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Article in *Theory and Society* · October 1995

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Source: *Theory and Society*, Vol. 24, No. 5, Special Issue on Circulation vs. Reproduction of Elites during the Postcommunist Transformation of Eastern Europe (Oct., 1995), pp. 697-722

Published by: [Springer](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/657848>

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The making of the Hungarian postcommunist elite: Circulation in politics, reproduction in the economy

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Vilfredo Pareto once argued that “history is a graveyard of aristocracies.”¹ Ruling elites are unable to reproduce themselves over long periods, because their members are subject to cyclical circulation. On the surface, the fall of communism in Central Europe appears to corroborate Pareto’s claim. The highly publicized (re-)burial of Imre Nagy, the public execution of Nicolae Ceaușescu, and the political backlash against Erich Honecker collectively sent a clear message across the world about the defeat of the old bureaucratic order and the victory of a new political elite. Was this message merely symbolic or did it reflect a more fundamental reorganization of the class structure of postcommunist societies? This question has generated intense theoretical and political debates in Central Europe, as well as in the successor states of the former Soviet Union.

Theories of elite recruitment

Three distinct theories dominate the literature on elite recruitment in postcommunist societies.² The first one of these, the *reproduction of elites* theory, was formulated independently by several scholars. Elemér Hankiss was the first to suggest – almost as a policy recommendation – that transforming the old cadre elite into a new propertied bourgeoisie may best guarantee the safest and most peaceful transition from communism to capitalism.³ Thus, he argued, the main opponents of market reform would be transformed into allies.⁴ Two other proponents of the thesis (Erzsébet Szalai and Jadwiga Staniszkis) agreed with Hankiss analytically, although their observations were motivated by social criticism, rather than policy advice. According to Szalai, large-enterprise management began to transform itself into a propertied bourgeoisie during the early stages of postcommunist development through a

Theory and Society 24: 697–722, 1995.

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series of management buy-outs.⁵ Likewise, Staniszki argued that the current transformation of Central Europe is best described as a form of “political capitalism” because changes in the class structure of Central European societies resemble those observed in post-colonial Africa where the bureaucracy used its political position to accumulate wealth.⁶

The implications of this theory for our study of elite recruitment are straightforward. According to this theory, the privileges of the old communist elite were based on the possession of political assets. In the transition to postcommunism, the cadres were able to convert these assets into economic capital, and thus enter the ranks of the propertied class. Thus, while the fall of communism in Central Europe may have brought about a change in the nature of the social hierarchy, the same people continue to occupy the most privileged positions in society.⁷ This is so, according to this theory, because there is virtually no limit to the ability of the old cadre elite to convert the “deflated” type of assets (i.e., political capital) into the “inflated” or “upgraded” type of assets (i.e., material capital). The old elite uses its temporarily maintained social networks as the mechanism to convert one form of asset into another. A typical example is the so-called “spontaneous privatization” ventures.⁸ Management in Hungary has far-reaching rights to decide whether to privatize a publicly-owned firm or not, at what price, and to whom. Often managers, who obtained their position because they were party members, now sell their companies for low prices to Western firms or to their old business partners with the understanding that they will be retained as well-paid managers or, at least, be permitted to acquire stock in the company at favorable rates. Social networks thus operate as one of the mechanisms by which political assets are converted into economic capital.⁹

By comparison with the reproduction of elites thesis, the *circulation of elites* theory is much less clearly formulated in the literature. Still, it is also true that in the dominant political discourse in Central Europe there is widespread fear (or hope) that a fundamental change of regime is taking place in which – not unlike in 1949 – the elite will be radically transformed. It is possible, after all, that individuals (or, their children) who lost power and privilege with the rise of communism in 1949 may now rise to power some forty years later. In Hungary, at least, there is some evidence to support this hypothesis. The first Hungarian Prime Minister of the postcommunist era, Mr. Antall, is the son of Admiral Horthy’s Deputy Minister of Interior. His major economic advisor,

Count Bethlen, is the nephew of István Bethlen – a conservative Prime Minister during the 1920s, who died in a Soviet jail after World War II.

Beyond this anecdotal evidence, there are at least elements of a “proto-theory” of the circulation of elites thesis in Hungary. Iván Szelényi, for example, proposed the theory of “interrupted embourgeoisement” in trying to identify the social origins of the new entrepreneurial class in Hungary.¹⁰ The key claim of this theory is that an “embourgeoisement” process was interrupted in 1949 with the transition to communism, and that the same process resurfaced in the late 1970s or early 1980s when the second economy began to take hold. The former entrepreneurs, after hiding in “parking orbits” during the socialist era, reentered the bourgeoisification trajectory, as new entrepreneurial opportunities reopened in Hungary.

Although this theory was advanced and empirically corroborated with survey data on Hungary’s agricultural petty bourgeoisie, it can be generalized to questions concerning elite recruitment today. Such a “circulation of elites” theory would suggest that conversion of assets is difficult and often unsuccessful. Thus, with a change in the social formation, one would expect to see significant downward mobility among those who possessed only those assets that were key to elite status under the old regime. In the transition from capitalism to communism, the former business elite became completely *de-classé*: some emigrated to neighboring market economies, others hid in “parking orbits,” and others still were proletarianized. Only the most successful members of the old business elite were able to transform their economic capital into cultural assets, and thus remain in lower elite positions. Given the implications of this theory, we would expect that during the transition to postcommunism, most members of the elite whose privileges were based on political assets will be removed from the elite; only a few among them will succeed in converting their political assets into economic capital.

Finally, the third theory that is relevant for our argument suggests that analyses of the class structure should focus their attention primarily on class *positions* and not on the characteristics of the *individuals* who fill these positions.¹¹ Proponents of this theory argue that their approach is correct because classes are “... ‘empty places’ in the social structure which are filled by individuals,”¹² but that are not determined by the actual characteristics of their incumbents. For example, in a critical commentary on social mobility research, Poulantzas wrote:

In essence, this bourgeois problematic of the social mobility of groups and individuals presumes: ... that the principal question about “social stratification,” or even about its origins, is that of the “circulation” or “mobility” of individuals between strata. However, it is clear that, even on the absurd assumption that from one day to the next, or even from one generation to the next, the bourgeoisie would all take the places of the proletariat and vice versa, nothing fundamental about capitalism would be changed, since the places of bourgeoisie and proletariat would still be there, and this is the principal aspect of the reproduction of capitalist relations.¹³

Clearly, then, the recruitment of individuals to class positions is of little interest to these scholars; they are much more concerned with the way in which class positions *themselves* vary across countries,¹⁴ or the way in which they change over time.¹⁵ The implication of this theory for our study of postcommunist elites is that it is fundamentally uninteresting to ask whether the same set of individuals who made up the *nomenklatura* elite under the communist regime are still in positions of power today. What matters, instead, is whether the nature of the positions themselves have changed with the transition to a market economy. In other words: a difference in elite *personnel* does not constitute a substantive change in the stratification system of postcommunist societies so long as these elites continue to have the same degree of power and privilege as they did under communism, and so long as they are selected on the basis of the same set of criteria as before.

In this article, then, we focus on three related theories, as applied to postcommunist Hungary: that of a conspicuous reproduction of members of the old *nomenklatura* at the top of the class structure; that of a high degree of elite circulation driven in part by a backlash against the old communists; and that of a reproduction of actual positions or “empty places” within the class structure that takes place with or without a change in elite personnel. In confronting these theories with data from Hungary, our approach will be mainly descriptive. We do not expect, therefore, to bring this debate to a close. However, we hope to shed some light on the social and historical circumstances that have contributed to the making of the Hungarian postcommunist elite.

The historical backdrop

Why more reproduction in Hungary?

There are two reasons why it is reasonable to expect considerable elite reproduction and a relatively small degree of elite circulation in

Hungary. First, unlike any other communist regime, the Hungarian was quite successful at coopting the intelligentsia by promoting them to elite positions under the old government. Because of this, the communist regime in Hungary enjoyed substantial legitimacy even as late as 1989. In addition, the size of the counter-elite in Hungary was rather insignificant; as a result, there was only a modest supply of alternative personnel to replace those already in positions of power. Clearly, then, to understand patterns of elite recruitment today, it makes sense to examine the unique historical processes that have shaped the character of the Hungarian nomenklatura.

The Hungarian regime entered a reform trajectory earlier and implemented reforms more consistently than any other country in Central Europe. In 1963, the Kádár regime dramatically changed its course. After years of repression and social confrontation that followed the 1956 popular uprising, Kádár and his allies in the Communist Party moved toward a policy of concessions and compromises. While this policy had its ups and downs (a major step ahead in 1968, a partial retreat in 1973, a new wave of reforms beginning in 1977, and another conservative turn in 1984), nonetheless, it began the transition to a market economy and, at the same time, it also managed to reshape the nature of class relations.

Beginning with 1963, the communist regime in Hungary experimented with social reforms by offering a series of complex packages to different strata in society.¹⁶ Kádár, who had populist tendencies, offered a “deal” to the working class; this later became known as the “second economy.”¹⁷ This deal began in the countryside. At the same time as Hungary collectivized agriculture in the early 1960s, it also adopted a highly flexible policy toward family production. Other collectivized economies typically tried to prevent family production. But Hungarian agriculture worked differently: agricultural production on family plots and the “family responsibility system” in the collective sector was at first tolerated, and later encouraged.¹⁸ This approach to socialized production proved to be so successful that, by the early 1970s, it started to be copied in industry. Hungarians invented the equivalent of family plots (or the individual responsibility system) in industry by permitting complex subcontracting arrangements to grow within firms.¹⁹

These concessions to workers did not go unnoticed in the literature. In fact, commentators frequently explained cross-national differences in working-class attitudes toward the communist regime by directly com-

paring the conditions of workers in Hungary and Poland during the late 1970s. Specifically, they argued that because the Polish working class did not get the concessions that the Hungarians received in the form of the second economy, it clashed with the bureaucratic order and, in the end, had little alternative but to join hands in collective action against the regime.²⁰ Using Hirschman's terminology, in other words, the Polish working class opted for "voice" over "exit" and "loyalty."²¹ It became politicized and entered into a battle with the regime. By contrast, it never occurred to Hungarian workers that they could organize unions for themselves in order to fight the bureaucracy. With the second economy, they were effectively fragmented and quickly individualized: they learned their way around the second economy, and started to believe that it offered to them a unique opportunity for upward social mobility.²² Using Hirschman's terminology, one might say that Hungarian workers opted for "exit" over loyalty: they were willing to ignore the state economy as long as they could make a good living after hours in their private or semi-private economic activities.

From the point of view of our analyses, however, the second social compromise – the one that Kádár made with the intelligentsia – is of greater consequence. During the 1960s, several of the socialist bureaucracies that had lost legitimacy with Stalin's death attempted to regain their popularity by recruiting members of the intelligentsia into positions of power and privilege.²³ This process was initiated by Nikita Khrushchev in the Soviet Union. Unexpected successes in science, research, and technology during the late 1950s and the early 1960s raised morale, and served as a basis to redefine socialism. During the classical Stalinist period, communism legitimated itself with the charisma of the leader, and emphasized the importance of class struggle. Beginning with Khrushchev, however, an attempt was made to reinterpret socialism as a "scientific project." In this new definition, socialism was presented to the masses as a rational order; one that was destined to outdo capitalism because of its superior educational system, its ability to develop technology in a more efficient manner, and its success at avoiding the anarchy of the market.²⁴ This vision of a scientific socialism appealed to the professional class in many countries: in Russia under Khrushchev, in Hungary after 1964, in Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring, in Poland during the early years of Gierek, and in East Germany under Honecker.²⁵

One of the unique features of the Hungarian development was that this social contract with the intelligentsia was carried further, and it was

also more consistently applied than in other countries. Beginning with the mid-1960s, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*, or MSZMP) made a concentrated effort to recruit people with high cultural capital into positions of authority.²⁶ In fact, the Party was so determined to recruit future leaders from among the most highly-educated segments of society that it was willing to abandon the idea that people in positions of authority had to join the MSZMP, or that they had to express their loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. As long as the technocratic intelligentsia did not challenge the two taboos of socialism (namely: the "leading role of the party" and the "alliance with the Soviet Union"), they were basically free to say and write whatever they wanted. If they were willing to make these limited gestures of personal loyalty, members of the technocratic intelligentsia were amply compensated by the regime with high levels of income, marked degrees of autonomy, and considerable amounts of power in decision-making.

When under Soviet pressure, Kádár was forced to crack down on dissent in 1973, he wisely decided to take oppressive measures only against a small group of highly visible philosophers and sociologists; the most famous case being the crackdown on the Budapest School.²⁷ In publicly persecuting these individuals, the Kádár regime satisfied the wishes of its Soviet allies. But, at the same time, it also made sure that economists and engineers were handled with a velvet glove.

Ironically, Kádár's pragmatic attitude toward the technocratic intelligentsia may have unintentionally played a role in weakening the legitimacy of the socialist system. The new technocracy that moved into positions of power did not believe (nor was it required to believe) in socialism. Not surprisingly, therefore, it did not take long before they, too, began to choose "exit" over "loyalty" as their approach to the socialist state. Led by large-enterprise managers, the new technocracy placed the idea of property reform on the MSZMP's agenda in the early 1980s. What they presented to the MSZMP at this stage was not a full-fledged program of privatization, but a simple solution to the "property vacuum" problem that plagued all socialist economies.²⁸ It is now clear that, with this maneuver, the technocracy began to move the Hungarian economy in the direction of capitalism and large-enterprise managers began slowly to renegotiate their property rights. Managers were granted considerable property rights under socialism, but these rights were rather implicit and were often restricted to mere possession: they were not permitted to inherit or alienate state property, but they

obtained significant control over what to produce and how to invest state capital. In addition, the bonuses that were paid to managers at the end of each fiscal year could be interpreted as a form of profit-sharing; albeit in a socialist disguise.

Beginning with the 1980s, the “new technocracy” made an attempt to legalize its property rights by extending them beyond mere possession.²⁹ At first, members of the bureaucratic “old guard” fought against this change, but during the summer of 1989 they were defeated by the new technocracy. From this point onward, the new technocracy was free to complete the transformation of property relations in Hungary. In a matter of months, legislation was passed to create the legal framework for spontaneous privatization or management buy-outs.

From our point of view, these developments are important because they serve to illustrate our claim that the new technocracy that came to power during the “third stage” of socialist development³⁰ was competent, but it was not committed to socialism. In other words, the new technocratic elite made a concerted effort to “exit” socialism and, in this sense, it may have pursued the project that Hankiss attributed to them: that is, to transform themselves into a grand bourgeoisie.

This high degree of cooptation of the Hungarian intelligentsia delayed the development of dissent, and suspended the formation of a counter-elite. The first weak step in this direction was a letter expressing the solidarity of the Hungarian dissidents with Charter 77. This was the first occasion when a substantial number of intellectuals were ready to use “voice,” rather than “exit.” Next came the emergence of the underground press; in particular, the regular publication on the periodical *Beszélő*. But the institutionalization of the counter-elite had to wait. Not until 1987 were the first formal dissident organizations established: this began with the formation of the “Network of Independent Initiatives,” followed by the Alliance of Young Democrats (*Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége*, or FIDESZ), the Hungarian Democratic Forum (*Magyar Demokrata Fórum*, or MDF), and, finally, the Alliance of Free Democrats (*Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége*, or SZDSZ). Once these organizations were in place, those in elite positions in 1988 were finally forced to acknowledge the existence of a dual power structure.

Despite these developments, when in March 1989 the idea of a round-table negotiation emerged, the opposition was still rather poorly organized, and had no identifiable social base. In fact, in March 1989,

public-opinion polls still indicated that the Communists would win the first free elections with about 30 to 35 percent of the votes; the party that came closest to the communists in terms of popularity (i.e., the Hungarian Democratic Forum) had less than 10 percent of popular support.³¹ These results began the roundtable negotiations with an ironic twist: the participants in these negotiations were all selected rather than elected in the sense that they could not claim to represent the general public, or even any significant fraction of this general public.³²

The dynamics of elite circulation in Hungary

Although our story, so far, provides strong support for the reproduction thesis, history does not always unfold so neatly. As the electoral campaign of 1990 got off the ground, the opposition parties gained more and more self-confidence. The conversion of the MSZMP into the Socialist Party (i.e., *Magyar Szocialista Párt*, or MSZP) on the one hand, and the Social Democratic Party (i.e., *Magyar Szociáldemokrata Párt*, or MSZDP) on the other proved to be a total disaster for the communists. Neither of these parties was able to make a clean break from their communist past and, as such, both were viewed as historical heirs of the MSZMP. Unfortunately for these parties, the name of the game during the election campaigns was anti-communism.³³

Since the electoral campaigns were fought on these symbolic grounds, anti-communists began to play an important role in politics. Once MDF formed a coalition government, it began to argue for the removal of communists from positions of power and privilege, the termination of all instances of spontaneous privatization, and the creation of a loyal civil-service body. In spite of this rhetoric, however, old communist cadres often remained in positions of authority; particularly, if they were willing to change their political loyalties. Perhaps for this reason, therefore, many former communists became the most radical opponents of social-democratic policies, and the most dedicated defenders of the free-market economy. This, in itself, could be considered a moral counter-selection: former communists who had personal and political integrity (in the sense that they continued to support communist ideology) were much more likely to be dismissed from their positions than were the “turn-coats.”

A new system of patronage is being built up in Hungary. All of a sudden, new political capital (i.e., loyalty to the new governing coalition) and a Christian-patriotic world view have become the major criteria by which political appointments are made. Surprisingly, therefore, it is exactly the weakness of the counter-elite that has created more circulation in Hungary. With the importance of anti-communist rhetoric, individuals who were located on the second rank of the social hierarchy now seek promotions. This is what Tamás Kolosi calls the “revolution of deputy department heads.”³⁴ These individuals now see a chance for upward mobility, because the post-communist regime makes it possible for them to wage a battle against their bosses in the name of anti-communism: they “discover” that they experienced political discrimination under communism and, with this knowledge in hand, they aspire to replace their ex-communist bosses.

At the same time, social networks have also become important in the recruitment of new elites. Since loyalty matters so much, the new elite now looks for subordinates, deputies, and employees that they know well; people who have a similar *habitus* and who come from the same social class.³⁵ There is a sudden interest in hiring the children and the grandchildren of the former genteel middle class for political and civil-service jobs: they are considered to be politically safe and ideologically loyal supporters of the new regime. In this manner, the class structure of pre-socialist Hungary is gradually being restored; this restoration is particularly evident among the ranks of the new political elite.

Empirical results from the Hungarian elite survey

The analyses presented here are based on the elite portion of the *Social Stratification in Central Europe [SSCE] Survey*.³⁶ Since the characteristics of this dataset are discussed at great length elsewhere in this issue, we do not repeat this material here. Suffice it to say that this survey is one of the richest and most extensive sources of data on Hungarian elites to date: it provides detailed information on respondents’ life history, and it also provides important socioeconomic data on their parents, grandparents, children, and friends. In carrying out the analyses, we used only a small fraction of the information that is available from the survey.³⁷ Our objective in this article is quite modest: we wish only to set the stage for future debates by asking what empirical support there is for the three theories of elite recruitment in Hungary. In the tables that follow we compare the old (1988) and the new (1993)

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the old (1988) and the new (1993) elites in Hungary

Variables	All elites		Economic elites		Political elites		Cultural elites	
	Old (N = 662)	New (N = 783)	Old (N = 82)	New (N = 489)	Old (N = 426)	New (N = 161)	Old (N = 154)	New (N = 133)
<i>Gender</i>								
Man	87.3	92.1*	93.9	93.3	82.6	87.6	96.8	93.2
Woman	12.7	7.9*	6.1	6.7	17.4	12.4	3.2	6.8
<i>Age in year of incumbency^a</i>								
Under 40	13.1	12.4	3.7	11.0*	18.5	24.8	3.2	2.3
40-49	31.6	38.7*	26.8	46.6*	38.5	31.1	14.9	18.8
50-59	36.7	36.7	56.1	37.6*	32.4	35.4	38.3	34.6
60-69	15.1	9.8*	13.4	4.1*	8.9	7.5	33.1	33.8
70 or above	3.5	2.4	0.0	0.6	1.6	1.2	10.4	10.5

* p < 0.05.

Note. Percentages may not sum correctly because of rounding error. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages. See text for the construction of all the variables that are included in this table.

^a Year of incumbency refers to 1988 in the case of the old elite and to 1993 in the case of the new elite.

Table 2. Family origins of the old (1988) and the new (1993) elites in Hungary

Variables	All elites		Economic elites		Political elites		Cultural elites	
	Old (N = 662)	New (N = 783)	Old (N = 82)	New (N = 489)	Old (N = 426)	New (N = 161)	Old (N = 154)	New (N = 133)
<i>Father's education</i>								
Primary school	51.2	34.5*	63.4	36.6*	51.6	28.6*	43.5	33.8
Secondary school	25.8	29.6	19.5	34.8*	28.4	23.0	22.1	18.8
Tertiary school	23.0	35.9*	17.1	28.6*	20.0	48.4*	34.4	47.4*
<i>Father's occupation</i>								
Cultural decision-maker	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.7	1.9	2.6	1.5
Economic manager	1.7	2.3	1.2	2.7	1.6	1.2	1.9	2.3
Political official	2.0	2.4	1.2	1.8	2.1	3.7	1.9	3.0
Lower-level manager	9.2	14.0*	7.3	15.1*	9.4	11.8	9.7	12.8
Professional (supervisor)	3.6	8.9*	2.4	8.0*	4.0	9.3*	3.2	12.0*
Professional (rank-and-file)	8.8	10.9	3.7	8.0	7.5	16.1*	14.9	15.0
Routine nonmanual worker	15.9	16.5	18.3	16.0	15.7	19.3	14.9	15.0
Skilled manual worker	24.5	19.8*	34.1	24.3	24.9	13.0*	18.2	11.3
Unskilled manual worker	7.6	5.4	4.9	4.5	9.6	7.5	3.2	6.0
Agricultural laborer	13.6	8.7*	9.8	10.2	15.5	5.6*	10.4	6.8
Not in the labor force	5.4	3.7	7.3	2.7	3.8	3.7	9.1	7.5
Deceased	6.6	6.1	8.5	5.7	5.2	6.8	9.7	6.8
<i>Father's party (MSZMP) membership</i>								
Never joined any party	58.0	56.8	56.1	58.9	56.3	53.4	63.6	53.4
Never member of MSZMP	13.1	13.4	17.1	9.6	12.2	18.6	13.6	21.1
MSZMP member	28.9	29.8	26.8	31.5	31.5	28.0	22.7	25.6

* p < 0.05.

Note. Percentages may not sum correctly because of rounding error. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages. See text for the construction of all the variables that are included in this table.

Table 3. Educational background of the old (1988) and the new (1993) elites in Hungary

Variables	All elites		Economic elites		Political elites		Cultural elites	
	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
	(N = 662)	(N = 783)	(N = 82)	(N = 489)	(N = 426)	(N = 161)	(N = 154)	(N = 133)
<i>Education</i>								
Primary school	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Secondary school	5.1	4.3	0.0	5.9*	8.0	1.9*	0.0	1.5
Tertiary school	94.6	95.7	100.0	94.1*	91.5	98.1	100.0	98.5
<i>Marxist major^b</i>								
No tertiary education	5.4	4.3	0.0	5.9*	8.5	1.9*	0.0	1.5
No Marxist major	69.3	84.3*	70.1	81.2*	61.3	85.7*	90.9	94.0
Partly Marxist major	25.1	11.2*	29.3	12.9*	30.0	11.8*	9.1	4.5
Only Marxist major	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.0
<i>Humanities major^b</i>								
No tertiary education	5.4	4.3	0.0	5.9*	8.5	1.9*	0.0	1.5
No humanities major	68.3	73.8*	86.6	83.6	69.2	65.8*	55.8	47.4
Partly humanities major	24.0	19.5*	13.4	9.6	20.4	28.6*	39.6	45.1
Only humanities major	2.3	2.3	0.0	0.8*	1.9	3.7	4.5	6.0
<i>Technical major^b</i>								
No tertiary education	5.4	4.3	0.0	5.9*	8.5	1.9*	0.0	1.5
No technical major	35.8	24.0*	4.9	4.5	34.3	52.2*	56.5	61.7
Partly technical major	45.5	46.6	74.4	55.6*	43.9	33.5*	34.4	29.7
Only technical major	13.3	25.0*	20.7	33.9*	13.4	12.4	9.1	7.5

* p < 0.05.

Note. Percentages may not sum correctly because of rounding error. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages. See text for the construction of all the variables that are included in this table.

^a These levels of education pertain to *attendance*, and not necessarily (although including) completion.

^b See *Appendix* for the precise coding of these variables.

Table 4. Political characteristics of the old (1988) and the new (1993) elites in Hungary

Variables	All elites		Economic elites		Political elites		Cultural elites	
	Old (N = 662)	New (N = 783)	Old (N = 82)	New (N = 489)	Old (N = 426)	New (N = 161)	Old (N = 154)	New (N = 133)
<i>MSZMP membership^a</i>								
Never joined any party	13.3	28.7*	9.8	29.9*	10.1	17.4*	24.0	38.3*
Never member of MSZMP	3.3	13.8*	3.7	3.7	2.8	50.9*	4.5	6.0
Former member of MSZMP	22.2	17.6*	26.8	17.6	18.5	8.1*	29.9	29.3
MSZMP member in 1988	61.2	39.8*	59.8	48.9	68.5	23.6*	41.6	26.3*
<i>Vote in the 1990 elections^b</i>								
Did not vote	8.2	5.9	7.3	7.0	6.3	2.5*	13.6	6.0*
Center right	18.9	37.2*	24.4	33.1	15.0	51.6*	26.6	34.6
Liberals	11.2	30.3*	25.6	29.2	6.3	31.7*	19.9	30.1*
Socialists	55.4	22.6*	42.7	25.4*	63.6	13.0*	39.6	24.1*
Other parties	6.3	4.1	0.0	4.7*	8.7	1.2*	3.2	5.3
<i>Party membership in 1993</i>								
Never joined any party	13.3	28.7*	9.8	29.9*	10.1	17.4*	24.0	38.3*
Not party member in 1993	71.1	58.7*	80.5	65.0*	70.9	42.2*	66.9	55.6*
Center Right	0.8	5.7*	1.2	1.2	0.7	23.6*	0.6	0.8
Liberals	0.2	3.2*	0.0	0.6	0.2	13.0*	0.0	0.8
Socialists	11.9	2.8*	7.3	2.2	14.3	3.7*	7.8	3.8
Communists	2.0	0.4*	1.2	0.4	2.6	0.0*	0.6	0.8
Other parties	0.8	0.4	0.0	0.6	1.2	0.0*	0.0	0.0

* p < 0.05.

Note. Percentages may not sum correctly because of rounding error. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages. See text for the construction of all the variables that are included in this table.

^a MSZMP (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*) refers to the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

^b See Appendix for the precise coding of these variables.

Table 5. Occupational characteristics of the old (1988) and the new (1993) elites in Hungary

Variables	All elites		Economic elites		Political elites		Cultural elites	
	Old (N = 662)	New (N = 783)	Old (N = 82)	New (N = 489)	Old (N = 426)	New (N = 161)	Old (N = 154)	New (N = 133)
<i>Occupation in 1988</i>								
Cultural decision-maker	5.1	2.9*	0.0	0.2	1.6	3.1	17.5	12.8
Economic manager	10.0	20.8*	56.1	30.9*	2.1	3.7	7.1	4.5
Party official	16.5	3.3*	7.3	2.2	20.9	3.1*	9.1	7.5
State official	31.6	5.6*	3.7	1.6	47.2	20.5*	3.2	2.3
Lower-level manager	15.9	37.4*	28.0	49.7*	9.9	15.5	26.0	18.8
Professional (supervisor)	7.9	10.1	1.2	4.9*	6.1	10.6	16.2	28.6*
Professional (rank-and-file)	6.5	14.6*	1.2	4.9*	6.8	37.3	8.4	22.6*
Worker	0.9	3.7*	0.0	4.7*	1.4	3.7	0.0	0.0
Not in the labor force	5.7	1.5*	2.4	0.8	4.0	2.5	12.3	3.0*
<i>Occupation in 1993</i>								
Cultural decision-maker	2.9	2.7	0.0	0.2	2.3	1.2	5.8	13.5*
Economic manager (public)	6.6	22.2*	20.7	34.4*	5.6	2.5	1.9	1.5
Economic manager (private)	2.9	17.2*	8.5	27.2*	2.3	0.0*	1.3	1.5
State official	7.6	16.7*	0.0	0.2	11.7	78.9*	0.0	2.3
Lower-level manager	24.0	25.4	18.3	31.7*	22.8	6.8*	30.5	24.8
Professional (supervisor)	7.6	7.2	0.0	1.0*	5.6	5.0	16.9	32.3*
Professional (rank-and-file)	11.2	3.2*	4.9	0.4	11.5	3.7*	13.6	12.8
Worker	4.5	1.3*	0.0	1.8*	6.8	0.0*	0.6	0.8
Not in the labor force	32.8	4.1*	47.6	3.1*	31.2	1.9*	29.2	10.5*

* p < 0.05.

Note. Percentages may not sum correctly because of rounding error. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages. See text for the construction of all the variables that are included in this table.

elites by examining their demographic characteristics, family origins, educational background, political participation, and occupational history.

The “reproduction” thesis

Within the current literature on elites in Hungary, there is widespread agreement that members of the old nomenklatura managed to remain at the top of the class structure during the transition to post-communism.³⁸ Up to now, however, these arguments have not gained extensive empirical support because the studies that have promoted them obtained their information either from nonrandom samples of firms or from anecdotal evidence.³⁹ With representative data on Hungarian elites from the SSCE survey, we are in a good position to submit the reproduction thesis to a more rigorous empirical test. If the thesis is correct, we would expect to find relatively little difference between the old and the new elites along a number of key socioeconomic variables.⁴⁰ A casual observer examining the results that are presented in Tables 1 through 5 might be tempted to conclude that the reproduction thesis is not supported by data from the SSCE survey. This is because a comparison of columns 1 and 2 in all of our tables shows marked differences in the socioeconomic characteristics of the two elites.⁴¹ However, when we disaggregate our two samples into different *types* of elites, three distinct patterns of elite recruitment emerge.

This way of looking at our data reveals that the economic elite samples offer the strongest possible case for the reproduction hypothesis. To be sure, even in these samples we find some differences in the basic characteristics of the old and new elites. Members of the new economic elite, for example, are significantly younger than were members of the old elite in 1988 (compare Columns 3 and 4, Panel 2, Table 1). They are also more likely to have had fathers who completed tertiary education (Panel 1, Table 2) and who worked in lower-level managerial or professional jobs (Panel 2, Table 2). In terms of schooling, we find that members of the new elite are notably less educated than their older counterparts (Panel 1, Table 3). At the same time, however, it is also clear that their training is of higher quality, given that a much smaller percentage of them completed their university education with a Marxist major (Panel 2, Table 3). Finally, our measures of political participation show only slight differences between the two sub-samples: although members of the new economic elite were clearly less supportive of the MSZP in the 1990 elections (Panel 2, Table 4), they were

just as involved in the Communist Party (MSZMP) prior to the fall of communism (Panel 1, Table 4), and they are similarly reluctant to participate in contemporary political life (Panel 3, Table 4).

Notwithstanding these differences, there is some evidence of reproduction in Hungary. Table 5 shows, for example, that a striking 31 percent of the new economic elite held economic command posts in 1988, and another 50 percent held lower-level managerial jobs in the state economy (Column 4, Panel 1). Likewise, 30 percent of the old economic elite survived as economic leaders in 1993 (see Column 3, Panel 2); but none used their political assets to enter the ranks of the new cultural or the political elite. While these results clearly support the reproduction thesis, they do so only in a partial sense. This is because a rather significant fraction of the old economic elite obviously did not fare so well under post-communism: a sizeable proportion of them (23.4 percent) experienced downward mobility, and an even larger percentage of them (47.6 percent) were “forced” into early retirement.⁴²

The “circulation” thesis

Turning now to a discussion of political elites, we see an entirely different pattern of recruitment emerging from the data. Unlike in the previous case, the similarities between the two political sub-samples are remarkably scarce: both elites are staffed mainly by men and they are also about the same age (compare Columns 5 and 6, Table 1). With these two findings, however, the commonalities between the old and the new elites cease and what we observe, instead, is a marked circulation of personnel between 1988 and 1993. This circulation is fairly systematic.

To begin with, the social origins of the 1993 political elite are dramatically different from those of their communist counterparts. Whereas the overwhelming majority of the old political cadres came from working-class families (Panel 2, Table 2), those in positions of political power today are more likely to be the descendants of highly educated and professional fathers (Panels 1 and 2, Table 2). To put the matter more sharply, the results in Table 2 indicate that a much larger percentage of the new political elite is composed of “second generation” professionals. This constitutes a major shift in the selection of elites in Hungary: the class-based quotas that favored children from working-class and peasant families in the recruitment of *political* leaders under communism⁴³ have now been replaced by a much greater degree of closure at the top of the social hierarchy.⁴⁴

Further differences between the two sub-samples are evident in Table 3, which shows that the educational credentials of the old and the new elites are quite dissimilar. Members of the new elite are distinctly more educated than their communist predecessors (Panel 1, Table 3), but a smaller percentage of them completed a Marxist major (Panel 2, Table 3), and fewer were trained in technical fields (Panel 3 and 4, Table 3). Once again, these results reveal a significant departure from earlier patterns of elite recruitment. Unlike the old regime, the post-communist political order does not favor technocrats; instead, it actively solicits the participation of humanistic intellectuals.⁴⁵

As one might have guessed, our results also show that the political loyalties of the two elites are different. Members of the new elite are manifestly non-socialist in their political orientation: a much smaller percentage of them ever joined the Communist Party (Panel 1, Table 4), fewer voted for socialist parties in the 1990 elections (Panel 2, Table 4), and only a minute fraction currently belongs to the MSZP (Panel 3, Table 4). On the other hand, it is also clear that many more members of the new elite have endorsed either Center Right or Liberal parties in 1990 (Panel 2, Table 4), and a significant percentage of them are actually members of these parties today (Panel 3, Table 4). These findings speak directly to one of our earlier predictions by showing that a new form of “counter selection” structures the composition of the new political elite. Whereas before, commitment to communism was expected from those who aspired to nomenklatura positions, today anti-communist sentiments are required for entry into the political elite.

Finally, the most obvious change in the makeup of the two elites is revealed in Table 5. According to the results that are presented here, only one-third of the new elite held command positions in 1988 (Column 6, Panel 1) and a spectacular 78 percent of all communist political leaders experienced downward mobility (Column 5, Panel 2). Thus, it is clear that the transition to post-communism has produced a remarkable transformation in the composition of the Hungarian political elite.

The “empty places” thesis

In the case of the cultural elite, neither the “reproduction” thesis nor the idea of “circulation” can explain our results. To be sure, the first

four tables show only minute differences between the two subsamples; thus hinting at the possibility that the cultural elite successfully reproduced itself in the post-communist world. However, when we turn to Table 5, we see that nothing could be further from the truth. Only 30 percent of the contemporary cultural elite held command positions in 1988 (Column 8, Panel 1), and a striking 91 percent of the old cultural elite either experienced significant downward mobility or retired by 1993 (Column 7, Panel 2). From this it follows that the fall of communism brought with it a significant *personnel* change in the ranks of the cultural change. But, unlike in the case of the political elite, it did not alter the criteria by which individuals were selected into the cultural elite. In this sense, therefore, the “empty places” thesis comes closest to explaining the overall makeup of this segment of the Hungarian elite.

Conclusion

Our findings indicate that recruitment into the new Hungarian elite is determined by three distinct processes. First of all, our results provide some support for the “reproduction thesis” by showing that a substantial segment of the old nomenklatura elite is still in economic command positions in 1993. This implies that some conversion of political assets has taken place in the transition to postcommunism. However, our data disconfirm the most extreme versions of this theory.⁴⁶ After all, we find evidence of reproduction *only* in the case of the economic elite and, even within this segment, reproduction is by no means complete. A sizeable proportion of new economic leaders were already in command positions in 1988, but an even larger percentage of them held lower managerial jobs. From this it follows that the reproduction of the economic elite was thwarted to a considerable degree by the “revolution of deputy department heads.”

On the whole, our data from Hungary suggest that the reproduction thesis is grossly exaggerated. Throughout the analyses, we uncovered many instances of downward mobility on the part of the nomenklatura elite. We also noted examples of discrimination and counter-selection; both driven by a backlash against the old communists. Among political leaders, for example, we found that the “room at the top” opened up with the transition to postcommunism. However, we also observed that this room was rapidly filled by second-generation professionals, as well as by loyal followers of the current political regime.

Finally, in the case of the cultural elite, we found very little evidence of change. To be sure, our results show considerable circulation in personnel within the cultural elite. Given the age distribution of the old elite, however, we think that this circulation is likely to have been produced by normal retirements, rather than by a political backlash. Most importantly perhaps for present purposes, the individual characteristics of the old and the new elites have remained much the same with the transition to postcommunism. Thus, while the individuals occupying these positions may have changed, the “empty places” at the top of the cultural occupations continued to recruit the same type of personnel. The fact that nothing has changed in the recruitment criteria for the cultural elite is not surprising. After all, the transition to post-communism intended to reform the economy and political life, but it left the cultural domain untouched.

Notes

1. V. Pareto, *Sociological Writings* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), 249.
2. I. Szelényi and S. Szelényi, “Az Elit Cirkulációja? A Társadalmi Szerkezet Változásai Közép-Európában a Posztkommunizmusba Való Átmenet Korában” [The Circulation of Elites? Changes in the Social Structure of Central European Societies During the Transition to Post-Communism], *Kritika* 10 (October 1991): 8–10.
3. E. Hankiss, *East European Alternatives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
4. It is important to point out that Hankiss formulated his theory of elite recruitment well before the complete disintegration of the communist regime.
5. E. Szalai, “Az Új Elit [The New Elite],” in E. Szalai, *Gazdaság és Hatalom* (Budapest: Aula, 1990), 169–176; E. Szalai, “Ismét az Új Elitről” [The New Elite Revisited], in E. Szalai, *Gazdaság és Hatalom*, 181–186.
6. J. Staniszki, “The dynamics of breakthrough in the Socialist system: An outline of problems,” *Soviet Studies* 61 (October 1989): 560–573; J. Staniszki, “‘Political capitalism’ in Poland,” *East European Politics and Societies* 5 (Winter 1991): 127–141; J. Staniszki, *The Dynamics of Breakthrough in Eastern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
7. This perspective is fashionable not only in the halls of academia, but also among Hungarian populists. In one of his rousing speeches delivered over the radio, István Csurka questioned the practice of describing the events of 1989 as regime *change* by noting that the transition to post-communism has provided individuals with limited opportunities for upward mobility. He said: “the story today is that the old proprietors remain in their places in the name of privatization.” See I. Csurka, *Vasárnapi Jegyzetek* [Sunday Notes] (Budapest: Püski–Magyar Fórum, 1991), 49.
8. D. Stark, “Path dependence and privatization strategies in East Central Europe,” *East European Politics and Societies* 6 (Winter 1992): 17–54.
9. For an extended discussion of these (and other) conversion strategies, see I. Szelényi and S. Szelényi. “The making of a new elite in postcommunist Central Europe: An outline of a dynamic model of social spaces,” paper presented at the

- Annual Meeting of the Hungarian Sociological Association, Miskolc, Hungary, July 1993.
10. I. Szelényi, *Socialist Entrepreneurs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).
 11. K. Marx, "Preface to the first German edition of *Das Kapital*," in K. Marx, *Capital*, Volume I (New York: International Publishers 1967), 18–21; A. Przeworski, "Proletariat into a class: The process of class formation from Karl Kautsky's *The Class Struggle* to recent controversies," *Politics and Society* 7/4 (1977): 343–401.
 12. E. O. Wright, *Class Structure and Income Determination* (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 21.
 13. N. Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (Verson: London, 1978), 33.
 14. E. O. Wright, *Classes* (London: Verso), 192–240; M. Burawoy, "Painting socialism: Working-class formation in Hungary and Poland," in S. G. McNall, R. F. Levine, and R. Fantasia, editors, *Bringing Class Back In: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 311–330.
 15. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968).
 16. For more on the concept of "dual compromise" under the Kádár regime, see I. Kemény, "A Magyar Munkásosztály Rétegződése" [The Social Stratification of the Hungarian Working Class], *Szociológia* 1/1 1972): 36–48.
 17. I. R. Gábor, "The second (secondary) economy," *Acta Oeconomica* 22/3–4 (1979): 291–311; P. Galasi and G. Sziráczi, *Labour Market and Second Economy in Hungary* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1985).
 18. P. G. Lewis, "Potential sources of opposition in the East European peasantry," in R. L. Tótkés, editor, *Opposition in Eastern Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 261–291. Also see: F. Donáth, *Reform és Forradalom: A Magyar Mezőgazdaság Strukturális Átalakulása, 1945–1975* [Reform and Revolution: The Structural Transformation of Hungarian Agriculture, 1945–1975] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977); F. Donáth, "Tulajdon és Hatékonyság" [Property and Efficiency], *Medvetánc* 1 (1982): 161–190; P. Juhász, Pál, "Agrárpiac, Kisüzem, Nagyüzem" [Rural Market, Small Business, Large Enterprise], *Medvetánc* 1 (1982): 117–139; I. Kovách, *Termelők és Vállalkozók: A Mezőgazdasági Kistermelők a Magyar Társadalomban* [Producers and Entrepreneurs: Small-Scale Agricultural Producers in Hungarian Society] (Budapest: Társadalomtudományi Intézet, 1988).
 19. D. Stark, "Rethinking internal labor markets: New insights from a comparative perspective," *American Sociological Review* 51 (August 1986): 492–504; M. Burawoy, *The Politics of Production: Factory Regimes Under Capitalism and Socialism* (London: Verso, 1985); M. Burawoy and J. Lukács, *The Radiant Past: Ideology and Reality in Hungary's Road to Capitalism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).
 20. D. Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics: Opposition and Reform in Poland Since 1968* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); M. D. Kennedy, *Professionals, Power, and Solidarity in Poland: A Critical Sociology of Soviet-type Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); M. D. Kennedy, "The intelligentsia in the constitution of civil societies and post-communist regimes in Hungary and Poland," *Theory and Society* 21/1 (1992): 29–76.
 21. A. O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
 22. Needless to say, workers did not benefit equally from the second economy. In fact, if anything, the introduction of these economic reforms produced greater income

- inequalities among workers. See: I. R. Gábor and P. Galasi, "A Másodlagos Gazdaság: A Szocializmusbeli Magánszféra Néhány Gazdaság-Szociológiai Kérdése" [The Second Economy: A Few Questions for Economic Sociology Raised by the Private Sector Under Socialism], *Szociológia* 6 (1978): 329–344; T. Kolosi, "A 'Mellékes' Nem Mellékes" [The "Secondary" [Income] is Not Secondary], *Élet és Irodalom* (March 1980): 5; I. Völgyes, "Hungary: The lumpenproletarianization of the working class," in J. F. Triska and C. Gati, editors, *Blue-Collar Workers in Eastern Europe* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 224–235.
23. G. Konrád and I. Szelényi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1979); I. Szelényi, "The prospects and limits of the East European new class project: An auto-critical reflection on *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*," *Politics and Society* 15/2 (1986): 103–144.
 24. I. Szelényi, "Eastern Europe in an epoch of transition: Toward a socialist mixed economy?" in V. Nee and D. Stark, editors, *Remaking the Economic Institutions of Socialism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 208–232; S. Szelényi, "Socialism," in E. F. Borgatta and M. L. Borgatta, editors, *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1992), 1856–1863.
 25. The Czech support for this vision is not surprising. After all, one of the major ideologues of the Prague Spring was Radovan Richta, who favored exactly this type of technocratic vision of socialism. See: R. Richta, *Civilization at the Crossroads* (White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1969); C. Harman, *Class Struggles in Eastern Europe 1945–83* (London: Bookmarks, 1988).
 26. S. Szelényi, "Social inequality and party membership: Patterns of recruitment into the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party," *American Sociological Review* 52 (October 1987): 559–573.
 27. A. Arató, "The Budapest School and actually existing socialism," *Theory and Society* 16 (July 1987): 593–619.
 28. F. G. Casals (P. Câmpeanu), *The Syncretic Society* (White Plains, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1980); J. Böröcz, "Kettős Függőség és Tulajdonvákuum: Társadalmi Átalakulás az Államszocialista Félperiférián" [Dual Dependency and Property Vacuum: Social Change in the State Socialist Semiperiphery], *Szociológiai Szemle* 3 (1992): 3–20.
 29. E. Szalai, "Elites and systematic change in Hungary," *Praxis International* 10 (April and July, 1990): 74–79.
 30. S. Szelényi, "Social mobility and class structure in Hungary and the United States," dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, No. 8826077, 1988).
 31. I. Szelényi and S. Szelényi, "The vacuum in Hungarian politics: Classes and parties," *New Left Review* 187 (May/June 1991): 121–137.
 32. Á. Róna-Tas, "The selected and the elected: The making of the new parliamentary elite in Hungary," *East European Politics and Societies* 5 (Fall 1991): 357–393.
 33. I. Szelényi and S. Szelényi, "The vacuum in Hungarian politics."
 34. T. Kolosi, personal communication.
 35. P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).
 36. I. Szelényi and D. J. Treiman, *Social Stratification in Central Europe: Hungarian Elite Survey* [MRDF]. Budapest: MEDIÁN Közvélemény- és Piackutató Kft. [producer]. Los Angeles, California: Department of Sociology, University of California [distributor], 1993.
 37. See *Appendix* at the end of this article for a full specification of the variables used in the analyses.

38. D. Stark, "Privatization in Hungary: From plan to market or from plan to clan?" *East European Politics and Societies* 4 (Fall 1990), 351–392; D. Bartlett, "The political economy of privatization: Property reform and democracy in Hungary," *East European Politics and Societies* 6 (Winter 1992): 73–118.
39. For an exception, see T. Kolosi and Á. Róna-Tas, "Az Utolsókból Lesznek az Elsők? A Rendszerváltás Társadalmi Hatásai Magyarországon" [The Last Will Be the First? The Social Consequences of Regime Change in Hungary], *Szociológiai Szemle* 2 (1992): 3–26.
40. As many scholars have noted, reproduction (and circulation) can assume many different forms: for example, it can take place across generations, and it can also be produced by a lack of movement of individuals between elite positions themselves. See, for example: A. Giddens, "Elites in the British class structure," in P. Stanworth and A. Giddens, editors, *Elites and Power in British Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 1–21; T. Bottomore, *Elites and Society*, Second Edition (London: Routledge, 1993). In our empirical analyses, we will use reproduction in its simplest possible form: that is, we wish to find out merely to what extent the old and the new elites differ along a number of variables. More extensive formulations of the reproduction thesis will be provided in other contributions to this issue.
41. There are only two exceptions to this rule: father's party membership (Panel 3, Table 2) does not appear to distinguish between the two elites, nor does respondents' education (Panel 1, Table 3) at this aggregate level.
42. The age distribution of old elites who were coded as "out of the labor force" in 1993 is as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Age in 1993	All old elites	Economic elites	Political elites	Cultural elites
Under 40	0.5	0.0	0.8	0.0
40–49	2.8	2.6	3.8	0.0
50–59	23.5	25.6	27.8	8.9
60–69	57.1	69.2	57.9	44.4
70 or above	16.1	2.6	9.8	46.7
N	217	39	133	4

Note. Missing values were not included in the calculation of these percentages.

43. S. Szélenyi and K. E. Aschaffenburg, "Inequalities in educational opportunity in Hungary," in Y. Shavit and H. Blossfeld, editors, *Persistent Inequality: Changing Educational Attainment in Thirteen Countries* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993): 273–302; A. Simkus and R. Andorka, "Inequalities in educational attainment in Hungary, 1923–1973," *American Sociological Review* 47 (December 1982): 740–751.
44. For discussions of the various forms of class closure, see: P. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Mobility* (New York: Free Press, 1964); P. M. Blau and O. D. Duncan, *The American Occupational Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1967); F. Parkin,

1974. "Strategies of social closure in class formation," in F. Parkin, editor, *The Social Analysis of Class Structure* (London: Tavistock, 1974), 1–18.
45. Arguably, however, this is only a temporary phase in the development of the Hungarian class structure. The new political elite seems to be dedicated to passing economic power over to private entrepreneurs. If it succeeds in doing this, it is likely to eliminate itself as a political class. The current post-communist revolution resembles, in this sense, the famous Russian revolution. In 1917 a group of intellectuals constituted themselves as a political class in a *peasant country* in order to lead a "proletarian revolution" without a proletariat, but with the express purpose of creating a proletariat. In 1989, a fraction of the intelligentsia seized power in Central Europe, their intention is to lead a bourgeois revolution without a bourgeoisie, but with the express desire to create a bourgeoisie. For more on this, see I. Szelényi and S. Szelényi, "The making of a new elite in post-communist Central Europe."
46. See E. Hankiss, *East European Alternatives*; J. Staniszkis, *The Dynamics of Breakthrough in Eastern Europe*.

Appendix

Our principal objective in this article is to characterize the social composition of the Hungarian elite at two time points in history: prior to the collapse of the communist regime (in 1988) and immediately after the transition to a market economy (in 1993). We identified elites on the basis of our sampling frame; this allowed us to distinguish not only between the old and the new elites, but it also permitted us to disaggregate our two main elite categories into specific *types* of elites (i.e., the economic, the political, and the cultural elite).

Demographic characteristics: We begin our analyses by surveying the gender and age of our respondents in the various elite categories. Age is measured in the year of incumbency; thus it pertains to 1988 in the case of the old elite and to 1993 in the case of the new elite. Our age categories are spaced at ten-year intervals, beginning with age 40. Given the nature of our sample, there are too few respondents in the youngest age group to warrant greater detail.

Family origins: Attention is also paid to the family origin of our respondents, as indexed by their father's education, occupation, and party membership. *Father's education* is a combination of the father's (highest) level of education completed and the type of school he attended. It is coded in the following manner: *primary school* (no schooling, less than 4 years of elementary school, 4 years of elementary school, 6 years of elementary school, 4 years of "bourgeois" school, 8 years of elementary school), *secondary school* (apprentice school, vocational school, technical secondary, academic secondary), *tertiary school* (college, university). Following a long tradition in social stratification research, *father's occupation* is measured at the time when the respondent was 14 years old, and *father's party membership* was designed to capture whether the respondent's father ever joined the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*, or MSZMP).

Educational background: For substantive reasons, we constructed two measures of educational attainment from the complete histories that are available in the elite survey. The first one of these, *education*, is a combination of level of education completed and the type of school attended. It is coded in the following manner: *primary school* (special school, elementary school, bourgeois school, primary school), *secondary school* (apprentice training, vocational school, technical secondary school, academic high school), and *tertiary school* (teachers training institute, college, university, other tertiary). Given that the overwhelming majority of our respondents have completed at least some tertiary education, we thought it might be useful to distinguish among them on the basis of the type of training that they received at the tertiary level. For this reason, we have included a number of variables in our analyses that indicate their major at the tertiary level: *Marxist Majors* include specialization in public administration (*állami-gazgatás*), armed forces (*fegyveres testület*), and Marxism-Leninism (*Marxizmus-Leninizmus*); *Humanities Majors* include courses in the natural sciences (természettudomány), social sciences (*társadalomtudomány*), and the humanities (*bölcsészettudomány*); and *Technical Majors* include technological (*műszaki*), agricultural (*mezőgazdaság*), commercial (*kereskedelmi*), and economics (*közgazdaság*) courses.

Political characteristics: Throughout the analyses, we use three separate variables to measure the political characteristics of the respondents. *MSZMP Membership* was constructed from the political history of the respondents. Its purpose is to identify respondents who *never* joined the Communist Party, those who joined but left before 1988, and those who were still members in 1988. *Vote in the 1990 Elections* is designed to capture respondents' party preference in the first free elections in Hungary. It is coded in the following manner: *did not vote*, *center right* (Hungarian Democratic Forum, the Independent Smallholders' Party, the Christian Democratic Party), *liberals* (Alliance of Free Democrats, the Alliance of Young Democrats), *socialists* (Hungarian Socialist Party), and *other parties*. *Party Membership in 1993* is coded in the same way as "vote in the 1990 elections," with the only exception that we separated out *communists* (the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) from "other parties."

Occupational characteristics: The occupational categories used in this study are based on the 1993 Hungarian Standard Occupational Classification System (*Foglalkozások Egységes Osztályozási Rendszere*, or FEOR-93). It recodes the detailed occupational categories that are available in FEOR-93 so as to capture, as much as possible, membership in different types of elites. The resultant occupational categories for 1988 are as follows: *cultural decision-maker* (e.g., members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, managers and directors of major cultural and educational institutions), *economic manager* (e.g., higher-level occupations in state firms), *party official* (e.g., paid functionaries, managers, and directors in the organizations of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), *state official* (e.g., bureaucratic officials in local as well as national state organizations, parliamentary representatives), *lower-level manager*, *professional with supervisees*, *rank and file professional*, *worker* (e.g., routine nonmanual worker, skilled worker, semi-skilled worker, unskilled worker, agricultural laborer), *not in the labor force* (e.g., retired, unemployed, student, disabled). The categories for 1993 are similar to those for 1988 with the following exceptions: (1) among economic managers, we distinguish between those who work in public and private firms, and (2) we have excluded from our classification the category for "party officials," because the transition to post-communism eliminated the party bureaucracies that produced these jobs. It is important to note that neither of our occupational classification schemes provide a

perfect measure of elite membership. This is because elite position and occupation are not in all instances the same. Consider, for example, members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Membership in the Academy is not considered to be a job and, for this reason, it is not reported in our occupational history table.