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978-0-521-51445-3 - *Skeletons in the Closet: Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Europe*

Monika Nalepa

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Skeletons in the Closet

This book tackles three puzzles of pacted transitions to democracy. First, why do autocrats ever step down from power peacefully if they know that they may be held accountable for their involvement in the ancien régime? Second, when does the opposition indeed refrain from meting out punishment to the former autocrats once the transition is complete? Third, why, in some countries, does transitional justice get adopted when successors of former communists hold parliamentary majorities? Monika Nalepa argues that infiltration of the opposition with collaborators of the authoritarian regime can serve as insurance against transitional justice, making their commitments to amnesty credible. This explanation also accounts for the timing of transitional justice across East Central Europe. Nalepa supports her theory using a combination of elite interviews, archival evidence, and statistical analysis of survey experiments in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Monika Nalepa is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. She is also Faculty Fellow of Notre Dame's Kellogg Institute for International Studies, the Kroc Institute for Peace Studies, and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies. In 2006–2007 and 2009, she held an appointment as Academy Scholar at the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. Nalepa has guest co-edited a special volume dedicated to transitional justice in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and has contributed articles to the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and the *Journal of Theoretical Politics* and chapters to numerous edited volumes devoted to transitional justice, including *NOMOS: Proceedings of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy*.

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*Tadeuszowi Nalepie,
który pomógł mi zrozumieć że niczego nie muszę*

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Advance Praise for *Skeletons in the Closet*

“Monika Nalepa’s *Skeletons in the Closet* offers a groundbreaking analysis of transitional justice and its role in the consolidation of new democracies. Combining rigorous theoretical analysis with an impressive array of qualitative and quantitative evidence – including interviews with elites on both sides of transitions from communist rule in Eastern Europe, as well as original surveys of citizens – this book makes a compelling case for its argument: policies that pursue transitional justice are typically not driven by the demands of voters and citizens. Instead, they must be understood as strategic choices by political elites acting in the fog of an authoritarian legacy, characterized by great uncertainty about past collaboration of resistance leaders with the former regime. This approach allows Nalepa to offer convincing explanations of puzzling aspects of the timing and the scope of transitional justice policies that have largely gone unexplained to date. This book will force scholars to rethink common conceptions about transitional justice, and it should be read not only by those who study post-communist Eastern Europe, but by anyone with an interest in transitions from authoritarianism to democracy.”

Georg Vanberg, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

“Why weren’t former communist elites immediately punished after communism fell? In this excellent book, Monika Nalepa explains why justice was delayed and, paradoxically, why in the end it was the former communists that purged themselves. Through an impressive combination of formal theory, statistical analysis, and primary research in Eastern Europe, Nalepa finds that fears of collaboration within the ranks of non-communist parties drove the timing of punishment. Where such fears were high, these parties were inhibited from enacting such legislation; where they were low, the former communists preempted the passage of harsh measures with milder ones of their own. No one who reads this carefully argued and provocative book will think about transitional justice in quite the same way again.”

Jason Wittenberg, University of California at Berkeley

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Skeletons in the Closet

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE
IN POST-COMMUNIST
EUROPE

MONIKA NALEPA

University of Notre Dame



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East Central European Political Organizations

Poland

Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność (AWS): Electoral Action Solidarity

Grupa Krakowska: Kraków Group

Komitet Obrony Robotników (KOR): Laborers' Defense Committee

Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej (KPN): Confederacy for Independent Poland

Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny (KLD): Liberal Democratic Congress

Liga Polskich Rodzin (LPR): League of Polish Families

Niezależny Związek Studentów (NZS): Independent Student Union

Niezależny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność": Independent Trade Union "Solidarity"

Obywatelski Komitet (Koło) Poselski(e) (OKP): Civic Parliamentary Committee

Platforma Obywatelska (PO): Civic Platform

Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (PZPR): Polish United Workers' Party

Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL): Polish Peoples' Party

Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS): Law and Justice

Ruch Obrony Rzeczypospolitej (RdR): Movement for the Republic

Ruch Odbudowy Polski (ROP): Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland

Ruch Wolność i Pokój (RWP): Movement for Freedom and Peace

Samobrona (S): Self-Defense

Socjaldemokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polski (SdRP): Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland

Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (SLD): Democratic Left Alliance

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East Central European Political Organizations

Solidarność '80 (S'80): Solidarity '80

Solidarność Walcząca (SW): Fighting Solidarity

Studencki Komitet Solidarności (SKS): Student Committee of Solidarity

Tymczasowa Komisja Koordynacyjna (TKK): Temporary Coordinating Committee

Unia Demokratyczna (UD): Democratic Union

Unia Pracy (UP): Labor Union

Unia Wolności (UW): Freedom Union

Wojskowa Rada Ocalenia Narodowego (WRON): Military Council of National Salvation

Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, and Slovakia

Česká Strana Sociálně Demokratická (ČSSD): Czech Social Democratic Party

Charta 77: Charter 77

Demokratické Levice (DL): Democratic Left (Czech)

Demokratická Strana (DS): Democratic Party (Slovak)

Demokratická Únia (DÚDÚ): Democratic Union (Slovak)

Hnutie za Demokratické Slovensko (HZDS): Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (Slovak)

Hnutí za samosprávnou demokracii – Společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko (HSDSMS): Movement for Autonomous Democracy – Party for Moravia and Silesia

Komunistická Strana Čech a Moravy (KSČM): Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia

Komunistická Strana Československa (KSČ): Communist Party of Czechoslovakia

Křesťanská a demokratická Unie–Česka Strana Lidová (KDÚ–ČSL): Christian Democratic Union–Czech People's Party

Křesťanskodemokratické Hnutie (KDH): Christian Democratic Movement (Slovak)

Levý Blok (LB): Left Bloc (Czech)

Liberálně sociální unie (LSU): Liberal Social Union (Czech)

Občanská Demokratická Strana (ODS): Civic Democratic Party (Czech)

Občanské Forum (OF): Civic Forum (Czech)

Sdružení pro Republiku – Republikánská strana Československa (REP): Union for Republic – Republicans' Party of Czechoslovakia

Slovenská Demokratická Koalícia (SDK): Slovak Democratic Coalition

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East Central European Political Organizations

Slovenská Národná Strana (SNS): Slovak National Party
Strana Demokratickej L'ovice (SDĽ): Party of the Democratic Left
(Slovak)
Strana Občanského Porozumění (SOP): Party of Civic Understanding
(Slovak)
Strana Zelených na Slovensku (SZS): Green Party of Slovakia
Unie Svobody (US): Freedom Union (Czech)
Združenie Robotníkov Slovenska (ZRS): Association of Slovak Workers

Hungary

Bajcsy Zsilinszky Endre Baráti Társaság (BZSBT): Bajcsy-Zsilinszky
Friends' Association
Ellenzéki Kerekasztal (EKA): Opposition Roundtable
Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége (FiDeSz): Alliance of Young Democrats
Fidesz-Magyar Polgári Párt (Fidesz-MPP): Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party
Független Jogász Fórum (FJF): Independent Lawyers' Forum
Független Kisgazdapárt (FKgP): Party of Independent Smallholders
Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt (KDNP): Christian Democratic People's
Party
Magyar Demokrata Fórum (MDF): Hungarian Democratic Forum
Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (MIÉP): Hungarian Justice and Life Party
Magyar Szocialista Munkás Párt (MSzMP): Hungarian Socialist Workers'
Party
Magyar Szocialista Párt (MSzP): Hungarian Socialist Party
Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége (SzDSz): Alliance of Free Democrats