Översikter och meddelanden

Parties and party systems in Poland
– The case of Solidarity and AWS

I The Polish Transition: a short overview

Basically the development of political parties and party systems in Poland followed the same line as in the other Central European countries; at the beginning the creation of broad movement parties followed by reconstruction and creation of new "post-communist parties". In the first stage of post-communism electoral volatility, party fragmentation and protest voting were striking. At that time, only the agrarian party PSL had distinct mass party characteristics. Furthermore, the boundaries between parties and interest groups have been porous. PSL was the only party with a significant rural base. At that time we had to do with non party system characteristics. Later, moving to ordinary interest based politics more predictable but not necessarily stable party systems emerged.

The new Polish parties, e.g. UW and AWS did seem to bear a closer resemblance to the catch-all, electoral-professional and cartel parties than the traditional mass parties such as in the case of the post-communist SLD and PSL. In general, the new parties in CEEC have not inherited the initial membership, organisational base and level of party identification that Western parties accumulated having operated in a competitive electoral environment over many years (Szczerbiak, 2001:124).

The 1989 election was followed by party-fragmentation and several "wars in the top" between pragmatists and fundamentalists. At the 1991 election an extreme multiparty system emerged

with no less than 27 different political groups represented in parliament. The non-party system characteristics, adversary politics, governmental overload, "overparliamentarisation", party'ism, party splits and the creation of new parties and party alliances were striking. In the first years after 1989 many parties tried their best to marginalize and isolate the "post-communist" The Republic of Poland's social Democratic Party (SdRP), later the left party alliance SLD. At the same time "post-communist" left alliance SLD tried its best to be accepted by Polish society and the international community as a relevant and responsible standard political social democratic party and as quickly as possible be a member of the Socialist International (SI).

At the same time low participation at the elections and decline in confidence in parliaments and parties could be observed. Furthermore, the polarization on the elite level did not reflect the dominant cleavages in society. Problems were increasing on the policy-level. After three years of post-communism almost half of the Polish population was dissatisfied with the way Polish democracy was conducted, and the same majority also disagreed with the interference of the church in politics. Mainly for those reasons, after the 1993 election the "post-communists" (SLD, PSL) returned to power. In most cases the protests were expressed as demands of replacement of politicians, strikes and "road actions", but not as a rejection of the principle about democracy being the "best possible solution".

No feasible strategies for coping with the new type of conflicts (those "between Us", i.e. inside Solidarity) were developed. In addition, the old alliance between intellectuals and workers broke down. Thus, as regards the first years we mostly had to do with a post-communist "muddling through".

The Polish transition has to be seen in the context of "the philosophy" of the round table dis-

cussions ("Magdelenka") 1988–89, and "the Balcerowicz plan I". No parties in government have been able to liberate themselves from the legacy of Magdalenka and the Balcerowicz plan despite proclamations about doing so. In addition, the political capital was waning because of the economic and social problems and the many "wars in the top". The social experience of the activists in opposition to the old system and phrases like "civil society against the state" used by dissidents were not decisive for most voters after the fight against the old system had been won. In other words, the image of a united society fighting against the authorities and their imperial supporters could not be maintained.

Democratisation in Poland has also been influenced by agents and structures external to the Polish state, constituting important structural factors behind the collapse of the old system. The influence of the external agencies, e.g. international financial organisations and human right movements was mediated through domestic social and political institutions[1]. The "party'istic" democracy was not so evident as in the Czech Republic and Hungary due to the low party institutionalisation, the fragile multi-party system and the high party fragmentation. Parties tended to be cadre configurations, not mass organisations. Under those circumstances non-democratically elected institutions like the trade unions and the church and the national bank might take a strong political position in society ("shadow institutionalisation"), limiting autonomy and further consolidation of the political arena.

From the outset *the polarization* of Polish politics has followed four lines:
● between Solidarity and post-communists, i.e. on the structural level
● inside the Solidarity movement ("the wars in the top"), i.e. on the institutional level
● for or against the president (Walesa), i.e. on actor level
● for or against the Balcerowicz plan I, i.e. the economic chock-therapy (the policy-level)
The first type of polarization was dominant just about and after 1989 and, as noted above, it has never been fully de-freezed at least not on the elite-level. The second, the "wars in the top",

were evident already about the time for the formation of the first Solidarity led government in 1989. The dominant model underlying Solidarity, civil society against totalitarianism, undermined Solidarity's own struggle as Solidarity did not go beyond culture and history going back to 1980-81, for that reason not being able to identify new conflicts and alternative futures under post-communism.

In other words, the *structural* factors, i.e. the legacy of the past, had a *subjective* side, manifested in the perceptions and actions of the politicians. After the formation of the SLD-PSL government a new third political divide associated with a "for and against the president" became more important. In spite of the peaceful pacted transition ("przemisczenie"), the divide was never de-freezed. However, as president Aleksander Kwasniewski did not make the same grave mistakes like Lech Walesa. Evidence showed that the early freezing of the old "We" versus "Them" discourse constituted an insurmountable obstacle for entering a historical compromise between the "post-communist" SLD and the social-liberal UW (Freedom Union (UW)). The previous national-accomodative system in Poland had been less suppressive than in most other CEECs. Nevertheless, on the discoursive level the "We-Them" distinction remained strong. As a result, at the mid 1990's Poland moved closer to *polarized pluralism*, in which case we find many relevant parties, i.e. parties with a big coalition potential or an effective veto power, and the ideological distances between the parties involved at the same time quite long.

In addition, Poland has been rich on polarisation of the *reactive* "affective" type, manifested in "for or against the Balcerowicz plans". The reactive polarisation was striking in the case of privatisations, wage regulation ("popiwek"), the administrative reform, the health reform etc. This development can be explained by the traditions from "communist time" for "output-articulation". The "wars in the top" had also a negative impact on the law making process as the "wars in the top" were followed by "wars of laws". Cleavages inherited from before 1989 were reactivated at the presidential election in 1995 and

the discussions about the new Polish constitution in 1995 and 1996.

As noted by *Wlodzimierz Weselowski*, the reactivization of old cleavages expressed a well planned polarisation of the political life organized by Solidarity.[2] As the economic growth and social mobility declined, group consciousness was reinforced and tended to challenge the new post-communist system. The refusal of cooperating with the "post-communists" was to a great extent based on tactical considerations, as the reference to a common enemy and Christian values signified the fight against the common enemy ("the communists"). Christian values at least outwardly suppressed the internal disagreements on personal and policy level and dampened the dissatisfaction among the electorate with the policy by the first Solidarity led governments. Like in most other CEECs a change towards majoritarian type democracy based on the principle that "the winner takes it all" could be observed.

Party members, party leaders and local structures did not play a significant role in the parties' communication strategies. The political leaders considered the mass media as more effective means of appealing to voters than relying on party members (Szczerbiak, 2001:114). *Institutionally* the new Polish parties were not like in more advanced democracies attempting to encapsulate their supporters by developing networks of ancillary structures directly linked to their party organisations, e.g. youth, women's and ecological sections (Szczerbiak, 2001:111). In general new Polish parties have been strongest represented at the level of *state institutions* and appeared capable of fulfilling their role in terms of structuring elections, institutions and recruiting elites (Szczerbiak, 2001:126).

In the *late 1990s* numerous ad hoc *coalitions and electoral alliances* emerged, e.g. AWS and "Przymierze Polski". In addition, a change towards a more bipolar and moderate multiparty system could be observed with the centre-left (SLD) and the centre-right (AWS) constituting the two poles. The situation changed fundamentally in 2000-2001, i.e. after the 2000 presidential election and, not least, after the parliamentary election in September 2001. After the 2001

election we were basically back in the situation leading up to the 1993 election, however, with a stronger populist and xenophobic representation in the Sejm. A "post-communist" (Aleksander Kwasniewski), not an "anti-communist" (like Lech Walesa 1990-1995) was the acting president. Nonetheless, the political situation after the 2001 has looked more unstable compared with the situation after the 1993 election. Evidence showed that low participation in the election was no guarantee against increased electoral support for populist xenophobic parties. At that election the left alliance SLD-UP did not gain the majority of seats in parliament due to changes in the election laws to strict proportional representation.

II Solidarity and AWS

2.1 The Solidarity movement

Since the beginning of the 1980's the Solidarity movement had been the leading force in the polarisation of Polish politics and society ("we" versus "them") based on Catholic ideologies and anti-communist discourses. Pragmatic attitudes and political self-limitation has been mixed up with active resistance against suppressors i.e. the communists, however, the self-limitation and internalisation of limits faded away soon after the demise of the old state socialist system.

The phenomenon Solidarity has been unique. Hardly any other trade union in the world has been in government, at the same time constituting a political party and an interest organisation. Furthermore, during its 21 years' long history Solidarity has constituted a social protest with a built-in self-limitation, working as a trade union focusing on short-term economic interests and as a catch-all movement in a society undergoing deep and fast changes, starting as a trade union, a democratic movement and a force of national independence. Solidarity can be considered as a political mass movement that took trade union shape. Over the last 22 years Solidarity on shift has constituted a trade union, a political mass movement and a reflexive movement ("pozycji refleksji") representing an "anti-political third

way" thinking. Solidarity can also be considered as a peaceful resistant movement, pressurizing for changes delineated by the intelligentsia. Finally Solidarity has been a political party in the more classical sense, in some periods even the party of government trying to change a socially, economically and culturally backward and socially deeply divided Poland. In the late 1980s the old trade union Solidarity speeded up the "chain reaction" ending with the fall of the old system and the round table talks, the semi-free election in June 1989, the formation of the first non-communist government, the economic shock-therapy and the hybrid type political capitalism that followed as the immediate result of the collapse of state socialism.

To conclude, at least four different "Solidaritys" have existed, the first going back in 1980-81, the second constituting underground Solidarity, a third in 1988-89 with Solidarity acting as an active participant in the round table negotiations followed by "wars in the top", and finally the fourth Solidarity acting first as an opposition party under the post-communist government and after the 1997 election as the party in power. A new fifth stage followed after the defeat at the 2000 presidential election and the 2001 parliamentary election.

In many of its aspects, e.g. from its working class base to the struggle to realize greater control over their enterprises, Solidarity had features in common with a socialist type movement in all but name. The dominant model underlying Solidarity resembled the social-democratic. As noted by Solidarity's leader Marian Krzaklewski[3], Solidarity has mostly acted "against" (the old system) and has in the fight against liberals and post-communists called upon universal Christian values and traditions back in Polish history.

Since 1980 we have to differentiate between
● The *trade union* Solidarity ("S")
● The *party-coalition* Solidarity i.e. AWS, later AWSP, at the foundation in 1996 consisting of mere than 30 different political groups.
● The *party movement* Solidarity (RS AWS)
Before 1989 the defence of the workers short-term interests was brought in the background

due to the argument that such a defence of workers interests provided a fundamental change of the state socialist system. In stead, extrication and blackmailing of the system were striking. Concrete plans and strategies for transforming Polish society were postponed until the final victory over the "post-communists" (Morawski 1998:74).

Before 1989 the fight against the old system had been a zero-sum play, a "win-looser game", during which the disagreement was suppressed in the name of the collective strength. The principle "strength through unity" was reflected in the territorial and regional structures of the movement. Furthermore, the political declarations of Solidarity were kept in abstract and symbolic formulations mostly including slogans about social justice, democracy, truth, rule of law, human rights and national community.

In the 1990s Solidarity had to adapt itself to the new, post-crisis situation, with the uncertainties typical of post-industrial societies and the "extraordinary politics" of the first stage of post-communism. As pointed out by *Kzrysztof Kwasniewicz*, in the broader context of post-communism Polish experience was a unique and exceptional, and not subject to linear-type regularities. Therefore, he argues, the experience of Solidarity can be given a double reading: either in terms of the regularities underlying its inception, development and mechanisms (intelligible to the world), or in terms of the regularities in the history of the struggle for independence and uprisings (intelligible to the Polish nation) (Kwasniewicz, in Bäcker etc, 2001:172). According to Kwasniewicz, between the two functions mentioned above no open contradictions could be found in the years before 1989.

After the demise of the old system Solidarity did not need to "hide itself" behind a trade union facade. After 1989 the political fight (now against the "post-communists") remained an important part of Solidarity's actions, but the policy and programme formulation was disregarded. A de-freezing and de-radicalisation took place, but only partly and mostly on policy-level, and to a minor extent on·the symbolic discoursive level. Solidarity leaders soon recognized that political enemies could be found also *inside*

own camp. In the first stage the political fight took place inside Solidarity's civic committees ("Komitety obywateski "S"). Thus the struggle was no longer only a fight against the "post-communists" and the trade union OPZZ, to a great extent it became a struggle *between us*.

The first (semi) free election in 1989 was a referendum for or against the old system, not a choice between different political programmes and visions. "Normal" elections were impossible to conduct under the then prevailing extraordinary politics and transition anomie. To a great extent personalities ("political crafting"), not future directed policy, determined the policy-line and the coalition-building.

2.2 The first years: The trade union Solidarity and the OKPs

During the round table negotiations civic committees ("Komitet Obywatelski", OKP) led by Lech Walesa was established (in December 1988), including representatives from cultural and scientific life and former dissidents. Under the umbrella of OKP 15 sub-commissions were established concerning important socio-economic questions and policy formulation. Furthermore, special commissions were formed dealing with trade union pluralism, freedom of organisations and with political and economic reforms. OKPs organisational structure reminded us of a proto-party consisting of a shadow cabinet with broadly formulated political programmes that should prepare the Solidarity movement to take over the government responsibilities when possible and feasible.

The first Solidarity parliamentary group consisted of nine different political groups. Formally OKPs organisation worked independently from the trade union Solidarity. OKP was organised around small groups of persons, mostly intellectuals who planned to establish their own independent parties.

Before the 1989 election Lech Walesa had paved the way for a political "systemic shift" away from real socialism by proposing a government that also included the two minor post-communist parties, ZSL and SD. That self-limiting strategy, it was argued, would not provoke

the leaders in Kreml and strengthen the position of the hardliners inside the ruling party (PZPR). The problem about the lack of administrative leaders from Solidarity side and relations to the Soviet Union was "solved" by accepting that key ministries, such as the Ministries of Home Affairs and Defence, so far could be handed over to the communists.

The policy disagreements in the Solidarity movement were kept down before the first semi-free election in summer 1989 and the first months of the rule of the Mazowiecki government. However, according to a big part of the electorate, many new Solidarity-leaders soon demonstrated an "euphorical arrogance". Most new non-communist leaders expected that the Polish people without reservations would accept radical changes in society — based on the argument that such policy is "good" and "self-evident". However, the significance of political learning and the "socialist mind" was underestimated. Furthermore, old policy subjects such as workers' self-government, workers' councils, co-ownership, strikes and demonstrations, all known from 1980-81, disappeared from the political agenda and was not even discussed after the struggle against the old system had been won.

After the formation of the first Solidarity-led government it soon became a hot issue, whether Solidarity's parliamentary group should support the new Solidarity-led government or be the driving force in a reinforced and uncompromising confrontation with the old system ("przyspieszenie"). During the election campaign in 1990 Lech Walesa supported the demands of "speeding up" based on the argument that the whole philosophy behind the round table agreements should be abandoned. Furthermore, he supported Solidarity's privatisation scheme based on give away schemes in the shape of shares given to the whole adult population. However, he still had to balance between the different political groups inside the movement. On the one side an authoritarian tendency could be observed characterised by the deep rooted and historically based hate to communism, on the other side we find a more liberal self-limiting line characterised by political tolerance, willingness

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NSZZ Solidarnosc ("S") year 2000

Approximately 1,1 mill. members, including 100,000 pensioners and rentists. Before the congresses the local organisations sometimes reports on more members in order to obtain more delegates.

The structure of "S": 37 regions and 16 branch secretariats, consisting of 90 kraj-sections. The biggest branches in "S" are: mining, energy, metal, health, teachers and railways. The biggest regions in "S": Slasko-Dabrowski, Mazowsze, Malopolska, Dolny Slask, Gdansk.

The daily work in "S" was led by a Komission ("Komisja Krajowa") consisting of more than 100 persons. The day-to-day problems are to be solved by a 15-person presidium KK that meets once a week. Chairman of "S" is Marian Krzaklewski supported by three vice-chairmen, Janus Sniadek, Józef Niemec and Jerzy Langer.

"S" has been a member of three international trade union associations, The European Confederation of Trade Unions, The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and The World Confederation of Work.

Working members of "S" pay a fee that corresponds to one percent of the wages. 60 pct. of the money paid remain in the local organisations, 25 go to the regions, 10 pct. to KK and 5 pct. to strike funds.

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to compromises and more political openness and by pro-European values.

From Solidarity and the OKPs new political parties were established, but most parties had a short existence. The normal procedure was the creation of a parliamentary group, later the creation of election committees with the aim to secure Walesa's victory to the forth-coming presidential election. One example was "Solidarnosc Pracy" that emerged from the OKP-faction "Solidarnost Pracy". "Solidarnosc Pracy" took part in the election in 1991 and was also represented in the new parliament. The changes in the election law and the new five percent threshold for parliamentary representation had as a result

that representatives from "Solidarnosc Pracy" and some reform-minded communists joined the new party "Union of Work" (UP) in order to regain seats in parliament.

Thus, in my judgement, at the time of the June 1989 election Solidarity could be considered as a broad movement party, i.e. a proto-party organized based on the civic committees (OKP) and the Solidarity trade union, and as a negative alliance without many concrete plans for the future. Moreover, Solidarity signified an embryonic political party composed of many different factions, i.e. a party in the minimal sense, however, with deep roots in the Polish people and Polish history and culture.

2.3 The new social environment

Due to the fight against the old system the trade union Solidarity had a specific culture ("ethos"), a foundation myth going back to the old system. The fight against the old system had been more than just a question about higher salaries and better work conditions. As noted by Witold Morawski (Morawski, 1998:71) at the same time the political ethos was mainly Christian and social democratic including political slogans about more freedom and equality. In addition, Solidarity was a patriotic movement, underlining the important historical task it was to create a free and independent Poland.

As noted above, before 1989 Solidarity mostly acted as a pragmatic and self-limiting movement and at the same time a movement for moral renewal of society. Only a minority of parties and movements acting in opposition to the (post-) communists, e.g. the right-nationalistic KPN and the catholic ZChN, rejected to take part in round table negotiations with the communist authorities and acting on the political scene according to declared fundamentalist catholic values and slogans. After all, the "We versus "Them" attitudes, the division in good and evil and the tendency to speak on behalf of the whole nation did not give much room for moderate policy choices.

After 1989 it was difficult for Solidarity to keep the lead. The old ethos and the foundation myth were downplayed after the victory over the

old system had been won and being in government. According to *Edmund Wnuk Lipinski*[4] this trend can be explained primarily by *structural* factors. After the victory over the old system Solidarity lost its classic mobilizising role going back to 1980-1981. Solidarity gained the greatest support on big state enterprises in the heavy industry, i.e. the "dinosauers" from the time of planned economy. In the first stage of post-communism the organisation of work was primarily a political, not an economic enterprise, in that way having an impact on the attitudes of workers to the parties and political system as a whole. By many citizens, extrication and output-articulation were still considered as the best ways of influencing the political system. Engagement in the private sector was not only seen as a strategy for establishing a market economy, but also as a political enterprise. Mainly for that reason Solidarity criticized the "theft" of public ownership through the nomenklatura privatisation. At the same time Solidarity tried to block privatisation, if privatisation of state enterprises might lead to more unemployment.

Due to the structural factors the victims of the introduction of market economy were those employed in the big state enterprises, i.e. the old strongholds of the Solidarity trade union. So the revolution once again "ate its own children". Tension erupted between on the one side the historic foundation of Solidarity, i.e. the fight against the old system, and on the other side those interests, which had to be defended during the transition to market economy, first of all full employment and better living standard. After the collapse of the old system Solidarity became divided in several factions. Just after 1989 Solidarity was joined by several people who had not actively taken part in the fight against the old system. Many from that group demanded abolition of the "thick line" policy of Tadeusz Mazowiecki. As noted above, until then the disagreements inside Solidarity had been artificially repressed in order to keep alive the common fight against the old system (Morawski, 1998:178).

Thus the character of a mass movement disappeared from the moment the communist system collapsed. The economic recession and the so-

cial problems fundamentally changed Solidarity's position in society. Under the prevailing extraordinary politics it was difficult to formulate consistent and well articulated policies to the most pressing policy problems, also programmes for the future and links to social interests in society were needed. The plans for the transition from plan to market were vague and inconsistent. Most important was to bring the communists in the defensive. As put by *Voytek Zubek*[5], at that time Solidarity indirectly supported the old communist view that the (new) post-communist system is fundamentally "healthy" and "historically progressive" and that "the leaders (i.e. the Solidarity-leaders) always are right". In other words, Solidarity acted as if it was enough to "convince" its opponents or push them (i.e. the postcommunists) in the defensive.

As noted above, from the outset Solidarity was in need of educated and professional people especially on meso level who could fill out the vacuum left after the old nomenklatura, and in that way create a new and better administrative apparatus. Should Solidarity come to power, the old nomenklatura inevitably would maintain a considerable political influence because of the administrative control. Also mechanisms for conflict solution in society in general were missing. Because of weak interest groups dissatisfaction was often expressed on the streets, i.e. through protest strikes and demonstrations, sometimes in violent forms. The lack of clear political visions was politically demobilising, evidence showed that under social and economic recession political programmes and visions for the future are strongly needed. On the way down in the "valley of tears" it was almost impossible to mobilise the voters in support of the government and bring them new hope and inspiration.

In short, the norms from 1980-81 did not fit with the construction of a new functional democracy and market economy, neither inside Solidarity nor in Poland as a whole. Furthermore, we can conclude that in the first stage the goals for the future were too broadly formulated, mostly as abstract symbols and discourses including demands of self-organisation and "spolecznienie" of the state, i.e. transition to a moral type political economy. Lech Walesa's

demands of "przyspieszenie", i.e. speeding up of the fight against the old system, were put forward, later "democratic socialist ideology" was striking based on a participatory democracy and a moral political economy.

In the new social environment tensions erupted between the old abstract goals for the future and the day-to-day politics. Edmund Wnuk-Lipinski rightly argues that the market reforms and chock therapy introduced after 1989 weakened the common interests inside the social groups which until then had supported Solidarity, especially workers on big state enterprises, farmers and state-employed in the education and health sector. In the fight to take care of these groups' demands and interests the Solidarity movement had to compete with other interest groups and parties, e.g. OPZZ, SLD, PSL, KPN and the Works Union (UP). To accomplish that aim some in Solidarity wanted to speed up transition to market economy, almost at every cost. Opposite, other groups spoke about a specific "third way" for Poland based on catholic religious ethics and moral economics. After the founding elections Solidarity failed to formulate programmes constituting sustainable alternatives to Rakowski's reforms.

No clear answer was given to the question whether Solidarity ("NSZZ Solidarnosc") should primarily constitute a political movement or a trade union. Compared with "first Solidarity" after 1989 the second Solidarity became more "exclusive", acting in a more restrictive way refusing to cooperate with most other political parties and movements. The second Solidarity mostly reminded about a broad catch-all anticommunist movement. Later, after 1989 more attention had to be paid to the realisation of concrete policy goals. Values and interests had to converge, if the plans to create a functional party identity and culture should succeed. But on that point Solidarity was facing several problems.

As said, the greatest support came from conservatively minded workers on the biggest state enterprises, i.e. the "dinosaurs" from the Stalinist period. Support has also been fairly high on big private enterprises, while the influence has been low on the new minor private firms, where the attitudes to introduction of market economy

in general were more positive. Furthermore, resistance from employer side against the establishment of trade unions has been strong on new small enterprises. In order to obtain more support and new members the trade union Solidarity had to secure itself a better representation on new private enterprises; if that did not happen, the number of trade union members might fall to less than one million, i.e. less than half of the membership of the "post-communist" OPZZ. The regional structures also had to be adapted to the new administrative division consisting of 16 regions ("voivods"), however, for institutional and historic reasons resistance against further regionalisation was widespread in all sections of Solidarity.

2.4 The first crisis and the political come-back

In the new parliament elected in 1993 Solidarity was not represented at all. According to *Mariusz Muskat* (Bäcker etc, 2001:167) the fundamental error was the premature assumption of power in 1989. The Union failed to recognize the importance of strategies dealing with the most important problems in society. In addition, the economy was in a bad shape, the links with the nation weakening and the old Solidarity ethos waning.

Before the 1993 election, Solidarity went on the barricades and put forward a vote of nonconfidence to Hanna Suchocka's Solidarity-led government, later, after the defeat at the 1993 election, Solidarity rejected the "godless" "post-communist" proposal for a new constitution. Acting outside parliament Solidarity tried to regain the lost influence by organizing strikes and demonstrations directed against the "post-communist" government. Among the more spectacular initiatives we find the collection of 500,000 subscriptions supporting Solidarity's proposal for a new constitution[6]. In the special commission which had prepared the proposal for a new constitution also representatives from the common secretariat of the centre-right groups could be found. The 500,000 subscriptions gave Solidarity the right to be represented in the constitutional commission set up by the parliament, but the aim to bring its own proposal

to a national referendum at the same time as the proposal from the government failed because of resistance the constitutional proposal from the two ruling parties SLD and PSL.

At that time the prospects for establishing a ' common front against the "post-communists" were not bright. The disagreement on the Right especially concerned the role of trade unions on state and regional level, e.g. policy related questions about privatisation and economic reforms. The trade union Solidarity's strong position was to a great extent due to the organisational vacuum on the Right. No other political groups could act as a "unifier" (Knuzewski, 1998:157). After the election defeat in 1993 more cooperation and unification was needed, because the victory of the left-wing SLD and PSL at the 1993 election had primarily been due to the split among right-wing parties on both actor as wells as policy level.

After the 1997 election the trade union Solidarity again became represented in parliament and government. The consequences for the style and the organisation of AWS were far reaching. Leading personalities from Solidarity were elected to the parliament; some became ministers in the Buzek-government set up after the election. Marian Krzaklewski was elected as the chairman for AWS' parliamentary group. Unfortunately, after the election victory the characteristics of political movement disappeared.

From the beginning, the position of Marian Krzaklewski has been stronger than the one of Lech Walesa. Opposite his successor (Marian Krzaklewski), former chairman Lech Walesa had to fight energetically to keep the post as chairman of Solidarity. Under the Krzaklewski chairmanship and decisions took place top-down according to well-prepared plans. Having taken over government responsibilities Solidarity appealed to more "responsibility" and "self-limitation" among trade union members and had to defend itself against critique of cooperating with the liberal and secular Freedom Union (UW).

The trade union Solidarity year 2000-2001 was different from the broad social movement in the 1980s. The catch-all character has been maintained, but at the same time a movement

towards a post-communist cartel party formation could easily be observed. According to critics of Solidarity the congress in autumn 1998 was evident of the petrification and bureaucratisation process and concentration of power to a narrow circle of the chairman (Krzaklewski) focusing on the "technology of power". The congress in 1998 took place shortly after the victory over the "post-communists", for that reason the enthusiasm among the delegates was great. Therefore Lech Walesa's critical remarks directed against the new government were not accepted by a majority of the delegates at the congress.

Trade union Solidarity's situation had changed before the 1999 congress. The fact that the 1999 congress took place at the time when the support of AWS and the government was low gave rise to sharp a critique against the policy of the AWS-UW government, e.g. concerning privatisations, tax policy and postponement of laws about introduction of 40 hours working week with Saturday as work free day. Nonetheless, speaking to the 1999 congress former president Lech Walesa kept a surprisingly low profile. However, his proposal to let the first round of the forthcoming presidential election constitute an American type primary election with himself as one of the candidates was not accepted by the delegates. With the negative experience from the presidential election in 1995 in mind, the majority of the delegates insisted that the political right should be presented by one common candidate in order to bring that new candidate in the strongest possible position in the struggle against the post-communist candidate, the then popular acting president Aleksander Kwasniewski.

2.5 The foundation of AWS ·

The main focus in this section will be on the formation, stabilization and demise of the *electoral alliance* AWS. The initiative to establish the election alliance AWS has to be seen in the context of the defeat at the 1993 election and the subsequent presidential election in 1995. At the presidential election 1995 the right wing parties were heavily divided, thereby contributing to the

"post-communist" Aleksander Kwasniewski's victory at the presidential election. In the months leading up to the presidential election in 1995 Solidarity ("NZZZ "Solidarnosc"") supported Lech Walesa. However, other right wing groups took the decision to support candidates appointed by their own political groups. Thus PC ("Porozumienie Centrum") decided to support Lech Kaczynski, ROP Jan Olszewski and ZChN Hanna Gronkiewicz-Walz. Inside Solidarity some supported by Zbigniew Wrzodak and thereby broke the party line and supported Jan Olszewski at the presidential election. Thus, without a greater unification on the Right the "power monopoly" of the post-communist could not be broken.

22 different parties and organizations subscribed the declaration of the creation of Election Action Solidarnosc (AWS), at the 1997 election AWS was composed of no less than 38 different parties and organisations. As noted earlier, AWS can be considered as a tactical and negative alliance, first an embryonic, later a proto-political party with trade union Solidarity as the organisational core. During the election campaign the attempt to mobilise the old Solidarity ethos succeeded to a great extent, and most important, the waste of votes was substantially reduced. At the 1993 election those groups, which later formed AWS, obtained 29 pct. of the votes, only 4 pct. less than at the 1997 election, but at the 1997 election the share of votes was enough for the Right to obtain the majority in parliament. As ROP lost votes to AWS the swing among the electorate as a whole to the Right was rather modest.

Some parties still worked outside the election alliance AWS. The liberal Freedom Union (UW) constituted the social liberal parts of the old Solidarity movement and The Works Union (UP), the centre-left orientated part of the old Solidarity, was also supported by reform-minded communists. Nevertheless, at the 1997 election AWS became the greatest single party with support from about one third of the electorate, more than predicted in the opinion polls before the election which showed an almost "dead heat" between Left and Right.

Summarizing, we can say that from the outset AWS can be considered as a broad right wing negative election alliance, with strong elements of anti-politics, without the old "self-limitation" and with very close links to the president (Walesa) and with strong support from the army and the church.

2.6 The organisational structure of AWS
From the outset AWS' different political groups and "legs" watched zealously over their own identity. Several acted as *veto-groups* trying to obstruct even already adopted decisions and prevent passage of new laws. The prospects to form one united right wing party with a high institutionalisation and a common party culture were moderate indeed. Plans circulating in spring 1995 to create an "independent trade union party"—only based on the trade union Solidarity — were impossible to carry out. The experience from the 1993 election, where the trade union Solidarity lost all seats in parliament, was frightening. The right wing parties were simply "doomed to cooperate".

The *trade union* Solidarity became AWS' organisational nucleus and Marian Krzaklewski remained chairman of the trade union until October 2002. Tactical considerations, not ideological unity, were most striking. The many political groups on the right could easily agree on the anti-communist orientation and the aim to remove "post-communists" from power, i.e. behaving like a negative alliance. Many inside the AWS expressed the opinion that the round table decisions in 1989 gave the "post-communists" too much influence. Also the support to demands put forward from the church was striking, e.g. in the questions concerning abortion and religious instruction. The close links to the church separated Solidarity not only from the "post-communists", but also from some of the "normal" coalition partners, e.g. liberals groups and moderates inside the Freedom Union (UW).

The formation of AWS can be considered as an attempt to institutionalize the trade union Solidarity's control over the right spectre of the political scene. Krzaklewski's proposal that all existing parties inside AWS should dissolve

themselves and after that constitute a unified political party, did not obtain the sufficient support. If such plans had been carried out, some of AWS' later organisational problems might have been avoided. From the beginning AWS was heavily divided politically and institutionally. Several right wing groups had tried to obtain parliamentary representation at the 1993 election, but in vain. These parties did not accept to loosing their identity. The support for AWS was tactical, not value, policy or programmatically based. For that reason disagreement on the actor level became striking. AWS can best be considered as a negative political alliance, created with the explicit goal to join forces against the "post-communists" and limit the waste of votes at elections, however, without a common political platform and a common vision for the future and without the sufficient cohesion and loyalty inside leadership of the election alliance.

As regards the institutionalisation, AWS was almost a copy of the "post-communist" SLD, at least formally. The Republic of Poland's Social democratic Party (SdRP) constituted the organisational kernel in SLD, just as the trade union Solidarity did in AWS. At the time of the creation of AWS the trade union Solidarity had 1.5 mill members, a figure no other right wing party or organisation was able to match up to. All other attempts to build up a common front on the Right directed against the "post-communists" and president Aleksander Kwasniewski had failed. As a result of that the trade union Solidarity gained a strong position inside AWS, however, mostly because of the lack of sustainable alternatives.

At the foundation the three main decision centres were
• The trade union Solidarity's leadership, i.e. the "Komisja Krajowa" and the "Rada Krajowa"
• AWS' political leadership, the coordination group
• AWS' representation in parliament
In the National Council ("Rada Krajowa") the votes were divided equally between the trade union Solidarity and the other groups, and the daily work was conducted by a coordinating group ("Zespol Koordynacyjny"). In addition, the

principle about parity between the trade union Solidarity and the 30 other groups was applied. The day to day leadership was conducted primarily by the chairman of the National Council. The chairman of the AWS National council was the trade union Solidarity's leader, i.e. Marian Krzaklewski, thereby reflecting the trade union's strong position. Marian Krzaklewski was at the same time the chairman of AWS parliamentary group and the trade union Solidarity. The trade union had the decisive word when candidates for election in 1997 were chosen. The strong position of the trade union could be upheld until the election in 1997. However, the defeat of Krzaklewski at the presidential election in October 2000 changed the situation. The danger of more organisational decentralisation was obvious; the likely outcome was more decentralisation, increased split inside the alliance and slow decision-making procedures. Marian Krzakleswki remained chairman for the trade union Solidarity until mid 2002, when he lost a contested election.

After the electoral victory in 1997 several new decision making procedures were introduced. In spite of that AWS remained a faction divided party. The anarchistic political culture on the right spectre of the political scene was impossible to change from the one day to the other. The experience from the time of Hanna Suchocka's Solidarity led government showed that the split *within* the right wing camp might become even greater than that between government and opposition.

Former president Lech Walesa supported the foundation of AWS but he kept his hands away from the day-to-day politics. Later he created his own party, The Republic of Poland's Republican Party and put himself forward as candidate at the 2000 presidential election. That election the former president would not be able to win, as most opinion polls only gave him few percent of the votes.[7] He was, however, still able to destabilize the political scene. Because of the low electoral support AWS did not dare to take an open confrontation with former president Lech Walesa and his new Christian party.

On the ideological and programme level AWS covered a wide spectrum, unfortunately too

wide. Most political declarations were vague, abstract, Christian, non-committal, almost a-political. The political declarations spoke about "authenticable" decentralization, de-communisation, construction of a marked economy with a "built-in" dialogue between the employers and the employed, a family friendly tax system and voucher-based privatization-schemes with syndicalist and social characteristics.

Summarizing, from the outset AWS was an embodiment of a vision of the future Polish society, expressing a striving towards more justice and honesty in society, even the wish of revenge. This gave rise to a distinctly negative type political alliance, directed against the "post-communists", composed of several different ideological trends and different political groups aiming to return to the political scene after the humiliating defeat to the post-communists at the election in 1993.

2.7 AWS' many "legs"

From the beginning the election alliance AWS contained different trends:

- A Christian National ("narodowo-katolickie")
- A conservative liberal ("konserwatywno-liberalne")
- A leg attached to the trade union Solidarity ("zwiazkowe")

The party organisation of AWS named RS AWS (see section 2.8.) constituted the Christian-democratic, the party ZChN the Christian-national and SKL the liberal-conservative policy line.

From the beginning the future organisation was heavily debated. Aleksander Hall argued that AWS' organisational structure was at the same time odd and amorphous, because AWS was composed of so different and "fictitious" organisations. The result was several attempts to centralise decision-making. The close cooperation between workers and intellectuals that in the 1980s gave Solidarity political strength, ceased to exist both inside the trade union Solidarity and AWS. Most intellectuals from the Solidarity movement joined the liberal Democratic Union (UD), the later Freedom Union (UW).

At the beginning it was difficult to say, whether AWS could be organisationally reshaped and after that constitute a close-knit, functional and disciplined political party. However, evidence showed that this was unlikely to happen. In so broad a movement as AWS it was also important to determine the political influence of the different political groups and to single out the political core ("nurt"), i.e. the main decision centre. After the withdrawal of KPN and Radio Maryja the fundamentalist conservative-traditionalist faction became weaker. Most decisions could only be taken after protracted negotiations. Furthermore, they were mostly taken according to the principle "the higher (in the organization), the more politics". Not all decisions were accepted and implemented on the local level and inside each political group and "leg". The decision making procedures were top-down but, as already noted, this did not mean that AWS constituted a homogeneous and functional party federation.

The political rhetorique was expressively anti-communist. More and more AWS appeared as an identity-party without consistent political programmes and sufficient institutionalisation aiming to come to power as fast as possible. The mobilisation of the old Solidarity-ideals was reactivated at the 1997 election. The election campaigns were moral-ideologically marked with strong elements of symbolic politics. The voters were simply promised more honesty in politics. Resistance against abortion has repeatedly been put forward, also demands of more financial support for families, and an approval of the concordat with the church as quickly as possible. In addition, demands about stricter "decommunization" ("dekomunizacji") including a purge of collaborators from the old system were put forward.

Thus AWS concentrated its efforts on three policy levels: the break with the communist past, the creation of a new "healthy" ("zdrowy") state separating the state from the economy and supported by the introduction of profound political, social and economic reforms. Themes like appointments of new people to important posts in society, abortion, decommunization, the concordat with the church, privatisation and a new

constitution were all placed high on the political agenda. Accordingly, the old "we versus them" distinction was still given a high priority. Solidarity put forward its own proposal during the discussions about the new constitution, reflecting classical religious and "syndicalist" values. A revision of the constitution, however, was not a part of the political agreement between AWS and Freedom Union (UW), leading to the common government after the 1997 election

Taking in consideration the big social and economic problems in society too little attention was paid to social policy issues. Moving to more ordinary politics, to dissociate oneself from the ("post-) communists" was no guarantee of electoral success. Should Solidarity survive in the shape of a functional political party federation, more "down-to-earth" political questions had to be taken up. The majority of the electorate asked for a policy-orientated line with clear marking on single issues appealing to the "average voter" emphasizing subjects such as the ways of collective bargaining, working conditions, employment service, social assistance, legal support to the members and influence on restructuration of enterprises. For most Poles the years before 1989 belonged to the past. Therefore, in the long run Solidarity could not survive only on the foundation myth, the memories and feelings going back to the fight against the old system. The old "We-Them" discourses from the 1980's were never "de-freezed", but the presidential election 2000 showed that the old anti-communist political slogans from the 1980s only appealed to a small part of the electorate, between 10 and 15 pct. of the electorate according to opinion polls. Therefore, the lack of de-freezing of the old "we-them" discourse was most beneficial to the Left, especially SLD.

The attitudes to the communist past also divided the right wing camp as a whole. Different opinions existed on how severely former communist and agents of the old system should be treated by the authorities. Tadeusz Mazowiecki's slogan about drawing a "thick line" (between the past and present) was met with much greater support in the Freedom Union (UW) than in AWS. Only few in AWS shared the opinion that "reckoning with the past"

should be structural, and not based on the demand of revenge. The "soft line" was expressed e.g. in the Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza" and by the editor-in-chief Adam Michnik.

On the ideological level AWS expressed a return to the polarised historical division of Polish society, as put by Michal Wenzel, AWS at the same time expressed "a return with considerable differences".[8] The values, on which Solidarity was created, were not those championed in the late 1990s. Neither in the shape of a trade union nor a political party Solidarity reflected the consensus seeking combating Solidarity 20 years back. The old distinction, "We versus Them" and civil society against totalitarianism, the lack of ability to go beyond culture and history, undermined not only the trade union Solidarity, but also the election alliance AWS in the struggle to identify new post-communist conflicts and alternative futures.

Many issues were policy-related. Thus the health reform, introduced by the AWS-UW government, was badly introduced and implemented. The citizens were not adequately informed about the consequences of the reform, e.g. which parts of health services that would be cut down after introduction of the reform. Furthermore, no answer was given on question, who would win and who loose because of the reform. As a consequence, no suitable analysis of the consequences of the reform for different social groups was carried through. According to most public opinion polls a big majority of the Polish people has shared the opinion that the health reform taken as a whole constituted a big step backwards.

This suggests that the development of AWS confirms the hypothesis that broadly based negative election alliances are hardly able to transform themselves into homogeneous and functional party-federations. Only a well-developed party culture and a sufficient party institutionalisation and loyalty on the actor level can keep a "party" alliance together and provide it with an "immune defence" in case of a political set-back. Both characteristics were absent also in the case of AWS. This implied that the risk of new splits on the Right existed ever since the foundation of AWS in 1996.

2.8 RS AWS

As noticed above, according to the original plans the federalization of AWS should ensure that AWS could express broad appeals. In order to speed up that process AWS' *member* organisation, *the Social Movement-Solidarity Electoral Action* ("Ruch Spoleczny AWS" ("RS AWS")), was established on 8 January 1997. However, RS AWS had a difficult start. The first congress was postponed due to the lack of agreement about AWS' institutional structure. From the beginning it was unclear whether RS AWS should be just an extension of the trade union Solidarity or alternately an independent policy-creating unity inside the AWS. Formally RS AWS declared itself "independent", but the political practice became different. Thus, in the statutes of RS AWS the cooperation with NSZZ Solidarnosc, i.e. the trade union Solidarity, was mentioned. It was no easy task to reach the optimal formula and the necessary compromises between so many different opinions and institutional concepts.

Some problems were of *institutional*, to a large extent due to the low number of party members. Thus not many from the trade union Solidarity joined RS AWS. At the time of foundation the political leaders talked about establishing a mass party consisting of 200 – 300,000 members. However, before long those plans soon had to be revised. In 1999 altogether 35,000 were registrated as members of RS AWS, only one quarter of those members came from the trade union Solidarity. In Silesia the trade union Solidarity had 200,000 members, but only about 2,000 took the decision to join RS AWS. RS AWS constituted the greatest group in AWS with 138 members of the Sejm and the Senate elected in 1997. The aim was to foster more cohesiveness, mediate between the liberal groups, e.g. SKL and the Christian-National ZChN and maintain the position as the strongest "leg" inside AWS.

Before long RS AWS became an elite driven party, a caucus type party according to Duverger's terminology and cartel party in Kirchheimer's. Not only the *trade union* Solidarity, also the *party movement* AWS (RS AWS) moved away from old ideals back to 1980-1981. Like in the trade union Solidarity a centralisation of

power took place, yet without introduction of more efficient decision-making procedures. Almost all important decisions were first taken after long and complicated negotiations. Several decisions could not be implemented in practice due to resistance from the different political veto factions inside AWS. The chairman of RS AWS, Jerzy Buzek, recognised some of the problems. According to him a better developed party organisation on powiat-level and better programmatic work should increase the influx of new members. On regional, i.e. voivod-level, RS AWS was clearly better organised compared with the powiat-level. The most important was where to find the *policy-deciding centre*. At the congress January 1999 in Gdánsk, Jacek Rybicki was elected as the new chairman of RS AWS' political council. His principal duty was to reach a compromise between the different factions inside AWS and formulate a common political programme, thus contributing to finding a common political denominator for the party federation taken as a whole.

Several political groups took the decision to join RS AWS, including minor ones such as "Porozumienie Ludowe", "Ruch dla Rzeczpospolita", "Nowa Polska", "Liga Krajowa" and "Stowarzyszenie Rodzin Katolitickich". The influence of those groups in AWS due to the low institutionalisation and modest voter-appeal, but by joining RS AWS the political influence, it was calculated, might increase. By admitting the small political groups RS AWS would be able to compete better with well-organised groups and "legs" inside AWS such as the Christian-National party ZChN and the conservative-liberal group SKL. Several times SKL[9] and ZChN, both members of the election alliance AWS, criticised the centralisation of power in the trade union Solidarity and RS AWS.

After several delays and postponements the first congress opened in February 1999, two years after the foundation. Before the 1999 congress Marian Krzaklewski tried to bring RS AWS under his control and avoid a power struggle by recommending Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek as the new chairman. Jerzy Buzek was elected as the new chairman, Deputy Prime Minister Janusz Tomaszewski became general

secretary, his primary task was the day-to-day work of the party. A seven-man group (a "G-7") should take care of day-to-day problems. The four political groups ("legs") and the chairman Marian Krzaklewski were represented in the "G-7 group". Before that took place Marian Krzaklewski had also been re-elected as the chairman of the AWS parliamentary group and the trade union Solidarity. At the first congress Jacek Rybicki became chairman of political council. Almost all elections were taken unanimously and without previous discussions. Later Tomaszewski, the general secretary, was forced to leave the post because of suspicion of cooperation with the secrete police before 1989.

In the late 1990s, like the trade union Solidarity the *party* movement (RS AWS) did not remind us about the old Solidarity. Also RS AWS failed to decouple trade union Solidarity from politics. As noted by *Jaroslav Kurski*[10], also RS AWS acted like a political entity that primarily aimed to acquire ("zdobyc") and after that keep ("trzymac") political power. Because of that, Kurski argued, RS AWS and AWS as a whole reminds us of Vladimir Meciar's party The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS). As we shall see, most of RS AWS' problems has to be seen in the context of the problems inside AWS as a whole and the ongoing debates about establishing a more "functional federation".

2.9 More about the debate on a new organization

The first breaches of party discipline took place soon after the 1997-election. As predicted by *Andrzej Rychard*, the dissolution of AWS and the AWS-UW government, inevitably would change the political pathways, which Poland had followed. Not only left parties, also extremist parties such as Lepper's "Samoobrona" or Tyminskis "Party X" might benefit from a new split among the right wing parties, resulting in an even stronger scepticism against political parties in general ("anti-politics").

Before long Adam Slomka from KPN-OP and Janusz Lopuszanski representing the Christian-National ZChN were excluded from AWS due to lack of party discipline; after that they formed

their own right wing political association "Poruzomienie Polski" (PP). In a common declaration they criticised what they called "the servility" of AWS toward the EU and the lack of a family-friendly tax policy. Furthermore, sharp criticism was turned against the then finance minister Leszek Balcerowicz, e.g. the proposal of a new tax system with a linear, non-progressive tax scale.

In the 1997 election the more fundamentalist Christian National groups became rather well represented in the parliament. Many were from the Christian-National groups were elected to parliament in spite of the fact that they were placed long down on the candidate lists. Unfortunately, soon after the election new "wars" erupted. The liberal-conservative faction SKL unceasingly asked for more discipline and better policy-creation. However, the demand for better party discipline, more party cohesiveness and a more centristic policy line as recommended by SKL were impossible to carry through.

The vice-chairman of the AWS' group in parliament, *Jacek Rybicki*, expressed the opinion that AWS should constitute a *federation* of different political groupings, which then should be transformed to a unitary political party or party-federation. However, like The Republican Party in US there should be place for different ideological "clubs", all supporting the basic catholic values. According to Rybicki AWS should be reshaped and after that constitute a party with three different "legs", a trade union, a Christian-National and a liberal one. However, it was difficult to reach an agreement on the most important organisational questions between the different "legs", especially on those questions that concerned each political group's representation and influence on decision making.

Coming to power AWS moved towards a clientelistic type cartel party persistently underlining possession of power and technology of power and with close links to the economic sphere ("political economy"). According to *Antoni Dudek* the RS AWS was unable to assume the role of leadership in view of the low level of professionalism, reluctance to pursue a consistent programme and the too high expectations among the electorate. The ongoing profession-

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alisation of the Polish political scene made the future of the RS AWS look rather bleak (Dudek, in Bächer etc, 2001:168).

The party leadership denied that the situation looked so bad, however, it was recognized that RS AWS should be better to obtain members from different social groups in society and that the party behaviour should disprove the argument put forward by many observers that AWS acted as a power orientated party and not much more. Several times *Jacek Rybicki*[11] underlined that AWS was forced to transform itself to a functional association, either in the shape of a unitary party, a federation of parties or a "energetic" political association ("porozumienie"). Time had run out for AWS as just an "election coalition". Functional leadership and more flexible decision-making procedures were badly needed.

Also *Wojciech Arkuszewski*[12], MP for AWS-SKL, expressed the opinion that AWS had to move away from an organisation consisting of veto group factions. In order to survive AWS had to transform itself and subsequently constitute a functional association. In order to acquire a sufficient cohesion and obtain the sufficient "energy" in decision-making AWS needed a secretariat that could take the necessary unpopular decisions and make sure that they were implemented by all political groups. The present decision-making procedures were far too complex and not least time-consuming.

The need of higher institutionalisation was reflected in the several breaches of the party discipline, e.g. by voting in parliament. As a result of that it was decided that future "deviationists" would not be re-nominated at the forthcoming election. Several times Marian Krzaklewski talked about the need of more discipline. Most political groupings viewed the party alliance as purely tactical and temporary. Because of that not much was changed as regards daily political practice. More than 70 members of AWS supported a vote of no confidence against the then minister for state property Emil Walacz, and the party discipline was also broken at voting in parliament on the state budget.

The end result of the organisational changes adopted in January 2000 was more confusion.

The day-to-day leadership ("G-7") was reconstructed and the presidium ("kolegium") increased its membership from 19 to 25. Those changes weakened the position of SKL and ZChN. In its efforts to streamline the organisation AWS had a "close eye" to the main adversary, the left wing SLD, in which case the transformation from a party alliance to a unitary political party has been considered as successful.

Thus AWS never acquired a strong leadership and sufficiently flexible decision-making procedures. The political disagreements inside the alliance were simply too frequent and the party discipline remained too low. In fact, under the prevailing unfavourable circumstances the decision to transform the "alliance" to a unitary "standard party" or alternately remain a loose institutionalised alliance was never taken. Jerzy Buzek had to act as a mediator, trying to agree with all groups involved before important policy decisions and inside the government Buzek had to fight with the Freedom Unions (UW) powerful finance minister and vice-Prime Minister Leszek Balcerowicz. Thus Jerzy Buzek was forced to act as a "man of reconciliation", not a man of "decision and action". Under those circumstances, it was impossible to act – and think – long-term and strategic.

As a result, also the policy aspect was neglected. In step with the decrease in voter support AWS was forced to give solutions of problems "close to people" a higher priority, e.g. improve the quality of the health reform. The proposal about a "pact for the agriculture" should limit the competition from populist and extremist parties such as Lepper's "Samoobrona" ("Selfdefence"). The need to improve the quality of the laws and the law-making process in general was recognised from all sides. Nevertheless Marian Krzaklewski declared that AWS' crisis was a question about better discipline and "the right attitudes". Hence, the Solidarity elite tried to avoid discussions about issues linked to the policy process, i.e. the bad quality of decision-making procedures, the bad implementation of the four big reforms and the many issues concerning formation of a "post-communist nomenklatura".

All plans about foundation of a unitary party were met with strong opposition. The aim to put ones own interests before the interests of society have been widespread inside the right-national camp. As already said, for many groups joining the AWS had been just a tactical manoeuvre. Working in opposition the left wing SLD could profit from the ongoing split in AWS and the low quality of law making. In the official declarations the significance of institutionalisation and profesionalisation was underlined. As we have seen above, several proposals for more efficient and flexible structures were put forward, but unfortunately too much time was wasted on discussions on internal organisational problems such as the distribution of power and how many "legs" that should be presented in the AWS-leadership. The final solution, however, was never found. The too strong focus on organisational and internal questions damaged the program and policy-formulation and as a result of that also the electoral support.

In the end AWS became more power-oriented, mainly focusing on the "technology of power". As said, the policy aspects were neglected; instead AWS was focusing on appointments to strategic posts in society and in that way failed to recognize the significance of the solution of the concrete day-to-day policy problems. By many observers the sharp fall in the voter-support was explained by the advance of a new post-communist nomenklatura originating in the old Solidarity-movement.

Criticism became stronger also from inside AWS. Member of parliament and former powerful chairman of trade union Solidarity's Mazowsze section *Maciej Jankowski*[13] emphasized that the fall in voter-support was caused by the fact that the interests of the party were put ahead the interests of society and that the political style was lacking self-limitation. The appearance of a new ruling class might mean the end of AWS. Also *Alexander Hall*[14] expressed the opinion that appointments to important jobs in society should not take place according to political criteria, but according to qualifications of people ("meritorycznosc"). The best of its ability AWS should fight against all types of political capitalism. *Jan Pary's* argued that AWS' problems

were caused by bad leadership and treachery against the Christian-social inspired election-programmes and discourses[15].

Former Prime Minister *Tadeusz Mazowiecki*[16] expressed the opinion that the foundation of AWS as such was a success. The main task was to create a sufficiently strong Christian-Democratic identity, i.e. a viable party organisation culture. That task has not yet been solved. A big problem was the lack of ability to take a rational position to political power and to use the political power to modernise the economy with due respect to the feelings and long-term interests of the Polish people. Organisational cohesion and de-freezing of old ideological cleavages should be followed by pragmatization on policy-level. In order to survive AWS had to be transformed to a "standard" political party or at least a functional federation consisting of different political groups, unfortunately nothing of that happened. Several groups acted as veto-groups, not as policy-creating entities as has been the case in the "post-communist" party-federation SLD. More policy-creation was necessary, should AWS be transformed to a functional federation and in the long-term a unitary political party.

Former leader of The Works Union (UP), *Rychard Bugaj*, expressed himself along the same line. AWS had won the election in 1998, he said, primarily because many Poles expected more honesty in politics and looked after new ideas that were beneficial for the majority of the population.[17] Instead AWS became an alliance *of power*. Contrary to AWS propaganda, no "breakthrough" took place on the policy level. Thus AWS was mostly dealing with passive follow-ups on reform plans introduced by the former SLD-PSL-government. Therefore AWS behaved as a movement without leadership and political visions. The result was a drastic decrease in voter support and in the end even dissolution and demise of AWS.

Part of the problems was that AWS was a young party formation with the uncertainty which inevitably follows from that regarding policy-formulation, organisation and creation of the necessary solidarity and loyalty among the different groupings inside the alliance. Dis-

agreement inside the alliance increased when concrete policy initiatives had to be taken. Strategies for coping with concrete policy were badly needed. Unfortunately, too many in AWS were "moral-politicians" and politicians believing in a "historical mission" lacking the ability to think and act long-term and strategic, unable to meet the double challenge of globalization and europeization. For that type of politicians the political culture of the past was difficult, not to say impossible to eliminate. Even after the take-over of governmental responsibilities, in which case more institutionalisation and professionalisation was needed, personal interests and identity politics were still in the front. Only so long as AWS was able to define itself on the symbol-level facing the common enemy, a façade of unity could be maintained. Thus many of the problems inside AWS can be found on the actor level.

After the 1997-election by the majority of the electorate AWS has been considered, not as a movement party but as a "party of power", i.e. with distinct cartel characteristics. In the late 1990s AWS occupied several important positions, e.g. the Prime Minister and vice-prime minister came from AWS, one third of the ministers, more than 100 members of the Sejm and the Senate, three chairmen on voivod-level and besides that 3-4,000 members of town and regional councils and mayors. "Catch-all" appeals were pushed forward, but the stamp of a movement party disappeared. So the hypothesis that the new parties move in the direction of catch-all cartel parties can be confirmed also in the case of AWS.

The international contacts were few. It may seem paradoxical that only the Freedom Union (UW), the most secularised among the Christian parties, were represented in the all-European Association of Christian parties. The monopoly of UW was not accidental, because the political profile of UW was more consistent with the dominant pro-European and pro-market secular trend in European politics.

According to the official declarations AWS should express the collective interests of the majority of the Polish people, and act in an inclusive and catch-all way. In practical life the organisa-

tion, however, was governed top-down and bureaucratically. Nevertheless party cohesion was almost absent both inside RS AWS and the party federation AWS and between AWS' many different "legs". The weakness on programme- and policy-level in itself reinforced the well-known cartel-profile focusing on the "technology of power", thus neglecting policy development and programmatic work. Also close links between politics and economy were striking. Thus managers on big enterprises, on which the state were holding majority stakes, were often nominated by the AWS, one example was Tomasz Tywonek, who became a member of the executive board of TPSA (Telecom). Also close ties between the AWS and managers in PKN Orlen (Polish Oil Company) have been observed.

From the beginning a culture of debate has been almost absent on macro political level as well as in the local party organisations. Almost no discussions took place before appointments to important jobs in society and important policy-decisions. It was even not even discussed what the party should fight for. January 1999, on the last day of the congress and without previous debates the first political programme was adopted, but mainly as abstract symbolic declarations. Future Poland should be "free and modern" based on "strong families", solidarity and market economy and regulated according to Christian moral and ethics. That programme could hardly appeal to many voters and to young people who paid most attention to living conditions and solution of the concrete day-to-day problems. According to "Pentor", in late 1999 no less than 74 pct of the Polish people expressed dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister and 82 pct. with the work of the government as a whole.

2.10 The demise of AWS

In the end, the decline in voter support and insufficient institutionalisation had as the logical finale a reconstruction of AWS ending with the demise of the "old AWS". In December 2000 and January 2001 the Civic Platform (PO) was created on the initiative of Maciej Plazynski, Donald Tusk and Andrzej Olechowski, and later AWS' liberal "leg" (SKL) with a narrow margin

took the decision to leave AWS and cooperate with the Platform (PO). Later, as the September 2001 came closer, also the trade union Solidarity (NSZZ "Solidarnosc") left AWSP. At the same time the Kaczynski brothers created their own platform called *"Right and Justice" ("Prawo i Sprawedliwosc", PiS)*, cooperating with Kazimierz M. Ujazdowskis, former member of ZChN, "Przymierze Prawicy".

From summer 2001, to the cooperation with ROP, AWS changed name to *"AWSP"* ("Prawo" meaning "Right"), now constituting an electoral alliance with three "legs", the RS AWS and the Christian parties PPChD and ZChN. In July 2001 ROP cancelled its cooperation with AWS, also some groups in ZChN took the decision to leave AWSP. Thus the Polish Right underwent a new deep transformation in the year between the 2000 presidential election and the 2001 parliamentary election, however, without being able to seriously undermine SLD-UP's then strong electoral position.

At the September 2001 election AWSP lost the parliamentary representation, obtaining only 5.5 pct. of the votes, not enough for party alliances to obtain representation in parliament. After the election defeat the federation re-established itself in the shape the "Ruch Spoleczny" (RS). On the IV party meeting in April 2002 Kzystof Piesiewicz was elected as the new chairman of RS, his aim was to move RS closer to the political centre and establish party alliances with other non-postcommunist parties e.g. at the regional and local elections in November 2002. According to the opinion polls, at least until late 2003 nothing indicated a political come-back at the next ordinary national election.

At the 2001 election, in the Polish parliament the Polish Right in general became well represented as the right nationalist The League of Families and Kaczynskis and more moderate party "Law and justice Party" (PiS) gained representation in the Sejm. Furthermore, the liberal side was represented by Citizen Platform (PO). In the beginning of year 2001 the Platform (PO) was joined by the SKL, until then a liberal AWS faction. Both The Freedom Union (UW) and AWS, the two parties with a background in the old Solidarity movement and "Solidarity myth"

and occupying posts in several post-communist governments, did not pass the threshold requirement of five pct. Thus, a transition to a new stage of party and party system development has taken place. Since the 2001 election Polish politics has become more "ordinary", but more unstable and certainly not more predictable.

2.11 Some conclusions

Several times the question has been raised, why the party alliance AWS failed while the left wing SLD succeeded. In line with *Michael D. Kennedy* (Kennedy, 1991:180) basically I find it fruitful to distinguish between *different types* of alliances, some based on *economic interaction*, some based on common socio-economic interests and networks, others based on *self-identification* held up by reference to a common enemy, after 1989 the "post-communists". The focus on the common "enemy" reinforced moral positions, with little room for political negotiations, as negotiation and compromises both inside the party movement and between parties appear as moral compromise and "treasury". In parties and party alliances based on self-identification, programmatic, policy and institutional side and the economic goal function are neglected and downplayed such as we have seen it in case of the trade union Solidarity as well as in the election alliance AWS, the party movement RS AWS and the election alliance AWSP. As we have seen, to understand "the meaning of Solidarity", the many problems linked to the *internal constitution* of the movement, has to be included.

Furthermore, many of AWS' problems have been policy-related and bound to low quality of public governance. As noted by *Lena Kolarska-Bobinska*[18], a precondition for a political success is that the policy content is communicated to the people in proper ways. Hence, time had passed when parliamentary elections can be won thanks to vague and broadly formulated political appeals and symbolic politics. More important than cabinet reshuffles and institutional infightings was to raise the quality of governance and policy-implementation, to improve the whole philosophy of public governance and the mode

of decision-making ("filozofia rzadzenia"). Un-
fortunately, from the outset AWS (and RS
AWS) conducted too many of the wars *against
itself* ("walka AWS z AWS").

Thus, many of AWS' problems had to do with
low quality of governance, at least seen from the
majority of the electorate. Thus explanations of
the demise of Solidarity and AWS has to be
found on several levels, on *historical* level in the
shape of a reactivation of old "We-Them" based
discourses in society with a striking tendency to-
wards "over-ideologization", on *institutional*
level in the shape of inefficient organisation and
low institutionalisation and on *policy*-level as
disagreements on the economic and social pol-
icy and the "day to day" policy-formulation.
Maybe most important, the explanations has to
be found on *actor-behavioural level* in the shape
of the ongoing "wars in the top", the anarchic
political culture on the Right, the low party loy-
alty and cohesion among the political elites, the
inclination to behave like "missionary" politi-
cians and regard politics as a fight of "life and
death".

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Noter

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