and support to remove them. Supporters of the Communist fraction occupied the Russian White House for two weeks before they moved to storm the Moscow Mayor's office and the radio tower in a final attempt to defeat the president. The next day Yeltsin reacted as army divisions finally showed loyalty to the president and stormed the White House after having bombed it with laser guided gradates. The president's power and the credibility of his threats could no longer be questioned by anyone. Khasbulatov and Rutskoi were imprisoned and Yeltsin had won the stand off.

Compared to the outcome suggested by the equilibrium found by unveiling the Communist fraction's estimation of the quantity q, the observed outcome seems to be somewhat different. As the equilibrium suggests the Communist fraction stands firm to Yeltsin's threat. However, the Yeltsin fraction reacts to this by dissolving the parliament. This indicates that the estimation of the credibility of the threat was uncertain. This uncertainty led to the miscalculation of the credibility of the threat by the Communist fraction.

When we now have observed the outcome of the interaction it is possible through the application of Bayes rule to establish the probability of the credibility of the threat. This is done by applying Bayes rule of probability theory to the model. By applying Bayes rule it is possible to decide the credibility of the threat given that we observe that Yeltsin

carries out the threat. Mathematically this is expressed as follows:[27]

A= Yeltsin's threat is *credible*

B= Yeltsin will *dissolve parliament*

Ã= Yeltsin threat is *not credible*

$$P(B \mid A) = 1 \qquad P(A) = q$$

$$P(B \mid \hat{A}) = 0 \qquad P(\tilde{A}) = (1-q)$$

$$P(A \mid B) = \frac{1(q)}{1(q) + 0(1-q)}$$

$$\underline{\underline{P(A \mid B) = 1}}$$

This equation expresses that the probability of the treat is credible given the observation that Yeltsin dissolves the parliament is equal to 1. Hence, when Yeltsin dissolves the parliament the treat has proven to be credible and the Communist fraction has miscalculated the threat from the Yeltsin fraction. Therefore, the outcome of the interaction is that the Communist fraction stands firm and the Yeltsin fraction carries out the threat and dissolves the parliament and calls for new elections and a referendum on a new constitution. The dispute about the credibility of the Yeltsin fraction's threat hinders a movement in the game from the sub-optimal conflict outcome to the Pareto-optimal outcome which would have led to a compromise. The result is that the Yeltsin fraction wins the confrontation and may impose their preferences on the issue of constitution upon the other actors.

The 1993 constitution

A new Russian constitution which was to resolve the disputes between the president and the parliament was approved by a referendum in December 1993. According to Sheinis (2004: 56) already then serious concerns was raised about falsification of the referendum. The constitution clearly strengthens the president's position in the new institutional frame work. This might not be strange as the draft for a new constitution was created by the Yeltsin fraction in the aftermath of the victory over the Communist fraction in October. The constitution of Russia was in many aspects a liberal constitution. It separates the state powers,

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[27] For a detailed discussion and calculation of Bayes rule applied to the observed outcome, please refer to the appendix of this chapter.

grant basic human rights to the population, secures freedom of speech and prohibits censorship (Sakwa 2002). However, the constitution echoes that Yeltsin's motivations was predominantly of a liberal character rather than a democratic character (Shevtsova 2000: ; Sakwa 2002: 61)

Institutionally, major changes were made to the legislative branch of power while the executive branch remained subordinate to the president and mainly untouched by the changes. The president was given the power to appoint the government and only the prime minister needs to be approved by the parliament (Shevtsova 1998: 93). The legislative was transformed into a dual chamber parliament with limited power. While the president was granted the right to dissolve the parliament it became practically impossible to remove the president (Ibid). The power of the constitutional court was limited compared to earlier drafts. The constitution was designed to give extensive power to the president in a form of a supra presidential system opening for the possibility of building an authoritarian political system if this was the intention of the head of state. According to Reddaway and Glinski (2001: 633) the constitution blocked any further democratic development. The negative balance of power between the braches created the basis for an authoritarian regime with little counterbalance to presidential powers (Shevtsova 1995: 24).

The 1993 constitution put the prospects of further democratic or authoritarian development in Russia solely in the intention of Yeltsin and the presidents which followed him. The regime rested on weak and subordinate institutions which was insufficient to control the presidents intentions while they still were to generate legitimacy by their democratic and liberal features (Shevtsova 2000). As shown by Sheinis (2004) Yeltsin showed willingness of manipulating the electoral process not only during transition but also in the founding election of December. McFaul et al (2004) points to several instances of suspected electoral manipulation in the post transitional elections. Yeltsin also showed willingness of manipulating the democratic process when he controlled the media coverage to his and the newly formed pro-president party "Russia's Choice" advantages, denying other political groups to compete on equal terms (Shevtsova 1995). All of this points towards that the regime Yeltsin inserted subsequent to the October 1993 confrontation tried to extract legitimacy from democratic procedures and institutions while the incumbent rulers showed willingness to use the opportunities they were given to manipulate the system to their advantage. This corresponds to the characteristics given of a hybrid regime in the first chapter of this thesis. Hence, by winning the confrontation with the Communist fraction in October Yeltsin introduced a hybrid form of rule through the new constitution in Russia.

7. Conclusion

The main objective I have undertaken in this thesis is to explain an observed difference in regime type between two structural and historical similar Slavic republics, Russia and Belarus. In the 1990s one could observe that Belarus moved towards a non-democratic regime while Russia seemed to have been consolidated in a "gray zone" between democracy and dictatorship. However, my goal has not only been to study the empirical outcomes, but has also had additional theoretical goals. First, to apply transition theory and game theory and create an integrated theoretical and methodological model for understanding post-Soviet transitions within a universal framework for understanding transitions. Secondly, to take into consideration the challenges which are created by multi-dimensional conflict issues about nation-building, state-building and economic change when they appear as conflicts during transition. Sub-optimality and the escape from such a situation have been central to this discussion. The following sections will discuss the major findings in the chapters of Belarus and Russia, the comparative findings and the implication for transition and regime theory. Finally, I will outline some further challenges which I have not undertaken in this thesis.

Belarus

Belarus met the formation of the Soviet Union with a poorly developed national consciousness. Long suppression from Russia and Poland, ethnic and class structures, low degree of urbanisation and the lack of a national conscious elite in addition to several other factors elaborated in chapter four had left the country with an unawake national identity. The nationalist trends which had been so influent in Western-Europe during the process of nation-building in the nineteenth century had not yet had a severe impact upon Belarus. Neither had the process of state-building had an impact upon the country as Belarus never experienced real independence before the formation of the Soviet Union.

When the processes of nation- and state-building finally reached Belarus in the mid twentieth century it was in the form of constructing a Soviet state and a Soviet identity and not as a national state or identity. This left Belarus, as opposed to the Baltic republics and Russia, with a weak and underdeveloped national consciousness. As Belarus entered the processes of democratisation in the late 1980s there excited a strong Soviet identity in Belarus and strong support in favour of the union both amongst the elites and the population. I have argued in this thesis that these finding have had a profound impact upon the Belarusian

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transition. By a closer examination of these factors they are believed to have created specific challenges for the transition.

These assumptions build upon the suggestions by both Rustow (1970) and by Linz and Stephan (1996: ; 1996b). However, I have discussed in detail some factors which create specific challenges. The challenges are further brought into the analysis about Belarus as micro-level factors, not macro-level assumptions or vague concepts. The lack of national identity and low support for independence is a consequence of the state- and nation-building processes. This further affects the actor's ability to compromise as well as their strategies towards both the issue of constitution of new institutions and the issues of the future nature of the state. By affecting the strategies and creating multi-dimensional conflicts during transition state- and nation-building processes have influenced the outcome of transition directly in Belarus.

I have argued that the multi-dimensional conflict structure of Belarus during transition hindered the possibility of a compromise on the dimension of constitution of new institutions. Furthermore, I argue that more attention was devoted, by the softliner actor and the opposition actor, towards securing national independence and an unstable national pact than securing a regime compromise. However, the national pact proved unstable and inadequate for securing national independence as the hardliner actor pursued re-integration with Russia and affected a strategy of re-establishing of the Soviet Union.

At the same time as the national compromise was insufficient, the softliner actor failed to take advantage of his position as a centric actor upon both conflict dimensions to propose a lasting compromise. In stead of pursuing a strategy of compromise on the question of regime type the softliner actor allied with the hardliners on this question while excluding the opposition from further influence. This strategy was followed in a hope of securing independence. However, as the national compromise fell apart the interaction returned to the sub-optimal conflict situation of a prisoners' dilemma game. Without a pact, about either conflict issues, a movement away from such an outcome is impossible. Hence, it seems to be a prior condition for an escape from a prisoners' dilemma game, which occurs in a nested conflict situation, that the prior conflict is solved before the attention is turned to other conflict issues. In the Belarusian setting this means that lack of a compromise about the national issue hindered a compromise about regime type.

These two factors was the main reason for the failure of the Belarusian actors to reach the non-myopic Pareto-optimal outcome and led to a sub-optimal conflict outcome as a result of the Belarusian transition. Hobbes describes in the Leviathan (published 1742, by Tuck

1991) such a situation in which actors wish for peace but as long as they all follows individual rationality the result will be a conflict. Further, a life under this conflict will be "lonely, short, disgusting and brutal" (Midtbø 2003: 124). Therefore, the only escape from this miserable life will be for the people voluntarily, by contract, to submit power to an absolute ruler. Such a conflict situation seems to have been the outcome of the Belarusian transition. While the strongest party, the hardliner fraction, attempted to introduce their preferences upon the other actors who resisted this, the peoples used the fist opportunity to submit their sovereignty to the one man who promised them stability, peace and continuity, the charismatic and authoritarian Alexander Lukashenka.

In addition to the multi-dimensional conflict structures of the Belarusian transition I also argue that Belarus met the transition phase especially ill-prepared. A regime split on the national level occurred at a much later stage than on the central level and the ruling elite suppressed and hindered opposition during the entire phase of liberalisation. This severely limited the impact of liberalisation upon Belarusian society. The opposition remained an urban phenomena and public debate was limited. This clearly affected the development, strength and position of the actors so that the opposition and softliner remained weak during transition. The Communist Party of Belarus remained powerful throughout both liberalisation and transition. However, the opposition managed to mobilise support about the issues of Stalinist crimes, the Chernobyl disaster and the issue of the Belarusian culture and language.

Russia

The Russian transition started as the Belarusian with the breakdown of the Soviet Union. However, the phase of liberalisation had a much more durable impact on Russia politics. A clear split between hardliner and softliner fractions occurred on central level already in the mid 1980s when Gorbachev came to power. And at a later stage also the softliner fraction split into a radical fraction around Yeltsin and a moderate around Gorbachev. Furthermore, I create a clear division between the Yeltsin fraction as a softliner and the democratic opposition. By doing so, I stress the liberal character of Yeltsin's strategies while relaxing the democratic nature of Yeltsin. I have found little implications for Yeltsin being neither a democratic nor an opposition player. Yeltsin prioritised reforms which were intended to overcome the challenges created by the crisis the Soviet Union and later Russia were facing. Full democratisation of the regime was of a lower priority. As the outcome findings confirm

Yeltsin's intentions was to create a regime streamlined to introduce these liberal reforms and maximise his political power while maintaining a legitimate rule. These findings correspond to the classification of Russia as a hybrid regime and the classification by Freedom House of Russia as partly free.

The first game presented in the chapter about Russia takes place between the Yeltsin fraction and the Democratic Russia Movement and clearly demonstrates how a compromise was unattainable. This conclusion clearly differs from that of most other observers, who have seen this moment in the transition as a golden opportunity for reaching a democratic outcome. By going beyond the conclusions reached by intuition I have unveiled that such an outcome was much more unlikely than it appeared at first sight. The reason for this is the complication which arises when two actors with a close preference structure engage in interaction about the question of regime type. I will return to this in greater detail in the section discussing implications to theory.

The second game presented in the Russian chapter deals with two more distant actors. This game, unlike the first, opens the possibility for a compromise. Despite this, the initial Nash-equilibrium in this game is a sub-optimal conflict outcome. However, a movement away from this outcome towards a Pareto-optimal outcome is possible if the one of the actors possess the necessary threatening or tempting power. The empirical elaboration found evidence for a threat and a movement away from the conflict strategy by the Yeltsin fraction.

The final game in the Russian chapter discusses the effect of this threat in order to illuminate whether this threat was sufficient for a movement away from sub-optimality. The discussion uncovered an uncertainty amongst the Communist fraction about the credibility of the threat. This uncertainty led to the Communist fraction's miscalculation of the credibility of the threat and thereby explains the armed confrontation between Yeltsin and the Parliament. As I have formally shown the threat proved credible and the confrontation resulted in a victory for Yeltsin. Thereby, Russia failed to escape sub-optimality by the use of threatening power. Instead of reaching a pacted compromise between the actors fraction the Russian transition outcome was determined by the outcome of a conflict and a confrontation.

Comparative findings

Both Belarus and Russia failed to escape the sub-optimal outcomes of the interaction about constitution and reach the Pareto-optimal outcome. This has different causes in the two countries. In Belarus a compromise outcome was not reached due to the multi-dimensional conflicts of the transition that hindered a pacted transition about the issue of constitution. In

Russia a compromise was at first unattainable due to the preference structures of the relevant actors. Later a compromise was hindered by the miscalculation of Yeltsin's threat. The possibility of a pact in Russia was ignored by the Communist fraction as they were overwhelmed by their own belief of their strength and support. These conclusions contradict the weakly theoretical founded claims by McFaul (2002) and Melville (2000) that post-Soviet transitions cannot be understood by transition theory due to the lack of known pacts. I have shown that the lack of known pacts should rather be seen as an explanatory factor towards the outcome than a precondition for the application of theory. Other conclusions can only be seen as a misinterpretation of the theoretical framework.

Another major comparative finding is the difference in actor constellations and the pressure for change which result from this. In Belarus three actor fractions have been found to be relevant to the transition. These are a moderate hardliner fraction, a moderate softliner fraction and a moderate opposition fraction. This combination of actors produced a relative low degree of pressure for change. Due to this only the opposition actor had democratic reforms as a relevant strategy and all other actors pressed for non-democratic strategies. The only way democracy could have been implemented in Belarus would have been through a victory of the opposition. This seems relatively unlikely given the balance of power and the relative strength of the actors.

In Russia I have found a different constellation of actors. Also here three actor fractions have been found to be relevant for the interaction. However, in Russia these are a moderate hardliner fraction, a radical softliner fraction and a moderate opposition fraction. The presence of a relative powerful moderate softliner fraction has shown to be crucial for implementation of reforms. The radical softliner player has democratic reforms as a relevant strategy. This leaves us with two actors with a democratic strategy. The combinations of strategies constitute a relative higher pressure for change during the interactions in Russia than in Belarus. This again can act as an explanatory factor, in combination with the different outcomes produced by the interaction, for the regime type which resulted from the interaction.

Furthermore, I have found that multi-dimensional conflicts are to be of decisive importance to the outcomes of the interaction. These findings results from bringing these conflicts into the micro-level analysis. Especially in Belarus the national conflict has been a hinder to a compromise outcome. In Russia on the other hand, the conflicts arising from the economic transition have been found to be a hinder for compromise. I have tested two different technical approaches towards these questions and will return to this in the next section.

Even thought Russia and Belarus have many similarities they did meet the phase of transition with some differences as well. Russia was an old empire and had without doubt a special position in the Soviet Union. Russia was the centre of the political breakdown and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Belarus on the other hand was less prepared for independence in 1991. It had little experience of independence and occupied a peripheral position with regard to the breakdown of the union.

In addition to the above findings I have briefly discussed the possible influence of the Ralwsin veil. Following this discussion it is my opinion that this factor has had a limited impact upon the outcome of transition. However, some effects came be observed. Elections in Russia gave an impression that the distribution of support was rather balanced or maybe slightly in favour of Yeltsin. In Belarus on the other hand, the electoral results give less clear indications on the strength of the actors due to widespread fraud and manipulation. Opinion pools indicate that the regime had strong support in the population and probably would have won a free election in this period. However, the ruling hardliners miscalculated their support when Lukashenka entered the race, and were clearly defeated in the founding election. A similar miscalculation of strength can be found in Russia where the Communist fraction over estimated their support both amongst elites and the population when confronting Yeltsin in 1993.

Implications for, and contributions to theory

One of the major theoretical tasks which I have undertaken is the incorporation of the challenges proposed by coinciding nation-building, state-building, economic transition and democratisation. These factors and processes are claimed by several theorists to be a challenge for democratisation.[28] Processes of state- and nation-building are processes still ongoing in most of the former Soviet Union as well as in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.[29] Regimes in this part of the world face major challenges in the coming decades with respect to increasing freedom combined with overcoming the obstacles of state- and nation-building. For further democratic progress in these parts of the world it is therefore of central importance to understand how and why these processes affect transitions from non-democratic regimes. Despite this, little attention has so far been devoted to these challenges on a micro-level.

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[28] See for instance Linz and Stepan (1996: ; 1996b), Przeworski (1991), Elster (1993) or Rustow (1970)

[29] See for instance Herland (2006) about the challenges of state- and nation-building in Syria and Libanon

I have applied two approaches to the conflicts arising from simultaneous nation-building, stat-building, economic-transition and regime change. By showing how specific conflict issues can be derived from these processes and how these again affect the interaction of the actors on the question of regime type I have created a genuine actor-approach for the study of multi-dimensional conflicts during transition. Furthermore, I have shown how these conflicts *create challenges* for the actor's ability to reach compromises on the conflict of regime type as long as conflicts remain unsolved upon other dimensions. This hinders the ability of reaching pacts on all conflict issues.

I have demonstrated that pacts are essential for reaching compromises during transitions. Without pacts it is difficult for actors to escape sub-optimal outcomes of interaction and reach optimal compromise outcomes, even non-democratic compromises like hybrid regimes. When multi-dimensional conflicts hinder pacts this further hinders the ability to escape from sub-optimality. By introducing the importance of pacts to the discussion of the Belarusian and Russian transition I have contributed to further develop this concept and its function in transitions. Pacts can be both hidden and inexplicit. Following my arguments and findings it will be more fruitful to understand *pacts as some sort of a non-formalised agreement, often unspoken and unwritten, but binding as an action guideline among the relevant actors during democratisation*. This expands the understanding and importance of pacts and compromises for the outcome of democratisation. Compromise is an essential part of democracy, maybe even *the most essential* component of a democratic system. The essence of pacting is important to everyone who seeks compromise outcomes as a lasting solution to disagreement in transitions. Even though the concept of pacts are essential to understand transition their presence are neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for a democratic outcome or the application of transition theory.

Furthermore, the importance of compromise in democratisation and democracy which I have stressed in this work underlines a point lacking in Dahl's (1971) conceptualisation of democracy. This is the central role of compromise in democracy. The concept of democracy should also be understood as a regime which requires willingness and possibility, which even encourage to compromises. A regime which includes these characteristics is one which is capable to both ensure the interests of the majority and the minority, the winners and the losers. By doing so, the regime secures stability both politically and socially.

I have here demonstrated that the transition theory can be applied to transitions in the former Soviet Union, despite the lack of observable pacts. This contradicts the claims made by McFaul (2002: 213) that the post-communist transitions "*are so different from the third*

wave democratic transitions in the 1970s and 1980s that they should not even be grouped under the same rubric". Post-Soviet transitions are not that different from transitions in Southern-Europe and Latin-America that they cannot be understood by the framework of transition theory. This makes McFaul's observation of a "fourth wave" of transitions, at the very best, inaccurate. In his proposed explanatory model McFaul (2002) introduces an awkward logic, as outcomes after elections are explained by the power distribution before elections. However, transition theory is not yet a complete theory, but more a universal model or a set of tools for understanding transitions. But by combining the tools of transition theory and game theory I have applied a model which proved to be useful for understanding post-Soviet transitions and which I believe can be applied to transitions universally.

Finally, my findings in the Russian case show that actors *close to each other* cannot reach a compromise outcome as result of the social interaction. The closeness of their strategies creates a preference structure which hinders a compromise and promotes conflict. Hence, unlike what intuition suggests, close actors cannot without further ado reach a compromise about regime type and therefore do not enter into negotiations about regime outcome. This finding contradicts the findings of Hersvik and Larsen (2004: 171) who in their study of Portugal concluded that "…*only actors close to each other will enter into negotiations.*". Furthermore, it is worth noticing that in this approach democracy cannot come about without democrats.

Further challenges

As mentioned earlier, transition theory is not a complete theory but more a model for understanding regime change. Further work needs to be done to create a complete model or theory. I contribute to understand post-Soviet and multi-dimensional conflicts by transition theory. However, some challenges have been beyond the scope of the thesis.

Amongst these are to investigate firmly and in greater detail the impact of the nation- and state-building processes upon the Russian transition. It seems clear that these processes played an important role in the breakdown of the Soviet Union and still have an impact upon Russian politics today. In the case of Belarus the significance of the relative closeness of the softliner actor and the hardliner actor should be investigated more closely to uncover possible negative effects on the possibility of a compromise.

Furthermore, additional sources can be brought into the analyse in form of interviews,

rapports or other material in order to even better construct the preferences and determine the strategies of the actors. Better estimation of the actor's utility function would have been a great advantage for the application of game theory. It would have been especially useful to develop methods in which actors' payoffs could be given at a higher measurement level than just as ordinal values. This would have expanded the possibilities to apply further mathematical tools from probability or decision theory to the analyses.

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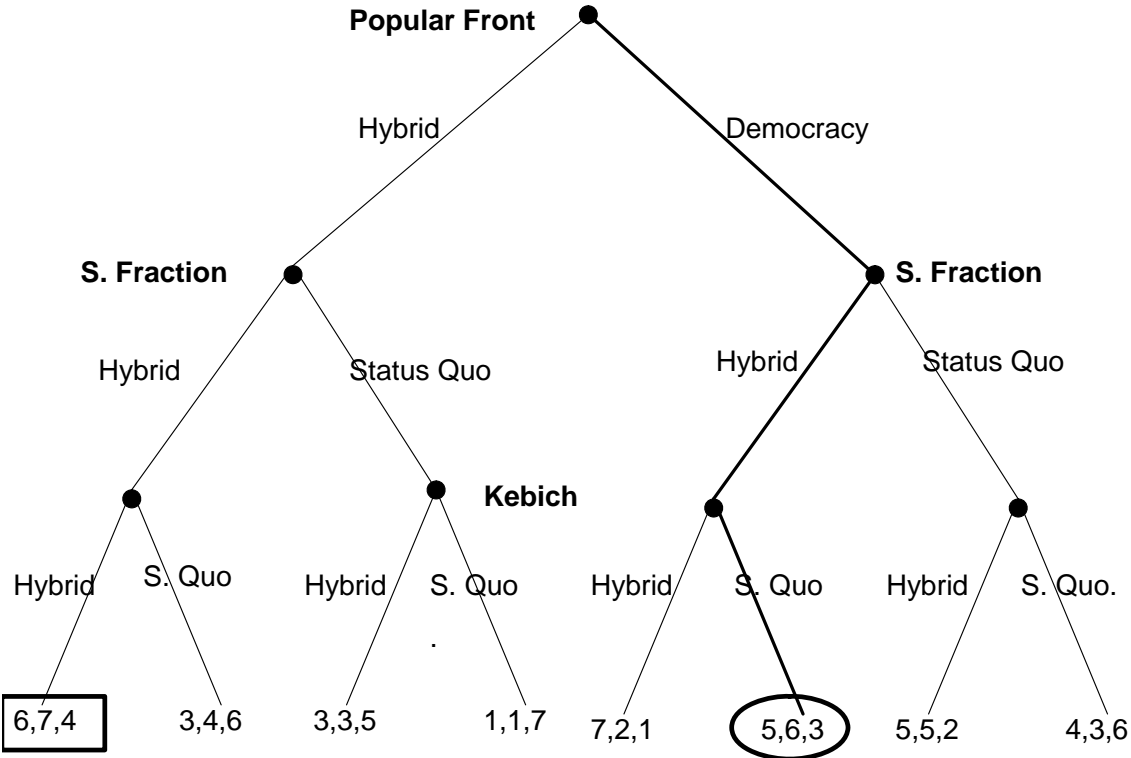Zaprudnik, J. (1989). "Belorussian Reawakening." *Problems of Communism* 38(4): 36-52.

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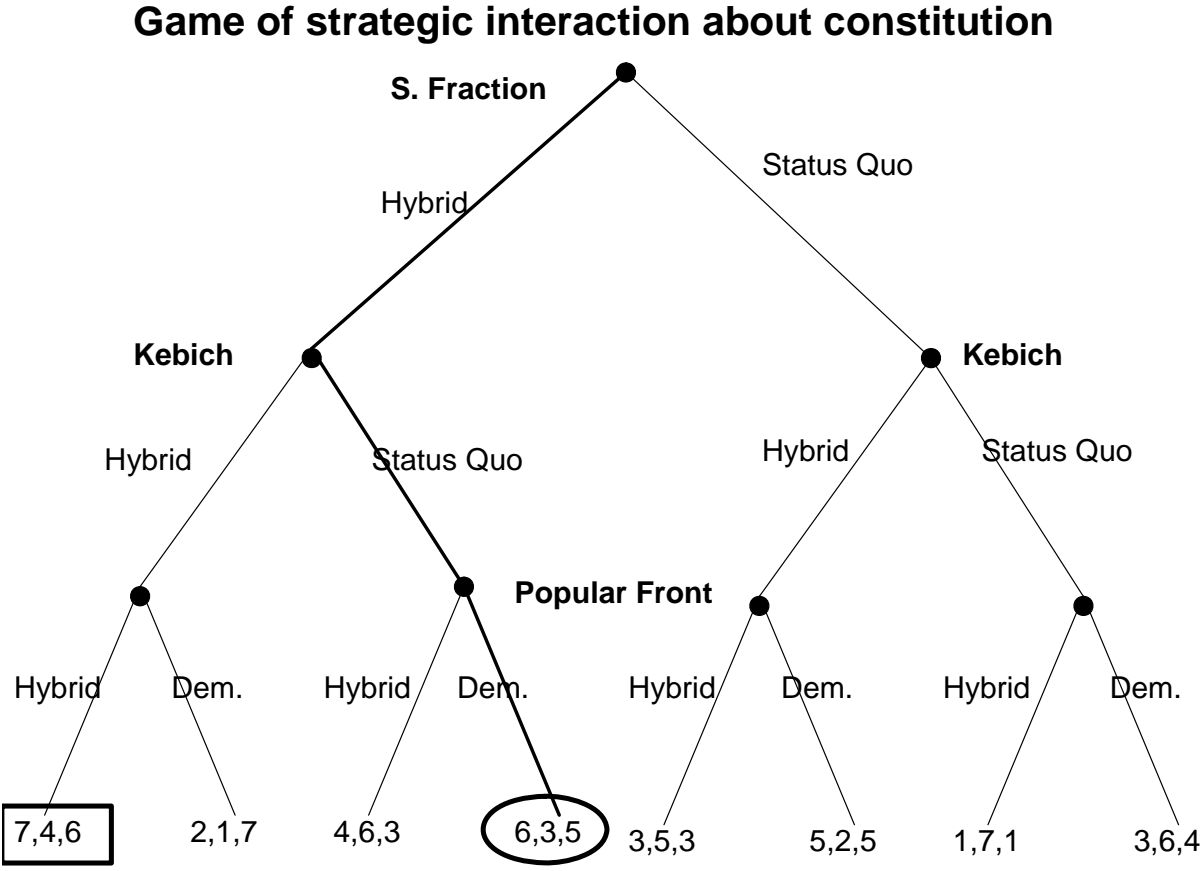
Appendix 1

The following two games represent the Belarusian game of social interaction about constitution and are modelled as dynamic games. They are opened by the softliner fraction and the opposition fraction respectively. In both games the outcome corresponds to the conflict outcome of the game presented in chapter five. This demonstrates that in this particular game the outcome is not changed by the sequence of moves taken by the players. Hence, which player that opens the game has no influence upon the outcome of the game. In both of the following games the sub-game perfect equilibrium is the DHS sub-optimal outcome.

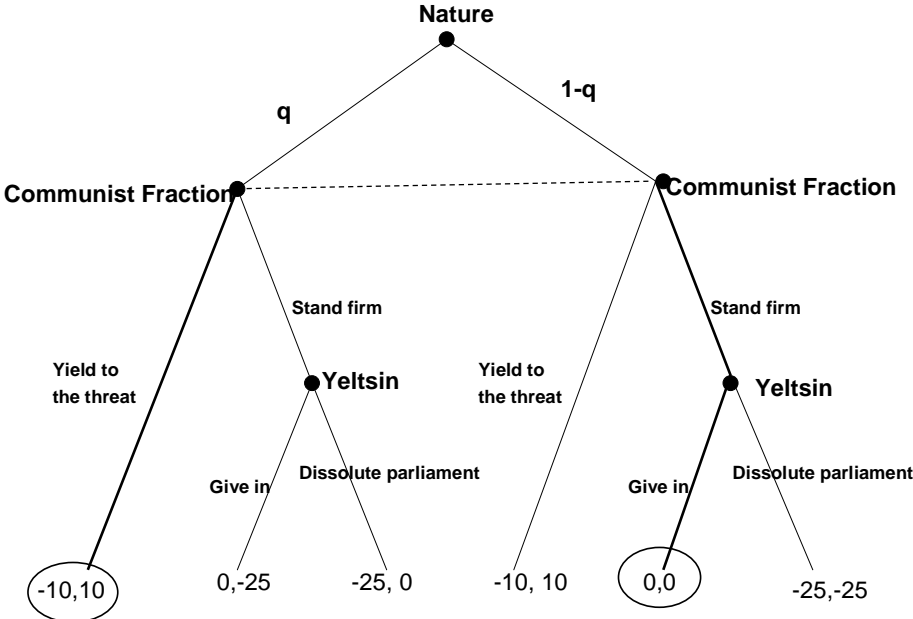The following game is opened by the Popular Front:

Figure 8.1 **Game of strategic interaction about constitution**

The following game is opened by the Shushkevich fraction:

Game of strategic interaction about constitution

S. Fraction

Hybrid

Status Quo

Kebich

Kebich

Hybrid

Status Quo

Hybrid

Status Quo

Popular Front

Hybrid   Dem.

Hybrid   Dem.

Hybrid   Dem.

Hybrid   Dem.

7,4,6   2,1,7   4,6,3   6,3,5   3,5,3   5,2,5   1,7,1   3,6,4

Appendix 2

The threat game estimation of q

The following calculations show the formal estimation of the constant q in the threat game between the Communist fraction and the Yeltsin fraction. It must be noted that the Yeltsin fraction in this game is modelled (believed) to know his "type". Hence, whether or not the threat he has put forward is credible or not. Yeltsin therefore knows both his own preferences as well as the preferences of the Communist Fraction. As the game is modelled as a dynamic game in which they have the last move the Yeltsin fraction also knows the preferences of the Communist fraction when making a possible choice.

First the *expected utility of yielding* for the threat by the Communist fraction is:

$$E(\mu)_{YIELD} = -10(q) + (-10)(1-q)$$
$$E(\mu)_{YIELD} = -10q + 10q - 10$$
$$\underline{E(\mu)_{YIELD} = -10}$$

Second the *expected utility of stand firm* to the threat by the Communist fraction is:

$$E(\mu)_{|STAND\_FIRM} = -25(q) + 0(1-q)$$
$$\underline{E(\mu)_{|STAND\_FIRM} = -25q}$$

To estimate the critical value of q the expected utilities are inserted into the following inequality:

$$E(\mu)_{|STAND\_FIRM} \geq E(\mu)_{YIELD}$$

$$-25q \geq -10$$

$$-25q \cdot (-\frac{1}{25}) \leq -10 \cdot (-\frac{1}{25})$$

$$q \leq \underline{\underline{0.4}}$$

According to this estimation the Communist fraction uncovers that the probability that Yeltsin's threat is credible is equal to or smaller than .4 or 40 percent.

By doing so one can establish the sub-game perfect equilibrium, in which the Communist fraction regards the threat not to be complete with a probability of .6 or more. In this situation the game predicts that the outcome is to be found on the right hand side of nature. Hence, in the outcome in which the Communist fraction *stands firm* and the Yeltsin fraction *gives in*. Note that the credibility is not given with certainty, only as an estimate. Therefore this equilibrium does not reveal the credibility of the threat.

Applying *Bayes Rule* to the threat game

After observing the result of the interaction it is possible to decide the *credibility* of Yeltsin's threat. To do so we can use Bayes rule. Bayes rule is introduced into game theory from probability theory and allows us to calculate the probability of the presumption to be true given a certain consequence can be observed.

The equation appears as follow:

$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(B|A)P(A)}{P(B|A)P(A) + P(B|\tilde{A})P(\tilde{A})}$$

A=   Yeltsin's threat is *credible*

B=   Yeltsin will *dissolve parliament*

Ã=   Yeltsin threat is *not credible*

$$P(B \mid A) = 1$$

$$P(B \mid \hat{A}) = 0$$

$$P(A) = q$$

$$P(\tilde{A}) = (1 - q)$$

$$P(A \mid B) = \frac{1(q)}{1(q) + 0(1 - q)}$$

$$\underline{\underline{P(A \mid B) = 1}}$$

Hence, if Yeltsin dissolves the parliament the threat is *credible*.

The *credibility* of the threat can be decided by observing the outcome. If the outcome is that Yeltsin *dissolves* the parliament then Yeltsin's threat has shown to be *credible*. However, the *credibility* of the threat can only be decided by observing Yeltsin *dissolving the parliament* or *giving in*. If the Communist fraction decides to *yield* to the threat the credibility of the threat cannot be decided. Because the probability of Yeltsin dissolving the parliament given that the threat is credible is not known it is set to nil.

$$P(B \mid A) = 0$$

$$P(B \mid \hat{A}) = 0$$

$$P(A) = q$$

$$P(\tilde{A}) = (1 - q)$$

$$P(A \mid B) = \frac{0(q)}{0(q) + 0(1 - q)}$$

$$P(A \mid B) = \underline{\underline{NAN}}$$

Hence, as the quotient is singular the equation is *unsolvable*

Appendix 3

The following appendix includes maps of Belarus and Russia, followed by some central facts about government, ethnic and religious distributions and central economic data.

Map of Belarus

The map below shows Belarus which is located in Eastern-Europe and is landlocked between Russia, Latvia, Lithuania Poland and Ukraine.[30]

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[30] *Belarus*. [Map/Still]. Retrieved February 19, 2007, from Encyclopædia Britannica Online:
http://search.eb.com/eb/art-62233

Map of Russia

The map below shows the Russian Federation.[31] Russia stretches over 11 time zones, from the Pacific Ocean in the east through Asia and Europe to the Baltic Sea in west. Russia is the world's largest country with regard to area.

Facts about Belarus

Country name:	Republic of Belarus (Respublika Byelarus') *former:* Belorussian (Byelorussian) Soviet Socialist Republic
Population:	9,724,723 growth rate: -0.41% (2007)
Ethnic groups:	Belarusian 81.2%, Russian 11.4%, Polish 3.9%, Ukrainian 2.4%, other 1.1%
Religions:	Eastern Orthodox 80%, other 20% (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim)
Languages:	Belarusian, Russian, other
Literacy:	99.6% of total population
Capital:	Minsk
Independence:	25 August 1991 (from Soviet Union)
Executive	*chief of state:* President Aleksandr Lukashenka (since 20 July 1994)

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[31] *Russia*. [Map/Still]. Retrieved Febuary 19, 2007, from Encyclopædia Britannica Online: http://search.eb.com/eb/art-61715

branch:	*head of government:* Prime Minister Sergei Sidorskiy (since 19 December 2003); *cabinet:* Council of Ministers *elections:* president elected by popular vote for a five-year term; first election took place 23 June and 10 July 1994; according to the 1994 constitution, the next election should have been held in 1999, however, Aleksandr Lukashenka extended his term to 2001 via a November 1996 referendum; subsequent election held 9 September 2001; an October 2004 referendum ended presidential term limits and allowed the president to run in a third election, which was held on 19 March 2006; prime minister and deputy prime ministers appointed by the president *election results:* Aleksandr Lukashenka reelected president; percent of vote - Aleksandr Lukashenka 82.6%, Aleksandr Milinkevich 6%, Aleksandr Kozulin 2.3%; note - election marred by electoral fraud
Legislative branch:	bicameral National Assembly or Natsionalnoye Sobranie consists of the Council of the Republic or Soviet Respubliki (64 seats; 56 members elected by regional councils and eight members appointed by the president, all for four-year terms) and the Chamber of Representatives or Palata Predstaviteley (110 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms) *elections:* last held 17 and 31 October 2004; international observers widely denounced the elections as flawed and undemocratic, based on massive government falsification; pro-Lukashenka candidates won every seat after many opposition candidates were disqualified for technical reasons
Judicial branch:	Supreme Court (judges are appointed by the president); Constitutional Court (half of the judges appointed by the president and half appointed by the Chamber of Representatives)
GDP	$7,800 real growth rate 8.3% (2006 per. capita PPP)
Unemployment:	1.6% officially registered unemployed; large number of underemployed workers (2005)
Population below poverty line:	27.1%
Household income by share:	*lowest 10%:* 5.1% *highest 10%:* 20%
Trade - partners:	Exports: Russia 35.8%, Netherlands 15.1%, UK 7%, Ukraine 5.7%, Poland 5.3%, Germany 4.4% Imports: Russia 60.6%, Germany 6.7%, Ukraine 5.4%

Source: CIA World fact book

Facts about Russia

Country name:	*conventional long form:* Russian Federation (Rossiyskaya Federatsiya) *former:* Russian Empire, Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
Population:	141,377,752 growth rate -0.484% (2007)
Ethnic groups:	Russian 79.8%, Tatar 3.8%, Ukrainian 2%, Bashkir 1.2%, Chuvash 1.1%, other
Religions:	Russian Orthodox 15-20%, Muslim 10-15%, other Christian 2%
Languages:	Russian, many minority languages

Literacy:	99.6% of total population:
Capital:	Moscow
Independence:	24 August 1991 (from Soviet Union)
Executive branch:	*chief of state:* President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin(Since 31 December 1999) *head of government:* Premier Mikhail Yefimovich Frradkov (since 5 March 2004) *cabinet:* Ministries of the Government or "Government" composed of the premier and his deputies, ministers, and selected other individuals; all are appointed by the president *note:* there is also a Presidential Administration (PA) that provides staff and policy support to the president, drafts presidential decrees, and coordinates policy among government agencies; a Security Council also reports directly to the president *elections:* president elected by popular vote for a four-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 14 March 2004 (next to be held in March 2008); *election results:* Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin reelected president; percent of vote - Vladimir Putin 71.2%, Nikolay Kharitonov 13.7%, other (no candidate above 5%) 15.1%
Legislative branch:	bicameral Federal Assembly or Federalnoye Sobraniye consists of the Federation Council or Sovet Federatsii (178 seats; as of July 2000, members appointed by the top executive and legislative officials in each of the 88 federal administrative units - oblasts, krays, republics, autonomous okrugs and oblasts, and the federal cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg; members serve four-year terms) and the State Duma or Gosudarstvennaya Duma (450 seats; as of 2007, all members elected by proportional representation from party lists winning at least 7% of the vote; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms) *elections:* State Duma - last held 7 December 2003 (next to be held in December 2007) *election results:* State Duma - percent of vote received by parties clearing the 5% threshold United Russia 37.1%, CPRF 12.7%, LDPR 11.6%, Motherland 9.1%, other 29.5%;
Judicial branch:	Constitutional Court; Supreme Court; Supreme Arbitration Court; judges for all courts are appointed for life by the Federation Council on the recommendation of the president
GDP	$12,100 real growth rate 6.6% (2006 per capita PPP)
Unemployment	6.6% plus considerable underemployment (2006.)
Population below poverty line:	17.8%
Household income or share:	*lowest 10%:* 1.7% *highest 10%:* 38.7%
Trade - Partners:	Exports Netherlands 10.3%, Germany 8.3%, Italy 7.9%, China 5.5%, Ukraine 5.2%, Turkey 4.5%, Switzerland 4.4% Imports Germany 13.6%, Ukraine 8%, China 7.4%, Japan 6%, Belarus 4.7%, US 4.7%, Italy 4.6%, South Korea 4.1%

Source: CIA World fact book