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In fact，the prematureclosure of the revolutions throughout much of Eastern Europe in early 1990s suggests that neither the political limits of the popular imagination nor the military limits of intervention are likely to be the decisive constraints, at least in the short term, Whereas Czechoslvakia moves toward a social democratic posture, more conservative regimes have been elected in Hungary and East Germany amidstwidespread signs that unemployment and homelessness come hand in hand with the capitalist market. Poland’s is the most aggressive conservatism as an erstwhile labour union, Solidarity, pursues the most unabashed embrace of capital. ‘Is this al there is?’ very soon became the common grumble throughout most of Eastern Europe.

The political results of the 1989 revolts are not simply regional. While they potentially affect every facet of everyday life in every home, factory, and street in Eastern Europe, the results are the same time resoundingly global. Within hours of the astonishing broadcast of film footage from Berlin, the Bush administration and the Defense Department faced a clamour of congressional demands that the extraordinary $300 billion defense budget be substantially reduced. The endangerment of jobs for American workers in defense plants across the country comprised the first cynical and hardly sustainable line of ideological defense; as ever, ‘jobs for American workers’ should be decoded as ‘profits for American companies’. The end of the Cold War in geopolitical terms was hailed around the world as a stunned Washington administration squirmed in search of new global enemies, finally alighting on Panama. Margaret Thatcher, herself no friend of the defeated regimes of official communism, revealed her class colours admirably with an extraordinary paean to the Secretary General of the Soviet CommunityParty, Mikhail Gorbachev (anointed byWestern leaders as author of a ‘democratization’ so far forbidden in his own country), while at the same time admonishing the masses in Eastern Europe to ‘take it slowly for goodness sake’ lest national and global ‘stability ’ be disrupted.

The prospect of a reunited Germany has resurrected an obsolete national and geopolitical essentialism, partly within Germany, but also among the ruling classes of France, Britain, and especially the United States. But German reunification today, in reality, has little to do with geopolitics. Simple spatial propinquity is of limited consequence in the age of IBMs and OCBMs. It is an economic question; the fading of the ‘American Century’, to use Henry Luce’s phrase of 1941 (rather optimistically, it would now seem), would progress that much faster with a reunited Germany (within a confederated Europe), doubling with the already prevalent competition from Japan. And yet, in the context of the globalization of production, capital, labour and commodity markets, and financial capital, an open Easter Europe becomes a virtual vacuum into which crisis-ridden capitals may willingly be sucked. The see-saw of capital takes a definitive lurch to the East. In the eyes of many optimistic businessmen, the opening of Easter Europe could be a shot of economic adrenalin to global capital, a new world to conquer, one more spatial fix, a new and empty economic space divined from outside the previously resistant geo-economic boundaries of global capital. With cheap labour and expanding markets, Hungary in particular is widely equated to a ‘gold mine’. And just in time. Their hope would be that substantial investment in and for Eastern Europe might provide sufficient opportunities to resolve or at least attenuate the crises of overproduction and financial indebtedness that Mr Johnson of Chemical Bank so accurately feared.

But there are many other scenarios, The technics of integrating non-hard currencies, different wage rates, market prices, and conditions of labour into the European and global political economies are formidable. However these arrangements are worked out, it seems indisputable that even if specific states re-erect comparatively closed economic and political the global market. In this respect, the Marxist analysis that has traditionally diagnosed Eastern European and Soviet societies and their histories as itinerant toward state capitalism, may well prove prophetic. And yet, after 1989, this would be the pessimistic argument. Grassroots working class and popular resistance bear the true authorship of the Eastern European revolt which certainly anticipates political and economic alternatives to an oppressive state and economy. But as E.P. Thompson has so forcefully put it, East Berliners did not break down the Berlin Wall just instigate privatized housing or privatized health care, British or American style.4 At the present conjuncture in Eastern Europe, therefore, it is still not an economic logic that orchestrates the production of space, but quotidian political struggles, at one and the same time separate and yet more and more closely connected: struggle over political rights defined in