curities, and other features of economies undergoing rapid and generally successful transformations. The authors of these country studies have thus anticipated well the trajectories of these nations as they moved into the new century.

Two of the strongest papers in this volume focus on the Polish transformation. Iraj Hashi’s “Employee Ownership and Enterprise Behavior” is a detailed and comprehensive attempt to evaluate the performance of enterprises privatized in the form of American-style employee-share ownership programs. Hashi provides a careful review of the long literature on worker-owned enterprises and concludes, via statistical evidence on firm behavior, that the early Polish experience with such firms seemed to be much more positive than the predictions of the classic Ward-Vanek models, possibly a result of the tradability of workers’ share rights in the modern Polish case. Krystyna Szymkiewicz’s similarly well-done paper on “The Banking Sector and the Financing of Enterprises in Poland” is fully updated through 1999 and provides an excellent history of the reform and development of that sector.

The environment for economic research was clearly less favorable in other parts of the region. A useful illustration of this is provided by Michael Wyzan’s paper on “Applying Simple Spreadsheet-based CGE Models to Economic Policy” in Bulgaria. This paper reflects perhaps the experience of many foreign advisers who came to the region during the mid-1990s and who discovered significant difficulties in translating “Western” economic research practices into useful policy tools in a region short on both data and economists well-trained in modern research methods. Wyzan provides a detailed description of an attempt to adapt CGE modeling to Bulgarian realities. One only wishes that he might also have described the reception that such models received among Bulgarian policymakers.

In sum, this volume, ultimately published in 2002, is rich in complexity and broad in content. It deserves a place in research libraries and the careful attention of scholars concentrating on the nations of this region. Its lack of cohesiveness and its incomplete updating make it less appropriate for undergraduate students. I suspect that such students would suggest publishing the papers from the next world conference on the internet as a better and quicker way to provide access to a broader audience.

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It takes a brave person to write about politics in post-communist East Central Europe. The constantly changing political kaleidoscope, with many different actors and groups entering and exiting the political stage, seems to defy orderly analysis. And yet, Kostelecky plunges in and makes great sense out of apparent-chaos. Wisely, despite the title that is misleading, he chooses only four countries: Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland. They are located close to one another and have similar histories and socioeconomic characteristics.
The author begins with a brief discussion of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of these countries with the emphasis on political party development. Moving to the post-communist era, he distinguishes three periods leading to present-day party alignments. Immediately after the fall of the communist regimes, the division was simply between a unified anticommunist bloc and the remnants of previous Communist Parties. It was an easy victory for the anticommunists—a bloodless revolution, or "a velvet revolution," as the Czechs called it. But, most people supporting democracy assumed it to mean a quick transfer to a Western form of economic prosperity. Few were prepared for personal sacrifices necessitated by the privatization and reconstruction of a moribund economy inherited from the communist regime. The resulting shock led in Hungary and Poland to a fragmentation of the anticommunist bloc and a revival of the "ex-communist-new democratic alliance of the left." The epitome of this ontogenesis was, in Poland, the defeat in the presidential election of Lech Walesa, the leader and symbol of Solidarity and the winner of a Nobel Peace Prize, by an ex-minister of the last communist government, Aleksander Kwasniewski. In Czechoslovakia the split of the anticommunist front took a different form. There was also some "rebirth of the democratic left," but the scene was dominated by the struggle between Czechs and Slovaks for their respective share of power within the new democratic and federal state. On December 8, 1993, this led to the dissolution of the Union and creation of two separate countries. Slovakia regressed to the authoritarian rule of Vladimir Meciar and his Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). In the Czech Republic, the unrepentant Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, the only one to retain "Communist" in its title in the whole of East Central Europe, could barely survive as a minor party. The dominant force was the reformist Civic Democratic Party under its leader and prime minister, Vaclav Klaus.

Most recently, the parties have began to align themselves along the more "normal" political framework of democracy in which party programs, attuned to varied preferences of the electorate, are arranged along the continuum of individual versus collective choices in economic and non-economic (social) matters. Thus, Social Democrats stand for collective decisions in economics and individual decisions in non-economic matters; Liberal Democrats support individual decisions in both spheres; Christian Democrats advocate collective decisions in non-economic matters and individual ones in economics; Authoritarians endorse collective decisions in economic and non-economic activities.

In Poland, the existence of many parties was the result of the initial adoption of an unrestricted proportional representation system, favored by the dissidents as the most democratic and by the communists as a safeguard against their complete elimination from politics. Under such an arrangement, in the first post-communist election held in 1991, many "major" parties and scores of smaller ones participated, including some like the Beer Lovers Party that won 3.3 percent of the votes which translated into 16 parliamentary seats. Internal leadership disagreements often led to splits and formation of new parties. The introduction of a 5 percent threshold before the 1993 election curbed the number of "major" parties to eight and abetted further party consolidation. The Czechoslovak 5 percent threshold had initially little impact, since the first election in 1990 had a plebiscite character, but started to have an effect in subsequent...