

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **HOW COMPETITIVE DIMENSIONS SHAPE STRUCTURES**

The previous chapter defines the extent of structural differences between Slovakia and the Czech Republic, but structural differences do not always produce different results. Institutions--particularly political parties--stand between input and outcome and act as a filter, intensifying some structural differences and softening others. Since voters hold a wide range of attitudes about political questions but have only one vote--at least in the Slovak and Czech parliamentary systems--how they cast their ballot plays a crucial role. On the whole, the citizens in the two electorates looked at different sets of issues when they decided how to vote, and the issues defining party competition in Slovakia were different than those in the Czech Republic. These differences in party choice--even more than differences in underlying attitudes--proved to be critical in shaping the two countries' political outcomes.

The first step in the process of understanding the interaction between attitudes, parties and outcomes is to put aside the common notion that political choice ultimately comes down to a single set of choices, on a dimension of competition extending from extreme left to extreme right. From that starting point, the chapter applies a variety of methods to determine the actual bases of voters' choice and of competition among parties in the two countries, and then examines the consequences of differences in those bases on the party systems of the two countries. The chapter shows that the combination of different underlying structures and different dimensions of party competition yield a highly complex set of possible outcomes and draws direct connections between several of the competitive dimensions and the relatively greater problems with accountability in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic.

## **How voters choose parties**

A 1992 article by Herbert Kitschelt shaped much subsequent debate about the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe by arguing that parties in these countries might clash with one another on sets of issues that were different from those of advanced industrial democracies. He also posited that these countries might clash on several sets of largely unrelated issues at the same time (Kitschelt, 1992). Elsewhere Kitschelt argues that "the dimensionality and configuration" of a party system may be "a critical element of democratic 'consolidation'" (Kitschelt, 1994). The number and nature of issue dimensions, he contends, directly affect the quality and of political party competition.

Since political leader and voters face potentially dozens of relevant political issues at any one time and since positions on these issues differ from one individual to the next in their importance and internal consistency, there is no single ideal method for determining which sets of issues form the basis of political competition. It is also important to note that there is no guarantee of agreement between party elites and party supporters regarding the most salient issues. As a result, it is necessary to make as thorough as possible a comparison between masses and elites and to compare the results of all major methods for determining the meaning of party competition. The identification of primary bases on which parties compete for voters and on which voters choose political parties commonly uses one of three methods. The first of these methods uses the political shorthand of "left" and "right." A second method looks at particular characteristics of party elite and party voter opinions on particular issues. A third method looks at the underlying sympathies and antipathies among political parties and their supporters and matches these to particular opinions.

### **i) Left and right**

The most commonly discussed dimension of competition is that defined by extremes of left and right. The tendency of political leaders throughout the world to use

these terms provides researchers with a ready-made tool for comparison. Sani and Sartori argue that "the polarization that matters generally is of the left-right variety" and that "this is generally the case because the spatial imagery subsumes under its ordering, regardless of domain of origin, the issues that acquire political salience"(Sani & Sartori, 1983, 337). Huber and Inglehart likewise approach the left-right continuum as a generic "tool generally used to describe this central dimension of political conflict"(Huber & Inglehart, 1995, 73). More than Sani and Sartori, Huber and Inglehart acknowledge that the meanings applied to left-and right may differ significantly from country to country. At the same time they hold that "Among expert observers on all six continents there is a widespread tendency to see political conflict as structured along only one dominant dimension, and to label this dimension as having left and right poles"(Huber & Inglehart, 1995, 90).

Although Huber and Inglehart's approach greatly improves on methods that apply the same meaning of left and right to all cases, their approach nevertheless faces certain limitations. These limitations appear in sharp relief in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In their study the authors ask experts to locate political parties on a ten point left-right scale. Czech parties on this scale range from 1.33 to 9.80, or 94% of the possible spread. Slovakia's parties, by contrast, range from 4.67 to 7.00, or only 26% of the possible spread. The explanation for this sharp difference is not a greater degree of consensus among Slovak parties but a lower degree of consensus among expert judgements on the Slovak case. The standard deviations for the rankings of parties in Slovakia far exceed those of their Czech counterparts, indicating that the expert respondents in Slovakia disagreed substantially about where particular parties belonged on the left-right continuum. For one major party in Slovakia, expert placements differed by as much as seven points on the ten-point scale. The difference between Slovakia and the Czech Republic within the framework of Inglehart and Huber therefore has less to do with the actual differences between parties than with the amount of meaningful information that "left" and "right" provide about the relationships among political parties. As subsequent

sections show, these results actually conform extremely well to much earlier predictions by Inglehart and Klingemann that left and right would perform poorly in certain countries, particularly those with open "questions of national identity"(Inglehart & Klingemann, 1976, 247).

The CEU surveys reveal an identical pattern at the mass level. Table 9.1 shows an almost identical dispersion of the Slovak and Czech populations on left-right self-placement. However, a look at the supporters of individual parties reveals significant differences. As with the evaluations of Huber and Inglehart's experts, the responses of voters indicate that Slovakia's parties inhabit a much narrower range on the left-right continuum than Czech parties, whether measured by the standard deviation of party positions or by the range between extreme left and extreme right parties. At the same time, the spread of voter positions within individual parties is considerably greater among Slovak than among Czech parties. In fact coherence on the left-right scale is higher in all but one of the Czech parties than in *any* of Slovakia's parties. In the Czech Republic the left-right continuum exists primarily at the level of the party system; while in Slovakia the continuum exists to a much greater degree within individual parties.

Most of the same conclusions also apply at the level of party leaders. A comparison of the results of the 1993 University of Leiden survey of parliamentary elites and the 1993 CEU study of public opinion, the relative left-right positions of Slovakia's party leaders correlate closely with the left-right positions of party supporters ( $r=0.88$ ), as do the relative positions of Czech party elites and their supporters ( $r=0.92$ ). Elite surveys conducted in the Czech Republic by Kitschelt in 1994 and by the author in 1996 show an even higher level of correlation with the results of public opinion surveys conducted in the same year. Comparison of the 1994 Kitschelt survey and the 1994 CEU survey show a correlation of 0.98 while comparison of the author's 1996 survey and the 1996 CEU survey show a correlation of 0.97. In addition to matching the locations of party voters,

**TABLE 9.1 MEAN CHARACTERISTICS OF LEFT-RIGHT SELF-PLACEMENT AMONG PARTY SUPPORTERS IN SLOVAKIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC FROM ANNUAL CEU SURVEYS: 1992 TO 1996**

| Country        | Dispersion of Population <sup>a</sup> | Dispersion of party supporters (Low dispersion indicates high coherence) |                                  | Dispersion of parties          |                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                |                                       | Raw dispersion <sup>b</sup>  | Relative dispersion <sup>c</sup> | Spread of parties <sup>d</sup> | Range between extremes <sup>e</sup> |
| Slovakia       | 1.51                                  | 1.30   | .86                              | .95                            | 2.68                                |
| Czech Republic | 1.58                                  | 1.16   | .73                              | 1.30                           | 3.57                                |

SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

<sup>a</sup>Defined as standard deviation of all respondents on a question asking for left-right self-placement on a seven point scale.

<sup>b</sup>Defined as the mean of standard deviations among supporters of each major political party.

<sup>c</sup>Defined as the raw dispersion divided by population dispersion.

<sup>d</sup>Defined as the standard deviation of all major parties' left-right scores (mean value of left-right responses among party supporters) for each survey, averaged over all four surveys.

<sup>e</sup>Defined as the distance between the left-right scores (mean value of left-right responses among party supporters) of the leftmost and rightmost party for each survey, averaged over all four surveys.

the positions of party leaders in these two countries show the same underlying characteristics as their counterparts in the electorate. In particular, the range of mean party positions occupied by Slovakia's parties is only 3.7 points on a 6.0 point scale, considerably smaller than the 5.2 point range occupied by the Czech Republic's parties. Furthermore, the range of answers for deputies within political party groups in Slovakia exceeded the range in the Czech Republic by a considerable margin, indicating a lower level of left-right coherence among Slovakia's parties.

## **ii) Particular Issues**

In light of the clearly different relevance of left and right in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, it is necessary to look more directly at the actual issues that influence voter choice and not simply at the shorthand labels. A second major approach looks directly at the characteristics of the opinions themselves to determine the role they play in political competition. Works by Markowski and Kitschelt et al examine the positions of party supporters on particular issues and use related characteristics to assess the importance of those issues in explaining choice of political party.

Rather than explore every possible question individually, it is helpful to identify broader themes in the politics of the countries under investigation. The technique of factor analysis offers a powerful tool for grouping questions according to similar patterns of response, allowing a large number of issues to be aggregated into a smaller number of items without sacrificing precision. Applying factor analysis to the responses of Czech political elites, Kitschelt identifies "an overriding economic protectionism versus market liberalism factor I that captures almost 50 percent of the entire variance of parties' issue positions"(Kitschelt et al., 1997, 206). He also identifies three other factors: "socio-cultural libertarian-secular versus authoritarian-religious," "environmentalists ... against anti-environmentalist centralizers," and "anti-communists hostile to immigration and ethnic minorities" against " parties tolerant to both multi-cultural as well as former

communists"(206). These other three factors, however, he argues, "contribute little to dividing the positions of the major Czech parties from one another, but define unique 'market niches' for minor parties"(207). Using data from the mass-level CEU surveys, Markowski and Kitschelt et al find nearly identical results. Factor analysis of Czech respondents by Kitschelt et al finds an almost identical set of factors: "socio-economic protectionism," "religious values," "cosmopolitans and civil liberties," and "nationalism" (Kitschelt et al., 1997, Table 8-2). Markowski identifies four factors in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic, labeling them "economic populism versus market liberalism," "participation," "libertarian-cosmopolitan," and "religious." In Slovakia he finds a fifth, "idiosyncratic" factor related to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia (Markowski, 1997, 228).

An even more thorough comparison may be made by using the full series of CEU surveys conducted between 1992 and 1996 to derive factors for both countries over a full five-year period. In the process it is useful to alter the procedures used by Markowski and Kitschelt and limit the set of questions to exclude those that ask respondents to make judgements of fact rather than judgements of opinion. This means that specific results differ somewhat from those of the above-mentioned authors, but the same general patterns emerge.<sup>143</sup> In fact the application of factor analysis to all four data sets for both countries produces strikingly consistent patterns. Slovakia exhibits four relatively strong factors for each of the four samples. These factors change little over time, and the main elements of all four factors are identical from 1993 through 1996. These four dimensions are relatively coherent in their subject matter and it is possible to give them shorthand labels with relatively little risk of the overstatement that is common to factor analysis. In order of clarity and consistency over time, the factors are:

- A Religion factor involving church influence, abortion, and atheists in politics;
- A Nation factor involving nationalism, the split of Czechoslovakia and patriotism;
- An Economy factor involving privatization, factory-closings and income differential;

- A Transformation factor involving the willingness of respondents to accept major changes in the immediate conditions of daily life involved in the transition away from communism, such as crime, unemployment, and private ownership.

Results for the Czech Republic show similar if less consistent patterns.<sup>144</sup> The major difference in the factoring of Slovak and Czech opinions involve the questions of patriotism, nationalism and the split of Czechoslovakia. In Slovakia these three questions consistently factor closely together whereas in the Czech Republic the patriotism and national questions factor together only weakly, and neither of them factors together with the split of Czechoslovakia. This difference supports Markowski's notion that national questions mean something different for Slovaks than for Czechs. Slovakia's strong and consistent national factor links together all questions with perceptibly national content. In the Czech Republic, by contrast the national factor is weaker in the public mind, its components are less coherent, and an issue that Slovaks consistently identify as national is completely absent. Unlike Slovaks, Czechs tend to interpret the split of Czecho-Slovakia as part of the broader post-communist transformation and not in relation to their national identity.

Although the standard questions of the CEU survey provide an invaluable source for time series data, they are quite limited in their number and scope. Other one-time surveys with broader sets of questions indicate that the set of four factors listed above omits at least one other important set of issues. Factor analysis of more detailed surveys conducted in Slovakia in 1994 by CEU and the survey firm FOCUS, reveals a fifth factor that groups together questions on pluralism and democracy, firm leadership, and obedience to law by political leaders. These findings concur with other works that call attention to strong disagreements within the Slovak electorate about the appropriate behavior of elected institutions both in terms of the vertical accountability of electoral institutions and horizontal accountability among institutions (Krause, 1996a; Leff, 1996; Meseznikov, 1997).

Since neither the extended CEU survey nor the FOCUS survey involved a counterpart in the Czech Republic, it is necessary to turn to other surveys for the purpose of comparing the characteristics of this factor in both countries. A survey conducted jointly in 1995 by the Slovak and Czech academies of science (SAV/AVČR) offers a means of resolving the problem, since it includes similar questions. Although the very different scope of the SAV/AVČR survey does not allow for comparable factor analysis, it is nevertheless possible to create a synthetic democracy factor consisting of those questions that most resemble their counterparts on the extended CEU and FOCUS surveys.

Table 9.2 presents a list of questions that comprise the factors used here. They are all synthetic to a certain degree because they reflect an overall pattern of the factor analyses conducted over a four year period and not the pattern of any single year. Furthermore, these synthetic factors eliminate specific factor weights and give equal weight to each question within a factor.<sup>145</sup> It is important to note that while the economy and religion factors for the two countries are identical, the nation and transformation factors differ slightly to reflect the above-mentioned differences in the assessment of Czecho-Slovakia's split. The grouping of accountability related questions that emerged from the extended CEU and FOCUS surveys receive the shorthand label Accountability1 and have no equivalent in the Czech Republic. The synthetic grouping of democracy-related questions from the SAV/AVČR survey receives the label Accountability2.

The identification of coherent sets of questions allow for further exploration of the relationship between opinion and party choice. Like Lijphart (Lijphart, 1984, 128), Kitschelt et al recognize that some issues which divide the electorate may not spill over into party competition (Kitschelt et al., 1997, 222). Having identified the "political divides," they therefore go on to identify which divides can be considered as "competitive dimensions." On the basis of data from political elites, they argue that a political divide is likely to constitute a competitive dimension if it "makes parties express coherent positions," "yields a high dispersion of party appeals," "bundles many salient issues" and

"serves as a strong predictor of parties' left-right placements"(Kitschelt et al., 1997, 224). These indicators of competitive dimensions at the party level can be adapted to help measure whether a particular factor shapes the choice of voters.<sup>146</sup> Kitschelt applies these criteria to the factors he identifies at the elite level and finds that only the socio-economic factor scores highly on all four of these criteria. The religious factor produces an equally wide and even spread of parties but lacks the coherence of party positions or the close connection with left-right self-placements (Kitschelt et al., 1997, Table 8-13).

Since the Slovak Republic lacks any similarly comprehensive elite survey, it is necessary to turn to the mass level for a comparison. The indicators of competitive dimensions introduced by Kitschelt et al translate to the electoral level as the following four questions:

- Do supporters of the same party tend to hold similar opinions?
- Do supporters of different parties tend to hold different opinions?
- Does a factor include multiple questions?
- Do opinions of party supporters on a factor correlate closely with their positions on a left-right scale?

Not all of the four indicators can claim equal utility, however. The third indicator--the number of salient issues that are bundled together in a factor--raises difficulties because both the number of issues in a factor and the salience of those issues are difficult to measure in any reliable fashion. The number of issues in a factor depends heavily on the number and type of questions that are included in the original survey. A survey that omits certain questions might thereby artificially de-emphasize the competitiveness of a factor. On the other hand, factor analysis of a survey with numerous questions may skew the results in the opposite direction unless there is some way of excluding those questions that repeat others or are not particularly important. The salience of questions is a better indicator than the number of questions, but salience is one of the most difficult pieces of information to obtain since

it requires lengthy interviews and respondents who are capable of making relatively sophisticated political judgements. Kitschelt et al note that even political leaders vary in their capacity "to distinguish between more important and less important political issues"(Kitschelt et al., 1997,137).<sup>147</sup>

Even more problematic is the fourth indicator, which relies on the left-right scale as a sign of a competitive dimension. In countries where left and right actually provide significant information about the competition of political parties, this measurement may prove useful, but the case of Slovakia shows that this assumption does not apply everywhere. Although the terms "left" and "right" are extremely flexible, they are not free enough from residual meaning to accommodate all possible political meanings or to

**TABLE 9.2. QUESTIONS COMPRISING SIMPLIFIED FACTORS FOR SLOVAKIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

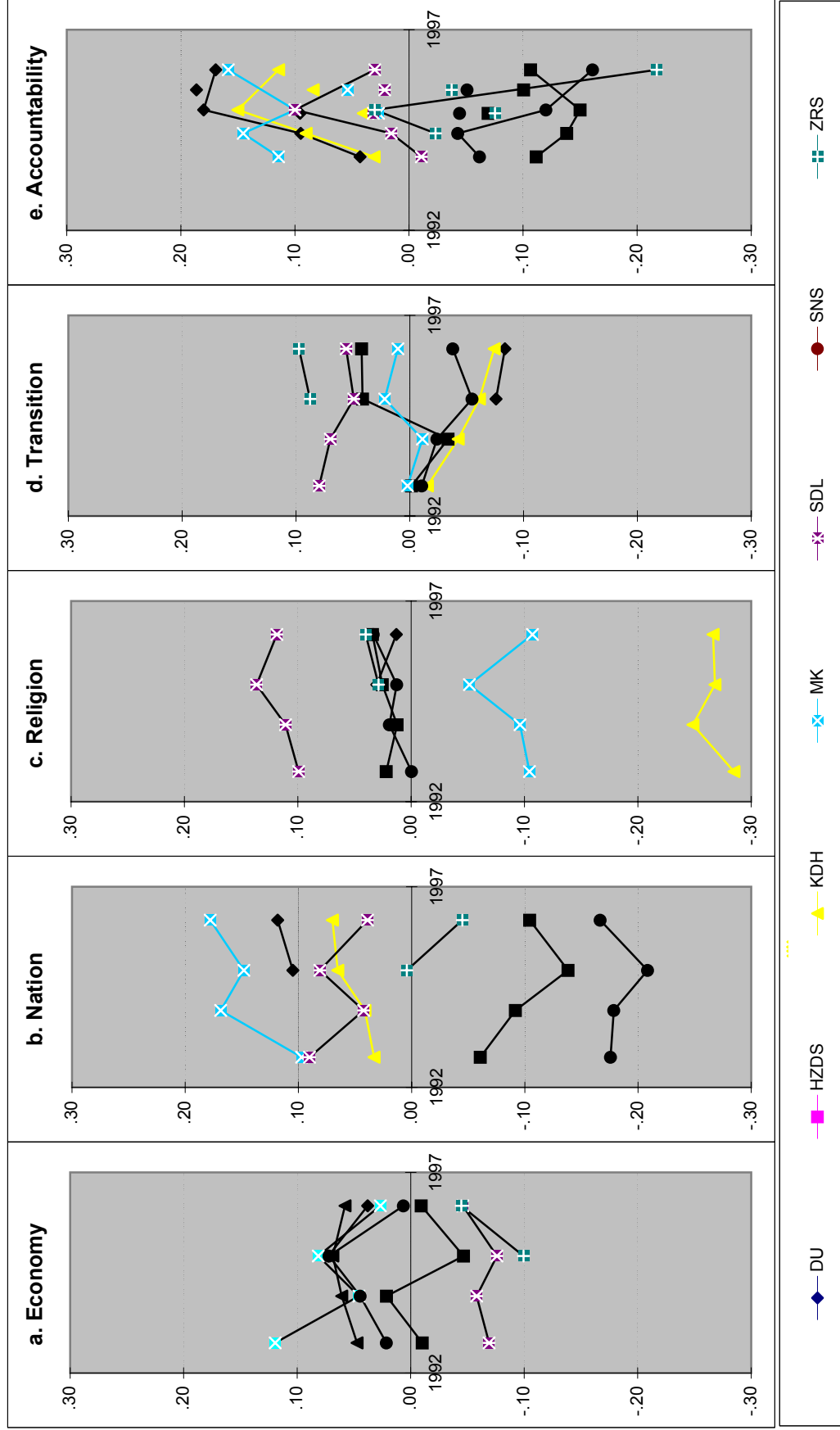
| Factor          | Both | Slovakia only | Czech Republic only | Question  |
|-----------------|------|---------------|---------------------|---|
| Economy         | ●    |               |                     | It is harmful for the economy if the government tries to reduce income differences between rich and poor.                               |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | Putting the former state-owned companies into private hands is going to help very much in solving the economic problems of our country. |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | Unprofitable factories and mines should be closed down immediately even if this leads to unemployment.                                  |
| Nation          | ●    |               |                     | Nationalism is harmful for the development of our country.  |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | In the case of a politician I [do not] prefer a strong patriot to an expert.  |
|                 |      | ●             |                     | It would be better if the Czech and Slovak republics were not separated.  |
| Religion        | ●    |               |                     | Politicians who do not believe in God should not perform public functions.  |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | A woman should [not] be allowed to have an abortion in the early weeks of pregnancy if she decides so.                                  |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | The church [does not have] too much influence in our country.   |
| Transition      | ●    |               |                     | It should be the government's responsibility to provide jobs for everyone who wants one.  |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | Politicians should care more about rising crime and deteriorating morality than about individual freedom and human rights.              |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | It would be better if former owners do not receive compensation.  |
|                 |      |               | ●                   | It would be better if the Czech and Slovak republics were not separated.  |
| Accountability1 |      | ●             |                     | Unity and togetherness of people are more important than plurality of opinion and democracy.  |
|                 |      | ●             |                     | Decisiveness and the firm hand of a strong personality are more important than patience at negotiation.                                 |
|                 |      | ●             |                     | In the interests of the people a politician can act against the law.  |
| Accountability2 | ●    |               |                     | An important part of democracy is protection of rights and freedoms of those political minorities who were not successful in elections. |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | Democratically elected state bodies should [not] use their power more firmly.   |
|                 | ●    |               |                     | Our country [does not need] a strong personality who will direct it out of the current situation.                                       |

SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996; FOCUS 1993-1996; Institute of Sociology 1995

"[echo] much of the voters' feelings towards significant political objects"(Sani & Sartori, 1983, 314) in every circumstance. In Slovakia the left-right scale fails two of Kitschelt's own tests: cohesiveness of party positions and wide dispersal of party appeals. It would not seem advisable, therefore, to set left-right alignment as a universal standard for the competitiveness of factors.

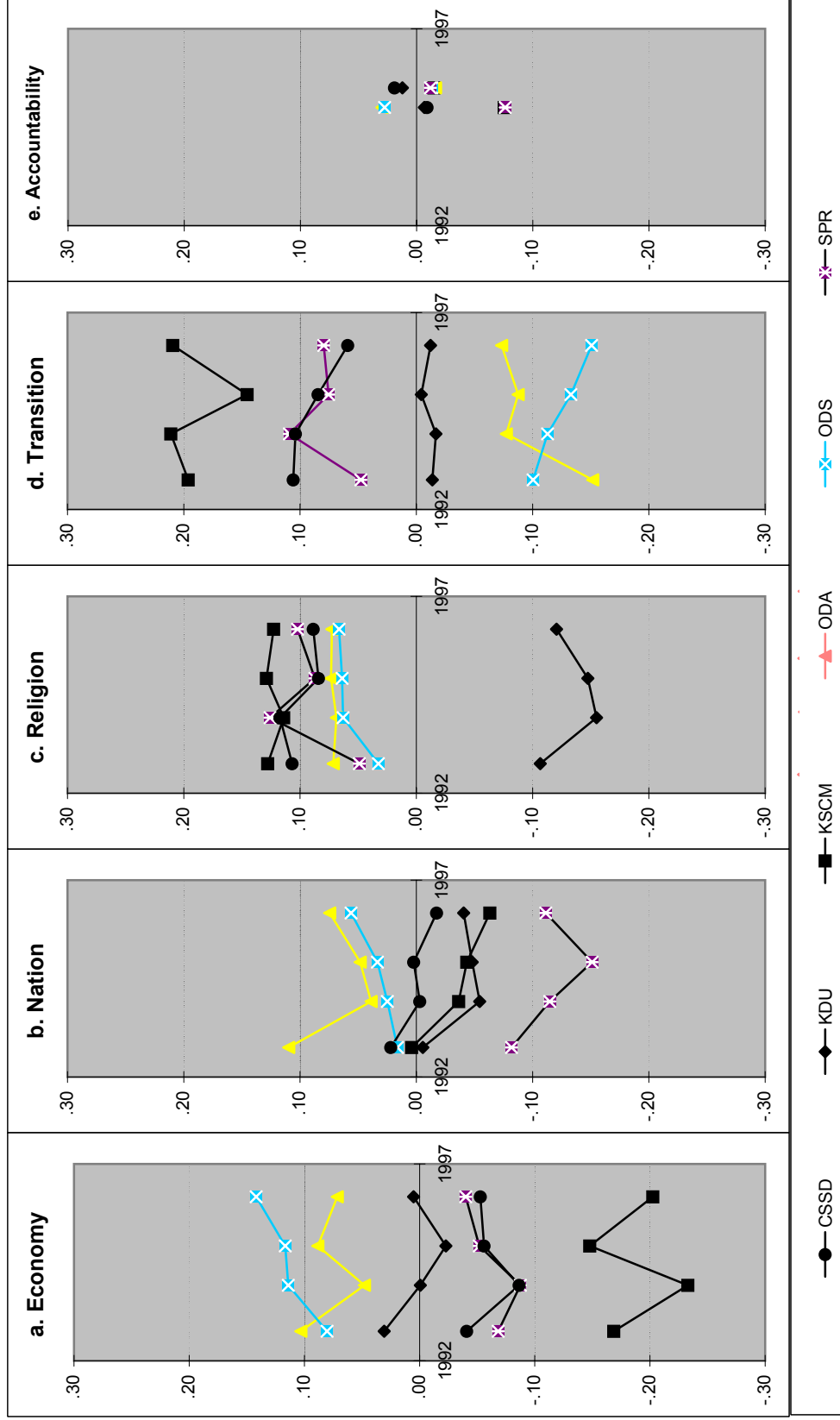
With these limitations in mind, it is possible to apply the Kitschelt et al test to the Slovak and Czech party systems. Figures 9.1a-e and 9.2a-e present the scores of major Slovak and Czech parties on each of the five factors between 1992 to 1996. Table 9.3 presents measures of coherence, dispersal, issue bundling, and left-right placement. In the Czech Republic the economy and transition factors neatly fit the criteria suggested by Kitschelt et al for a competitive dimension. These factors perform well on all four tests. Czech parties prove highly coherent on these issues relative to the population as a whole,<sup>148</sup> and positions of individual parties are widely dispersed across the spectrum of possible responses. These issues also bundle a fair number of specific questions and correlate closely with the left-right positions of party voters. The religion factor is not as useful for differentiating parties. Parties occupied a wide range of on religious questions, but the dispersion was highly uneven, with the Czech Republic's Christian Democratic Union at one end of the spectrum and all other parties clustered together at the other end. Furthermore, party positions on religious questions were not as coherent as on economy and transition issues. Nor did party positions on religion correlate particularly closely with their positions on the left-right axis. If religion performed poorly in the Czech Republic, the nation and accountability factors performed even worse. Party supporters' positions on these issues were not coherent and parties occupied such a narrow spread of

**Figure 9.1. Factor scores of political party supporters in Slovakia: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, FOCUS 1993-1996

**Figure 9.2. Factor scores of political party supporters in the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, FOCUS 1993-1996

**TABLE 9.3. MEAN CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSE ON FACTORS AMONG PARTY SUPPORTERS IN SLOVAKIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC FROM ANNUAL CEU SURVEYS: 1992 TO 1996**

| Country        | Survey    | Factor          | Dispersion of population <sup>a</sup> | Dispersion of party supporters (Low dispersion indicates high coherence) |                                  | Dispersion of parties     |                          | Issues bundled <sup>f</sup> | Predictor of party left-right placement <sup>g</sup> |
|----------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
|                |           |                 |                                       | Raw dispersion <sup>b</sup>  | Relative dispersion <sup>c</sup> | Party spread <sup>d</sup> | Party range <sup>e</sup> |                             |  |
| Slovakia       | CEU       | Economy         | .97                                   | .92  | .95                              | .20                       | .52                      | 3                           | .83  |
|                |           | Nation          | .98                                   | .90  | .92                              | .40                       | 1.07                     | 3                           | .16  |
|                |           | Religion        | .99                                   | .94  | .95                              | .43                       | 1.17                     | 3                           | .79  |
|                |           | Transition      | .88                                   | .84  | .95                              | .22                       | .55                      | 3                           | .83  |
|                | CEU/FOCUS | Accountability1 | 1.26                                  | 1.20   | .96                              | .38                       | 1.00                     | -                           | .25  |
|                | SAV/AVCR  | Accountability2 | 1.20                                  | 1.12   | .93                              | .43                       | 1.24                     | -                           | .18  |
| Czech Republic | CEU       | Economy         | .91                                   | .87  | .96                              | .36                       | .99                      | 3                           | .91  |
|                |           | Nation          | .86                                   | .84  | .98                              | .22                       | .59                      | 2                           | .23  |
|                |           | Religion        | .84                                   | .82  | .98                              | .41                       | 1.08                     | 3                           | .45  |
|                |           | Transition      | .99                                   | .91  | .92                              | .39                       | 1.03                     | 4                           | .89  |
|                | FOCUS     | Accountability1 | 1.13                                  | 1.12   | .99                              | .25                       | .66                      | -                           | .62  |
|                | SAV/AVCR  | Accountability2 | 1.11                                  | 1.10   | .99                              | .18                       | .49                      | -                           | .10  |

SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996; FOCUS 1993-1996; Institute of Sociology 1995

<sup>a</sup>Defined as the mean of standard deviation of all respondents for all questions comprising a factor. Questions in CEU and Democracy I factors use four point scales. Questions in the Accountability2 factor use a five point scale.

<sup>b</sup>Defined as the mean of standard deviations among supporters of each major political party for all questions comprising a factor.

<sup>c</sup>Defined as the raw dispersion divided by population dispersion.

<sup>d</sup>Defined as the mean standard deviation of all major parties' factor scores (mean value of responses among party supporters for all questions comprising a factor) for each survey, averaged over all four surveys.

<sup>e</sup>Defined as the distance between the factors scores (mean value of responses among party supporters for all questions comprising a factor) of the parties with highest and lowest factor scores for each survey, averaged over all four surveys.

<sup>f</sup>Defined as the number of questions comprising a factor. Because of differences in their derivation the Democracy I and II factors receive no score on this indicator.

<sup>g</sup>Defined as Pearson's correlation between major parties factor scores and their left-right scores.

positions that Figure 9.2e does not make it possible to tell the parties apart.<sup>149</sup> Nation and accountability<sub>2</sub> also failed to correlate with left and right (though accountability<sub>1</sub> exhibited reasonably close correlation) and the national factor bundled fewer issues than any other.

When applied to Slovakia Kitschelt's tests produce different results and yield major inconsistencies. In Slovakia it is the nation and accountability<sub>2</sub> factors that perform best on the first two tests. Parties in Slovakia exhibit both a coherence among supporters' positions and a wide range of positions from one party to the next. The religion and accountability<sub>1</sub> factors share wide range but lack the internal coherence of party supporters,<sup>150</sup> while the economy and transformation factors exhibit neither range nor coherence. The left-right test, however, provides diametrically opposite results. As in the Czech Republic, it is Slovakia's economy and transition factors that correlate well with left and right. Religion correlates less well and the nation and both accountability factors correlate extremely poorly. The issue-bundling indicator fails to resolve this inconsistency in test results, since all four of the factors derived from the CEU surveys bundle an equal number of questions.

Thus, although the factor approach used by Kitschelt et al works well in the Czech Republic, it works poorly in Slovakia. One option for resolving the internal conflicts is to leave aside the methodologically questionable "left-right" and "bundled issues" indicators. This, however, leaves only the measures of party coherence and party spread. Although these are important signals of how strongly a factor influences political choice, Kitschelt et al acknowledge that they are not "sufficient" conditions (Kitschelt et al., 1997, 246). Other methods are needed for determining which opinions correspond most closely to voters' preferences for particular political parties.

### **iii) The spatial approach**

Instead of beginning with issues and trying to identify which of them shape opinions about parties, it is possible instead to begin with opinions about parties. Preferences of voters can be summarized using a spatial model on which distance between any two parties corresponds roughly to the degree of antipathy between the two. By comparing the positions of parties in such a space against the issue positions of the same parties' supporters, it is possible to discern the relationship between issues and party preference. Although the roots of this method can be traced back four decades to the work of Downs (Downs, 1957) and gained prominence nearly two decades ago with the work of Enelow and Hinich (Enelow & Hinich, 1984), it is only in recent years that scholars have applied similar techniques to countries outside the limited realm of advanced industrial democracies (Dow, 1998; Hinich, Khmelko, & Ordeshook, 1998; Lin, Chu, & Hinich, 1996).

A basic raw material of the spatial method is a battery of "thermometer score" questions that ask respondents about their general level of sympathy toward political parties without reference to any particular political issue. From this data it is possible to use a number of different statistical techniques to locate parties within a space defined by these preferences.<sup>151</sup> Contrary to earlier predictions (Krause, 1996a) statistical techniques suggest that both the Slovak and Czech political party systems lend themselves equally to representation in a one-dimensional space without undue oversimplification. Figures 9.3 and 9.4 locate political parties in Slovakia and the Czech Republic on a one-dimensional preference dimension on the basis of factor analysis of data from CEU surveys.<sup>152</sup>

The locations of parties are internally consistent and remain so over time. In Slovakia a group of three parties--the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), the parties of the Hungarian Coalition (MK) and the Democratic Union (DU)--stand together consistently near one pole of the preference dimension. Three others--the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), the Slovak National Party (SNS) and the Association of

Workers of Slovakia (ZRS)--stand together near the opposite pole. In between these two poles moves the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL). In a pattern that closely corresponds with SDL's political alliances in Slovakia's parliament, the party shifts its position on the preference dimension from its proximity to HZDS and SNS in 1992 to proximity to DU, KDH and MK in 1994 and back again toward a more centrist position by 1996.

In the Czech Republic, the pattern is likewise clear and consistent. The Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA) stand near one pole in close proximity to one another. The Christian Democratic Union-Czech People's Party (KDU-ČSL) stands on the same side as ODS and ODA but closer to the center. The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) stands near the opposite pole and the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) stands on the same side but somewhat closer to the center. The Republican Party (SPR-RSČ) also stands on this side of the center line but fluctuates between the center and the extreme.

Evidence from party elites in both countries tend to correspond very closely with mass level responses. Results from factor analysis of sympathy scores conducted by Kitschelt in 1994 and the author in 1996 correspond almost perfectly to the mass-level results listed immediately above. In both years the correlation between relative party positions derived from mass-level and elite-level data exceeded  $r=0.99$ . Without a complete survey of Slovak elites, a comparison is somewhat more difficult. The available evidence, some of it anecdotal, does provide a strong indication that the mass-level results correspond closely to the elite level. An official of the Hungarian party Coexistence (ESWS) when asked in a formal interview with the author to rank parties in terms of sympathy, ranked other Hungarian parties to be closest, followed by the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) the Democratic Union (DU), followed by the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), and finally, at the least degree of sympathy, SNS, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), and the Association of Workers of

**Figure 9.3. Positions of major political parties on the preference dimension in Slovakia: 1992-1996**

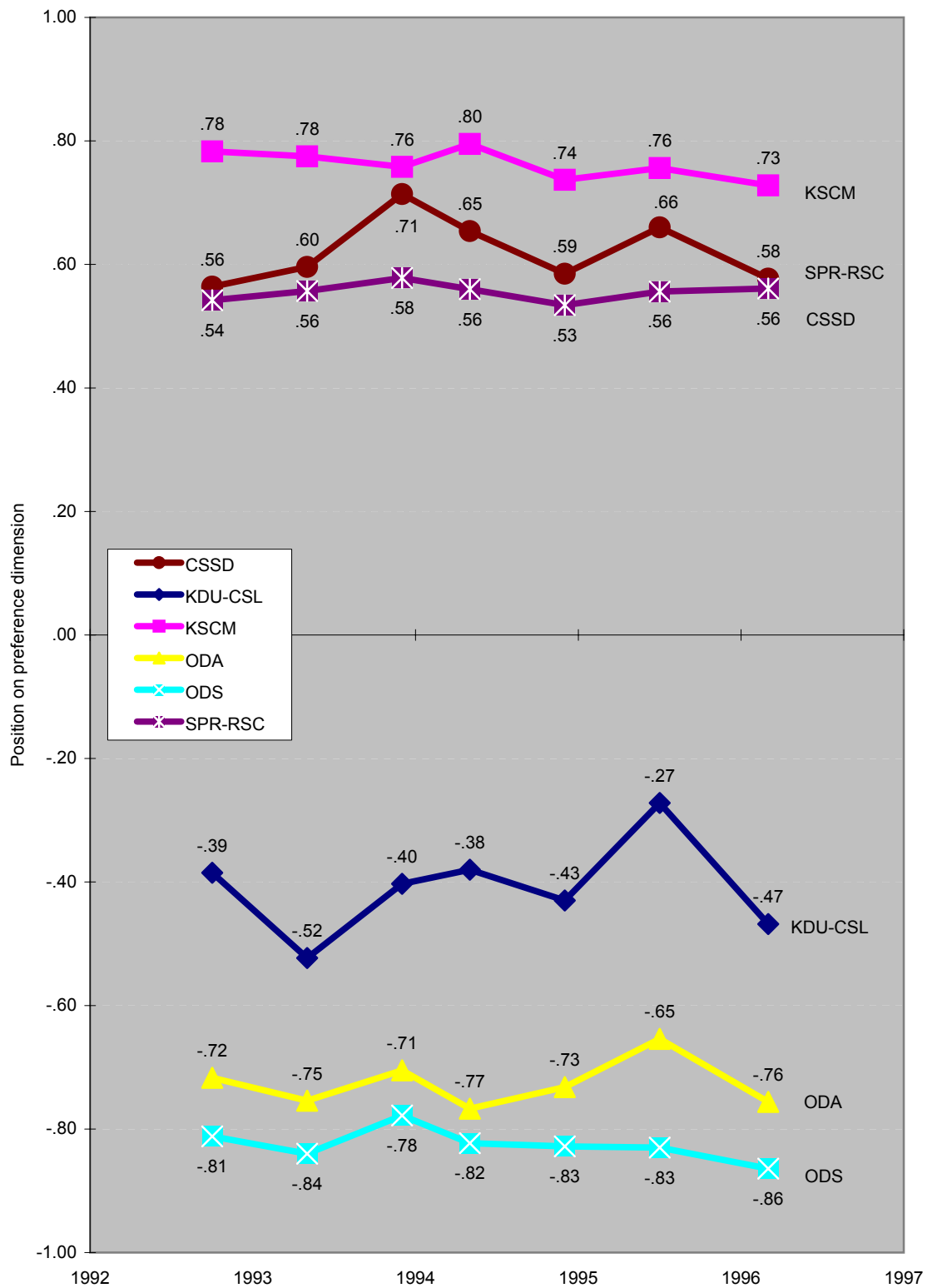


Slovakia. In a parallel interview, a parliamentary deputy of HZDS ranked his sympathy for parties in almost precisely the reverse order: SNS and ZRS, followed by SDL, and then at a considerable distance DU followed by the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (MKDM) and, at bottom, KDH and ESWS.

Having identified how voters tend to rank parties along the preference dimension, it is possible to go further and assess the similarity between party positions on this dimension and their positions on particular factors. Figures 9.5 and 9.6 offer a graphic representation of the correlations. The results are striking. In the Czech Republic party positions on the economy and transition factors correlate closely with party positions on the preference dimension. This evidence strongly confirms the conclusions of both Kitschelt et al and Markowski that party choice in the Czech Republic involves primarily economic and socio-economic questions. The correlation of the preference dimension with the religion dimension begins at a low level and actually declines during this period, while the correlation with the nation factor rebounds after an extremely low ebb in 1993. The accountability factors add a note of ambiguity. The accountability1 factor correlates well with the preference dimension, whereas the accountability2 factor produces what is by far the lowest correlation for any factor over the whole four year period.

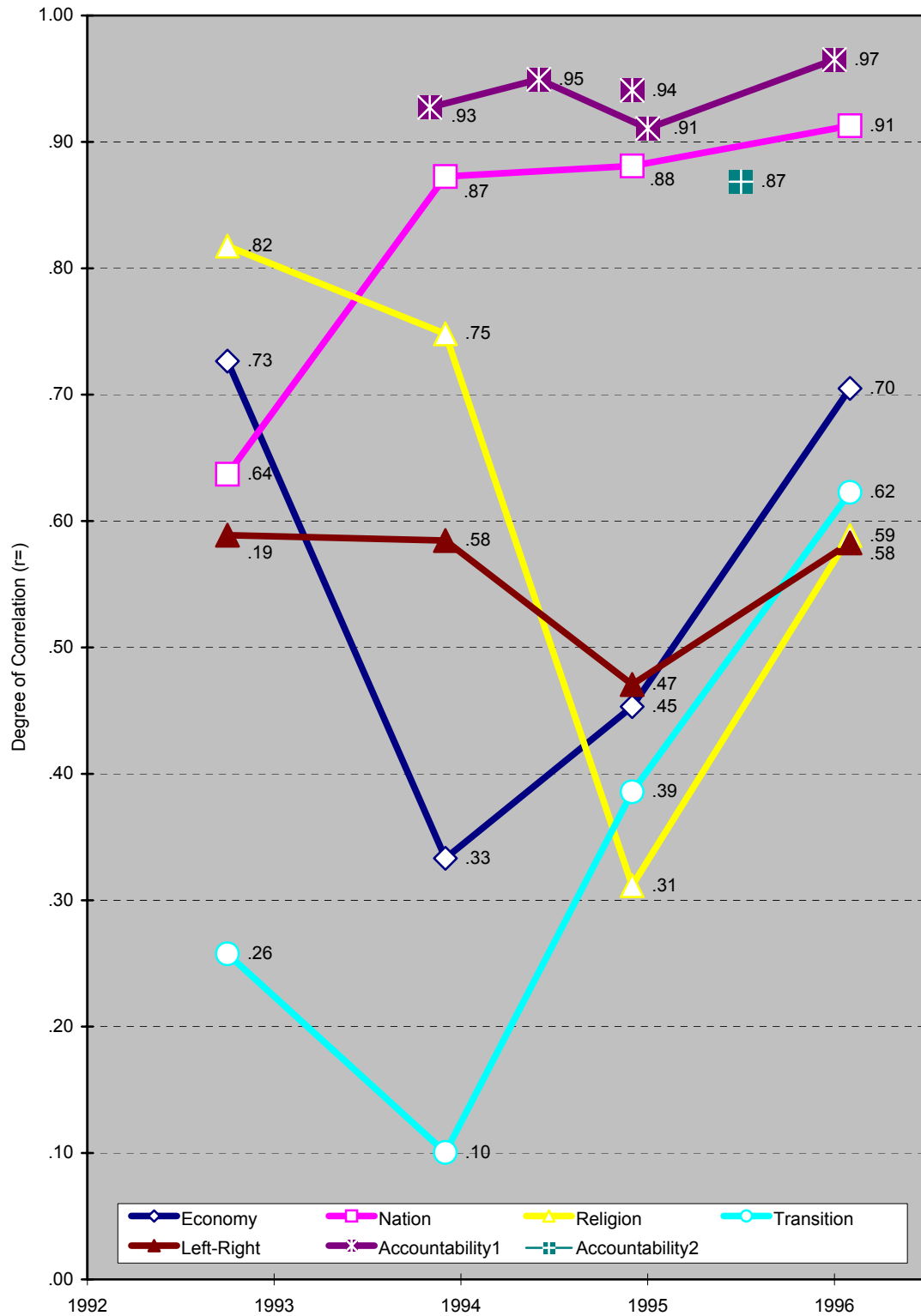
To resolve this difference, it is necessary to turn to another measurement of the relationship between party positions on the preference dimension and their positions on various factors. A correlation calculation measures the degree to which parties occupy similar relative positions on two sets of dimensions; a slope calculation goes one step further to measure the degree to which movement on any dimension produces movement on the other dimension. A high degree of slope in the relationships discussed here suggests that supporters of parties on opposite sides of the preference dimension differ dramatically in their positions on a particular factor. A low degree of slope suggests little difference of opinion from one side of the party spectrum to the other. Figures 9.7 and 9.8 present the results of these calculations for Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In the

**Figure 9.4. Positions of major political parties on the preference dimension in the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



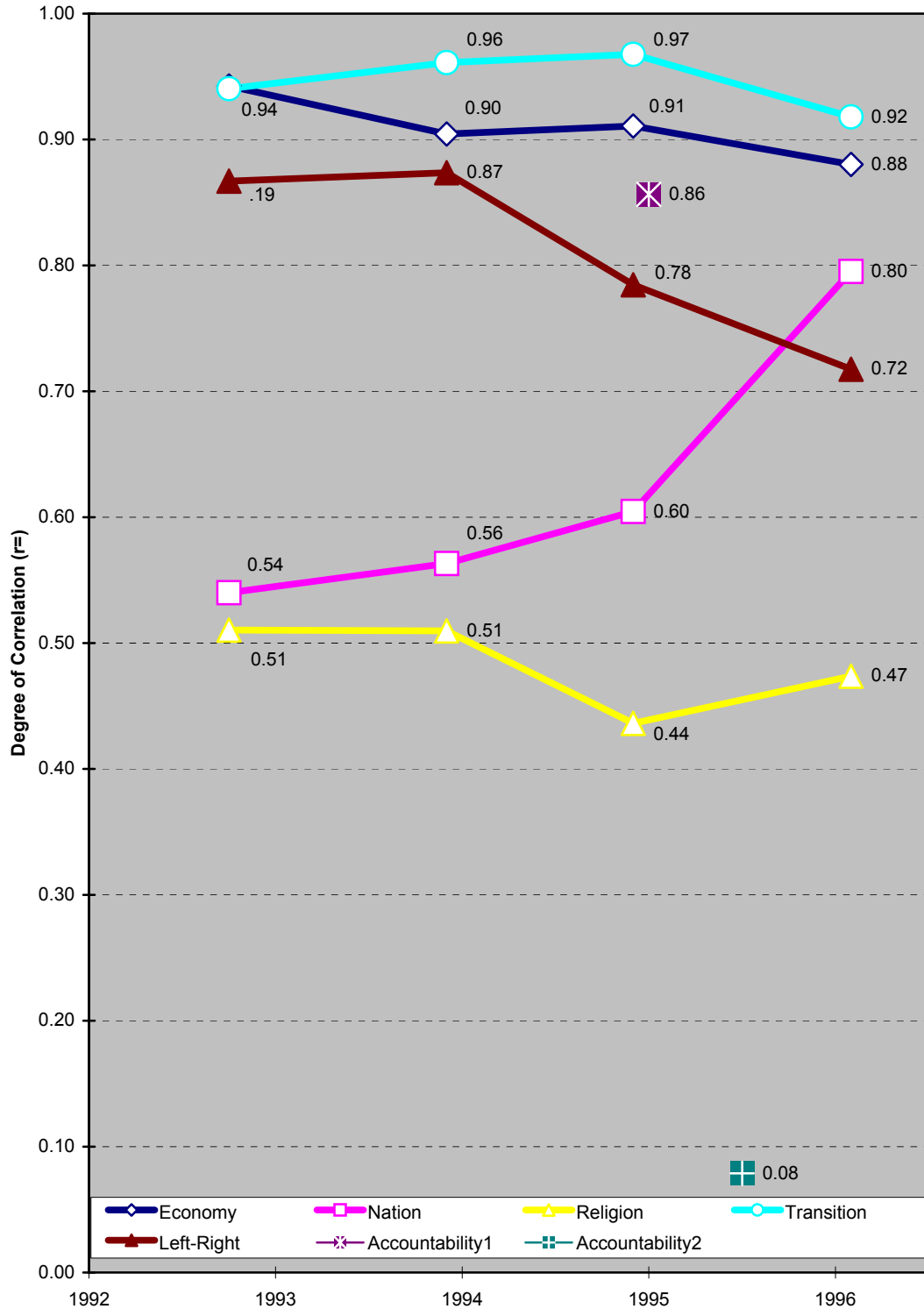
SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

**Figure 9.5. The degree of correlation between party placement on factors and party position on the preference dimension in Slovakia: 1992-1996**



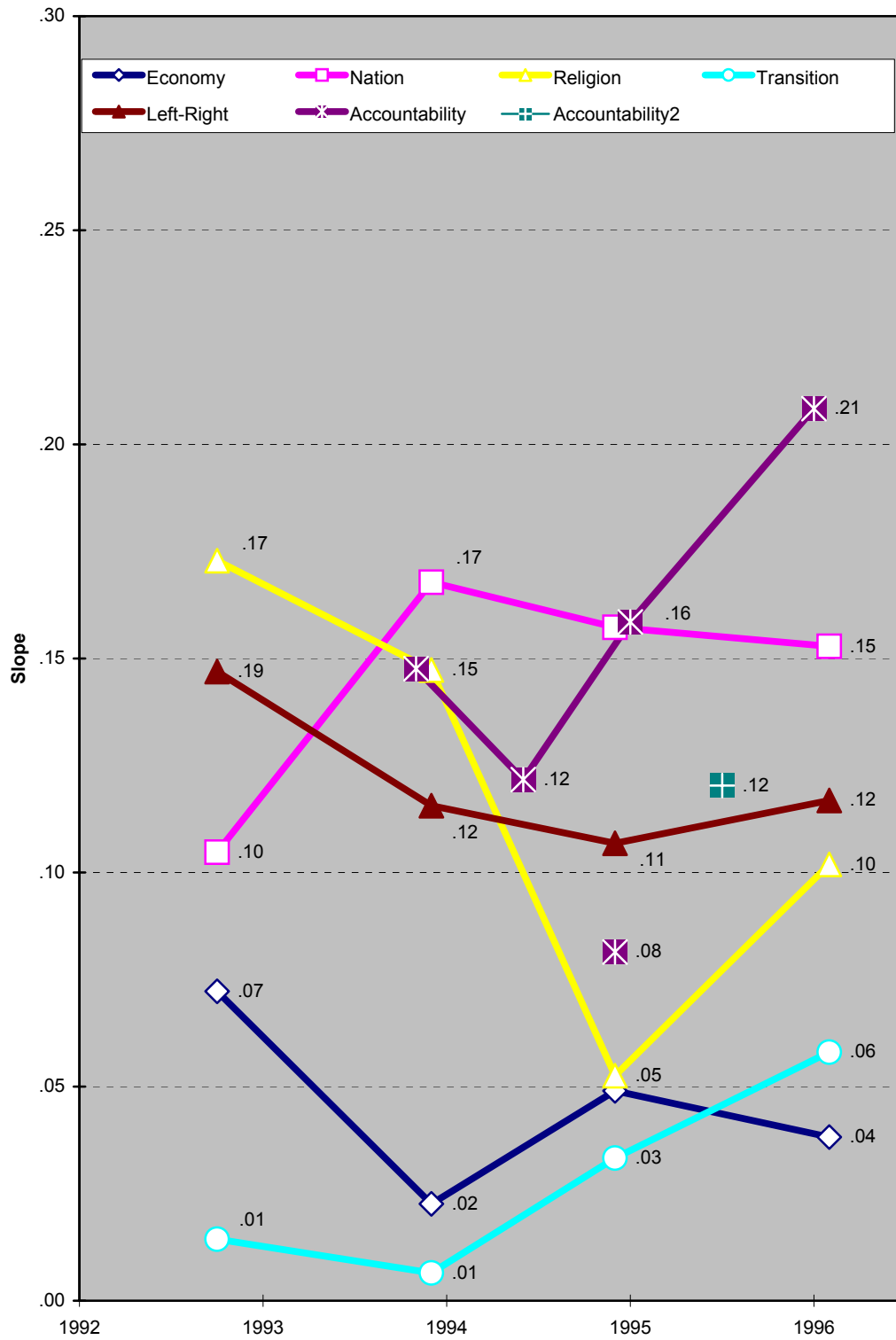
SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995

**Figure 9.6. The degree of correlation between party placement on factors and party position on the preference dimension in the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



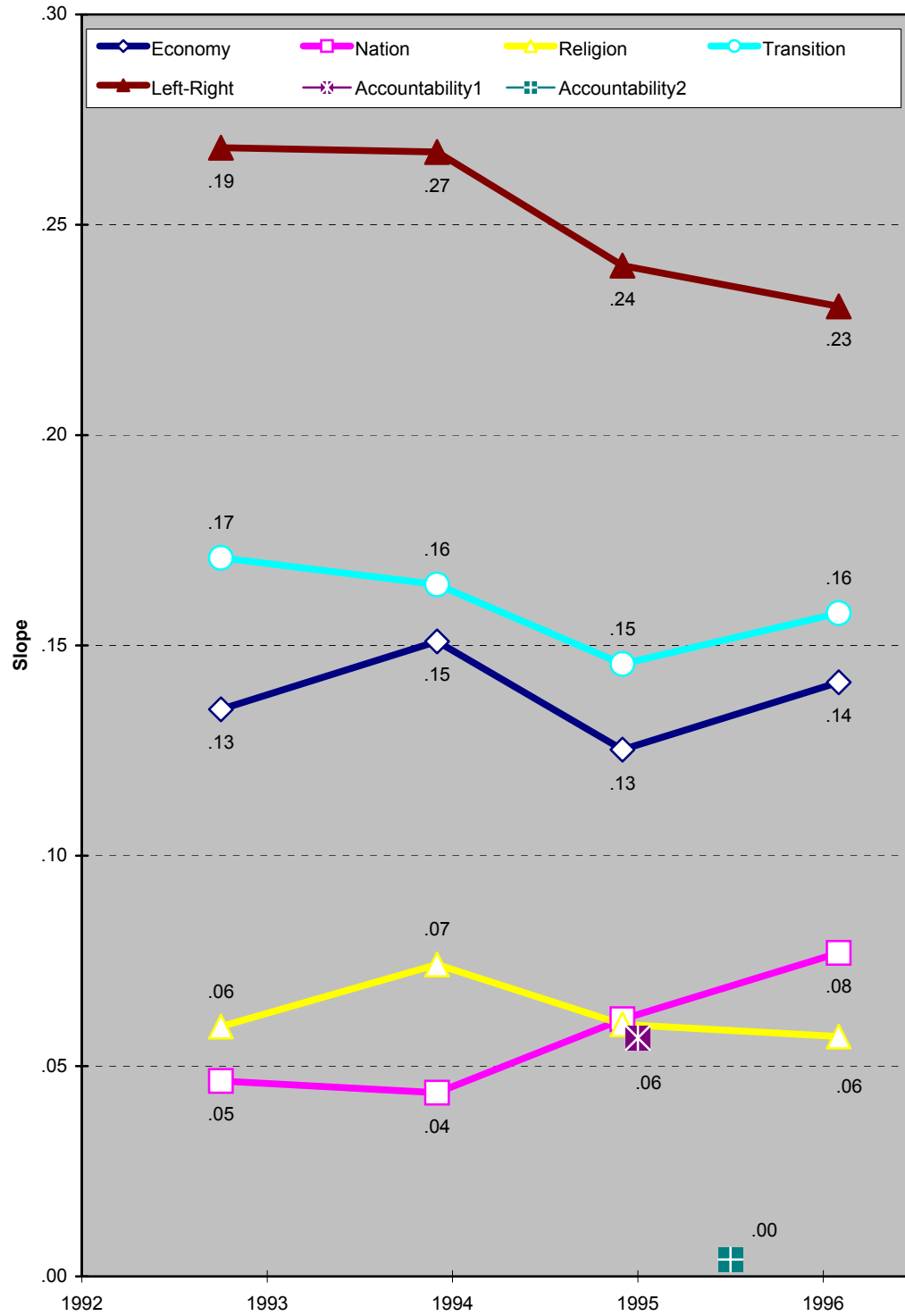
SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995

**Figure 9.7. The slope of the relationship between party positions factors and party positions on the preference dimension in Slovakia: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995

**Figure 9.8. The slope of the relationship between party positions factors and party positions on the preference dimension in the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995

case of the Czech Republic, the slope measurements tend to echo the results of the correlation measurements and are even more stable over time. The economy, transformation and especially the left-right factors exhibit extremely high slopes, while religion and nation exhibit considerably less differentiation. The accountability--both 1 and 2--perform even more poorly. While the positions of party supporters on accountability1 did follow parties' positions on the preference dimension, the actual difference in the full range of party positions on accountability questions was smaller than on any other factor.

The results for Slovakia contrast sharply with those of the Czech Republic. The figures for 1992 show three factors that correlate well with the preference dimension: religion, economy and nation. In 1993, however, the correlations with religion and economy decline significantly and the correlation with the nation factor increases markedly. The nation factor continues to produce very strong correlations in 1994 and 1996, rivaled only by the extremely high correlations of the accountability1 and 2 factors. After 1992 the nation and accountability factors remain considerably higher than those of any other factor, even after a sharp rebound of other factor correlations by 1996.<sup>153</sup> Slope measurements offer a similar view of Slovakia's political development, including the drop in differences on religion questions and the generally low levels of difference on economy and transition questions. These measurements also show a dramatic early rise in slope on nation questions and a similar subsequent rise for accountability questions. Different measures of accountability show a fairly wide range, but even at their lowest the levels accountability1 and accountability2 stand above all but the nation and left-right factors.

These results mesh nicely with other sources of evidence and correspond extremely closely to the results obtained using Kitschelt's measurements of coherence and spread on particular factors as described above. Parties in the Czech Republic showed the widest spread and most coherence on precisely those factors--economy and transition--that correlate most strongly with the main dimension of competition. Slovakia's national and

accountability dimensions fit this same pattern, suggesting that party spread and coherence serve as strong indicators of the issues on which voters depend when choosing a party.

At the elite level the results are extremely similar. In the Czech Republic the elite level preference dimension in both 1994 and 1996 correlated more closely with party responses on economic and socio-economic questions than with responses on questions related to national identity, religion, culture, or the use of political authority. Table 9.4 lists the questions in order of the degree of correlation. In Slovakia it is more difficult to establish the relationship with the same precision, but several different sources help to fill the gaps. Although more anecdotal, these tend to confirm the groupings and even some of the specific rankings that emerge at the mass level. Rafael Rafaj, spokesman for the Slovak National Party (SNS) argues that the primary dimension of competition is a national one and groups Slovakia's parties into national and non- or anti-national in the same pattern as the CEU results. HZDS officials provide extremely similar statements. Particularly instructive is an analysis of Slovakia's political scene by HZDS parliamentary deputy Hofbauer. Hofbauer argues that "the Slovak political scene is ... completely different" from the bipolar left-right party systems of the west. He describes his own party as a "a dominant and massive centrist party, with markedly pro-national, Christian, ecological and social orientation." Other parties he characterizes as follows:

- "The left-wing spectrum is composed of the post-communist SDĽ with leftist phraseology and rightist behavior, and the SDSS [Social Democratic Party of Slovakia] with a markedly pro-Czech orientation...."
- "The so-called right-wing groups [KDH and DU] in reality are not right-wing forces but rather forces which were and are uncompromisingly opposed to our statehood..."
- "A special political enclave is comprised of the three subjects of the Hungarian Coalition, who are structured on the basis of Magyar nationalism, and do not communicate with the Slovak government. Their partners are the Hungarian government in Budapest...."(Hofbauer 1998)

**TABLE 9.4 CORRELATION BETWEEN MEAN POSITIONS OF PARTY ELITES ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS AND PARTY POSITIONS ON THE PREFERENCE DIMENSION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC: 1994 AND 1996**

| Question  | Year             |      |                  |      |
|---|------------------|------|------------------|------|
|   | 1994             |      | 1996             |      |
|   | Correlation (r=) | Rank | Correlation (r=) | Rank |
| Private v. public management of firms                     | 0.97             | 1    | 0.99             | 2    |
| Unlimited v. limited foreign investment                   | 0.96             | 2    | 0.99             | 1    |
| Left v. right   | 0.95             | 3    | 0.47             | 7    |
| Extensive v. limited health care coverage                 | 0.95             | 4    | 0.92             | 3    |
| State intervention v. market economy                      | 0.94             | 5    | 0.90             | 4    |
| National v. cosmopolitan feeling                          | 0.85             | 6    | 0.82             | 5    |
| Church involvement in state education v. Church exclusion | 0.58             | 7    | 0.68             | 6    |
| Unlimited mass media v. respect prevailing morals         | 0.15             | 8    | 0.46             | 8    |
| Individualism v. collectivism and tradition               | 0.11             | 9    | 0.42             | 9    |

SOURCE: Kitschelt 1994b, Krause 1996v

While defining his own party as centrist he collapses left and right and focuses only on the contrast between his party's pro-national sentiments and the anti-national or anti-Slovak sentiments of the other parties. In line with the CEU results, he expresses the least antipathy for SDL, more toward KDH and DU and the most toward the parties of the Hungarian Coalition (MK). Although these isolated statements cannot prove the similarity between mass and elite understandings of the main competitive dimension, they at least indicate the currency of such ideas among prominent HZDS leaders. Furthermore, in light of the swift action taken by HZDS against dissenting parliamentary deputies such as František Gaulieder, it is unlikely that Hofbauer would have kept his weekly column in the party newspaper, *Slovensko do toho!*, or remained near the top of the party's candidate list for parliamentary elections if his statements were not in accord with party beliefs.

The focus on the nation and accountability issues can be found equally clearly in the statements of Slovakia's party leaders in the months leading up to the 1998 parliamentary election. According to Jan Cuper, a deputy for the majority coalition's HZDS, "In this election what will really be decided is whether Slovakia will continue to exist as an independent and sovereign state"(Malecova, 1998). According to a statement by the rival Slovak Democratic Coalition, by contrast, "The current competition is a struggle about the building of a democratic state. In this conflict there are only two possibilities: a state that is democratic or one that is autocratic"(1997c).

These results offer clear replicable evidence that party competition in Slovakia after 1992 involved national and democratic questions more than economic, social or religious ones, whereas party competition in the Czech Republic focused primarily on economic and socio-economic questions. They also conform closely to descriptive accounts of the Slovak and Czech party systems, particularly those that characterize the 1992 elections in Slovakia as an election about both economic policy and national sovereignty with overtones of the anti-communist struggle of 1990 (Innes, 1997; Szomolanyi, 1995). To the extent that the question of religion correlated strongly in 1992 with the question of

anti-communism, there is evidence that all three of these shaped party choice in Slovakia in 1992.<sup>154</sup> By 1993 and especially by 1994, these other issues had largely fallen aside and questions about the nation and accountability emerged as dominant.

### **Structures versus dimensions**

The existence of multiple dimensions of competition, multiple and distinct issues on which voters may choose parties dramatically complicates the relationship between the structural differences described in the chapter eight and the party-based explanations of accountability violations offered in chapter seven. By analogy to bidding games of playing cards, the outcome of a round depends not only on the cards in a player's hand but also to the suit called as trump. If there were only one basis for party choice, then differences in underlying attitudes would determine the relative success of particular kinds of parties. If, on the other hand, two countries had the same underlying structures but different issue dimensions, then the nature of the key political issue in each country would determine the winner. In the case of Slovakia and the Czech Republic, both the underlying structures and the issue dimensions--both the trump suit and the distribution of cards--were measurably different. This absence of simplicity demands a second part of this chapter to disentangle the two influences. The following pages look at the relationship between the structural difference and support for anti-accountability parties, and exploring how issue dimensions played in enhancing or offsetting the structural differences discussed above. In particular it focuses on relative importance of structure and dimension in determining levels of support for anti-accountability parties in both countries.

### **Religion**

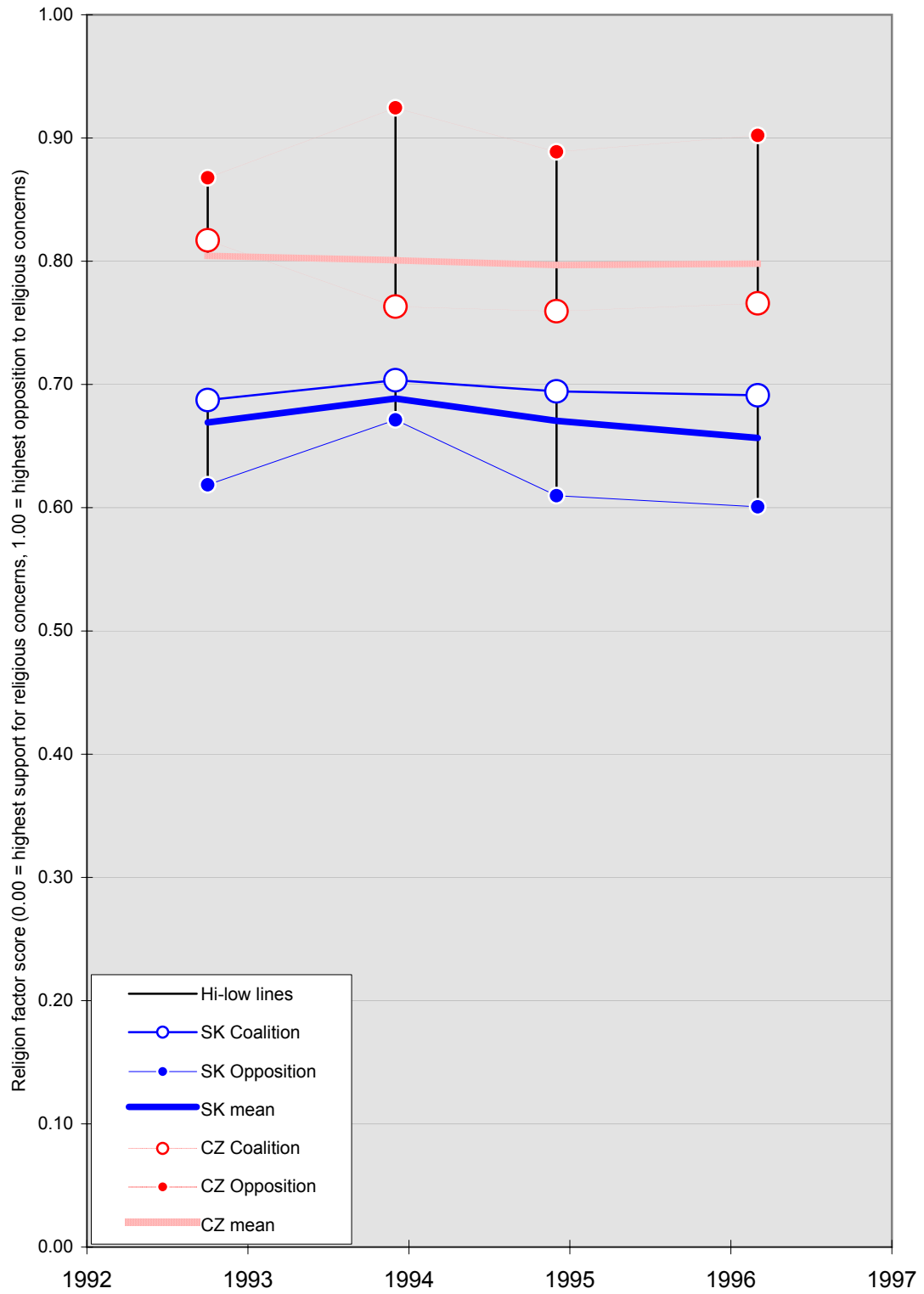
Religion offers a convenient starting point for the analysis because Slovakia and the Czech Republic differed in the distribution of attitudes but not--at least after 1992--in the importance of religion as a competitive dimension. Figure 9.9 offers a graphic

representation of the relative importance of structural and dimensional differences by comparing the positions of the two countries' population means and the range between the mean positions of coalition and opposition party supporters, represented respectively by white and colored circles. Unlike graphs for other dimensions that appear below, Figure 9.9 shows similarly-sized gaps between the opposition and the coalition and only a small distance between the coalition and the population mean. On religion the structural differences--the distance between the population means--predominated.

Yet the large distance between the two populations on religious questions does not seem to have produced any significant difference in overall levels of support for accountability or pro-accountability parties. Aforementioned work by Elster et al (Elster et al., 1998) and Putnam (Putnam, 1993) suggests that higher religiosity might contribute to weaker support for democracy--and perhaps incidentally for accountability--but evidence from Slovakia and the Czech Republic shows no such relationship. Although Czechs and Slovaks differed significantly in their likelihood of believing in God and attending religious services on a regular basis, that difference did not contribute to increased popular opposition to accountability or to popular support for anti-accountability parties or coalitions. CEU surveys conducted between 1992 and 1996 show no statistically significant correlation between scores on the accountability<sup>1</sup> factor and scores on the religion factor in either Slovakia or the Czech Republic.

As the above discussion of competitive dimensions indicates, religious views played equally little role in overall political choice in either country. With the exception of the two countries' moderately sized Christian Democratic and former Communist parties, religious questions did not have much effect on overall party choice or on the

**Figure 9.9. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Religion factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

preference of opposition or coalition. Other parties inhabited an extremely narrow range of positions and faced a high degree of internal party division. The greater religiosity of Slovak voters did not incline them toward parties that opposed accountability. CEU survey respondents in Slovakia with high scores on the Religion factor were not any more likely than the population as a whole to support the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) or the HZDS-led coalition as a whole. In fact, the most religious segment of Slovakia's population gave above-average support to parties such as the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (MKDM) that emphasized their support for accountability.

The religious dimension of party choice did play a limited role in exacerbating Slovakia's accountability problems, but in a way that was not largely incidental to the broader question of structure versus dimension. Whereas Slovakia's governing coalition parties differed little from one another in their position on the religion factor, the parties of the opposition differed more widely than any other set of parties on any factor in either of the two countries. This broad divide on the religion factor impeded effective cooperation among those parties with the greatest capacity for restraining Slovakia's HZDS-led majority coalition. In 1994 the brief coalition of the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) and the former-communist Party of the Democratic Left (SDĽ) in opposition to HZDS produced a significant backlash among former Communists who were unable to abide cooperation with Catholics and Catholics who were unwilling to accept close ties with the former Communists.<sup>155</sup> This backlash had a particularly strong effect within SDĽ and led the party to seek "its own seat within the opposition"(Mesežnikov, 1996, 21). By 1998 these conflicts had moderated to some degree, allowing KDH and SDĽ to re-establish their earlier coalition and cooperate with reasonable success.

By creating divisions within the opposition, Slovakia's religion factor exhibited characteristics of a cross-cutting divide, a phenomenon often associated with a moderation of political conflict. But Slovakia's religion factor cut only halfway across the political

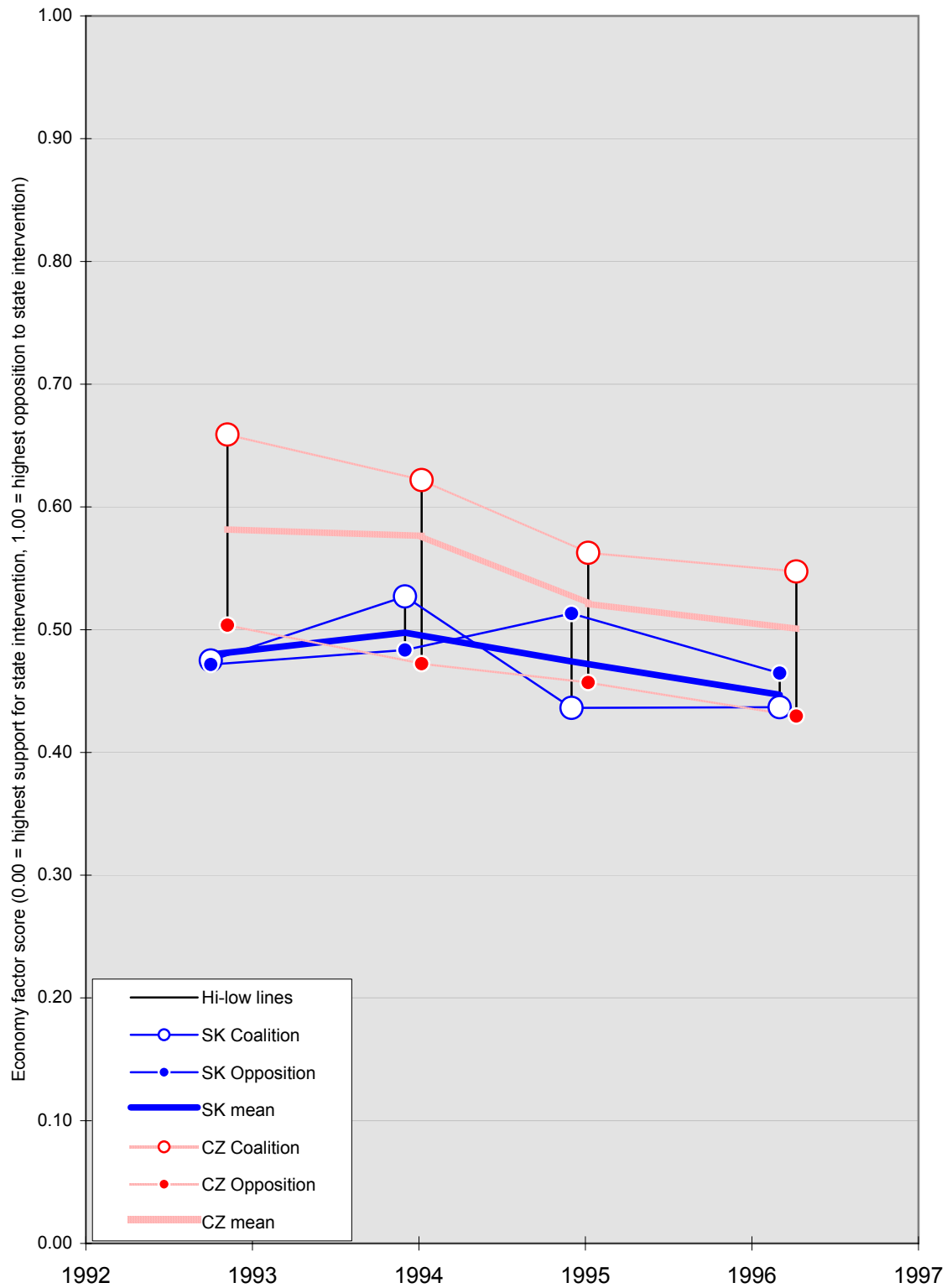
spectrum, thereby exacerbating strengthening the coalition by dividing only the opposition against itself. In the Czech Republic, by contrast, the Communist and Christian Democratic parties fell on different sides of the coalition-opposition divide (for reasons only distantly related to their positions on religious questions) and both sides were therefore more homogeneous. Although the Czech opposition did not prove particularly effective in its own attempts at cooperation, it did not at least suffer from the additional religious handicap faced by Slovakia's opposition.<sup>156</sup>

### **Economy**

The economy dimension differed from the religion dimension in important ways. On economic questions there were differences in both the structures and in the dimensions. Figure 9.10 shows a narrower but still substantial gap between the population means than on the religion factor discussed above, and a gap between the majority coalitions that was almost twice as wide (and considerably wider than the gap between the coalitions on the religion factor). The economy factor also exhibits another significant departure from the religion factor discussed above: whereas the gaps between the two countries' opposition and coalition party supporters were nearly equal, on economy the gaps were extremely different. The gap between Czech opposition and coalition party supporters on the economy factors was, on average, three times as wide as the same gap in Slovakia. A virtually identical pattern emerged on the transition factor, shown in Figure 9.11. The complicated nature of these relationships has important consequences for the role of economy in shaping the political outcomes of the two countries.

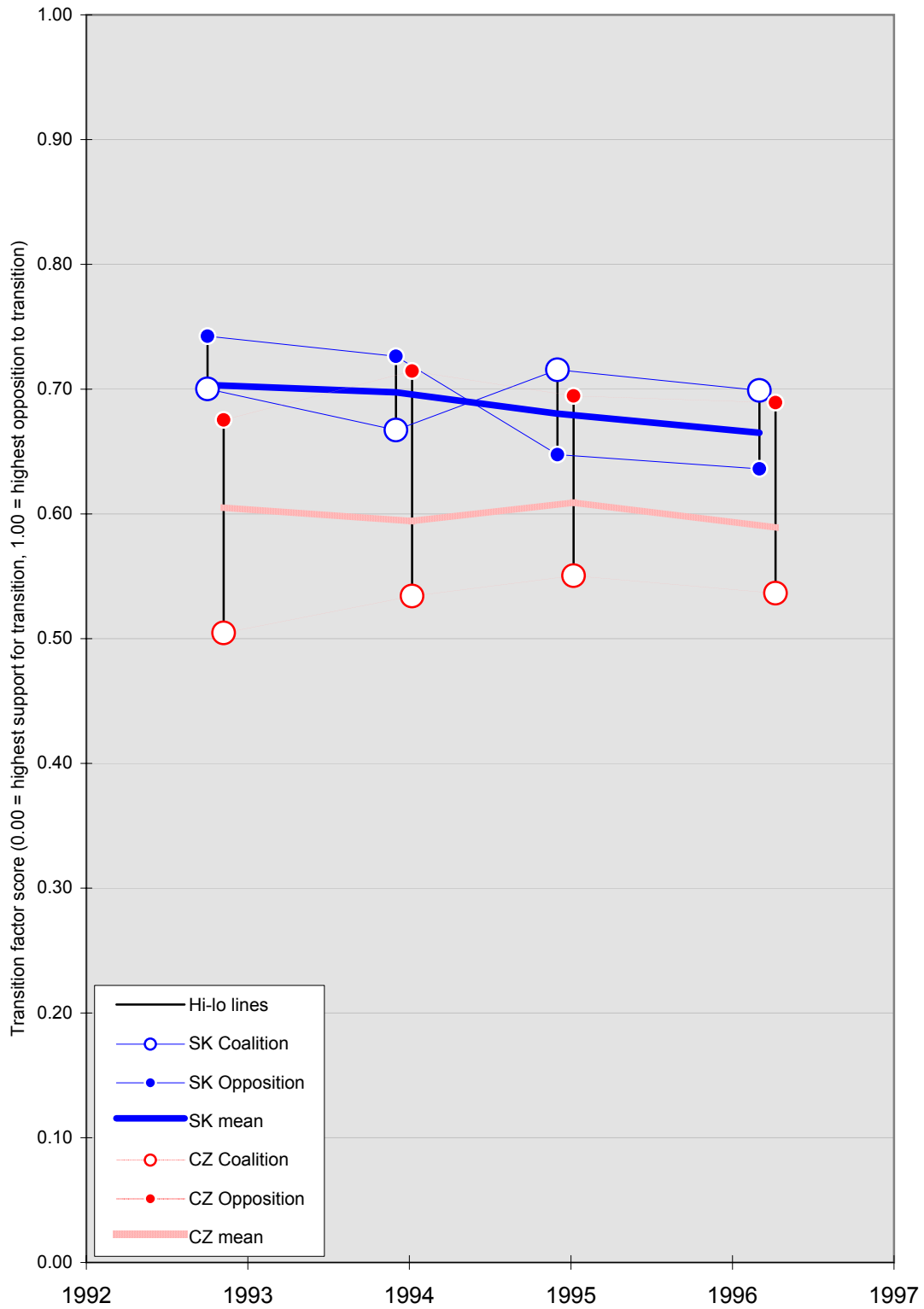
As with religion, the first task in approaching economy and transition questions is to look for direct connections between the differences in attitudes on these questions and differences on accountability. One of the most conventional accounts for differences

**Figure 9.10. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Economy factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

**Figure 9.11. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Transition factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

between Slovakia and the Czech Republic is that the heightened economic insecurity of Slovaks--regardless of actual circumstances--produce a greater desire for a strong leader, unencumbered by other institutions, who could restore prosperity and security. Similarly, Slovaks' more positive views toward state involvement in the economy might easily lead them to excuse the more expansive growth of state control in the political sphere as well. These explanations, while plausible from a theoretical perspective, conform only moderately well to the actual circumstances. Although the leaders of Slovakia's majority coalition did occasionally use economic arguments about "social justice and equality" and the risk of the market to justify their institutional encroachments--particularly the replacement of privatization vouchers with privatization bonds that shifted the privatization decisions from voucher holders to political leaders--there is little evidence of a relationship between the economic attitudes and rejection of accountability. Five surveys conducted by FOCUS and CEU between 1993 and 1996, show a statistically significant relationship between statist economic attitudes and rejection of accountability, but the magnitude of that relationship was extremely small. Each ten percent increase in statist views corresponded to only a one or two percent greater rejection of accountability as measured by the accountability<sup>1</sup> factor. Since the views of Slovaks and Czechs toward state involvement in the economy differed by only ten to fifteen percentage points, this difference cannot be relied upon to explain more than three percent of the difference between Slovak and Czech accountability scores.

If economic questions played any role in shaping the different Slovak and Czech political outcomes, the effect did not result from differences in overall levels of well-being or belief in a command economy, but because of differences in how such economic attitudes affected political choice. Even here, the record is mixed. Contrary to expectations, Slovaks' greater economic anxiety and more statist economic views did not provide any dramatic impetus to the growth of anti-accountability parties. Voters in Slovakia did not consistently associate the anti-accountability Movement for a Democratic

Slovakia (HZDS) with any particular economic goals or strategies, and the party did not attract a disproportionate share of support from among those with strong preferences for government involvement in the economy or from those in particularly dire economic circumstances. Supporters of the HZDS stood in the middle of Slovakia's range of parties on the economy and transition factors, inclined only slightly toward state involvement.<sup>157</sup> The party also lacked any clear ownership of economic issues or any stability in economic issue ownership over time. What is true of HZDS is even more broadly true of the coalition it formed after the parliamentary election of 1994. The coalition brought the relatively centrist HZDS together with the intervention-oriented Association of Workers of Slovakia (ZRS) as well as the economically ambiguous Slovak National Party (SNS),<sup>158</sup> further diluting the prevailing economic profile.

Since both Slovakia's coalition and its opposition included a set of parties that covered nearly the full economic spectrum, voters with particularly strong economic fears or economic preferences faced viable choices on either side. Furthermore, since coalitions and even individual parties spanned a wide spectrum of economic opinions, voters with strong economic preference could not be certain that a vote based on economic criteria would have any impact. Scenarios of disadvantaged Slovaks joining behind an unaccountable leader in search of economic deliverance simply do not fit Slovakia's pattern. The disadvantaged chose from among a variety of parties, and the parties of the HZDS-led majority coalition could not rely on their support or trust that they would overlook accountability violations in the interest of economic gains. The absence of a clear economic dimension of party choice in Slovakia thus helped to neutralize whatever minor effects on accountability attitudes may have resulted from Slovaks' pro-state economic attitudes and perceived economic distress.

If the economic basis of party choice cannot not explain the success of Slovakia's anti-accountability parties, it may nevertheless explain some of the differences between the overall outcomes of the two countries. In the Czech Republic economic attitudes

fundamentally affected party choice. The Czech Republic's party system stood in sharp contrast to the extremely small range of economic policy positions offered by Slovakia's political parties and the extremely high degree of internal disagreement on economic questions among supporters of any given party. On questions of economic policy incorporated into the economy and transition factors measured above, the Czech Republic's parties exhibited a wide range of positions, high internal coherence and a very close correlation with the preference dimension discussed above. The same conclusions also apply to more concrete issues of economic well-being. These dimensional differences, furthermore, led to the formation of a coalition among parties whose supporters were characterized by similarly high levels of economic well-being and free-market sentiments.

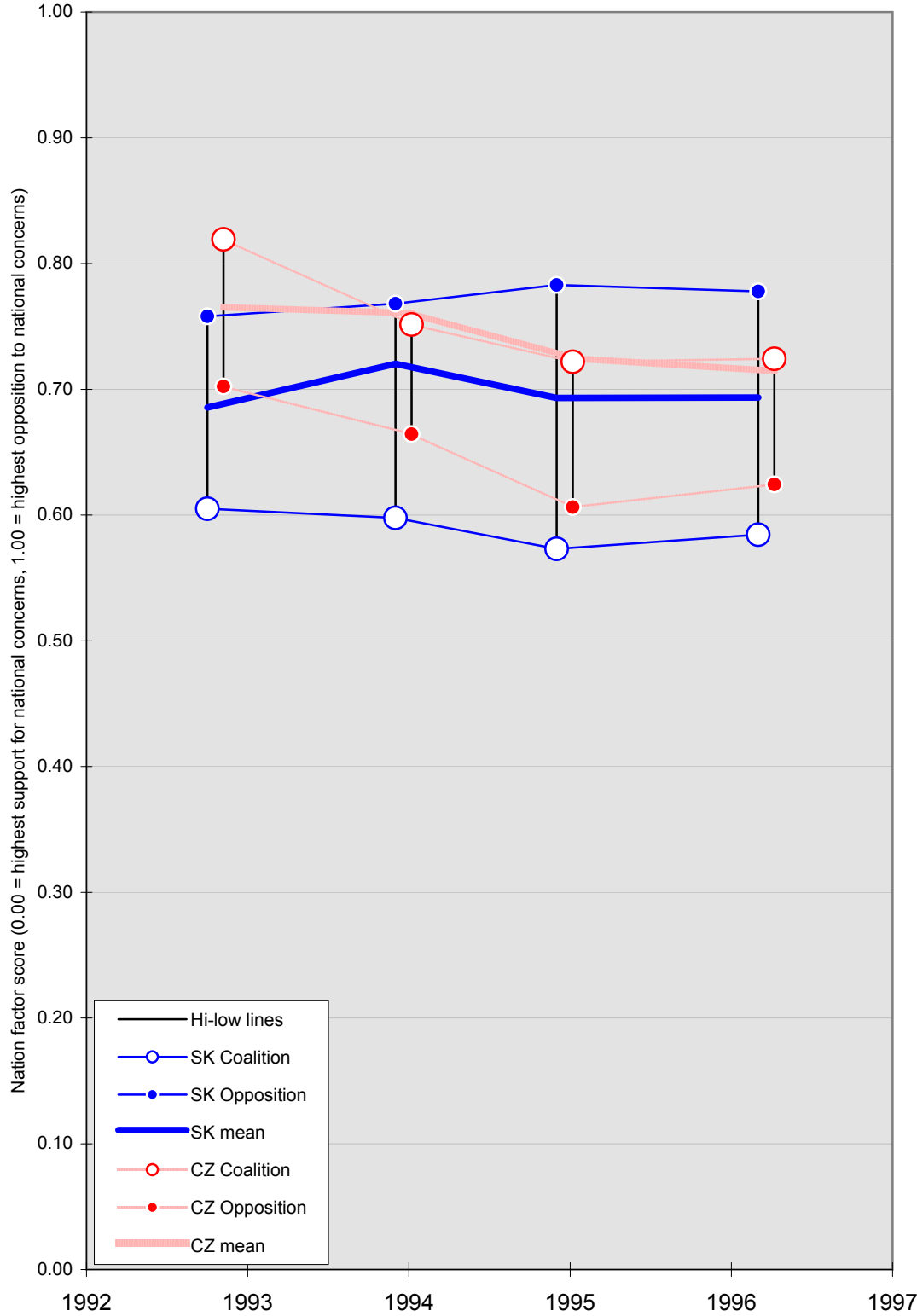
Yet the creation of a pro-market coalition did not automatically produce a pro-accountability coalition. As above arguments show, economic views did not strongly predict accountability views in either country. Although slightly inclined toward accountability, the Czech Republic's economic liberals remained far from unified on such questions. The connection between the two was more indirect: the existence of an economic dimension helped prevent the unification of anti-accountability forces. Since most Czech voters cared deeply about the economic profile of their chosen party, those parties could expect a negative reaction if they sought coalition partners with opposing views.<sup>159</sup> This limitation did not in itself do much to prevent an anti-accountability coalition--other dimensions and internal party struggles were more influential in forestalling that outcome--but the absence of similar limits in Slovakia allowed the establishment of coalitions that would have had little chance of survival in the Czech environment. Had economic issues played as great a role in separating Slovakia's political parties as they did in the Czech Republic, HZDS might have been unable to assemble its anti-accountability coalition in 1994.

## **Nation**

The responses of Slovak and Czech party supporters on the nation factor resembled responses on the economy and transition factors, but with the two countries reversed. As Figure 9.12 shows, the overall positions of the Slovak and Czech populations differed by small margins--considerably smaller than the gap between the two populations on the religion, economy and transition factors--whereas the difference between the two coalitions was relatively wide. In an almost precise reversal of results on the economy and transition factors, the gap between coalition and opposition on national questions in Slovakia was twice as large as in the Czech Republic. Unlike other issues, the dimensional pattern of national issues in Slovakia and the Czech Republic corresponds directly to the differences in Slovak and Czech levels of horizontal accountability.

Especially since the advent of German National Socialism in the 1920s, observers have associated emphasis on national issues with support for institutional encroachment. Slovakia's surplus of nationalists might therefore lead directly to a governing coalition that would be more likely than its Czech counterpart to attack rival institutions. The first part of this equation--the relationship between national attitudes and opposition to accountability--did hold true in Slovakia during the 1990's, and in fact actually became stronger over time. Table 9.5 shows the level of correlation between the respondents' position on accountability and their positions on a variety of national questions including a composite factor that includes questions on the separation of Czechoslovakia, minority rights, attitudes toward Hungarians, and trust in the European Union.<sup>160</sup> The table shows consistently significant correlations for all questions except those concerning Romanians. Furthermore, most of the correlations increased in strength over time, especially on questions concerning trust in the European Union and NATO. These correlations, however, do little to explain Slovakia's accountability difficulties, because the difference between the Czech and Slovak populations overall remained relatively small. Opposition to accountability increased with national sentiment in Slovakia, but by all of the indicators

**Figure 9.12. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Nation factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

**TABLE 9.5 CORRELATION BETWEEN RESPONDENTS' ATTITUDES ON NATION-RELATED ISSUES AND ATTITUDES ON THE ACCOUNTABILITY3 FACTOR IN SLOVAKIA: 1993-1995**

| Issue  | Correlation with Accountability3 |          |               |               |
|--|----------------------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|
|  | October 1993                     | May 1994 | December 1994 | December 1995 |
| Preference for independent Slovakia  | 0.09**                           | 0.12**   | 0.13**        | 0.08*         |
| Rejection of future reunification of Czechoslovakia                            | 0.05                             | 0.08**   | 0.11**        | 0.13**        |
| Rejection of trust in the European Union                                       | 0.06                             | 0.06*    | 0.14**        | 0.20**        |
| Rejection of trust in NATO   | 0.04                             | 0.05*    | 0.16**        | 0.20**        |
| Belief that the majority can decide at the expense of the minority             | 0.11**                           | 0.07**   | 0.16**        | 0.24**        |
| Rejection of Hungarians as neighbors   | 0.11**                           | 0.19**   | 0.20**        | 0.12**        |
| Rejection of Romanies as neighbors   | 0.03                             | 0.00     | 0.06*         | 0.01          |
| Rejection of use of Hungarian for street signs                                 | 0.07*                            | 0.22**   | -             | -             |
| Rejection of use of Hungarian for personal names                               | 0.08*                            | 0.20**   | -             | -             |
| Rejection of statement that Hungarians in Slovakia are as patriotic as Slovaks | 0.10**                           | 0.17**   | -             | -             |
| Rejection of patient negotiation in dealing with Hungarians                    | 0.07*                            | 0.24**   | -             | -             |
| Nation2 Factor   | 0.21**                           | 0.13**   | 0.25**        | 0.26**        |

SOURCE: FOCUS 1993-1996

used here, Slovakia's national sentiment--while measurably different in its content--was not considerably greater.

Far more relevant are the dimensional aspects of Slovakia's national issues. Slovak notions of national identity differed from those of the Czech Republic not only in content--Slovaks focused on struggle and fragility, on overcoming past wrongs and defeats, and on threat from domestic minorities--but also in their close ties to political parties. Supporters of different parties disagreed vehemently on national questions, and their disagreements followed a consistent set of patterns. The FOCUS and ISSP surveys show strong correlations between party supporters' positions on all of the major national questions except those involving the country's Jewish and Romany minorities. The same parties that sought to free Slovaks from Czechoslovakia and keep the new country independent of other foreign domination also sought to prevent domestic domination by Hungarians and attempted to develop patriotic feelings among Slovaks toward their new state. Parties that sought to protect and even enhance the position of Hungarians in Slovakia also sought to integrate Slovakia into larger political structures that could provide a restraint on the Slovak majority. Furthermore, the parties with more appreciation for common Czechoslovak state also appreciated the opportunities for European integration and investment while attempting to remain neutral on issues that would allow them to be identified as opponents of Slovakia's statehood.<sup>161</sup> These differences tended to widen over time, and the results show a Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)-Slovak National Party (SNS) cluster moving away from the mean toward the national extreme and a Christian Democratic Movement (KDH)-Democratic Union (DU) cluster, sometimes accompanied by the Party of the Democratic Left (SDĽ), moving away from the mean in the opposition direction. The Hungarian parties stood well toward the limit position in that same direction and moved little during the whole period. To the extent that accountability attitudes were tied to national attitudes in Slovakia, the ability of national issues to shape party choice undoubtedly affected the gap on accountability issues. Increasingly wide gaps

on national issues corresponded to increasingly wide gaps on accountability attitudes, and the array of parties on both issues match perfectly.

In the Czech Republic, by contrast, national issues played little independent role in shaping support for Czech political parties. Most national issues remained relatively unpoliticized, and did not prompt much differentiation among political party supporters.<sup>162</sup> Nor did national issues form strong and consistent patterns among party supporters. As with the Czech population as a whole, the FOCUS and ISSP surveys conducted in the Czech Republic show few significant correlations between party supporters' positions on any of the above-mentioned national questions. At most the 1994 FOCUS survey identifies a low level of correlation between positions of party supporters on questions of European Union membership and their positions on the treatment of minorities. On neither of the surveys did party supporters' positions on these questions correlate closely with questions about the split of Czechoslovakia or with broader questions of national identity. Since the Czech Republic lacked a meaningful nationality dimension and also lacked accountability problems while Slovakia possessed both, it is tempting to posit a causal connection between the two. The evidence presented thus far, however, establishes only a correlation. Exploring the connections between the two is the task of the following chapter.

### **Political Culture**

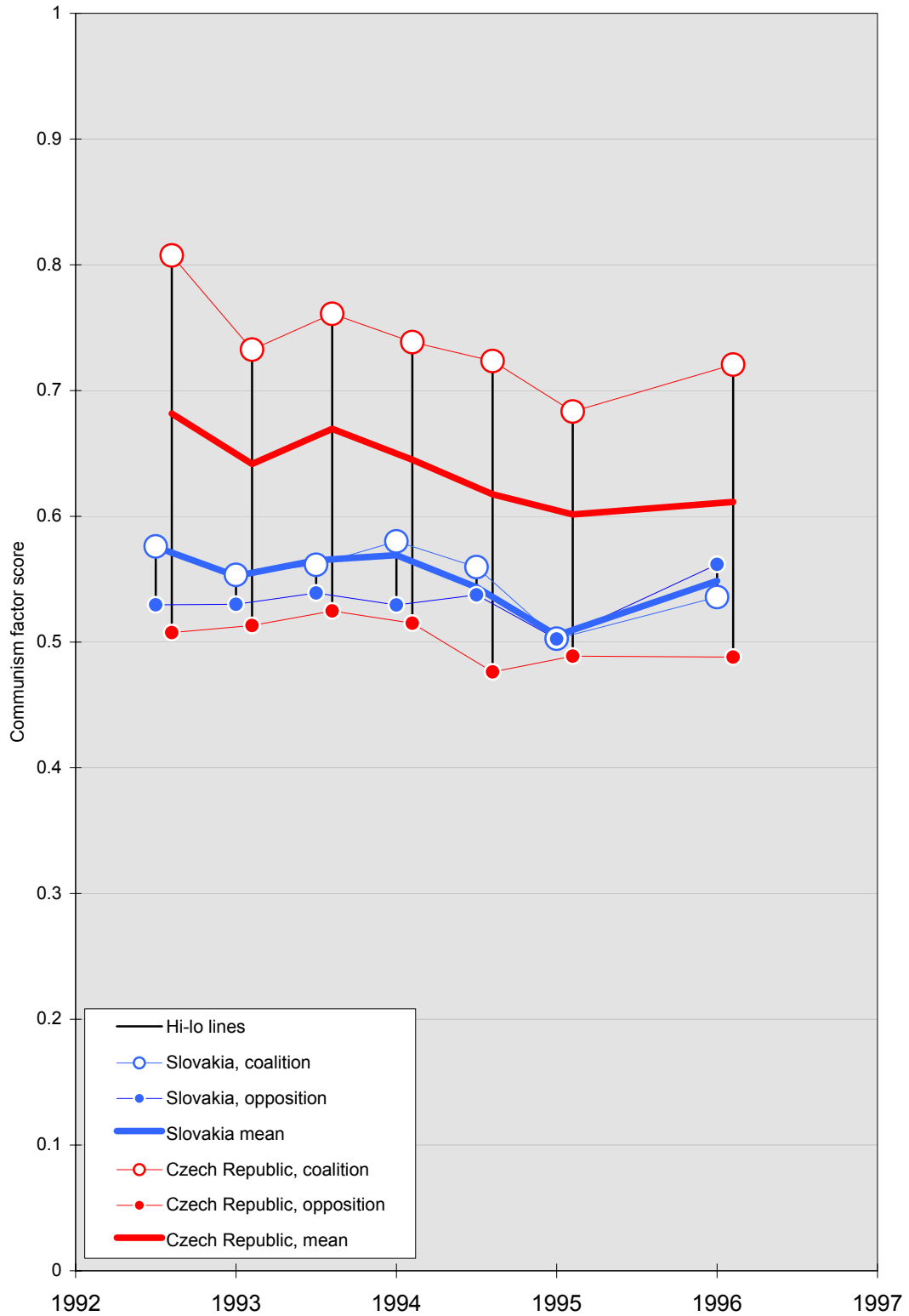
Two sets of questions related to political culture exhibit two significantly different patterns of structural and dimensional difference. On questions of communism, different dimensions widened an already substantial structural gap. On questions of accountability, dimensional differences actually created a gap between the two countries' coalitions that was almost non-existent at the structural level. Of the two, only the dimensional differences in accountability can explain the party system differences discussed in the previous section.

## *Communism*

Lack of multiple survey questions on questions related to communism prevented a more thorough exploration of a communism dimension in previous parts of this chapter, but results from a CEU survey question on the importance of removing former communist party members from positions of influence allows for an approximate characterization of the relative influence of dimensions and structure. In the Czech Republic the positions of party supporters on the decommunization question correlated most strongly with their positions on the economy and transition factors and to a slightly lesser degree with their positions on the religion factor. In Slovakia the decommunization results resembled those of the religion factor more closely than those of the economy and transformation factors, but only by a small margin. It is not a surprise, therefore, that positions of the respective populations and coalitions on the communism question depicted in Figure 9.13 closely resemble the comparable figures for economy and transition. On all of these dimensions there were moderate differences between the population means and a large difference between coalitions magnified by an extremely large gap between the Czech Republic's coalition and opposition parties and an extremely small corresponding gap in Slovakia.

It is common practice to evaluate the strength of democratic thinking in post-communist countries by looking at the degree to which the population looks with fondness on the former communist regime (Rose, 1994; Rose & Haerpfer, 1993), but the structural gap between Slovaks and Czechs on this question does not lend itself easily to an explanation of different levels of accountability. As the previous chapter suggests, Slovaks on the whole experienced a different form of communist rule than did Czechs and held a different understanding of the relationship between communism and political values such as accountability. Roško, Musil and other Slovak scholars including Kusá (Kusa, 1994), Szomolanyi, and Novosad refer to Slovakia's experience of communist rule was relatively mild--a "lazy" or "velvet" totalitarianism--that engaged in less severe repression than did its Czech counterpart. This relative mildness combined with greater relative

**Figure 9.13. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Communism factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996

economic success made it easier for Slovaks to think well of the party, both during its rule and in retrospect. Fonder reminiscences of communism and less bitterness toward its officials therefore cannot be equated simply with a rejection of accountability. Nor do studies offer strong evidence of a relationship. Of the two surveys that permit a test of the relationship between attitudes toward communism and attitudes toward accountability in Slovakia, one finds a statistically significant correlation while the other finds no statistically significant correlation at all.

Nor was the relationship any clearer in the Czech Republic. Negative opinions about communism combined with memories of communist era institutional encroachment may have in theory helped Czechs to support accountability, but as in Slovakia the few available tests yield conflicting results and no clear conclusions.<sup>163</sup> In light of these weak and uncertain relationships, it is extremely unlikely that the moderate difference between Slovaks and Czechs on questions of communism can explain the differences in accountability described in section I. In Slovakia, furthermore, a dimensional consideration raises further doubts about any relationship between communism and accountability. Opinions toward the past regime and its officials played little role in shaping most Slovaks' choice of party and no apparent difference in their preferred coalition. As Figure 9.13 above indicates, supporters of Slovakia's majority coalition were no more likely than supporters of the opposition to hold favorable opinions toward the former communist regime and its officials. In seven separate surveys conducted by CEU between 1992 and 1996, supporters of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) and the other minor coalition parties scored at or very near the population mean when asked about the removal of Communist party officials from influential positions. Supporters of opposition parties differed far more substantially from the mean but their positions ranged from strong support for decommunization (the Christian Democratic Movement) to strong opposition (the Party of the Democratic Left), so that overall coalition and opposition positions remained almost identical.<sup>164</sup> The similarity calls into

question any relationship between support for decommunization and support for accountability. Significant accountability violations occurred in Slovakia only during the tenure of the HZDS-led coalition; the governments that preceded and followed it did not engage in accountability violations despite the fact that their supporters on the whole were no more likely to favor decommunization than supporters of HZDS-led coalition and far less likely to favor decommunization than supporters of the coalition that governed the Czech Republic during the same period.

If favorable attitudes toward the communist regime did not drive Slovakia toward accountability violations, it is nevertheless possible that relatively negative attitudes toward Communism may have protected the Czech Republic from the same fate. In the Czech Republic, party choice remained closely connected to questions of communism and decommunization. The 1992 to 1996 CEU surveys found supporters of Czech coalition parties to be dramatically more likely than supporters of other parties to support the exclusion of former communist officials from government. Other surveys found the same pattern on questions of retrospective fondness toward the communist regime. Yet the parties supported by anti-communists were highly mixed on questions of accountability. Furthermore, although coalition party leaders claimed that their efforts at lustration of communist party officials were designed to preserve democracy and accountability, it must also be noted that such efforts served the collateral purpose of excluding potential political rivals from politics and in that sense, at least, limiting opportunities for accountability.

Differences in the Slovak and Czech communism dimensions may have helped to preserve accountability only in one limited sense, and as with the halfway-cross-cutting religion dimension in Slovakia, the effect resulted from accidental differences in the two party systems. The Czech Republic's wide communism-related dimension did not bring pro-accountability parties together, but serve to prevent the closer cooperation of two of the Czech Republic's least accountability-prone parties--the Communist Party (KSČM) and the strongly anti-communist the Republican Party (SPR-RSČ)--which might otherwise

have been inclined toward mutual cooperation. In Slovakia, by contrast, the question of communism limited the coordination of efforts by pro-accountability parties. Sharp differences toward the former communist regime between the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL) and the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) were not strong enough to prevent coalitions between the two in 1994 and again in 1998, but the differences--in line with differences on religious issues--were strong enough to produce conflict and distrust between the two parties for the duration of their cooperation.

### *Accountability*

Whereas politicization of communism-related questions merely exacerbated a difference that had already existed between the two populations, politicization of accountability issues in Slovakia actually created a major difference that did not exist at the aggregate level. Figure 9.14 plots the relative positions of the Slovak and Czech population means, as well as the positions of coalition and opposition supporters over time. As these results indicate, supporters of both the Czech coalition and opposition remained almost indistinguishable from the population as a whole while a significant margin separated the Slovak coalition and opposition. Slovakia's coalition thus counted among its supporters a markedly disproportional share of anti-accountability voters, whereas in the Czech Republic such voters remained more broadly distributed. Thus, even though average Slovak respondents to the 1994 FOCUS survey showed a two percentage point stronger support for Accountability1 than did their Czech counterparts, supporters of Slovakia's majority coalition showed an eleven percent weaker support for Accountability1 than did supporters of the Czech Republic's majority coalition. The 1995 Transformation and Modernization (T&M) survey found an identical pattern for Accountability2, though with somewhat narrower differences. In this way dimensional differences in accountability attitudes in Slovakia overcame structural similarities between

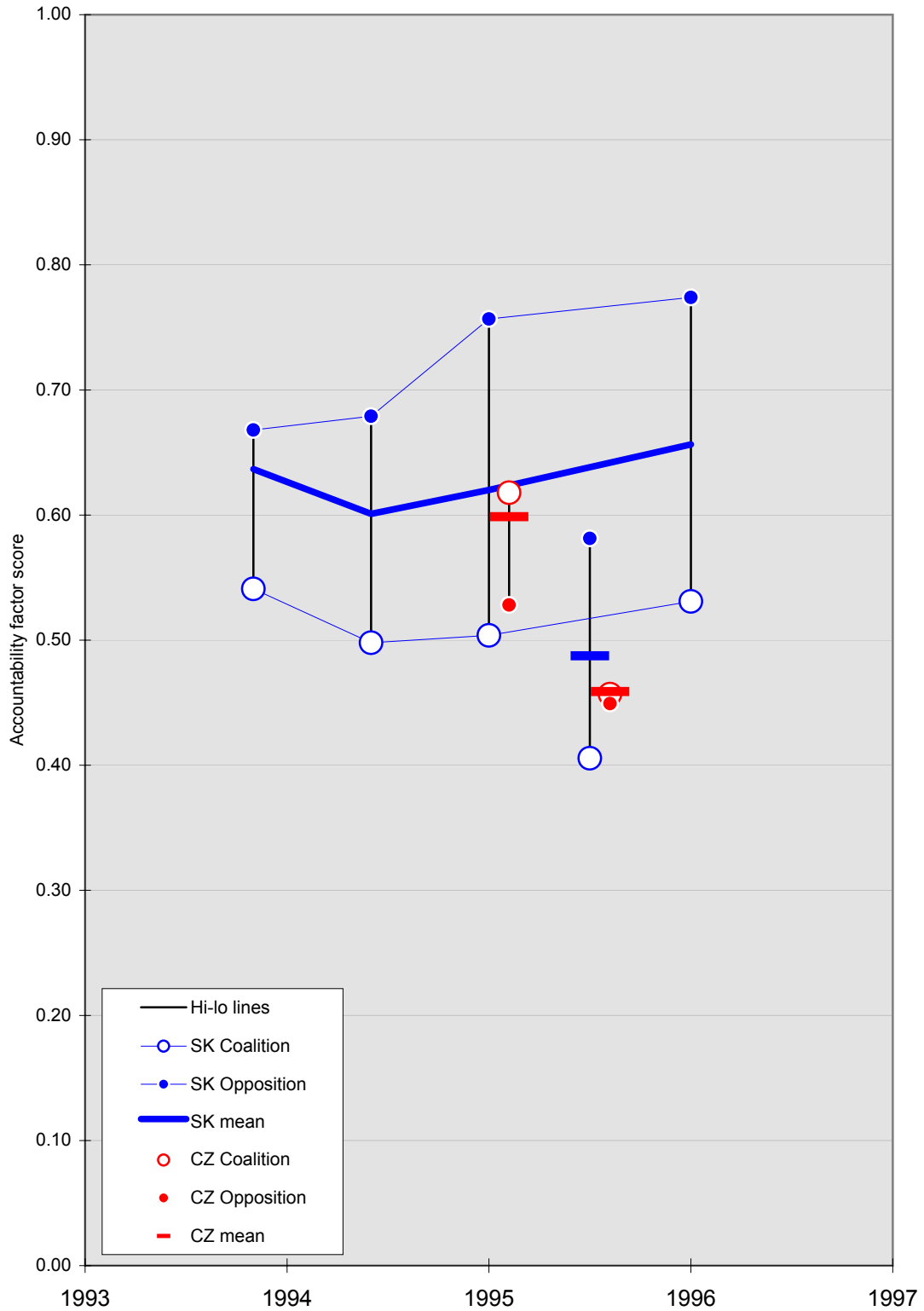
the two populations. This difference, furthermore, contributed directly to the difference in party leadership attitudes described in chapter seven.

Scholars frequently cite differences in attitudes toward accountability as the primary explanation for Slovak and Czech political outcomes. A Slovak population that was more opposed to accountability, they argue, would naturally be more likely to opt for political parties with the same outlook. However, a closer look at attitudes in the two countries invalidates the structural explanation.

Structural differences between Slovaks and Czechs on accountability questions were dwarfed by differences on other political questions. The difference between Slovaks and Czechs on 26 available democracy- and accountability-related survey questions averaged a mere 4.3 percentage points, and individual survey results went counter to the broader pattern in 30% of the surveys. By contrast, differences between Slovaks and Czechs on 18 questions related to economic systems averaged 11.1 percentage points, and the relative positions of Slovaks and Czechs remained consistent in all cases. Likewise, differences averaged 10.6 percentage points on the 24 available questions related to economic policy, and 25.6 percentage points on 14 questions related to religion. On neither of these sets of questions did any survey find a reversal of the general pattern. Slovakia therefore lacked the hypothesized army of anti-accountability voters who would steer the country in a direction different to that of the Czech Republic.

Furthermore, although respondents in Slovakia fell slightly short of their Czech counterparts on accountability questions, the respondents remained consistently more inclined toward accountability than were their neighbors in Hungary and Poland, countries that suffered no comparable institutional encroachments. Results obtained by the New Democracies Barometer (NDB) surveys between 1993 and 1995 show respondents in Slovakia to be considerably less likely than respondents in Poland or Hungary to prefer single party government, the dissolution of parties and parliament, or rule by a strong leader. In most cases, responses from Slovakia were actually considerably nearer to the

**Figure 9.14. Position of coalition, opposition, and population means on the Accountability factor for Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, Focus 1993-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995

responses from the Czech Republic than they were to responses from Poland; responses from Hungary tended to remain somewhere between those of Slovakia and Poland. Although it is not within the immediate scope of this chapter to explain how these other countries escaped the same political outcome as Slovakia between 1992 and 1998, it is significant that aggregate responses on political culture questions did not play a dominant role in determining outcomes.

Finally, it is also necessary to note that the static and aggregate approach to the relationship between political culture and political outcomes used by a number of observers including Carpenter (Carpenter, 1997), Elster et al (Elster et al., 1998) and others is incapable of explaining the sudden reversals in Slovakia's politics that are one of the most significant characteristics of Slovakia's politics during its independence. Neither Carpenter nor Elster et al devote more than brief attention to Slovakia's coalition of the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), Democratic Union (DU) and the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL) that governed between March and November of 1994. Carpenter refers to the government as a failed attempt at "elite-sponsored democratization," but does not address the fact that although these parties failed to gain a majority in the subsequent parliamentary election, they did gain 45% of all parliamentary seats. In addition, arguments focusing on Slovakia's traditional political culture and attitude toward authority cannot easily explain how opposition parties that overtly emphasized the importance of accountability and other non-traditional understandings of authority gained 62% of all seats in parliament in the 1998 parliamentary election despite a thriving economy and a governing coalition that exerted strong control over state-owned broadcast media and other state-resources. Since no survey evidence shows signs of a sudden change, and since it is in any case unlikely that Slovakia's political culture changed as quickly as its governments, it is necessary to find an alternative explanation that can account for rapid and significant political change in a country otherwise thought to be disadvantaged at a fundamental level.

Where the static, aggregate explanation fails to explain different Slovak and Czech political outcomes, an explanation relying on the relationship between attitudes and party choice performs extremely well. As the above sections indicate, the gap between Slovakia's opposition and coalition parties on the Accountability1 indicator was not only several times larger than the corresponding gap in the Czech Republic but was larger than the gap on *any* issue in the Czech Republic except the question of decommunization. At the widest point in the gap on accountability1, the mean positions of Slovakia's opposition and coalition supporters differed by a margin that represented one fourth of the possible range. The supporters of the opposition and those of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) differed by an even greater margin. As chapter seven explains, this gap played an essential role in the accountability violations undertaken by the HZDS-led coalition. Because the support base of the coalition included few voters with strong feelings toward accountability, it could act against rival institutions without fear of losing support. The absence of similar developments in the Czech Republic meant that all parties--including the governing coalition--risked losing support if they pursued a strategy of encroachment. If the two populations had responded to accountability questions in similar ways, it is likely that the outcomes would have been similar as well. A Slovak coalition that depended upon the support of a random sample of Slovakia's population would have faced almost as much opposition to accountability violations from within its own ranks as did its Czech counterpart; a Czech coalition that relied primarily on the support of anti-accountability Czechs would have provided significantly greater leeway for accountability violations.

In broad terms, these results suggest that aggregate levels of support for accountability may be more than offset by differences in the way that supporters and opponents of accountability line up behind rival political parties. Of course the relative numbers on each side of the issue are also important in setting a baseline of support for accountability, but in cases such as Slovakia or the Czech Republic where the two sides maintain a rough

balance, a close relationship between accountability attitudes and party choice can play a major role in determining political outcomes. This is especially significant since the emergence of an accountability dimension can also promote the internal radicalization of parties and further intensify the cycle.

### **Conclusion**

Structural differences between Slovaks and Czechs, while in many cases still significant, had surprisingly little effect on the character of the respective Slovak and Czech majority coalitions. Slovaks on the whole were not much more likely to oppose accountability than Czechs despite their more religious, statist, and nationalist outlooks. Far more important to the differences in outcome were differences in the dimensions of competition.

A close look at the issue dimensions that emerged among coalition and opposition supporters in Slovakia and the Czech Republic reveals three distinct patterns. Figure 9.15 shows the spread between opposition and coalition supporters on the five sets of issues discussed here. Religious issues, more than others, exhibited a relatively similar pattern in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic. On other issues the differences proved more extreme. Attitudes toward communism and the economy were closely related to partisan differences in the Czech Republic but not in Slovakia. Attitudes toward the nation and toward accountability correlated strongly with coalition choice in Slovakia but not in the Czech Republic.

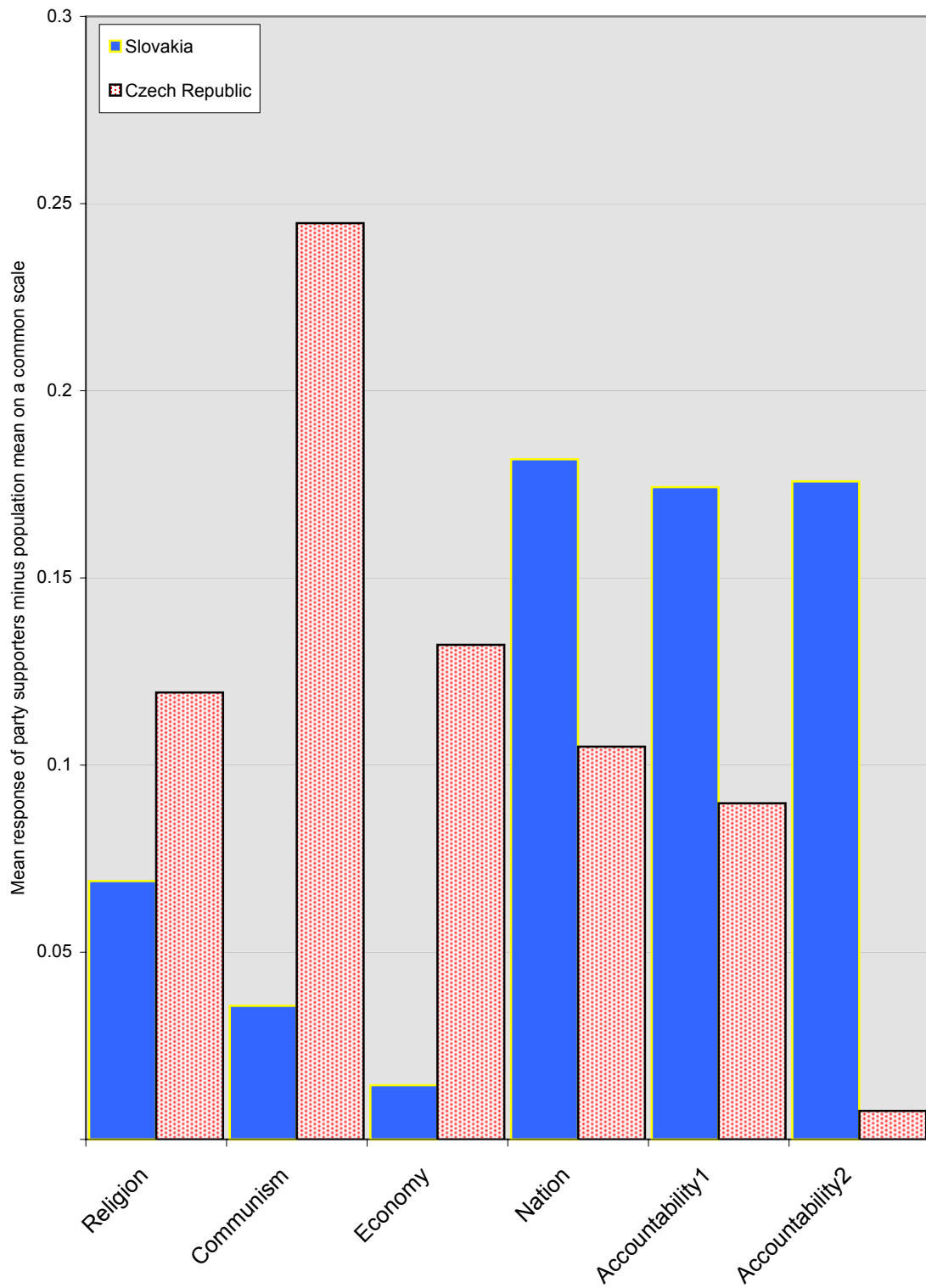
The issue dimensions that emerged in the Czech Republic had the effect of undercutting the development of an accountability dimension and prevented almost all parties from pursuing accountability violations or joining an anti-accountability coalition without the risk of losing supporters. The issue dimensions that emerged in Slovakia, by contrast, directly fueled the emergence of a coalition of increasingly anti-accountability parties. The difference in the political salience of accountability issues corresponds

precisely to the concentration of anti-accountability attitudes among party leaders and party supporters that was described in chapter seven.

It is precisely such a concentration of attitudes among elites that motivated the encroachments of Slovakia's coalition. Furthermore, such a concentration of attitudes among coalition voters led coalition leaders to expect that they could continue their encroachments without fear of losing the support of their coalition's electoral base (an expectation proven false by the 1998 parliamentary election). By their presence or absence, other issue dimensions in Slovakia contributed to the emergence of an accountability dimension. The national dimension of competition reinforced this pattern, and the partial dimensions of religion and communism helped to keep pro-accountability parties from gaining a stronger counter-position.

Since the pattern of party choice on accountability questions closely parallels the pattern on national questions and differs significantly from the pattern on economy and communism-related issues, it may be fitting to blame the national issue dimension for Slovakia's political problems and credit the economy and communism dimensions for the Czech Republic's escape. But attributing accountability violations in Slovakia to the existence of a national dimension--or, conversely, attributing the absence of accountability violations in the Czech Republic to the presence of an economy dimension--rests on the highly questionable assumption that dimensions exist independently of one another. Dimensional competition is a zero-sum game. The emergence of a particular issue dimension diminishes the relevance of other dimensions that are not parallel to it. Thus the strength of economy and communism dimensions in the Czech Republic depended directly on the weakness of the accountability and nation dimensions. The reverse situation applied in Slovakia. The following chapter addresses the interrelationship between these dimensions and examines hypotheses for why issue dimensions emerge in certain environments and not in others.

**Figure 9.15. Average gap between coalition and opposition parties on key factors in Slovakia and the Czech Republic: 1992-1996**



SOURCE: Central European University 1992-1996, FOCUS 1993-1996, Institute of Sociology 1995