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Veronika Pasyukova: Successor Parties and Trade Unions in the Post-Communist States. Institutionalizing Informal Relationships

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The paper outlines the main ideas of the Candidate dissertation thesis defended at the Perm State University (Perm, Russia) in 2008 and the arguments developed at the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies (Washington, DC, USA) in 2009.

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Abstract

The specific character of post-communist democracies greatly depends on the transformation of the informal relationships and networks that were typical of the late communist period. The institutional basis of the post-communist states was their former communist regimes; likewise, civil society institutions were formed on the basis of their communist predecessors, such as successor parties and trade unions. In Russia and East Central Europe, successor parties, trade unions and the state demonstrate different models of relationships that include formal and informal links according to the level of their institutionalization and their role in the post-communist period. In this research, I investigate the factors that affect the institutionalization of the relationships between successor parties, trade unions, and the state in post-communist democracies.

The methodological basis of my research incorporates both rational choice theory and game theory. I define three arenas in which the relationships between the successor parties, trade unions and the state take place depending on the institutional links between them: 1) the institutional design arena, 2) the electoral arena and 3) the social dialogue arena. The models of relationships between the three groups assume the following formal and informal links: 'successor parties-state' in the institutional arena, 'successor parties-trade unions' in the electoral arena and 'trade unions-state' in the social dialogue arena.

To test the defined models of relationships between the successor parties, trade unions and the state, I conducted a comparative analysis of some of the available cases in the East Central European region, with emphasis on Poland and Russia. The analysis also includes Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria.

The research results show that the relationships between the three groups in post-communist democracies reflect the different levels of institutionalization of the informal links rooted in the former communist regimes. The cases of Poland and Hungary conform to Model 1, with prevailing formal relations between the successor parties, trade unions and the state. The cases of Russia and Romania conform to Model 2, with prevailing informal relations between the three groups. Finally, the cases of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia can be characterized as intermediate, i.e. as falling between Model 1 and Model 2.

1. Introduction

The specific character of post-communist democracies greatly depends on the transformation of the informal relationships and networks that were typical for the late communist period. The institutional basis of post-communist states was the former communist regimes; likewise, civil society institutions were formed on the basis of their communist predecessors, such as successor parties and trade unions.

Today, the successor parties are legitimate participants in political processes in post-communist democracies. In Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, they have been state-level policy-makers for a long time. In other countries, such as the Czech Republic and Russia, the successor parties acted as strong and constant opposition to the government. The civil society institutions inherited by the post-communist regimes include not only the former communist parties themselves but also

structures that were ideologically and organizationally subordinated to them. These institutions, such as trade unions, youth groups and women's organizations, are known as civil society institutions in traditional democracies. However, their communist counterparts were controlled by the regime and thus realized miscellaneous functions. Due to this legacy, civil society organizations descended from the former communist regimes are still unpopular in post-communist democracies. However, these organizations, particularly trade unions, nevertheless participate in democratic processes and influence them both in formal and informal ways.

As the experience of Russia and East Central Europe shows, successor parties, trade unions and the state demonstrate different models of relationships that include informal interactions depending on their degree of institutionalization and role in the post-communist period. In this research, I will try to uncover the factors that affect the formation of relationships between these three groups in post-communist democracies.

My research covers the period of 1989 to 2004, from the beginning of the post-communist era to the accession of most East Central European countries to the European Union. The specific features of the various communist parties and trade unions that were in place in the late communist period are also taken into consideration. The relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state are investigated in terms of the institutional design of the post-communist regimes, the level of the successor parties' and trade unions' electoral participation, and the social dialogue process regulating the labour relations between trade unions and the state.

2. Theoretical background. The post-communist state, parties and trade unions

Post-communist transformations in Russia and East Central Europe constitute one of the largest areas of research in contemporary political science. This paradigm has sparked large amounts of theoretical and empirical research, including a vast number of studies on the institutional transformations of the state, former communist parties and former official trade unions in the region. Many of these inquiries are relevant to this paper, which focuses on the relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state in Russia and East Central Europe as well as on the factors determining their degree of institutionalization.

The institutionalization of post-communist regimes and states is generally connected with the democratic consolidation that follows the transition period. Some researchers have focused on the transformations of the party-state and the bureaucratic structures of the ruling communist parties.¹ In this paper, the state transformations in the post-communist period are considered in terms of the

¹ Gregory, Paul R.: *Restructuring the Soviet Economic Bureaucracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; Csanádi, Maria: *Party-States and Their Legacies in Post-Communist Transformation*, Cheltenham, Northampton/MA: Edward Elgar, 1997; Grzymala-Busse, Anna: *Redeeming the Past. The Regeneration of Communist Parties in East Central Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002; Grzymala-Busse, Anna: *Rebuilding Leviathan. Party Competition and State Exploitation in Post-Communist Democracies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

transition period², the political economy³, and a political and economic institutional analysis⁴ based on the neo-institutional approach and its variations, including the rational choice theory.

The research on former communist or successor parties can be broken down into the following chronological periods. The first period (1991–1994) was devoted to analysing the collapse of the communist parties. Viewed as unwelcome relics during the transition period, the communist parties were expected to disappear quickly and give way to genuine democratic parties.⁵ Serving as bridges between the old system and the new, the former ruling parties shaped the specific character of the transformations in each country's case.⁶

The second stage of research (1994–1997) focused on the first electoral successes of the former communist parties in Poland and Hungary. The central issues for discussion included the reasons and factors that contributed to the successful development of communist parties in the new conditions.⁷ The researchers were mainly interested in explanations for the political successes of the former ruling parties in the post-communist period.⁸ However, in this paradigm the successor parties were taken as accidental and even alien elements in the new party systems. Some researchers explained the electoral preferences of the successor parties' supporters in terms of the national specific

² Linz, Juan J. / Stepan, Alfred C.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

³ Hausner, Jerzy (ed.): *Evolution of Interest Representation and Development of the Labour Market in Post-Socialist Countries*, Cracow: Cracow Academy of Economics, 1994.

⁴ Cook, Linda J.: *Trade Unions, Management, and State in Contemporary Russia*, in: Rutland, Peter (ed.): *Business and State in Contemporary Russia*, Boulder/CO: Westview Press, 2001, pp. 151–172; Howard, Marc M.: *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003; Ekiert, Grzegorz / Hanson, Stephen E. (eds): *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. Assessing the Legacy of Communist Rule*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

⁵ Kitschelt, Herbert: *The Formation of Party Systems in East Central Europe*, in: *Politics and Society*, 1992 (Vol. 20), No. 1, pp. 7–50; McFaul, Michael: *Post-Communist Politics. Democratic Prospects in Russia and Eastern Europe*, Washington D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1993.

⁶ Szajkowski, Bogdan (ed.): *Political Parties of Eastern Europe, Russia and Successor States*, London: Longman, 1994; Pridham, Geoffrey: *Political Parties and Their Strategies in the Transition from Authoritarian Rule. The Comparative Perspective*, in: Wightman, Gordon (ed.): *Party Formation in East-Central Europe. Post-Communist Politics in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1995, pp. 1–28.

⁷ Lewis, Paul G.: *Political Institutionalization and Party Development in Post-Communist Poland*, in: *Europe-Asia Studies*, 1994 (Vol. 46), No. 5, pp. 779–799; Ishiyama, John T.: *Communist Parties in Transition. Structure, Leaders, and Processes of Democratization in Eastern Europe*, in: *Comparative Politics*, 1995 (Vol. 27), No. 2, pp. 147–166.

⁸ Timmermann, Heinz A.: *Dilemma for the Socialist International. The Communist Parties' Successors in East Central Europe*, in: Waller, Michael et al. (eds): *Social Democracy in a Post-Communist Europe*, Newbury Park: Frank Cass, 1994, pp. 180–201; Waller, M.: *Adaptation of the Former Communist Parties of East Central Europe. A Case of Democratization?*, in: *Party Politics*, 1995 (Vol. 1), No. 3, pp. 373–390; Mahr, Allison / Nagle, John D.: *Resurrection of the Successor Parties and Democratization in East Central Europe*, in: *Communist and Post Communist Studies*, 1995 (Vol. 28), No. 4, pp. 393–409.

character of the political and economic transformations, including the fragmentation of the new political systems and economic failures of the first post-communist governments.⁹

After 1995, it became obvious that the former communist parties were by no means accidental elements in the new political systems, but a permanent fixture of post-communist partial development in East Central Europe and the former USSR.¹⁰ The 'comeback' of left forces to the political arena was regarded as a regular occurrence and not a fluke.¹¹ A. Bozóki defined structural and genetic explanatory models to describe the development of the most and least successful communist parties.¹² According to J. Ishiyama, the successful development of successor parties was determined by a combination of internal and external factors, such as ideological and organizational transformation.¹³ He analysed the ideological and organizational changes correlated with the internal development tendencies of the former communist parties as tactical means to attract potential partners.

Most researchers working in the 2000s referred heavily to previous studies. Utilizing the previous theoretical background, their work is based on case studies and various aspects of partial development.¹⁴ To explain the successor parties' trajectories of development, the authors analysed the organizational structures of the ruling parties in the communist period¹⁵ and the ideological evolution of the successor parties during their adaptation in the post-communist period.¹⁶ Empirical research based on East Central European cases, including the Communist Party of the Russian

⁹ Kitschelt, Herbert: Formation of Party Cleavages in Post-Communist Democracies. Theoretical Propositions, in: *Party Politics*, 1995 (Vol. 1), No. 4, pp. 447–473; Kopecký, Petr: Developing Party Organizations in East-Central Europe. What Type of Organizations is Likely to Emerge?, in: *Party Politics*, 1995 (Vol. 1), No. 4, pp. 515–544.

¹⁰ Markowski, Radoslaw: Political Parties and Ideological Spaces in East Central Europe, in: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 1997 (Vol. 30), No. 3, pp. 221–254; Bielasiak, Jack: Past and Present in Transitional Voting. Electoral Choices in Post-Communist Poland, in: *Party Politics*, 2002 (Vol. 8), No. 5, pp. 563–585.

¹¹ Bukowski, Charles / Racz, Barnabas (eds): *The Return of the Left in Post-Communist States. Current Trends and Future Prospects*, Cheltenham, Northampton/MA: Edward Elgar, 1999.

¹² Bozóki, András: The Ideology of Modernization and the Policy of Materialism. The Day After for the Socialists, in: *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 1997 (Vol. 13), No. 3, pp. 56–102.

¹³ Ishiyama, John T.: The Communist Successor Parties and Party Organizational Development in Post-Communist Politics, in: *Political Research Quarterly*, 1999 (Vol. 52), No. 1, pp. 87–112; Ishiyama, John T.: Party Organization and the Political Success of the Communist Successor Parties, in: *Social Science Quarterly*, 2001 (Vol. 82), No. 4, pp. 844–864.

¹⁴ Lewis, Paul G.: *Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, London, New York: Routledge, 2000; Millard, Frances: *Elections, Parties, and Representation in Post-Communist Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002; Lubecki, Jacek: Echoes of Latifundism? Electoral Constituencies of Successor Parties in Post-Communist Countries, in: *East European Politics and Societies*, 2004 (Vol. 18), No. 1, pp. 10–44.

¹⁵ Grzymala-Busse, Anna: The Organizational Strategies of Communist Parties in East Central Europe, 1945–1989, in: *East European Politics and Societies*, 2001 (Vol. 15), No. 2, pp. 421–453; Marks, Gary N.: Communist Party Membership in Five Former Soviet Bloc Countries, 1945–1989, in: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 2004 (Vol. 37), No. 2, pp. 241–263.

¹⁶ Ishiyama, John.T. / Bozóki, András: Adaptation and Change. Characterizing the Survival Strategies of the Communist Successor Parties, in: *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 2001 (Vol. 17), No. 3, pp. 32–51; Grzymala-Busse, Anna: The Programmatic Turnaround of Communist Successor Parties in East Central Europe, 1989–1998, in: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 2002 (Vol. 35), No. 1, pp. 51–66.

Federation, was also conducted.¹⁷ The results of the main theoretical and empirical studies were published in a volume edited by Ishiyama and Bozóki¹⁸ while another research team led by J. Curry and J. Urban¹⁹ undertook an alternative project analysing the successor parties in various countries of the region.

According to the typology created by Ishiyama and Bozóki, the successor parties can be divided into four basic ideological types: orthodox-communist, national-communist, modernized (social-democratic) and national-socialist (see Table 1).

Table 1. Typology of successor parties in East Central Europe²⁰

	Non-reformed	Reformed
Non-nationalized	Orthodox-communist (Communist party of Bohemia and Moravia)	Modernized, social-democratic (Hungarian Socialist Party, Social Democracy of the Polish Republic)
Nationalized	National-communist (Communist party of the Russian Federation)	National-socialist, populist (Bulgarian Socialist party, Romanian Party of Democratic Socialism)

As we can see, the experience of Russia and East Central Europe has required the reconsideration of traditional theories of partial development. H. Kitschelt and his colleagues have conducted prominent research on East Central European parties and party systems with a new focus on the partial development in the region.²¹ I used Kitschelt's conceptual models of communist and post-communist regimes as well as his typologies of post-communist parties and party systems in my research.

According to Kitschelt, the successor parties' development depends on the preceding communist regimes: patrimonial, bureaucratic-authoritarian and national-consensus. The national-consensus regime type led to the formation of the social-democratic successor parties; the bureaucratic-authoritarian regime led to the orthodox-communist successor parties; and the patrimonial regime

¹⁷ Urban, Joan B. / Solovej, Valerij D.: *Russia's Communists at the Crossroads*, Boulder/CO: Westview Press, 1997; March, Luke: *The Communist Party in Post-Soviet Russia*, Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 2002.

¹⁸ Bozóki, András / Ishiyama, John T. (eds): *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe*, Armonk/NY, London: M.E. Sharpe, 2002.

¹⁹ Curry, Jane L. / Urban Joan B. (eds): *The Left Transformed in Post-Communist Societies. The Cases of East Central Europe, Russia and Ukraine*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003.

²⁰ Adapted from: Ishiyama, John.T. / Bozóki, András: *Adaptation and Change. Characterizing the Survival Strategies of the Communist Successor Parties*, in: *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 2001 (Vol. 17), No. 3, pp. 32–51, here p. 36; Bozóki, András / Ishiyama, John T. (eds): *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe*, Armonk/NY, London: M.E. Sharpe, 2002, here p. 7.

²¹ Kitschelt, Herbert et al.: *Post-Communist Party Systems. Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

resulted in the creation of the national-communist and national-socialist parties, which are founded on clientelistic relations.²²

Since the traditional theories for analysing trade union development seem to be irrelevant for the cases of Russia and East Central European countries, alternative analytical models of trade unions need to be considered, such as 'transmission belts' of communist parties, transition trade unions and others. The activity of trade unions in the post-communist period can be analysed from the viewpoint of labour relations. The post-communist trade unions are considered to be participants in the social dialogue process.

The transformation of communist trade unions into civil society institutions led to the formation of new labour relations.²³ Researchers focused on the great number of worker strikes and the new alternative (independent) trade unions in Russia and East Central Europe that emerged in the beginning of the 1990s.²⁴ This period saw the emergence and development of a new theoretical framework for studying the transformation of official communist and post-communist trade unions in the transition process. S. Crowley, D. Ost and P. Kubicek indicated the necessity of reconsidering traditional views on the defensive functions of trade unions in their analysis of East Central European and former USSR cases.²⁵ According to S. Peregudov, the relations between post-communist trade unions and the state can be considered akin to those of interest groups in the corporative lobbying system.²⁶

Researchers were also greatly interested in the political role of trade unions in the initial post-communist transformations.²⁷ The institutionalization of the social dialogue (understood as the process of tripartite negotiations of state, trade unions and employers' associations) compelled researchers to focus on the participants of the social dialogue and their roles in labour relations in the post-communist period. Trade unions were considered as both a subject and an object of state labour policy.²⁸ P. Kubicek and D. Ost noted that trade unions were gradually losing their political

²² Kitschelt, Herbert: Constraints and Opportunities in the Strategic Conduct of Post-Communist Successor Parties. Regime Legacies as Causal Argument, in: Bozóki, Andraś / Ishiyama, John T. (eds): *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe*, Armonk/NY, London: M.E. Sharpe, 2002, pp. 14–40.

²³ Széll, Gyorgy (ed.): *Labour Relations in Transition in Eastern Europe*, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1992; Thirkell, John et al. (eds): *Labour Relations in Eastern Europe. A Comparative Perspective*, London: UCL Press, 1995.

²⁴ Pollert, Anna: Trade Unionism in Transition in Central and Eastern Europe, in: *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 1999 (Vol. 21), No. 2, pp. 209–234; Crowley, Stephen: Explaining Labour Weakness in Post-Communist Europe. Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspective, in: *East European Politics and Societies*, 2004 (Vol. 18), No. 3, pp. 394–429.

²⁵ Crowley, Stephen / Ost, David (eds): *Workers After Workers' States. Labor and Politics in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Kubicek, Paul: Organized Labour in Postcommunist States. Will the Western Sun Set on It, Too?, in: *Comparative Politics*, 1999 (Vol. 32), No. 1, pp. 83–102.

²⁶ Peregudov, Sergei P. et al.: *Gruppy interesov i rossijskoe gosudarstvo*, Moscow: Editorial URSS, 1999.

²⁷ Ost, David: The Weakness of Strong Social Movements. Models of Unionism in the East European Context, in: *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 2002 (Vol. 8), No. 1, pp. 79–96.

²⁸ Candland, Christopher / Sil, Rudra (eds): *The Politics of Labour in a Global Age. Continuity and Change in Late-Industrializing and Post-Socialist Economies*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001; Casale, Giuseppe: *Evolution and Trends in Industrial Relations in Central and Eastern European*

significance because they were concentrating their attention on the social dialogue.²⁹ S. Peregudov attributed this tendency to the state's increasing influence in regulating labour relations and the ongoing process of European integration.³⁰

The general assumption is that communist trade unions acted as the communist party's 'transmission belts', thereby increasing the significance of the communist legacy factor. The relations of trade unions and the post-communist state were established on the foundation of the social dialogue. However, S. Crowley, P. Kubicek and D. Ost believe that the attempts to analyse trade unions in Russia and East Central Europe as civil society institutions, or as participants in the social dialogue, demonstrated the unions' institutional weakness. One of the factors explaining the inefficiency of the trade unions' participation in the social dialogue is the clientelistic nature of their relations. In addition, the trade unions' post-communist activity was politicized and their political partners (allies) were often successor parties. The shift of trade unions to the political sphere has in some cases led to electoral cooperation between trade unions and successor parties.³¹

One factor contributing to the successful development of successor parties was their relations with trade unions. M. Waller attributed the electoral successes of the Polish and Hungarian communist parties to their close cooperation with the former official trade unions, which remained rather powerful during the transition process.³² Ishiyama tested this hypothesis and verified that both Poland and Hungary had widely spread trade unions that enjoyed a relatively low level of distrust among the population.³³ However, electoral success is not always contingent upon cooperation with trade unions. For example, L. Cook and L. March discovered that there was no formal cooperation between Russian trade unions and the CPRF because the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia refused to cooperate with the communists, preferring to collaborate with the 'party of power' instead.³⁴

The explaining model of relations between successor parties and trade unions in East Central Europe was developed by M. Orenstein. He hypothesized that the determining factor in this cooperation is the direction of the successor parties' ideological evolution. He identified two stages in the

Countries, in: *International Journal of Comparative Labour Law and Industrial Relations*, 2003 (Vol. 19), No. 1, pp. 5–32.

²⁹ Kubicek, Paul: *Organized Labor in Postcommunist States. From Solidarity to Infirmary*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004; Ost, David: *The Defeat of Solidarity. Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, Ithaca/NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

³⁰ Peregudov, Sergei P.: *Korporacii, obshchestvo, gosudarstvo. Evoluciya otnoshenij*, Moscow: Nauka, 2003.

³¹ Crowley, Stephen / Ost, David (eds): *Workers After Workers' States. Labor and Politics in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Kubicek, Paul: *Organized Labor in Postcommunist States. From Solidarity to Infirmary*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004.

³² Waller, Michael: *Adaptation of the Former Communist Parties of East Central Europe. A Case of Democratization?*, in: *Party Politics*, 1995 (Vol. 1), No. 3, pp. 373–390.

³³ Ishiyama, John T.: *The Communist Successor Parties and Party Organizational Development in Post-Communist Politics*, in: *Political Research Quarterly*, 1999 (Vol. 52), No. 1, pp. 87–112.

³⁴ Cook, Linda J.: *Trade Unions, Management, and State in Contemporary Russia*, in: Rutland, Peter (ed.): *Business and State in Contemporary Russia*, Boulder/CO: Westview Press, 2001, pp. 151–172; March, Luke: *For Victory? The Crises and Dilemmas of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation*, in: *Europe-Asia Studies*, 2001 (Vol. 53), No. 2, pp. 263–290.

transformation of the most successful Polish and Hungarian successor parties. In the first stage, there was an intra-party division into conservative and reformative wings. After their victory, the reformers initiated cooperation with trade unions in the second stage and consequently gained mass electoral support. The Polish successor party made electoral coalitions with trade unions and encouraged trade union leaders to take part in the party's activities.³⁵ Orenstein's model confirms the significance of trade unions in the transformation of successor parties, but it does not explain the institutional success of the successor parties that did not cooperate with trade unions.

3. Models of relationships

The methodological basis of my research incorporates the rational choice theory and game theory. To develop theoretical models for the analysis, I borrow the term 'arena' from G. Tsebelis,³⁶ who describes the relations between actors and institutions as nested games on different levels called arenas. Arenas can be independent but can also overlap in some places, and they are limited by the given institutional conditions that govern the simultaneous participation of actors and institutions in the different arenas.

I defined three arenas in which the relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state take place depending on the institutional links between them: 1) the institutional design arena, 2) the electoral arena and 3) the social dialogue arena. Accordingly, the models of relationships between the three groups assume the following working or non-working institutional links: 'successor parties-state' in the institutional arena, 'successor parties-trade unions' in the electoral arena and 'trade unions-state' in the social dialogue arena.

I developed three models of relationships for the interactions between successor parties, trade unions and the state.

Model 1. This model is characterized by the working institutional links in all directions of the hypothetical triangle 'successor party – trade unions – state'. The institutional design of the political system in Model 1 allows the successor party to form the government and set state policy after the successor party wins the parliamentary election. During the parliamentary election, the successor party and former official trade unions create an electoral coalition using their informal links inherited from the communist regime. The interactions between the trade unions and the state occur in the social dialogue process with a minimal role of clientelistic relations for lobbying the trade unions' interests.

Model 2. In this model, the institutional links in the triangle 'successor party – trade unions – state' do not work. The institutional design of the political system that is typical for Model 2 does not allow the successor party to form the government or state policy regardless of the election results. Even if the successor party receives the majority of votes and seats in the parliament, the party acts in opposition to the current government. The successor party and former official trade unions do not

³⁵ Orenstein, Mitchell A.: A Genealogy of Communist Successor Parties in East-Central Europe and the Determinants of Their Success, in: *East European Politics and Societies*, 1998 (Vol. 12), No. 3, pp. 472–499.

³⁶ Tsebelis, George: *Nested Games. Rational Choice in Comparative Politics*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1990.

form an electoral coalition after the parliamentary election, even in the presence of informal links. The formal interactions between the trade unions and the state take place in the tripartite negotiation process, but lobbying trade unions' interests is more efficient with the use of informal clientelistic relations.

In addition, a third model (Model 3) can be defined that represents the middle ground between Model 1 and Model 2.

To test the models of the relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state, a comparative analysis was conducted on the cases of East Central Europe, including Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria.

I chose the two basic cases of Poland and Russia for the analysis according to the following criteria. The similarities of the countries' institutional design, including their semi-presidential political systems, served as the first criterion. The regular electoral successes of the Polish and Russian successor parties in the post-communist parliamentary elections were taken as the second criterion. The third criterion was the mass trade union organizations, or so-called former official trade unions, inherited from the communist regime. The analysis considered three electoral cycles in Poland and Russia (1991–1993, 1993–1997 and 1997–2001 for Poland and 1993–1995, 1995–1999 and 1999–2003 for Russia).

For testing the defined models of relationships, I conducted a comparative analysis of some of the available cases in the East Central European region, with emphasis on Poland and Russia. Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria were also analysed. The former Yugoslav states were not included in the analysis because of the specific character of their nation-building and long-term military conflicts.

4. Successor parties, trade unions and the state in the institutional arena

The analysis of the institutional changes in Russia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in the post-communist period revealed a correlation between the legacy of the communist regime and the post-communist institutional design, and focuses on the organizational transformation of the following successor parties: the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic (SDPR) (after 1999 called the Democratic Left Alliance (DLA)), the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), the Hungarian Socialist Party (HSP), the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), the Social-Democratic Party of Romania (SDPR), the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (CPBM) and the Party of Left Democrats in Slovakia (PLD). The former official trade unions include the All-Poland Agreement of Trade Unions (OPZZ), the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FITUR), the National Confederation of Hungarian Trade Unions (NCTU), the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria (CITU), the National Confederation of Free Romanian Trade Unions (NCFTU), the Confederation of Trade Unions of Bohemia and Moravia (CTUBM) and the Confederation of Trade Unions of Slovakia (CTUS).

The communist regime in Poland that was characterized by Kitschelt as 'national-consensus' led to the post-communist transformations in the form of negotiations or 'pacted transition'.³⁷ The institutional post-communist design in Poland was constitutionally established in the 1993 Little Constitution and was consolidated after the 1997 Constitution. Despite the intention of the first president, Lech Wałęsa, to assume full executive powers, Poland instead ended up with the so-called premier-presidential system. The government in Poland is formed based on election results, and the prime minister is elected by the parliament and confirmed by the president. As a result, the post-communist regime in Poland contributed to the integration of parties that win parliamentary elections into the governance system. This allows parties to form government and state policy, and also to nominate their candidate for the prime minister position.³⁸

The communist regime in Russia, which Kitschelt described as patrimonial, led to coercive post-communist transformations.³⁹ The post-communist institutional design was established by the 1993 Constitution. Following Boris Yeltsin's efforts to assume full executive powers, Russia became a so-called president-parliamentary system.⁴⁰ In this arrangement, the president forms the government and nominates the prime minister, who must be confirmed by the parliament. As a result, the post-communist regime in Russia contributed to the isolation of the governance system, including the presidential administration and government, from the parties. Parties that win parliamentary elections are therefore not able to influence state policy directly.⁴¹

The national-consensus communist regime in Hungary was the foundation of the post-communist negotiated transformations in the form of a pact that was similar to the Polish case. In Hungary, that pact determined the establishment of the parliamentary political system. The post-communist changes to the patrimonial communist regime in Bulgaria also had a negotiated character; the political system there can also be described as parliamentary in nature. Coercive communist regime transformations took place in Romania, including the military conflicts and the execution of the Ceausescu family. The country's post-communist transformation can be characterized as an imposed transition; it finally ended up with a premier-presidential political system. In the case of Czechoslovakia, the bureaucratic-authoritarian communist regime became a parliamentary type system in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia as a result of the negotiated transformation process.

In each analysed case, the successor parties kept their organizational structures on the regional level. However, in Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, the communist ruling parties were formally dissolved following the foundation of new successor parties in 1989–1990. In Russia, the communist party was suspended until the 1993 Constitutional court decision that legalized the party's regional organizations. In Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, the former communist leadership simply changed

³⁷ Kitschelt, Herbert et al.: *Post-Communist Party Systems. Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999, here p. 24.

³⁸ Shugart, Matthew S. / Carey, John T.: *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; Millard, Frances: *Polish Politics and Society*, London, New York: Routledge, 1999; Szczerbiak, Aleks: *Poles Together? Emergence and Development of Political Parties in Post-Communist Poland*, Budapest: Central University Press, 2001.

³⁹ Kitschelt, Herbert et al.: *Post-Communist Party Systems. Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Cooperation*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999, here p. 23.

⁴⁰ Shugart, Matthew S. / Carey, John T.: *Presidents and Assemblies. Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

⁴¹ Sakwa, Richard: *Russian Politics and Society*, London, New York: Routledge, 2002.

their parties' names. In Romania, the former communist party was transformed into the interim umbrella structure that later became the source of the successor party and other political parties.⁴²

The transformations of the former official trade unions in these countries were founded on the resurrection of informal links between the regional organizations and the leaderships of the official trade unions. This occurred in all cases except for the Czech Republic. In Russia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia, the successor trade unions were established with communist resources. Alternatively, in the Czech Republic, various trade unions appropriated the old communist trade union structures for their institutional building.⁴³

5. Successor parties, trade unions and the state in the electoral arena

For the cases of Poland and Russia, we should consider the electoral strategies of SDPR/DLA and OPZZ in the parliamentary elections of 1991, 1993, 1997 and 2001, and CPRF and FITUR in the parliamentary elections of 1993, 1995, 1999 and 2003, respectively.

The transformation of the Polish successor party, the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic / Democratic Left Alliance, underwent modernization and social-democratization processes (See Table 1). In its organization, the party kept its developed infrastructure and elaborated its ideology on the social-democratic platform. Consequently, the party preferred to cooperate with the trade unions. The former official trade union federation, the All-Poland Agreement of Trade Unions, tried to gain independence from the government after the Constitutional Court's decision about the assignation of the communist trade unions' properties to OPZZ. Despite the resistance of the OPZZ leadership, the regional OPZZ trade unions rehabilitated the partnership agreement with SDPR and contributed to the formation of their electoral and parliamentary coalitions under the leadership of SDPR and OPZZ.⁴⁴

⁴² For details, see: Szajkowski, Bogdan (ed.): *Political Parties of Eastern Europe, Russia and Successor States*, London: Longman, 1994; Linz, Juan J. / Stepan, Alfred C.: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation. Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996; Lewis, Paul G.: *Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, London, New York: Routledge, 2000.

⁴³ Crowley, Stephen / Ost, David (eds): *Workers After Workers' States. Labor and Politics in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Candland, Christopher / Sil, Rudra (eds): *The Politics of Labour in a Global Age. Continuity and Change in Late-Industrializing and Post-Socialist Economies*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁴⁴ For details, see: Millard, Frances: *Polish Politics and Society*, London, New York: Routledge, 1999; Szczerbiak, Aleks: *Poles Together? Emergence and Development of Political Parties in Post-Communist Poland*, Budapest: Central University Press, 2001; Szczerbiak, Aleks: *Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics. Polish Parties Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support*, in: *Europe-Asia Studies*, 2003 (Vol. 55), No. 5, pp. 729–746; Grzymala-Busse, Anna: *The Programmatic Turnaround of Communist Successor Parties in East Central Europe, 1989–1998*, in: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 2002 (Vol. 35), No. 1, pp. 51–66; Markowski, Radoslaw: *The Polish SLD in the 1990s. From Opposition to Incumbents and Back*, in: Bozóki, Andraś / Ishiyama, John T. (eds): *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe*, Armonk/NY, London: M.E. Sharpe, 2002, pp. 51–88; Curry, Jane L.: *Poland's Ex-Communists. From Pariahs to Establishment Players*, in: Curry Jane L. / Urban, Joan B. (eds): *The Left Transformed in Post-Communist Societies. The Cases of East Central Europe, Russia and Ukraine*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003, pp. 19–60.

The transformation of the Russian successor party, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, took the form of nationalization. Bozóki and Ishiyama characterize the CPRF as a national-communist party (See Table 1). In terms of its organization, the party kept its developed infrastructure and elaborated its ideology on the national patriotic platform. Originally, the CPRF's ideology included social-democratic elements, but its attempts to establish political cooperation with the former official trade unions failed. However, there were isolated cases of informal cooperation between the CPRF and trade unions on the regional level.⁴⁵

The relationships of successor parties and trade unions in the electoral arena in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia followed the ideological evolution of the successor parties. This analysis considered the parliamentary elections of 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002 in Hungary; 1991, 1994, 1997, 2001 in Bulgaria; 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000 in Romania; 1992, 1996, 1998, 2002 in the Czech Republic; and those of 1992, 1994, 1998, 2002 in Slovakia. The electoral cooperation based on the inherited communist institutional links can be determined by the direction of the successor party's ideological evolution.

The case of Hungary is rather similar to the case of Poland: the ideological evolution of HSP was accompanied by modernization and social-democratization. The new ideological platform led to electoral cooperation between HSP and NCTU. In Bulgaria, the national-socialist ideology of the successor party, BSP, was not acceptable to the former official trade unions, despite the successor party's long-term period in power. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Romania's former official trade unions exhibited a very different strategy: they agreed to a political partnership with the ruling SDPR, despite the national-socialist character of the latter. In this case, trade unions obtained pro-government status due to the personal (clientelistic) relations with the successor party leadership; the electoral cooperation proved to be unnecessary. In the Czech Republic, CPBM adopted an orthodox-communist ideology that resulted in the long-term political isolation and non-participation of the successor party in the government. The Czech trade unions refused to engage in electoral cooperation, not only with CPBM, but also with the other parties. Finally, in Slovakia, PLD came to embody a modernized, social-democratic ideology, similar to the Hungarian and Polish cases. However, there was no electoral partnership between PLD and CTUS due to the refusal of the CTUS leadership, despite the periodic inclusion of trade union candidates on the PLD's electoral lists.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ For details, see: Urban, Joan B. / Solovej, Valerij D.: *Russia's Communists at the Crossroads*, Boulder/CO: Westview Press, 1997; Sakwa, Richard: *Russia's 'Permanent' (Uninterrupted) Elections of 1999–2000*, in: *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 2000 (Vol. 16), No. 3, pp. 85–112; Sakwa, Richard: *Russian Politics and Society*, London, New York: Routledge, 2002; Sakwa, Richard: *The 2003–2004 Russian Elections and Prospects for Democracy*, in: *Europe-Asia Studies*, 2005 (Vol. 57), No. 3, pp. 369–398; Simon, Rick: *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000; March, Luke: *The Communist Party in Post-Soviet Russia*, Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 2002.

⁴⁶ Bukowski, Charles / Racz, Barnabas (eds): *The Return of the Left in Post-Communist States. Current Trends and Future Prospects*, Cheltenham, Northampton/MA: Edward Elgar, 1999; Curry Jane L. / Urban, Joan B. (eds): *The Left Transformed in Post-Communist Societies. The Cases of East Central Europe, Russia and Ukraine*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003; Grzymala-Busse, Anna: *Redeeming the Past. The Regeneration of Communist Parties in East Central Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

6. Successor parties, trade unions and the state in the social dialogue arena

In Poland, the powerful trade union actor, Solidarity, strongly affected the relations of OPZZ and the Polish government. The Solidarity trade unions did not find the tripartite negotiations necessary since they were active political participants on their own and directly involved in the first post-communist governments. The institutional establishment of the social dialogue in Poland was possible due to OPZZ's initiative in 1994 after the SDPR government came to power. Afterwards, the tripartite negotiations between the government, OPZZ, Solidarity and employers' associations occurred regularly and their decisions obtained legislative status.⁴⁷

In Russia, the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia found themselves at the mercy of the president and presidential administration after they nearly lost their properties in the 1993 conflict between the president and the Supreme Council. FITUR subsequently dutifully played the role of pro-government trade unions and refused to partner with the opposition parties, including CPRF. FITUR's independent political foray into a paradoxical coalition with the Ally of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs failed in 1995. The relations between FITUR and the Russian government were largely determined by the president's influence. Despite the presidential decree establishing social dialogue institutions, they did not play a considerable role in the policy-making process in either the social or economic spheres.⁴⁸ To lobby their own interests, the trade unions had to use other, mostly informal, channels, such as personal and clientelistic relations.⁴⁹

The analysis of the relationships between the trade unions and state (government) in the social dialogue process in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia also considered the indirect participation of successor parties in the social dialogue. The efficiency of the social dialogue was analysed in each case by referring to the role of clientelistic relations in the interactions between the trade unions and the state.

The institutionalization of the social dialogue occurred according to different scenarios. In Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the trade unions initiated the establishment of the social dialogue institutions in 1990–1991. In contrast, in Romania, the government and president (i.e. the state) regulated the trade unions' activity. The efficiency of these tripartite negotiations and the resulting social dialogue can be evaluated as successful in Hungary, where trade unions became influential participants in the social dialogue, similar to the case of Poland. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria, the efficiency of the social dialogue seemed to be medium, since the initial active participation of trade unions in the social dialogue evolved into government regulation of

⁴⁷ Crowley, Stephen / Ost, David (eds): *Workers After Workers' States. Labor and Politics in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Kubicek, Paul: *Organized Labor in Postcommunist States. From Solidarity to Infirmary*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004.

⁴⁸ Peregudov, Sergei P.: *Korporacii, obshchestvo, gosudarstvo. Evoluciya otnoshenij*, Moscow: Nauka, 2003.

⁴⁹ Afanasiev, Mikhail N: *Klientelizm i rossijskaya gosudarstvennost'*, Moscow: MONF, 2000; Simon, Rick: *Labour and Political Transformation in Russia and Ukraine*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000; Cook, Linda J.: *Labor and Liberalization. Trade Unions in the New Russia*, New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1997; Clarke, Simon: *Russian Trade Unions in the 1999 Duma Election*, in: *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 2001 (Vol. 17), No. 2, pp. 43–69.

labour relations. In Romania, similar to the case of Russia, the social dialogue exhibited a low degree of efficiency. Despite the formal existence of the social dialogue in Romania, the relationships between the trade unions and the government were based on clientelism and thus became subordinated.⁵⁰

7. Conclusions

As the research shows, the theoretical models of the relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state in post-communist democracies were elaborated on the basis of the neo-institutional approach, rational choice theory and game theory, implying the establishment of institutional links based on the former communist regimes. The factors and models of relationships between the three players in Russia and East Central European countries are summed up in Table 2.

According to Model 1, which specifies prevailing formal relations, the institutional design of the political system allows the successor party to form the government and state policy after the successor party wins the parliamentary election; during the parliamentary elections, the successor party and former official trade unions form an electoral coalition; and the interactions between trade unions and the state take place in the social dialogue. According to Model 2, in which informal relations prevail, the above-mentioned institutional links do not work. Model 3 is the intermediate option between Model 1 and Model 2.

The cases of Poland and Hungary conform to Model 1, the cases of Russia and Romania conform to Model 2, and the cases of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia fall somewhere in between (Model 3).

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Hausner, Jerzy (ed.): *Evolution of Interest Representation and Development of the Labour Market in Post-Socialist Countries*, Cracow: Cracow Academy of Economics, 1994; Crowley, Stephen / Ost, David (eds): *Workers After Workers' States. Labor and Politics in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Lanham et al.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001; Candland, Christopher / Sil, Rudra (eds): *The Politics of Labour in a Global Age. Continuity and Change in Late-Industrializing and Post-Socialist Economies*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001; Kubicek, Paul: *Organized Labor in Postcommunist States. From Solidarity to Infirmity*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004.

Table 2. Factors and models of relationships between successor parties, trade unions and the state in Russia and East Central Europe.

<i>Country</i>	<i>'Communist legacy' (communist regime type / institutional design)</i>	<i>Ideological evolution of successor party (party ideology)</i>	<i>Efficiency of social dialogue (minimal clientelism)</i>	<i>Relationship 'successor party – state'</i>	<i>Relationship 'successor party – trade unions'</i>	<i>Relationship 'trade unions – state'</i>	<i>Model</i>
Poland	national consensus / premier-presidential	modernized, social-democratic	high	+	+	+	1
Russia	patrimonial / president-parliamentary	national-communist	low	-	-	-	2
Hungary	national-consensus / parliamentary	modernized, social-democratic	high	+	+	+	1
Bulgaria	patrimonial / parliamentary	national-socialist	medium	+	-	+/-	3
Romania	patrimonial / premier-presidential	national-socialist	low	-	-	-	2
Czech Republic	bureaucratic authoritarian / parliamentary	orthodox communist	medium	+	-	+/-	3
Slovakia	bureaucratic authoritarian / parliamentary	modernized, social democratic	medium	+	-	+/-	3

The successor parties and former official trade unions should be considered as the institutional heirs of the former communist regimes; the shift of trade unions to the political field has led to electoral cooperation between trade unions and successor parties. Cooperation based on the inherited communist institutional links can be determined by the direction of the successor party's ideological evolution. In Poland and Hungary, the successor parties' adoption of a social-democratic ideology and modernization contributed to their electoral cooperation with trade unions.

The efficiency of the interactions between trade unions and the state in the social dialogue institutions depends on the extent to which informal clientelistic links were used. The efficiency of tripartite negotiations with influential trade unions was high in Poland and Hungary. Medium efficiency, characterized by the initial active participation of trade unions in the social dialogue and followed by state regulation of labour relations, was typical for the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria. Finally, low efficiency, along with the formal existence of social dialogue institutions but the regular use of clientelistic links by trade unions and the government, made the social dialogue subordinate to the state in Russia and Romania.