

Coalition Formation and the Regime Divide in East Central Europe*

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I. Introduction

The ability to form stable governing coalitions is a basic precondition of effective democratic governance in multi-party parliamentary systems. Several explanations have emerged of how political parties form such coalitions. They have contributed greatly to our understanding of how mature democracies function, but they have been less successful in accounting for the patterns of coalition formation in the new democracies of East Central Europe after the collapse of the communist regimes in 1989.

Party coalitions in East Central Europe are as diverse as they are puzzling. Some parties have formed stable coalitions between ideologically close allies. For example, the Czech government from 1992 to 1996 was heralded as an example of mature coalition formation and stability, and was easily explained by spatial theories of coalition formation. However, parties in other countries, such as Poland, rejected the very idea of such alliances, despite ideological proximity and complementary policy goals. Instead, they formed unstable and conflictual coalitions with second- or even third-best alternatives. Finally, in some cases, parties from opposite ends of the political spectrum unexpectedly formed alliances, as in Slovakia.

Such patterns run counter to the expectations derived from existing theories of coalition formation. Below, I first examine the existing explanations, and the coalitions they predict in East Central Europe. While no theory claims to predict all cases of coalition formation, these explanations seem unusually weak in accounting for the post-communist cases. Therefore, using survey data and the historical record to re-examine the pattern of coalition formation, I argue that

* I would like to thank Grzegorz Ekiert, Gary King, Kenneth Shepsle, Michael Tomz, and the participants of the

there may be a more parsimonious explanation of coalition patterns in the region. The fundamental predictor of coalition formation continues to be the “regime divide”—the depth and character of the persisting conflict between the successors to the ruling communist parties of the pre-1989 *ancien regime*, and the parties emerging from the communist-era opposition to these regimes. The deeper this divide, the lower the chances of coalitions forming on the basis of similar policy goals or ideology between the communist successors and their opposition counterparts.

The article then examines the coalition formation efforts of the communist successor parties. Even where these parties have succeeded in moderating their ideology, and in radically transforming their image, the regime divide can prevent them from forming coalitions with parties that share their policy preferences. While this cleavage shows signs of waning, the expectation of electoral punishment has prevented policy-convergent coalitions in the region for over a decade. Thus, the article builds on existing theories of coalition formation, while emphasizing the peculiarities of post-authoritarian transitions, and the constraints they impose on coalition building.

I. Existing explanations and their predictions

Throughout the literature, coalitions have been defined as a collection of government parties. Most scholars have agreed that if a) the party composition changes, b) an election takes place, or c) the prime minister of the cabinet changes, that particular coalition is said to end.¹ A stable coalition (the equilibrium) is reached when “a protocoalition V will form a viable government if there is no alternative coalition A which is supported by parties controlling more legislative votes than those supporting V, and which all parties supporting A prefer to form rather than V.”² Three main explanations of this process of coalition formation have emerged.

Faculty Workshop at Yale University for their helpful comments.

The explanation that has dominated the field³ posits that parties seek office, and will try to form a “minimum winning coalition”—a collection of parties with the minimum number of seats over the majority in the legislature.⁴ Since office-seeking is a zero-sum game (one partner’s gain is another’s loss), parties will minimize the extent to which they have to share offices.⁵ Majority governments will dominate, and office-seeking parties will bandwagon onto the proto-coalition, in an effort to gain the spoils of office. Therefore, we should see parties in East Central Europe form coalitions irrespective of their historical roots or ideological preferences. Since the new parties in the region have been initially described as having vague ideologies, few clear policy differences, and office as their main goal, there are even more grounds to expect that the coalitions in the region will follow the minimum winning coalition model.⁶

However, given the proliferation of minority governments (35%)⁷ and super-majority governments in Western Europe, many scholars have relaxed the assumption of pure office-seeking. Parties have been found to seek policy, as well as office, leading to the notion of a minimum *connected* winning coalition,⁸ which posits that parties form coalitions with ideologically proximate partners. In these “spatial proximity” models, policy goals, rather than office-seeking, underlies coalition formation, and the coalition parties will tend to converge in a zone of agreement on policy or ideology.⁹ If only one policy dimension is relevant, there is no “jumping over” of ideological neighbors in coalition formation. If there are several relevant policy dimensions, however, coalition bargaining may become unstable.¹⁰ Political institutions, such as ministerial policy autonomy, can reduce this instability.¹¹

If this explanation holds, parties will form coalitions that minimize policy differences in comparison with other possible proto-coalitions. Both minority and majority governments are in keeping with this analytical framework, since the goals are no longer zero-sum. Therefore, in

East Central Europe, we should see coalitions that coalesce around common policy goals, such as the large (if vague) initial support for economic and administrative restructuring, irrespective of party histories or the resulting size of the coalition.

Four assumptions of rationality underlie both of these approaches—a) each party is treated as a unitary actor, b) coalition governments must command majority support in legislature, c) parties are motivated by either office or policy or both, and d) all winning combinations of parties represent possible coalition governments.¹²

However, there are strong reasons to suggest that this last assumption should be relaxed. Elsewhere, parties perceived as a threat to the democratic system, or whose past alliances are unacceptable to the other parties' electorates, have been kept out of coalitions. For example, many West European communist parties have been excluded from government, despite policy positions that are often close to government parties. Neither pure office-seeking nor pure policy-seeking explanations can account for these patterns.¹³ Contrary to these models, therefore, we can assume that some coalition governments are more probable than others. We then have to specify which constraints or criteria will exclude parties from consideration as coalition partners.

The main constraint that determines coalition formation in the new democracies of East Central Europe is the regime divide between the parties originating from the communist regime, and those with roots in the former opposition to these communist parties. This *regime divide* consists of the depth and character of the conflict between the communist rulers and their opposition prior to the democratic transitions of 1989: whether it consisted of repression or negotiation, and if the latter, whether this negotiation was dominated by conflict or consensus. The more repressive or conflictual the relationship, and the more recent the conflict, the deeper the divide, and the less likely the possibility of democratic cooperation.¹⁴

The fundamental reason for the strength of the regime divide is that parties in a new democratic system seek to establish clear and stable reputations, first and foremost. Such reputations are the crucial signals by which both the voters and the other parties evaluate electoral appeals and policy proposals. Parties have been found to pursue credibility even when doing so adversely affects their short-term goals.¹⁵ Like others, party reputations are acquired through repeated, consistent, and sustained behavior,¹⁶ and consistency in parliamentary behavior lends credibility to party claims.¹⁷ In established, mature, democracies that are the analytical focus of minimal winning or spatial models, scholars can (and do) take for granted that parties have established such reputations.

In new democracies, however, party reputations are a goal unto itself, rather than a given. The new democratic system could not provide the time and opportunity for several iterations of the parliamentary game that would generate party reputations. Therefore, no political party could rely on its record of parliamentary behavior to establish their credibility immediately after 1989. Moreover, the profusion of inchoate political parties after democratic transitions meant policy programs that were as vague as they were numerous, with ambiguous and overlapping stances that made meaningful distinctions often impossible.¹⁸ Since the parties' policy stances were often as vague as they were volatile, voters and other parties had difficulty readily identifying the party closest to them ideologically.

In the absence of an established parliamentary record or clear identities, the parties' pre-democratic past determined their coalition potential. Specifically, the greater the conflict between the communist party and its opposition prior to 1989, the greater the divide between their successors. At a time when ideological and policy stances were often either vague or contradictory, the most easily identifiable parliamentary cleavage was between parties of the

opposition and parties stemming from the former regime. It was much easier for all concerned to look at the parties' pedigree, which was immutable and much more difficult to "spin" to either the voters or the other political parties. The regime divide was thus a source of both the most convenient identification for the political parties, and the easiest shortcut for the voters. This cleavage between the two "camps" of the communist era continued after the transition to democracy in 1989, on the strength of the need to establish party identities and reputations. The nature and extent of the conflict between the two camps, in turn, established the likelihood of their cooperation—the greater the conflict, the less likely a party to form a coalition across the regime divide, given the charges of betrayal of its identity and its allies, by both other parties and the voters.

Thus, we should expect that parties will form coalitions within their respective "camps" (that is, groupings of parties originating in either the former regime or the former opposition), even if their ideological or policy stances are actually closer to parties from the opposite camp. The more negotiation and consensus between the two sides prior to the democratic transition, on the other hand, the more likely the parties are to cooperate in the new democratic system on the basis of ideological proximity and policy goals, rather than their institutional origins.

Once parties decide they will form coalitions only within their respective camps, they have a limited number of potential partners. If they have a choice, they will pick as partners those parties closest to them on policy issues (thus furthering their reputation as consistent and pragmatic). This is because we assume that parties seek policy, as other European parties do, and that the regime divide is keeping them from pursuing this aim freely. If there are few parties within the same camp, they will simply form coalitions with all the parties within their camp, whether or not this guarantees a majority or proximity on policy/ ideology.

There are two corollaries to this postulate. First, since the parties with roots in the anti-communist opposition have “won,” (the democratic system they sought has replaced the communist system), we should see an asymmetry in coalition formation. That is, the communist successor parties are more likely to reach out and be open to coalitions, while the opposition successor parties will be more likely to refuse to form coalitions with the successors to the communist parties.

Second, parties which cross the divide and form coalitions with parties from the opposite camp should be punished by either the electorate or by other parties at unusually high rates (irrespective of their performance or incumbency effects) during the next electoral/ coalition formation cycle. This should affect those who *join* the coalition (and thereby “betray” their camp and electorate) more than those who *form* the coalition.

Under what conditions will the regime divide no longer matter? So long as party elites perceive that they will be punished electorally in the next round, they have a disincentive to form coalitions with parties from the other camps. If and when a party that formed a coalition across the divide is not punished by the electorate, the likelihood of other parties forming similar coalitions increases. As the size of the “punishment” decreases, the likelihood of cross-camp coalitions increases. Three conditions permit this: a) parties care less about their reputation, b) other sources of party reputation trump the regime divide, or c) voters no longer punish the “traitors.” There are several ways in which these conditions hold: for example, if there is a threat to the democratic system itself, all other parties may “close ranks” and form a cross-camp coalition against an anti-democratic party. Alternatively, policy pressures (such as demands of international organizations, economic crises, or security conflicts) could also be an imperative for cross-camp coalitions. Finally, time itself is likely to have two effects: generational change

means that a new cohort of voters and politicians, who had no stake in the former conflict, will come forth. Moreover, with time, the parties will develop parliamentary and electoral records, which determine the reputations of political parties in established democracies in the West.

To summarize, in new democracies, the politicians' first concern is to establish clear reputations—widely accepted sets of expectations about a given party's behavior and intent. In a post-transition system marked by vague and overlapping policy stances, the regime divide is the most fundamental cleavage, and as such, the clearest source of such identity. Therefore, coalitions will form within the constraints of the regime divide. If parties cross this divide, they are punished by the electorate, and the regime divide will persist so long as parties care about their reputations, or voters continue to punish defection.

Methodology and Summary of Findings

To test these hypotheses, I compiled a record of all government coalitions after 1989 in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.¹⁹ Other scholars have examined elite sympathies regarding other parties as a basis for testing hypotheses of coalition formation.²⁰ However, this may be misleading, insofar that a politician's dislike of a party that receives either 2% or 70% of the vote is irrelevant for the subsequent formation of coalitions: under the rules existing in each of the cases studied, the first party would not enter parliament, while the latter would have no need for coalition partners.

To see whether the minimum winning coalition model held, I examined whether the actual coalition, or other party combinations, could better approximate a minimum winning coalition. In all cases, this consisted of a simple majority. If no other combination of parties could have better approximated the minimum winning coalition standard of 50% +1, the actual coalition was coded as compliant with the expectations of the minimum winning coalition models.

Tested against the actual record of coalition formation, the minimum-winning-coalition explanation predicted 24% of the coalitions correctly. This is even less than the 34% the minimum-winning-coalition model has been found to predict in Western Europe.²¹ The rest of the coalitions were either under- or over-sized, despite the availability of other coalition parties. Thus, both the ODS and the CSSD led minority governments in the Czech Republic, and no majority government existed in Poland until 1993. Two out of the three Hungarian governments were too big by the simple majority standard (and too small by the 2/3 majority required to pass major pieces of legislation.)²²

In testing the spatial proximity model, the two examined dimensions were the parties' economic policies and their declarations of "worldviews"—stances on religion in the public sphere, nationalism, and cultural openness.²³ The first dimension consists of the parties' stances on economic reform. Scholars have shown that the social-bourgeois economic divide is the fundamental one around which the Left-Right spectrum is structured.²⁴ In East Central Europe, public opinion polls also show that the economic situation is the foremost concern of the voters.²⁵

The other major dimension of party competition in East Central Europe runs along a spectrum from secular/ cosmopolitan/ liberal to religious/ nationalist/ authoritarian stances.²⁶ This "worldview" dimension dominated the political discourse at several points: in Poland from 1991 to 1992 (over questions of abortion and religions in schools), in Slovakia and in Hungary intermittently (over questions of minorities and nationalism), and in the Czech Republic (during the recent debates over Roma minority policies). The regime divide cuts across both the worldview and economic dimensions: debates over these issues raged between and within both camps.

To test the spatial proximity model, I first used the parties' programmatic declarations, electoral appeals, and expert evaluations thereof, to place each party relative to each other on both the economic redistribution—free market and the cosmopolitan—authoritarian dimensions in each country. The more a party had advocated a free market, privatization, economic reform, and free trade, the farther it was placed along the “free market” end of the economic dimension. Conversely, the more the party had advocated redistribution, state ownership, a slowing down of economic reform, and state protection of vulnerable sectors, the farther along the “redistributive” end of the scale. The more a party advocated freedom of speech, secular rule, minority protection, and cultural openness, the farther its placement along the “cosmopolitan” end of the worldview scale. The more a party advocated censoring of offensive speech, an active role for the Church in state affairs, nationalist sentiment, xenophobia, or protection of national culture from foreign influence, the less “cosmopolitan” its placement. The result was a two-axis spatial graph of party ideological locations.

To determine whether the coalition patterns were consistent with the expectations of the spatial model, I used a two-step measure. First, I measured the average Euclidean (“as the crow flies”) distance between the coalition partners. If no other coalition could have minimized the distance, then the existing coalition was coded as compliant with the predictions of the spatial proximity model. However, since the saliency of a given cleavage may differ from party system to party system, a fairer test of the spatial proximity explanation should examine which coalitions would have formed if only one dimension dominated the process of coalition formation. In other words, would the coalitions be ideologically connected on *either* dimension of party competition? I therefore also measured the relative ideological distances on each of the two individual dimensions for coalitions that did not minimize the Euclidean distances.

The results show that only 43% of the coalitions that formed minimized the average Euclidean distance between the stances on *both* dimensions. This is considerably less than the 85% of West European coalitions explained by a broadly policy-based theory.²⁷ In addition, when coalitions connected only on a single dimension of competition were examined, 10% of the coalitions connected on the “worldview” dimension alone, and 24% of coalitions connected only on the economic “dimension.”

Thus, among some of the odder bedfellows that resulted were the coalitions of the economically reformist SdRP with the ultra-populist PSL in Poland in 1993-7, the liberal UW with the populist AWS in Poland after 1997, the social democratic SDL’ with the Christian Democratic KDH in Slovakia in 1994, and again in 1998, and the economically liberal Fidesz with the more populist MDF and FKGP in Hungary in 1998. Among the coalitions that should have formed, but did not, were the leftist coalition of the Czech Social Democrats with the post-communists in 1997, the populist HZDS with the leftist SDL’ in Slovakia in 1992, and again in 1994-8, and the secular, pro-reform UW-SdRP coalition in Poland after 1993, and again in 1997.²⁸

Finally, to examine the effects of the regime divide, I traced the histories of the parties. If all the coalition parties came from *either* the former opposition to communist rule, or from the former communist rulers, the coalition was coded as complying with the expectations of the regime divide model. 86% of the coalitions were made up of parties with common roots in either the “communist government” or “communist opposition” camps. In addition, the regime divide model further predicts that parties within the regime divide will form coalitions based on policy proximity. 66%, or 12 out of the 18 one-regime camp coalitions conform to this expectation on at

least one dimension of policy, and 39% (7 out of 18) do so on both main dimensions of policy proximity.

The results are summarized below. As we can see, more coalitions conformed to the expectations of the regime divide model than of either the minimum winning coalition model or the spatial proximity models.

TABLE 1 HERE

Several coalitions conformed to predictions of multiple models—specifically, one coalition was predicted by both the minimum-winning and the spatial model, four coalitions were predicted by all three models, and six by both the regime divide and the spatial models.²⁹ Therefore, Section III examines the process of coalition formation, and the declarations of the potential participants during the negotiations to show why a coalition conformed to a given model.

To examine whether the corollary of asymmetry held (communist successors find other parties more attractive as coalition partners than vice versa), I replicated the analysis of (Kitschelt et al 1999) by comparing scores given by respondents in public opinion polls from 1994 to 1996 regarding how “representative” the communist successor parties were seen by the rest of the electorate, and compared the results to how the communist successor supporters saw the rest of the parties. The results show a general asymmetry between how desirable the two camps are to each other’s supporters, thus partly explaining why communist successors seek coalitions, rather than other parties seeking coalitions with them:

TABLE 2 HERE

Thus, as we will see in the second part of this paper, the main communist successor parties have to prove themselves to both the electorate and to other parties, but have less to fear from forming coalitions—their electorate views other parties as roughly equally representative. This

asymmetry also suggests why the partners of the communist successors are more likely to be punished by the electorate in the next round of elections for their coalition participation—their constituency views the communist successors as far less representative. As we can see from the table below, parties which cross the regime divide and form coalitions across it lose a far greater proportion of their electorate than other incumbents (or the parties that *formed* the divide-crossing coalitions).

TABLE 3 HERE

Thus, parties that cross the regime divide lose support in the next elections at rates that are anywhere from twice to five times as high as other incumbent parties do. This is in keeping with the finding that even though coalitions undertake to assume collective responsibility for policy outcomes, both voters and other politicians differentiate between coalition partners, shifting support depending on their perceptions of a party's culpability.³⁰ As we will see in the next section, this electoral punishment also applies when parties with roots in the same regime camp form coalitions, if one of the partners has otherwise successfully disassociated itself from that camp.

Other potential reasons for the electoral losses, such as poor government performance or failure to deliver on promised policies or patronage, had less influence on the size of the punishment. If poor government performance was at the root, all incumbents should have been punished, not just the junior partners. If failure to deliver on policy or patronage promises mattered, then other junior coalition partners, equally constrained by the limitation of a junior role, should have been punished at the same rates. That neither condition held offers more evidence that the voters specifically punished the “defectors.”

To see how the process of coalition formation worked in East Central Europe, and under what conditions the regime divide played a significant role, the next section turns to a detailed set of case studies of coalition formation among a sub-set of actors, the communist successor parties.

III. Discussion: Coalition Formation and the Communist Successor Parties

The communist successor parties' efforts to form coalitions best illustrate the importance of the regime divide in the new democracies of East Central Europe. First, they are the key representatives of the regime divide—the parties of the discredited communist regime. As such, they faced a paradox: their past as the communist rulers made them simultaneously the most experienced and the most discredited political actors after 1989. After the mass anti-communist movements fragmented in 1990-91 and transformed into several smaller competitors, their successors were still united in their opposition to the communist past and the communist successors. As a result, the successor parties were ostracized and isolated in the parliaments as the unwelcome reminders (and remainders) of the communist regime.

Second, the parties were uniformly interested in pursuing coalitions and cooperating with other parties. However, they varied in achieving this objective: three out of the four parties examined did form government coalitions, and of those three, two were able to cross the regime divide. Of the two that formed coalitions across the divide, one was severely punished for doing so by its electorate, while the other retained its electorate and instead saw its junior coalition partner tumble in the polls. Therefore, these parties provide the variation in the outcomes that makes it possible to examine the regime divide and its effects on coalition formation in the democratic East Central Europe.

In Poland, the regime divide dominated coalition formation. The regime divide itself was characterized by recent, and inimical, confrontation—the rise of the independent trade union Solidarity in 1980, its transformation into a nation-wide opposition movement that claimed a third of the adult population, and the communist regime’s crackdown and imposition of martial law in December 1981. As a result, not only was the relationship between the post-communist and post-opposition forces highly adversarial, but many of the main players are still active on the political scene. Therefore, even though the communist party transformed itself radically into a moderate social-democratic, pro-reform force, it has been unable to form a single coalition with parties arising from the former opposition to communist rule.

Thus, after the first free elections, held in 1991, the Polish communist successor (The Social Democracy of Poland, SdRP) came in second with 12% of the vote, but was shut out of the coalition formation process. The party continued to be excluded, *a priori*, from consideration as a coalition partner or parliamentary ally, despite programmatic similarities and evident professionalism.³¹ Its policy proposals were also ignored, even as the party supported the radical economic and political reforms of 1989-91, in an attempt to appear “responsible” and gain greater acceptance.³² The SdRP rather bitterly concluded, “sometimes we’d get the feeling that even if we proposed something that was most obvious and beneficial, it would still be rejected on the basis of its origins.”³³

Nor did the top vote-getter, the Democratic Union (UD), a centrist post-Solidarity formation well-respected for its moderation and expertise, easily form a coalition. In the highly fragmented Polish parliament,³⁴ other post-Solidarity forces initially refused to form a coalition with the UD because its leader, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, had called for reconciliation and a “thick line” to be drawn between the two regimes, rather than for the prosecution of communists and their

successors. Instead, Jan Olszewski initially formed a minority coalition dominated by Christian Democrat groupings, only to fall from power in July 1992. This coalition minimized the differences in worldviews, but was too small to govern effectively.

His successor, Hanna Suchocka, formed a coalition that included both the Christian Democrats and the centrist UD, and the equally liberal Liberal-Democratic Congress (KLD) and Polish Economic Program (PPG). The differences between the Christian Democrats and the coalition partners comprised both “worldview” and economic issues. The Christian Democrats proved an especially disruptive force in the parliament, routinely torpedoing proposals they saw as “anti-family” or anti-Church (or too brazenly “liberal” in their economic stances). Nevertheless, the UD again excluded the communist successor from consideration as a coalition partner.

The Suchocka government fell in June 1993. In September 1993, the communist successor SdRP won the elections, with 20% of the vote. The divisions over joining its government in Poland again fell along the cleavage first expressed in 1980-81—all the successor forces of Solidarity rejected a coalition with the SdRP, despite ideological similarities among both the Labor Union (UP) and the UD.

Immediately after the elections, SdRP leader Aleksander Kwasniewski repeatedly insisted that the UD would be the best partner for the SdRP, as it would reassure the West of the new government’s reformist continuity.³⁵ The party had already formed some local coalitions with the UD,³⁶ and had attempted to reach out several times on the national level.³⁷ Moreover, there were numerous personal ties between the leaders of the SdRP and the UD.

However, for the UP and UD/UW (as the party was known after the UD and the KLD united after the 1993 elections), personal or ideological similarities had little effect on the parties’

coalition formation. Despite personal friendships, their shared experiences during the Round Table negotiations of 1989, and their similar views, especially on the role of the Church in Polish society, access to abortion, religion in schools, and foreign relations, the UP and UW could not afford an open alliance with the SdRP.

Although the UP had former communist reformers in its ranks, it argued that this “is the limit—one that we will not cross.”³⁸ The UW, in turn, promptly responded that it would not join any coalitions with the communist successors.³⁹ Its shared claims of expertise and managerial competence with the SdRP meant that one of the few things that distinguished it from the post-communists was its origin in Solidarity. An open, formal, alliance with the SdRP, UW leaders feared, would eliminate the UW from the political scene—such a coalition would only be possible if “a massive disaster” occurred, and the rest of the political scene became extremely radicalized.⁴⁰

Faced with this rejection from its first choice of partners, the SdRP was thus forced to form a government coalition with the Peasants’ Party (PSL), with whom it shared very few policy stances but a common pedigree—the PSL was a satellite party under communism, nominally representing the large rural sector, but subservient to the communist party. Formally speaking, the PSL was also from the communist successor camp. However, it acted “as if” it had come from the opposition, using the argument that as a satellite party, it was also oppressed by the communists. After 1989, given its singleminded drive to benefit the farmers, it developed a strong identity as a Christian/ peasant party, and attracted conservative rural voters, many of whom were strongly opposed to the communist successor party.

From the start, the two had very different economic and political aims. Differences immediately emerged, and persisted, over the Concordat with the Church, agricultural policy,

market reform, local administration reforms, and privatization.⁴¹ As an outgoing finance minister put it, the PSL acted as a brake on reforms, “thinking only about how much it can grab for the peasants.”⁴² At the same time, the PSL treated the coalition as an endless source of patronage,⁴³ continually criticized the SdRP, knowing full well that the SdRP had no other potential coalition partners, and refused to accept collective responsibility for government actions.⁴⁴

After four years of rule, the SdRP retained its electorate in the 1997 elections, gaining votes in absolute numbers and increasing its share of the vote from 20% to 27%. The PSL, however, lost half of its support, going from 15% to 7%. Even as the PSL was in the same regime camp for coalition purposes (other parties insisted that the PSL and the SdRP should form the coalition, given their common roots), its conservative rural voters treated the party’s coalition as crossing the regime divide, and punished it accordingly.

For their part, when the post-Solidarity forces returned to power within the AWS electoral coalition in 1997, the familiar pattern re-emerged. The UW chose to join the populist (and fractious) AWS in a government coalition, even though it knew much of the AWS was opposed to UW’s continuation of economic and administrative reform.

Thus, the patterns of Polish coalition formation follow the expectations of the reputation model. Despite both ideological proximity and numerical need, parties from the Solidarity camp refused to form alliances with parties from the post-communist camp. Within the post-Solidarity camp, policy proximity determined coalition potential in the first Christian Democratic coalition. Once this coalition was expanded to include the liberal UD, KLD, and PPG parties, it reverted to a simple regime divide coalition. The two corollaries also held: first, the SdRP consistently sought cooperation, and no other party sought a coalition with it. Second, the PSL was “punished” for its coalition, while the SdRP was not.

In contrast, the Hungarian political parties accepted the communist successor more readily, because the regime divide was less deep. The major state-society conflict of the communist era came in 1956, with the Hungarian Uprising and its brutal ending. Afterwards, however, a consensus emerged between the party and its societal opposition, centered around social stability and the prevention of another such tragedy. The party slowly liberalized both the political and the economic spheres, even allowing partly-free elections. Moreover, this conflict had occurred over 30 years before the transition to democracy, so that the vast majority of the players had left the political scene. As a result, the relationship between the party and the society was far less adversarial. The Hungarian party's past was nowhere near the liability that the Polish party's was, and its transformation into a social democratic party after 1989 was far more credible to both the electorate and to the other parties.

Thus, initially, the Hungarian communist successor, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP), was isolated in 1990-92 by the new government led by the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF).⁴⁵ Throughout 1990-94, despite the fact that its ideology and support base were the closest to the existing coalition,⁴⁶ it was not asked to join the coalition.⁴⁷ Moreover, despite numerous personal ties with the other parties' leaders—some in had fact helped to found the anti-communist opposition groupings of the late 1980s together—the communist successor was shunned by the MDF government in parliament.⁴⁸

However, other opposition parties welcomed its “exit from its political ghetto,” even if they did not immediately seek cooperation with the MSzP.⁴⁹ The MSzP avoided direct confrontation with the government, and instead focused on “acting responsibly in the parliament and displaying internal unity.”⁵⁰ As the conflicts increased within the coalition and in the parliament,

the MSzP and its insistence on moderation began to look increasingly attractive to the Hungarian parliamentary groupings,⁵¹ especially given its support for the economic and political reforms.

The MSzP's resulting electoral victory in 1994 meant that for once, a communist successor party did not experience the asymmetry of unilaterally asking for coalition support. After winning the 1994 elections with 33% of the vote and 54% of the seats, the MSzP formed a governing coalition with the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), a liberal party arising from the pre-1989 opposition to the communist regime.⁵² Ideologically, the SzDSz was not necessarily the party closest to the MSzP—Fidesz was just as close.⁵³ However, the SzDSz elites felt that after also being excluded from power in 1990, they now had their one chance to govern, and with a competent, ideologically moderate partner.

Despite the shallower regime divide, however, the SzDSz was “punished” by its electorate for the coalition—its support dropped from 19.7% in 1994 to 7.8% in the 1998 elections. Moreover, the new coalition that formed after the 1998 elections, led by the centrist Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz), excluded the SzDSz (along with an extremist nationalist party, the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP), but included all of the other extant non-communist parties. Fidesz explicitly punished the SzDSz for its cooperation with the MSzP, and reasserted the primacy of the regime divide. Nor did it brook discussion with the MSzP, despite continued ideological similarities.

Thus, the Hungarian coalition patterns support the reputation-seeking model. Hungarian political parties could more easily overcome the shallower regime divide, and form coalitions across that divide. However, the voters still punished the “collaborator” with the post-communist party (far more than the communist successor itself, who had largely retained its share of the

vote in the 1998 elections). As a result, the subsequent coalition excluded the “collaborator,” and was formed along the regime divide.

For their part, Czech parliamentary coalitions formed exclusively within the former opposition’s camp. Even though this meant governing as a minority government after 1997, no party wanted to cross the regime divide and form a coalition with the communist successor, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM). This was largely because of the depth of the regime divide in the Czech Republic, the result of the party’s refusal to liberalize or to engage the opposition after the Prague Spring of 1968. Instead of negotiation, however adversarial, the communist party consistently repressed the opposition and persecuted its representatives. After 1989, this cleavage was further exacerbated by the communist successor’s inability to transform itself into a more moderate party, and by its isolation by the President, Vaclav Havel, who repeatedly denounced the party.⁵⁴

As a result, the other parties excluded the KSCM *a priori* from any governing or electoral coalitions, putting them on par with the neo-fascist Republicans, despite repeated efforts to establish good relations with other opposition parties.⁵⁵ The KSCM’s legislative proposals were kept off the agenda in several cases, prompting the party to declare that it would now pursue only policy proposals in “areas of interest.”⁵⁶ Instead of negotiating with the KSCM, the other parties attempted to delegitimize it. The party continually complained of societal and parliamentary ostracism, and its elites admitted the KSCM had little chance of widespread acceptance.⁵⁷

Repeated efforts were rebuffed by potential partners.⁵⁸ Most importantly, the one party the KSCM had initially identified as an attractive coalition partner, the Social Democrats (CSSD), rejected the KSCM outright. Even when the CSSD was extremely weak (it barely cleared the 5% electoral threshold in 1990-2), it refused to form a coalition with the KSCM, the only other Left

party in the Czech Republic. The Social Democrat leaders declared that no coalitions were possible with the communist successor KSCM due to “irreconcilable value differences” between the two parties and because the KSCM “lost its place among the system of democratic parties” in the Czech Republic.⁵⁹

Instead, the parliament was dominated from 1990 to 1997 by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), one of the offshoots of the Civic Forum, the mass movement that brought down communism in the Czech Republic in 1989. The ODS steadfastly refused to negotiate with the Czech communist successors, and instead formed a coalition with the two parties whose policy goals were closest its own: the ODA and the KDU-CSL. The same coalition formed again after the June 1996 elections. However, it fell apart in December 1997, after revelations of ODS corruption.

After a caretaker government, the 1998 elections brought in the Social Democrats into power. The ODS refused to form a grand coalition (or rather, demanded so many cabinet ministries as to make farce of the concept), and the other parties refused to enter the coalition with the leftist Social Democrats. Since the KSCM was the one remaining potential partner, its leaders had hoped for an informal coalition with the Social Democrats. However, the Social Democrats once again refused this option, and instead chose to govern as a minority government, rather than risk getting tarred with the brush of “communist collaboration.”

Thus, the Czech patterns of coalition formation also confirm the regime divide model. Parties formed coalitions exclusively within the former opposition camp, given the extremely deep regime divide. Rather than risking electoral punishment, parties formed minority governments. Finally, while the communist successor desperately sought allies, it was thwarted by all the other parties in doing so. The regime divide was so deep as to make impossible the one coalition

predicted by both minimum winning and spatial proximity models, between the Social Democrats and the communist successor in 1998.

Finally, the Slovak coalition patterns are perhaps the most unorthodox, in keeping with the nature of its nascent democracy. They also illustrate the conditions under which the regime divide can be overcome. Three factors contributed to a shallower regime divide than in the Czech Republic: first, the repression of the opposition after 1968 was milder in Slovakia. Second, Slovakia experienced real gains, both in the form of economic subsidies and some measure of regional autonomy, after 1968. Third, it was the unspoken understanding (and after 1989, a main claim of the communist successors) that the system in Slovakia could have been different, had it not been for Czech domination. Therefore, although the regime-society conflict was as recent as it was in the Czech Republic, it was not quite as deep or as bitter. For its part, the communist successor, the Party of the Democratic Left, (SDL'), was largely able to transform itself, the result of the same federative policies after 1968, and the pool of reformist elites they allowed to flourish.⁶⁰

Moreover, given the relatively small pool of intellectuals and politicians in Slovakia, communists dispersed into almost all the main parties in Slovakia after 1989. These, in turn, had by 1992 either firmly committed themselves to democratic rule (KDH, SDL', DU), or made minimal commitments to democracy and the rule of law, instead turning to populist and nationalist appeals (HZDS, SNS, and later, ZRS). Therefore, in addition to the regime divide, a cross-cutting cleavage ran between "democratic" and "populist" parties.

Vladimir Meciar (himself a former communist) and his Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) ruled Slovakia beginning with the 1992 elections. A populist party with little patience for democratic practice and policymaking, the HZDS formed a coalition with the nationalist SNS

in 1992, and did so again after winning the September 1994 elections. Meciar's heavy-handed tactics meant that the communist successor SDL' was one of the few only stable and consistent defenders of democracy within Slovakia.

Therefore, the "democratic" parties banded together against the HZDS, which they perceived as a threat to the democratic system itself. As a result, the SDL' could more easily overcome the regime divide,⁶¹ and more importantly, would have to participate in any coalition that replaced Meciar. In March 1994, then, after months of negotiation with the HZDS to moderate its policies,⁶² the SDL' joined forces to bring down the HZDS government.

As a result, the Slovak communist successor not only crossed the regime divide, but also formed a coalition to protect democratic and market reforms with its ideological opposite—the Christian Democrats. Joining them in the coalition were three centrist splinters.⁶³ The policy distance between the Christian Democrats and the SDL' was considerable, especially on the "worldview" dimension.⁶⁴ The SDL' could cross the regime divide because the cleavage was shallower and because a real threat existed to democracy that made such a coalition imperative, and caused the parties to care less about their immediate reputation with the voters.

Nonetheless, as the junior partner in a coalition that straddled the regime divide, the SDL' was punished for its defection. In the elections held later that year, in September 1994, the SDL' barely won 10% of the votes, instead of the 25% it had expected. However, the SDL' persevered in its opposition to the HZDS. Given their common roots and shared constituencies, several leaders in both the HZDS and the SDL' felt the alliance was a "natural" one.⁶⁵ However, joining the HZDS in a coalition would have meant not only risking submission to a highly autocratic party, but also losing the SDL's hard-earned reputation as a protector of democracy. At the same time, however, the party was reluctant to cross the regime divide again. Therefore, the SDL'

refused to enter either the HZDS coalition, or the anti-HZDS electoral coalition that formed in 1997, the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK). Instead, it ran by itself in the 1998 elections. It did join the new government coalition with the SDK, in the name of preserving democracy, but exacted 9 out of 20 government ministries.

In Slovakia, a shallower regime divide allowed the communist successors and the opposition heirs to form coalitions. However, the other divide that oriented post-1989 politics in the country was between the forces of “standard” democratic politics, and those of populism, for whom nationalism, patronage, and the oppression of political opponents was a *modus operandi*. As a result, there was also less asymmetry in coalition formation between the communist and opposition successors, even if the voters punished the party which crossed the divide, the SDL’, in the subsequent elections. The Slovak case thus cautions us against assuming that the regime divide will be the only cleavage driving coalition formation—an even more fundamental disagreement over the commitment to the new system and its institutionalization can trump the regime divide, and the parties’ focus on it as a chief determinant of their reputation. The threat to the democratic system (in the form of the HZDS) caused the parties to pay less attention to their reputations, and more to preserving the political system in which they could survive.

Generally, however, the regime divide has continued to structure coalition formation, as parties sought to develop clear and stable reputations in the new democracies. Parties constrained themselves, either by eliminating some possibilities altogether, or by making certain coalitions and parliamentary actions far less likely.⁶⁶ Specifically, the past state-society relationship determined the relative ease and flexibility with which communist successor parties formed coalitions.

Given this divide, ideological proximity can even act as an *obstacle* to coalition formation when the reputation of the formateur or the dominant party in the coalition would adversely affect the support of the would-be coalition partners. In the Polish and Czech cases, parties ostensibly close to the communist successors refused to form coalitions with them. Similarly, the Slovak SDL' actually formed a coalition with one of the parties *farthest* away from it ideologically.⁶⁷ However, such decisions make sense once we take into account that the effects of the regime divide can outweigh ideological similarities.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to explain why some coalitions have formed so much more readily than others have in East Central Europe, defying the predictions of both ideological and policy-centered theories. The regime divide poses a problem for theories of coalition formation, since “elegant mathematical formulations of bargaining power do not respond well to the *ad hoc* deletion of parties from the universe” of potential partners.⁶⁸

Coalition in new democracies form along the regime divide, since the new parties' first priority after the democratic transition is to develop a consistent identity and a reputation that will allow them to gain a steady electorate. The deeper this regime divide, the less likely the formation of coalitions that bridge it. As a corollary, old-regime parties are more likely to seek than to be sought in coalition formation, illustrating the “asymmetry” inherent in this process of reputation building. Second, parties which cross the divide are likely to be punished by the voters in the next round of elections. So long as they do, the divide will persist. When the voters reduce their punishment of the “defectors,” or if the parties begin to care less about their historical identity, the regime divide is likely to decrease.

It is important to note that this discussion has focused on coalition *formation*, rather than on coalition *stability*. Policy and ideological diversity within the coalition both have been found to determine coalition stability—yet it is not clear whether these factors would play the same role in new democracies.⁶⁹ Another direction for further research is to test the hypothesis generated in this paper against other cases of transitions from authoritarian regimes, such as Southern Europe, Central and Latin America, and post-war Western Europe. While policy and ideology can bring coalitions together or keep parties apart in established democracies, the parties' political pedigree can be the most important determinant of coalition formation in new democracies.

The three models, and their chief characteristics, are summarized below:

Model	Minimum Winning Coalition	Spatial Proximity/ Directional Models	Regime Divide
Assumptions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. parties as unitary actors 2. coalition governments must command majority support in legislature 3. parties are motivated by office 4. all parliamentary parties are potential coalition partners 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. parties as unitary actors 2. coalition governments must command majority support in legislature 3. parties are motivated by policy 4. all parliamentary parties are potential coalition partners 	As in spatial proximity, but Assumption 4 is relaxed: only some parties in parliament can form coalitions together.
Parties' goal	Office	Policy	Reputation
Determinants of coalitions	Size considerations	Ideological Proximity/ Ministerial Portfolios Complement each other	Regime Divide
Predicted Outcomes	Coalitions will form such that the total number of seats occupied by the coalition partners is the minimum number beyond the majority.	Coalitions will minimize ideological distance, and the coalition partners will exhibit centripetal tendencies.	Coalitions will form only within the "regime camps:" among parties with roots in either the former regime, or the former opposition.

Table 1. Determinants of coalition formation in East Central Europe after 1989

Coalition model:	Minimum Winning	Spatial Proximity			Regime Divide
		Economic issues alone	Worldview issues alone	Both (Euclidean)	
Number of Coalitions Predicted Correctly	5 24%	5 24%	2 10%	9 43%	18 86%

Table 2. Indicators of asymmetry in coalition-seeking.⁷⁰

Scale: 1-7, with 7 as most representative.	Poland	Czech	Slovak	Hungarian
Representativeness ranking of communist successor party by other voters	3.45	2.49	3.14	3.32

“Representativeness” ranking of other parties by communist successor supporters	3.15	3.59	3.98	3.39
Ranking of party by party supporters	6.11	6.43	6.43	6.18

Table 3. Indicators of electoral punishment of parties that crossed the regime divide.

Country	Average electoral support lost by incumbents in the next election, as % of their previous support.	Electoral support lost by parties that crossed the regime divide, as % of their previous support.
Poland	-29.8%	-53%
Hungary	-18.9%	-60%
Czech Republic	No crossing of regime divide	
Slovakia	-6%	-29%

¹ Lijphart, Arend. “Measures of Cabinet Durability: a Conceptual and empirical evaluation.” *Comparative Political Studies*, (July 1984), 265-279.

² Budge, Ian and Laver, Michael “Coalition Theory, Government Policy, and Party Policy,” in Michael Laver and Ian Budge, eds. *Party Policy and Government Coalitions* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), p. 6.

³ Laver, Michael. “Between theoretical elegance and political reality: deductive models and cabinet coalitions in Europe,” in Pridham, Geoffrey, ed. *Coalitional Behaviour in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 41.

⁴ Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. (New York: Basic Books, 1984).
Dodd, Lawrence. *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press,

1976). Gamson, William. "A Theory of Coalition Formation," *American Sociological Review*. (1961), 373-382.

⁵ Riker, William. *The Theory of Political Coalitions*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

Baron, David and Ferejohn, John. "Bargaining in Legislatures," *APSR* (1989), 1182-1206.

⁶ See, for example, Agh, Attila. "The Hungarian Party System and Party Theory in the Transition of Central Europe." *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. (April 1994), 217-238, Lewis, Paul.

"Political Institutionalization and Party Development in Post-communist Poland." *Europe-Asia Studies*. 5 (1996), 779-799, Bielasiak, Jack. "Substance and Process in the Development of Party

Systems in East Central Europe" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 30 (1997), 23-44,

Kopecky, Petr. "Developing Party Organizations in East-Central Europe," *Party Politics*, 1995,

No. 4: 515-534, Racz, Barnabas. "The Socialist-Left Opposition in Hungary," *Europe-Asia*

Studies 4, (1993), 647-670, Zubek, Voytek. "The Fragmentation of Poland's Political Party

System." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, (March 1993), 47-71.

⁷ Strom, Kaare. "Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies*, (July 1984), 199-227.

⁸ de Swaan, Abram. *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*. (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1973).

⁹ See Laver, Michael, and Kenneth Shepsle. "Government Coalitions and Intraparty Politics,"

BJPS (October 1990), 489-507, Schofield, Norman. "Existence of a 'structurally stable'

equilibrium for a non-collegial voting rule." *Public Choice* (1986), 267-284. Austen-Smith,

David and Jeffrey Banks. "Stable portfolio allocations" *APSR* (1990), 891-906. Parties can of course seek office, in order to achieve policy goals.

¹⁰ McKelvey, Robert. "General Conditions for Global Intransitivities in "Formal Voting Models," *Econometrica*, (1979), 1085-1111.

¹¹ Budge, Ian and Keman, Hans. *Parties and Democracy* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).

¹² Laver in Pridham, p. 34.

¹³ Budge, Ian, David Robertson, and Derek Hearl, eds. *Ideology, Strategy, and Party Change*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1987).

¹⁴ This definition of the regime divide differs from the account of Kitschelt, Herbert, Zdenka Mansfeldova, Radoslaw Markowski, and Gabor Toka. *Post Communist Party Systems*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1999). Rather than looking at the type of communist regime, this approach looks at the history of the *interactions* between the party and its opposition. In Kitschelt's specification, we would expect identical results for Poland and for Hungary, given the similarities in the regime type.

¹⁵ Laver and Shepsle 1996, pp. 19 and 248.

¹⁶ Dixit, Avinash and Nalebuff, *Thinking Strategically* (New York: Norton, 1991), Schelling, Thomas. *The Strategy of Conflict*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

¹⁷ Franklin, Mark and Thomas Mackie. "Familiarity and Inertia in the Formation of Governing Coalitions in Parliamentary Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* (July 1983), 275-298, Laver, Michael, and Shepsle, Kenneth. *Making and Breaking Governments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 69.

¹⁸ Offe, Claus. "Capitalism and Democracy by Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe" *Social Research*, 59 (Winter 1991), 865-892.

¹⁹ All the data on coalitions, party spatial locations, and codings used are available from the author.

²⁰ Toka, Gabor. “The Hierarchy of Issue Domains in Inter-Party Relations in East Central Europe with a Directional Model of Coalition Formation,” Paper presented for the meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 3-6, 1998.

²¹ Budge and Keman, p. 14.

²² To give the greatest chance to the minimum winning coalition hypothesis, I coded simple majority Hungarian coalitions as compliant with its predictions.

²³ Kitschelt, Herbert, “The Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe,” *Politics and Society*, 1 (March 1992), 7-50. Markowski, Radoslaw. “Political Parties and Ideological Spaces in East Central Europe” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 3 (1997), 221-254., Zubek, Voytek. “The Reassertion of the Left in Post-Communist Poland,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, 5 (1994), 801-837, Huber, John and Inglehart, Ronald. “Expert Interpretations of Party Space and Party Locations in 42 Societies,” *Party Politics* 1, (January 1995) 73-111.

²⁴ Lijphart, Arend. *Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

²⁵ Kitschelt 1992, 1994. Evans, Geoffrey, and Whitefield, Stephen. “Economic Ideology and Political Success,” *Party Politics* (October 1995), 565-578. Agh, Attila. “The Hungarian Party System and Party Theory in the Transition of Central Europe.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. (April 1994), 217-238, Bunce, Valerie, and Csanadi, Maria. “Uncertainty in Transition: Post-Communists in Hungary.” *East European Politics and Societies*, (Spring 1993), 240-273, Cotta, Maurizio. “Building party system after the dictatorship: the East European cases in a comparative perspective,” in Geoffrey Pridham and Tatu Vanhanen, ed. *Democratization in Eastern Europe: domestic and international perspectives*. (London: Routledge, 1994).

²⁶ Kitschelt 1992.

²⁷ Budge and Keman, p. 44.

²⁸ Zubek, p. 53.

²⁹ The one coalition predicted by both minimum-winning and spatial models was the MSzP-SzDSz coalition in Hungary, 5.94-5.98. The four coalitions predicted by all three models were: the two ODS, KDU-CSL, ODA coalitions in the Czech Republic, 6.92-6.96 and 6.96-11.97, the VPN-KDH coalition in Slovakia 6.90-3.91, and the HZDS-SNS coalition in Slovakia, 6.92-3.94 (spatial proximity on economic dimension only). The six coalitions predicted by both the regime divide and the spatial coalition were: the KLD-PC-UD-OKP coalition in Poland, 1.91-12.91, the PC, PL, SLCh, ZChN, PChD coalition in Poland, 12.91-7.92 (spatial proximity on the worldview dimension only), the OF-KDU-HSD-SMS coalition in the Czech Republic, 6.90-6.92, the HZDS-ZRS-SNS coalition in Slovakia, 10.94-10.98, and in Hungary, the MDF-FKgP, KDNP coalition, 5.90-5.94, and the Fidesz, FKgP, MDF coalition, 5.98- (spatial proximity on worldview dimension only.) An additional four coalitions were predicted by the spatial proximity and the regime divide model, but non-coalition parties existed that were just as close to the coalition formateur as the parties that joined.

³⁰ Anderson, Christopher. "The Dynamics of Public Support for Coalition Governments," *Comparative Political Studies* 28 (October 1995), 350-383.

³¹ Millard, Frances "The Shaping of the Polish Party System, 1989-93," *East European Politics and Societies*, (Fall 1994), 467-494, p. 843.

³² Jozef Oleksy, quoted in *Zycie Warszawy*, 17 March 1993.

³³ Wiatr, Jerzy *Krotki Sejm*. (Warsaw: BGW, 1993), p. 35.

³⁴ Five governments formed and fell in the first four years of its existence, and parliamentary groupings proved highly unstable.

³⁵ *Rzeczpospolita* 25-6 September 1993.

³⁶ *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* 5 August 1994. The Freedom Union's leader, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, initially forbade such coalitions with the SLD, but revoked this stance after such coalitions formed anyway in several cities.

³⁷ For example, it offered to stabilize the government of Hanna Suchocka, but she refused to negotiate with the party. *Rzeczpospolita* 3 September 1993.

³⁸ *Sztandar*, quoting Borowik of UP, 14 March 1996.

³⁹ *Trybuna Ludu*, 27 September 1993, and 28 September 1993..

⁴⁰ *Wprost*, 22 March 1998.

⁴¹ Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, *Dwa Lata Pracy Parlamentarnej (19.9.1993-19.9.1995)*. (Warsaw: SLD Parliamentary Club, 1995) and Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, *Nasz Program dla Polski: Trzy lata Pracy Parlamentarnej SLD*. (Warsaw: SLD Parliamentary Club, 1996), p. 8.

⁴² Marek Borowski, resignation speech, *Gazeta Wyborcza* 7 February 1994.

⁴³ For example, the PSL nominated, in 22 out of 30 cases, its own party activists to various posts. The SLD did so with only 1 out of 8. *Trybuna*, 7 February 1994.

⁴⁴ Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, *Nasz Program dla Polski: Trzy lata Pracy Parlamentarnej SLD*. (Warsaw: SLD Parliamentary Club, 1996), p. 15.

⁴⁵ Agh, Attila. "The Hungarian Socialist Party and Party Change," *Party Politics* 2 (October 1997) 427-444, p. 430.

⁴⁶ Markowski 1997.

⁴⁷ Szarvas, Laszlo. "Parties and party-Factions in the Hungarian Parliament," Budapest Papers on Democratic Transition No. 34, Hungarian Electronic Library, 1992.

⁴⁸ Szelenyi, Szonja, Ivan Szelenyi, and Winifred Poster. "Interests and Symbols in Post-Communist Political Culture: the Case of Hungary." *American Sociological Review*. (June 1996), 466-477, p. 475.

⁴⁹ Reisch, Alfred A. "Hungarian Socialist Party Looks Ahead," RFE/RL, 29 March 1991.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 25.

⁵¹ O'Neil, Patrick. "Revolution From Within: Institutional Analysis, Transitions from Authoritarianisms, and the Case of Hungary" *World Politics* (July 1996), 579-603.

⁵² The MSzP took 9 out of the 12 ministries, leaving Internal Affairs, Culture and Education, and Transport to the SzDSz.

⁵³ Markowski 1997 argues that Fidesz was actually closest to the MSzP. Kitschelt et al 1999 place the SzDSz next to the MSzP on several dimensions.

⁵⁴ For example, even as he met with the representatives of all the other parliamentary parties, including the right-wing extremist SPR-RSC, Havel refused to meet with the representatives of the KSCM.

⁵⁵ *Dokumenty IV Sjezdu KSCM*, (Prague: KSCM, 1996), p. 48.

⁵⁶ *Dokumenty II Sjezdu KSCM*, (Prague, KSCM, 1993), p. 12.

⁵⁷ *Dokumenty II Sjezdu KSCM*, p. 10.

⁵⁸ Including the HSD-SMS, a regional party, Jiri Dienstbier's Civic Movement, and the Czech Socialist Party.

⁵⁹ Petra Buzkova, in *Mlada Fronta Dnes*, 28 January 1993.

⁶⁰ Specifically, the strict centralization of power in the Czechoslovak communist party meant that as orders flowed from Prague to the Slovak regional party heads, Bratislava was largely neglected by party supervision and control commissions. Pockets of reformists survived.

⁶¹ Interview with Dusan Dorotin, 4 February 1997, Bratislava, and *Nove Slovo* 18 July 1991.

⁶² *Narodna Obroda*, 21 February 1996.

⁶³ These were the Alternative of Political Realism and Alliance of Democrats (which later joined to form the Democratic Union), and the National Democratic Party.

⁶⁴ Markowski 1997.

⁶⁵ One major shared constituency of the two parties were the so-called “red managers”—former party directors who now managed newly privatized enterprises. (TASR, *Daily News Monitor* 3 October 1994.)

⁶⁶ Strom, Kaare, Budge, Ian, and Laver, Michael J. “Constraints on Cabinet Formation in Parliamentary Democracies,” *American Journal of Political Science* (May 1994), pp. 303-335.

⁶⁷ Markowski 1997, p. 233.

⁶⁸ Laver in Pridham, pp. 41-2.

⁶⁹ Party policy is more responsible for the formation of coalitions, than for their stability.

Luebbert, Gregory. *Comparative democracy: policy making and governing coalitions in Europe and Israel* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 145-155. Paul Warwick argues that ideological diversity determines cabinet stability. Warwick, Paul. *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), p. 83.

⁷⁰ Data from Gabor Toka at Central European University, and the “Party Systems and Electoral Alignments in East Central Europe” Project public opinion polls, conducted from 1992 to 1996.