

# The Enlargement of the European Union and NATO

*Ordering from the Menu in Central Europe*

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# Contents

<i>List of Tables, Graph, and Figures</i>	page ix
<i>Preface and Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction: Ordering from the Menu in Central Europe	I
1 Emulation as Embedded Rationalism	20
2 Emulation as Rapid Modernization: Health Care and Consumer Protection	41
3 Emulation Under Pressure: Regional Policy and Agriculture	77
4 The Struggle for Civilian Control of the Military	116
5 Military Professionalization in War and Peace	154
6 Using Theory to Illuminate the Cases	179
7 Synthesis and Sequence: Juxtaposing Theory Traditions	196
8 Extensions and Conclusions	216
<i>Appendix: Selected List of Persons Interviewed</i>	243
<i>Works Cited</i>	249
<i>Index</i>	283

## Tables, Graph, and Figures

### TABLES

1. Different Uses of Emulation in the Design of Postcommunist Institutions	6
2. Outcomes of Efforts at Emulation Through Copies, Templates, Thresholds, and Patches	10
3. Central Tendencies in Modes and Outcomes	14
4. Comparison of Incidences of Disease and Causes of Death, 1991–99	47
5. Attitudes on the Trade-off between Welfare Spending and Lower Taxes	56
6. Frequency Distribution of Directives in Consumer Protection Addressed by the Hungarian Legislature, 1991–2001	71
7. Key Dimensions of the Preaccession Instruments for Regional Policy	81
8. EU Agriculture Expenditures by Country and Category	98
9. Predicted Percentage Changes in Producer Prices of Major Crops and Livestock Products Above FAPRI Baseline Prices	100
10. Military Expenditure as a Percentage of GDP, 1989–2000	131
11. 1995 Military Expenditure by Market Exchange Rates and Purchasing Power Parity Rates	132
12. Attendance at the George C. Marshall Center	136
13. Remilitarization of the Socialist Ministry of Defense in Hungary	140
14. USIA Poll Results on Nato Enlargement	147

## GRAPH

1. Military Expenditure in Millions of 1995 Constant U.S. Dollars, 1989–2001 131

## FIGURES

1. Varieties of Modes of Emulation 35
2. Varieties of Outcomes 36

## Introduction

### *Ordering from the Menu in Central Europe*

So when *does* an idea's time come? The answer lies in the match between idea and moment. An idea's time arrives not simply because the idea is compelling on its own terms, but because opportune political circumstances favor it.

(Lieberman 2002: 709)

In 1989–90, the communist regimes of Eastern Europe fell. In a few countries, social movements had challenged and eroded communism; in other places, the regimes seemed to collapse of their own weight. In either case, however, the notion of becoming a normal European state was an idea whose time had come. Almost all the new governments that emerged looked to distance themselves from many communist-era practices and institutions. Elites and citizens generally thought of these changes as part of a “return to Europe.” Even those who argued that one could not “return” to a place (Europe) that one had never left still acknowledged the need for radical changes. Within a few years, elites and citizens also came to a broad consensus that their states should aspire to join the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and many subsequent institutional changes were pursued with these goals in mind.

This book analyzes Central and Eastern European (CEE) states' efforts to return to Europe by trying to become members of the EU and NATO. Unlike available accounts of the “dual enlargement,” it pays particular attention to the proclivity of CEE elites to emulate existing institutions from Western Europe. As the subtitle puts it, these elites often “order from the menu” as opposed to creating their own new practices entirely from

scratch. The menu is composed of institutions and practices used by the EU and NATO or by their member states. Emulation, defined more fully below, includes a variety of related processes that have in common the fact that elites in one country use formal institutions and practices from abroad to refashion their own rules or organizations.<sup>1</sup> The elites in question are members of the CEE governments, along with top parliamentarians and civil servants, all of whom play key roles in such emulation as they draft the reform plans of the government and its individual ministries.

Emulation is a curious and understudied phenomenon: Why do the attractions of foreign designs sometimes outweigh the attractions of indigenous innovation? In the case at hand, how faithfully have CEE elites attempted to reproduce Western European designs in their own societies? How much have EU and NATO external pressures or incentives shaped their choices? Finally, to what extent have institutions and practices adopted from Western Europe promoted democratic or market-oriented practices in CEE? The answers to these questions have rich implications for scholars of globalization, regionalization, development, international organizations, and institutional change in a variety of policy areas.

The book also contributes to the debate about the extent to which outsiders can assist processes of reform occurring in other countries. This issue has a central place in several social science disciplines and is a regular topic of public discussion on reforming states in the wake of regime collapse or transition. A host of important studies look at the effect of foreign aid, trade, and foreign direct investment on both economic growth and, though to a lesser extent, on political reforms as well. On the more overtly political side, a large historical literature covers military occupations and a smaller one treats the use of institutional conditionality, mostly in Latin America and Africa. With some exceptions, this literature tends to emphasize the limits of external coercion in promoting reform.

Too often, however, we lack evidence on crucial questions. For example, proponents of the 2003 military invasion of Iraq downplayed or ignored the limits just noted – limits that soon seemed all too real. When

<sup>1</sup> In principle, this book uses the distinction between institutions as rules and organizations as groups of formally constituted individual actors who pursue some common purpose (Stone Sweet, Fligstein, and Sandholtz 2001: 6; Hall and Taylor 1996; North 1990). In practice, it is sometimes hard to tell when emulation is of rules and when it is of organizational structures (often delimited by rules). In such cases, *institutions* is sometimes used in a more generic sense. In any case, however, the focus is on both organizational structures and the formal norms and laws propagated through such structures. I do not include uncoded norms, routines, and mentalities.

are institutions “foreign” enough to promote real change and yet not so foreign as to be unacceptable? We have too few studies of a crucial dimension of external assistance: the use of foreign institutional models to change the legal architecture – constitutional and statutory – of the reforming state. True, there are literatures on both diffusion and policy borrowing. But while the former pays little attention to the ways institutions change as they spread from one setting to another, the latter squashes a large number of contrasting motives and strategies into one overstuffed concept. So what happens when international actors promote particular institutional changes in the context of a massive shift in domestic structures? Or what happens when these reforming states are simply intrigued by an apparently better practice somewhere else? Both situations have been ubiquitous in CEE since 1990.

Policy makers should care about these issues. Regardless of whether they are internal reformers, external occupiers, or ostensibly neutral consultants, such reformers ask many of the same questions: Does what works in one place tell us anything about what might work in another? Are there lessons that one country’s leaders can learn from another? If so, is it better to learn by taking explicit advice, or is it better to observe from a distance? Should lessons lead to rapid change, or is real learning best achieved gradually? If local conditions differ – and they always do – should we try to change the practices or change the local conditions? Running through all of these questions are the crucial issues of external imposition versus domestic choice and superficial and cosmetic changes versus real and enduring ones.

The intense and sustained use of emulation in CEE thus offers a unique research opportunity, with links to several broader problems. For example, while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank often give leveraged policy advice to borrower nations, it is not clear how and when international organizations can best promote model institutional structures and formal rules. The reconstruction and occupation of post-conflict states has also stimulated debates about the possibilities and limits of institutional change by design. The importance of sustained and systematic attention to institutional redesign under the influence of foreign models is nowhere more apparent than in the Europe of the last years of the twentieth century and the first years of the twenty-first. Nowhere have the conditions been more propitious for emulation, as the East Europeans have had the idea, the opportunity, and the incentives to pursue this course for close to a decade.

The questions answered in this book also fill a widely acknowledged gap in the literature on CEE. A decade and a half after the collapse of



communist regimes, the time is ripe for a reappraisal of the sources of institutional design in CEE and, in particular, of the role of outsiders. The early, almost exclusive focus on forces internal to the region has been augmented by a steadily growing interest in the external influences on, or even the external governance of, the various political and economic transformations of the region (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004; Grabbe 2004; Lieven and Trenin 2003; Pravda and Zielonka 2001; Carothers 1999; Dawisha 1997; Grey 1997; Pridham et al. 1997). This writing on external influences describes a range of Western actions to promote change, though much of it still leaves us quite far from understanding how those Western policies are taken up by the weak states of CEE. It shows that external influence is a multistranded process and not a discrete variable. As a result, authors who begin by setting up external pressures or international imperatives as alternatives to domestic explanations of economic and political change in CEE usually abandon the claim that these are real alternatives (Crawford and Lijphart 1995: 194–6; Stark and Bruszt 1998: 5–8). A sustained focus on both domestic and external pressures will be needed to replace the mostly atheoretical concepts in the literature on external influences.<sup>2</sup>

CEE elites have used emulation very extensively. For example, in Hungary's June 1999 parliamentary session, of the 180 laws passed, 152 were not subject to any debate simply because they were part of the EU *acquis communautaire*, which is the set of treaties, rules, standards, principles, and policies that acceding countries are required to adopt (Kopstein and Reilly 2000: 27; *Magyar Nemzet* [Budapest], June 19, 1999). This observation, which could be replicated many times across the region, raises some real puzzles. Given the common expectation that states will jealously guard their sovereignty, why would states just freed from Soviet domination willingly subject themselves to invasive reform demands from Western Europe? Given the importance of control of the national legislative agenda, why would elected officials surrender agenda-setting power to the EU or NATO? The outcomes are as puzzling as the motives. If international organizations (IOs) – especially the EU – really wield significant

<sup>2</sup> On the chronologically prior but related issue of the purported “diffusion” of neoliberal economic policies of the early 1990s to postcommunist states, see Bockman and Eyal (2002). These authors do successfully cast historical networks as an alternative explanation to a crude version of “imitation.” This book shares both the skepticism about diffusion and the focus on the historical underpinnings of CEE enthusiasm for Western models, though it treats choices that come later and are made by actors who were not part of the actor-network identified by Bockman and Eyal.

power, why does the kind of emulation attempted and the outcomes that result vary so greatly? Finally, if CEE elites are simply pretending to reform, how do we explain the extraordinary changes that have occurred in some policy areas? To unravel most of these puzzles, we must first appreciate the great variation in the choices for and results of emulation.

#### EXPLAINING MODES AND OUTCOMES OF EMULATION

This book explains two patterns: the kinds of emulation CEE elites attempt and the outcomes of reform that follow from these efforts. Both patterns encompass significant variation, and the empirical chapters of the book discuss this variation in great detail. For now, it is sufficient to sketch only the main outlines of the causal relationships.

The first outcome to be explained is what I call the emulation “mode.” How have CEE elites tried to emulate Western European institutions? I argue that what appears to be one messy complex of borrowing Western structures is better understood as four different, but related modes (see Table 1). The typology in Table 1 follows from two factors whose combination generates these different modes: the degree of pressure brought to bear externally and the degree of faithfulness in replication (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Powell and DiMaggio 1991; Kopstein and Reilly 1999: 20–1). In any given case, EU and NATO officials largely determine the first value (coded in simple binary fashion in Table 1 as “more voluntary or less voluntary”), and CEE national governments largely determine the second (coded as “faithful or approximate”). Crucially, modes of emulation are often the result of the constrained choices of CEE elites; elite preferences for faithful versus approximate emulation – or their refusal to emulate at all – underscore their room to fashion a response to these constraints.<sup>3</sup> The combination of these two factors – what we might call pressure and precision – marks a pattern that is richer than the crude notions that CEE states either do exactly what the powerful IOs demand or that they merely pretend to do so as a way to gain membership. Depending upon the policy area being considered, CEE states often do some of each and, as the discussion below will indicate, several other things in addition.<sup>4</sup>

The four modes of emulation are as follows: The upper-left cell of Table 1 comes straight from a well-established literature. Scholars of

<sup>3</sup> I thank Robert Cox and Wayne Sandholtz for help in clarifying this point.

<sup>4</sup> Thus, the unit of analysis and comparison in this book will be the policy area. This choice is defended below in the section on cases, methods, and data.

TABLE 1. *Different Uses of Emulation in the Design of Postcommunist Institutions*

	More Voluntary	Less Voluntary
Faithful	Copies	Patches
Approximate	Templates	Thresholds

“diffusion” and “policy borrowing” have long tried to understand the macrosociological and network factors that promote the voluntary and reasonably faithful spread of institutions from one place to another (for reviews, see Jacoby 2000: 4–12; De Jong, Lalenis, and Mamadouh 2003; Strang and Soule 1998). Such cases, labeled copies for shorthand, did exist in CEE, but this book argues that they were rather rare.<sup>5</sup>

Much more common were three other modes that occurred alongside simple copying. The first alternative mode I call templates. As communism collapsed, some CEE elites voluntarily looked to Western Europe for general templates in which they used the West European model more as a loose approximation than a detailed blueprint. In some cases, CEE states took their inspiration or sought advice directly from EU and NATO officials, but in many other cases they were able to use national templates from those organizations’ member states. In some cases, CEE experts had fairly intimate familiarity with Western practices, either from careful study, extended exchange visits, or years in exile in the West. A large number of Western experts also visited the region, armed with advice that ran the spectrum from well-conceived to obviously ludicrous. In many cases, this form of emulation was blended in the same policy sector with institutional reforms that were entirely indigenous. As a result, a common pattern was that CEE elites often tried to make significant local adaptations of the foreign template.

The second alternative mode I call thresholds. In these cases, the EU and NATO set minimum standards for policy and institutional changes. But typically, these standards were rough and approximate – that is, “We can’t tell nonmembers how to design their institutions . . .” – and also less voluntary – “. . . but if you eventually want to join, you’ll need to make the following reforms. . . .” Thus, pressure was high, but precision could be low. Both the EU and NATO long tried to minimize mandates of precise institutional outcomes. At times, this reluctance reflected a lack of internal

<sup>5</sup> The policy borrowing literature does sometimes refer to the likelihood that copies will not be exact. Here, the most extensive typology is Rose (1991: 21–2).

consensus among members or deference to the sovereignty of CEE states. In part, however, IO officials also were wary of a checklist approach, because for several years, each IO had an internal consensus against a rapid enlargement. Some officials worried that if they gave precise targets to CEE reformers, they would come under more pressure to admit CEE states if those targets were met. In other cases, NATO and EU officials claimed to see value in letting CEE states discover appropriate structures without undue outside pressure. Yet as membership drew nearer, both organizations began to articulate certain minimal conditions. In many cases, we will see that these thresholds remained vague; as in Justice Potter Stewart's famous assessment of pornography, EU and NATO officials often claimed to know what was acceptable or unacceptable when they saw it. Once the IO in question articulated such thresholds, CEE elites could, by definition, no longer make use of the two voluntary modes (copies and templates), at least not in response to that particular threshold.

The third alternative mode to copying is located in the upper-right cell of Table 1. As CEE states' membership has drawn nearer, both organizations sometimes have required mandatory and faithful patches. This mode allowed CEE elites the least discretion of all, for these patches have been quite explicit, often involving specific legal texts to be incorporated en bloc into national law.<sup>6</sup> While such patches have been more common in EU accession as a result of the detailed and demanding *acquis communautaire*, NATO accession has also generated CEE patches, especially in the last-minute defense legislation that attempted to meet specific NATO Target Force Goals (TFGs). In some cases, CEE elites inserted patches into policy domains where their existing structures were quite thin. In other cases, they used patches to fix what NATO and the EU had deemed to be holes in more developed legislative practices or administrative capacities. As we will see, policy areas that had once been marked by the industrious if voluntaristic use of templates came later to be the site of a mad rush to patch what was still deemed incompatible with prevailing IO practices. Indeed, one of the virtues of patches was the speed with which they could be implemented. Some policy areas subject to EU and NATO thresholds were patched when the threshold could clearly have been met by some form of indigenous reform that owed no debt to specific Western models. Yet since both the conceptual and political demands

<sup>6</sup> Patches were most common in response to the EU, whose number of regulations, directives, and legal acts grew from 1,947 in 1973 to 24,130 by 1997 (Grzymała-Busse 2004: 25).

of developing indigenous reforms can be quite high, off-the-shelf patches were often the preferred response to pressure from the IO.

In short, not all emulation is the same. We should be skeptical of accounts that characterize emulation as homogenous, usually by noting the futility of isolated acts of “mindless imitation” or “mimicry.”<sup>7</sup> Different modes of emulation are the result of different mixes of IO constraints and CEE elite choices, and this section provides a terminology adequate to the complexity of the issues. We should also be skeptical of accounts that do not explicitly recognize the dynamism of modes of emulation. Over the course of the 1990s, the CEE states went through several ups and downs on the road to membership in the EU and NATO. The shifting domestic political moods interacted with the shifting policies of the IOs themselves. Table 1, therefore, distinguishes between degrees of voluntarism on the part of the CEE elites.<sup>8</sup> The basic pattern is that early in the 1990s, CEE reforms were very lightly constrained, if at all, by the IOs. As first NATO and then the EU announced forthcoming enlargements and began to inventory CEE practices, the degree of voluntarism fell off markedly. The NATO case then suggests that after membership is achieved, the scope for voluntaristic reforms rises once again.

But modes of emulation are only half of the story. Just as there is a range of variation in ways to emulate existing Western practices, so too is there a range of outcomes that result. In some cases, we will see emulation feeding into a robust “politics as usual,” while in other cases emulation will create policy areas almost *de novo*. As in Table 1, a necessary initial step is to provide labels for these outcomes, the pattern of which the empirical chapters then explain. I use four such labels, which I shall define below: struggle, scaffolding, homesteading, and learning. Two of these labels – struggle and learning – reflect fairly common and well-studied kinds of outcomes. The two others – scaffolding and homesteading – are less familiar, though hopefully still intuitive once explained. All four, however, are meant as short descriptions of the range of the kinds of politics that

<sup>7</sup> This trope is remarkably common in journalistic accounts of institutional reform, but it also appears widely in academic accounts, often under the guise of an “alternative explanation.” Chapter 8 will take up this issue in more detail, but one common root of this disparagement of emulation as a source of institutional change is that it is much easier to recognize when it fails than when it succeeds. This disparity generates a major selection bias because we are much more likely to study emulation that fails.

<sup>8</sup> Excellent accounts of the temporal dimension in postcommunist reforms can be found in Fish (1998b) and Grzymała-Busse (2002). More generally, arguments that emphasize historical “sequencing” have been used to explain both stasis (e.g., Pierson 2000a, 2000b) and change (e.g., Blyth 2002).

result when elites try to or are obliged to emulate policies and institutions that exist elsewhere. A key aim of the book is to describe and explain this full range of variation.

As in the case of Table 1, I use two broad factors to map this variation as it has existed across a range of policy areas in postcommunist CEE. Again, I highlight one factor at the international level and one factor at the domestic level. At the international level, we need to know about the nature of the demands emanating from the IO. Are they many and detailed? Few and vague? I capture this dimension by use of the concept of “rule density,” by which I mean the extent of IO demands.<sup>9</sup> This book looks at five policy areas, the selection of which is discussed below. In three of them – agriculture, regional policy, and civilian control of the military – the IO rules were dense. In two others, health care and consumer protection, they clearly were not.

The other dimension is the density of policy sector actors present at communism’s collapse. The intuition is that emulation proceeds differently where state and social actors are well developed than in policy sectors that are new.<sup>10</sup> Of the five policy areas, there are three where actors

<sup>9</sup> In discussing the EU, this book often refers to *acquis* density, rather than rule density, since the EU’s rules are known collectively as the *acquis communautaire*. There is an existing literature on the “legal transposition” of EU directives (binding EU legislation that each member state uses its own “form and method” (Art. 249) to achieve), but I do not rely on it in this book for two reasons. First, (as that literature recognizes) current EU member states shape directives in directions that they know they can later transpose – indeed, in many cases the directive effectively codifies the rules of some subset of existing member states. This is not possible in CEE, because they have not been members in the period considered here and have had to transpose directives that they have had no role in shaping and that take no account of their own national traditions. Thus, transposition is likely to be a much harder task for CEE states than for member states even when one excludes the obvious fact that existing member states have far superior systems of public administration (Dyson and Goetz 2003). The second reason not to rely on the transposition literature is that the book includes NATO cases that do not fit the presumptions of that literature. Chapters 4 and 5 do, however, argue that NATO also has a kind of *acquis*, much of which it has first tried to codify during the recent enlargements. For a detailed discussion of rule density as applied to CEE cases, see Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2004) and Schwellnuss (2004).

<sup>10</sup> The obvious alternative specification would be “actor preferences.” I use actor preferences very extensively in the case studies. But for mapping the range of variation, this factor is less useful because of the broad consensus across postcommunist societies that gaining entry into the EU and NATO was important. Choosing cases based on variation on this dimension would have meant giving undue prominence to the fairly small numbers of extreme right and left actors opposed to IO membership and blurring the differences between more mainstream actors who almost all, at least officially, have supported their country’s efforts to gain membership in these IOs.

were dense and two where they were thin. In health care, agricultural policy, and civilian control of the military, reform proponents faced powerful actors from the start of the postcommunist era. In each case, some of the actors were nonstate interest groups, while others were part of the state apparatus itself, often ministries or factions within ministries. These actors have contested the adoption of some Western models and significantly reshaped others.

TABLE 2. *Outcomes of Efforts at Emulation Through Copies, Templates, Thresholds, and Patches*

	Low Density of Actors	High Density of Actors
Low Density of Rules	Homesteading (consumer protection)	Continuous Learning (health care)
High Density of Rules	Scaffolding (regional policy)	Open Struggle (agriculture, civilian control of the military)

Table 2 sketches the range of variation. The right column of the table shows the dominant pattern when actors were well established. In those cases where the IO placed heavy demands on these powerful actors (i.e., rule density was high), emulation led to high-profile “struggles.” In the agriculture case, emulation was a precondition for Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) support, and the struggles revolved around the extent of financial support that would flow to farmers after the emulated structures and policies were in place. In the military case, meeting certain thresholds of civilian control was a precondition for membership, yet this provoked fights between civilians and certain factions of their militaries. By contrast, when those demands were light, well-established actors could use emulation to engage in relatively unpressured “learning.” This is the outcome in health care in both countries studied, as both the Ministries of Health and the major interest groups paid close attention to specific health care models from Western Europe and even the United States.

Regional economic development and consumer protection are two areas in which CEE interests were much less organized in 1989–90 and thus constituted far less of a brake on reform initiatives. These cases are on the left side of Table 2. In regional policy, a dense set of EU rules (though not so dense as in agriculture) provide a “scaffolding” around which previously latent or unorganized interests have congealed. In consumer protection, where the density of EU rules is quite modest, the rules

have been sufficient only to encourage new groups to “homestead” this policy domain and have generated only a few isolated pioneers to push forward this new policy area.

Tables 1 and 2 do different kinds of work in this book. Table 1 indicates that four kinds of emulation have been occurring in CEE. Table 2 describes the central tendencies that should result from any given effort at emulation, whether through highly voluntaristic copies or highly constrained patches. In Table 1, the observations about elite pursuit of different modes of emulation were premised on significant room for strategic choice; that is, the IO officials choose the stringency of their own institutional standards, and CEE elites choose whether to use emulation faithfully or approximately. Of course, neither of those choices is unconstrained: The IOs are often constrained by their member states, and the CEE elites are clearly constrained by the rules of the IO they wish to join, as well as by domestic politics. Even so, the outcomes shown in Table 2 clearly are more structural and less contingent than those in Table 1, because neither rule density nor actor density is easily manipulable.<sup>11</sup>

The Table 2 outcomes follow from the two factors identified earlier – the density of the existing IO rules and the density of state and social interests in the various policy areas of CEE societies.<sup>12</sup> Put differently, there is no direct causal link between Table 1 and Table 2. In part, the two tables are not wholly independent. For example, the density of actors often influences elite choices about the modes of emulation to pursue. In general, high actor density pushes elites toward more approximate forms of emulation that might capture the virtues of foreign models while still shaping them to local conditions. A strong causal link between the tables also is hard to demonstrate, because CEE states often drew on several modes of emulation in each of the policy domains identified in Table 2. In many cases, elites began the postcommunist period attempting to use a rough template of an existing Western European institutional model, only to be confronted by an IO in the mid-1990s with a much more specific threshold in the same policy area, and then confronted, within a few more

<sup>11</sup> That said, the EU and, to a lesser extent, NATO have learned to manipulate the size and scope of their rules. Several examples are given below.

<sup>12</sup> This summary stresses deterministic factors, but the case studies add contingency. For example, while Table 2 is premised on high variation across policy domains – in part because of the “most similar cases” design described in the next section – the case narratives indicate where national peculiarities play key roles in shaping outcomes. As we will see, these contingent factors are key in explaining which CEE states will actually be able to use the institutions and implement the policies that they have emulated.



years, the demand that very specific patches be employed if membership negotiations were to proceed. As a result, it turns out that most modes of emulation are empirically linked to most of the possible outcomes.<sup>13</sup> Thus, we have two somewhat distinct patterns to explain and two different sets of causal logics to explain them.

All that said, there is an indirect causal link between modes of emulation and outcomes. Since both the EU and NATO have made non-negotiable demands on CEE states that wish to join, the states have had to adopt certain institutions and practices irrespective of whether the result was an uncontroversial “modernization” or a bitter struggle. For the issue of getting such institutions “on the books,” the mode of emulation simply is not a decisive factor. But when we ask whether these new institutions and policies will actually make a difference in the CEE states – whether they will be used and come to find public acceptance – modes do matter. In short, even where the destination is fixed by the IO, it turns out to matter what road is taken to get there. For example, one of the findings stressed below is that emulation works least precisely where it is used most – in policy sectors with heavy external demands and few domestic precursors. There, elites have often scrambled to get the right policies “on the books” but lack the actors who could make such policies have the effects the EU and NATO have intended.

#### CASES, METHODS, AND DATA

As noted, this book draws on Table 2 by using at least one policy case from each of the four cells. The book’s unit of analysis is thus the national policy area, and the primary empirical basis encompasses the Czech and Hungarian preparations for joining the EU and NATO. This provides ten initial cases – five in each of two states. Its secondary basis employs briefer case studies of select policy areas in three other postcommunist states (Poland, Bulgaria, and Ukraine) and also one non-postcommunist case (Sweden).

<sup>13</sup> There are some logical exclusions. While copying could logically lead to any of the four outcomes, the other modes cannot. States should rarely employ voluntaristic templates in cases where interest constellations lead them to expect large struggles. For example, this logic is consistent with the fact that U.S. President Bill Clinton clearly did not use the “Canadian health care model” as a template for U.S. reforms, though it may explain why it was useful for opponents to claim that he did. Because both thresholds and patches respond to IO demands, they cannot lead to the learning outcome, which in this book presupposes elites free to explore foreign models and their applicability to their own national context absent any IO demands to do so.

The Czech–Hungarian comparison constitutes a “most-similar cases, most-likely cases” research design (Mill 1970; Snyder 2001). The states share several important features that previous research has linked to emulation by diffusion. Most important, both have had long experience with broader European institutional developments and have relatively high levels of economic development.<sup>14</sup> They are thus likely to be relatively privileged in pursuing institutional change through emulation relative to distant and underdeveloped states such as Ukraine. Both are *de facto* unitary states with long-term integration into the Germanic law subfamily of civil law traditions. Both have had alternations of government between the center right and center left inside parliamentary regimes with broadly similar party spectrums and electoral thresholds.<sup>15</sup> Both developed an early domestic consensus that joining the EU and NATO were central foreign policy goals. This means that, unlike Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia, we can observe differences between voluntary emulation and that which is driven by the IOs (Vachudova 2004). The countries are about the same size (with populations around 10 million), and inside CEE, both were among the early front-runners for EU and NATO membership. If there is any place in CEE where conditions for comparing emulation are propitious, it is here.<sup>16</sup>

Like all methods, this choice privileges some questions at the expense of others. I build on “most similar” cases because they help us focus on the importance of a few key variables at the IO and policy levels and exclude a host of complicating factors in the poorer and more distant areas of the postcommunist world.<sup>17</sup> Further, I try to maximize observations on different policy areas rather than on the largest range of postcommunist countries. Even if modest, these controls are important because as many commentators have noted, CEE is a region where many things are changing

<sup>14</sup> The classic study on geographic and fiscal influences on diffusion rates is Walker (1969).

<sup>15</sup> But Hungary has had a stronger consensus on EU and NATO membership and has not had a party dominate its national agenda for as long as the ODS (Civic Democratic Party) did in the Czech Republic.

<sup>16</sup> In comparative political studies of the CEE, familiarity often breeds contempt. There is a tendency for case studies of the CEE to skewer the country that is studied closely and to laud the efforts of some alternative CEE case where things supposedly have been done much better. This book acknowledges that there has been lots of progress in both countries and that both still have glaring problems to overcome.

<sup>17</sup> Variation is highest across policy cases. It is modest across IOs. It is lowest across the two country cases. While chapter 8 gives evidence from less-reformed postcommunist cases (Bulgaria, Ukraine), the low variation across country cases is consistent with research on compliance rates in Western Europe as well. See Börzel, Hofmann, and Sprungk (2003) and Lowi (1972).

TABLE 3. *Central Tendencies in Modes and Outcomes*

Mode	Agriculture	Regional Policy	Consumer Protection	Health	Civilian Control/ Military Professionalism
Modes	Thresholds	Thresholds	Patches	Templates	Thresholds
Outcome	Struggle	Scaffolding	Homesteading	Learning	Struggle

simultaneously. Bunce, for example, states that “virtually everything that can be in transition is in transition in Eastern Europe,” and this fact underscores the importance of picking cases that share as many features as possible (1997: 175).

The Czech and Hungarian cases are “most likely” cases in that they are “close” to Western Europe, whether one measured this in terms of history, geography, or the political race for membership. This contrast will become more clear in chapter 8, when the Ukrainian and Bulgarian cases are considered. Focusing on most likely cases is useful because emulation is often difficult to disentangle from indigenous reform, so it helps to focus first on cases where the trend is clearest and strongest. The benefit of this research design is to highlight significant within-country variation; the evidence will show, for example, that “most likely” does not always mean “most successful.” The cost of this research strategy is that we will be unable to read diffusion rates off of factors like GDP, FDI levels, or literacy rates. We will see that while the resulting argument is generalizable, it has very high data requirements.

Table 3 summarizes both outcomes just discussed in each of the five policy areas, indicating both a dominant mode of emulation and the broad outcome. For summary purposes, the chart ignores country differences that will be covered extensively in the empirical chapters. It focuses instead on the central themes of the chapters to come, leaving caveats for later. The importance of the “less voluntary” end of the spectrum stands out, for only in the case of health care – where the EU has little leverage – has one of the voluntary modes of emulation been dominant. In all other cases, thresholds and patches have been the main device, though again, the empirical cases will show that voluntary templates did play some role in both the civilian control and regional policy cases. Moreover, in no case are voluntary and faithful copies the dominant mode of emulation. This implies that the mode that is at the center of the dominant social science approach to understanding emulation – for example, the diffusion

literature – is much rarer than the other modes discussed in this book. If that is true, we have been thinking about the wrong thing – voluntaristic and faithful copying – in the wrong way, for example, primarily as a consequence of developmental indicators.

In addition to the structured Czech–Hungarian comparison that runs through each of the four empirical chapters (two on the EU and two on NATO), the final chapter reviews more briefly the evidence from four other cases. This chapter checks the findings against cases that vary from the two main cases in ways that are most likely to matter for broader comparative research. Briefly, the Polish case is obviously important in gauging the effects of its much larger population and economy, which, for these reasons, does not lend itself to sustained structured comparison with the two other “front-runner” cases. Especially in the crucial case of agriculture, how does this enormous size affect modes and outcomes of emulation? The case on Sweden, which joined the EU in 1995, allows us to check hypotheses about non-postcommunist countries that seek closer ties to Western organizations. Especially intriguing here is the case in which new members have to lower their institutional standards in order to become members of an IO rather than raise them. The Bulgarian case – using a country from the Ottoman rather than Habsburg Empire – lets us explore the relevance of particular legacies of state formation for efforts to join these Western clubs. Ottoman territories had fundamentally different traditions of public administration than did Roman law countries. Does this difference matter in policy domains that depend heavily on administrative competence?<sup>18</sup> Finally, the Ukrainian case provides something of a null hypothesis: What kinds of institutional changes occur when a state shows little interest in joining Western clubs from which it is, in any case, far distant?

Data sources include EU and NATO documents, quantitative data on programs promoting institutional emulation, such as the EU’s Phare program and NATO’s Partnership for Peace, third-party evaluations of such programs, and about 100 interviews over five years with EU, NATO, Czech, and Hungarian officials. In addition, the book builds on scholarly case studies of institutional reform in all of the policy sectors noted above. Many policy specialists have commented on the importance of emulation, and this book tries to situate and cross-check many such observations in the light of other forms of qualitative and quantitative data.

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of the historical proclivity of Europeans to dismiss Ottoman administration as beyond the boundaries of the “standard of civilization,” see Silvia and Sampson (2003); see also Kitschelt et al. (1999).