

Studies in Public Policy Number 279

POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC
CONSOLIDATION IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

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1997

SPP 279
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ISSN 0140-8240

Abstract

The thesis of this paper is that the presence of well institutionalized political parties is not a must for democratic consolidation. The evidence in support comes from surveys in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, and from electoral data. The paper examines in turn the definition and evidence concerning electoral volatility, the age and organizational style of parties, party fragmentation, the stability of electoral institutions, the links between social groups and political parties, and the programmatic structuration of party competition. It concludes that democracy is being consolidated in East Central Europe before parties are being institutionalized, and that the subsequent institutionalization of parties is desirable as a means to improve the quality of democracy.

Paper presented at the 2nd symposium of the International Political Science Association on "The Challenge of Regime Transformation: New Politics in Central and Eastern Europe", organized by the Department of International Relations and Political Science at the University of Vilnius, Vilnius, 10-15 December 1996. It is a revised version of a paper originally prepared for presentation at the conference on "Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Trends and Challenges", organized by the Institute for National Policy Research, Taipei, and the International Forum for Democratic Studies - National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, at Taipei, 27-30 August 1995. For their helpful comments on that earlier draft I would like to thank Larry Diamond and my colleagues at the Department of Political Science at the Central European University. None of them is responsible for the remaining errors.

This essay reviews some salient features of party system development in the Western periphery of the former communist bloc: Poland, Hungary, and the former Czechoslovakia. The selection of material was guided by recent scholarly discussions on the relationship between democratic consolidation and party systems. The main theoretical contention below is that the presence of reasonably institutionalized political parties is not a must for democratic consolidation. This proposition is supported firstly by survey and electoral data suggesting that in the first half of the 1990s the party systems of East Central Europe remained unstable by any standards. Yet, as of 1995 at least three of the four countries arguably had to be counted as consolidated democracies. Or so it seemed provided that we stuck to reasonably - though not excessively - narrow definitions of consolidation and democracy. A search is made for evidence on the existence of the very mechanisms which were, in the recent literature, presumed to create a causal link between democratic consolidation and party system institutionalization - and none is found.

The paper is organized as follows. Section one clarifies concepts and briefly outlines theoretical arguments about the link between party system development and democratic consolidation. Section two looks at empirical data on electoral volatility. Volatility has often been argued to be a powerful *independent variable* that may make the behaviour of party elites not conducive to democratic consolidation, and at the same time the most important *indicator* of the absence of party system stabilization. Sections 3 to 6 look at various other indicators of party system consolidation: the age and organizational style of parties, party fragmentation, the stability of electoral institutions, the links between social groups and political parties, and the programmatic structuration of party competition. "Programmatic structuration" denotes here the transparency of the likely policies of the parties. This entails the clarity or crystallization of party positions on various issue dimensions, the size of the difference ("spatial distance") between the party positions, and the extent to which party positions on all the relevant (salient) issue dimensions can be predicted from knowing the party positions on a few (say up to three) ideological superdimensions like clerical-secular, socio-economic left-right, etc. Each of these indicators can be also conceived as independent variables that can influence the supposedly all important factor of electoral volatility¹. The cross-national differences

¹ See Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," in: Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, eds., *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1994); and Leonardo Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe," in: Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, eds. *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 315-388.

along these indicators are then assessed to see whether they can explain differences in electoral volatility across East Central Europe on the one hand, and between East Central European and other democracies on the other. Only one of the indicators shows signs of "maturity" in the East Central European party systems. However, previous theoretical work on the topic notwithstanding, that one factor may not influence the degree of electoral volatility. Sections 7 and 8 examine the relationship between party system and democratic consolidation in terms of the former's contribution to legitimacy and governability. The conclusion tries to reconcile the findings with those of other studies on the impact of parties and party systems on democratic consolidation. It also offers an explanation for a) why there often seems to be a correlation between the institutionalization of political parties and the consolidation of democracy; and b) why democratic theory has to be concerned with the development of political parties, if democratic consolidation does not presume stable party structures.

I POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

Historically, political parties often played marginal or no role in the transition to democracy and this was the case in Eastern Europe as well. After the long suppression of multiparty politics, almost the only parties that had something to contribute to the East European transitions to democracy in 1989-1991 were the incumbent communist parties and their former satellites, the various peasant, artisan, and Christian Democratic parties, which were once licensed to build socialism in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. As for the unambiguously pro-democratic forces, it was only in Hungary that the major participants in negotiating the terms of the transition were organized along such lines that were probably meant to become relatively persistent party identities. Elsewhere, broad umbrella organizations like Solidarity (NSZZ "S"²) in Poland, or Public Against Violence (VPN) in Slovakia turned out to be more suitable forms of popular mobilization than parties.

To be true, most of these organizations eventually entered the electoral arena, and at least the Lithuanian Sajudis and the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS) in Bulgaria survived as major parties. But initially, the avoidance of anything resembling party discipline, office-seeking behaviour, elaborate bureaucracy and any but the vaguest liberal democratic ideology were quite conscious actions of these organizations. The most popular of all, the Czech Civic Forum (OF), even had

² Throughout this paper the Polish, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian initials, and/or short-form English names of the various East European parties and organizations are used. The full names of the parties and a brief description of their most salient characteristics are given in the Appendix.

"Parties for party members - Civic Forum for everybody" as one of its leading campaign slogans before the June 1990 elections. The Confederation for Independent Poland (KPN), the only party-like organization of the East European pro-democratic forces that was established well before the transition period - back in 1979 -, found practically no role to play in the transition process until the first completely free (presidential) elections were called for November 1990.

Yet, "the development of parties seems to be bound up with that of democracy, that is to say with the extension of popular suffrage and parliamentary prerogatives"³. There are at least two fundamentally different ways of interpreting this relationship. The one reiterated at the end of this paper is that reasonably stable political parties are the inevitable by-products of a viable mass democracy. Since only the electoral arena gives formally equal influence to all citizens, political parties are the central agents of democratic representation, and thus the influence of parties and party systems on the quality of democracy can hardly be overstated. While this notion is not easy to define operationally, at the heart of it is the belief that those systems which are - judging from their procedural norms and practices - rightly recognized as democratic, may still approximate democratic ideals to widely different degrees. Whatever else one would want to include, few would exclude accountability and responsiveness to popular preferences from among these ideals. It is in this narrow meaning that the "quality of democracy" concept is used below.

³ Maurice Duverger (1951), *Political Parties. Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State* (London: Methuen, 2nd revised English edition, 1964), xxiii. Morlino also notes that "Earlier experiences with democratization suggest a strong relationship between regime consolidation and the stabilization and structuring of parties and party systems", see his "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe," 316.

The other way of looking at Duverger's above observation is that parties come first: "in modern mass societies, building a party system appears to be a necessary though insufficient condition for consolidating democracy and governing effectively"⁴. The notion of consolidation (fragility) aims at separating the political system's capacity to survive from its endurance (breakdown), which can be the result of other factors than insufficient consolidation, and can only be observed *post facto*. While the conceptual distinction is easily made, the operational definition of consolidation is a matter of controversy. As an eminent representative example, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan say that democratic consolidation implies at least three things. First, that all political actors are "subject to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflicts within specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by democratic process" - which also implies that a full-fledged democracy is at place. Secondly, "no significant ... actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime or by seceding from the state." Finally, "a strong majority of public opinion, even in the midst of major economic problems and deep dissatisfaction with incumbents, holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life, and ... support for antisystem alternatives is quite small or more-or-less isolated from prodemocratic forces"⁵.

By 1995 only one of the four countries analyzed below showed any detectable sign of an absence of consolidation along the three above criteria. At least since the October 1991 legislative election in Poland, all were full-fledged democracies according to the widely accepted institutionalist-minimalist definitions: public officials were democratically elected or subordinated to control by elected representatives; free and fair elections occurred, governments emerged and fell, and controversies over constitutional reform-proposals were fought over by due process. Political conduct was regulated by the legal system, vigilant parliamentary oppositions guarded the separation of powers and attacked sleaze and nepotism, political rights were comprehensive and uncurtailed, and political violence nearly unknown (one exceptional case will be noted below). An overwhelming majority of the public and certainly all politicians expressly endorsed the democratic order in the midst of a recession deeper than that of 1928-32. Certainly no significant, and, if we

⁴ Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," 27. Note that Mainwaring and Scully themselves have a more complex view of this relationship than the one implied by the short quotation in the main text. They, in fact, posit mutual dependence between the institutionalization of parties and democratic stabilization; see *op. cit.*, 28.

⁵ Juan J. Linz, and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies," *Journal of Democracy* 7 (April 1996), 16.

are to believe the respective intelligence agencies, not even insignificant actors spent any "resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime or by seceding from the state" - the "velvet divorce" of the Czech and Slovak republics on 1 January 1993 was probably disapproved by a majority of the public, but in no way violated existing laws or the ideals of representative democracy. There is not the slightest indication that political actors would have considered any other route to power than the democratic process; and although some observers might label the Czech SPR-RSC and KSCM as antisystem parties, they have been anyway thoroughly isolated on the political scene and kept endorsing democracy and playing by its rules.

The only truly worrisome violations of democratic procedures occurred in Slovakia, where in late 1994 the government and the parliamentary majority excluded opposition representatives from the supervision of the privatization agency, public television, and the secret police, partly in violation of some written procedural norms. Later they failed to denounce, and effectively blocked any investigation of an obvious, politically motivated, serious abuse of power by the secret police. Thus, Slovakia may be an arguable exception, but otherwise there is no good reason to doubt that democratic consolidation, as defined above, was attained in East Central Europe some time in the early or mid-1990s. What this essay argues is that this could have hardly been the result of a strong institutionalization of the party systems, since all of them remained relatively unstable throughout the period, and the Slovak party system was, in decisive aspects, the most or the second most institutionalized of the four.

But why would party systems influence consolidation at all? The recent scholarly literature has argued that although the degree of party fragmentation and ideological polarization are not entirely irrelevant, what really matters for consolidation is the very institutionalization of a party system⁶. This process entails the stabilization and social embeddedness of the major party alternatives and their relative policy positions, and thus a regularity in the patterns of inter-party competition. Party institutionalization may also mean that "party organizations are not subordinated to the interests of ambitious leaders; they acquire an independent status and value of their own. The party becomes autonomous vis-a-vis movements

⁶ See Peter Mair, "How, and Why, Newly-Emerging Party Systems May Differ from Established Party Systems?" Paper prepared for delivery at the conference on 'The Emergence of New Party Systems and Transitions to Democracy', Centre of Mediterranean Studies, University of Bristol, 17-19 September 1993; Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe" and especially Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America".

or organizations that initially may have created it for instrumental purposes"⁷, but for difficulties of operationalization and measurement this factor will not be investigated below.

There are several ways of reasoning about the link between party system institutionalization and democratic consolidation. If the first also entails that the "major political actors accord legitimacy to the electoral process and to parties"⁸, then party institutionalization and the consolidation of the democratic regime - which also includes much the same element in its definition - are simultaneous processes by definition. Another theoretically unsatisfactory argument is to say that "given the many crucial functions performed by political parties, their relevance to the consolidation of democracy is obvious"⁹. The problem with this reasoning is that it fails to specify why the institutionalization (or any other particular trait) of the parties would matter specifically for consolidation. Why would unstable, see-saw parties be unable to perform these crucial functions in a way which does not prohibit democratic consolidation?

Among more specific arguments which do answer such questions, Leonardo Morlino suggested that the firm control of civil society by party elites who have a direct stake in the continuation of the democratic process may be necessary for democratic consolidation. Alternatively, a widespread legitimacy of the democratic process among the relevant political actors must be present shortly after the transition to democracy. Since this latter condition arguably obtained in East Central Europe, his argument will not be examined below, although it will be revisited in the conclusions. There is a non-accidental similarity between Arend Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy and Morlino's proposition. In the former, democratic stability is facilitated by the effective control of cohesive and deeply divided ethno-religious groups by cooperating subcultural elites. However, though minority rights are a salient issue in Slovakia, all the four countries analyzed here have very limited ethno-religious fragmentation, and therefore Lijphart's reasoning will not be considered below. In some recent works, uncertainty and volatility of party identities and party strength were argued to undermine politicians' commitment to comply with the rules of the democratic game¹⁰. Section two below will have a closer look at this

⁷ Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," 5.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation ...", 315. Note that Morlino himself does not subscribe to this view without any further qualification, and he does not attribute it to another source either.

¹⁰ See Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America", and particularly

line of argument, while sections three to six will analyse some related factors that also show signs of a comparatively weak institutionalization of the East Central European party systems. Two further arguments of Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully will be revisited by sections 7 and 8. These posit that party system institutionalization also contributes to democratic consolidation through increasing governability and regime legitimacy¹¹.

Two caveats are in order. First, though the analysis will focus on certain relatively stable systemic characteristics of party-voter linkages in the region, it must be recognized at the outset that "the very notion of a newly-emerging party *system* may well be a contradiction in terms, of course, in that to speak of a system of parties appears to ascribe some degree of stability and predictability to the interactions (i.e. the mechanics) of the parties concerned."¹² Second, party (system) institutionalization may be thought of as just one of many factors that have an additive effect on democratic consolidation. However, given the lack of comparable data on a large number of countries and a large number of relevant variables, this way of modeling the party system - democratic consolidation relationship cannot be tested empirically here. Therefore, only a more restrictive model will be examined, which posits that a certain degree of party (system) institutionalization is a necessary (but probably not sufficient) condition for (a certain degree of) democratic consolidation.

The credit for trying to identify quantitative indicators about when the institutionalization of a party system may have passed the critical threshold goes to the above cited studies of Peter Mair on the one hand, and Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scott on the other. Most of the quantitative evidence cited in the paper comes from a series of comparative mass surveys, sponsored by the Central European University, which monitored the development of electoral alignments in the four Visegrad countries. For reasons of brevity these data will be referred to as CEU-surveys. CEU (Central European University), *The Development of Party Systems and Electoral Alignments in East Central Europe*, Machine readable data

Mair, "How, and Why, Newly-Emerging Party Systems May Differ from Established Party Systems?".

¹¹ See Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America". The authors also hint on some other ways that institutionalized party systems can, in their estimation, help democratic consolidation, such as reducing corruption, and reducing the electoral appeal of "personalistic" and "populist" appeals. These propositions obviously sound plausible but are not discussed here in the absence of empirical evidence that could be confronted with these hypotheses.

¹² Mair, "How, and Why, Newly-Emerging Party Systems May Differ from Established Party Systems?".

files (Budapest: Department of Political Science, Central European University, 1992, 1993, 1994). The surveys have been carried out since Fall 1992 with the assistance of one of the major commercial political polling institutes in each country: CBOS in Poland, STEM in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and Median in Hungary. The samples were representative for the non-institutionalized adult population of the respective countries. In Poland we used clustered random sampling, with sample sizes of 1149, 1188, 1468, 1209, 1162, 1173, and again 1173 in the successive waves. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia we started with clustered random sampling but switched to quota from 1993. The Czech sample sizes were 815, 939, 1117, 1562, 1515, 1291, and 1569, and in Slovakia we had samples of 712, 920, 871, 845, 757, and 1213 respondents. In the Hungarian studies the Ns have been 1200 (1196 in June 1995), and the method of sampling clustered random route. The dates of the surveys are shown in the tables.

II ELECTORAL VOLATILITY

If establishing a party system means primarily the development of a somewhat stable pattern of interactions among the competing party elites on the one hand, and among these elites and the voters on the other, then the greatest obstacle to such a development is the apparent instability of party support and party identities. The two are obviously interrelated. In the absence of reasonably strong party attachments in the electorate, sizeable changes in the electoral support for the various parties can occur - particularly in times of economic trouble. The volatility of party support should suggest to the elite actors that there is no payoff in sticking to a currently unpopular party label. The easy access to the media by parliamentarians and other notables, the skills of a well-paid campaign staff, the personal appeal of some new faces, or the attraction of a well selected bunch of positions on some topical issues may all prove more important electoral assets than an established trade mark. Voters are certainly no fools, but this is precisely why they do not necessarily deem a four years old party label a better warranty of predictable quality and ideology than any of the former factors.

Peter Mair has persuasively argued that low electoral volatility - which has characterized most consolidated democracies for most of the time¹³ -, promotes a willingness to compromise by making the protagonists believe that they cannot achieve either total or long-lasting victory over their rivals. Reciprocally, the relatively high electoral volatility that usually characterizes new democracies is not

¹³ See Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair, *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of the European Electorates 1885-1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

conducive to political moderation. This may be a particularly grave problem in postcommunist democracies, where extremely competitive elite behaviour is likely to prevail. The reasons for this are threefold. Firstly, the most important determinants of electoral volatility are 1: changes in election laws, the number and identity of parties, and franchise, which all save the last one proved extremely volatile in recent East European history; and 2: the organizational mobilization of social cleavages, which is necessarily weak there due to the notorious underdevelopment of civil society in the former communist world. Secondly, since their place of origin is often the legislature itself and they are born in the era of electronic mass media, East European parties are rather unlikely to establish the elaborate and comprehensive mass organizations and identifications with social groups that are believed to have been instrumental in stabilizing some of the West European electorates¹⁴. Thirdly, the stakes are unusually high in postcommunist politics due to the depth of institutional changes and the ongoing socio-economic transformation¹⁵.

Aggregate level or net volatility means half the sum of the absolute percentage differences between the votes received by each party in two consecutive elections. Thus, if there are three parties contesting the first election, each receiving 33.3 percent of the vote, and one of them goes out of business by the time of the next election, and the remaining two receive 60 and 40 percent of the vote, respectively, then the total volatility between the two elections was, ignoring the signs: $33 + (33 - 60) + (33 - 40) = 33 + 27 + 7 = 67$ percent. In the present paper individual level or gross volatility will mean the percentage of "voters" who change their voting preference from one point in time to another.

Tables 1 to 4 show our first piece of evidence on the weakness of party loyalties in East Central Europe. The most readily available tool of cross-national research on this issue is to compute aggregate volatility, i.e. the percentage of votes that change hands between two consecutive elections. This is most easily done by summing up the percentage gains of the entirely new parties and those established parties which increased their support compared to the previous election. In comparing the four countries, it is worth making a distinction between two different components of the total volatility. Vote transfers between parties that retain their identity stem directly from the volatility of voters' decisions, whereas the volatility that result from some parties disappearing or splitting and others emerging anew

¹⁴ Ibid. Note, however, that in this respect their empirical evidence only demonstrates an empirical link between the organizational encapsulation of the left-wing electorate and the ethno-religious heterogeneity of the country on the one hand, and aggregate level electoral volatility on the other.

¹⁵ Mair, "How, and Why, Newly-Emerging Party Systems May Differ from Established Party Systems?"

reflects at least as much the volatility of elite behaviour.

Table 1 shows that in Poland between 1991 and 1993 voters' shifting party alignments proved the dominant source of the total volatility. Although they used different names at the two elections it seems entirely justified to consider the 1991 Catholic Electoral Action (WAK) list and the 1993 list of the "Unity" Catholic Electoral Committee (KKWO-) coalition as the ticket of the same party, namely ZChN, and it is reasonable to treat SP and UP as the same formation. Thus, altogether 34.5% of the votes "changed hands" and only about a third of this change (12.2%) could be explained away by some parties going out of business by the time of the second election. Even discounting this component would leave Poland with a total volatility of 22.3%, almost three times higher than the West European average (below 8.5 percent) in the 1945-89 period, and well above the standard of the first 15 or so years of new party systems in Western Europe (varying rather predictably around 13-14 percent across Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece after 1974, only exceeded by the 19 percent figure observed in Greece between 1946 and 1964)¹⁶. But for

Table 1: POLAND: PARTY LIST VOTES IN 1991 AND 1993

	1991	1993
	(%)	(%)
<i>Lower house elections</i>		
SLD	11.99	20.41
PSL	9.22	15.40
UP (SP in 1991)	2.06	7.28
Partia "X"	0.47	2.74
NSZZ "S"	5.05	4.90
KPN	8.88	5.77
WAK (KKWO in 1993)	8.98	6.37
PL (PL-SLCh coalition in 1991)	5.47	2.37
POC (PC-ZP in 1993)	8.71	4.42
MN	1.49	0.70
UD	12.32	10.59
KLD	7.49	3.99
UPR	2.25	3.18
PPPP	2.97	0.10
RAS	0.36	0.19

¹⁶ See Mair, "How, and Why, Newly-Emerging Party Systems May Differ from Established Party Systems?", table 1.

PWN-PSN	0.05	0.10
MB	0.05	0.07
Others	12.16	11.42

Note: Parties in the "other" category only contested one of the two elections. The ChD won five seats, and five others won one seat each in 1991. BBWR, with 5.41 percent of the vote, won 16 seats in 1993.

Source: Stanislaw Gebethner, "System wyborczy: Deformacja czy reprezentacja?", in: Stanislaw Gebethner, ed., *Wybory parlamentarne 1991 i 1993* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995), 10.

international comparison we can only use the 34.5 percent data about total volatility, and that shows the Polish party system more unstable than that of Uruguay, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Venezuela or Argentina (all having an average of volatility well below 20 percent in the last two decades), and in the same class with Bolivia and Ecuador¹⁷.

In the early 1990s Hungary had somewhat more loyal voters than Poland. Here, total volatility over a four years period was "only" 28.3%; and

Table 2: HUNGARY: PARTY LIST VOTES IN 1990 AND 1994

	1990 (%)	1994 (%)
Worker's Party (MP, ex-MSZMP)	3.68	3.19
Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)	10.89	32.99
Social Democratic P. of Hungary (MSZDP)	3.55	0.95
Green Party of Hungary (MZP)	0.36	0.16
Agrarian Alliance (ASZ)	3.13	2.10
Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)	21.39	19.74
Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	8.95	7.02
Party of Entrepreneurs (VP)	1.89	0.62
Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	24.73	11.74
Christian Democratic People's P. (KDNP)	6.46	7.03
Independent Small Holders Party (FKGP)	11.73	8.82
Others	3.24	5.64

Note: Parties in the "other" category only contested one of the two elections and none won any seats.

¹⁷ The source of the Latin American data is Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," 8.

Sources: "Az Országos Választási Bizottság jelentése (Report of the National Election Committee)", *Magyar Közlöny*, 13 May 1990, and "Az Országos Választási Bizottság jelentése (Report of the National Election Committee)", *Magyar Közlöny*, 24 June 1994.

if we add the 1994 votes of four new splinter parties to the votes of their mother-organizations, MDF and FKGP, then it is down to 25.8 percent. This latter figure resembles what Mainwaring and Scully report about (partially or non-free) legislative elections in Mexico and Paraguay.

In the 1990 and 1992 Czechoslovak elections, voters cast three different votes for party lists competing for seats in the National Councils of the two subnational (Czech and Slovak) legislatures, and for the two houses of the Federal Assembly. On 1 January 1993, the country split, the Federal Assembly was dissolved, and the Czech and Slovak National Councils (elected in the 1992 Czechoslovak elections) became the unicameral legislatures of the two new states. The volatility estimates for 1990-92, and for the 1992-96 period in the Czech Republic, and 1992-94 in Slovakia slightly vary depending on which of the 1990 and 1992 votes are considered, but the differences are not of major consequence for our conclusions. In the analysis below, I aim to concentrate on the most salient election. It was assumed that in 1990 the elections to the lower house of the

Table 3: CZECH ELECTIONS: 1990-1996

	1990	1992	1996
	(%)	(%)	(%)
KSCM (KSCS in '90, LB in '92)	13.5	14.3	10.3
LB (splinter from KSCM)	-	-	1.4
SDL (splinter from KSCM)	-	-	0.1
CSSD	3.8	7.7	26.4
HDZJ (part of SZV in 1990, DZJ in 1996)	-	3.3	3.1
LSU (joint list of CSS, SZ, and ZS)	-	5.8	-
CSS (part of LSU in 1992)	2.8	-	-
SZ (part of LSU in 1992)	3.1	-	-
HSD-SMS (CMUS in 1996)	7.9	4.2	0.5
OF	53.2	-	-
ODA (part of OF in 1990)	-	5.0	6.4
ODS-KDS (successor of OF, ODS in 1996)	-	33.9	29.6
OH (successor of OF, SD-LSNS in 1996)	-	4.4	2.1
KAN (part of OF in 1990)	-	2.0	-

KDU-CSL (KDU in 1990)	8.7	6.0	8.1
SPR-RSC (part of VDSPR in 1990)	-	6.5	8.0
SPP	0.1	1.1	-
Others	7.0	5.5	4.1

(Party list votes in the Czech Republic in the June 1990 and June 1992 elections to the Chamber of People, the lower house of Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, and in the May-June 1996 elections to the lower house of the Parliament of the Czech Republic).

Sources: On the 1990 results see *Volby do Federalniho shromazdeni Ceske a Slovenske Federativni Republiky v roce 1990*. Praha: Federalni statisticky urad, 1991. On the 1992 results see *Lidové Noviny*, June 8, 1992; *Lidové Noviny*, June 12, 1992; and for some corrections Lubomír Brokl, "The Results and Consequences of the 1992 Elections," *Czechoslovak Sociological Review* 28 (1992 Special Issue), 119-123. The 1996 data were provided by the Czech Statistical office through the <http://www.volby.cz> Web Site.

Federal Assembly were the most salient. It was further assumed that in 1992 this continued to be the case in the Czech Republic, but in Slovakia the elections to the Slovak National Council were already seen as more important. Indeed, in 1992 most Slovak party leaders already stood for the elections to National Council, and not to the Federal Assembly.

At first sight, astronomical volatility confronts us when we look at table 3¹⁸ with the Czech data. The 1990 CSS, SZ and ZS figures obviously have to be summed and treated as if LSU (their later joint electoral list) had reached those results in 1990. More questionable is whether we should reckon that ODA, ODS, OH and KAN all originated from the Civic Forum (OF), and that ODS and OH were sort of designated heirs to it. If we ignore this, the 1990-92 Czech volatility figure is 67.3 and safely beats the Peru's record of an average of fifty-odd percent volatility over the 1978-90 period. Alternatively, we may collapse all four fission products of OF to end up with a total volatility of 22.0 percent, appreciably below the above discussed 1990-94 Hungarian figures. Comparing the 1992 and 1996 lower house

¹⁸ Note: In calculating the volatility data reported in the main text, "other" parties were assumed to have contested only one of the three elections. This assumption is somewhat contestable in the 1990 VDSPR and SZV electoral coalitions, which dissolved after the 1990 election, but three of their component parts participated in later elections. The three-party VDSPR coalition (Coalition of All-Nation Democratic Party), which won 0.9 of the votes and no seats, included SPR-RSC; and the nine-party SZV coalition (Alliance of Peasants and Countryside), which won 3.8% of the votes but no seats, included HDZJ and ZS.

election results in the Czech Republic, a total volatility of 31.4 percent obtains, but we should keep in mind that the 1996 SD-LSNS is, for all practical purposes, the heir of what OH used to be in 1992. Thus, 29.3 is a better approximation of the 1992-96 Czech volatility - nearly the same as the 1990-94 Hungarian figure. Only a tiny fraction of this was directly caused by party-splits - the two splinters from the orthodox communist KSCM won less than two percent of the 1996 votes.

In 1990-92 Slovakia appears to have been very similar to the other part of the then existing Czechoslovak federation both in the degree of volatility and in its main source being one single split. VPN, the broadly based movement leading the November 1989 velvet revolution in Slovakia was split in March-April 1991. If we recognize that HZDS, the winner of the 1992 election, was - certainly in organizational, but to some extent also

Table 4: SLOVAK ELECTIONS 1990-1994

	1990	1992	1994
	(%)	(%)	(%)
KSS (KSCS in 1990)	-	0.76	2.72
ZRS (splinter from SDL)	-	-	7.34
SDL (KSCS in 1990, and part of SV in 1994)	13.81	14.70	-
SV	-	-	10.41
SDSS (SD in 1990, and part of SV in 1994)	1.89	4.00	-
SZS (part of SV in 1994)	-	2.14	-
SZ	3.20	1.08	-
VPN	32.54	-	-
HZDS (splinter from VPN)	-	37.26	34.96
DU (splinter from HZDS)	-	-	8.57
MOS (part of VPN in 1990, and part of MK in 1994)	-	2.29	-
ROI (part of VPN in 1990)	-	0.60	0.67
ODU (successor of VPN, later renamed as SKD, and merged with DS in 1993)	-	4.04	-
DS (DS-ODS in 1992)	4.40	3.31	3.42
MKDH-ESWS (part of MK in 1994)	8.58	7.42	-
MK	-	-	10.18
KDH	18.98	8.88	10.08
SKDH (splinter from KDH, renamed as KSU in 1994)	-	3.05	2.05
SNS	10.96	7.93	5.40
Others	5.63	2.53	4.09

Party list votes in the June 1990 elections in Slovakia to the Chamber of the People, the lower house of Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, and in the June 1992 and September 1994 elections to the Slovak National Council, the only chamber of the Slovak national parliament.

Note: "Other" parties contested only one of the three elections.

Sources: *Volby do Federalniho shromazdeni Ceske a Slovenske Federativni Republiky v roce 1990*. Praha: Federalni statisticky urad, 1991, and *Statistická ročenka Slovenskej republiky 1993*, (Bratislava: Statistický úrad Slovenskej republiky, 1994).

in ideological terms - a direct heir of VPN, then a total volatility figure of 23.1 obtains. Otherwise we get 55.7 percent. In the third round of free parliamentary elections in Slovakia total volatility was 23.8 percent. This figure was computed from the electoral data on table 4 by treating the sum of the 1992 SDL-, SDSS-, SZS-votes as the 1992 results of their later electoral coalition (SV). Also the sum of the 1992 MOS- and MKM-ESWS results was treated as the 1992 results of MK. Furthermore, since SKD, the successor organization of what used to be ODU in 1992, merged with DS in early 1994, instead of the 1992 DS-vote, one might prefer to compare the 1992 total vote of ODU and DS together to the 1994 DS-vote. Doing so would reduce the 1992-94 total volatility from 23.8 to 23.7 percent. Though ZRS and DU were founded by deputies defecting from SDL and HZDS, respectively, treating them as successors of SDL and HZDS was not considered appropriate. Nevertheless, the fact that making these two arguably incorrect assumptions would bring the estimated volatility down to 14.1 does indicate that - unlike in the other three countries - elite level fissions remained a rather important cause of electoral volatility in Slovakia. Given the above discussed uncertainty concerning the "true" amount of volatility in Slovakia in 1990-92, it seems rather difficult to tell whether this figure signals a massive decrease or a maintenance of the previous level of electoral instability. In the other three countries too, aggregate electoral data is of little help in determining whether the voters' party loyalties had become any stronger over the first five-six years of democracy in East Central Europe. Furthermore, the aggregate level data hides how many voters move in opposite directions - e.g. some from ex-communists to conservatives, and some in the reverse direction. The probability of such movements can obviously have some influence on how secure party elites feel from electoral disasters, and whether they can possibly expect a sweeping victory over their opponents. Therefore we have to turn to individual level data for more evidence on volatility.

Table 5 shows survey data about the temporal stability of electoral preferences. The first obvious thing to note is that although our data somewhat

overstates stability (see the notes to table 5), the displayed figures are obviously lower than those found in Western democracies¹⁹.

Table 5: SURVEY DATA ON STABILITY OF ELECTORAL PREFERENCES

	Standpatters among former voters %	Months since last election
Slovakia, November 1994	88	2
Slovakia, September 1992	76	3
Czech Rep., September 1992	78	3
Poland, April 1994	76	8
Slovakia, July 1995	79	10
Czech Rep., April 1993	67	10
Slovakia, April 1993	65	10
Poland, October 1992	51	12
Hungary, June 1995	69	13
Poland, January 1993	60	15
Poland, December 1994	73	16
Czech Rep., November 1993	65	17
Slovakia, November 1993	61	17
Slovakia, April 1996	78	19
Poland, June 1995	59	21
Czech Rep., April 1994	61	22
Slovakia, April 1994	60	22
Poland, August 1993	43	23
Poland, December 1995	49	27
Czech Rep., November 1994	60	29
Hungary, September 1992	50	29
Hungary, January 1993	51	33
Czech Rep., June 1995	61	36
Czech Rep., January 1996	66	43
Hungary, December 1993	47	44
Czech Rep., June 1996	53	48
Hungary, April 1994	44	49

Note: The left hand column shows respondents who expressed a voting intention - "if there were an election next weekend" - for the same party that they

¹⁹ See Ivor Crewe and David Denver, eds., *Electoral Change in Western Democracies: Patterns and Sources of Electoral Volatility*, (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1985).

voted for in the last parliamentary election, as a percentage of all voters in the last election. Respondents who would not vote, or did not know which party to support are excluded from the computation of the percentages. The same applies for respondents who did not tell or did not know which party they voted for in the last election.

The data on participation and vote in the last election are based on the respondents' recall, and are thus likely to overstate the percentage of "standpatters". We counted as standpats those respondents who ("next weekend") would have voted for a (new) party (e.g. UW) which absorbed the party (e.g. KLD, UD) they had voted for in the last election. Similarly, the Czech respondents who recalled voting for LSU in 1992 and named ZS or CSS as their current preference, or recalled voting for LB in 1992 and at the time of the survey preferred KSCM were counted as standpats.

Source: CEU-surveys.

Secondly, note that the longer the time that passed since the last election, the more people abandon the party they voted for. After a similar number of months passed since the last elections, Hungarian voters in 1992-1993 appear to have been less volatile than Poles in August 1993, but probably more volatile than Czechs in 1994. Significantly, Czechs had in 1994 one round more of free elections behind them than Hungarians before May 1994 and Poles before September 1993. Indeed, the comparison of the November 1994 to the September 1992, and the July 1995 to the January 1993 results in Slovakia, or the June 1995 and December 1994 to the August and January 1993 results in Poland suggests that electoral preferences become more stable with every round of elections. Technically, 44 months after the first election, in December 1993 a lot more volatility was registered in Hungary than 43 months after the second election in the Czech Republic. But in June 1995, 13 months after the second election, there was about as much volatility in Hungary as there used to be in the Czech Republic 16 months after the second election. Either time itself, or experiments with the governments of different parties and coalitions seem to develop more firmly based electoral decisions.

Table 5 suggests a relatively clear ranking of the four countries. The aggregate electoral data suggested that voters' party loyalty was probably the strongest in Slovakia, and weakest in Poland, while the Czech Republic and Hungary were between the two extremes and probably did not differ much from each other. Now we can see that on the individual level, at least for most of the 1992-95 period, Czechs and Slovaks had much more stable party loyalties than Hungarians, and Hungarians more stable ones than Poles (compare any two rows referring to surveys

taken in different countries a similar time after an election). Equally obviously, voters in each East Central European country were far less loyal to their parties than their West European and North American counterparts. Comparisons of electoral data also showed most Latin American countries to have had lower aggregate volatility in the previous two decades than the four postcommunist countries in the 1990s. So, if it is correct to describe the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland as "consolidated" democracies (or anyway more consolidated ones than Slovakia and many of the Latin American countries used to be in the 1970s and 1980s), then the theoretically expected correlation between party system institutionalization (as measured by volatility) and democratic consolidation does not obtain. As we shall see in the next sections, this picture is not altered if we also consider four other criteria of party (system) institutionalization.

III AGE, ORGANIZATIONAL STYLE, AND FRAGMENTATION OF PARTIES

One reason for the weakness of party loyalties in East Central Europe may be the newness of most parties. Mainwaring and Scully note that in the early 1990s, in all of the better institutionalized party systems in Latin America the percent of lower chamber seats held by parties established before 1950 was between 56 and 98 percent, whereas in the "inchoate" party systems of Brazil, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador such parties only controlled 0.6 to 40 percent of the seats. Again, the East Central European countries appear to be closer to this latter group - and the reasons why the party loyalties that existed before the communist period proved difficult to revive were often and convincingly told²⁰. Briefly, East European countries had too little, if any, democratic experience before the communist takeover to develop well-entrenched parties; the authoritarian experience lasted unusually long, suppressed civil society and transformed economy and culture to an exceptional degree - even by the standards of modern

dictatorships. No surprise, then, that some attempts to revive once significant parties just did not lead anywhere, despite the good supply of human resources and initial publicity that helped the enterprise: striking examples for this include the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), the Democratic Party (DS) in Slovakia, and the Social

²⁰ Probably the best is by Maurizio Cotta, "Building Party Systems After Dictatorship: The East European Cases in Comparative Perspective," in: Geoffrey Pridham and Tatu Vanhanen, eds. *Democratization in Eastern Europe: Domestic and International Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1994), 99-127.

Democratic Party of Hungary (MSZDP).

By the conservative criteria of Mainwaring and Scully, few of the East Central European parties would really qualify as historical: the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM) and the Christian democratic Czech People's Party (KDU-CSL). While the Czech Socialist Party (CSS) and the Polish Democratic Party (SD) used to belong to this group, they had a minimal electorate and were soon discontinued after the transition to democracy. Despite minor changes in the label, these parties clearly maintained significant continuity of organization ever since the late forties. Several others were established long before the communist takeovers, but in their case historical continuity is limited to labels, symbols, ideology, and - where thoroughgoing property restitution took place after the transition - real estate. The significant players in this league of quasi-historical parties are the Czech Social Democrats (CSSD), the Slovak Democratic Party (DS), the Slovak National Party (SNS), and the Independent Small Holders (FKGP) in Hungary.

Breaking down the data displayed on table 5 by party shows that the constituencies of all three truly historical parties which had a measurable group of supporters did indeed display stronger than average loyalty to their parties throughout the entire period covered by the CEU surveys, whereas among the quasi-historical parties only CSSD could claim the same (data not shown for reasons of space). The Polish SD and the Czech CSS, had such a minimal electoral support in the first free elections after the fall of communism and disappeared so soon afterwards that one could not measure the loyalty of their voters by surveys. Since the three historical parties are, certainly not by chance, also the only real mass parties in the region (their membership figures are many times higher than those of their competitors), it is difficult to tell whether a party's historical continuity or the organizational encapsulation of its voters is more effective in stabilizing a (narrow) basis. One or the other apparently does the trick, and it is also clear that the communist regimes deprived virtually all parties of both. Equally clearly, these criteria cannot account either for Poland's relatively high volatility, or for the similarity between the Czech and Slovak volatility figures. Regarding the first, party fragmentation may offer an explanation. Clearly, the greater the number of parties, the more likely that voters will find it easy to find an ideologically proximate other party for the sake of which they can abandon their previous partisanship (no matter how strong it was)²¹. In the 1991 and 1993 Polish elections, the fractionalization of the vote was excessive by any standards. Hungarian, Czech and Slovak elections did

²¹ For empirical evidence supporting this proposition see Bartolini and Mair, *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of the European Electorates 1885-1985*.

not differ a lot in this respect, they all produced a lesser fragmentation of the vote than the two Polish elections, but appreciably more than any West European democracy in the postwar period. Following Douglas W. Rae²², the fractionalization of the electoral votes can be calculated as one minus the sum of squares of the proportion of votes won by each party. For instance, if just two parties share the votes equally, then the Rae-index of fractionalization equals .50, that is 1 minus 2 times (.50 x .50). If there are ten parties, each winning 10 percent of the vote, then $F=.90$, i.e. 1 minus 10 times (.10 x .10). In Western European elections between 1945 and 1985, the average fractionalization of the national vote ranged from a low of .585 in Austria and .610 in the United Kingdom to a high of .814 in Switzerland and .815 in Finland²³. Using more detailed data than those displayed in tables 1 to 4, the fractionalization of the vote in successive elections was .92 and .90 in Poland, .85 and .82 in Hungary, .68, .81, and .84 in the Czech Republic, and .82, .81, and .83 in the three Slovak elections. The 1990 Czech figure was "abnormally" low because the broadly based Civic Forum - which split very soon after the election -, won more than fifty percent of the vote.

Thus, a look at the age, the organizational style, and the fragmentation of the parties also confirms that the East Central European party systems of the early 1990s displayed a low level of institutionalization, and goes some way in explaining the high volatility observed in this region. However, these factors fail to explain why Slovak parties had more loyal voters than the Hungarian parties in the 1992-95 period.

IV UNSTABLE ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS

Another possible explanation for cross-national differences in electoral volatility could be provided by changes in election laws, splits and mergers of established parties, and the entry of new ones. Changes in election laws or the party system can be expected to alter party behaviour and thus generate voters' movements over and above their direct impact on volatility, which materializes through splitting the vote of previously unitary political entities. Indeed, the most significant change of election law occurred in Poland, the most volatile of the four countries in the period examined. However, the 1993 change in the election law had very little detectable impact on either voters' or politicians' behaviour. The overall fragmentation of the

²² See his classic *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967).

²³ See Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson, *Politics and Society in Western Europe* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1987), 165.

vote slightly decreased, but only because the combined vote of the front-runner increased from a mere 24.3 percent in 1991 to 35.8 percent in 1993. Since 1991 Poland has had proportional representation with party lists. The 1993 pre-election reform consisted in the introduction of a five percent (for coalitions seven percent) legal threshold for winning seats in the primary electoral districts, and a further reduction of proportionality by altering the method of seat allocation. Before this reform an unusually high number of small parties could win a few seats in districts where their vote exceeded five to ten percent of the regional total. Contrary to what one could have expected from the 1993 change of election law, the percentage of vote won by parties and coalition with less than five percent of the national total actually increased from 22 to 29 percent - and this was indeed the most important reason why PSL and the ex-communist SLD could win a 66 percent majority in the lower house with vote returns which, under the previous election law, would have earned them just 37 percent of the seats²⁴. Thus, though the 1993 electoral reform was bound to have behavioural effects some time later - in 1994-95 at least one important party merger (of UD and KLD), and the setting up of AW "S" ("Solidarity" Electoral Action, a broad electoral coalition of the anti-communist right) involved a good number of the right wing parties which were left without representation after the 1993 Sejm-election -, the volatility of votes between 1991 and 1993 had apparently little to do with the reform.

Since the other three countries had only marginal changes in their electoral laws, and these were more significant in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic and Hungary, this factor cannot explain the differences in electoral volatility across these three countries either. Furthermore, the emergence of entirely new parties and the total disappearance of others generated more movement of votes in Slovakia and in the Czech Republic than in Hungary (cf. table 2 to 4 above). Similarly, flux of established party identities in a more general sense also had a stronger influence in the latter two countries than Hungary. Almost all the more significant Slovak parties that were founded or reborn in 1990-91 eventually split along a line dividing more radical nationalists and moderates. Details and embellishment aside, this was a partly or entirely accurate description of what happened to the nationalist-leaning HZDS in 1993-94, the radical nationalist Slovak National Party (SNS), and the ex-communist Party of Democratic Left (SDL) in 1994. And, of course to the Greens (SZS and SZ) in 1990, and to the market liberal Public Against Violence (VPN) and the Christian Democrats (KDH) in 1991. To be sure, the split in SDL along the same lines, while

²⁴ See Stanislaw Gebethner, "System wyborczy: Deformacja czy reprezentacja?", in: Stanislaw Gebethner, ed., *Wybory parlamentarne 1991 i 1993* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995), 21.

it had been long awaited, only appeared inasmuch as many of the 1992 SDL-voters and some of the members deserted to ZRS in 1994 (ZRS had a few places on the SDL-list in 1992, but decided to go alone into the 1994 election). Adding that divisions within the coalition of the three Hungarian ethnic parties followed similar lines, the only party in the post-independence Slovak parliaments which remained unaffected by similar divisions was the Social Democrats (SDSS), who won their two seats in 1994 only through having a joint electoral list with SDL and SZS.

In the four years between the elections in June 1992 and May-June 1996, four out of the eleven parties initially represented in the Czech National Council disappeared (the rather insignificant KDS merged with its coalition partner, the ODS; HSD-SMS and CSS split and eventually merged with ZS and each other, leaving their successor party with just one-tenth of the votes required to pass the electoral threshold in the 1996 election). While a financial scandal seemed to have driven the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) into electoral oblivion, a brand new right wing formation (DEU) and two splinters (SDL and SLB) from the orthodox communist party (KSCM) made inroads into the electoral bastions of the older parties. True, the major partner in the right-wing governing coalition, ODS, and one of its Christian Democrat coalition partners, KDU-CSL, had retained the electoral support that they had in 1992 all way through the electoral cycle, but nonetheless their competitive position drastically changed too. After having faced a deeply divided and fragmented opposition for four years, ODS and KDU-CSL could have ended up in the opposition benches in 1996, and the social democrats (CSSD) - who won less than 4 and 7 percent of the vote in the 1990 and 1992 elections to the Czech National Council, respectively - might have found themselves in the position to form a left-wing majority government²⁵.

But the story is not just about volatile voters. For in the Czech case a wholesale alternation of government and opposition would require the Czech social democrats to offer a coalition to KSCM, by far the most stubborn communist party in the entire region. But much of the CSSD's electoral success is thought to have presumed that they credibly dissociated themselves from exactly that party. Only one thing was more unlikely than a CSSD-KSCM coalition - a coalition between the social democrats, the communists, and the xenophobic-anticommunist Republicans

²⁵ This scenario presumed that the social democrats would get 20-25 percent of the vote in the upcoming elections, and scandal-stricken ODA would not pass the 5 percent threshold. Both possibilities were shown quite likely by the 1995 public opinion polls, and projections of their results for the composition of the next legislature were widely discussed in the Czech press ever since June 1995, see "Preference ODA klesly pod pet procent," *Lidové Noviny*, 20 June 1995, 3; and STEM, "Volební preference", Mimeo prepared for the June 1995 press conference on poll results (Praha: Stredisko empirickych vyzkumu).

(SPR-RSC). Yet, these three opposition parties gained an absolute majority of seats in the 1996 elections, leaving a set of uncomfortable choices for the Czech political elite. Since both the social democrats and the centre-right favoured an implicit (and presumably even an explicit) grand coalition to compromising themselves by cooperating with either the far right or the ex-communists, the 1992-96 right-wing coalition had to be enlarged with the social democrats. In 1996, the appearances of an outright grand coalition of centre left and centre right was avoided by a tacit agreement on legislative cooperation. That there were no social democrat ministers to be in the cabinet did not alter the fact - so uncomfortable for both sides - that among the opposition parties only the social democrats could be called upon to let the government pass any legislation, the budget not excluded. The monopoly of "true" opposition thus had to be conceded to the far right and the orthodox communists, the inclusion of whom into any government has been made even less likely by their anti-EU and anti-German stances. This outcome, of course, is exactly the configuration that Giovanni Sartori labelled as "polarized pluralism" and described its persistence as an irresistible incentive for engaging in centrifugal instead of centripetal party competition, increasing ideological polarization, a strong ideological "patterning" of society, irresponsible opposition behaviour, and playing the "politics of outbidding"²⁶. At the very least, barring a major realignment of parties, the alternation of government and opposition has become for all practical purposes impossible in the Czech Republic. As far as one can judge this, the cohesion and strategic position of the right-wing proto-coalition and the disproportionate distribution of electoral support among its three components makes it extremely unlikely that a bare majority government of some but not all centre-right parties and the social democrats could survive for any length of time. Although either the electoral decay or the "domestication" of the two extremist parties, which were so readily stigmatized (certainly not without grounds) by both the centre left and the centre right, could restore a predominantly centripetal competition, the emergence of the "grand coalition" made these developments somewhat less likely than they used to be.

If institutional changes are not quite convincing in explaining the higher volatility in Poland around 1992-93 than in the former Czechoslovakia, they also add

²⁶ See chapter 9 of Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party System: A Framework for Analysis, Vol. I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). An empirical test of Sartori's proposition refuted one of his key hypothesis, namely that polarized pluralism would lead to the centre continuously losing votes, though reckoned that it might lead to a general dealignment of the voters and a weakening of the subcultures, which, in turn, can undermine the politics of elite consensus. See G. Bingham Powell Jr., "The Competitive Consequences of Polarized Pluralism," in: Manfred J. Holler, ed., *The Logic of Multiparty Systems*, (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1987), 173-190.

little to our understanding of the case of the second most volatile country of the period. For in 1990-94 such changes were either absent in Hungary, or their significance was minimal. The only noteworthy change in the election law was that the January 1994 amendment to the election law raised the electoral threshold for party lists from 4 to 5 percent. On the similarly small effect of some splits in FKGP and MDF, see above.

V SOCIAL GROUPS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

One of the most frequently heard assertion about electoral politics in East Central Europe goes like this: "... [the Czech party system] is anchored neither in a social nor in an interest structure, and that is why the parties do not have regular voters. ... This unanchored system of parties will for a long time not be a support, but rather a danger for democracy."²⁷ Logical as these remarks are, they leave empirical researchers in trouble when it comes to specify what an embeddedness in the social structure means. One obvious idea would be to look at the socio-demographic composition of the constituencies of individual parties. However, such an enterprise leaves one with the unappealing conclusion that in the four East Central European countries agrarian parties have their relatively strongest support among farmers, Christian parties among the frequent church-goers, market liberals in the better educated and younger part of the urban population, and ex-communist parties among former communist party members. Even more disturbingly, the age of the party system is totally unrelated to the social distinctiveness of the various parties' electorates. Whichever social background variable we look at, its correlation with party choice tends to show as much variation and a similar average among Western countries as in East Central Europe²⁸.

There is hardly any theoretical justification to judge the social anchoring of new party systems by different standards than those which are found meaningful and sufficient when it comes to older democracies. As my previous analysis cited above showed, if we concentrate only on the most widely discussed issue, we can indeed see that the coefficient for class voting is much higher in Britain than in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary. But the rest of contemporary continental Western Europe hardly differs from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (Hungary looks rather like the US and Ireland on this count). The closeness to the

²⁷ Lubomír Brokl, "Between November 1989 and Democracy - Antinomies of Our Politics," *Czechoslovak Sociological Review* 28 (Special Issue 1992), 33.

²⁸ See Gábor Tóka, "Parties and Electoral Choices in East Central Europe," in: Paul Lewis and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Rooting Fragile Democracies*, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 100-125.

continental pattern is also underlined by the similarly strong effect of church attendance on party choice in West Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Though the peculiarities of individual countries are readily visible - e.g. agricultural employment and place of residence had a uniquely strong effect on party preferences in Poland -, there are no signs of systematic differences between those Eastern and Western democracies that we could compare quantitatively. Therefore, the obvious East-West differences in electoral volatility are not easy to explain with the supposedly "catch-all" appeal of the East Central European parties. Furthermore, as the socio-demographic embeddedness of votes seems to have been stronger in Poland than in the other three East Central European countries already back in 1992, it is again unlikely that this line of reasoning could be very useful in explaining the weakness of party loyalties.

VI PROGRAMMATIC STRUCTURATION OF PARTY COMPETITION

Yet another way of explaining the latter would refer to political cognitions and look for evidence that in the less developed party systems voters see weaker programmatic differences between the parties. Either learning about party ideologies may take time, or such differences may not exist in the postcommunist countries, or exist but cannot be easily comprehended due to the multidimensional nature of the ideological divides between the parties. Either of these could result in a weaker attachment to parties. While it may be true that the larger the number of ideological dimensions (and thus, that of parties), the more precisely sophisticated voters can express their policy preferences in their vote, beyond a very low number of (i.e. 2 or 3) dimensions these gains are likely

to be lost on the trade-off between the number of dimensions on the one hand, and the predictability and stability of the resulting government coalitions on the other. Presumably even the voters of the most sectional parties would like to know which other parties may be helped to office by their voting for their first preference. But if the ideological structuration of the party system is weak (i.e. much of the variation in party positions on various issues is left unexplained by the parties' location on the first one or two ideological axes), they are likely to remain ignorant about the possible consequences of their vote.

The distribution of issue advantages between the various parties can also be a fairly important determinant of the meaningfulness of electoral choice. The accumulation of a disproportionately large number of issue advantages by any single party over others is likely to result in the emergence of a dominant party. This may have a number of advantages in many respects, but arguably little in terms of making elections a contest worth to participate in.

To make it clearer what factors are postulated here as conducive to the emergence of a dominant party, let me summarize (and simplify) an argument from Budge and Fairlie's analysis of electoral competition²⁹. Left wing parties normally owe much of their attractiveness to being perceived as much more credible and effective than their competitors on issues related to socio-economic redistribution. The normally high saliency of the issues related to socio-economic redistribution provides a great potential advantage to the Left. Therefore, the emergence of a relatively balanced party competition is the function of their competitors' ability to establish electoral advantages on a large number of other issues (e.g. general competence, foreign policy, religion, law and order). Following this reasoning, the long lasting electoral hegemony of the US Democrats, the Canadian Liberals, the Irish Fianna Fail, and the Indian Congress Party can be convincingly explained by their ability to combine a somewhat left of centre image with long term advantages over their competitors on a number of issues which, in the more balanced party systems of continental Europe, normally benefit the right wing parties.

Unfortunately, lack of comparable data prevents us from comparing in terms of programmatic structuration the East Central European party systems to either Latin American or West European ones. This section, therefore, is limited to examining whether the cross-national differences in electoral volatility across East Central Europe might be explained by cross-national differences in the programmatic structuration of the party systems. The twin problems of ideological structuration and conceivable electoral dominance are assessed here on the basis of mass survey data. The respondents of the CEU-surveys were asked to tell which parties were the most, and which one was the least likely to pursue various political goals (the description of these goals is shown in the APPENDIX). Respondents were also asked to tell how important these goals were for them personally. The present analysis relies only on the Fall 1992 results, which covered a larger number of issue domains than the follow-up studies.

Table 6 shows that just as Budge and Fairlie postulated, a good number (though not all) of the "left wing" socio-economic goals - e.g. reducing unemployment, reducing inequalities, putting less economic burden on people's shoulders during the transformation of the economy - were found important or very important by virtually everybody. It is certainly not the case that a pro-market party would, by definition, be unable to deliver on these issues: increases in state pensions are normally less a question of commitment to the welfare state than a by-product of economic growth. But most of the left-wing socio-economic goals have visible trade-

²⁹ Ian Budge and Dennis J. Fairlie, *Explaining and Predicting Elections. Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-three Democracies* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983).

offs with reducing corporate taxes and other measures which a pro-market party is likely to consider. A few "natural right wing" goals - i.e. fighting crime - are certainly popular and almost as consensual in the eyes of the voters as the mentioned left wing goals. But most of the default right wing goals (i.e. increasing the influence of religion and the churches, strengthen patriotism, decommunization) are salient only for a smaller part of the public, and there is also a considerable minority opposed to them. Thus, there is a good chance that a party which establishes high credibility on all the left wing economic goals can only be matched in electoral strength by competitors who achieve credibility, and thus, several smaller net gains, on a wider range of issues and preferably also on general economic competence. Note, however, that this "natural advantage" of the Left is much smaller in the Czech Republic than in the other three

Table 6: HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO ...

	Poland	Czech	Slovakia	Hungary
	(mean score)			
Q18A Reduce inequalities	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.5
Q18B Help private enterprises	2.5	1.8	2.1	2.0
Q18C Competent managers	1.4	1.1	1.2	1.2
Q18D Defend human rights	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.4
Q18E Less economic burden	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3
Q18F Environment protection	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.7
Q18G Better health care	1.3	1.1	1.3	
Q18H Deterioration morals	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.5
Q18I Abortion allowed	2.3	1.9	2.3	1.8
Q18J Protect companies	2.5	3.2	2.4	3.2
Q18K Strengthen patriotism	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.3
Q18L Increase pensions	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.4
Q18M Increase church influence	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.3
Q18N Speed up privatization	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.5
Q18O Reduce unemployment	1.4	2.0	1.4	1.4
Q18P Fight crime	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4
Q18Q Decommunization	2.9	2.3	2.7	2.8
Q18R Effective foreign policy	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.5
Q18S SEE APPENDIX	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.3
Q18T SEE APPENDIX	-	-	3.0	3.6

Note: Mean ratings on a five point scale, 1=very important, and 5=not at all important. For the exact wording of the items see the Appendix.

Source: Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

countries: Czechs tend to attach somewhat lower (though still very high) priority to

the typical left wing socio-economic goals, and a little higher priority to the typical right wing economic goals than Poles, Slovaks, or Hungarians do. This fact alone may explain quite a bit from the fact that the secular right wing parties have a much greater electoral strength in the Czech, than in the Slovak and Polish lands (40 percent of total Czech, and only 19 and 6 percent of the total Polish and Slovak samples expressed a voting preference for ODS or ODA, UD or KLD, and DS and SKD, respectively). Just as in the case of class voting, the Hungarian liberal parties (SZDSZ, FIDESZ) again deviate from any simple prediction based on their sister parties' performance in the other three countries. On the basis of popular attitudes towards various directions of public policies, we would expect their electoral strength to be closer to the Slovak or Polish figures than to the Czech, but in actual fact SZDSZ and FIDESZ commanded 33 percent support in the total Hungarian sample. All the reported figures about voting support are based on all answers (including "do not know", "would not vote, etc." answers and straight refusals of answering) concerning the likely direction of respondents' vote if there was a general election next weekend. The answer for this is provided partly by the somewhat idiosyncratic nature of the dominant ideological divides in Hungary (see below), and partly by some seeming oddities in the popular perception of the various parties' socio-economic policies in Hungary.

The answers concerning which parties were likely to pursue these goals were aggregated and are shown in table 7. Positive figures indicate that the percentage of respondents who thought that the party in question was committed to the given goal was larger than the percentage of those who think that the party is the most unlikely to pursue that goal. Negative figures indicate that the second opinion was more numerous in the sample.

Two things are immediately clear from the data and must be stressed before going into the details. The respondents were asked simply about the parties' commitment to or against certain goals, and not about their exact location on some continuum running, for instance, from the most clerical to the most anticlerical position. Therefore, the data describe the popularly perceived *direction* of party positions, and not so much their *intensity*. That is, extremely high absolute values mean that many respondents agreed on which party was the "owner" of an issue, and not that they attributed an extreme position to this party on that issue. This is an important feature of the data for both methodological and normative reasons. While polarization is not an unmitigated blessing, the normative evaluation of the development of party systems must surely consider the *distinctiveness* of party positions as a positive trait: I am not aware of any dissenting view on this count.

The importance of this stems from the fact that the tables leave no doubt that many more Czechs and Slovaks than Hungarians, and more Hungarians than Poles

can point to one or another party as the "owner" of an issue, and furthermore, there tends to be quite a good deal of consensus in these Czech and Slovak answers: thus the relatively high absolute values

Table 7A: POLAND: PARTY POSITIONS ON ISSUES, 1992

	PSL	ZchN	UD	SLD	PC	KLD	KPN	PL
	(Emphasis on issues)							
A reduce inequality	10	2	18	18	-1	-3	8	1
B free market	2	4	27	-13	10	29	2	1
C competent manag.	7	-2	24	7	4	13	6	1
D defend democracy	5	1	24	7	1	5	10	1
E less burden	7	2	10	18	-1	-7	6	1
F environment	9	1	10	2	1	0	2	3
G social services	8	1	18	17	2	0	4	1
H moral renewal	3	38	9	-2	1	1	3	1
I abortion allowed	3	-41	20	35	2	6	4	1
J protect compan.	3	0	4	18	0	-11	4	0
K patriotism	4	11	11	3	2	1	24	0
L pensions & benef.	6	0	15	20	-1	-7	7	0
M church influence	1	54	-2	-32	2	0	0	0
N privatization	1	5	24	-15	13	30	1	0
O reduce unemploy.	7	1	14	22	0	-6	7	1
P fight crime	4	4	16	6	4	5	11	1
Q decommunization	1	27	1	-37	18	2	34	0
R foreign policy	5	3	21	4	3	11	7	0
S food market	30	0	4	4	1	-8	3	12

The table shows percentage figures which are obtained by subtracting the percent of respondents naming the party as the one least likely to pursue the goal in question from the percent naming it as one which pursues that goal. Thus, minus six means that six percent more of the respondents thought the party was most unlikely to pursue that goal than thought that the party was likely to pursue it. The text of the question and the items (indicated with A to T) is shown in the Appendix.

Source: Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

in many more cells of table 7.B and 7.C than table 7.D and particularly 7.A. Since this difference between Czechoslovaks and the rest can also be observed if we exclude non-voters from the analysis (data not shown), here we at last seem to encounter a finding that may help explaining why party attachments around 1992-93 tended to be stronger in the Czech and Slovak republics than in Hungary, and why they were stronger in Hungary than Poland: because voters in the former had a clearer image of what the major

Table 7B: CZECH REPUBLIC: PARTY POSITIONS ON ISSUES, 1992

	HSD- CSSD	KDU- SMS	CSL	KSCM	LSU	ODA	ODS	SPR- RSC
	(Emphasis on issues)							
A reduce inequality	29	2	13	10	12	8	-10	0
B free market	1	0	11	-58	2	39	70	-3
C competent manag.	8	1	10	-29	5	36	56	-3
D defend democracy	11	2	17	-17	6	22	29	-6
E less burden	39	0	9	9	16	11	-17	-1
F environment	2	0	6	-13	41	4	0	-4
G social services	16	0	15	0	5	14	17	-4
H moral renewal	9	0	35	-17	5	13	16	-4
I abortion allowed	10	0	-44	10	2	13	21	2
J protect compan.	26	1	0	36	9	4	-34	0
K patriotism	7	21	10	-11	3	14	9	8
L pensions & benf.	33	0	5	20	7	3	-14	-3
M church influence	1	1	75	-60	3	2	5	-2
N privatization	-1	0	10	-59	1	45	77	-1
O reduce unemploy.	32	1	6	28	10	7	-13	1
P fight crime	7	1	9	-6	3	18	33	1
Q decommunization	1	1	9	-70	0	24	42	26
R foreign policy	3	0	7	-20	1	34	55	-8
S Czech-Slovak rel.	23	6	11	20	12	4	5	-2
T rapid separation	-17	0	10	-40	-5	41	73	-1

(% figures calculated as in Table 7A)

Source: Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

parties stood for in programmatic terms. Elsewhere it was shown that this ranking of the countries rather consistently showed up on several other indicators of what I labelled "the meaningfulness of electoral choice", such as the strength and dispersion of partisan attachments in the voting population; the voters' ability to identify government and opposition parties correctly; the richness and sophistication of their reasoning about why they liked and disliked various significant parties in their country; or the probability that their party choice was predictable from their issue attitudes³⁰.

Table 7C: SLOVAKIA: PARTY POSITIONS ON ISSUES, 1992

	DS	HZDS	KDH	ESWS	SDSS	SDL	SNS	ODU
	MKM- (Emphasis on issues)							

³⁰ See Tóka, "Parties and Electoral Choices in East Central Europe".

A reduce inequality	3	48	-11	-5	16	46	15	-12
B free market	10	47	1	-4	4	-1	15	16
C competent manag.	4	56	-19	-4	6	36	16	2
D defend democracy	4	41	2	-4	12	30	23	-2
E less burden	1	51	-10	-2	13	44	13	-16
F environment	0	17	-5	-3	2	10	4	-5
G social services	3	45	3	-3	10	34	13	-3
H moral renewal	1	31	39	0	5	16	8	-6
I abortion allowed	5	45	-73	1	5	38	14	7
J protect compan.	-1	48	-12	-2	9	40	14	-19
I patriotism	-1	43	-15	-15	1	10	81	-13
L pensions & benf.	0	46	-3	-1	18	41	9	-13
M church influence	4	-13	89	14	0	-46	2	0
N privatization	14	36	9	-1	1	-12	9	29
O reduce unemploy.	0	55	-10	-1	15	53	15	-15
P fight crime	2	57	-7	-3	4	26	18	-5
Q decommunization	13	0	50	3	0	-47	14	25
R foreign policy	1	69	-9	-16	5	21	48	-9
S Czech-Slovak rel.	17	20	25	-1	16	33	-31	19
T rapid separation	-3	54	-30	-2	-4	-4	73	-12

(% figures calculated as in Table 7A)

Source: Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

Secondly, whereas the data about the popular perception of party positions on moral and social issues like strengthening patriotism, increasing church influence, etc., reflect rather faithfully what the parties are pledged to, this is not necessarily the case in the socio-economic domain. Apparently no party, whatever policies it is pledged to, is able to establish much more credibility on either left or right wing socio-economic issues than the general economic competence it is believed to possess (see the results with item C). This, again, is important for normative reasons. The voters may be wrong in assessing the competence of the various parties, but they are only rational when they ignore the socio-economic promises of those parties which they perceive as incompetent.

Table 7D: HUNGARY: PARTY POSITIONS ON ISSUES, 1992

	FKGP	KDNP	MDF	SZDSZ	FIDESZ	MSZP
A reduce inequality	0	14	1	23	43	28
B free market	16	0	28	33	30	-3
C competent manag.	-1	6	5	30	44	22
D defend democracy	-2	17	15	33	45	17
E less burden	1	12	7	20	33	8
F environment	4	12	-12	23	37	29

G social services	-2	29	10	23	37	21
H moral renewal	3	46	16	13	20	12
I abortion allowed	2	-29	5	30	41	24
J protect compan.	3	6	1	7	7	20
K patriotism	25	24	39	12	18	4
L pensions & benf.	3	19	8	21	30	31
M church influence	18	66	26	-2	-1	-16
N privatization	17	5	33	29	23	-6
O reduce unemploy.	5	9	-5	25	36	32
P fight crime	8	9	29	22	23	15
Q decommunization	35	12	32	25	23	-29
R foreign policy	1	7	35	26	28	19

(% figures calculated as in Table 7A)

Source: Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

The discussion of the details must start with the more or less constant factors. The East Central European publics see very little difference between the four ex-communist parties regarding their positive commitment to such goals as reducing inequalities, putting less burden on people's shoulder during the transformation of the economy, and providing better health care and education. They are also invariably believed to be largely indifferent regarding patriotism. There are, however, very large differences between the Czech KSCM on the one extreme, and the Slovak SDL and the Hungarian MSZP on the other regarding general competence and these parties' perceived attitude toward clerical, anti-communist, and pro-market policies. Many more Czechs than Slovaks and Hungarians attribute lack of competence (see items C and R), and opposition to typically right wing goals (see items B, M, N and Q) to the ex-communist parties. Whereas the image of the Polish SLD is usually closer to that of KSCM on this count, by 1992 SDL and MSZP established quite a good deal of positive reputation on competence issues.

The cross-national variation in the image of the Christian parties is even smaller. Relatively few people attribute them any other policy priorities than those directly related to their religious appeal (i.e. item H and M, and opposition to item I, free choice concerning abortion). Those few who still associate socio-economic goals with them think that they are either committed to the development of market economy, or to providing better health care and education, or - even more likely - to both. The cross-national variations precisely reflect a correct popular understanding of what can be known about these parties: the Slovak KDH has a bit more right wing, and the Hungarian KDNP a more left wing image on socio-economic issues than the Polish ZChN and the Czech KDU-CSL. Among the agrarian parties, the Polish PSL, and particularly the Hungarian FKGP achieved a much greater visibility and a more elaborated ideological profile than the post-Solidarnosc PL. Whereas the

FKGP has a rather clerical, patriotic and pro-market profile, the Polish PSL is thought to be left of centre and rather secular.

Thus, the integration of Christian and agrarian party images into what, as we will see below, appears to be the main ideological dimensions of party competition in East Central Europe, was already in a fairly advanced stage by Fall 1992. The coalition preferences of these parties also became known. Suffice it here to say that they are not entirely inconsistent with their ideological positions. These facts suggest that the electoral base of these parties may eventually become less sectional in the near future than what they were at the time of the reported survey data. These prospects, however, are likely to be closed for the regionalist HSD-SMS in the Czech Republic, for the Polish PL, and for the MKM-ESWS coalition speaking for the interests of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia. Whether because of their own faults or not, these three parties have an almost entirely single issue image.

The rest of the significant East Central European parties fall, according to common sense knowledge, in about four different categories, and the individual parties are often too idiosyncratic to be unambiguously classifiable regarding the extent to which they should be described as secular liberal or as secular conservative (i.e. this is the classification problem with the Czech ODA and ODS); or secular conservative or nationalist-anticommunist (i.e. this is the dilemma with PC in Poland and MDF in Hungary). The Polish KPN is certainly perceived as a secular, anti-communist, nationalist and on the questions of economic policy, distinctively left wing party. The Republicans (SPR-RSC) are seen by Czechs as an anti-communist nationalist (in fact, presumably as a xenophobe and anti-Gypsy) party - again, with rather left wing, if any, views on economics. The third clear case in this class is the Slovak National Party (SNS). The remaining patriotic-anticommunist parties in the public perception are the Hungarian MDF, and particularly the Polish PC. They - both with a considerable government record behind - are much more likely to be associated with pro-market than with left wing goals in the socio-economic domain, and MDF is also believed to be credible on Christian issues and effective foreign policy.

The group of liberal and secular conservative parties also shows a good deal of cross-national variation. The Czech ODA and ODS, the rather insignificant DS and SKD in Slovakia, and SZDSZ and FIDESZ in Hungary were often believed to be tough anti-communist, while in Poland KLD and UD were not (see item Q at the columns referring to the respective parties in table 7). Apparently, the legacy of the liberal-dominated Mazowiecki government, which aimed to draw a "thick line" between past and present, remained very visible in this case. These parties are invariably strongly associated with pro-market policies, economic competence, pro-choice views on abortion, and not much enthusiasm regarding the protection of

unprofitable companies. Where they most strongly differ from each other is their perceived commitment to left-wing economic goals. The Czech ODA and ODS, the Slovak SKD and DS, and the Polish KLD have virtually no credibility at all on such goals, but the Polish UD and - even more so - the two Hungarian liberal parties do.

Finally, Slovakia's "natural party of government", HZDS, is a class of its own. With its extraordinarily high ratings on every issue except the most obviously right wing ones (i.e. decommunization, increasing church influence, and maintaining good relations between Czech and Slovaks - an issue largely monopolized by the otherwise insignificant federalist Right in Slovakia), by Fall 1992 HZDS indeed came close to establishing a profile promising long term electoral hegemony. The only East Central European parties with such an apparently broad appeal were, at that time, the Hungarian liberals, SZDSZ and FIDESZ. We would obviously need more than just impressions about what these parties promised to the voters to understand the origin of such devastatingly popular images. The Hungarian examples suggest that relatively popular opposition parties can afford to keep on promising pro-market policies. As long as they are perceived as much more competent than their competitors, and do not pledge to e.g. freezing state pensions once they got into office, they can trust that the wishful thinking of desperate voters will do the rest of the job.

The example of HZDS, however, also suggests that not too carefully designed election pledges may also raise popular expectations which are hard to meet by an East European government. The Slovak example provides relatively clear evidence that the first landslide won with such a broad appeal is not likely to be followed by a second one. In April 1993, the next CEU-survey registered a huge loss in HZDS's credibility on virtually every issue (compared to September 1992), but much less so on pro-market policies than on left-wing socio-economic goals. Similar losses were also registered in voting support for HZDS (1993 data not shown). Thus, the example of HZDS suggests that the depth of socio-economic problems itself guarantees that in the foreseeable future no party in the region is likely to maintain such a hegemony-promising profile as HZDS had in 1992.

With the question of feasible electoral hegemonies thus answered, we can turn to the question of ideological structuration. The raw data discussed until now was subjected to a factor analysis (see table 8.A to 8.D). Because of their single issue character, PL, HSD-SMS and MKM-ESWS were excluded from this analysis. The proportion of variance explained by the first one or two factors can be conceived as a measure of ideological structuration. The higher these figures are, the more easily we can explain the variation in party images by expressing the loading of parties and the scores of issues on one or two ideological dimensions.

The results show a fairly similar picture across the three countries. The first

dimension is a general Left-Right dimension, with increasing church influence, decommunization, helping the development of free market economy and other right wing goals having high scores on the one extreme, and reducing inequalities and other left wing goals having high scores on the other extreme. The second factor pits the secular liberal and conservative parties, with their emphasis on pro-market goals, against the

Table 8A: POLAND: IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PARTY COMPETITION, 1992

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3
Explained variance:	44%	30%	15%
	<u>Factor loadings (unrotated):</u>		
KPN	.43	-.28	.84
PSL	-.78	-.14	.11
SLD	-.95	.05	.16
ZCHN	.66	-.52	-.41
UD	-.34	.89	.05
PC	.82	.40	.29
KLD	.42	.88	-.15
	<u>Factor scores of items:</u>		
reduce inequalities	-1.09	-.30	.30
support free market	.90	1.99	-.68
competent managers	-.34	.93	.07
defend democracy	-.31	.47	.26
less economic burden	-.79	-.76	.00
environment	-.60	-.42	-.41
social services	-.77	.04	-.03
moral renewal	.46	-.79	-1.38
abortion allowed	-1.04	1.06	.75
protect companies	-.41	-1.03	-.23
patriotism	.35	-.64	1.38
pensions and benefits	-.81	-.47	.15
increase church influence	1.44	-1.50	-2.34
speed up privatization	1.23	2.01	-.72
reduce unemployment	-.84	-.48	.22
fight crime	.10	.14	.37
decommunization	2.58	-.87	2.36
foreign policy	-.07	.63	-.08

Results of a principal component analysis of the aggregated individual level data in Table 7A.

Christian parties, with their religious appeal and more emphasis on social services. The third dimension (which does not occur in Hungary, where there are only two factors with an eigenvalue greater than one) pits the anti-communist nationalist against the rest. The first two factors, so familiar

Table 8B: CZECH REPUBLIC: IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PARTY COMPETITION, 1992

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3
Explained variance:	50%	18%	16%
	<u>Factor loadings (unrotated):</u>		
KSCM	.89	.33	-.19
CSSD	.83	.20	.01
LSU	.54	-.29	-.23
SPR-RSC	-.19	.27	.92
KDU-CSL	-.17	-.92	.13
ODA	-.85	.31	-.30
ODS	-.95	.16	-.24
	<u>Factor scores of items:</u>		
reduce inequalities	.98	-.06	.18
support free market	-1.49	.14	-.78
competent managers	-.89	.32	-.85
defend democracy	-.23	-.25	-.76
less economic burden	1.25	.09	-.05
environment	.80	-1.20	-.84
social services	.23	-.10	-.37
moral renewal	-.06	-1.01	-.14
abortion allowed	.22	2.12	-.00
protect companies	1.40	.45	.28
patriotism	-.07	.22	1.12
pensions and benefits	1.23	.27	-.01
increase church influence	-.40	-2.94	.89
speed up privatization	-1.73	.36	-.70
reduce unemployment	1.21	.40	.24
fight crime	-.26	.27	.05
decommunization	-1.31	.59	3.11
foreign policy	-.89	.34	-1.35

Results of a principal component analysis of the aggregated individual level data shown in Table 7B.

from West European politics, explain 74 percent of the total variance in aggregated party images in Poland, 68 percent in the Czech Republic, 75 percent in Slovakia,

and 83 percent in Hungary. This suggests that the ideological structuration of party images is stronger in Hungary than in the

Table 8C: SLOVAKIA: IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PARTY COMPETITION, 1992

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3
Explained variance:	56%	19%	17%
	<u>Factor loadings (unrotated):</u>		
SDL	.96	.03	.26
SDSS	.73	-.33	.43
HZDS	.81	.46	.13
SNS	.27	.50	-.77
KDH	-.69	-.58	-.20
DS	-.76	.42	.43
SKD (ex-ODU)	-.81	.46	.34
	<u>Factor scores of items:</u>		
reduce inequalities	.82	-.44	.74
support free market	-.76	1.11	.72
competent managers	.29	.70	.47
defend democracy	.25	-.07	.28
less economic burden	.87	-.56	.38
environment	-.30	-.74	-.31
social services	.28	-.23	.45
moral renewal	-.26	-1.08	-.31
abortion allowed	.32	1.44	.89
protect companies	.83	-.61	-.16
patriotism	.45	1.24	-3.10
pensions and benefits	.91	-1.04	.72
increase church influence	-1.90	-2.11	-1.01
speed up privatization	-1.50	1.43	1.14
reduce unemployment	1.09	-.57	.46
fight crime	.28	.35	-.16
decommunization	-2.29	.19	.08
foreign policy	.63	.99	-1.27

Results of a principal component analysis of the aggregated individual level data shown in Table 7C.

other three countries in the sense that the ideological dimensions discriminating between the parties are less numerous there. Elsewhere, party positions on nationalist and anti-communist issues do not vary so predictably together with party positions on clerical-secular issues as they do in Hungary.

Table 8D: HUNGARY: IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PARTY COMPETITION, 1992

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
Explained variance:	56%	27%
	<u>Factor loadings (unrotated):</u>	
KDNP	-.61	-.59
MSZP	.84	-.42
MDF	-.70	.51
FKGP	-.78	.47
SZDSZ	.65	.72
FIDESZ	.87	.30
	<u>Factor scores of items:</u>	
reduce inequalities	.92	-.47
support free market	-.20	1.58
competent managers	1.04	.18
defend democracy	.83	.39
less economic burden	.27	-.26
environment	.91	-.69
social services	.47	-.60
moral renewal	-.57	-1.24
abortion allowed	1.26	.85
protect companies	-.27	-1.40
patriotism	-1.36	.31
pensions and benefits	.44	-.66
increase church influence	-2.40	-1.59
speed up privatization	-.61	1.37
reduce unemployment	.89	-.42
fight crime	-.23	.30
decommunization	-1.49	1.88
foreign policy	.11	.46

Results of a principal component analysis of the aggregated individual level data shown in Table 7D.

The fact that Czech and Slovak voters around 1992 faced a more complex (three-, rather than two-dimensional) party system than Hungarians does not mean that they did not know considerably more about these relatively complex realities than Hungarians about their simpler world. Quite the contrary; above we already stressed that table 7.A to 7.D seem to provide our best available explanation for the apparently stronger Czech and Slovak, and weaker Polish party loyalties in this period in that they show the former to have been more knowledgeable than Poles or

even Hungarians about the parties' programmatic profiles. To test this proposition more directly, elsewhere we examined empirically which groups of voters were most likely to remain loyal to their preferred party over some period of time: those whose party preferences were related in a consistent manner to their issue attitudes (type 1), or those whose party preferences were most clearly rooted in their socio-demographic traits such as class, residence, age or denomination (type 2), or those whose party preferences were weakly or not at all anchored in either of these factors (type 3). Supporting the line of argument pursued in this paper, the results suggested that type 1 (if any) voters were the least likely to change their party choice over time³¹.

Furthermore, the degree to which the voters' choices between opposition and government parties were influenced by their issue attitudes are probably weaker in Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1992 than in Britain in 1987 (the only Western country with which such a comparison was made), but stronger than in Poland and Hungary in 1992. Thus, the extent to which programmatic differentiation between the parties influences electoral behaviour may go some way in explaining both East-West and East-East differences in the degree of electoral volatility³².

To conclude sections 2 to 6, we have many reasons to believe that the East Central European party systems are less or far less institutionalized, than those in West European or even Latin American democracies. If they (or most of them) had nevertheless achieved (a degree of) democratic consolidation by 1995, then the reason should be that at least one critically important element of inter-party relations, namely the expectation that the game will be played by democratic rules, may get stabilized even if nearly all other aspects of the game (who the players will be, how the votes may be distributed in the next round, what economic policies they will adhere to in practice, etc.) remain uncertain. This is not to say that lack of party system institutionalization does not undermine accountability, or that it does not pave the way for "populist" appeals, as Mainwaring and Scully argue at some points. But in the absence of yet other factors, all this plus a deep economic recession may not be enough to endanger democratic consolidation in East Central Europe.

³¹ The analysis was based on data from altogether six panel studies carried out in the four East Central European countries. All respondents were interviewed at two different times, and the analysis compared the strength of statistical relationship in the data from the first wave of the interviews between their issue attitudes, socio-demographic traits, and party choice, to whether or not they changed their party preference between the two waves of interviews. See Gábor Tóka, "The Electoral Payoff on Various Modes of Party Appeals: Evidence from New Democracies." (Budapest: Department of Political Science, Central European University, 1996).

³² See Table 6.6 of Tóka, "Being Represented - Being Satisfied? ..."

VII POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: THE INTERVENING VARIABLES

As far as roughly comparable evidence exists, Mainwaring and Scully's fairly liberal criteria of an institutionalized party system are probably not met by any of the four East Central European party systems and at least some are among what Mainwaring and Scully call "inchoate party systems" (cf contemporary Brazil, Ecuador, Peru or Bolivia). At least three of these four postcommunist countries are "consolidated" democracies. I argue that it is difficult to see that inchoate party systems would hamper democratic consolidation in the ways that Mainwaring and Scully identify. Contrary to what they expect in inchoate party systems, in East Central Europe it is not "often" the case that social actors confront each other directly, without the moderating mediation of political representatives, or that political actors "rather than directing their efforts toward winning elections, ... question the legitimacy of the electoral process and engage in actions that imply rejecting government legitimacy"³³. Moreover, though extremely high electoral volatility does prevail in East Central Europe and makes election outcomes fairly unpredictable, this uncertainty apparently fails to undermine politicians' loyalty to the democratic rules of the game.

The increasing institutionalization of political parties does not seem to boost the popular legitimacy of the new regimes. Here, the problematic aspect is not so much the level of popular support for the abstract idea or principles of democracy. These are relatively high anyway³⁴, clearly demonstrating that "a strong majority of public opinion, even in the midst of major economic problems and deep dissatisfaction with incumbents, holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life"³⁵. My point here is twofold. First, normative support for the abstract ideal of democracy among the mass public, which was often claimed to be largely unrelated to economic evaluations in postcommunist Eastern Europe³⁶ as well as elsewhere, was shown to

³³ These are some of the likely consequences of an inchoate party system according to Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," 23.

³⁴ The most comprehensive piece of evidence on this is provided by a ten-country survey, the main results of which are reported by László Bruszt and János Simon, *Political and Economic Orientations during the Transition to Democracy: Codebook*, (Budapest: TTI, 1992).

³⁵ This is part of the definition of consolidation proposed by Linz and Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies," 16.

³⁶ See Geoffrey Evans and Stephen Whitefield, "The Politics and Economics of Democratic

have behavioural consequences for regime stability only under the most unusual - for the four countries in my analysis arguably irrelevant - circumstances³⁷. In contrast, there is persuasive evidence that widespread dissatisfaction with democracy can have relevant consequences for regime stability in a wide variety of democratic regimes³⁸. Second, satisfaction with democracy is responsive to the popular evaluation of economic conditions, but probably not so much to the evaluation of democratic institutions like parties.

Elsewhere it was shown that those Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Hungarians who think that "their views and interests are well represented" by at least one of the major government or opposition parties do *not* tend to be more satisfied with the functioning of democracy and do *not* feel politically more efficacious than those who do not feel represented by any of the major parties³⁹. Table 9 also shows that - even though the institutionalization of political parties progressed in most of the four countries between 1992 and 1996 - satisfaction with political parties has *not*

Commitment: Support for Democracy in Transition Societies", *British Journal of Political Science* 25 (1995): 485-514; James L. Gibson, "A Mile Wide But an Inch Deep (?): The Structure of Democratic Commitments in the Former USSR." *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (1996): 396-420; and Raymond M. Duch, "Economic Chaos and the Fragility of Democratic Transition in Former Communist Regimes", *Journal of Politics* 57 (1995): 121-158.

³⁷ See Gibson, "A Mile Wide ...".

³⁸ G. Bingham Powell, Jr., "Extremist Parties and Political Turmoil: Two Puzzles." *American Journal of Political Science* 30 (1986): 357-378.

³⁹ See Gábor Tóka, "Being Represented - Being Satisfied? Political Support in East Central Europe," in: Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs, eds., *Citizens and the State*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 354-382.

increased over time; against a minor and recent increase in Poland we can see a somewhat clearer decline in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Moreover, while in three of the four countries temporal fluctuations in the evaluation of political parties are positively correlated with changes in the level of satisfaction with democracy - which would fit the hypothesis that satisfaction with the political intermediaries generates satisfaction with democracy -, the relationship is the opposite in the Czech Republic. The more Czechs evaluated political parties favourably, the fewer were satisfied with democracy. In contrast, changing levels of positive evaluation of personal economic conditions are positively correlated with satisfaction with democracy in each of the four countries.

The crucial thing to look at is not the strength of the individual level correlation showing how likely a person dissatisfied economically is to report dissatisfaction with democracy. These correlations can be depressed by the considerable amount of "random noise" present in the responses due to the well-known problems of survey methodology, or can be inflated if the responses are influenced by personality-specific response sets, such as "yea-saying" or a generalized deferential or "keep smiling" attitude. Rather, it is the aggregate level relationship that we have to look at, i.e. whether the *percent* satisfied with democracy at a given place and time is related to the *percent* happy with the economic conditions, most likely but not necessarily because the economically satisfied tends to be politically satisfied as well. Across the five to seven observations available in each country, this correlation is .77 in Poland, .89 in the Czech Republic, a clearly insignificant but still positive .31 in Slovakia, and .83 in Hungary. The comparable aggregate level correlations between the percentage of respondents satisfied with democracy and the percentage positively evaluating the political parties are .77, -.40, .50, and .97, respectively.

Table 9: TRENDS IN SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY AND EVALUATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

	Very or rather satisfied with functioning of democracy (%)	Disagree that parties only interested in votes (%)	Disagree that economic conditions very unfavourable (%)
	POLAND		
October 1992	19	10	18
January 1993	19	7	13
August 1993	22	9	18
April 1994	26	8	15
December 1994	24	9	23
June 1995	20	10	25

December 1995	<u>35</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>38</u>
Change	16	5	20
CZECH REPUBLIC			
September 1992	39	29	44
April 1993	47	26	46
November 1993	53	25	52
April 1994	44	21	46
November 1994	48	19	49
June 1995	47	19	46
January 1996	<u>52</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>54</u>
Change	13	-8	10
SLOVAKIA			
September 1992	28	24	26
April 1993	25	11	20
November 1993	28	11	27
April 1994	21	10	24
November 1994	21	14	27
June 1995	<u>28</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>29</u>
Change	0	-7	-3
HUNGARY			
September 1992	22	14	19
January 1993	22	14	16
December 1993	28	15	16
April 1994	39	23	25
July 1995	<u>21</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>17</u>
Change	-1	-1	-2

Source: CEU-surveys.

Given the small number of cases in the four national time series, most of these correlations are, statistically speaking, not strong enough to draw inferences about the possible interrelationships between the three factors. Yet, the data leave one with the impression that the assessment of personal economic condition is more generally important for satisfaction with democracy than the assessment of political parties. The primacy of economic judgements is suggested by two further observations. First, the correlations between the percentage of respondents positively evaluating political parties and the percentage satisfied with personal economic conditions are .95, -.31, .40 and .92 in the four countries, respectively. It is very hard to believe that the apparently frequent parallel between the changes in satisfaction with parties and personal economic conditions would find its explanations in the latter's dependence on the former. If so, that relationship may also explain away the occasional positive correlation between the assessments of parties and democracy as a result of their shared dependence on economic evaluations. Secondly, the absolute amount of variation in the evaluation of political parties is much lower both across time and

across countries than the variation in the percentage satisfied with democracy. Thus, economic evaluations - which also vary quite substantially - are more likely than the assessment of parties to explain changes in satisfaction with democracy.

It has been shown elsewhere that differences in the popular evaluation of economic conditions indeed give a potent explanation both for the observed differences between the four East Central European countries and for the temporal trends in levels of satisfaction with democracy⁴⁰. Table 10 shows that this holds true within a larger sample of postcommunist countries as well. At first sight, economic determinism is contradicted by the data. Across the 34 observations displayed on table 10, the correlation between the percentage satisfied with democracy and the percentage expecting favourable economic trends over the next twelve months is extremely weak (0.12) and statistically insignificant. If, however, we ignore the four samples within which, on the individual level, the correlation of the two variables was spectacularly weak - the Czech Republic in January and October 1990, Slovakia in January 1990 and

Table 10: EVALUATION OF ECONOMIC PROSPECTS AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY: VARIATIONS ACROSS COUNTRIES AND OVER TIME, AND THEIR CORRELATIONS ON THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

		Expecting favourable economic trends %	Satisfied with democracy %	Pearson correlation between two variables
Czech Rep.	Jan. 1990	9	87	0.14
Czech Rep.	Oct. 1990	9	40	0.15
Czech Rep.	Oct. 1991	25	35	0.24
Czech Rep.	Nov. 1992	26	40	-
Hungary	Oct. 1990	6	21	0.30
Hungary	Oct. 1991	22	34	0.30
Hungary	Nov. 1992	14	23	-
Poland	Oct. 1990	31	50	0.36
Poland	Oct. 1991	21	35	0.34
Poland	Nov. 1992	25	37	-
Slovakia	Jan. 1990	11	82	0.17
Slovakia	Oct. 1990	12	26	0.35
Slovakia	Oct. 1991	19	17	0.23

⁴⁰ See Tóka, "Being Represented - Being Satisfied? Political Support in East Central Europe".

Slovakia	Nov. 1992	22	24	-
Albania	Autumn 1991	77	44	0.19
Albania	Nov. 1992	-	45	-
Belarus	Nov. 1992	16	13	-
Bulgaria	Autumn 1991	41	46	0.34
Bulgaria	Nov. 1992	40	50	-
Estonia	Autumn 1991	25	36	0.24
Estonia	Nov. 1992	27	31	-
Georgia	Nov. 1992	43	48	-
Latvia	Autumn 1991	23	42	0.34
Latvia	Nov. 1992	22	18	-
Lithuania	Autumn 1991	24	62	0.34
Lithuania	Nov. 1992	25	53	-
Macedonia	Nov. 1992	44	49	-
Moldavia	Nov. 1992	23	38	-
Russia	Autumn 1991	19	18	0.30
Russia	Nov. 1992	23	13	-
Romania	Autumn 1991	44	43	0.22
Romania	Nov. 1992	51	30	-
Slovenia	Nov. 1992	44	48	-
Ukraine	Nov. 1992	28	19	-

Economic expectations: Over the next 12 months, do you expect that the financial situation of your household will 1. get a lot better; 2. get a little better; 3. stay the same; 4. get a little worse; 5. get a lot worse. The percentage of respondents choosing the first two options is reported - Do not know answers and other missing values excluded.

Satisfaction with democracy: Percent answering "very" or "fairly satisfied" to the question: On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in (our country) ? Do not know answers and other missing values excluded.

Sources: Commission of the European Communities, *Central and Eastern Eurobarometer: Eighteen Countries Survey, Autumn 1992* (Brussels: European Commission, 1993); and *Central and Eastern Eurobarometers: the January 1990, October 1990, Autumn 1991 surveys*, Machine readable data files (Distributor: Zentralarchiv, Köln).

Albania in Autumn 1991 -, then across the remaining 30 observations the aggregate level correlation becomes considerable (0.54) and statistically significant. Why these time points were special in Czechoslovakia can be explained by their being close to a sudden and cathartic transition to democracy from a particularly repressive regime,

i.e. with a strong "system honeymoon" effect. In both the Czech and the Slovak republics, an extremely high level of satisfaction with democracy was registered in January 1990, which evaporated without the economic expectations of the population becoming any more pessimistic. As table 10 shows, at the same time as the initial euphoria withered away, the individual level correlation between the two factors became stronger (whereas it had been unusually weak earlier). Judging from the figures displayed on table 10, a similar honeymoon effect may also have been present in Albania in 1991, right after the first free election ever in that country. The question about personal economic expectations was not asked in Albania in November 1992. In the subsequent analysis this missing data was substituted with the 1991 Albanian data. This step was felt justified because the results obtained with this variable were very strongly correlated (both on the individual and the aggregate level) with the answers about expectations concerning the development of the national economy in the next two months (data not shown), and the comparison of 1991 with the 1992 distribution on this second item suggested that there was no change in the economic atmosphere in Albania between Autumn 1991 and Autumn 1992.

The data displayed in table 10 provides altogether 17 cases to analyze how strongly aggregate level changes in economic optimism and political support are correlated with each other within one country between two successive time points: three for the Czech and Slovak Republic each, two for Poland and Hungary each, and the 1991-1992 comparisons for some other Eastern European countries. Again, the correlation is statistically insignificant at first sight (.34, probability level=.19), but after removing the above mentioned conspicuous cases (Slovakia and the Czech Republic between January and October 1990 and changes in Albania between 1991 and 1992), it becomes .50, which is significantly different from zero at the 07. level.

The data confirm that nations showing lower levels of political satisfaction tend to be more pessimistic regarding economic prospects too. The correlation between the country means⁴¹ of the percentage satisfied with the development of democracy and the percentage expecting favourable economic trends is .45 (significant at the .03 level), and it increases to .58 if the four cases supposedly biased by the "honeymoon" effect are excluded from the computation of the Albanian, Czech and Slovak country means.

The same analysis of correlations in the Eastern Eurobarometer data between satisfaction with the development of democracy and economic expectations was repeated by substituting the data about personal economic expectations with answers

⁴¹ If several successive observations were available for a country, then their average was used as the "country mean".

for the question "Over the next 12 months, do you think the general economic situation in (OUR COUNTRY) will 1. get a lot better; 2. get a little better; 3. stay the same; 4. get a little worse; 5. get a lot worse" (data not shown). The theoretical difference between these two sorts of expectations notwithstanding, the results obtained were similar, except that using the item about the national economy, no "system honeymoon" effect seemed to be detectable, though it could have been present at least in the 1990 Czechoslovak and the 1991 Albanian results. This minor difference and the slightly stronger correlation coefficients encountered in this second analysis may have been due to the presence of the same acquiescence bias both in the answers about the national economy and about satisfaction with the development of democracy, but not (or less so) in the answers about the personal economic expectations.

Thus, an economic "feel good" factor seems to have a significant influence on satisfaction with democracy, and this finding may also be able to explain the robust East-West difference concerning satisfaction with democracy⁴². Cross-national comparisons of generalized trust in elected officials, in contrast, reveal hardly any gap between East Central Europe and the western democracies. This again suggests that the institutionalization of political parties *per se* may have little to do with the popular legitimacy of the democratic regime. As table 11 shows, East Central Europeans are not more likely than the French, British, Greek, Irish, or the Spaniards to believe that "Most people with power try to take advantage of people like yourself" or to doubt that "Most elected officials care what people like me think", even though their party systems are clearly less stable.

Table 11: TRUST IN POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES IN WESTERN

42 On the East-West gap in satisfaction with democracy see Tóka, "Being Represented - Being Satisfied? Political Support in East Central Europe". On East-West differences in economic evaluations in 1991 see Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, *East--West Attitude Survey*. Codebook. (Washington, DC: Times Mirror Centre, 1991). In May 1991 this Times-Mirror survey found around fifty percent of Spaniards and French, around sixty percent of Italians and Britons, and seventy percent of West Germans to agree with the statement that 'I am pretty well satisfied with the way things are going for me financially'. In the same survey this percentage was only 34, 25 and 21 in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, respectively. With the exception of Italy, these percentage differences between the countries in question nicely parallel the 1991 Eurobarometer and Eastern Eurobarometer findings about differences in the rates of satisfaction with democracy in these countries. Note that satisfaction with democracy is influenced by economic evaluations not just in some new democracies, but also in Western Europe: see Brad Lockerbie, "Economic Dissatisfaction and Political Alienation in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 23 (1993), 281-293.

DEMOCRACIES AND EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3
	% disagree	% disagree	% agree
Belgium	32	-	-
Denmark	66	-	-
France	38	13	28
Great Britain	31	13	36
Germany	44	12	33
Greece	22	-	-
Ireland	33	-	-
Italy	16	9	14
Luxemburg	45	-	-
The Netherlands	47	-	-
Portugal	64	-	-
Spain	25	16	28
United States	<u>-</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>45</u>
Average	39	14	30
Czech Republic	46	15	35
Hungary	35	14	34
Poland	32	7	25
Slovakia	<u>27</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>22</u>
Average	35	11	29

Notes: Item 1: Q. Most people with power try to take advantage of people like yourself. Sources: for the EC member states, the averages of the two separate measurements published in Jacques-R  n   Rabier, H  l  ne Riffault, and Ronald Inglehart, *Euro-barometer 26: November 1986* (Ann Arbor, Mich: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1988) and Jacques-R  n   Rabier, H  l  ne Riffault, and Ronald Inglehart, *Eurobarometer 30: October-November 1988* (Ann Arbor, Mich: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1990), respectively, are reported. The source of East Central European data is an October 1991 comparative survey, see Jacek Dohnalik, Jan Hartl, Krzysztof Jasiewicz, Radoslaw Markowski, Peter Mateju, Lubos Rezler, G  bor T  ka, and Milan Tucek, *Dismantling of the Social Safety Net and Its Political Consequences in East Central Europe. An International Comparative Study Initiated and Sponsored by the Institute of East-West Studies, NewYork- Prague*, Machine readable data file (Distributors: IEWS, New York and TARKI, Budapest, 1991).

Item 2: Q. Generally speaking, elected officials lose touch with the people pretty quickly. Item 3: Q. Most elected officials care what people like me think. Source: Times Mirror Center for The People and The Press, *East-West Attitude Survey*, Codebook May, 1991 survey. (Washington: Times Mirror Center, 1991).

VIII PARTY SYSTEMS, GOVERNMENT STABILITY, AND POLICY SUCCESS

Mainwaring and Scully argue that party institutionalization helps democratic consolidation also through the beneficial impact of the former on "whether effective policy making will result"⁴³. Yet, this effect is hard to trace in East Central Europe. The ranking of the four countries in terms of government stability just does not seem to match their likely ranking in terms of policy successes in the 1990-95 period.

In 1990-93 Poland had hardly any coherent legislative majority to back an "effective" executive⁴⁴. In June 1989, the semi-free elections to the lower chamber granted the communist party and its satellites an almost two-thirds majority, but the free competition for the Senate seats returned a 99 percent Solidarity (NSZZ "S") super majority in the upper chamber. Though the Sejm (the lower house) formally had the right, it obviously lacked the political legitimacy to bring down the Solidarity led governments, no matter how strong policy disagreements occurred between them. The predictable result was a stalemate, and when the Sejm declined either to give decree powers to the government, or to pass the financial bills which were deemed an absolute necessity by the government, early elections were called. The October 1991 election became notorious for awarding seats to 24 different electoral lists, with the "winner" receiving only 12.3 percent of the vote and 13.8 percent of the seats, and all the three biggest parties excluded from the resulting minority government. After the new, freely elected Sejm brought down three different governments, a new election law was passed and another early election called for September 1993. Due to the new election law, the ex-communist SLD, and the heir of its former satellite, now called PSL, won a 66 percent majority in the Sejm and could form a majority government.

In 1990-92, long delays and stalemates were reportedly caused in the passing of many important economic bills by the considerable ideological divisions and paralysing splits in OF and VPN, the winners of the 1990 Czechoslovak elections⁴⁵. After the June 1992 elections, an ideologically compact national government was formed in the Czech Republic with ODS, ODA, KDU-CSL and KDS providing a

⁴³ Mainwaring and Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," 2.

⁴⁴ On the 1989 election see Zbigniew Pelczynski and Sergiusz Kowalski, "Poland," *Electoral Studies* 9 (December 1990): 346-354).

⁴⁵ This relatively well known story is probably best told by Carlos Flores Juberias, "The Breakdown of the Czecho-Slovak Party System", in: György Szoboszlai, ed. *Flying Blind* (Budapest: Hungarian Political Science Association, 1992), 147-176.

steady 52.5 percent legislative support for the government in the coming years. In June 1992 Slovakia started off with a near-majority single party (HZDS-) government, later lifted to majority status by the joining of a coalition partner (SNS), but - after splits in both government parties - replaced by a minority government of the former opposition between March 1994 and early elections in September 1994. In contrast, Hungary had much the same coalition government from May 1990 to May 1994, with a relatively disciplined and ideologically compact legislative majority⁴⁶ providing solid support for an entire legislative term, even after the death of the original prime minister and numerous splits in the government parties. After the second free election in May 1994, two former opposition parties formed another apparently stable majority government.

Thus, if the political system's capacity to generate lasting legislative majorities backing stable governments were the only determinant of policy success, the latter would show Hungary the most, the Czech Republic second, and pre-1993 Poland the least successful. However, macroeconomic data (such as 1995 levels of economic growth and unemployment, change in inflation between the beginning of transition and 1995) suggest the following "success ranking" instead: Poland or the Czech Republic on first place, then Slovakia, and Hungary the least successful.

CONCLUSIONS

Why, then, is there no apparent sign in East Central Europe that higher levels of party institutionalization would promote democratic consolidation and policy effectiveness? First, as both Morlino and Mainwaring and Scully stress, democratic consolidation may not require "hyperinstitutionalized" parties. Furthermore, in such countries and times where and when the conditions are probably (even) more favourable for democratic consolidation than in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s or postwar Italy, even Bolivia's or Ecuador's level of party institutionalization may suffice to make electoral success the only "currency of power".

Reasons to suspect that the four East Central European countries in the 1990s are just such a place abound: think of their geographical closeness to the European Union and all the policy constraints that this implies; their traditions of firm civilian control of the military⁴⁷; and last but not least that "After democratization a former

⁴⁶ see András Körösiényi, "Stable of Fragile Democracy? Party System in Hungary," *Government and Opposition* 28 (January 1993): 87-105.

⁴⁷ Poland is a debatable case, but in Czechoslovakia and Hungary the military is certainly not viewed as a potential political actor; see Pietro Grilli di Cortona, "From Communism to Democracy: Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia," *International Social*

monopolistic party is in no better position than any other political group to reinstate an authoritarian system. The party gives up its monopoly of power but not the opportunity to compete for power by democratic means. When they return to the barracks, the military give up both, but they also retain the capacity to reacquire power by non-democratic means. The transition from a one-party system to democracy, consequently, is likely to be more difficult than the transition from a military regime to democracy, but it is also likely to be more permanent."⁴⁸

Huntington's reasoning is particularly interesting in the present context, as it would suggest that even if political parties (in plural) were not necessary for democratic transition and their development was not a crucial factor in democratic consolidation, the fact that the remnants of the *ancien régime* were organized along party lines could have been highly conducive to democratic consolidation. However, it would clearly be far-fetched to think that this was the only factor that might have made the development of other parties less relevant for consolidation. Suffice it here to refer to the troublesome cases of Russia or Belarus. Their cases might, in the long run, support Morlino's observation, that wherever - as in postwar Italy, but unlike in Spain, Greece, and Portugal in the 1970s and East Central Europe after 1989 - the "acknowledgement of democratic institutions and practices is not initially widespread [i.e. among the organized political actors], a dominant partisan control of society may be the only route to [democratic] consolidation. [...] Over an extended period of time, habitual conformity with democratic rules of the game can lead to widespread internalization of key democratic behavioural norms. Control of society by governing parties can also prevent sectors of society from defecting to antisystem extremist alternatives, insofar as they can provide incentives to groups to work within the system ..."⁴⁹.

Secondly, one could argue that the East Central European party systems are, on the whole, no less institutionalized than some of the more consolidated Latin American democracies. Although in organizational terms Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile or Venezuela may have better developed parties than anything one can find in Eastern Europe, the programmatic structuration of East Central European party systems may be stronger: in the absence of comparable evidence, this is rather difficult to tell. But if it is so, and a stronger ideological structuration of the political field can compensate for lesser institutionalization in making democratic politics

Science Journal 43 (1991): 315-330.

⁴⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press), 120.

⁴⁹ Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation ...", 361-2.

relatively predictable and credible, then the East Central European party systems probably should not be grouped together with the "inchoate" party systems of some fragile democracies.

Alternatively, it may also be that democratic consolidation should be defined in a stricter way than we did so far. In the four East Central European countries political actors seem to reckon that only electoral success can lead to political power, but many in the new party elites, not to speak of rank and file partisans, do not seem to be convinced that their rivals would not try some other routes to power if an opportunity occurs. True, these party elites did not show a great appetite for preemptive strikes against imagined threats to democracy so far. But it does not sound entirely unreasonable to define a consolidated democracy in somewhat stricter terms regarding the expectations of politicians. Suppose that politicians only believe in the law-abiding behaviour of their competitors if past behaviour in similar situation warrants that. Then, the probability that they trust that the winner of the next election will not use illegitimate means to stay in power, is greatly increased if (A) all potential contenders are collective actors (parties) with a certain established reputation; and (B) the past actions of these collective actors are believed to be a better guide to the behaviour of individual politicians than their personal predilections, which are anyway untested in the case of new faces. What conditions (A) and (B) together describe is, of course, the institutionalization of a party system. Thus, incorporating expectations about other actors' likely behaviour in the definition of consolidation may eliminate the puzzle of some postcommunist countries qualifying as consolidated democracies even though their party systems are extremely volatile.

Finally, it may be that Mainwaring and Scully's observation about the impact of party institutionalization on effectiveness in policy making and on democratic consolidation has less validity in parliamentary than in presidential systems. In parliamentary systems the legislature just cannot continue opposing the policies of the executive and implicitly letting the bureaucracy or the presidency implement what they find unpopular, though probably necessary. Those legislators who fail to support a non-confidence motion are rather easy to identify and certain to take the blame or credit for doing so. Public policies may, in the last analysis, be formulated by unaccountable civil servants, but there is always somebody to be held responsible for their actions.

Thus, when parties assumed office in East Central Europe after making supposedly unrealistic promises about a less painful, softer course of economic reform, they usually hastened to announce that the fiscal problems revealed to them when they first entered their new office were much deeper than expected, and therefore they were forced to follow a somewhat different course of action than

previously planned. Exaggerated as this allegation of regularity may sound, this was nevertheless the case with the Christian-national Olszewski-government in Poland in 1991, with the Antall-government in Hungary in 1990, with the first HZDS-government formed after the June 1992 elections in Slovakia, and with most leaders of the ex-communist MSZP after their victory in the 1994 Hungarian elections. The one remaining representative of this league, the 1993- SLD-PSL-government in Poland acted differently, and tried to reconcile the fiscal constraints with their election pledges. This latter aspiration also characterized the later years of the Antall-government in Hungary. Though one could argue that the eventual economic policies of these governments were more in line with the wisdom of finance ministry bureaucrats than with their election pledges, at least in retrospect the parties themselves were electorally accountable for what they did and also for the gap between their words and deeds. This is not to say that electoral control of public officials does not suffer when every second or third government in the region acts this way, but that matter relates to the quality, and not to the mere survival of newborn democratic systems.

This, however, is exactly the conclusion of the present paper. The quality of democracy is a great enough stake to justify the development of a strong party system even if that would not contribute much to the consolidation of democracy. Laying the stress on "democracy" than on "consolidation" suggests different priorities. For instance, it may attach greater import to clear-cut programmatic competition between somewhat ideological parties, and less to moderation, convergence, consensus, and low volatility than is usual in scholarly discussions of democratic consolidation. As the dilemmas of the emerging polarized pluralism in the Czech Republic indicated, beyond a certain point ideological polarization might hurt the quality of democracy. But to enable voters to make sense of the choices they face can be greatly facilitated by vigorous partisan clashes over ideological differences⁵⁰. Once party profiles are clearly drawn and initial electoral alignments forged, less strong stimuli may be enough to make voters believe that at elections they do make real choices - but not when a new party system is built from scratch⁵¹.

Attributing to political parties more of a contribution to the quality, rather than the mere consolidation of democracy also prompts another explanation for why parties and democracy tend to develop together. Vote trading - roughly, the strategic coordination of the voting behaviour of a smaller number of actors in order to make the overall outcome of collective decisions reached by a larger group more beneficial

⁵⁰ This point was developed in some detail in Tóka, "Political Parties and Electoral Choices ..."

⁵¹ I am grateful to Larry Diamond for suggesting this qualification of my original argument.

for themselves then it would be if they followed sincerely their true preferences on every single vote - inevitably emerges in any decisionmaking body that has real powers, like making and breaking governments, and adopts the principle of majority rule for important collective decisions. The coordinated strategic behaviour of any one group, by increasing voting support for a set of otherwise non-winning proposals, is certain to hurt the aspirations of other assembly members. The latter can only counter the trick - without restricting the freedom of members and suspending majority rule - is to form another voting bloc. If freedom and majority rule prevails, no reasonable assembly member concerned with the outcome can avoid engaging in the mutual reciprocation of vote trading.

Furthermore, if the assembly faces a large number of decisions that have little to do with each other (as modern legislatures do), the voting record of many, and probably all individual assembly members is doomed to become more predictable, given the identity of the coalition which they pledged to support than would result from their own individual preferences regarding the outcome of a series of collective decisions⁵². Thus, should these assembly members be elected representatives, their electors have strong incentives to abandon independent (and thus, incalculable) candidates and base their choice of representative primarily on what they associate with the legislative coalitions (party labels) on offer. The party list element of proportional representation reinforces this.

For this line of reasoning, political parties are more the products of democracy than its creators. Parties are still necessary to make representative democracy work, since - with the possible exception of a few extremely salient *and* simple issues - the decisions of legislative assemblies composed of isolated individuals would be incalculable, dominated by largely invisible *ad hoc* coalitions brought together around the preferences of the best informed and most skilful agenda-setters and vote-traders instead of the most numerous⁵³. But the claim is simply that the quality of democracy would suffer in the absence of relatively cohesive and persistent parties, and not that democratic institutions would not be able to survive that way: "Once the scale of society makes direct popular rule impossible and the complexity of political life renders selection by lot unacceptable, representation based on popular elections appears to be the only way to preserve elements of popular participation, direction,

⁵² See e.g. Michael Dummett, *Voting Procedures* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), chapter 2. Well before the postwar boom in the development of social choice theory, Eric Elmer Schattschneider explained the inevitable emergence of political parties in democracies along these lines, see E. E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1942), 30-39.

⁵³ See William H. Riker, *Liberalism Against Populism: A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1982).

and control implicit in democracy. ... Without parties to structure the campaign, to provide continuity from one election to the next, and to provide links among candidates in different localities and for different offices, the resulting elections are unlikely to be meaningful, even if they are technically free."⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Richard S. Katz, *A Theory of Parties and Electoral Systems* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 1.

APPENDIX A: The phrasing of the items of question 17 and 18 in the Fall 1992 CEU-surveys.

q.17 I am going to read some political goals. Please, tell me after each, which party or parties in ... (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) you think really wish to reach that objective. You can name maximum three parties in each case. Then I am going to ask you which party you think is the least likely to pursue that goal. Please, consider every parties operating in our country, not only those which we talked about earlier.

q.18: Now I would like to ask you how important each of these political goals are for you personally. When one of them is very important for you, answer one, if it is not at all important for you, answer five.

- a. Reduce unjust inequalities between people
- b. Help the development of private enterprises and a free market economy in ... (country)
- c. Guarantee that competent people are to be in charge of the economy
- d. Defend human rights and individual freedom in ...(country)
- e. Guarantee that less economic burden is put on the shoulder of people during the transformation of our economy
- f. Make more effective steps in environment protection
- g. Provide better health care and education
- h. Stop the deterioration of moral in our country
- i. Guarantee that women can have abortion if they decide so
- j. Protect unprofitable companies and mines from bankruptcy
- k. Strengthen national feelings
- l. Increase pensions and social benefits
- m. Increase the influence of religion and the Church(es)
- n. Speed up privatization of state-owned companies
- o. Reduce unemployment
- p. Give the police proper means to fight crime effectively
- q. Removing former communist party members from positions of influence
- r. Representing (promoting) ... (Czech, Polish, etc.) interests abroad better
- s. (POLAND ONLY) Protect the Polish food market by customs and taxes from foreign products.
- s. (CSFR ONLY) Preserve friendly relations between Czeches and Slovaks.
- t. (CSFR ONLY) The rapid separation of the Czech and Slovak Republics.

APPENDIX B: A short guide to abbreviations and party names appearing in the paper:

Poland

- AW "S":** Akcja Wyborcza "Solidarnosc" - "Solidarity" Electoral Action. A broad electoral alliance created after the 1995 presidential election with the participation of parts of BBWR, KPN, the former NSZZ "S", NSZZ "S '80", PC, PK, PL, SLCh, ZChN, and other small groupings. The programmatic profile of the coalition was rather obscure, the unifying goal of the participants was to remove the ex-communists from power in the next parliamentary election.
- BBWR:** Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform - Non-partisan Block for the Support of Reform. A heterogeneous electoral organization created before the 1993 election on the apparent initiative of President Lech Walesa, which, however, was never joined or endorsed publicly by him. In 1996 a part of BBWR joined AW "S" (cf. AW "S").
- KKWO:** Katolicki Komitet Wyborczy "Ojczyzna" - "Unity" Catholic Electoral Committee. A 1993 electoral coalition of ZChN (see below), PK (a splinter group from UD), and two smaller Christian parties, SLCh and PChD (cf. ZChN, WAK).
- KLD:** Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny - Liberal-Democratic Congress. The most market liberal offspring of the Solidarnosc camp led by former Premier Jan Krzysztof Bielecki. Supported three of the four (i.e. the market-liberal Mazowiecki-, Bielecki-, and Suchocka-) governments in 1989-93 (cf. UW).
- KPN:** Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej - Confederation for Independent Poland. An anti-communist and nationalist party with distinctively left of the centre economic policies, led by the veteran dissenter Lech Moczulski (cf. AW "S").
- MB:** Związku Białoruskiego - The electoral list of a Belorussian minority organization.
- MN:** Mniejszość Niemiecka - The electoral list of a German minority organization.
- NSZZ "S":** NSZZ "Solidarnosc" - "Solidarity" Independent Trade Union. The name of the 1991 and 1993 electoral lists, and the 1991-93 parliamentary club of the trade union that was founded in August 1980, banned between December 1981 and late Spring 1989, and served as a rallying point of opposition forces throughout the 1980s. While represented in the lower house, it first supported, then brought down both governments of that period (i.e. the Olszewski- and the Suchocka-cabinets). After the 1995 presidential election this political arm of the trade union was transformed into the much more encompassing AW "S" coalition (cf. AW "S").
- Partia "X":** Partia "X" - "X" Party. An anti-communist, secular, nationalist, anti-establishment, and social-protectionist party associated with Stanisław Tyminski, the surprise runner-up in the 1990 presidential election.

- PC, POC: Porozumienie Centrum - Centre Agreement. A Christian-conservative offspring of the Solidarnosc camp led by Jan Kaczynski. In 1991 its electoral list was labelled POC (Porozumienie Obywatelskie Centrum). Supported the Olszewski-government in 1991-92 (cf. AW "S").
- PL, PL-PSL: Porozumienie Ludowe - People's Agreement. A Christian-oriented agrarian party, offspring of the Solidarnosc camp. In the 1991 election it appeared as Polskie Stronnoctwo Ludowe - Porozumienie Ludowe. Formally supported each non-communist government while represented in the lower house (cf. AW "S").
- PPPP: Polska Partia Przyjaciol Piwa - Party of the Polish Friends of Beer. A strongly market-liberal party which originated from a 1991 protest party of the same name. It supported the Suchocka-government in 1992-93.
- PSL: Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe - Polish People's Party. A "historical" peasant party with a vast grass-root organization, which existed under the communist period as ZSL (United People's Party), a satellite of PZPR. One of the two coalition partners in the post-1993 governments.
- PWN-PSN: Polska Wspólnota Narodowa - Polskie Stronnictwo Narodowe. An electoral alliance of two insignificant extreme nationalist parties.
- PZPR: Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, Polish United Workers' Party. The ruling party in the communist period, voluntarily disbanded in January 1990 (cf. SLD).
- RAS: Ruch Autonomii Slaska - Movement for the Autonomy of Silesia. A regionalist party in South-Western Poland.
- RdR: Ruch dla Rzeczypospolitej - Movement for the Republic, later KdR (Koalicja dla Rzeczypospolitej - Coalition for the Republic). A strongly anti-communist Christian-nationalist party founded by former premier Jan Olszewski and other defectors from ZChN and PC in 1992 (cf. ZChN, PC, ROP).
- ROP: Ruch Odbudowy Polski - Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland. A strongly anti-communist electoral alliance formed by RdR and two other small parties in 1995 (cf. RdR).
- SdRP: Socjaldemokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej - Social Democratic Party of Poland. The *de facto* political heir of PZPR, the communist party of the *ancien régime* (cf. SLD).
- SLD: Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej - Democratic Left Alliance. The joint electoral list and parliamentary club of SdRP and the OPZZ trade union federation (cf. SdRP).
- SP or UP: Solidarnosc Pracy - Solidarity of Labour. A participant in the 1991 parliamentary election, later renamed as UP (cf. UP).
- UD: Unia Demokratyczna - Democratic Union. The main market-liberal offspring of the Solidarnosc camp led by a host of prominent politicians like former premiers Mazowiecki and Suchocka, and 1995 presidential candidate Jacek Kuron. Supported three of the four (i.e. the Mazowiecki-, Bielecki-, and

Suchocka-) governments in 1989-93 (cf. UW).

- UW: Unia Wolności - Freedom Union. A party of notables led by former finance minister Leszek Balcerowicz, and created by the merger of UD and KLD after the latter did not gain any seats in the 1993 parliamentary elections (cf. KLD, UD).
- UP: Unia Pracy - Union of Labour. A strongly secular social-democratic party led partly by some former prominent leaders of the Solidarnosc trade union (cf. SP).
- UPR: Unia Polityki Realnej - Union of Realpolitics. An extreme libertarian-conservative party with a somewhat anti-establishment appeal, led by Janusz Korwin-Mikke.
- WAK: Wyborcza Akcja Katolicka - Catholic Electoral Action. A 1991 electoral list based mostly on ZChN (cf. ZChN, KKWO).
- ZChN: Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe - Christian-National Union. The main Christian party in Poland, an offspring of the Solidarnosc camp. It supported each non-communist government while represented in the lower house (cf. KKWO, WAK, AW "S").

Czech Republic

- CMUS: Ceskomoravská unie středu - Czech-Moravian Union of the Center. A centre-left party formed on 17 December 1994 by the remainder of LSU and CMSS (former HSDMS, previously HSD-SMS) (cf. HSD-SMS, LSU).
- CSS: Česko strana socialistická - Czech Socialist Party. A slightly left of the centre historical party which used to be one of the satellite parties during the communist period. In 1992 it became part of LSU. In November 1992 some CSS-deputies and three former SPR-RSC deputies formed a separate parliamentary club called LSNS, and the June 1993 CSS-conference renamed the Socialist Party as LSNS and broke ties with LSU. Some former CSS-members and deputies decided to remain in LSU as individual members (cf. SD-LSNS).
- CSSD: Československá sociální demokracie - Czechoslovak Social Democracy, later Czech Social Democratic Party. A historical party which "merged" with KSCS after the February 1948 coup and was only reorganized after the November 1989 revolution.
- CSL: Česk(oslovensk)á strana lidová - Czech (previously Czechoslovak) People's Party: a historical Christian party which used to be one of the satellites of KSCS (cf. KDU-CSL). One of the Czech government parties since July 1992.
- DZJ or HDZJ: (Hnutí) důchodců za životní jistoty - Pensioners' (Movement) for Secure Life. A slightly left of the centre single-issue party using the HDZJ-label in 1992 and the DZJ-label in the 1996 elections.
- HSD-SMS: Hnutí za samosprávnou demokracii - Společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko - Movement for Self-governing Democracy and Society for Moravia and Silesia:

a centre-left, very moderately regionalist organization which contested the 1990 and 1992 elections (cf. CMUS).

- KAN: Klub angazovaných nestraníků - Club of Involved Non-Party-members; an association dating back to 1968, and revived after November 1989. It was a part of OF in 1990 (cf. OF).
- KDU: Křesťanská a demokratická unie - Christian and Democratic Union. CSL and some smaller Christian groupings contested the 1990 Czechoslovak election under this label (cf. KDU-CSL, CSL).
- KDU-CSL: a little more than just another name for CSL (cf. KDU, CSL)
- KSCM: Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy - Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia. The major component of LB, formerly KSCS (cf. KSCS, LB).
- KSCS: Komunistická strana Československa - Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The historical communist party in Czechoslovakia, which split between the Slovak SDL and the Czech-Moravian KSCM in the second half of 1990 (cf. KSCM).
- LB: Levý blok - Left Bloc. The 1992 electoral list and 1992-96 parliamentary club of KSCM and some smaller left-wing groups (cf. KSCM, KSCS).
- LSU: Liberální sociální unie - Liberal Social Union. The 1992 joint electoral list of three left of centre parties, CSS, SZ, and ZS, which was formally registered as a separate political party. After the defection of SZ and LSNS, its remainder (composed by ZS and some former CSS-members) continued to exist as a parliamentary club and also had a grassroots organization, but was absorbed by CMUS in December 1994 (cf. CSS, SZ, ZS, SD-LSNS, CMUS).
- ODA: Občanská demokratická aliance - Civic Democratic Alliance. A libertarian-leaning party of notables, a part of OF in 1990 (cf. OF), represented in every Czech government since the 1989 revolution.
- ODS: Občanská demokratická strana - Civic Democratic Party. The main market-liberal party in the Czech Republic. A successor organization of OF initiated and led by the 1990-92 federal finance minister - and, from July 1992 to present, Czech Premier - Vaclav Klaus (cf. OF). A participant in every Czech government since its inception.
- OF: Občanské Fórum - Civic Forum. The Czech umbrella organization which was the leading force of the November 1989 revolution, and the main non-communist political organization in the 1990 Czechoslovak elections and the 1990-91 governments (cf. ODA, ODS, OH, KAN).
- OH, SD: Občanské hnutí - Civic Movement, later renamed as SD (Slobodny Demokrati - Free Democrats). A centrist pro-market successor organization of OF, led by former Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier and joined by a plurality of the 1990-92 Czech cabinet members (cf. SD-LSNS).
- SDL: Strana demokraticka levica - Party of Democratic Left. A splinter from KSCM critical of the somewhat orthodox position of KSCM (cf. KSCM, LB).
- SD-LSNS: Slobodny Demokrati/Liberální strana národní sociální - Free

Democrats/Liberal Social National Party. A centrist party created via the merger of SD (ex-OH) and LSNS (ex-CSS).

SPP: Strana přátel piva - Beerlovers' Party. A small electoral organization with a limited anti-establishment appeal.

SPR-RSC: Sdružení pro republiku/Republikánská strana Československá - Association for the Republic/Czechoslovak Republican Party. A xenophobic and anticommunist, anti-Gypsy party with somewhat social-protectionist economic policies, led by Miroslav Sládek. It contested the 1990 election under the VDSPR label.

SZ: Strana zelených - Green Party. A left of centre environmentalist party, part of LSU in 1992. SZ set up its own lists for the 1990 election and 1996 elections, but could not contest the latter for failing to make the deposits required by the election list (cf. LSU).

ZS: Zemědělská strana - Agricultural Party. Not to be mixed with the right-wing Agrarian Party of the interbellum period, ZS used to be the left-of-centre political arm of Czech and Moravian collective farms. Its candidates appeared on the 1990 VSZ- and the 1992 LSU-electoral lists. Through a number of organizational changes the remainder of ZS was eventually absorbed by CMUS (cf. LSU, CMUS).

Slovakia

DS: Demokratická strana - Democratic Party. A right of the centre historical party in Slovakia traditionally favouring the Czechoslovak federation to Slovak independence. After 1992 it has absorbed several other federalist-leaning pro-market parties, including SKD (cf. SKD). Participated in the 1990-92 Slovak national (i.e. republican) governments.

DU: Demokratická Unia Slovenska - Democratic Union of Slovakia. A party of notables founded in 1994 by prominent defectors from HZDS. Party leader Jozef Moravčík was the Prime Minister in the March-September 1994 interim government given by a rainbow coalition of anti-Meciar forces (cf. HZDS).

HZDS: Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia. HZDS was founded in March 1991 by then Slovak Premier Vladimír Mečiar as a faction within VPN, and formally left VPN after the bulk of the federalist and pro-market tendency in the VPN leadership decided to oust the popular Mečiar from the premiership. HZDS was joined by about a half of the VPN-deputies and members, and adopted a more nationalist and less pro-market platform than VPN (cf. VPN). HZDS was the major government party between July 1992 and March 1994, and after the September 1994 election. While governing the independent Slovakia, the economic policy preferences of HZDS have become somewhat blurred, but the party established a clear identity through its combative advocacy of a distinctly majoritarian form of democratic government, an increasingly nationalist position on domestic issues, and a

cautious balancing of the Eastern (i.e. Russian) and Western orientation in Slovak foreign policy.

- KDH:** Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie - Christian Democratic Movement. A right of the centre Christian party, participated in the 1990-92 Slovak national governments and the 1994 Moravcik-government (cf. SKDH).
- KSS:** Originally, the name of the Slovak sister party of the Czechoslovak communist party; from 1991 the name of a small communist party dissatisfied with the reformist leadership of SDL.
- MK:** Magyar Koalíció - Hungarian coalition. An electoral coalition and parliamentary club of MKM, ESWS and MOS.
- MKM-ESWS:** The 1992 coalition and 1992-94 parliamentary club of two Christian-nationalist parties speaking for ethnic Hungarians.
- MOS:** Madarská občianska strana - Hungarian Civic Party. A liberal party of ethnic Hungarians, a part of VPN in 1990, and of MK in 1994. A supporter of the 1990-92 Slovak national governments.
- ODU:** Občianská demokratická únia - Civic Democratic Union. The secular, pro-market, federalist, and anti-Meciar offspring of VPN. One of the two most important partners in the 1991-92 Slovak national government headed by Jan Carnogursky (cf. VPN, SKD).
- ROI:** Rómska občianska iniciatíva - Civic Initiative of Gypsy Citizens. An ethnic organization which was a part of VPN/OF in 1990, but had a separate list of its own in the 1992 Czechoslovak elections.
- SDL:** Strana demokratickej ľavice - Party of the Democratic Left. The main ex-communist party in Slovakia, which is reputed for its moderation and reformist stance. Gave occasional but important legislative support for the July 1992-October 1993 Meciar-government, but participated in the March-September 1994 Moravcik government supported by a rainbow-coalition of anti-Meciar forces (cf. KSS, SV).
- SDSS:** Sociálnodemokratická strana na Slovensku - Social Democratic Party of Slovakia. The Slovak wing of the historical social democratic party of Czechoslovakia, joined by Alexander Dubcek in 1991 (cf. SV).
- SKD:** Strana konzervatívnych demokratov - Conservative Democratic Party. A secular, federalist, pro-market party formed mostly by former prominent politicians of ODU. Merged with DS before the 1994 election (cf. ODU, DS).
- SKDH, or KSU:** Slovenské kresťanskodemokratické hnutie - Slovak Christian Democratic Movement; later renamed as Kresťansko Socialna Unia. A small party founded by the more nationalist elements of KDH in March 1992 (cf. KDH).
- SNS:** Slovenská národná strana - Slovak National Party. A nationalist party with a long pre-war history, which started advocating the independence of Slovakia in 1990. Though SNS only signed a formal coalition agreement with HZDS in October 1993, the party already gave legislative support to, and its leader had a

portfolio in the Meciar-government between July 1992 and April 1993. Since October 1993 SNS was part of all HZDS-led governments and went into opposition when Meciar was temporarily ousted by a vote of non-confidence in March 1994. A pro-market splinter group (Narodno-demokratická strana) left the party in Winter 1993-94, supported the March-October 1994 Moravcik-government, and won parliamentary seats on the 1994 DU-list.

SV: Spolocna volba - Common Choice. A 1994 electoral coalition comprising of SDL, SDSS, SZS and HP (Hnutie poľnohospodarov: Movement of Farmers) (cf. SDL, SDSS, SZS).

SZS: Strana zelených na Slovensku - Green party of Slovakia. A left of centre party, part of SV in 1994 (cf. SV).

VPN: Verejnost Proti Násiliu - Public Against Violence. The umbrella organization which was the leading force of the November 1989 revolution in Slovakia, and the main non-communist political organization in the 1990 elections and the 1990-91 Slovak national governments (cf. HZDS, ODU, MOS).

ZRS: Zdruzenie robotnikov Slovenska - Association of Workers of Slovakia. A social-protectionist association, harshly critical of the privatization process. In 1992 one ZRS-representative was elected on the SDL-list, but in 1994 they fielded their own lists of candidates (cf. SDL).

Hungary

ASZ: Agrárszövetség - Agrarian Alliance. A moderate agrarian party which also contested elections and saw 2 and 1 of its candidates elected in single member districts in the 1990 and 1994 parliamentary elections, respectively. Two ASZ deputies joined the SZDSZ parliamentary club, one remained independent.

FIDESZ: Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége - Federation of Young Democrats. A secular and pro-market (in Hungarian parlance, liberal) youth organization which, alongside with MDF and SZDSZ, was among the most prominent opposition forces in the 1988-1990 democratic transition. It was eventually transformed into an ordinary political party and became a middle of the road ally first of SZDSZ, and - after 1994 - of MDF and KDNP.

FKGP: Független Kisgazda Párt - Independent Small Holders Party. An agrarian party of long historical pedigree, after 1990 it became the most nationalist, most anticommunist, and most populist of the six main parties in Hungary. Until early 1992 FKGP was a junior partner in the post-1990 governments, but then the party went into opposition and expelled most of its parliamentary deputies for their refusal to leave the government benches. Between 1990 and 1994 a number of smaller groups defected from FKGP and fielded candidates under various (United, National, etc.) "small holder" labels without success.

KDNP: Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt - Christian Democratic People's Party. A strongly social-protectionist Christian party, a junior partner in the 1990-94 coalition government.

- KP: Köztársaság Párt - Republic Party. A small SZDSZ-leaning party founded by a popular defector from the MDF-caucus in 1993.
- MDF: Magyar Demokrata Fórum - Hungarian Democratic Forum. A Christian-conservative party basing its identity on a strongly patriotic appeal and advocating a social market economy. The main government party between the 1990 and 1994 elections.
- MP (formerly MSZMP): Munkáspárt - Worker's Party. A small anti-market millieu-party with a considerable membership but limited electoral success, founded by orthodox communists in late 1989.
- MSZDP: Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt - Social Democratic P. of Hungary. Dating back to 1890, the image of MSZDP in postcommunist Hungary was shaped primarily by its controversial historical record and personalistic infightings between 1989 and 1993.
- MSZP: Magyar Szocialista Párt - Hungarian Socialist Party. The predominantly reformist successor of the former communist party called MSZMP, which was officially disbanded in October 1989. The single government party before the 1990 election, and the main government party after the 1994 election.
- MZP: Magyarországi Zöld Párt - Green Party of Hungary. An insignificant electoral organization devoid of any persistent ideological leaning.
- SZDSZ: Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége - Alliance of Free Democrats. A secular, pro-market, cosmopolitan (in Hungarian parlance, liberal) party, the junior partner in the post-1994 government.
- VP: Vállalkozók Pártja - Party of Entrepreneurs. An insignificant pro-business party which won one single-member seats in 1994 due to support FIDESZ, SZDSZ, and ASZ.

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