

spread in Eastern Europe – an exhaustive explanation for the gap between them and the countries in South-eastern Europe with respect to transition. In fact, Tito's Yugoslavia, as well as the Romania of the 1968 opposition to the "Breznev doctrine" had known strong western support. The overthrow of Ceaușescu in December 1989 and the proclamation of radical rejection of communism in the first declaration made by the newly established authorities of Bucharest attracted once again western support for Romania. Examples of "missed opportunities" and "wasted chances" in former socialist countries of South-eastern Europe are, undoubtedly, more numerous. On the other hand, it is possible that the same general measures – liberalisation of the right to initiative, free elections, administrative decentralisation, etc. – should have different results in different contexts, defined by history and influenced by geographic position.

Nevertheless, when it comes to different measures, with different results, adopted in different countries in neighbouring regions, we have to deal, in a very strict sense, rather with something else than history and geography: we have to deal with governance. However, a simple historical analysis points to the following fact: while the Prague of 1968 attempted at a shift from the Soviet socialism to the democratic socialism inspired by the West, Sofia was obstinately defending Brejnevism and its Stalinist roots, and Bucharest was laying the foundation of Ceaușescu's national-communist adventure; while in 1980 in Poland the "Solidarity" movement targeted the communist regime, Eastern European countries were officially displaying an opposite mobilisation; while Kadar's Hungary was accommodating small business capitalism, Bulgarian and Romanian economists were discussing about the "strengthening of the socialist property"; while many Central and Eastern European countries had overthrown the communist dictatorship and were heading towards pluralism, Yugoslavia was stumbling in the anachronistic Milosevici regime; while, in the early '90s Central European countries were intensively privatising their economies and were encouraging foreign investments, Eastern Europe was flirting in some countries with the reformism of the "socialism with human face"; while the same countries were encouraging the establishment of the civil society and the engagement of intellectuals in the public sphere, some leaders in the region were launching the disastrous thesis of the "political non-involvement of the intellectuals"; while in Central European countries the successors of the communist party had been reformed for some time, in some Eastern European countries they came back in power, wearing new tags, and their reformation proves to be slow; while in Central European countries accession to NATO and EU determined public debate on what needs to be done to this purpose, in some Eastern European countries the debate tended to focus on exerting the existing power. Examples can go on. **My thesis is that the rhythm of transition from Eastern socialism to open society was mainly determined by governance and that it is high time that South-eastern European countries paid high priority to this factor of modern dynamics.**

3

I do not wish to abandon the analysis of the former socialist South-eastern European countries in favour of general considerations. However, following Burns and Carson (2002), I would like to mention that any human activity is organised and regulated by socially produced and reproduced rules and rule systems, incorporated in language, customs and codes of behaviour, norms, laws and social institutions². I will start from Rhodes' (1997) definition of "governance" as "selforganizing, interorganizational networks"³. Unlike "government", which refers to the executive authority of a representative democracy, "governance" means the correlated action of numerous actors involved in guiding society, from statespeople, elected politicians, officials, to pressure and interest groups. As landmark, I will take the distinction made by Köhler-Koch (1999) between the various "governance" types – statism, corporatism, pluralism, network governance⁴. **My thesis is that: governance can account better than other factors for the rhythm of the Eastern transition from Eastern socialism**