The PDS: A Study of the Development and Stabilisation of the PDS as an Eastern German Regional Party - 1989 - 2000

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Abstract

This study examines the place of the PDS within the German political system. By developing and employing a typology of regional parties this work illustrates that the PDS has been politically successful on account of its mobilisation of distinct territorial interests – in much the same way as other regional parties across the democratic world have done. The creation of a territorial divide along the former inner-German border has offered the PDS the opportunity to re-model its image and profile as the protector of eastern German specificity.

The West German party system that expanded eastwards in 1990 has not been able to sufficiently channel regionally specific sentiment into the political process: and it is for this reason that a regional party has been able to stabilise itself in the eastern states. The PDS has taken advantage of a number of structural advantages (in terms of its regional heritage, leadership, its party organisation and so forth) in moulding and shaping a policy package that reflects the differing opinions, attitudes, values and beliefs of many eastern Germans. It is as a result of this that the PDS has been able to stabilise its position within the eastern German regional party system and to build a platform that offers it the opportunity of being a long-term actor in the German party system.

Acknowledgements

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Illustrations

Abbreviations

AG	Arbeitsgemeinschaft (Working Group in the PDS)
BP	Bayerische Partei (Bavarian Party, Germany)
BVP	Bayerische Volkspartei (Bavarian Peoples Party, Germany)
BQ	Bloc Québécois (Québécois Bloc, Québec, Canada)
B90/Gr	Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (Alliance 90/The Green Party, Germany)
CDC	Convergencia Democratica de Catalunya (Democratic Convergence of Catalonia, Catalonia, Spain)
CDN	Convergencia de Democratas Navarros (Basque Country, Spain)
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union, Germany)
CiU	Convergéncia i Unió (Convergence and Union, Catalonia, Spain)
CSU	Christlich Soziale Union (Christian Social Union, Germany)
DC	Democrazia Cristiana (The Christian Democratic Party of Italy)
DKP	Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (German Communist Party)
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party (Northern Ireland, UK)
DVU	Deutsche Volksunion (German Peoples Union)
EA	Eusko Alkartsauna (Basque Country, Spain))
ECB	European Central Bank
EP	European Parliament
ERC	Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (Republican Left of Catalonia, Spain)
ETA	Basque Homeland and Liberty
FDF	Front Démocratique des Francophones (Democratic Front of Francophones, Brussels, Belgium)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party, Germany)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
HB	Herri Batasuna (Basque Country, Spain)
IG	Interessengemeinschaft (Interest Group in the PDS)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)
KPF	Kommunistische Plattform (Communist Platform of the PDS)
LN	Lega Nord (Italy)
MdB	Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestags (Member of the *Bundestag*)
MdL	Mitglied des Landtags (Member of one of the sixteen *Land* Parliaments)
MF	Marxistisches Forum (Marxist Forum in the PDS)

MfS	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (The Ministry for State Security - the Stasi)
MNLV	Basque National Liberation Front
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (National Democratic Party)
PC	Plaid Cymru (Wales, UK)
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano (The Communist Party of Italy)
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism)
PNV/EAJ	Partido Nacionalista Vasco/Eusko Alderdi Jeltalea (Basque National Party, Spain)
PQ	Parti Québécois (Party Québécois, Québec, Canada)
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano (The Italian Socialist Party)
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español (The Spanish Socialist Party)
PTE/UC	Partido de los Trabajadores de Espana/Unidad Comunista (The Spanish Workers Party/Communist Unity)
RC	Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (The Communist Refoundation, Italy)
REP	Die Republikaner (The Republican Party, Germany)
RW	Rassemblement Wallon (Wallonia, Belgium)
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party, GDR)
SDLP	Social and Democratic Labour Party (Northern Ireland, UK)
SDP	Social Democratic Party (Great Britain)
SFP	Svenska Folkpartiet (Swedish Peoples Party, Finland)
SNP	Scottish National Party (Scotland, UK)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party, Germany)
SVP	Südtiroler Volkspartei (South Tyrolian Peoples Party, Italy)
UA	Unidad Alavesa (Basque Country, Spain)
UCD	Union de Centro Democratico (Union of the Democratic Centre, Spain)
UDC	Unió Democràtica de Catalunya (Democratic Union of Catalonia, Catalonia, Spain)
UPN	Union del Pueblo Navarro (Union of the Navarrese People, Basque Country, Spain)
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party (Northern Ireland, UK)
UV	Union Valdôtaine (Val d'Aosta, Italy)
VB	Vlaams Block (Flemish Block, Belgium)

The PDS as a Regional Party in Eastern Germany 1989-2000

Introduction

The stabilisation of the *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Party of Democratic Socialism - PDS) in eastern Germany has been one of the most surprising outcomes of the unification process[1]. Whereas the PDS was once perceived as unlikely to have any future at all[2], developments over the last decade have seen the party stabilise and prosper from a political base that offers it the opportunity to develop into a medium/long-term regional political force. The spectrum of political and academic opinion expressed on the topic of the PDS remains, however, wide and diverse (see chapter one). At the one extreme, notably in conservative circles, the PDS is viewed as an extremist, undemocratic and disruptive force, that should be regarded as a pariah, as well as a threat to the democratic stability of the German state. At the other end of the spectrum, the PDS is regarded as a broad-church of socialist opinion, aiming to fundamentally alter the economic inequalities in German society by reversing the trend towards neo-liberalism and social inequality. Many further positions are also held in between these two poles.

This work consciously attempts to analyse the PDS from a perspective that avoids partisan alignments and value judgements. For this reason the ideological contradictions within the PDS's programme are given markedly less attention than in other works. The reason for this is simple: the core hypothesis of this work is that the PDS is a regional party that, uniquely, mobilises territorially salient interests within the political arena. By doing this, the PDS has established itself as a political force at the local, regional and federal levels based on a core electorate in the five eastern *Länder* and Berlin. As unsuccessful attempts to expand westwards have proven, the PDS remains an eastern German regional party, articulating interests that are specific eastern Germans.

The development and rejuvenation of the PDS has surprised a number of political analysts. It was originally believed that as a result of the collapse of the eastern and central

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[1] This is surprising not least because the PDS is the direct successor party of the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED) – the former ruling party of the GDR.

[2] Heinrich Bortfeldt: *Von der SED zur PDS: Wandlung zur Demokratie?* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1992), p.295; Gordon Smith: 'The 'New' Party System', in Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson, Peter H. Merkl and Stephen Padgett (eds.): *Developments in German Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), p.100; Patrick Moreau: *PDS - Anatomie einer postkommunistischen Partei* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1992), p.459; Manfred Gerner: *Partei ohne Zukunft? Von der SED zur PDS* (München: Tilsner Verlag, 1994), p.59.

European state socialist regimes, the PDS would, after perhaps an interim period of representing the apparatchicks of the GDR state, disappear as an anachronism of a bygone age.

Hence although the PDS was widely expected to enter the 12th *Bundestag* in 1990, largely as a result of a relaxation of the entry requirements, few analysts expected the PDS to return in 1994. But the PDS confounded its critics by utilising its strength in eastern Berlin to successfully win four seats: thus ensuring parliamentary representation in the 13th *Bundestag*[3]. Although the PDS was (perhaps paradoxically) generally given a much better chance of survival in 1998 than it had been in 1994, it was also not until the final results were recorded that the PDS knew it had successfully hurdled the 5 per cent barrier – so entering the *Bundestag* for the first time as a *Fraktion* rather than as a *Bundestagsgruppe*.

The PDS's strong and consistent showing in the late 1990s in the eastern states should not, however, disguise the traumatic and schizophrenic early period of the party's development. From the fall of the Berlin Wall on the ninth of November 1989 it became clear that the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party (SED)), in its pre-1989 guise, was heading for oblivion. For this reason the SED set out on a process of disjointed, piecemeal reform – reforming party structures and processes as much as it had to, while being simultaneously aware that radical reform would lead to widespread disenchantment within the intrinsically conservative party membership[4]. Following the formation of the SED/PDS in February 1990, Gregor Gysi, the Berlin lawyer who had quickly risen through the party's much maligned hierarchy to be party leader, championed the dropping of the name SED altogether, in order to (hopefully) signal a clear and definitive break with the past[5]. Yet despite this apparently rapid change, the party remained tied to much of the ideological rhetoric it had espoused in the GDR[6]. It went to considerable lengths

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[3] Although the PDS did indeed return to the *Bundestag* in 1994, it did so despite only registering 4.4 per cent of the vote. The PDS made use of a clause allowing parties obtaining three directly elected members to take their place in Parliament as a *Bundestagsgruppe* rather than a *Bundestagsfraktion*. Although this prevented the PDS from enjoying the same rights as the parties who did achieve 5 per cent, it none the less enabled the PDS to register 30 members of the Federal Parliament.

[4] Daniel Hough: 'SED to PDS: A Case of Continuity through Change?', in Paul Cooke and Jonathan Grix (eds.): *German Monitor: East Germany: Continuity and Change* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B. V., 2000a), pp.123-132.

[5] Heinrich Bortfeldt (1992): op. cit. For a detailed English language account of the PDS's development in this formative period see Peter Barker 'From the SED to the PDS: Continuity or Renewal?', in *German Monitor - The Party of Democratic Socialism. Modern Post-Communism or Nostalgic Populism?* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 1998), pp.1-17.

[6] For a particularly critical analysis of the PDS's development see the work of Patrick Moreau, Jürgen Lang and/or Viola Neu. Patrick Moreau (1992): op. cit; Patrick Moreau & Jürgen Lang: *Was will die PDS?* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1994a); Patrick Moreau and Viola Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus und Linkspopulismus* (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Interne Studien 76, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1994); Patrick

to retain as many of the assets and possessions of the SED as was possible – ensuring that, both financially and organisationally, the PDS remained a viable entity[7]. Without the connections and networks inherited from the SED, the PDS would have struggled to survive the initial 'transitional' phrase after unification[8]. Yet internal reform could not prevent the party from, between mid-1989 and December 1991, losing over two million members. Only the former SED cadre remained loyal to the party[9]. Legally the party can, therefore, legitimately be described as the successor party (*Nachfolgepartei*) of the SED.

This work will illustrate that the PDS has, however, achieved longer-term political success as a result of other, more surprising societal developments. The PDS has been politically successful as a result of its effectiveness at articulating specific regional interests. The core hypothesis of this work is therefore:

The electoral success of the PDS is based upon the political mobilisation of uniquely eastern German interests.

In order to test this hypothesis, this thesis is split into five chapters. The first two chapters concentrate on placing this work within the context of other studies of the PDS, as well as creating an analytical framework suitable for analysing the core hypothesis - that the PDS is an eastern German regional party, prospering as it mobilises territorial (i.e. eastern German) sentiment within the broader political arena. Chapters three, four and five are based on extensive original research, drawing on opinion poll data, party programmes, speeches, interviews and so forth in order to demonstrate exactly how the PDS mobilises territorially specific sentiment.

Moreau and Jürgen Lang: *Linksextremismus. Eine unterschätzte Gefahr* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1996); Patrick Moreau: 'Mit Lenin im Bauch ... ? Die PDS auf der Suche nach einer Berliner Republik von Links', in *Politische Studien*, Heft 349, September/October 1996, pp.27-42; Viola Neu: *Die Potentiale der PDS und der Republikaner im Winter 1997-98* (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1998); Patrick Moreau: *Die PDS: Profil einer antidemokratischen Partei* (München: Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 1998); Viola Neu: *Die PDS 10 Jahre nach dem Fall der Mauer* (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1999).
[7] One source has claimed that while in 1992 the SPD had assets amounting to DM 276.8 million, the PDS could register a remarkable DM 438.7 million. *This Week in Germany*: 20 January 1995, p.5.
[8] Gero Neugebauer: 'Hat die PDS bundesweit im Parteiensystem eine Chance?', in Michael Brie, Martin Herzig and Thomas Koch: *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde und Kontroverse Analysen* (Köln: Papyrossa Verlag, 1995), p.41.
[9] In October 1989 the SED officially had 2.3 million members, but by the end of 1991 the PDS's membership had dropped to 172,000. Following these initial losses, the membership of the party has stabilised somewhat, and membership numbers have continued to fall at a much more gradual rate. At the end of 1997 the PDS was still able to register just over 100,000 paid-up members. See Patrick Moreau (1998): op. cit. p.97.

Chapter one discusses the relevance of adopting a regionalist approach to a study of the PDS. The review of the secondary literature on the PDS identifies the four broad approaches that authors tend to adopt when discussing the PDS, before analysing their respective strengths and weaknesses. All four highlight different parts of the PDS's complex nature, and it is for this reason that they each contribute something to understanding more about the party's development, ideological orientation and inner-contradictions. But the underlying assumption in all four approaches remains that the party will be, at best, a medium-term marginal party of protest and of economic and social transformation, and, as such, attempts at linking the PDS's existence to wider schools of thought have been limited. Chapter one therefore illustrates that a specifically regionalist approach is lacking. There has been remarkably little scholarly work dedicated to analysing the PDS's key political strength - the articulation of *territorially* specific interests - a failing that this work aims to overcome.

The second chapter further develops the theoretical basis of the thesis, as well as the analytical framework that is employed in chapters three, four and five. The PDS, like other regional parties of the democratic world, is at home in its own socio-cultural environment, articulating specifically regional interests within the political arena. This is in spite of strenuous efforts to broaden its electoral base nation-wide. It, therefore, seems strange that very little academic analysis has been conducted on the issue of the PDS as a regional party - comparable and consistent though it appears with other regional movements[10]. The second chapter opens by discussing the nature of political regionalism, before discussing how parties which represent territorial specificity fit into the body of academic research on party system development and party system change. This reveals how the existing framework for analysis does not unpack regional party success effectively. This has traditionally been on account of their heterogeneous nature, their wide-ranging aims and demands, their varying strengths and the inherent difficulties of classification that analysing them poses.

Section 2.3. therefore illustrates that a systematic attempt to classify the foundations of regional party success is presently lacking. Section 2.4. introduces an analytical tool that enables the political scientist to unwrap the complex nature of regional party success – a typology of regional parties. The first part of the typology broadly outlines the Structural and Causal Factors inherent in Regionalism. Not only does this enable the existence of an eastern

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[10] The only study that has attempted to place the PDS in a cross-national, regional perspective is that conducted by David Patton, and he limits himself to a comparison with the *Lega Nord*, the SNP in Scotland and the Reform Party in Canada. While enlightening, Patton's article only touches the surface of successful territorial mobilisation, and leaves scope for a broader analysis on the, as he concludes, similarities in political manner

German *Trotzidentität* (identity of defiance) to be analysed in chapter three, it also provides an analytical tool for discussing a supplementary hypothesis of this thesis:

> *The political mobilisation of a territorial identification is the key variable underpinning the success of regional parties. The existence of a sense of regional identification alone will not guarantee the success of a regional party, but where regional parties are successful, strong and salient regional identifications are visible.*

The cultural and socio-economic variables posited in section 2.4. form the cornerstones of the development of regional identities: and without these, regional parties are not going to be able to succeed. The complex interaction of a regional identification[11] and other salient cleavages (class, economic difference, religion and so forth) dictate, in each individual case, exactly what constellation of political forces exists within that region. The second part of the section 2.4. then sets out three agency factors which are important in the mobilisation of regionalism by regional parties.

The typology outlined in chapter two is then applied to the only comparable political party within Germany - the Bavarian CSU. The example of Bavaria is discussed as it is a specifically German case of regional identity creation. The historical specificity of 'Bavarianism', coupled and re-enforced by salient feelings of regional identification based on unique social and cultural foundations, have ensured that Bavarians, like eastern Germans, possess strong feelings of territorial belonging. The example of Bavaria is used to illustrate, firstly, that a peripheral identity exists in another part of Germany and, secondly, that a political party (the CSU) successfully channels Bavarian feelings of 'differentness' into the regional and national political arenas.

Chapter three moves on to discuss a key part of the core hypothesis: that eastern Germany is a distinct and unique political and cultural regional space. Eastern Germany can be defined as a regional space as Easterners exhibit sustainable attitudinal and value

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between these parties. See David F. Patton: 'Germany's Party of Democratic Socialism in Comparative Perspective', in *East European Politics and Societies*, Volume 12 Number 3, Fall 1998, pp.500-526.

[11] It is worth clarifying here what is exactly meant by the term 'identity'. In the context of this work 'identity' is taken to mean the distinct norms, beliefs and values of an individual (or group) that can be regarded as a persisting entity. Further to this, and particularly within the context of larger communities, identity can also be understood as a set of behavioural or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognisable as a member of a certain group. For a broader discussion on the definitional problems that one is inevitably faced with when discussing the phenomena of social identity see David B. Knight: 'Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism', in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Volume 72 Number 4, 1982, pp.514-531; Ernest Gellner: *Culture, Identity and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Michael Keith and Steve Pile (eds.): *Place and the Politics of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1993).

difference when compared to western Germans, as civil society, the economy and political competition function in different ways[12]. The first part of the typology helps to reveal the processes of identity creation that have taken place in the eastern states, leading to the establishment of a *Trotzidentität* directed against the dominant western German culture, political discourse, institutional structures and economic norms. Collective feelings of uniqueness have therefore spawned solidarity amongst eastern Germans. The transformation process has lent itself to a re-identification of many eastern Germans with 'their' territorial space and a subsequent orientation towards regional feelings and sentiments. Both the legacy of combined experience within the GDR and the socialisation processes that this entailed, coupled with the unique and complex transformation processes that unification spawned, have enabled eastern Germans to collectively re-identify with one another (if not the state where they used to live) in a way that would have been unthinkable as the Berlin Wall came down. These complex developments have created territorial divide along the former East-West border that cross-cuts other more longstanding social cleavages in Germany. The typology highlights the clear differences that exist in the *Weltanschauungen* of eastern and western Germans - and the advantageous climate that had been created for a party mobilising specifically eastern German concerns within local, *Land* and national political arenas.

The second part of the typology is applied to the PDS in chapters four and five. The fourth chapter illustrates how the PDS has developed the capacity to mobilise Easternness, while the fifth chapter dissects the PDS's policy package in detail, illustrating how the PDS attempts to make policy for eastern Germany. These are powerful preconditions of the PDS's success in the eastern states, enabling it to be successful as a result of the East/West divide and the processes of identity creation that this has spawned.

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[12] For further discussion of the nature of civil society in the GDR/eastern Germany, see Jonathan Grix: *Civil Society in East Germany Pre and Post-1989* (Birmingham: Discussion Papers in German Studies, The University of Birmingham, Number 4, 1999).

<u>Thesis Outline</u>

Chapter One
Literature Review and Methodological
Considerations

Chapter Two
Developing an Analytical Approach suitable
for Discussing the PDS as a Regional Party

| Understanding Regional Parties and Regionalism | Structural and Causal Factors inherent in Regionalism | Agency Factors in the Mobilisation of Regionalism |

Chapter Three
Identity Creation in Germany:
Eastern Germany as a Regional Space

Chapter Four
The PDS as a Successful Regional Party I: The
Capacity of the PDS to Mobilise Easternness

Chapter Five
The PDS as a Successful Regional Party II: The PDS
making Policy for Eastern Germany

Conclusion

Chapter five turns to the policy approaches of the PDS, illustrating how its policy package and parliamentary work is based on issues and policies that are of particular salience in the eastern states: in other words, the PDS remains strong and vociferous on exactly the issues where eastern German self-perceptions and attitudes vary from their western German brethren.

The concluding chapter of this work pulls the strands of the argument together. It is argued that the nature of the eastern German regional space, characterised as it is by a separate identity based on differing cultural and value underpinnings, has stabilised as the transformation process has continued. The cross-cutting nature of the East/West cleavage ensures that a politically distinct environment will continue to offer a regional party the opportunity to mobilise regionally specific sentiment. The PDS, embedded as it is in the social and political structures of the eastern states, articulates territorial issues, interests and problems - justifying comparison with other such political parties. The thesis concludes by offering suggestions for further research arising out of the completion of this study.

Chapter One

1. The Place of the PDS within Academic Debate

1.1. Introductory Remarks

In order to set out the key ideas underlying this work, it is important that the proposed regional approach to the study of the PDS is placed within the context of other studies of the party. It is for this reason that this thesis commences with a review of the existing approaches employed in studying the PDS. This review illustrates the lack of serious debate on the subject of the PDS as a long-term (regional) phenomenon. It is only in very recent times, in particular following successful election results in 1998 (at the federal level in September 1998, but also in the state elections in Saxony Anhalt and Mecklenburg West Pomerania) and 1999 (at the European level as well as the state level again (in Brandenburg, Saxony, Thuringia and Berlin)) that the longer-term nature of the PDS's political appeal has been taken seriously both by the media and the political classes.

In spite of the prominent belief that the PDS remain(s)(ed) a transitory phenomenon, detailed and sophisticated studies of the party's history, ideological orientation, electoral base and position within the political system have all contributed to what is now a broad base of work on the party[13]. Rarely, however, have authors gone further than claiming that the party has the potential to be at best a medium-term phenomenon, prospering as the transformation of eastern Germany continues. The literature review in this chapter illustrates that adopting a regional approach fills a gap within the academic debate and throws further light on both the reasons behind the party's successes to date, as well the very nature of territorial mobilisation within the FRG. It will also highlight that authors have persistently neglected the importance of territory, and the societal cleavage that exists between the old and new federal states, in analysing the reasons for the PDS's longevity. This work attempts to rectify these deficits.

1.2. Approaches to the study of the PDS

This chapter concentrates on the four main approaches that are adopted in studies of

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[13] The most balanced and thorough account of the PDS's development remains, however, that by Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss. See Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss: *Die PDS: Geschichte, Organization, Wähler, Konkurrenten* (Opladen: Leske and Budrich, 1996).

the PDS. It is the contention of this work that while all of the discussed approaches *do* contribute valid and important ideas to understanding the development of the PDS, they do not adequately illustrate the uniquely *territorial* position of the PDS within the eastern German political landscape. All of the approaches, to greater or lesser extents, neglect the process of regional identity creation that has ensued *eastern Germany-wide* post-1989. The establishment of a cross-cutting East/West societal cleavage and the effects of societal transformation are best highlighted by using a regionalist approach. Consequently, there remains remarkably little academic work dedicated to analysing the party within the framework of other parties which articulate sentiment based on a territorial divide (i.e. other regional parties).

None the less, for a party that registers a minimal percentage of the vote nationwide (even if it achieves around 18-25 per cent in eastern Germany), there has been a surprisingly *large* amount of literature published on the PDS. The focus of this literature review is, therefore, to identify and summarise four broad, frequently interlinked, approaches that authors have chosen to adopt when analysing the PDS. Section 1.3. proceeds to highlight both their strengths and weaknesses before offering conclusions on their validity and their applicability to this study.

The four approaches to be discussed are as follows:

- The protest party approach
- The Socialist reform party approach
- The anti-system extremist party approach
- The milieu party approach

Each of the four approaches is generally employed within the framework of two main schools of thought on the PDS and its role in Germany today. As has already been touched upon, the first sees the PDS as a dysfunctional, disruptive element within the German political system, often bordering on the extremist fringe, contributing to a destabilising of political life[14], while the second sees the PDS more as a stabilising, reforming, corrective influence stressing its integrative and representative functions.

It must, however, be emphasised that each approach is not taken to be individual and distinct, and significant degrees of overlap and co-ordination are evident in all the literature

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[14] Lothar Probst: *Die PDS - von der Staats- zur Regierungspartei: Eine Studie aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern* (Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovac, 2000).

on the PDS. But some approaches clearly do still have more salience than others, hence after briefly discussing the fundaments of each approach, conclusions will be drawn as to their strengths and weaknesses before the interlinked strands of the different approaches are pulled together and the author's own approach to the study of the PDS is elaborated upon.

1.2.1. The Protest Party Approach

In the eastern German case, protest voting can be defined as the action of voting for a party with the aim of articulating disruptive, non-institutionalised feelings of disenchantment, brought on by conceptions of subjective or material dissatisfaction with one or all of the social, economic and political changes invoked since the collapse of the GDR. It does not have to be based on material disadvantage, although, of course, in certain circumstances this may play a major role[15]. Almost every analysis of the PDS incorporates, in some shape or form, the concept of the PDS as a protest party. A considerable amount of academic research that was conducted in the mid-1990s invoked this approach and viewed the party as a representative of diffuse and uncoordinated protest movements[16]. A complex mixture of economic, political and socio-psychological dissatisfaction was perceived to be the basis of a vote for the PDS, and it was subsequently believed that as the eastern *Länder* became further integrated into German society, and as, in particular, the economic environment in the new *Länder* improved, then the reasons for protest voting would subside. This analysis has clearly proved to be somewhat off the mark.

But the fact is not disputed that the PDS has represented a *"reservoir for protest voters"*[17] and throughout the 1990s the PDS proved itself to be the principal vehicle through which dissatisfaction with socio-economic and political change in eastern Germany was articulated. This form of protest voting is based on the *subjective, psychological* dissatisfaction of Easterners with the social, economic and political realities of contemporary German life. A number of authors have, however, stressed the *material* differences between eastern and western Germans, and they have tried to ground the PDS's political stabilisation

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[15] The majority of Eastern Germans are clearly financially better off now than they were in the GDR. Even those who are unemployed can have incomes and material possessions that far outstrip those they earned in East Germany. Eastern Germans are also substantially better off than other citizens of former state socialist countries - mainly on account of the financial support that they have received from western Germany. It is only, importantly, in direct comparison with western Germans that eastern Germans see themselves as materially disadvantaged - and this is the key relationship that proponents of the 'materially disadvantaged' (see 1.2.1.1.) approach are referring to.

[16] Gero Neugebauer: '1994 im Aufschwung Ost: Die PDS. Eine Bilanz', in *Gegenwartskunde*, Volume 43 Number 4, 1994, pp.431-444.

[17] Hans-Georg Betz and Helga A. Welsh: 'The PDS in the New German Party System', in *German Politics*,

in the successful articulation of eastern German material disadvantage. These two sub-approaches have differing levels of validity, as the analysis below reveals.

1.2.1.1. Material Protest

Throughout the early 1990s material protest, based on the weaker economic position of the eastern states and the weaker financial position of Easterners in general, was believed to be a key variable in explaining PDS support in eastern Germany. At the 1999 state election in Saxony, for example, voters for the PDS viewed both their own personal economic situation and the general economic environment as worse than supporters of the SPD or CDU did[18].

Many eastern Germans, on a broader and more expansive scale than solely the former functionaries of the SED regime, believed that post-1989 they were going to have the opportunity to take part in the economic success story that they (largely correctly) perceived West Germany to be. But as the economic and social difficulties of the transformation from a command to a capitalist economy endured, many grew disillusioned with the inability of the eastern economy to 'catch-up' with that in the West. Unemployment rose, job insecurity increased, the state no longer appeared able or willing to support the poor and weak in society and general disenchantment with the inequalities and contradictions of the social market economy increased (see section 3.2.2. for further analysis of this). Easterners became more and more aware of their disadvantageous economic position vis-à-vis Westerners and sought to express this through the ballot box by supporting the non-establishment, left-wing PDS[19].

Persuasive though this argument may appear at first it does not, however, correspond to the reality of the PDS's support base in the eastern states. The socio-economic profile of both the PDS's membership and its broader electorate *are not* characterised by particular economic hardship (see tables 1 and 2).

Volume 4 Number 3, December 1995, p.98.

[18] See Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: *Wahl in Sachsen: Eine Analyse der Landtagswahl vom 19. September 1999* (Mannheim: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, 1999), p.55.

[19] See for example Rainer-Olaf Schultze: 'Wiedersprüchliches, Ungliechzeitiges und kein Ende in Sicht: Die *Bundestags*wahl vom 16. Oktober 1994', in *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*, Volume 26 Number 2, May 1995, p.344.

Table 1[20]
The Results of the 1998 Federal Election per Age Category in Western and Eastern Germany (in per cent)

	CDU/CSU		SPD		Alliance 90/Greens		FDP		PDS		DVU/ NPD/REP	
	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E
18-24	31	21	37	28	12	6	7	6	2	22	6	13
25-34	29	21	45	33	11	6	6	3	2	22	4	9
35-44	31	24	45	33	12	5	6	3	1	22	3	8
45-59	36	28	44	37	6	4	9	3	1	23	3	2
60+	47	34	39	38	3	2	7	3	1	19	2	2
Total	37	27.4	42.3	35.1	7.3	4.1	7	3.3	1.2	21.6	2.9	5

Within the party membership, where many former SED functionaries are still active, a mere 12 per cent of members of the PDS are either *Vorruheständler* or unemployed (and so theoretically most likely to suffer material disadvantage)[21]. At the 1994 election Jürgen W. Falter and Markus Klein described the areas of high unemployment in eastern Germany as the PDS "*Wahltiefburgen*" (electoral wastelands)[22] and the over-representation of civil servants and white collar workers as disapproving the theory that the PDS is singularly a party of those materially disadvantaged[23]. Patrick Moreau and Jürgen P. Lang contend that "*PDS support is characterised by dissatisfaction and pessimism, yet its supporters personal situations do not appear to be that bad*"[24] – further dispelling the idea that economic deprivation is a motor of PDS support.

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[20] See Infratest Dimap: *Wahlreport: Wahl zum 14. Deutschen Bundestag 27. September 1998* (Berlin: Infratest Dimap, 1998).
[21] Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss (1996): op. cit. p.151. It is also misleading to contend that a majority of eastern Germans view themselves as unification losers - as in 1998, 67 per cent of Easterners regarded themselves as being the exact opposite - the *winners* from the unification process. Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.53.
[22] Jürgen W. Falter and Markus Klein: 'Die Wähler der PDS bei der Bundestagswahl 1994. Zwischen Ideologie, Nostalgie und Protest', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 51-52/94, p.24.
[23] Markus Klein and Claudio Caballero: 'Rückwärts in die Zukunft. Die Wähler der PDS bei der *Bundestags*wahl 1994', in *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, Volume 37 Number 2, June 1996, pp.229-247.
[24] Patrick Moreau and Jürgen P. Lang: 'Aufbruch zu neuen Ufern?', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B6/96, 1996b, p.55.

Table 2[25]
The Results of the 1998 Election According to Education and Occupation

	CDU/CSU		SPD		Alliance 90/Greens		FDP		PDS	
	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E
Education:										
High	33	23	35	33	16	8	10	4	2	29
Middle	37	26	42	34	6	3	7	3	1	20
Low	39	34	48	38	3	2	4	3	1	17
Occupation:										
Worker	30	24	53	36	4	2	4	3	1	19
White Collar Workers	31	25	46	35	10	6	7	3	1	25
Civil Servants	35	26	37	32	14	7	8	3	1	25
Self-Employed	45	38	23	21	10	4	16	12	2	18
Out of Work	23	19	49	37	11	4	6	2	2	25
Pensioners	46	34	41	39	2	2	7	3	1	19
In Education	28	21	36	29	17	11	7	6	4	22

Statistics referring to the 1998 election expressly illustrate the heterogeneous nature of the PDS electorate. The young and the old, men and women, well educated and those with no or few qualifications all vote for the PDS in relatively large and consistent numbers[26]. It is especially noteworthy that voters from all age-categories supported the PDS. This is in contrast to the membership structure of the party, which is dominated by people over 60 years of age (see also section 4.3.)[27].

The majority position within the PDS literature no longer stresses a 'materially based

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[25] Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.57.

[26] Even in Berlin, where the PDS's considerable electoral successes are generally attributed to the high proportion of former SED nomenclature resident in the eastern districts of the city, it is clear that the PDS's base of support is heterogeneous. For example, 18 per cent of 18-24 year olds in eastern Berlin voted for the PDS in the 1999 state elections, just as did 18 per cent of the 45-59 year old category. 19 per cent of PDS supporters were in full-time employment, while only 16 per cent were pensioners and 17 per cent were still in some form of education. See Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e.V.: *Wahl in Berlin: Eine Analyse der Wahl zum Abgeordnetenhaus vom 10. Oktober 1999* (Mannheim: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Bericht 100, 1999), p.28 & p.35.

[27] See Oscar W. Gabriel and Oskar Niedermayer: 'Entwicklung und Sozialstruktur der Parteimitgliedschaften', in Oscar W. Gabriel, Oskar Niedermayer and Richard Stöss (Hrsg.): *Parteiendemokratie in Deutschland* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), p. 294. 67 per cent of the PDS membership is over 60 years of age. See Peter Christian Segall et al: *Die PDS im Wahljahr 1999: 'Politik von links, von unten und von Osten'* (München: Akademie für Politik und Zeitgeschehen, Hanns Seidel Stiftung e. V, 1999), p.122.

protest' explanation of PDS success. Section 1.2.1.2. illustrates how proponents of the protest hypothesis have moved to describe the PDS's electoral success as being based upon a subjective, rather than objective, deprivation at the hands of the 'New' Republic.

1.2.1.2. Socio-Psychological Protest

When discussing the importance of socio-psychological protest in explaining PDS success in eastern Germany it is important to differentiate between the motives of the *membership* of the party and those of the PDS's *broader electoral base*. This is as these two groups support the party for very different reasons. Wilfred Barthel et al have, in their comprehensive survey of the values, opinions and motivations of the PDS membership, firmly concluded that *"unification losers have congregated in large masses in the PDS"*[28]. Many PDS members worked for long periods of their life in the (ultimately) vain attempt at making the GDR into a successful political, economic and social project. Members of the *Aufbaugeneration* genuinely believed that the GDR was the first attempt to create a socially just, socialist state on German soil. Its failure represents the failure of their hopes and ambitions.

Slightly younger former SED functionaries who remain in the PDS are now deprived of the power and prestige that they were once accorded in the GDR. Although they remain materially better off than they were pre-1989, it is the loss of status that causes feelings of disenchantment with the FRG. They owed their career development to the GDR system, and with its abolition went the legitimisation for their chosen career path. It is for these reasons that both of these segments from within the PDS membership can be termed socio-psychological protesters.

Viola Neu, talking of the PDS's base of support in the wider electorate, asserts that *"the PDS electorate is largely made up of the 'losers' from 1989"*[29]. This observation is more questionable than the conclusions that Barthel et al came to about the motives behind the membership's support of the party. And not only because Neu does not attempt to define exactly what she means by the term 'unification losers' (see below). Tables 1 and 2 (above) illustrate that the PDS's base in the broader electorate is much broader and heterogeneous than that of its membership (see section 4.3. for an analysis of the PDS's membership

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[28] Wilfred Barthel et al: 'Forschungsbericht Strukturen, politische Aktivitäten und Motivationen in der PDS - Mitgliederbefragung der PDS 1991' (Berlin: Trafo-Verlag, 1995), p.9.
[29] Viola Neu: 'Das Wählerpotential der PDS Ende 1993' (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1994).

profile)[30]. This paradox is indeed not lost on PDS party elites, who have to tread a careful line between the wants and desires of an ageing membership and those of a much more heterogeneous electorate. An element of protest certainly encourages Easterners to support the PDS as it represents their feelings of dissatisfaction with the present day German economy, society and political system. But, as this thesis aims to illustrate, viewing this purely as diffuse protest misses the point that such sentiment is territorial in nature.

Proponents of the protest party approach still perceive the PDS electorate principally in terms of 'unification losers' – whether this be in the material sense (i.e. Easterners remain poorer than Westerners, even if they are richer than they were in 1989 – see section 1.2.1.1.) or in the socio-psychological one. Generally, as was mentioned above, they are seen as those eastern Germans who have seen the power and the prestige that they had attained within the GDR taken away from them. As such the concept frequently boils down to expressions of subjective feelings and emotions. These 'unification losers' are not normally beset by particular forms of economic hardship, but rather by a psychological unwillingness to accept the FRG as home.

Socio-psychological protest is something that has, however, also been evident in the sectors of the electorate who had most *to gain* from unification. Easterners remain critical of the way that the GDR (and their lives and achievements within the GDR) is handled in popular discourse. They also remain highly critical of politicians who make promises that they appear unable to keep. Broad-based feelings of second class citizenship exist across all of the eastern states as Westerners continue to dominate politics and economics in the united Germany. *"Perceptions of collective inferiority"* argue Beverly Crawford and Arendt Lijphart *"have created a culture of victimisation and political helplessness"*[31] in eastern Germany, enabling, they argue, the PDS to develop a role for itself as an agent within the party system that can incorporate the disparate feelings of discontentment of eastern Germans into one coherent voice. This dissatisfaction often has strongly anti-capitalist leanings (see section 1.2.2.), and the bedrock of the eastern German *Trotzidentität*[32] is the demarcation that Easterners make between themselves and Westerners.

Although many commentators still view the socio-psychological protest approach as

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[30] For a particularly lucid account of the political beliefs of the PDS membership see Lothar Probst: *Die PDS in Rostock: Eine Lokalstudie über die Anatomie einer postkommunistischen Partei*, in Peter Barker (ed.): *German Monitor - The Party of Democratic Socialism. Modern Post-Communism or Nostalgic Populism?* (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V, Volume 42, 1998), pp.54-77; or Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit.

[31] Beverly Crawford and Arendt Lijphart: 'Old Legacies, New Institutions, Hegemonic Norms and International Pressures', in *Comparative Political Studies*, Special Issue, July 1995, p.180.

[32] The issue of an eastern German identity has prompted considerable academic discussion, and it is something that is of great importance to the PDS. For a closer examination of the fundamentals of this see chapter three of

the key variable in the electoral longevity of the PDS, it is not possible to view the PDS as a party of *pure* protest. *"The widely stated clichés stressing that PDS voters are nostalgic SED beneficiaries, pure protest voters or opponents of German unity are only valid for a minority"*[33] and even though the PDS has, at times blatantly, adopted this approach during election campaigns[34], the reasons for the party's continued survival are more complex than this approach alone can highlight. Within its electorate 'unification losers', in the form of those who have suffered losses of pride and privilege stemming from their lives in the GDR, clearly do not dominate[35].

Although the PDS fared disproportionately well amongst people with an advanced formal education (29 per cent of graduates in the eastern states in this category voted for the party in 1998), it was also able to poll strongly in the less well-educated sectors of the electorate[36]. Pensioners remain slightly (19 per cent) *underrepresented* in the PDS supporter profile, as do the self-employed (18 per cent - although this remains considerable higher than a left-wing, socialist party would normally expect), while workers (25 per cent), civil servants (25 per cent) and white collar workers (25 per cent) are all over-represented. In comparison to other parties (see table 2) the PDS electorate remains heterogeneous and representative of eastern German society as a whole[37].

Furthermore, feelings of dissatisfaction and discontentment with the political process are *not* just limited to PDS (and/or DVU) voters, as broad swathes of eastern German voters who choose to support the CDU and/or SPD also remain unhappy with the political and economic situation in the eastern states[38]. Neugebauer and Stöss highlight the need to view a vote for the PDS as being something between a reaction to the ideological rhetoric of the

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this work.

[33] *Der Spiegel*: 6 November 1995, p.42.

[34] During the 1994 *Bundestag* election campaign, for example, the PDS openly campaigned on the slogan "Election Day is Protest Day". See Wayne C. Thompson: 'The Party of Democratic Socialism in the New Germany', in *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Volume 29 Number 4, 1996, p.439.

[35] Joyce Marie Mushaben: 'Auferstanden aus Ruinen: Social Capital and Democratic Identity in the New Länder', in *German Politics and Society*, Volume 15 Number 4, Winter 1997, p.94.

[36] More precisely (and only in eastern Germany), 16.6 per cent of Easterners without any qualifications voted for the PDS, while 19.9 per cent of those with *Mittlere Reife/Realschule* qualifications, 26.5 per cent of those with A Levels (*Abitur*) and 28.7 per cent of Easterners with university degrees did so. See Infratest Dimap: 'Wahlverhalten' in Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.5.

[37] Of particular note are the comparisons in the CDU electorate between the number of self-employed who support the party (38 per cent in eastern Germany) and the number of unemployed (19 per cent in eastern Germany). The number of those still in education (21 per cent in the eastern states) who voted for the CDU is also (from the point of view of the CDU) worryingly low. Despite its convincing victory in 1998, the SPD also displays considerable differences in sectoral support. This is shown in that only 21 per cent of civil servants supported the SPD in eastern Germany, while 39 per cent of pensioners did. Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.57.

[38] See Marc Howard: 'Die Ostdeutschen als ethnische Gruppe? Zum Verständnis der neuen Teilung des geeinten Deutschlands', in *Berliner Debatte INITIAL*, Heft 4/5, 1995a, pp.119-131.

GDR and a mark of protest against the transformation from a socialist to a capitalist society[39].

Yet protest voters are generally viewed in the political science world as volatile swing voters. Hence 'protest parties' are by their nature seen as transient phenomenon that citizens only turn to in extraordinary conditions of political, economic or social dissatisfaction[40]. In the case of the PDS one can see that evidence assembled since 1990 reveals PDS party alignment to be strong and sustained. In fact, the PDS has the most loyal supporters of any party in eastern Germany - a trait that would not normally be associated with protest parties[41]. Indeed, although the PDS played on its reputation as a protest party in the early and mid 1990s in particular, it is now clear that if Easterners wish to protest at the political level, then they tend to the parties of the far-right - principally the German Peoples Union (DVU). The DVU even usurped one of the PDS's 1994 election slogans by claiming in the 1998 campaign that if Easterners wanted to *Protest wählen* ('protest with your vote'), then it should be the DVU that they vote for. This is exactly what the PDS had claimed for itself in 1994. Hence although the PDS profits from feelings of general dissatisfaction in the eastern states, characterising the PDS as a 'protest party' is misguided[42].

The PDS is regarded by many Easterners as an aspect of normality, rather than as a protest phenomenon, as it articulates eastern German interests within regional and national political arenas. 67 per cent of Easterners (but only 36 per cent of Westerners) view the party as being 'democratic', while three-quarters do not object to the party being represented in the *Bundestag*[43]. It is therefore more constructive to investigate the protest potential that the PDS mobilises in terms of the articulation of regional distinctiveness. It is here that analysis of the PDS as a protest party needs to factor in the territorial element of this 'protest', as 'protesters' view themselves as part of a social and cultural grouping that exists within the eastern states (see section 1.2.4.).

The protest party approach is not therefore sufficient in explaining the successful mobilisation of votes by the PDS in eastern Germany *over a sustained period of time*. This

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[39] Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss (1996): op. cit. p.162.

[40] The success of the right-wing DVU in the Saxony Anhalt state election of 26 April 1998, when the party polled 12.9 per cent of the vote, despite having almost no party basis in the Land, would be a more typical example of a protest party attracting the votes of the socially dissatisfied, electorally volatile sections of the populace. In the 1998 Federal Election, just 5 months after the DVU's triumph in Saxony Anhalt, the party did not manage to jump the 5 per cent hurdle in any state, and in the 1999 elections in the eastern states (in Brandenburg, Saxony, Thuringia and Berlin), the DVU was only able to enter one eastern parliament (Brandenburg).

[41] Jürgen W Falter and Markus Klein (1994): op. cit. p.24. Hans-Georg Betz and Helga A. Welsh (1995): op. cit. p.92.

[42] Eva Sturm: *'Und der Zukunft zugewandt'? Eine Untersuchung zur Politikfähigkeit der PDS* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000), p.315.

[43] Hans-Joachim Veen et. al.: *Analyse der Bundestagswahl vom 27. September 1998* (Sankt Augustin: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1998), p.43.

approach remains short-term in nature, and, even at its most far-sighted, implies that when Easterners become 'satisfied' with their economic and social positions within the FRG, the PDS will inevitably disappear from the party political landscape. Yet there is little evidence to suggest that the eastern states are likely to economically catch-up with the western states in the foreseeable future – and if at some point genuine equality *is* achieved, then the PDS may still have entrenched its position as an eastern German regional party to such an extent that it can outlive the dissipation of one the key structural variables (economic inequality) that shaped the cleavage divide between the eastern and western states of which it is a product. Furthermore, many young people support the PDS who never experienced the GDR (i.e. the those in the 18 – 24 age group, see table 1) – a phenomenon that the protest party approach is unable to adequately explain away. This approach neglects the attractiveness of the PDS to people across all social strata within eastern Germany. It also neglects the fact that the party's support has grown to be both loyal and reasonably well distributed. This is not a characteristic of a party that is built on short-term protest, dissatisfaction and disillusionment. It is for this reason that the base of the party's support has to be conceptualised as being more loyal than that of a mere transitory 'protest' phenomenon.

1.2.2. The PDS as a Modern, Socialist Reform Party

This approach is only adopted by a minority of authors. Furthermore, many of the proponents of this approach often appear to hold principles which the party itself espouses. The PDS is viewed as a renewed, democratic-socialist party that has grown out of the reforming wing of the SED. Rather than treat the party as a transitory 'protest' phenomenon the emphasis shifts to the important long-term role that the PDS could/should play as the heir to the long established Marxist-communist tradition in Germany.

This is in stark contrast to the hostile responses that the party generates across the majority spectrum of academic literature (see in particular section 1.2.3.), as well as in the journalism covering the party's activities. Commentators adopting this approach are often not afraid of calling for a structural realignment of the left, very possibly involving the eventual dissolution of the PDS as it is today[44], in favour of some other future constellation of left-

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[44] Frank Unger has called for the dissolution of both the SPD in eastern Germany as well as the PDS, in order to form a new political organisation that he proposes to call the Social Democratic Union (SDU). Those in the PDS who understood themselves as Communists would form a newer version of the KPD, while those on the right of the eastern SPD would (if they wished) form another centre party, or they would join the Alliance 90/Greens. The SDU would, he proposes, be a broad, eastern Germany *Volkspartei*, with its own *Fraktion* status within the *Bundestag*. This would enable socialism in Germany to be represented in a coherent and flexible manner. The

wing political groupings. It is against the background of a social democratic[45], possibly supplemented by an eco-liberal party, that the PDS would contribute to the *"ideological rearmament"* of the German Left[46].

Fritz Vilmar encapsulates much of the analysis covered by proponents of this approach when he notes:

> as an eastern German regional party ... the PDS will stagnate in the respectable, but futureless '20 per cent ghetto', ultimately remaining around the 5 per cent mark in all of Germany.

Vilmar contends that the shift rightwards of the SPD, as it distances itself from anti-capitalism and Keynesian economics has generated sufficient space on the left of the political spectrum for a socialist/anti-capitalist all-German party to establish itself and as such *"the PDS has the chance to occupy the vacated position ... (to the left of the SPD) ... within the all-German political spectrum"*[47]. For its part, the party openly tries to cast itself as a democratic, reforming, socialist party[48] and it is clear that the overwhelming majority of PDS members, supplemented by a considerable portion of its electorate, remain committed to the ideal of a society beyond capitalism[49], in a way that members of the SPD and the Greens do not.

SDU would enjoy a similar arrangement with the SPD that the CDU currently does with the CSU. See Frank Unger: 'Adieu PDS? Plädoyer für eine neue Parteienlandschaft der Linken in der Berliner Republik', in Heinz Beinert (ed.): *Die PDS - Phönix oder Asche?* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1995), pp.81-88.

[45] The more conservative elements within the PDS membership frequently warn against a 'social-democratisation' of the party. They point out that there is no place in the German party system for a second version of the SPD. While agreeing with these claims, the leadership of the PDS tends to claim that the SPD is moving so far to the right on issues such as the funding of the welfare state, social justice, peace and economic strategy that the SPD is leaving a void to its left that the PDS has to fill. This means a broadening of the PDS's electoral base - and an acceptance of what many would contend were traditional socialist/social democratic positions. This is certainly the position of a number of members on the right of the PDS, who see a role for the PDS as a broader based left-wing party. An example of a broadening of the PDS's profile rightwards came in 1999 when Uwe Kitsch, a former SPD MP in Bavaria, publicly renounced his SPD membership and joined the PDS.

A number of former *Staatsparteien* across central and eastern Europe have chosen to change their ideological orientation and have become social democratic parties. This was made much easier in every other case than it was in eastern Germany, as a new party system was forming following the collapse of state socialism. The PDS never had this option (which is not to say that it would have taken it anyway), as the West German party system quickly expanded Eastwards.

[46] Günter Minnerup: 'The PDS and the Strategic Dilemmas of the German Left', in *German Monitor*, Peter Barker (ed.) (1998): op. cit. p.214.

[47] Fritz Vilmar: in *Neues Deutschland*, 16/17 January 1999, p.1.

[48] Following the elections to the European Parliament in 1999, Dietmar Bartsch felt confident enough to proclaim that the PDS is a *sozialistische Volkspartei* (socialist peoples party) in the eastern states. This gives recognition both to the PDS's strength in all sectors of the eastern German electorate and its ideological underpinnings as party that is in opposition to the capitalist structures of German society. See 'Wahlen entscheidend für die Zukunft der PDS', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 15 July 1998, p.1.

[49] Lothar Bisky, the long-time *Vorsitzender* of the PDS, has defined that PDS as an *"out and out anti-capitalist party"*, stressing the PDS's willingness to fundamentally change the economic structures of German society. See 'Bisky kandidiert nicht noch einmal für den PDS-Vorsitz: Auf der Suche nach einer Alternative zum 'angelsächsischen Kapitalismus'', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8 April 2000, p.2.

This having been said, the party programme of 1993 speaks rather circumspectly of socialism as an *"indispensable goal, a movement and a system of values"* and a *"society in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all"*[50]. In practice the programmatic orientation of the PDS remains vague and ill-defined as an array of factions and undercurrents battle for the heart and soul of the party. As Neugebauer and Stöss observe, *"revolutionaries stand in opposition to reformers, libertarians to dogmatists, fundamentalists to pragmatists and progressive forces against those with more conservative values"*[51] and the diffuse number of ideological beliefs held ensure any characterisation of the party is limited to that of a 'socialist' broad church of leftward opinion[52].

Studies that analyse the PDS through the prism of socialist politics highlight much of the ideological heterogeneity evident within the party. By attempting to de-construct what the PDS means by socialism proponents of this approach highlight the broad base of ideological diversity that stretches between the reforming, pragmatic leadership around Gregor Gysi, André Brie and Lothar Bisky to unreconstructed Communists such as Sarah Wagenknecht, Ellen Brombacher and Michael Benjamin in the Communist Platform and/or Marxist Forum. Such proponents analyse, from an altogether more supportive position that those adopted by advocates of the anti-system approach such as Patrick Moreau, what the PDS understands by the term socialism, what it has learnt from the socialism in the GDR and what it must do if it is to create a coherent alternative to the capitalism it claims to despise[53]. This is especially important for the future of the PDS project as despite the fact that the PDS has condemned Stalinism, it has yet to produce a coherent and systematic analysis of its own communist past. Only by successfully accomplishing this can the party define and construct a definition of its current ideological identity.

It does, however, remain clear that an *expressly socialist party* has logically only a limited function acting as a representative of regional interests. Proponents of this approach

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[50] PDS: *Programme of the Party of Democratic Socialism* (Berlin: PDS, 1993), p.11.

[51] Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss (1996), op. cit. p.114.

[52] The PDS openly describes itself as an *"alliance of left-wing forces"*, stressing that its commitment to democratic socialism is not *"tied to any defined philosophical outlook, ideology or religion"*. See PDS (1993): op. cit. p.31.

[53] See for example Michael Benjamin: 'DDR-Identität und PDS', in Lothar Bisky, Jochen Czerny et al (eds.), *Die PDS - Herkunft und Selbstverständnis* (Berlin: Dietz, 1996), pp.231-236. The 'mainstream' elements of the PDS remain highly critical of the state-socialism that existed across central and eastern Europe pre-1989. This can be seen by the large amount of literature available on PDS websites on *Geschichtsaufarbeitung* (http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte) and in more formal documents such as the Party Programme. In the 1993 Party Programme, for instance, the PDS observes that *"many questions concerning our own history remain unanswered ... (and) ... the mistakes, shortcomings and crimes committed in the name of socialism have dismayed us and roused us to deep reassessments, so that we are critically examining our moral and political tradition in full consciousness of our own responsibility for the distortion of the socialist idea"*. PDS (1993): op. cit. pp.3-4.

seem to avoid facing the reality of political competition in Germany today: the PDS is not a socialist party that is particularly strong in one region of the country: on the contrary, it is a regional party that is built on socialist principles. The PDS has concentrated considerable efforts on expanding westwards - but with marginal success. Even in the districts where the party has registered its best share of the vote in the West[54], there has been an over-representation of people with a university or *Hauptschule* diploma and a low percentage of *Realschule* graduates or, alternatively, a very high percentage of unemployment[55]. It is, therefore, clear that the tendency towards PDS support has tended to be highest in areas populated by the 'intellectual' left, rather than the 'working class' left.

Falter and Klein elaborate further, and define three characteristics of PDS support in *both* East and West. High population density, relatively high percentage of the population at work in the service sector and a relatively high unemployment rate[56]. André Brie, on the other hand, has emphasised how the same societal problems, albeit to different extents and in a different economic and societal basis, exist in both the West and East of the country, hence the need for an all German socialist party is a real one[57]. Proponents of this approach stress the need for a distinctive contribution from the PDS as a party to the left of the SPD and the Greens. Only then can the PDS influence societal change as a socialist party exerting pressure on its social democratic brother[58].

This approach is strong in highlighting the ideological direction of the PDS. It is clearly a party that seeks a society beyond capitalism, and although it is vague on what this society would look like, it is clear that it would be based on nominally socialist values and structures. This approach also throws light on the complex internal ideological discussions within the party as well as on the slow and incremental process of programmatic development that the PDS has undertaken. This approach highlights that 'socialism' remains the common denominator that holds the *membership* of the party together. This is in spite of the different

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[54] In the second ballot in 1998 Federal Election, the PDS received its highest share of the vote in the western *Länder* in Berlin/Kreuzberg/Schöneberg (4.4 per cent). It also registered between 3.5 per cent and 3 per cent in Bremen West, Hamburg Mitte, Berlin Neukölln and Berlin Tiergarten. See Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.83.

[55] Gerald R. Kleinfeld: 'The Return of the PDS', in David Conradt, Gerald R. Kleinfeld, George K. Romuser and Christian Søe: *Germany's New Politics* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995), pp.221-254.

[56] Jürgen W. Falter and Markus Klein (1994): op. cit. p.24.

[57] André Brie: *Wählerpotential der PDS: Erkenntnisse, Tendenzen und Möglichkeiten* (Berlin: PDS-Grundsatzkommission, 1996), p.16.

[58] Left-wing commentators have argued that this must be a long term aim of the PDS, and only over the course of a number of years will the PDS see any real policy change as a result of adopting this approach. The publication of the *Erfurter Erklärung* (Erfurt Declaration) is the only hard and fast document proclaiming such a left-wing strategy as being advisable, and although it has been signed by trade unionists, church representatives, intellectuals and politicians, only one position holding Social Democrat (Richard Dewes from Thuringia) was among them. The declaration itself lamented the state of the German nation and, even though it was critical of much of the opposition parties policies and strategies, called for a change in the Kohl (as it was then)

understandings that reformers and conservatives, traditionalists and pragmatists understand by the concept. This approach is, therefore, particularly effective at illustrating why the development of socialist thought within the party can only be completed at a pedestrian speed on account of the diverging ideological beliefs that exist within the membership.

In spite of these strengths, this approach has one major shortfall: it is conspicuously unable to explain why the PDS has been so ineffective at expanding westwards. Although its proponents do stress what the PDS *should* be, their analysis still bears remarkably little resemblance to the reality of the PDS's present-day political position. A German socialist party would have to find much more resonance in the western populace to be able to make this claim seriously. The PDS has been unable to take advantage of the SPD's move rightwards and remains a party with few members and few voters in western Germany. This is best illustrated by a few simple facts: in 1994 the PDS had 975 *Basisorganisationen* (grass-roots groups) in Saxony Anhalt, 841 in Thuringia, 930 in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 1,619 in Saxony, 1,188 in Brandenburg and 953 in Berlin. In the western states the PDS had a combined total of 124 *Kreisverbände* and grass-roots groups across all ten states[59]. Judging by these statistics the PDS had an almost identical number of organisational units in the Mecklenburg city of Rostock as it did in all of western Germany[60].

The socialist party approach is unable to explain why so many Easterners and so few Westerners support the party - and although discrepancies in voter support are evident for every political party, the extreme nature of the PDS's failure in the West indicates that voters in the East are likely to support the party for other reasons than a particular affinity to socialism (even if socialism remains a political ideology that is more widely supported in the eastern states). Hence this approach is severely limited by its unwillingness to accept the reality of the contemporary party political landscape in Germany today.

1.2.3. The Anti-System, Extremist Party Approach

Through the early 1990s this approach came to predominate in discourse on the PDS. However, as time has passed it has gradually lost its dominant position, even if a number of authors still continue to talk of the PDS as a both extremist and anti-system. One of its main proponents has been Patrick Moreau who has produced a number of detailed studies on the

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government.
[59] Jürgen P. Lang, Patrick Moreau und Viola Neu: *Auferstanden aus Ruinen? Die PDS nach dem Superwahljahr 1994* (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1995), p.37.
[60] See Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit.

position of the PDS within the German political system[61]. He sees the PDS as a left-wing, anti-system, extremist party that both polarises and destabilises the German party system. Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse further claim that the PDS's subversive influence poses a real challenge for the democratic actors within German politics today[62], and the party has led to a *"blockierte Demokratie"* (blocked democracy) or to what has been called *"polarisierter Pluralismus"*[63] (polarised pluralism), in which the PDS threatens not only Germany's traditional coalition model of stable government, but also constitutional democracy as it has developed since 1945.

According to this approach the PDS is seen as having contributed to the 'polarisation' of the German party system as it is perceived as 'ideologising' political discourse and broadening the political spectrum to include 'left-wing extremists'. The social and economic transformation problems (see chapter three) in eastern Germany have also fuelled debate on the rise of extreme right-wing sentiment[64] leading to the possibility of the catch-all people's parties of the centre-left and centre right having to deal with parties on both their left (the PDS) and the right (in the form of the German Peoples Union (DVU), Republicans or National Democrats (NPD), depending on circumstance) that, according to this approach, reject the *"federal constitutional consensus"*[65].

The pragmatic left-wing nature of the PDS has led Jürgen P. Lang to refer to the PDS as an *"extremely opportunistic party"* whose parliamentary orientation and commitment to representative democracy are purely functional[66]. Attempts to sideline elements like the Communist Platform (KPF), the *AG Junge GenossInnen* (nominally the party's youth-wing) or the *Westlinken* (left-wing western Germans - whose discourse tends to be much more ideologically left-wing than that in the East) should be seen above all as tactical steps, rather than as genuine evidence of democratisation within the party, as the PDS seeks tactical ways

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[61] Patrick Moreau (1992): op. cit.; Patrick Moreau and Jürgen Lang (1996): op. cit.; Patrick Moreau (1996): op. cit. pp.54-61; Patrick Moreau (1998): op. cit.; Patrick Moreau, Marc Lazar and Gerhard Hirscher (eds.): *Der Kommunismus in Westeuropa. Niedergang oder Mutation?* (Landsberg am Lech: Günter Olzog Verlag, 1998).

[62] Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse: *Politischer Extremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Berlin: Prophyläen, 1993), p.41.

[63] Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten: 'Postkommunisten im Spagat: Zur Funktion der PDS im Parteiensystem', in *Deutschland Archiv*, Volume 30 Number 6, November/December 1997, p.873. See also Giovanni Sartori: *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis - Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

[64] The rise of what is known in the popular press as a 'right-wing' sub-culture, as well as the DVU's strong showing in the Saxony Anhalt *Landtag* election of 26 April 1998 and the *Landtag* election of the 5 September in Brandenburg, highlight the existence of a superficially 'right-wing' sentiment in the new *Länder*.

[65] Viola Neu (1999): op. cit. p.5.

[66] Jürgen P. Lang: 'Nach den Wahlen 1994: PDS-Strategie im Wandel?', in *Deutschland Archiv*, April 1995, p.380.

of achieving its anti-democratic aims[67]. Moreau and Lang concur with this analysis:

> The political ideas of the PDS are tactical manoeuvres, whose aims stretch much further than their individual demands would have one believe ... (and) ... the PDS has developed an ideology that at first theoretically brings the existing system into question, in order to, supported by pseudo-democratic mass acceptance, with embellished, consciously diffuse, aims, eliminate it[68].

Manfred Gerner, in his work *Partei ohne Zukunft? Von der SED zur PDS* agrees, claiming that the PDS merely pays lip-service (*Lippenbekenntnisse*) to democracy, and that the Marxist-Leninist tendencies of the party basis pose a clear and distinct extremist threat to the Federal Republic's democratic structure[69].

In particular the factions on the left of the PDS cause commentators like Moreau, Lang and Gerner to further distinguish the party as 'extreme', as, in Moreau's words, the PDS has developed itself, particularly in western Germany, into an "*Anziehungspol*" (poll of attraction) for left-wing extremist elements[70]. The structure of the PDS is complex and allows the existence of a number of groups with different perspectives. While all mass parties do contain contradictory elements, the level of incompatibility within the PDS suggests, according to this approach, a failure to reconcile democracy with the party's stated goals.

Proponents of this approach argue that although the party has clearly developed and reorganised from its days as the SED, it has yet to genuinely reform. As Kleinfeld observes "*the result (is) a post-Communist party, whose members largely continue to regard themselves as Communists*"[71]. Kleinfeld argues that the PDS has a classic Communist party structure, and that these organisations are typical vehicles for orchestrating extra-parliamentary activity, as well as simultaneously undermining the social and political organs of society. He notes:

> Their goal is to exacerbate the conflict potential in society. The main point is not that the individuals who may be addressed by the groups represent a uniform party concept, but these individuals are contacted and mobilised for the PDS[72].

The Communist Platform is certainly the most well known of these groups, and

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[67] Viola Neu: 'Party of Government in Waiting', in *German Comments*, April 1997, pp.20-24.
[68] Patrick Moreau and Jürgen P. Lang (1996): op. cit. p.60.
[69] Manfred Gerner (1994): op. cit. p.242.
[70] Patrick Moreau: 'Eine kurze Geschichte der PDS in der bundespolitischen Parteienlandschaft (1989 - 1997)', in Patrick Moreau, Marc Lazar and Gerhard Hirschner (eds.) (1998): op. cit. p.277.
[71] Gerald R Kleinfeld (1995): op. cit. p.225. See also Patrick Moreau and Jürgen Lang (1994): op. cit.
[72] Gerald R. Kleinfeld (1995): ibid. p.226.

although its membership ranges somewhere between 1,000 (according to the leadership)[73] and 4,500 (according to the KPF itself)[74], and it would be relatively easy to dispose of these extremist elements, the rank and file membership of the party appears to have no wish to do so[75]. In their work on the PDS, Moreau and Lang claim that 48 per cent of PDS supporters believe that communism will once again increase in salience, while 47 per cent of the PDS electorate hold the idea of communism up as a positive thing. They claim that *"PDS support still orientates itself towards the communist worldview and towards the hope of its realisation"[76].* Bortfeldt has also observed that *"not an insignificant number of party members are in opposition to the (capitalist) system"[77]* and although they may not be members of the various extreme-left factions, the socialisation process within the GDR fosters considerable toleration of them.

And indeed, orthodox members of the PDS's left-wing groupings readily claim that the formation of the GDR was the first attempt on German soil to live in a non-capitalist society. Sarah Wagenknecht and those around her on the Communist Platform even insist that the decline of socialism began with Nikita Khrushchev's condemnation of Stalin in 1956. Such statements are taken as being evidence of the shallow nature of the reform process undertaken within the party[78]. If the groups around Wagenknecht superficially accept the pluralism within the party and within German society as a whole, then, it is argued, this is for purely tactical reasons, and not out of the conviction that their is any genuine alternative to Marxism[79].

Within the party programme, the central message appears to be a *"fundamental rejection"[80]* of the political and social system of the Federal Republic, and subsequently of the social market economy that has evolved. Proponents of this approach argue that the PDS has the gradual overcoming of constitutional democracy as its ultimate aim, followed by the imposition of a rather vague socialist order that is based on the ideals of Marx, Engels, Gramsci and Lenin[81]. Moreau elaborates:

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[73] 'Sarah Wagenknecht, Chefin der 'kommunistischen Plattform': Von Goethe zu Hegel, von Hegel zu Marx, von Marx zu Lenin', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 October 1994.

[74] Jürgen P. Lang (1995): op. cit. pp.375-376.

[75] Jürgen P. Lang (1995): ibid. pp.369-380.

[76] Patrick Moreau and Jürgen P. Lang (1996): op. cit. p.56.

[77] Heinrich Bortfeldt: 'Die Ostdeutschen und die PDS', in *Deutschland Archiv*, Volume 27 Number 12, December 1994b, p.1283. See also Ilse Spittman: 'PDS - Anwalt der Ostdeutschen', in *Deutschland Archiv*, July 1994, p.673.

[78] Patrick Moreau: in Patrick Moreau, Marc Lazar and Gerhard Hirscher (1998) (eds.): op. cit.

[79] Manfred Gerner: 'Antagonismen der PDS - Zum Pluralismus der SED-Nachfolgepartei', in *Deutschland Archiv*, March/April 1996, pp.227-239.

[80] PDS (1993): op. cit. pp.2-3.

[81] Gerald R. Kleinfeld (1995), op. cit. pp.226-230.

> The ideological foundation (of the PDS) is still built on classic ideological
> traditions that also characterised both the SED regime and the international
> communist movement: Anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism/anti-Americanism and
> anti-liberalism unify in a political-economic project characterised by dirgist,
> statist and totalitarian tendencies[82].

It is contended that the PDS should consequently be handled with caution. Yet it is noticeable that while the PDS is accused of ideological dogmatism, the parties of the centre-right have not been averse to using ideological weaponry in the attempt to de-legitimise the PDS in the eyes of the electorate[83]. The CDU/CSU frequently stress what they believe to be the extremist, unacceptable nature of the party. After the re-election of the Social Democrat Reinhard Höppner as *Ministerpräsident* of Saxony-Anhalt in May 1998 with the help of PDS votes, CDU spokesman Otto Hauser, claimed that "*it is roughly the same as if the National Socialists had, under another name, played a role in governing post-1945 Germany*"[84]. Günter Beckstein, the Bavarian Home Affairs Spokesman, has also claimed that "*the PDS is an anti-constitutional party*"[85] just as Theo Waigel has observed that the programmatical positions of the PDS illustrate that the it is attempting to build a 'new' republic "*on political and economic structures inherited from the SED*"[86]. In academic discussion, Eckhard Jesse has summarised the position of this school of thought in slightly less controversial, but no less unequivocal fashion when he observed that:

> ... the PDS, through its origins in the SED, its programme, its ambivalent position
> on the use of force, its evasive approach to GDR history and its close links to anti-
> democratic action groups is, at its core, an extremist political party[87].

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[82] Patrick Moreau: in Patrick Moreau, Marc Lazar and Gerhard Hirscher (1998) (eds.): op. cit., p.286.

[83] The most obvious (but by no means only) examples of this are the 1994 'red-sock' and 1998 'red-hands' campaigns by the CDU/CSU, openly playing on the controversial issue of past relations between social democrats and communists. Neither campaign had any direct relevance to contemporary political debate. The 1994 campaign was largely perceived to have been successful, although the 1998 campaign was noticeably dropped in the weeks preceding the federal election. This is as the eastern German electorate appeared to be tired of CDU/CSU references to such events, and their attempts to picture the PDS as a modern day Communist Party.

[84] Otto Hauser (CDU): 'PDS stimmt für Höppner - heftige Kritik aus Bonn', in *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, 27 May 1998, p.1.

[85] Günther Beckstein (CSU): 'Union fordert verstärkte Überwachung der PDS', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 22 April 2000, p.5.

[86] Theo Waigel (CSU): 'Die geistigen Grundlagen der Christlich-Sozialen Union', in Hanns-Seidel Stiftung: *Geschichte einer Volkspartei - 50 Jahre CSU, 1945-1995* (München: Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, 1995), p.63.

[87] Eckhard Jesse: 'SPD and PDS Relationships' in *German Politics*, Volume 6 Number 3, December 1997, p.99. See also Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse (eds.): op. cit. pp.193-214. As far as this author is aware, nowhere is the PDS ambiguous on the use of force. This applies for home and international affairs. At the international level the PDS is particularly 'unambiguous', as, as high profile disagreements at party conferences illustrate, the PDS seeks a radical demilitarisation of international affairs. Debates on the Kosovo War in 1999 and the use of UN troops in international conflict at the Münster *Parteitag* (Conference) of April 2000 particularly illustrate

This analysis is also supported by the Bavarian Office for Upholding the Constitution, which continues to regard the PDS as an extremist party. According to their 1997 analysis of the party, the PDS ...

> ... belongs to the group of parties that can be defined as 'post-Communist' or 'neo-Communist'. These definitions are intended to show the PDS has not distanced itself from either Communist ideology or practice. On the contrary, the PDS remains in its core traits very much the old party ... (the SED) ... [88]

The report further adds that:

> The PDS is a relic of the GDR and is politically responsible for the violent, and above all economic, problems in the eastern states ... the PDS remains 'neo-Communist' as it has turned itself into a Communist party along the lines of other western European Communist parties, without reducing its communist, and therefore extremist, character[89].

The reports of the Bavarian Office for the Protection of the Constitution illustrate that there remains a tendency to regard the PDS as an *Überbleibsel* (left-over) of the GDR. The fact that upwards of two million citizens vote for the party is not seen as sufficient evidence that the questions that party asks, the criticisms it articulates and the positions that it takes need to be taken as seriously as those of other parties. Proponents of this approach much prefer to dwell on the undoubted contradictions and problems that the party has in coming to terms with its own past and its left-wing ideological position rather than what it says about Germany (and in particular eastern German) politics and society *today*.

The PDS itself, as one would expect, rejects notions that it is 'anti-system' or 'extremist' out of hand:

> To categorise the PDS as an extremist party is stupid, outrageous and completely ignores the development of the party. The party programme, it's statute and a range of party resolutions have established a clear break with Stalinism. The party has repeatedly declared that it respects the Basic Law ... and, furthermore, in the *Bundestag* the PDS has fought against attempts to undermine it[90].

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this. See *PDS Disput/Pressedienst*, Nummer 4 (Disput) and Nummer 15/16 (Pressedienst), 2000.

[88] Bayersiches Staatsministerium des Innern: *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS)* (München: Bayerisches Staatsministerium des Inneren, 1997), p.5.

[89] Bayersiches Staatsministerium des Innern (1997): ibid. p.5.

[90] Dietmar Bartsch: 'Wer macht eine extreme Politik?', in PDS *Pressedienst*, Number 20, 14 May 1998. See also http://www.pds-online/pressedienst/9820/24800.html

Helmut Holter, the PDS leader in Mecklenburg West Pomerania and Minister in the SPD/PDS coalition, has articulated this slightly differently, although in no less categorical fashion. Holter sensibly points out that the reform of any political system is not the same as seeking to overthrow it. As he observes:

> The PDS's support of the Basic Law and of the constitution of Mecklenburg West Pomerania, and with it the acceptance of the legitimacy of the German state (*Staatswesen*) and of parliamentary democracy does not exclude discussion and constructive criticism of the deficits evident in contemporary democracy[91].

Lothar Bisky is also adamant that the PDS is a *"part of the Federal Republic's society"*, although the party still clearly strives for a *"better society"* and as such recognises and supports the idea that changes in Germany are only possible and desirable through the achievement of governmental majorities[92]. Harald Ringstorff, the SPD Prime Minister of Mecklenburg West Pomerania (and leader of the first SPD-PDS coalition government) further states that the *"PDS has apologised to the victims of the SED regime and to the SPD for the forced unification of 1946"* and it is clear that Ringstorff regards the PDS as an eminently more viable coalition partner than the CDU[93]. Despite the inability and/or unwillingness of the PDS's leadership to completely distance itself from its SED past, the PDS has moved irrevocably away from the '*Staatspartei*' structure of pre-1989. No votes are contrived (or at least no more than any other party attempts to impose its will on its members), any member is free to stand for election and, as the resignations of party luminaries like André Brie and Gregor Gysi illustrate, the party 'basis' does not always act as the leadership expects or hopes it will[94]. In this sense the democratic changes and healthy debates that have come to characterise conferences since 1989 represent a distinct metamorphosis. The PDS *does* still need to continue re-defining its controversial past, but the numerous documents that the historical commission of the PDS produces do illustrate that the party is making progress on

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[91] Helmut Holter: *Die PDS als Zukunftspartei* (Schwerin: PDS Landesverband Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, November 1999), p.2.

[92] See 'Bisky kandidiert nicht noch einmal für den PDS-Vorsitz: Auf der Suche nach einer Alternative zum 'angelsächsischen Kapitalismus'', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 8 April 2000, p.2.

[93] Harald Ringstorff (SPD): quoted on the 17 November 1998 in 'Das rote Gespenst', in *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 10, 1999, p.23.

[94] The most widely publicised spat between the PDS leadership and the 'basis' occurred at the 2000 Party Conference in Münster over UN military intervention in areas of political crisis. The 'basis' refused to back the Executive proposal to review every case on its individual merits, insisting instead that the PDS rule out all forms of UN military intervention – with no exceptions. This was in direct contravention to what the Executive had proposed. Gregor Gysi, attempting to make the best of a bad job, described the defeat as *"a victory for inner-party democracy"*, and although the decision rendered the PDS, in effect, *Politikunfähig*, it illustrated that democracy is very much alive and well within the PDS. See 'Das Fiasko der PDS-Reformer', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 2000, p4. See also 'Preis des Erfolgs', in *Neues Deutschland*, 11 April 2000, p.1.

this front. Claims by opponents that the PDS glorifies the GDR need clarification. The PDS is unwilling to dismiss the GDR as a footnote in history[95]. It is unwilling to accept that the attempt at building a socialist state was illegitimate[96]. Furthermore, the PDS (like many eastern Germans) is aggrieved at perceived attempts at 'sidelining' the lives and experiences of Easterners pre-1989[97].

The PDS is also prepared to admit that socialism in the GDR was fatally flawed[98]. The lack of democratic accountability, the dogmatic economic planning[99] and the huge contraventions of human and civil rights have all been condemned by the PDS[100]. The role of

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[95]   See Lothar Bisky's thoughtful speech held at the *Tränenpalast* in Berlin on the 7 October 1999. Lothar Bisky: '50 Jahre DDR – "Vorwärts und nicht vergessen?"' on http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9910/ddr50.htm

[96]   See line three of 'Das Programm der PDS: 2. Das Scheitern des sozialistischen Versuchs', on http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/programm/punkt02.htm

[97]   See paragraph two of 'Das Programm der PDS: 2. Das Scheitern des sozialistischen Versuchs', on http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/programm/punkt02.htm

[98]   The PDS does not state that the socialism that existed in central and eastern Europe was fatally flawed *from the beginning*, but it does admit that its failure was necessary in view of its inability to react to the economic demands that competition with capitalism placed upon it. Furthermore, its deficiencies in terms of democracy and the inability of the leaders of the state-socialist countries to implement reforms suitable for counteracting such deficiencies rendered it doomed to eventual failure. See http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/ programm/punkt02.htm For a broader analysis of the PDS's interpretation of life in the GDR, the reasons for its failure and the SED's role in this see http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte. The PDS has, in spite of the production of these documents, still found the path to reconciling itself to its past difficult. At the time of writing a clear and coherent explanation of what went wrong in the GDR, why and what this means both for the PDS and any socialist future world is lacking. But, while it is clear that parts of the PDS membership are never likely to be able to subjectively come to terms with the failings of the SED and the GDR, the reforming leadership of the party has made strides in this direction. The most notable example of this was an open letter by Gregor Gysi to the party in August 1996. In it he expressed his belief that most of the PDS membership were, in some form or other, party to 'real-existing socialism', and were therefore a part of its failure. He stated that admitting this very fact was indeed painful, but there was no way of avoiding it. He claimed that the membership of the SED and the PDS had done too little to change the GDR for the better and that 'we' had defended undemocratic and anti-emancipatory practices for too long, even though these practices were not worth defending. Those people who still have not realised this, according to Gysi, clearly have not grasped the nature of the reform project on which the PDS is built. See Gregor Gysi: 'Zur gegenwärtigen Diskussion in unserer Partei', *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 34, 1996, pp.9-12.

[99]   See paragraph 5 on http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/programm/punkt02.htm Furthermore, the PDS has also stated that the market is a necessary component of contemporary society. In one document, for example, it has claimed that "*we have to accept the market, but we don't want 'Markt pur'* (purely the market)". See http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9808/weizsaecker-brief.htm

[100]   The PDS has explicitly stated this on a number of occasions, of which one of the most prominent came in a letter to ex President of the FRG, Richard von Weizsäcker in August 1998. See paragraph three on http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9808/weizsaecker-brief.htm The process of *Geschichtsaufarbeitung* does, however, remain an uneven one within the PDS, hence differing groupings and platforms within the party often have different (and on occasion diametrically opposed) opinions on the same events. No issue highlights this more than the building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961. Unequivocal condemnations of the event can be found in statements made by a number of younger PDS members (including Halina Wawzyniak, then a member of the PDS Executive) in 'Geschichtsaufklärung versachlichen! Erklärung junger PDS-Mitglieder zum Politbüro-Prozess', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 36, 1997, p.11, as well as in statements made by Petra Pau, leader of the PDS in Berlin and since 1998 MdB, and Carola Freundel, leader of the PDS in the Berlin city parliament in *PDS Pressedienst*, Volume 33, 1997, p.43. A much less unequivocal analysis of the event can be found by referring to Hans Modrow: 'Zum Jahrestag des 13. August 1961. Persönliche Erklärung von Hans Modrow', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 35, 1997, p.11.

the SED in these crimes has also been unambiguously admitted[101]. The PDS needs to establish how a future socialist state would function over and beyond simply condemning capitalism. While these are undoubtedly important issues, it is clear that, in light of the PDS's programmatic and practical work, they do not constitute a threat to the FRG's *democratic* consensus. The PDS is unambiguous, particularly in light of its experiences in the dictatorial GDR, on the need for societal change to be brought about through the democratic process.

The all-encompassing Marxist-Leninist ideology of the SED has been replaced and the PDS now attempts to portray itself more as a broad church of leftward leaning opinion, having denied the importance of the leading role of the working class and chosen to adopt less ideologically extreme positions. Anyone who wishes to oppose capitalism and the societal relationships that it fosters is welcome within the party, and although definitive statements of what the party hopes to achieve (particularly the rather flimsy semi-definition of socialism) are lacking, the PDS has moved towards being a broad left-wing alternative to the SPD. It accepts the democratic 'rules of the game', and attempts to offer an alternative to the unjust capitalist system it perceives Germany to be caught in the grip of[102]. Regardless as to the coherence of this alternative, the party has adapted to the system, and now adheres to the rules of the political game like any other party.

Practical experience substantiates this claim. Following the much vaunted toleration of an SPD/Alliance 90/Greens coalition by the PDS in Saxony Anhalt, as well as participation in a governing coalition in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, it is clear that one should also pay attention to the way the PDS has actually behaved in the real world of eastern German government. As Peter Bender commented in *Die Zeit*:

> The SPD and Greens have been tolerated by the PDS in Saxony Anhalt for four years - would this have been possible with a radical party? (Reinhard) Höppner's experience has been that when he has spoken with the CDU and the PDS, he could never rely on the support of the CDU, whereas he could with the PDS. The results were seen on election day (26th April 1998) - those people who wanted to vote 'radically' voted for the DVU[103].

In Mecklenburg West Pomerania, where the PDS is now part of a governing coalition

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[101]   *"The traditional separation of powers was not adhered to and a democratic electoral system was not implemented ... the right to criticise and to complain existed judicially, but in practice it was hardly ever realised"*. See paragraph five on http://www.pds-online/dokumente/programm/punkt02.htm

[102]   The PDS has continued to align itself with all the fundamental requirements of the constitution, and the party's programme and policy documents do not seek to overthrow the democratic structures on which the FRG has been built. A number of commentators focus considerable attention on the alleged 'anti-constitutional' activities of the KPF, neglecting the fact that the party has clearly renounced all claim to societal transformation by any other means than through the democratic process.

with the SPD, 38 per cent of citizens were of the opinion that the PDS was a completely normal party, while a further 29 per cent viewed it as being compatible with the parliamentary/democratic structures of the FRG. Over two-thirds of the Mecklenburg West Pomerania's citizens viewed the PDS as an 'almost' normal party[104]. This is replicated in the FRG as a whole where, in July 1999, 68 per cent of Germans viewed the PDS as a 'normal, democratic party'[105].

But despite the party's protestations to the contrary, and regardless of wild politically motivated claims, PDS *members* do largely remain anchored in their SED heritage - although ideological foes of the PDS, and the majority of authors who view the PDS as 'extremist', see any movement away from this base as evidence of a strategy rather a fundamental shifting of beliefs - subsequently leaving the PDS in something of a no-win situation. Proponents of this approach have allowed their analysis to verge on ideological dogmatism, as they have no inclination of viewing the party as anything other than a disruptive political actor. Moreau, for instance, leaves little doubt as to what his opinion of the party is by calling his (empirically impressive) 1998 work a 'Profile of an Anti-Democratic Party': this goes against much of the evidence available on the internal dynamics of PDS political debate[106]. The ideological opposition to socialism that such authors espouse means that they cannot bring themselves to accept that a socialist party can legitimately function within the FRG. They perceive the FRG, supported by the Basic Law, to be a state based on capitalist principles: something that the *Grundgesetz* is anything but clear about. Neu claims that a *"a change towards democratisation is not recognisable"* and that the *"alleged change is of a tactical nature"* - but even the most cursory glance at political activity within the PDS reveals that, if anything, the party suffers from too much ideological pluralism[107]. Criticisms of the PDS as contributing to an ideological broadening of the political spectrum also appear, in light of the PDS's clear acceptance of the Basic Law, somewhat hollow. 'Polarised pluralism' may make political life in the FRG more complicated for the CDU/CSU and SPD, but this is by no means a justification for ostracising the PDS. The PDS occupies a democratically legitimate political position in the German party spectrum and it garners votes on the basis of a democratic political platform - and as such Backes and Jesse's claims of 'blocked democracy' sound more like a recognition that the other parties are going to have to fight for votes with

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[103]   Peter Bender: in *Die Zeit*, 14 May 1998.
[104]   *Politbarometer Mecklenburg-Vorpommern* (Bielefeld: EMNID-Institut, Meinungs- und Sozialforschung, März 1998), p.20.
[105]   Viola Neu (1999): op. cit. p.5.
[106]   Patrick Moreau (1998): op. cit.
[107]   Viola Neu (1999): op. cit. p.7.

another political opponent.

The overriding view amongst authors who adopt this approach is one of extreme scepticism and mistrust. These authors fall short of calling for the outright prohibition of the PDS, but they stress the importance of mobilising democratic forces against the party. This approach emphasises the perceived ambiguous nature of the party's commitment to democracy, and chooses to illustrate both the anti-system and extremist elements that are still evident. While legitimately pointing out the questionable commitment of the left-wing fringe to parliamentary procedures and to the social market economy, it is often apparent that too much concentration is paid to factions like the KPF, the *AG Junge GenossInnen* or the *Marxistisches Forum* (Marxist Forum). The PDS may well still be under observation by the Bavarian Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Landesverfassungsschutzamt*), but the party as a whole is not regarded as being extremist by the federal authorities. It seeks to change societal structures through policy initiatives, does not seek in any way to use violence and recognises and accepts both democracy in general and the democratic structures of the FRG in particular[108]. One suspects that even if the party survives another twenty years, some of the proponents of this approach will continue to brand the candidates and constituents of the party as leftover SED stalwarts[109]. The PDS clearly *is* committed to the constitutional foundations of the Federal Republic. It has reiterated this on countless occasions. The network of AGs, IGs, Platforms and Fora contribute to healthy internal political debate, making the PDS the most pluralist and *Diskussionsfreudig* of all Germany's political parties[110]. Furthermore, much to the chagrin of conservative critics, there is nothing in the Federal Republic's constitution that *expressly* forbids the creation of a socialist economy. Therefore, it is distinctly dubious to claim that the anti-capitalism of the PDS is, in itself, anti-constitutional. Although the unification treaty of 1990 makes a specific point of emphasising that the economy of the FRG is a 'social-market' one, this is clearly meant to be an expression of the economic system as it was at the time. There is no clear and unambiguous passage that dictates that this has to remain so in the future[111].

Hence this approach paradoxically illustrates what the PDS is not: an extremist and anti-constitutional party. It integrates disruptive left-wing elements into the political process, yet remains able to act within the constitutional limitations of the German political order.

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[108]   Kurt Möller: 'Extremismus', in: Bernhard Schäfers and Wolfgang Zapf (Hrsg.): *Handwörterbuch zur Gesellschaft Deutschlands* (Opladen: Leske and Budrich, 1998), p.198.
[109]   Joyce Marie Mushaben (1997): op. cit. p.96.
[110]   Rainer Linnemann: *Die Parteien in den neuen Bundesländern* (Münster: Waxman, 1994), p.106.
[111]   Jens Alber, Christina Nübel and Martin Schöllkopf: 'Sozialstaat/Soziale Sicherheit', in Bernhard Schäfers and Wolfgang Zapf (Hrsg.): *Handwörterbuch zur Gesellschaft Deutschlands* (Opladen: Leske and Budrich,

Viewing the PDS as the vehicle for left-wing extremist sentiment fundamentally misses the point that the PDS's *everyday political activities* are not in any way extremist. And this is patently obvious to the vast majority of electors in *both* the eastern and western states, who have long ceased to regard the PDS as an extremist political organisation.

1.2.4. The Milieu Party Approach

Authors such as Jens Bastian and Hans-Georg Betz and Helga A. Welsh have approached the study of the PDS from the perspective of the party as the representative of a distinct 'milieu' in eastern Germany[112]. Bastian contends that the PDS is *"above all else a party of the Milieu"*[113], that remains specific to both its social environment and its culture. Richard Schröder elaborates further, describing the PDS as a *"milieu party with elements of a self-help group, kept together by a common feeling of protest"*[114] while Betz and Welsh stress the *"importance of the PDS as the main political representative of a specific socio-economic and cultural milieu"*[115]. After the 1999 elections Jesse also observed that *"the PDS is principally a milieu party and its protest function is of secondary importance"*[116]. This approach clearly recognises that the party unites different groups, characterised by high levels of education, secularisation and urbanisation, which share similar cultural and political orientations[117]. These groups may be diverse, but they are united within a broad cultural milieu – whose interests and problems in coming to terms with life in the FRG are articulated by the PDS within the political arena[118].

Neugebauer has subsequently summarised the social milieu that supports the PDS as one that is:

> ... defined by the comparable worlds in which the majority of its members live. They live largely in cities or towns, they are (or were) frequently white collar workers, are (in comparison to members of other parties) in possession of higher

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1998), p.622.

[112] Jens Bastian: 'The *Enfant* Terrible of German Politics: The PDS Between GDR Nostalgia and Democratic Socialism', in *German Politics*, Volume 4 Number 2, August 1995, pp.95-111 and Hans-Georg Betz and Helga A. Welsh (1995): op. cit. pp.92-111.

[113] Jens Bastian (1995): ibid. p.107.

[114] Richard Schröder: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, see Gerald. R. Kleinfeld (1995): op. cit. p.242.

[115] Hans-Georg Betz and Helga W. Welsh (1995): op. cit. p.92.

[116] Eckhard Jesse: 'Die Landtagswahl in Sachsen vom 19. September 1999: Triumphale Bestätigung der CDU', in *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*, Volume 31 Number 1, March 2000, pp.76.

[117] Stefan Hradil: 'Die Modernisierung des Denkens. Zukunftspotentiale und 'Altlasten' in Ostdeutschland', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B20/95, p.7.

[118] Michael Vester: 'Milieuwandel und regionaler Strukturwandel in Ostdeutschland', in: Michael Vester, Michael Hoffman and Irene Zierke (eds.): *Soziale Milieus in Ostdeutschland. Gesellschaftliche Strukturen zwischen Zerfall und Neubildung* (Köln: Bund, 1995), pp.10-11.

levels of formal education, are not religiously committed and belonged to the carrier-groups (*Trägergruppen*) of the SED at the different levels of party, state and societal system. This ensures that they largely represent the founders and the inheritors of the GDR system ... [119]

Throughout the 1990s the PDS was seen as being anchored in this well-organised and stable milieu. The PDS was perceived as being unable to move away from the socio-structural base of the former *Dienstklasse*[120] of the GDR, with its roots firmly embedded in the SED, and in particular the *Aufbaugeneration*[121]. The milieu is seen as being relatively closed as well as occupationally and geographically defined[122]. These functionaries, in spite of their relatively rapid adaptation to life in the 'new' Germany, still feel (through joint experience) bonded together through loss of the pride and prestige that they had attained before 1989[123].

Heinrich Bortfeldt has emphasised how this logically meant that the PDS was initially viewed very much as an "*Auslaufmodell*", being essentially regarded as a final resting place for those disaffected as a result of the abolition of the GDR and a temporary political home for the politically unsatisfied[124]. Bortfeldt argues that apart from the obvious 'external' factors like the general acceptance of the party within the federal political system and the *Ausgrenzung* (exclusion) that accompanied this as a result of being the successors to the SED, 'internal' factors like a radically shrinking membership, the ageing of the party faithful and the lack of clear orientation would dictate that the milieu within which the party existed would soon shrink to the extent that the PDS would cease to be a relevant factor in national politics[125].

Much as is the case with the protest party approach, there has, therefore, tended to be an implicitly short-term nature to this approach, as those who feel particularly attached to the GDR and part of the milieu that has provided a backbone of PDS support will, by definition,

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[119] Gero Neugebauer (1995): in Michael Brie, Martin Herzig and Thomas Koch: op. cit. p.51.

[120] The term *Dienstklasse* can be traced back to the work of Heike Solga, and her work on the class structures in East German society. She defines the *Dienstklasse* as "*the privileged, socially self-contained and highly qualified administrative and operative functionaries that worked in the GDR in the leading positions in the economy, administration, universities, media, military, mass organisations and smaller SED circles of power that exerted power within GDR society*". See Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten (1997): op. cit. p.871. See also Heike Solga: 'Die Etablierung einer Klassengesellschaft in der DDR: Anspruch und Wirklichkeit des Postulats sozialer Gleichheit', in Johannes Huinink et al, *Kollektiv und Eigensinn. Lebensverläufe in der DDR und danach* (Berlin: Akad. Verlag, 1995), pp.45-89.

[121] Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten (1997): ibid. p.871.

[122] Markus Klein and Claudio Caballero (1996): op. cit. pp.229-247.

[123] Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss (1996): op. cit. p.162 and p.285. Joachim Raschke: 'SPD und PDS. Selbstblockade oder Opposition?', in *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, Number 12, 1994, pp.1453-1464.

[124] Heinrich Bortfeldt (1994b): op. cit. p.1283.

[125] Gero Neugebauer: 'Die Position der PDS im Parteiensystem', in *PDS Pressedienst* (Berlin: Nummer 46, 15

become fewer and fewer over time. Gordon Smith's 1992 conclusion epitomises much of the academic viewpoint in the early 1990s, stressing that as soon as 'normal'[126] election rules were once again invoked, the PDS would cease to achieve federal representation:

> Its federal-wide vote (2.4 per cent (in 1990)) as opposed to its share in East Germany alone (11.1 per cent) means that the PDS either must make significant advances in West Germany or somehow recover a following in East Germany. Neither eventuality is realistic[127].

Until the PDS successfully returned to the *Bundestag* and performed above expectations in the *Land* elections of 1994, German political scientists held similar opinions. In the run-up to the 1994 federal election, for example, Manfred Gerner observed that "*it is doubtful that the PDS will find the method or the means to re-enter the Bundestag*"[128], while two years earlier, in 1992, Heinrich Bortfeldt was even more conclusive:

> The PDS will not re-enter the *Bundestag* at the 1994 federal election. It has a national *Wählerpotential* (potential electorate) of around 1 - 2 per cent and is thus well on the way towards political *Bedeutungslosigkeit* (nothingness)[129].

This judgement has proven misguided. The short-term milieu party approach is therefore not sufficient in explaining the success of the PDS as an eastern German regional party. The PDS is no longer a "*living corpse*" or "*dinosaur*"[130] of a previous era, and as such analysts have slowly begun to discuss the methods, strategies and beliefs that underpin the party's apparent stabilisation within the German political system[131]. Contrary to initial projections, the contemporary milieu from which the PDS garners support has broadened and to an extent metamorphosed to include many who were never in the *Dienstklasse* of the GDR.

November 1996), p.17.

[126] To enter the Federal Parliament, political parties have to register at least 5 per cent of the popular vote. The PDS failed to do this in both 1990 and 1994, although it did straddle the 5 per cent barrier in 1998. It entered the 1990 Parliament as the 5 per cent hurdle was, for this one election, applied to eastern Germany and western Germany separately. The PDS was, therefore, comfortably able to clear this barrier in the eastern states. In 1994 the PDS once again entered the Federal Parliament, despite registering only 4.4 per cent of the vote. On this occasion the party made use of an almost forgotten clause allowing parties representation if three of their candidates were directly elected. The PDS was able to return four directly elected MPs (something it repeated in 1998) from eastern Berlin - so avoiding the necessity of clearing the 5 per cent barrier.

[127] Gordon Smith (1992): in Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson, Peter H. Merkl and Stephen Padgett (eds.): op. cit. p.100.

[128] Manfred Gerner (1994): op. cit. p.59.

[129] Heinrich Bortfeldt (1992): op. cit. p.295. Similar analysis was also offered by Patrick Moreau in his numerous works on the PDS. See for example Patrick Moreau (1992): op. cit. p.459.

[130] John Ishiyama: 'Communist Parties in Transition: Structures, Leaders and Processes of Democratisation in Eastern Europe', in *Comparative Politics*, Volume 27 Number 2, 1995, pp.147-166.

[131] Henry Krisch: 'Searching for Voters: PDS Mobilisation Strategies, 1994-1997', in Peter Barker (ed.) (1998): op. cit. p.39.

This is something that proponents of the milieu party approach did not envisage and cannot adequately explain. It is for this reason that a *regional party* approach is applicable - as it enables the *regional* nature of the PDS's success to be deconstructed. Furthermore, at the 1998 Federal Election the PDS's support clearly began to level out across eastern Germany, and the party is no longer a party that relies principally on the GDR stalwarts who predominate within the party membership. The PDS lost, by a considerable margin, more of its support in the five eastern Berlin constituencies - the traditional *Hochburgen* (strongholds) of the PDS as a result of the large number of former functionaries who live there - than it did anywhere else[132]. Despite retaining the 4 seats (*Direktmandate*) that the PDS had won in 1994, the PDS still lost 5.7 per cent (of second votes) in Mitte-Prenzlauer Berg, 5.1 per cent in Hellersdorf-Marzahn, 5 per cent in Friedrichshain-Lichtenberg and 4.2 per cent in Hohenschönhausen-Pankow. In the fifth eastern Berlin seat, which Siegfried Scheffler won for the SPD, the PDS also lost 3.4 per cent[133]. Indeed, only in Köpenick-Treptow, with the high profile candidature of Lothar Bisky, did the PDS manage to increase its proportion of *Erststimmen* (by 1.7 per cent)[134].

The skilful reinvention of the PDS as a party that represents eastern German interests stems from the changed nature of its appeal - and as such the party has developed from being a 'milieu' party into a 'regional' party. A considerable proportion of the eastern German population consciously view themselves as being 'eastern German' (see chapter three), and as such have redefined their interests within the context of being members of an eastern German community. Hence patterns of electoral support in the eastern states since 1998 illustrate that the 'milieu' party is now an out-dated concept - as the PDS is supported by a broad-base of eastern Germans. This is as the PDS has embedded itself in the social and political structures of all eastern German *Länder* and is perceived by the electorate at large as an advocate of broad regional interests. The PDS is a child of German unity that has established itself as a result of a representation gap that eastern Germans widely perceive as existing - owing to the economic, cultural and institutional implications of the unification process[135]. This is something that this approach tends to overlook, even if, in its implicit nature, it points in this direction. The milieu is traditionally defined too narrowly, and it is limited to the former servants and the subjectively disaffected. Laurence H. McFalls is nearer the reality of the

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[132] The PDS gained votes in every one of the eastern states, except Berlin, where it lost 1.4 per cent and Mecklenburg West Pomerania where its proportion of the vote (23.6 per cent) remained exactly the same as 1994. The gains ranged from 1 per cent in Brandenburg, to 4.1 per cent in Thuringia. See Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.180.
[133] Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.64.
[134] Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.65.

situation when he notes that the PDS:

> ... represents a social process, namely the integration into the social order of the enlarged Federal Republic of Easterners who wish none the less to have the validity of their past recognised[136].

This milieu approach is, however, useful in highlighting the societal influences evident behind a vote for the PDS in the early and mid-1990s. The original milieu (of those close to the aims and power structures of the GDR) within which the PDS existed in the early years is still in evidence, and is still very supportive of the PDS in terms of actively advocating the party's aims. But the 'milieu' approach has outlived its usefulness - as the PDS's electoral base is now based on territorial affinity with eastern Germany. Eastern Germany may, at the societal level, still be in a process of transformation, as citizens continue to 'find their place' in the FRG. But at the economic and political levels eastern Germany is a space that is going to remain fundamentally different from the western states. The milieu has expanded to theoretically include many more eastern Germans, as the milieu is now based much more on a fundamental identification with a past life in the GDR and with the territory of the eastern states. Like Bavaria, the 'political clocks tick differently' in the East, as civil society, economic imperatives and the nature of political life dictate that Easterners react and view the structures and imperatives of all aspects of life in the FRG differently[137]. The longer the perceptions of difference endure, the more likely it is that a sustained societal cleavage will continue to stabilise between eastern and western Germany, offering the possibility that the PDS will be able to anchor itself ever deeper into both the eastern German psyche, and the eastern German political system.

1.3. The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Four Approaches To The PDS

As has been already mentioned, no single approach is sufficient, if taken alone, to throw adequate light on the complex phenomenon that the PDS has become. Elements of all methods of analysis have some relevance in helping to understand the beliefs, strategy and development of the PDS. Even those authors who clearly prefer to highlight one approach over and above the others do not fail to appreciate the complexity of any analysis of the PDS. Patrick Moreau, for instance, clearly and unambiguously highlights what he believes are

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[135] David F. Patton (1998): op. cit. p.505.
[136] Laurence H. McFalls: 'Political Culture, Partisan Strategies and the PDS: Prospects for an East German Party', in *German Politics and Society*, Spring 1995, p.59.

undemocratic and extremist tendencies, but he does not fail to acknowledge that the PDS platform and voter base also consists of elements of eastern German interest articulation, protest and that it effectively articulates issues and problems spawned by the economic, political and social transformation of the GDR. It is, therefore, beyond debate that elements of all of the approaches that have been discussed need to be incorporated into any effective analysis of the party.

The dissatisfaction of many Easterners with the effects of the transformation from a command to social market economy, as well as continued uncertainty and mistrust of their new environment, has found expression in a vote for the PDS. Protest has hence been a clear and obvious fundament of PDS support. Furthermore, the psychological effects of nearly a decade of social and economic turmoil remain evident today - and the protest party approach highlights key regionally-specific elements of dissatisfaction that the PDS has successfully articulated within the political arena. The protest party approach illustrates many of the psychological beliefs of PDS supporters that supplement those of the bedrock of support that former GDR functionaries also still provide. And it is indeed correct to presume that both ex-functionaries and the subjectively disadvantaged are 'protesting' - even if at consciously different things. The former functionaries are protesting largely at their loss of pride and privilege, while the subjectively disadvantaged, following the optimism of the unification years and the promises of 'flourishing landscapes'[138] and economic prosperity, at their failed hopes and ambitions. It is for this reason that the protest party approach contributes considerably to understanding how the PDS stabilised itself in eastern Germany throughout the mid-1990s.

However, it is the contention of this work that the protest party approach alone is not sufficient to explain the sustained longevity of the PDS. It is inherently short-term in nature, and assumes that as and when Easterners become 'satisfied' with their economic and political positions within the FRG then the PDS will disappear from the party political landscape. It neglects the fact that the PDS is attractive to people across social strata within eastern German society, and the base of the party's support has grown to be both loyal and reasonably well distributed. This is not a characteristic of a party that is built on short-term protest, dissatisfaction and disillusionment - and hence the base of the party's support has to be

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[137] Jonathan Grix (1999): op. cit.

[138] Helmut Kohl used the phrase 'blühende Landschaften' in an interview on Tagesthemen during the EU summit in Dublin on the 28 April 1990. His exact words were "when all the successful principles of the social-market economy become reality in the former GDR, then, in three or four years, we will have a flourishing landscape and we will all benefit from it". See Gabi Haeger: Wächst wirklich zusammen, was zusammen gehört? Identität und Wahrnehmung der Intergruppensituation in Ost- und Westdeutschland (Münster, LIT Verlag,
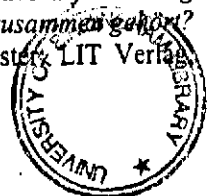
conceptualised as being more loyal than that of a mere transitory 'protest' phenomenon.

The PDS does still remain a socialist party. Both its programme and ideological rhetoric leave no doubt that the PDS is striving to achieve a society that is not based on capitalist structures. While accepting the considerable ideological diversity in evidence across the PDS, ranging from the reformed-Stalinists and die-hard Communists in the KPF, to the reforming leadership around Gregor Gysi, this approach highlights the continued attempts at exhorting radical societal change at the national level. It also illustrates the necessity of an assessment by the PDS of the party's past and for this to be adapted into the PDS's concept of what a future (socialist) Germany would look like.

The fundamental failing of the socialist party approach is that it does not reflect the reality of political competition in the FRG. The PDS is *not* an all-German party, and it has manifestly failed to build an electoral base in the western states - therefore it is clear that the political success of the PDS in the eastern states is based on some sort of regional appeal. This appeal certainly has socialist elements to it, but to get to the bottom of exactly what this is, one must adopt an approach that takes into consideration the values, culture, identity and historical specificity of eastern Germans. The PDS has not been able to take on the mantle of the political left in western Germany because it has no roots in the western states. In the western states the SPD effectively channels socialist sentiments into its political activities, whereas the territorial uniqueness of the PDS enables it to fulfil a unique political functions (based on its territorial specificity) in eastern Germany. Its election results in the West reveal that it has not established itself in any state, and, one would presume, ten years of persistent failure are unlikely to be reversed in the future.

The anti-system approach is useful at highlighting the problems that sections of the PDS membership have in coming to terms with the political, social and economic realities of the FRG. But proponents of this approach overlook the integrative role that the PDS plays in ensuring that left-wing ideologues are not cut off from the political system. Furthermore, the PDS has proven itself capable of governing at the local level, and has been a stable party in the unusual governing constellations in Saxony Anhalt and Mecklenburg West Pomerania - so much so that they are frequently seen as possible models for other eastern *Länder*. Its record at the micro-levels of eastern German politics reveal that it is perfectly capable of *sachorientierte* political activity. Not only has the PDS been an efficient oppositional force, it has also indicated that it can be a constructive and dependable force *within* governmental structures.

Univ. Diss.,1998), p.1.

The PDS enables those East Germans who are never likely to come to terms with life in a capitalist society to find a place to vent their dissatisfactions. Yet, the party has (as much as is possible) jettisoned its Stalinist baggage, and while requiring more reform before it can be accepted as 'normal' in the sense that the other parties are, any recognition of the PDS as a constitution threatening movement is exaggerated. The unsavoury elements within the PDS are rich contributors to the pluralist structure of PDS internal party democracy - but in no way do they dictate policy and/or PDS activity at the federal, regional or communal level. At the micro-political level politics in the eastern states continues to function through personal interaction - and talk of PDS representatives wanting to overthrow the capitalist system fundamentally misunderstands both the nature of communal politics and the undeniable contribution that PDS politicians make at this level (see section 4.8.).

The milieu party approach comes closest to conceptualising the east-west divide evident in Germany today, although this divide is viewed as one that will disintegrate as and when the East 'catches up' and the former functionaries of the GDR die out. The different processes of socialisation within East and West Germany are not seen as having any *long-term* effects on the political make-up of party competition within Germany. The transformation process, it is contended, will eventually come to an end - and at this point eastern German interests will be comparable with those of western Germans. There will be, therefore, no function for a regional party in eastern Germany to fulfil. This work contests this train of thought. The process of identity and cleavage formation that have taken place since 1989, based on the transformation process and the socialist legacy of the GDR have fundamentally changed the parameters of electoral competition in the new *Länder* (see chapters two and three). Hence while the milieu approach correctly stresses the existence of a cultural community in eastern Germany, it undervalues the importance of an eastern German-wide specific subculture to PDS success as well as the rapid rise of an eastern German identity. The analysis offered by proponents of this approach therefore only goes some way towards explaining the cleavage divide - as it underestimates the strength and pervasiveness of the regional identity that has stabilised in the East. The PDS has adopted ideological and cultural language to substantiate their already strong regional anchorage - and it is these arguments that have taken hold within the eastern electorate.

1.4. Eastern German Volkspartei?

The four approaches discussed above indicate that a vacuum exists within the present

literature as little work has been done on the role of the PDS as a regional party. Yet it is this approach which offers the greatest insight into explaining the PDS's longevity. In spite of the tendency to view the PDS as a transitory phenomenon, there has none the less been talk by some commentators, as well as in the popular press, of the PDS being an eastern German *Volkspartei* (peoples party)[139].

The concept of the *Volkspartei* was initially developed as an ideal type in the 1960s by Otto Kirchheimer[140]. The *Volkspartei* aimed to maximise electoral potential over and above facilitating processes of social integration and direct interest articulation. In order to do this the ideological platforms of *Volksparteien* were perceived as being broader than had previously been the case as they attempted to transcend traditional economic, religious and territorial divides in order to widen their electoral appeal and stress national interests. These developments were, however, seen as inevitably leading to a weakening of the *Volkspartei's* ability to perform some of the traditional functions that parties have been ascribed: namely, to act as agents of political integration, to democratically mediate between the institutions of the state and society at large, to conceptualise and articulate particular interests, to formulate policy, to co-ordinate relations between the executive and legislature and to recruit elites[141].

The evolution of political competition in the 1970s and 1980s did appear to vindicate Kirchheimer's theory, as larger, ideologically broader, parties developed in a number of West European polities. West Germany was no different to other European states in this regard as the CDU/CSU and SPD embraced broad alliances of voters and weakened their alignments with class interests and distinct ideologies[142]. The CDU was the first party to move along this path in the late 1950s as it broadened its profile to towards an inter-denominational and inter-class platform. The CDU stressed the broad concepts of social responsibility and a clear commitment to the social-market economy[143]. With the adoption of the Godesberg Programme of 1959 the SPD chose to follow suit, abandoning its socialist doctrine in an attempt to remain competitive with the CDU.

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[139] Michael Brie, in his thoughtful work of 1995, was the first to postulate that the PDS had developed into an eastern German *Volkspartei*. See Michael Brie: 'Das politische Projekt der PDS - eine unmögliche Möglichkeit' in Michael Brie, Martin Herzig and Thomas Koch (eds.) (1995): op. cit. pp.9-38. For an English language extension of this hypothesis see Joanna Mckay: 'The Wall in the Ballot Box', in *German Politics*, Volume 5 Number 2, August 1996, pp.276-291. For an example of politicians (of all political persuasions) describing the PDS as an eastern German *Volkspartei* see Johannes Leithäuser: 'Inhaltliche Auseinandersetzung mit falschen Parolen', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 October 1999, p.2.
[140] Otto Kirchheimer: 'The Transformation of the Western European Party Systems' in Joseph La Polombara and Myron Weiner (ed.): *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp.177-200.
[141] Alan Ware: *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[142] Stephen Padgett and Tony Burkett: *Political Parties and Elections in Western Germany: The Search for a New Stability* (London: C.Hurst & Company, 1986), p.2.
[143] Gordon Smith (1992): op. cit. p.79.

The apparent dominance of the political process by the CDU/CSU and the SPD, coupled with the 5 per cent hurdle for national elections, tended to mean a squeezing out of smaller parties, and throughout the 1960s (from the 1961 election), 1970s and most of the 1980s (until 1987) only three parties remained in the *Bundestag*. In recent years, however, it has become clear that the *Volksparteien* are not in a position to *extinguish* political opponents, and since the rise of the Greens in particular their dominance has come under threat for a number of reasons[144]. But the ability of the CDU/CSU and the SPD to appeal to a broad base of socially diverse voters that spans the political spectrum continues to lead to them being branded, both in the academic and non-academic discourse, as *Volksparteien*.

The hypothesis that the PDS is an eastern German *Volkspartei* has been forwarded since the mid-1990s. It gained further credence following the 1999 Berlin election, when the PDS registered 39 per cent of the vote in the eastern parts of the city[145]. Wayne C. Thompson adds that the PDS is indeed an eastern German *Volkspartei* "*in the sense that it integrates diverse groups of voters*" to its cause[146], while various eastern German politicians - from all parts of the political spectrum - have articulated similar sentiments. East Berlin, even with its high concentration of old SED functionaries and so-called 'unification losers', is an example of this, as these people alone do not constitute the 39 per cent of the electorate who chose to vote for the PDS in 1999. East Berliners of all ages and from all social strata have voted for the party[147].

The PDS's strong electoral performances in 1994 and 1998 were "*largely due to the party's ability to present itself as the only authentic advocate of East German interests*" and "*to provide East Germans with a sense of identity*"[148] - and it is this key political role that has enabled the PDS to stabilise itself in the political system. The PDS is a cross-class (see tables 1 and 2) party that mobilises support from all sectors of the eastern German populace. Although it struggles to convince citizens with religious backgrounds to support it, the fact

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[144]   These include increased levels of electoral volatility, patterns of electoral dealignment, declining levels of partisan identification and the fragmentation of party systems. For a discussion of the challenges to *Volkspartei* dominance see Stephen Padgett: 'Introduction', in Stephen Padgett (ed.): *Parties and Party Systems in the New Germany* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993), p.4. See also Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan and Paul Allen Beck (eds.): *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[145]   The PDS was able to register 42 per cent of the first votes polled in the eastern districts of Berlin, with the CDU polling 28.4 per cent and the SPD 19.3 per cent. Although the PDS polled slightly less of the second votes (39.5 per cent), it still remained clearly ahead of both the CDU (26.9 per cent) and the SPD (17.8 per cent). See http://www.statistik-berlin.de/wahlen

[146] Wayne C. Thompson (1995): op. cit. p.446.

[147]   In 1995, the PDS was able to poll at least 30 per cent of the votes from within all age groups and social strata in eastern Berlin. The PDS fared worst in the women over 60 age-category, where it polled 30.7 per cent of the vote. It did best in the women 35-44 age group, where it received 41.5 per cent of the vote. See Joanna McKay (1996), op. cit.

that far fewer eastern Germans are active Christians ensures that the PDS is not fundamentally weakened by this electoral hindrance.

The political activities of the SPD and the CDU have inadvertently re-enforced the feeling that the PDS is the only party that can faithfully be trusted to look after eastern German interests. The CDU, following the broken promises of the pre- and post-unification period, gradually lost much of its political credibility in the East, and by 1998 was viewed with scepticism and mistrust by large sections of the eastern German electorate[149]. As the party that was in power at the federal level until 1998, the CDU was also seen as the party that was responsible for the economic melt-down experienced in the eastern states - and it ultimately paid the price with a crushing electoral defeat in September 1998.

But the SPD, after its initial failure to create an electoral base in eastern Germany in the early 1990s, took a number of years to gain political credibility, and even following the federal election victory of September 1998 the party soon plunged into electoral crisis in the East as a result of a number of heavy *Landtagswahl* defeats in 1999. Whether the SPD remains a *Volkspartei* in the eastern states is, as a result of its very weak organisational basis of poor showings in a number of recent state elections, in itself an issue of contention. The SPD remains a party that is perceived as having few policies that can transform the economic situation in the East, and it is widely regarded as a western German party that is unable to bridge the gap between its western German strongholds and the very different eastern German political territory.

Neither the CDU nor the SPD are perceived in the eastern states as being parties who cater for eastern German interests: whether these be in terms of regenerating the eastern German economic base, defending the rights of eastern German citizens in united Germany or articulating eastern German historical specificity. The PDS is able to fulfil this role on account of its unique heritage, its regional strength and its anchorage in eastern German societal structures and organisations. While it is also undoubtedly true that a significant proportion of eastern Germans will *never* support the PDS on account of its past as the SED and its strong left-wing beliefs, it is just as clear that the PDS is the only party that serves the specifically eastern German cultural self-appreciation. Jens Bastian subsequently notes that it is possible to see where the hypocrisy of the western parties has helped sow the seeds of PDS success[150]. Former members of the *Blockflöten*[151] were freely and easily incorporated into the

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[148] Hans-Georg Betz and Helga A. Welsh (1995): op. cit. p.93.

[149] Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit.

[150] Jens Bastian (1995): op. cit. p100.

[151] The *Blockflöten* parties included the CDU and the LDPD (the East German version of the FDP), and acted as nominally independent parties, that in reality were very much in subservience to the SED.

CDU and FDP, while members of the PDS were openly perceived as being unable to change or adapt to the new political environment. While the western parties continue to stress the continuities with the SED, the PDS has come, in the eastern states, to be regarded as the representative of eastern Germans[152]. Former civil rights activist Jens Reich helps further highlight this by observing that no other party offers as many services that assist eastern Germans in comprehending the mass of laws and regulations in the FRG, particularly as many of its members are retired and have the time to respond to other people's worries and concerns[153]. All these factors broaden the electoral appeal of the PDS and enable it to appeal to a broad spectrum of the eastern German electorate.

Evidence of double standards and the perception that Easterners should be unreservedly grateful for unification has backfired in election campaigns, where the PDS has been able to garner votes from those who would otherwise not have felt such sympathy towards the party[154]. Konrad Jarausch has succinctly observed that *"many eastern Germans feel deprived of their personal as well as of their collective past"*[155] and as a consequence have opted for the one defender of their pasts that is available to them.

This provides evidence of how regional and nationalist parties can win over certain groups of people who they can relatively easily claim to represent. Support can be retained for as long as the group perceives itself to be threatened, mistreated or simply different, regardless of whether the party actually has a clear and coherent strategy. The peripheral position of eastern Germany within the FRG has ensured that eastern German cultural values have been subject to a persistent battering by those held by western Germans (see section 2.3.2. for further discussion of this). In terms of political representation, the party system in the eastern states is broader as a party (the PDS) represents eastern German uniqueness within the political process. This is in contrast to the initial post-1990 reactions that perceived the PDS as being a party for those which simply mourn the passing of the GDR. The fundaments of political competition are different in the East, allowing specific territorial mobilisation to occur. A considerable amount of work has been conducted into the nature of political competition in eastern Germany. Stephen Padgett has highlighted four particular characteristics of eastern German political uniqueness. These all help to illustrate how the

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[152] Erich Schreck: 'Die PDS in der Parteienlandschaft', in *Deutschland Archiv*, March 1996, pp.471-472.
[153] Jens Reich: 'Wo trotz und Mitleid sich verbunden', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 September 1994, p.35.
[154] Jürgen W. Falter and Markus Klein (1994): op. cit.
[155] Konrad H. Jarausch: 'The German Democratic Republic as History in United Germany: Reflections on Public Debate and Academic Controversy', in *German Politics and Society*, Volume 15 Number 2, Summer 1997, p.42.

PDS has stabilised itself on the eastern German political stage[156]. These characteristics are:

1.   the weakness of socially structured partisanship - resulting in electoral volatility in eastern Germany

2.   a preference for total opposition rather than moderate opposition

3.   the importance of personalities

4.   the influence of subjective factors

Factor one is certainly true for the other political parties in eastern Germany - but not for the PDS[157]. While many voters float between CDU and SPD, and the Alliance 90/Greens and the FDP are virtually non-existent, the PDS's electorate *does* remain loyal and stable (see section 4.8.). This is as strong alignments have been built up between the PDS and its followers, based on the PDS's Easternness and many voters self-identification with eastern Germany. Hence, the cross-cutting regional divide between eastern and western Germany appears more politically salient in the eastern states than other traditional cleavages like class or confession. The absence of clear and sustained partisan alignments in the East is emphasised by the election results of the CDU and SPD (see appendix) which have varied greatly from state to state and over time. The PDS's electorate, however, is the most stable across time and place, of any of the parties in eastern Germany today. Eckhard Jesse observed after the 1998 Federal Election that the PDS is becoming *"more a milieu party and less a protest party"*[158] – yet while Jesse consciously uses the term milieu, the phenomenon that he is in fact talking about is the development of the PDS into a *regional* party. As was illustrated earlier, the PDS is supported by a broad cross-section of the eastern German electorate, and it has become ever more deeply rooted within eastern German society and political life. Hence it is the contention of this work that the 'milieu' now encompasses all of eastern Germany, and not just those who were particularly attached to the GDR – and as such the concept 'milieu' it in itself out of date, as the PDS has simply developed into a party articulating regionally distinct interests and 'differentness'.

There is little doubt that the other three factors Padgett mentions (a preference for total opposition, the importance of personalities and the influence of subjective factors) strongly

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[156] Stephen Padgett: '*Superwahljahr* in the new *Länder*: Polarisation in an Open Political Market', in *German Politics*, Volume 4 Number 2, August 1995, pp.75-95.
[157]   See the election reports published by both Infratest Dimap and Forschungsgruppe Wahlen for statistical evidence of this.
[158] Eckhard Jesse: 'Politische Studien - Zeitgespräch zum Ausgang der Bundestagswahl 1998', in *Politische Studien*, Volume 362, November/December 1998, p.11.

help the PDS defend self-perceived eastern German interests. While opposition to 'western' parties is strong, the PDS will garner support as the party that cares for the interests and worries of eastern Germans (see chapters four and five)[159]. It is argued that only when and if western German parties become all-German parties (a process that remains anything but certain) will the PDS consequently prove superfluous.

The importance of personalities in eastern German politics is also widely accepted, as the political successes of Manfred Stolpe (SPD) in Brandenburg and Kurt Biedenkopf (CDU) in Saxony illustrate. And the PDS has also benefited from possessing one of the most enigmatic personalities in German political life - Gregor Gysi. He remains, in spite of his imminent withdrawal from the political scene, the most visible and articulate of the PDS's politicians, and he has been *"indispensable to PDS success"*. His rise to power was astronomically quick, and as the Berlin Wall came down he moved swiftly from the lower reaches of the SED hierarchy to be PDS party leader by late 1989. It is down to his *"compelling personality"*[160], as well as to the reformers around him, that the PDS has been able to sail a difficult course between continuity with its past, and change to be able to adapt to future requirements (see section 4.6. for more analysis of the importance of Gysi's leadership to the PDS, as well as a discussion of the role of other leading figures within the party).

The final factor that distinguishes the eastern German political landscape from that in the west of the country, the influence of subjective factors, has been crucial in the rise and stabilisation of the PDS in the German political landscape. The PDS has proved masterful at defending elements from everyday life in the GDR, as well as other forms of subjective dissatisfaction and unhappiness with the transformation process. The much vaunted rise of 'Ostalgie' has further strengthened the PDS's role as an instrument for East Germans enabling them to demonstrate their unwillingness to be treated as *"Deutscher zweiter Klasse"* (or second class Germans[161]) and to have to suffer high unemployment and social deprivation on a scale unparalleled in the GDR (see chapter three).

The success of the PDS as an advocate of eastern German uniqueness did, on one

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[159] Claudia Ritter: 'Identitätspolitik in Ostdeutschland', in *Identitäten in Europa. Welt Trends, Internationale Politik und Vergleichende Studien*, Nummer 15, Sommer 1997, p.72.

[160] Ann L. Phillips: 'An Island of Stability - The German Political Party System and the Elections of 1994', in *West European Politics*, Special Issue, July 1995, p.226.

[161] A 1997 survey conducted by the Bielefelder Meinungsforschungsinstitut Emnid illustrated that a third of eastern Germans still regarded themselves as second class citizens in the Federal Republic. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 November 1997, p.4. See also Klaus Schröder: 'Die blockierte Vereinigung: Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede der Deutschen in Ost und West', in *Gegenwartskunde*, 3/1992, pp.299-300.

occasion, lead to calls from within the party for the PDS to concentrate on acting primarily as a representative of eastern interests within the structure of a left of centre alliance[162]. As a result of the consistent bedrock of eastern German support, Christine Ostrowski, a PDS member of the *Bundestag* from Saxony[163], and Ronald Weckesser (the leader of the PDS on Dresden's city council) have, in a document that has become known as the 'Letter from Saxony', presented a strong critique for abandoning the party's present strategy of attempting to grow into a 'national' rather than a 'regional' party, and for completely reassessing the PDS's raison d'être. Ostrowski and Weckesser therefore conceptualised the approach that this work pursues – that the PDS is successful as it articulates regional interests in the political arena - although they were unfortunately unable or willing to further their ideas over and above their initial contribution in 1996.

They claimed that what the PDS understands by the term socialism *"has to be defined by the experiences and beliefs of its millions of voters in the former GDR"*[164]. They have called bluntly for the PDS to be an eastern German people's party, as all attempts to broaden the party's electoral base into western Germany have clearly failed *"as there is no place in the political landscape for a western version of the PDS ... as the fact that the PDS results in the west lie below even the DKP's clearly illustrates"*[165]. Ostrowski and Weckesser see the strength of the PDS in its representative function in the eastern states, and subsequently stress the PDS's successful articulation of eastern German interests. They state that the CSU could be used as a strategic model for the PDS to seek to emulate, as, Ostrowski and Weckesser maintain, as, as a leftist, regional party the PDS may be able to exert considerably more influence on the national (one presumes SPD-led) Government[166].

Despite the broad and often biting criticism from within the party that these comments drew[167], it is clear that Ostrowski and Weckesser are offering a coherent theoretical approach

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[162] For more analysis of the place of the PDS within possible centre-left alliances see Nick Hubble: 'The PDS in Erfurt and the Erfurter Erklärung', in Peter Barker (ed.) (1998): pp.78-93.

[163] Christine Ostrowski was a member of the *Bundestag* until December 1990, and once again from September 1998 onwards. Between 1990 and 1998 she was a member of the Saxony state parliament. She is also *Stadtvorsitzende* of the PDS in Dresden.

[164] Ostrowski and Weckesser also observe that the failure of the westward expansion does not surprise them as those who associate themselves with the PDS in the western states are ideological left-wing radicals, and have nothing whatsoever in common with the successful communal politicians who are the face of the PDS in the eastern states. See Christine Ostrowski and Ronald Weckesser: 'Für einen eigenen Weg statt 'links von der SPD'", in *Neues Deutschland*, 8 May 1996, p5. See also http://www.christine-ostrowski.de/aktuelles.htm Page 7.

[165] Christine Ostrowski and Ronald Weckesser (1996): ibid. p.5.

[166] Christine Ostrowski and Ronald Weckesser (1996): ibid. p.5.

[167] Following the publication of the Letter on the 8th of May, the pages of *Neues Deutschland* were full of commentaries, letters and other contributions denouncing Ostrowski and Weckesser for attempting to undermine the PDS's proposed expansion westwards. PDS politicians were also quick to rubbish the Letter (and its authors) in the most public of fashions. Heiko Hilker and Uwe Adamczyk, two MdLs from Saxony, claimed that

that is much under researched[168]. Their calls for a re-evaluation of the political left in eastern Germany may be unpalatable for the PDS while they survive as a result of other influences, but the continued failure of the PDS's *Westausdehnung* indicates that sooner or later the party is going to have to admit that in the old states in remains a fish out of water. The PDS is successful in the East because of what it is - a regional advocate of territorial specificity. Parties to the left of the SPD (which is what the PDS attempts to profile itself as in the western states) have never been able to build a firm footing in western Germany - and Ostrowski and Weckesser recognise the long-term reality - that the PDS is unlikely to buck this trend. This research aims to emphasise that the logic behind their arguments is correct, and that, if the PDS is regarded as a regional party like other European regional parties, one is able to understand, through the articulation of territorially unique political sentiment, how the party has reached where it is today.

None the less, the sound base of PDS support that exists in eastern Germany cannot be regarded as solid enough to register the 20+ per cent of the vote in the East that is necessary to achieve *Bundestag* representation, let alone true *Volkspartei* status. If the 5 per cent hurdle is to be rendered meaningless for the PDS, then it needs to increase its share of the vote in the eastern states to above the 30 per cent mark. This explains the continued efforts of the reformist leadership to appeal to both younger voters (in contrast to the ageing membership), the middle classes (and particularly small businessmen) and to expand into the western part of the country. At the moment, and for the foreseeable future, the PDS needs every single vote it can get, so as to clear the 5 per cent barrier. But long-term, the prospects of the PDS appealing to Westerners remains slim.

1.5. The Regional Party Approach

The discussion above illustrates that although elements of all four of the traditional

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Ostrowski instinctively sought media attention and as such would be overjoyed that she was in the political limelight. Claudia Gohde, a member of the PDS Executive with responsibilities for the western state organisations (*Landesverbände*), was struck by the arrogance of Ostrowski in claiming that western members of the PDS were simply left-wing ideologues, while Angela Marquardt claimed that she personally had much more in common with many western members of the PDS than she did with Ostrowski. For more evidence of criticism of the Letter see 'Auf ausgelatschten Wegen etablierter Parteien', in *Neues Deutschland*, 9 May 1996, p3.

[168] *Neues Deutschland*, despite its staunch willingness to support the PDS's campaign to expand westwards, has also, on occasions, acknowledged that it is in the East where the PDS has the potential to make a genuine impact on German politics – therefore tacitly accepting the assumptions made by Ostrowksi and Weckesser. As *Neues Deutschland* observed on the 9th of January 1996, *"a new identity exists in the East ... characterised by a conscious opposition to the arrogance of western German politicians ... and as a consequence the PDS is still yet to maximise its electoral potential in the eastern states"*. See *Neues Deutschland*, 9th January 1996, p.1.

approaches that are generally employed when discussing the PDS throw some light on the reasons for the party's success, none has the capacity to see the PDS as anything other than a short-medium term phenomenon. This is as they neglect the importance of eastern German uniqueness and the success that the PDS has had in articulating this within the political arena. They are not able to conceptualise the existence of a clear set of eastern German values, preferences and attitudes that the PDS has mobilised into its clear and distinct eastern German political platform. The approaches do much to highlight the mechanics behind votes for the PDS but they make no attempt to conceptualise the PDS's key strength at a broader level: its regional heritage and its ability to articulate eastern German interests and eastern German identity within the political process. Discussion of the PDS as an eastern German *Volkspartei* highlights that, regardless of whether the PDS has actually achieved true *Volkspartei* status[169], the nature of PDS support is broad, heterogeneous and almost exclusively *regional* in nature.

Hence this work adopts an approach that enables a discussion of the *regional* nature of the PDS's success to be discussed without neglecting the valuable points that authors who have adopted other approaches have also made. This thesis will, therefore, build on the very tentative initial steps that the two PDS politicians from Saxony, Christine Ostrowski and Ronald Weckesser, suggested for the party in 1996.

During the 1990s it became clear that broader sections of the eastern German electorate were voting for the PDS over and above those who were blatantly protesting or who stemmed from the ideological 'milieu' that is traditionally close to the party. As Koch-Baumgarten has observed:

> the PDS is an expression of the 'east-west' conflict as a conflict of values, it is not the point of attraction for those critical of capitalism, but rather those critical of western culture and modernisation[170].

The support base of the PDS is subsequently characterised more by its position towards the West than any zest for reform or through overt anti-capitalism, although these two factors are unquestionably evident in the PDS's platform[171]. This is a common trait amongst regional parties, as they successfully articulate the sentiments of an 'in' group to act politically against the 'out' group (see chapter two).

The PDS flourishes in an 'eastern German' community that needs political representation at the local, regional and national level. The PDS responds to this by openly

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[169] The term *Volkspartei* is discussed in greater detail on pages 53-54.
[170] Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten (1997): op. cit. p.872.
[171] Gero Neugebauer and Richard Stöss (1996): op. cit.

campaigning on issues that are close to eastern German hearts - such as unemployment, social security, non-discrimination on the grounds of their past and/or the particular difficulties that remain original to an eastern German who has experienced the GDR as well as the complex transitional process from socialism to capitalism (see chapters four and five). Only by invoking a regional approach can one adequately unpack the reasons why the PDS, entrenched as it is in eastern Germany, is able to voice these regionally salient attitudes within the political process, as it is the territorial anchorage of the party that enables it to successfully mobilise support in the political arena.

In order to explore this approach properly, this thesis creates an analytical framework (a typology of regional parties) that enables comparisons of regional parties to be made – and the PDS subsequently to be placed within this context cross-national context. This will enable the core hypothesis of this work to be tested by highlighting the similarities between the PDS's methods and motives and those of other territorially restricted political parties. The PDS clearly remains a party that is regionally restricted in its successes, and, as it continues to receive support form all social strata in eastern Germany, is thriving across the new *Länder*. The fundamental restructuring of electoral competition within (eastern) Germany since 1989 has come about as a result of the differing life experiences and socialisation processes experienced by eastern and western Germans. A cross-cutting territorial cleavage divide exists as a result between Germans of East and West. The strength and organisation of the 'western' parties has not prevented a regionally concentrated party from taking root, and making political capital from the economic, social, cultural and political deficits that eastern Germans have experienced post-1989. A societal cleavage divide between the new and old federal states is at the base of this, and it is this development that has launched the processes of identity creation that are analysed in chapter three. In order to illustrate this, this thesis will introduce a two-part analytical framework in chapter two, emphasising how parties that are regionally restricted are successful. It will then be shown in later chapters that the PDS appreciates the uniqueness of political competition in the eastern states, and as such mobilises support as an articulator of eastern German specificity. The typology will illustrate that by discussing other regional parties, and the methods and approaches that they employ, one can understand exactly how the PDS has mobilised regional political support. The PDS, this work contends, can, and does, mobilise support in eastern Germany as a result of a territorial cleavage - as other regional parties do. This throws more light not just on the reasons behind the success of the PDS, but also on the very nature of territorial support for regional political parties in general. It will be hoped that the conclusions that this works draws will enable

further research to be conducted on the nature of regional party support in nation-states from a comparative perspective. The factors within this work's analytical framework illustrate how such a territorial divide enables regional parties to find a role for themselves within the political system of a given nation-state. It is for this reason that chapter two carries the discussion on by introducing the analytical framework of a typology of regional parties.

1.6. Regional Party Success in Germany: The CSU – A Contrast and a Comparison

This work also refers to the position of Germany's other explicitly regional party - the Christian Social Union in Bavaria. The CSU has moulded itself into 'Bavaria's political party', and achieves levels of voter support that remain pipe-dreams to all other political parties. The CSU consistently polls over 50 per cent of the vote in Bavaria (and in the 1970s, under the charismatic leadership of Franz-Josef Strauss, at times over 60 per cent of the vote) and has consequently dominated Bavarian politics since the Second World War. This ensures, in the words of Peter James, that the outstanding feature of Bavarian elections still remains the fact that everyone actually knows the result well in advance[172]. Furthermore, the CSU's Bavarian dominance is coupled with considerable influence at the federal level as the sister party of the CDU.

The CSU does not stand for election in any other part of Germany. It is therefore another German regional party. The case of the CSU is of particular interest to this thesis as it offers a specifically German example of territorial political mobilisation. The CSU understands the uniquely conservative yet modern political identification that many Bavarians appear to possess, and aggressively represents this within the political arena. It understands the uniqueness of 'Bavarianism' and skilfully shapes its political package so that it is often seen as *encapsulating* the very essence of Bavarian exceptionalism[173]. The CSU has managed to become popularly accepted as the political representation of Bavaria. Bavaria is, in the words of Alf Mintzel, a *"CSU-Staat"*[174]. For this reason a discussion both of the nature of Bavarian identity and the CSU's political mobilisation of this offers a revealing insight into the way that PDS mobilises eastern German identification within the eastern German political sub-system.

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[172] Peter James: 'The 1998 Bavarian State Election', in *Representation*, Volume 36 Number 1, Spring 1999, p.97.

[173] Even the SPD in Bavaria calls itself the 'Bavarian SPD', illustrating how prominent 'Bavarianism' is within Bavarian political, social and cultural life.

[174] Alf Mintzel: 'Regionale politische Traditionen und CSU-Hegemonie in Bayern', in Dieter Oberndörfer and Karl Schmitt: *Parteien und regionale Traditionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Berlin: Duncker and

The CSU achieved this dominant position by forging a middle way between traditional '*Bayerntreue*' ('Bavarian patriotism') and a necessary opening up and modernisation of the Free State[175]. This ensured that it was able to outflank the more conservative and reactionary *Bayernpartei* (BP) in the 1950s and 1960s. The BP eventually also failed in its attempts to represent the agrarian, traditional interests of *Altbayern*, and consequently became ever less able to accept the processes of modernisation and secularisation that Bavaria was concurrently undergoing[176].

After extinguishing the threat of the BP the CSU proceeded to become electorally dominant across all of Bavaria. It did this by becoming a broad-based regional *Volkspartei* representing economic modernisation and wealth as well as traditional, conservative Bavarian values[177]. The CSU was able to formulate a social pact between big industrial companies and the middle-classes allowing a stabilisation and preservation of the Bavarian social and political system on conservative premises[178].

This work will not analyse the political position and development of the CSU in detail. What it will do, however, is show how the CSU articulates regionally specific political and cultural sentiment in both the regional and national political arenas. The CSU represents, and indeed for many is considered to be a part of, their identity as Bavarians. The typology that is developed in the section 2.4. is, therefore, applied briefly to the case of Bavaria and the CSU in order to demonstrate the processes of territorial identity creation and their political articulation, that take place in another part of Germany. This illustrates that the PDS is not unique in articulating regional sentiment in the national political arenas – as the CSU has successfully performed the exact same function for a number of years in Bavaria.

1.7. Methods and Sources for Analysing the PDS as an Eastern German Regional Party

Having established that a comprehensive discussion of the PDS as an eastern German regional party is lacking, this work will construct a typology of regional parties in the

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Humboldt, 1991), p.125.

[175] Alf Mintzel (1991): ibid. p.150.

[176] This process was none the less slow and gradual, and it was only after 1966 that the BP was finally and irreversibly defeated by the CSU. See Alf Mintzel: *Geschichte der CSU: Ein Überblick* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1977), pp.53-57. See also Alf Mintzel: 'Die Bauernpartei', in Richard Stöss (Hrsg.): *Parteienhandbuch. Die Parteien der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1945-1980 Band 1, AUD bis EFP* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1981), pp.395-489.

[177] The best and most detailed analysis of the CSU's development and position within the German polity has come from Alf Mintzel. For a particularly comprehensive account see Alf Mintzel: *Die CSU-Hegemonie in Bayern: Strategie und Erfolg, Gewinner und Verlierer* (Passau: Wiss.- Verl. Rothe, 1998).

[178] Alf Mintzel: 'The Christian-Social Union in Bavaria: Analytical Notes on its Development, Role and Success', in Max Kaase and Klaus von Beyme (eds.): *Elections and Parties* (London: Sage, 1978), p.200.

democratic world, before placing the PDS within the context of this 'ideal type'. An ideal type is a vehicle that brings together the key elements of a particular phenomenon[179]. It assists in making contrasts and comparisons of otherwise exceedingly complex and multi-faceted societal entities[180]. Existing regional parties exhibit very different characteristics, some of which appear to contradict those of other regional parties – but by constructing a typology of these parties, one can illustrate the aspects of their behaviour that are broadly comparable, as well as empirically testable[181]. The typology *is not*, however, intended to throw light on the relationships *between* variables. It is an abstraction of reality that posits the key determinants of success – but in terms of weighting the importance of each variable it has no explanatory capacity. Hence the ideal type is abstract rather than normative.

The typology that is created in this work is, therefore, an attempt at highlighting the differing variables that have led to regional parties establishing a presence in a national/regional polity. The aim is to highlight the conditions for success and the factors that lead to sustained regional party existence[182].

The first part of the typology is employed in chapter three. This allows the similarities in the process of identity creation that has taken place in eastern Germany to be placed in the context of similar processes that have taken place in other regions. Such processes of identity creation can only be placed in their proper context by analysing the differences that exist in all of the German state (i.e. in eastern *and* western Germany) – hence an evaluation of both the attitudes and values of Westerners and Easterners needs to take place. Within the context of the typology, opinion poll data provides the backbone of this analysis. Since 1989 there have been a multitude of studies on the attitudes of eastern Germans. In order to limit the risk of methodological bias, data from the *Allensbacher Institut für Demoskopie*, *TNS-Emnid*, *ISDA* and *Infratest Dimap* is applied[183]. These four public opinion research institutes provide a broad cross-section of data on the values, attitudes and opinions of Easterners and Westerners. They enable fundamental differences to be highlighted in terms of identities, value structures

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[179] See Fritz Ringer: *Max Weber's Methodology. The Unification of the Cultural and Social Sciences* (Cambridge, USA: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp.110-121.
[180] Jonathan Grix: *An Introduction to Doctoral Studies in the Social Sciences* (Birmingham: Discussion Papers in German Studies, The University of Birmingham, Number 5, 2000), p.13.
[181] Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryan S. Turner (eds.): *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1994), p.104.
[182] Fritz Ringer (1997): op. cit. p.111.
[183] As with most analysis that is based on survey data, two cautionary notes must be sounded. Firstly, the answers given may not truly reflect the opinions of the respondent, as it is conceivable that, for one of a plethora of possible reasons, respondents may wish to hide their true opinions. The formulation of the question is also of great importance as responses can be significantly skewed if questions are poorly worded. It is for this reason that a large base of survey data has been taken into consideration and, notwithstanding these difficulties, it is clear that significant trends in this data do still remain clearly identifiable.

and attitude orientations in both eastern and western Germany. There is a rich body of data on the attitudes of Germans in both parts of the country, as well as a large amount of secondary literature that successfully analyses the relevance of this for the wider political and social environment in eastern Germany. This work draws on the findings of these studies to illustrate how the eastern *Trotzidentität* has become embedded in the eastern German psyche.

The data is, however, employed in such a way as to illustrate the differences in self-perception and general *Weltanschauung* between eastern and western Germans. This is not meant to imply that commonalities do not exist. This is clearly not the case, as on a number of issues there are no or only small differences in opinion between eastern and western Germans. But as one of the supplementary aims of this work is to illustrate that Easterners have a distinct self-understanding, and that the eastern German political space is unique, the fundaments of the eastern *Trotzidentität* need to be explained. The reasons for the existence of an identity of defiance are to be found in the value and attitudinal differences of eastern and western Germans. Hence this study illustrate ways in which Easterners *differ* in the attitudes to western Germans, and does not focus on the things that that they have in common. This data forms the basis of this work's claim that a *Trotzidentität* exists in the eastern states. At times data from other studies is also employed to illustrate particular points (i.e. on economic matters studies by, for example, the *Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung* in Halle, or the *Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung* in Berlin).

Chapters four and five aim to illustrate how the PDS articulates this territorial specificity. A qualitative evaluation of the programmes, policy documents, working papers, discussion papers and other party literature helps to build up a picture of the PDS's political platform. These documents illustrate the PDS's position on uniquely eastern German issues and problems. Semi-structured interviews with PDS politicians and activists in the eastern states also add to the understanding of how the PDS mobilises eastern German sentiment. A semi-structured method of interviewing was adopted in order to ensure that the discussion covered all relevant aspects, while still enabling the respondent to diverge to areas that he/she believed to be of particular interest. Interview evidence did not, however, play a particularly prominent role in the writing of this thesis, as interview evidence is always a supplementary to primary and secondary evidence also collected.

Chapter five specifically discusses the areas where the PDS has a strong profile: these are the issues, firstly, where eastern Germans hold differing attitudinal preferences to Westerners (see chapter three), and, secondly, topics which PDS politicians highlight in debates, which appear in party programmes and on which the PDS has a particularly strong

profile. Data from the federal and state Parliaments is used to illustrate how this is manifested in the legislative arena, showing how the PDS has developed itself into the 'eastern German voice' within the Federal Parliament and, to an extent, within regional parliaments.

The concluding chapter of this work draws the strands of the argument together. It reviews the core hypothesis in light of the research conducted and offers concluding remarks on both the nature of regional party success in general and PDS success in particular. It briefly discusses the future prospects of the PDS in view of this. The final chapter also attempts to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the study's approach and conclusions. It also offers guidance for possible lines of enquiry in the future.

Chapter Two

2. Regions and Regional Parties - An Analytical Framework

2.1. Introductory Remarks

This chapter develops an analytical framework within which the PDS can be discussed as a regional party. It will develop a typology in order to illustrate how regional parties mobilise specific territorial sentiments. The first part of the typology discusses two key factors that help sustain/create a regionally distinct political environment. It is hypothesised that a regional space is spawned as a result of a combination of these structural variables. It is as a result of these fault lines that regional parties are able to mobilise territorially specific sentiment within the political arena. The first part of the typology is vital in understanding exactly what regional difference is meant to mean – and only after having done this can one move on to discuss how regional parties articulate this in the political arena.

The second part of the typology highlights three characteristics that distinguish a regional party's activities within the political arena. They can be termed 'agency factors'. The first part of the typology is employed in chapter three to explain the differences (in the spheres of economics, politics, culture, values and attitudes) that differentiate the eastern states from the western states of Germany. They help to flesh out what the eastern German identity of defiance is understood to mean. The second part of the typology is employed in chapters four and five in order to illustrate how the PDS is the political articulator of this. The typology is therefore used to show how a territorial cleavage exists between eastern and western Germany, and that the PDS is the regional party that gives political voice to eastern German attitudes, orientations and beliefs.

Before discussing the typology in more detail, it is first necessary to place regional parties within the context of both established theories on political regionalism, as well as the literature on the development and nature of party system change. Regional parties form a heterogeneous group. This dictates that a discussion of the factors that promote and support political regionalism is necessary, in order to place parties articulating expressly regional sentiment within the wider discourse on political parties in general. Supplementary to this, it is also necessary to discuss the nature of party system formation and change that has further allowed them to carve out their niches in western polities. The discussion conducted in

section 2.3. of this chapter, therefore, lays the foundations for the formation of the typology of regional parties, which is outlined in section 2.4.

Section 2.3. illustrates that historically dominant parties are not necessarily able to sustain their dominance over political activity across the whole territory of a nation-state, even if they possess unquestionable advantages in their quest to do so[184]. New, or renewed, cross-cutting and territorially sensitive divides may enable regional parties to establish themselves in a given party system[185]. The traditional parties power of agenda setting, their efficient organisations and their widely perceived representative functions can be overcome in certain cases, as new or alternative societal constellations form. These pose challenging questions of the so-called 'national' parties, and if these parties fail to respond adequately, then new and salient cleavage divides can be created. This intrinsically means that parties articulating regionally specific sentiment are varied and very much place-specific. The history of each individual region/nation subsequently plays a key role in dictating the precise form that they take[186]. Evidence of this variety can be found right across western Europe, as well as in Canada. It is hypothesised that in the case of Germany, the established parties have not been able to incorporate specific eastern German sentiment into their programmes and agendas. The effects of GDR socialisation and the post-1989 transformation period have combined to fuel a process of identity creation within the eastern states. As such, space has developed for a regionally concentrated party to establish itself in eastern Germany. This is based upon the differences of opinion and attitude that Easterners exhibit in comparison to Westerners (chapter three).

2.2. Definitional Considerations

However, before discussing this works analytical approach in more detail, it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by the term 'regional'. This is a task, however, that remains fraught with pitfalls as the term 'regional' remains something of an arbitrary concept. Arthur Benz et al note that 'regions' are rarely sufficiently well-defined, and, as such, tend to be analysed and discussed in different ways by different authors[187]. Konrad Köstlin,

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[184]   Giovanni Sartori (1976): op. cit.

[185]   Stefano Bartolini & Peter Mair: *Identity, Competition and Electoral Volatility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.57.

[186]   Derek W. Urwin: 'The Price of a Kingdom: Territory, Identity and the Centre-Periphery Dimension in Western Europe', in Yves Meny & Vincent Wright (eds.): *Centre-Periphery Relations in Western Europe* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), p.167.

[187]   Arthur Benz, Kimberley Crow & Everhard Holtmann: 'Regionen und regionale Politik', in Arthur Benz &

meanwhile, unambiguously states that attempting to define what constitutes a region is in itself impossible, on account of their man-made nature and their ever changing dynamics. Köstlin is adamant that the interaction of external (structural) factors with localised phenomena produce unique sets of human-inspired territorial circumstances – ensuring that regions remain inherently unique and, therefore, 'undefinable' in their make-up[188]. While Köstlin's argument that regions remain fundamentally undefinable is true in absolute terms, within their own social, cultural, economic or political context, the notion of a region does take on a clear and coherent meaning. But one needs to be careful in interpreting exactly what this is meant to mean. As structural phenomena, regions *do not* have identities, aspirations or interests. To gain some sort of meaning, the spatial content of a region must be associated with some other politically relevant differences: in attitudes, identities, culture, levels of wealth and so on. Similarly, a basic and potentially divisive cleavage such as language does not, in itself, create political conflict: it does so only when language is associated with differential access to power, status or economic wealth. Hence agents play fundamental role in articulating and giving value to (territorial) structural difference[189].

Sylvia Pintarits has observed that there are indeed two reference points for regions: the first are economic/institutionalised/cultural characteristics that differentiate the region from the other. The second is the comparison with other regions that are clearly different, but formally take on the same role (i.e. they too are perceived or classified as regions)[190]. Hence the characteristics that arise to differentiate a region from the whole, and are seen as taking on special territorial salience, are exaggerated/articulated by social actors – and as such a region is constituted by the social actors who live within it.

For the purposes of this study a broad definition of the term region is employed. A region is, firstly, regarded as a geographic entity within a nation-state. The size and economic and social structure of regions may still vary immensely. Nonetheless, it is possible to propose as a working definition that regions are human constructs, that come about as the result of the conceptual division of the world on the basis of a specific set of chosen

Everhard Holtmann (Hrsg.): *Gestaltung Regionaler Politik: Empirische Befunde, Erklärungsansätze und Praxistransfer* (Magdeburg: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung Sachsen Anhalt, 1998), p.15.

[188] Konrad Köstlin: 'Die Regionalisierung von Kultur', in Konrad Köstlin und Hermann Bausinger (Hrsg.): *Heimat und Identität: Probleme regionaler Kultur* (Neumünster: Studien zur Volkskunde und Kulturgeschichte Schleswig-Holsteins Band 7, 1979), pp.25-38.

[189] David J. Elkins and Richard Simeon: 'Introduction', in David J. Elkins & Richard Simeon: *Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life* (London: Methuen, 1980), pp.xi.

[190] Sylvia Pintaris: *Macht, Demokratie und Regionen in Europa: Analysen und Szenarien der Integration und Desintegration* (Marburg: Metropolis Verlag, 1996), p.29.

criteria[191]. The selection and balance of criteria, of course, change with the geographical, social and historical setting. The most definitive characteristics of these regions are that they are geographically defined (on the grounds of historical precedent, judicial agreement or popular will), they tend to be areas of territory *within* present-day nation states (although, once again, they can theoretically overlap national borders[192]) and are located between historical, cultural, linguistic or economic dividing lines. Such a definition is necessarily broad, as each individual region is formed by original constraints and developments.

Moreover, many of the movements and parties that have been categorised as 'regional' often refer to themselves as 'national', defending long-held national traditions (be they cultural, historical, quasi-mythical or linguistic), with the aim of achieving separation, autonomy from, or simply greater recognition within, a more or less centralised state. Basque, Catalonian, Quebecois, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Breton and many other forms of national movement profess to protect and enhance the rights and culture of 'nations' of peoples who historically perceive themselves as being different from the 'foreign' state and elites who govern them from the centre.

From a methodological point of view it is not clear what analytical tools and devices are applicable to illustrate 'regional specificity' and 'regional uniqueness'. This is something that this work aims to help rectify. Erwin Fink et al conceptualise this problem in the German case:

> can the region be simply identified with German territorial states such as Saxony or Bavaria? Or should such a definition reflect the more sophisticated analytical tools that have only recently been applied to regional studies? These methods (among others), which have been adopted mainly from the social sciences, are used to consider how identities are constructed through language, ritual and regional and local ways of life (both entrenched and dynamic)[193].

When applied to the case of eastern Germany in particular, one must be clear what one is and what one is not trying to analyse. This work does not attempt to show that eastern

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[191] David B. Knight: 'Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism', in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Volume 72 Number 4, 1982, pp.514-531.

[192] An example of this is to be found in the Basque country, where Sabino Arana y Goiri, the founding father of Basque nationalism, synthesised the geographical extension of the Basque land as "Zazpiak-bat" (seven into one). By this he was indicating that the four provinces on the Spanish side and the three 'départements' in France should be united in the formation of a free Basque homeland. See Daniele Conversi: *The Basques, The Catalans and Spain* (London: Hurst and Company, 1997), p.53.

[193] Erwin Fink et al.: 'Memory, Democracy and the Mediated Nation: Political Cultures and Regional Identities in Germany, 1848-1998', in *German History*, Volume 17 Number 2, 1999, p.259.

Germans have no common ties with western Germans. This is patently not the case[194]. Over and above the common factors of language and history (prior to 1945), Germans from east and west display deep cultural and social similarities. This is not to say that the social, economic, cultural and political environments in the new and old *Länder* are synonymous - as it is clear that differing identities and societal constellations exist not just between states and regions, but also within them. Western Germany is not a homogeneous societal unit and regional disparities are clearly evident[195]. This is also the case within eastern Germany[196]. These developments are by no means limited to Germany alone, as even the most cursory glance at societies in the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Canada, France, Belgium and so forth amply illustrates.

Identity formation is, however, a process that takes place on a number of different levels. Local and regional identities do not necessarily sit uneasily with national or even cross-national identities - even if the process of identity adoption/creation often takes uneven amounts of time and different passages before it is widely accepted. In the German case, regional diversity and uniqueness has deep historical roots, and the German nation-state is in itself a relatively new construction placed over previous constellations of regional variety. Dialects and accents, as well as other forms of regional identification, remain strong to this day. The creation of a societal cleavage along the former inner-German border has, however, engendered a process of identity formation that cross-cuts other previously prevalent salient mobilising issues. Territorial identification has hence became an issue in political debate, as eastern German citizens recognise factors that link them (and inevitably exclude others - principally their western brethren) together.

Before creating a tool that enables the essence of the eastern German regional space and identity, and its political articulation, to be unpacked, it is necessary to discuss how other regional parties have created space for themselves in national party systems of the western

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[194]   At the time of unification, and in the first few months of 1990, many observers were astounded at how quickly and easily eastern Germans appeared to be adapting to the new western liberal democratic state which they were about to join, as eastern Germans expressed political attitudes that were sometimes even more liberal and democratic than those of their western German counterparts. See Laurence McFalls: 'Shock Therapy and Mental Walls: East Germany as a Model for Post-Communist Political Culture?' in *After the Wall: Eastern Germany Since 1989* (Boulder: Westview, 1998), p.149.

[195]   For example, Bavarians are clear and unambiguous in their territorial identification with their *Land*, just as they are clear that they are not Rhinelanders or from the Pfalz. Northern Germans from states such as Lower Saxony or Schleswig Holstein also have a clear self-appreciation as being from the northern areas of the country - and subsequently as not being from, for example, Baden, Hesse or The Ruhr area.

[196]   For example, within Mecklenburg West Pomerania, Mecklenburgers and citizens of West Pomerania are clear in their identification to one particular part of their *Land* - something that is also politically evident in the differing ways that they vote (see Nikolaus Werz & Jochen Schmidt (Hrsg.): *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern im*

world. Only by de-constructing regional party success can one analyse whether the PDS fits the broader European pattern of successful regional parties: and it is for this reason that section 2.3. moves on to begin classifying the different regional parties that are (or were) in existence.

2.3. Understanding Regional Parties and Regionalism

Classifying regional parties is not a straightforward task. Their heterogeneity ensures that they remain a diverse group and, electorally speaking, they tend to remain "*little more than an irritant*"[197]. Lieven De Winter has, however, attempted to classify regional parties with regard to the demands that they make on the state - and this approach does appear to be a helpful way of classifying regional parties political will and ambition. It becomes evident that regional movements and parties can make many forms of regional demands on a state. As a general rule, these demands tend to limit themselves to one of the three areas of culture, economics or politics (although a combination of all three may be evident). As a result of this, regional parties have tended to range from parties that lobby within the existing constitutional system for cultural recognition or economic resources, to campaigning for forms of regional autonomy or even separatism and the creation of a 'new' nation-state. De Winter regards the defining demand of a regional party's programme as a "*political reorganisation of the existing national power structure, for some kind of self-government*". He therefore proposes a classification of regionalist parties based on the radicalism of the demands they make. De Winter claims that protectionist regional parties represent a particular constituency (usually an ethnic or cultural community) that is of a unique character and as such claims to merit unique treatment. This often takes the form of cultural demands being met within the framework of the existing nation-state. The second grouping of autonomist parties are likely to accept power-sharing, provided that their particular region is seen to be given some form of 'special' status. The *Südtiroler Volkspartei* (SVP) is a prime example of this. To some extent, the *Convergencia Democratica de Catalunya* (CDC) and the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV) in the Basque Country fulfil this criteria, as although they do not exclude independence as an option, they settle in practice for autonomy.

Wandel - Bilanz und Ausblick (München: Günther Olzog Verlag), 1998. There are also, to name another example, strong historical ties particularly linking Saxons to their *Land*.
[197] Derek. W. Urwin: 'Harbinger, Fossil or Fleabite? 'Regionalism' and the West European Party Mosaic', in: Hans Daalder & Peter Mair (eds.): *Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change* (London: Sage, 1983), p.250.

National-Federalist parties, meanwhile, seek a clear territorial re-organisation of the nation-state. A number of the Belgian parties, as well as the *Lega Nord, Sinn Fein* and *Herri Batasuna* are examples of this[198].

The PDS can be classified as a protectionist party, as it seeks to protect and enhance the interests of eastern Germans without demanding a reconfiguration of state structures. This having been said, the PDS has, on occasion, articulated demands for specific structures that would enhance the representation of eastern Germans. The PDS calls for a new constitution, while stressing new forms of 'direct democracy'[199]. Latterly, the PDS has also called for the new *Länder* to be given special constitutional rights with regard to vetoing policies that are seen as being in contravention of the *Einheitsvertrag* (Unification Treaty)[200]. Classifying the PDS in this way does not, however, reveal a great deal about the methods and means that the PDS has adopted in achieving electoral success in eastern Germany. Even the most cursory glance at the PDS's election results indicates that it is much more at home in eastern Germany than it is in the west - making it a regionally strong party. This, even if just at a superficial level, makes it a party that is comparable with other regional political parties. The PDS is obviously articulating/forwarding/representing and/or defending interests and issues that are of particular political salience in the eastern states. It is for this reason that it fares so well in this region of Germany. This work aims to illustrate what these regional particularities and unique traits are. But if the nature of regional political mobilisation in Germany is to be adequately conceptualised, it is important to examine the rich mosaic of regional parties that exist in the rest of the democratic world.

2.3.1. Regional Parties in the Democratic World

Regional parties in the democratic world have traditionally been seen as ethnonationalist parties that seek to defend the interests of a particular ethnic group that is indigenous to a region of a nation-state. The range and scope of 'ethnic parties' is surprisingly large, and in 1991 Lane, McKay and Newton talked of 44 such entities in western

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[198] See Lieven De Winter: 'A Comparative Analysis of the Electoral, Office and Policy Success of Ethnoregionalist Parties', in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp.204-205.
[199] PDS (1993): op. cit. p.13.
[200] PDS Parteivorstand: *Rostocker Manifest. Für einen zukunftsfähigen Osten in einer gerechten Republik* (Berlin: Parteivorstand der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus, 1998), p.8.

Europe[201]. In a more recent analysis, Hearl, Budge and Peterson have analysed 118 regions in Europe, concluding that 33 of them have specifically 'ethnoregionalist' parties. They note that in 14 of these regions, the ethnoregionalist vote is divided over several parties, while in the other 19 one single ethnoregionalist party exists[202]. Urwin, meanwhile, claims to have pinpointed 115 regionalist parties within 17 countries in the period since 1945[203]. Lijphart, furthermore, contends that while some countries have party systems where ethnic parties do not play significant roles in political life, *all* countries remain ethnically divided to some extent - hence the latent potential is always there[204].

However, as these figures demonstrate, analysing regional parties, and the factors that spawn them, can also turn into a conceptual minefield. The terms 'ethnoregionalist', 'regionalist', 'ethnonationalist', 'nationalist' and 'regional' are all used to describe the same phenomena (i.e. regionally restricted political parties). Furthermore, as was mentioned above, a strong tendency remains towards over-playing the importance of some form of ethnicity in the success of regional parties. De Winter and Türsan, in their excellent analysis of regional parties in Europe, explicitly describe regional parties as 'ethnoregionalist', stressing the ethnic fundament that underpins their success[205]. However, this terminology fits uneasily when applied to prominent parties like the *Lega Nord* in Northern Italy, who base their political claims on a group solidarity that has little to do with ethnicity. This point is even conceded in the Italian case, with Marco Tarchi pointing out that:

> The claim of identity based on ethnicity and supported by folklorist forms of action (assemblies, demonstrations, graffiti written in dialect, costume parades) reduced them (... the original Northern Leagues ...) to cultural epiphenomena and isolated them from the socio-economic interests of the 'people', who in fact lacked the common ethnic or linguistic traits that these movements sought to represent[206].

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[201]   Jan-Erik Lane, David Mckay & Kenneth Newton: *Political Data Handbook: OECD Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp.125-132.

[202]   Derek Hearl, Ian Budge & Bernard Peterson: 'Distinctiveness of Regional Voting: A Comparative Analysis across the European Community Countries (1979-1993)', in *Electoral Studies*, Volume 15 Number 2, 1996, p.175.

[203]   Derek W. Urwin (1983): Hans Daalder & Peter Mair (eds.): op. cit. p.228.

[204]   Arend Lijphart: 'The Power-Sharing Approach' in Joseph V. Montville (ed.): *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), p.491. While Lijphart may be taken to this argument farther than is perhaps necessary, it is clear that modern-day nation-states are not normally home to homogeneous ethnic groups. For this reason plural societies tend to have larger or smaller minority groups within their national borders. Within Europe, it is perhaps only Portugal and Iceland that can be regarded as anything like exceptions to this rule. See David B. Knight: 'Territory and People or People and Territory', in *International Political Science Review*, Volume 6 Number 2, 1985, p.249.

[205]   Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit.

This work aims to correct the imbalance in academic discourse that overplays the ethnic element of regional consciousness, and it is for this reason that the term 'regional party' (rather than 'ethnoregionalist') is preferred.   This stems from the fact that while many regional parties incorporate separate ethnic identities into their political platforms, ethnic influences are not the primary motivational factors behind *all* regional parties. Group identity is not necessarily 'ethnic' - as the above mentioned case of the *Lega Nord* illustrates.

This work consciously aims to avoid falling into the trap of becoming too abstract (as is often the case when the attempt is made to incorporate too many factors and considerations into the study of differing regional phenomena), while at the same time aiming to avoid the curse of generalisation that too close a concentration on too few cases results in. Based on an extensive view of the literature on regional parties in the democratic world, this study will attempt to set out the key characteristics that underpin regional party success[207], and facilitate successful regional mobilisation. For this reason, the typology invoked is split into two parts: the first section, discussing the problem of 'what differentiates a region from the whole?', provides the foundations for the second part of the typology on the nature and mobilising forces of regional parties themselves. The typology will enable the author to both identify the social, political, economic and psychological differences between the new *Länder* and the old *Länder*, as well as to illustrate how the PDS is the political representation of this. The outline of the typology is set out below:

A Typology of Regionalism and how Regional Parties Mobilise Regional Particularity
Structural and Causal Factors Inherent in Regionalism

- Cultural Variables
- Socio-Economic Variables

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[206]   Marco Tarchi: 'The *Lega Nord*' in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (1998): ibid. p.144.

[207]   'Success' is defined differently by different parties. It is clear that, over and above their policy claims, some parties regard long-term stability in the party system as 'success', while others have more quantifiable goals, whether they be articulated in electoral terms (i.e. the CSU in Bavaria aims to achieve (at least) 50 per cent of the popular vote), or in policy terms (i.e. the preservation of cultural rights like the PC strives for in Wales). Some parties (like the SNP in Scotland) have ultimate goals (which in the case of the SNP involves Scottish independence), but in the short-medium term have to settle for incremental progress (like the creation of a Scottish Parliament). De Winter conceptualises this by placing regional parties into one of four categories, based on election results over three successive elections. *Hegemonic Parties* manage to win an absolute majority of votes on their particular region. *Large Parties* represent substantial minorities (between 25 per cent and 50 per cent) of the electorate. *Medium-Sized Parties* gain between 15 and 25 per cent of the votes, and *Small Parties* record only a small minority (less than 15 per cent) of votes. See Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. pp.212-214.

Agency Factors in the Mobilisation of Regionalism

- Party Leadership
- Party Organisation
- Party Policy

Each of the factors in the typology will be individually discussed, showing how particular parties exploit fault lines to their electoral advantage. It is not implied that regional parties *only* garner support as a result of individual mobilising factors, but rather that key, regionally salient issues act as catalysts of support. In reality, complex and unique combinations of these factors contribute to territorial cleavage[208] formation, and subsequently the development of regional movements that articulate territorial sentiment. It is not the aim of this study to explain why similar societal developments in one particular territory lead to particular party formation, while in other regions the 'national' parties are able to absorb such a challenge. The individuality of every case study would in itself make this a mammoth task to undertake. Rather, this chapter aims to highlight the criteria that regional parties have to fill *if* they are going to be successful. It will not stipulate that the fulfilment of such criteria in any one area automatically means a regional party *will* receive popular support.

2.3.2. Regional Parties and Approaches to Political Regionalism

The study of political regionalism appeared to acquire a new lease of life in the academic world after the 1960s. In line with the pioneering work of Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset, issues of territorial uniqueness, and the factors that lead to it developing and prospering, became mainstream topics of discussion amongst political scientists. This is particularly true in terms of the concepts of centre and periphery, which, even if problems still surround their usage[209], remain important vehicles for the study of

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[208] For an initial analysis into cleavage formation in western, industrialised society, see Seymour M. Lipset & Stein Rokkan: *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives* (London: Macmillan, 1967).

[209] The centre-periphery paradigm may have enjoyed undeniable popularity in the last thirty years, but it has not been without its critics. It has been rejected on the grounds that it is relatively simple in its nature and it has only weak explanatory value: centres and peripheries can be perceived as being everywhere, and centres are more than likely to have some sort of periphery attached to them just as peripheries can often have some form of centre. However, such criticisms tend to be based on an over-expression of geography, to the exclusion of other supplementary ways of conceptualising centre-periphery relations. What may, in fact, be of primary importance may be distances in economic, cultural, social, ethnic, political or psychological, as well as geographic, terms. For a fuller discussion of this and other criticisms of the centre-periphery model see Yves Meny & Vincent Wright: 'General Introduction', in Yves Meny & Vincent Wright (eds.): *Centre-Periphery Relations in Western*

territorial politics today[210]. By employing the concepts of centre and periphery one can begin to appreciate how the dominant cultural positions of centres influences and conflicts with the subject culture that has tended to characterise peripheries - and hence how the relationship between the two can shape territorial identifications in nominally peripheral areas of a state.

The relatively uncomplicated nature of the terms has led to centres and peripheries being employed to refer to both territories and population groups in a given nation-state[211], and analysts have subsequently used often quite different criteria in classifying territories and populations as either peripheral or central. Within this context, it is clear that further differentiation is necessary if the terms are to be usefully employed. In terms of space and distance, two types exist: one physical, the other social and cultural. Stein Rokkan termed one a *geographical* space and the other a *membership* space. The membership boundary tends to be much firmer than the geographical boundary: you can cross the border into a territory as a tourist, trader or casual labourer, but you will find it much more difficult to be accepted as a member of the pre-eminent core group within the territory[212]. In areas where the interaction between the centre and the periphery is dominated by the core culture, and the interests of the dominant group predominate, it is clear that any peripheral identity will have only limited structural opportunities for reproduction. Yet the glue of a historically defined regional culture[213], whether this be based on (most frequently) language, religion or other unique cultural stigmata can still be cohesive enough to support peripheral identities[214] (see section 2.4.1.1.).

Centres can be minimally defined as privileged locations within a territory[215]. Identifying centres involves locating where institutions are based, where resource holders and elites meet, where established arenas exist for deliberations and decision-making as well as where elites and the mass of the citizenry come together for collective reaffirmation of their own identity (in whatever form this may take)[216]. Centre-building intrinsically involves the

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Europe (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp.1-9.

[210] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.): *State Formation, Nation-Building and Mass Politics in Europe: The Theory of Stein Rokkan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.109.

[211] It is important to make the distinction between territorial centre-periphery distinctions and those that are based on ethnic-cultural contrasts. One can, for example, talk of an imported proletariat as a 'socio-cultural' periphery even though it is resident in a central area. Regardless of whether the terms are used in connections with *territories* or *people*, it is important that the geographical content remains visible in some form otherwise the dichotomy becomes indistinguishable from other societal conflicts.

[212] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): ibid. p.104.

[213] For an detailed discussion of the meaning of 'regional political cultures', see Richard Simeon & David J. Elkins (1980): op. cit.: pp.31-76.

[214] Derek W. Urwin (1985): op. cit. p.162.

[215] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): op. cit. p.110.

[216] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): ibid. p.111.

privileging of one site over another and by expanding so much effort in the creation of the centre that future generations feel bound to retain the location as a centre as a result[217]. The reasons for the choice of that particular site may no longer be valid, or they may even have been arbitrary from the very beginning, but once a number of institutions, fora, arena and monuments have been created, the opportunity costs of creating a 'new centre' become very high indeed. This leads the centre to exert considerable, often dominant, influence over the more outlying parts of the territory.

Peripheries, meanwhile, tend to be subordinate to the authority of the centre. The centre tends to represent the seat of authority, and the periphery those geographical locations at the furthest distance from the centre, but still within the territorial border of the state[218]. Specific characteristics are implicitly attributed to peripheries: a periphery is normally dependent, with little control over its own fate and possessing minimal resources for the defence of its distinctiveness against outside pressures. Wars and conflicts may have led to particular territories being conquered and (imperfectly) incorporated into the larger nation-state. Those officials who administer the day-to-day affairs of these peripheral areas are likely to have the interests of the centre at heart and place them over and above those of the indigenous population. In the classic centre-periphery model, peripheries also tend to have poorly developed economies, at the extreme either a subsistence economy standing outside the territorial network of economic exchanges and trade, or one that is dependent upon a single commodity that is sold in distant markets over which the periphery itself will have little or no control[219]. Finally, the classic model of centre-periphery relations regards peripheries as having a marginal culture: without unified and distinctive institutions of its own, its culture will tend to be fragmented and parochial. Though not fully integrated into the overall system of communications and identity that is dominant across the politically defined territory, its ability to resist absorption by the latter remains weak and precarious[220]. These are obviously ideal-type characteristics which may not apply in all particular cases. They do, however, draw attention to the fact that peripherality can exist in three distinctive domains of social life: in politics, in economics and in culture[221].

The development of the centre-periphery framework in the 1960s and 1970s led issues such as social and cultural difference, income disparities and the unequal distribution of

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[217] Harold Innis: *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951), pp.92-131.
[218] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): op. cit. p.113.
[219] Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): ibid. p.113.
[220] Stein Rokkan, Derek Urwin, Frank H. Aarebrot, Pamela Malaba & Terje Sande: *Centre-Periphery Structures in Europe: An ISSC Workbook in Comparative Analysis* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1987), pp.35-40.

wealth to be increasingly discussed in explicitly territorial terms[222]. Although territory in itself is a neutral concept, it becomes politically significant as a result of the interpretation and the values which a population ascribes to it – be they ethnic, historical, linguistic or for other reasons[223]. Territory can, therefore, quickly become a concept generated by people organising space for their own aims – a fact that the centre-periphery framework helps to highlight. In the 1960s political elites, realising the malleability of territory, therefore began to increasingly mobilise peripheral feelings of distinctiveness within the political process. The rise (although not necessarily their creation) to prominence of regional movements throughout Europe in this period, based on the political articulation of interests (be they cultural or socio-economic) specific to that region, is living proof of this. Furthermore, the centralising and modernising tendencies of modern-day capitalism have further increased the salience of peripheral identities. Elite actors within (national) dominant cultures have encouraged *national* political integration, yet these processes also paradoxically contribute to an increasing awareness of ethnic consciousness, and a growth in the desire for identification and membership in a community less distinct and impersonal than national society[224].

It is within the context of the centre-periphery debate discussed above that a number of authors have proceeded to develop theories of territorial mobilisation that explicitly stress the importance of centre building and central domination in spawning political regionalism. The importance of structural dynamics have, often, been seen as being paramount in determining human behaviour within given regions[225]. These approaches stress that particular social, economic and/or political environments (or structures) come together to create peripheral uniqueness. This happens at a number of different levels, and can take the form of economic uniqueness, cultural specificity (most often in the form of a separate language) or historical difference. At the political level, it is regionally based political parties that act as agents of structural specificity, fostering and reflecting territorial consciousness and regional identification[226]. This is principally as such resources are inherently passive – i.e. they

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[221]   Peter Flora, Stein Kuhnle & Derek W. Urwin (eds.) (1999): op. cit. p.113-114.
[222]   Yves Meny: 'The Political Dynamics of Regionalism: Italy, France and Spain', in Roger Morgen (ed.): *Regionalism in European Politics* (London: Policy Studies Institute, 1987), p.3.
[223]   Jean Gottman: 'The Evolution of the Concept of Territory', in *Social Science Information*, Volume 14, 1975, p.29.
[224]   Yves Meny (1987): op. cit. p.5.
[225]   This is not meant to imply that proponents of such approaches would necessarily describe themselves as 'structuralists'. On the contrary, it is simply an ontological point on the positions which they implicitly take up within the structure-agency debate – in other words their tendency to privilege structures over agents. See Colin Hay: 'Structure and Agency', in David Marsh & Gerry Stoker (eds.): *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p.193.
[226]   John A. Agnew: 'Structural and Dialectical Theories of Political Regionalism', in Alan D. Burnett & Peter J. Taylor (eds.): *Political Studies from Spatial Perspectives* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1981), pp.275-289.

represent *potential* more than anything else – and it takes catalysts and agents to articulate this potential in the political arena[227].

Largely structural theories of uneven economic development across a given state[228], or of internal colonialism[229] or of ethnic competition[230] all claim, in their different ways, to account for regional mobilisation. Tom Nairn, for example, produces, particularly in the light of the SNP's success in Scotland in the 1970s, a thorough economic explanation of the importance of international capitalism in dictating the differing political environments of regions within Britain. He perceives Scotland's then weaker economic base as leading to a general growth in the dissatisfaction with the 'British' parties, and as such a rise in nationalist sentiment[231]. Michael Hechter uses structural terminology in a different way arguing that states like the United Kingdom (and, it can be argued, post-1989 Germany) have been built and 'integrated' by a process of domination by a central or core (ethnic) group. The centre dominates political, economic and cultural activity to the detriment of the periphery. Peripheral areas subsequently remain disadvantaged or exploited, and local cultures, while not disappearing, are subject to a systematic battering by that of the dominant group[232]. This has been well summarised by Peter Wagstaff when he notes that: *"centralisation of power, often perceived from the margins as internal colonialism, is the factor which provokes regional dissent and the desire for a distinctive voice"*[233].

A different structural analysis can be drawn from the competition between differing 'ethnic' groups in western Europe. Structural processes and constraints of modernisation dictate that ethnic groups are forced to compete for the same rewards and resources, as a result of the growing interconnectedness of what were once territorially and economically separate peoples. Put another way, the increasing integration of regional economies into the

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[227] Derek W. Urwin (1985): op. cit. p.162.

[228] The uneven economic development that results from international capitalism has been seen as the driving factor behind particular regional political developments, see Tom Nairn: *The Break-up of Britain. Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1981). George Hoffman has encapsulated the commonly held perception in this approach by observing that *"modernisation and industrialisation in many multinational societies has an uneven impact on a country's regions and has contributed to regional consciousness"*. See George W. Hoffman: 'Regional Policies and Regional Consciousness in Europe's Multinational Societies', in *Geoforum*, Volume 8 Number 3, 1977, p.122.

[229] For further analysis see Michael Hechter: *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975). Michael Hechter: 'Internal Colonialism Revisited', in Edward J. Tiryakin & Ronald Rogowski (eds.): *New Nationalism of the Developed West* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp.17-26.

[230] Charles Ragin: 'Ethnic Political Mobilisation: The Welsh Case', in *American Sociological Review*, Number 44, 1979, pp.619-634.

[231] Tom Nairn (1981): op. cit.

[232] Michael Hechter (1975): op. cit.

[233] Peter Wagstaff: *Regionalism in Europe* (Oxford: Intellect European Studies Series, 1994), p.12.

capitalist system has given rise to a resurgence in regional movements[234]. Regional mobilisation occurs in order to 'fight for the cause' and to defend a particular regional distinctiveness[235].

While these approaches undoubtedly contribute to the understanding of the nature of political regionalism and the nature of centre-periphery politics, structures alone cannot *cause* predictable and specific political outcomes of regional party success. The notion that a region and a people are in a peripheral position within a society does not in itself mean that political regionalism and regional political parties will necessarily be salient. While regional parties do take advantage of structurally advantageous societal and economic conditions that peripheral positions spawn, it is clear that structural factors only *assist in understanding* how regional parties are successful at the polls, as, as agents within the political process, it is the regional parties themselves that need to articulate and mobilise potential voters in the political arenas[236]. Hence structures merely help to define the potential range of options and strategies of actors. The structural theories briefly mentioned above have exacerbated specific territorial grievances or particularities, and as such increase the propensity for a regional party to develop. This is because each specific regional environment provides a unique set of objective conditions in which different combinations of interests are defined within different cleavage structures[237]. Social and political action is contextualised within the structural contexts in which it takes place.

The distinction between structure and agency is revealed in the typology outlined in the previous section. The first part of the typology highlights the structural factors that help to differentiate a regional space from the broader nation-state. Without the structural background of a regional space, where citizens exhibit a clear territorial identity, regional parties will not be able to mobilise political support. The second typology highlights the agency factors, illustrating how regional parties act as agents in the political process. The key division between structure and agency is one of the reasons that a two-part typology needed to be created in order to test the key hypothesis.

A party system that allows for the growth and stimulation of new and challenging voting habits is, of course, also necessary in allowing the expression and instrumentalisation

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[234] Yves Meny (1987): op. cit. p.5.
[235] Charles Ragin (1979): op. cit.
[236] Colin Hay (1995): op. cit. p.189.
[237] The cleavages that exist in modern-day democratic societies are still usually based on the traditional societal conflict lines of class, religion and centre-periphery. Their particular importance in a given polity, however, can and does vary immensely, as a result of their interaction with other regionally salient political issues, debates and

of regional sentiment[238]. This process has two dimensions: firstly, 'traditional' parties are perceived as being unable to represent regional groupings[239]. Secondly, regional political consciousness must be strong enough to prompt political mobilisation around a territorial cleavage. Other cross-cutting cleavages may also dictate that even in areas where a considerable degree of regional consciousness is evident, it has rarely manifested itself in a particularist regional voice (as was the case in Scotland, for example, up until the last thirty years). It is for these reasons that the dynamics of party system change need to be analysed, as this offers the key to when and how regional parties are able to cement themselves within national party systems.

2.3.3. Regional Parties and the Roots of Party System Development

A brief overview of the place of regional parties within the literature of *party system development* is necessary to illustrate how hard political scientists have found it to capture the reasons for their continued existence. Regional parties are seen as somehow unique and different and have not easily fitted into broad theories of European party system development[240]. Aside from the studies by Hoffman[241], Levi and Hechter[242], Rokkan and Urwin[243], Newman[244] and, latterly, De Winter and Türsan[245], the literature on regional parties remains uneven in both scope and method, and is largely descriptive. Regional parties are seen as interesting little anomalies in the party systems of western European states.

On the surface, regional parties do indeed appear to be heterogeneous, and it is clear that communist, socialist, social democratic, Christian democratic and far-right 'party families' have more in common across international frontiers. Most regional parties are small in size, they do not share a common train of economic thought and do not have a particularly

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dividing lines. For a detailed discussion on the nature and types of cleavages with western democracies see Jan-Erik Lane & Svante Ersson: *Politics and Society in Western Europe* (London: Sage, 1999), pp.37-75.

[238] Maurice Duverger: *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State* (London: Methuen, 1964).

[239] Giovanni Sartori (1976): op. cit.

[240] Ferdinand Müller-Rommel: 'Ethnoregionalist Parties in Western Europe: Theoretical Considerations and Framework of Analysis', in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit. pp.17-27.

[241] George W. Hoffman (1977): op. cit.

[242] Margaret Levi & Michael Hechter: 'A rational choice approach to the rise and decline of ethnoregional political parties', in Edward A. Tiryakin & Ronald Rogowski (eds.) (1985): op. cit. pp.128-146.

[243] Stein Rokkan & Derek W. Urwin: *Economy, Territory, Identity: The Politics of Western European Peripheries* (London: Sage, 1983). See also Richard Rose & Derek W. Urwin: in Hans Daalder & Peter Mair (eds.) (1983): op. cit. pp. 221-256.

[244] Simon Newman: 'Ethnoregional parties: a comparative perspective', in *Regional Politics and Policy*, Volume 4, Summer 1994, pp.28-66.

[245] Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit.

common view of how society should be structured[246]. The only genuine commonality is their claim upon the state: they identify themselves with, and act (they claim) on behalf of, territories and groups that do not coincide with state boundaries.

In order to begin to appreciate the place of regional parties within European polities, an understanding of the parameters of party system development in general is necessary. Lipset & Rokkan's attempts to unpack the complex nature of party system formation throw much light on the mechanics of party competition across western Europe today. Interests, values and ideologies in European politics are linked in complex ways to produce a series of identifiable currents and trends that span European politics as a whole. Each of these has a recognisable social base and usually a common body of doctrinaire thought, that manifests itself in a rich variety of national, regional and local ways. Lipset & Rokkan conceptualised this in 1967 and came to see the party system as a dependent variable that has developed as a result of the freezing of cleavages that have long-held traditions within society. They highlight four main societal cleavages, stemming from one of the two great revolutions (the so-called national revolution and the industrial revolution), of centre/periphery, state/church, land/industry and owner/worker. In the words of Lipset and Rokkan:

> ... the party systems of the 1960s reflect, with few but significant exceptions, the cleavage structures of the 1920s ... the party alternatives, and in remarkably many cases, the party organisations, are older than the majorities of the national electorates[247].

Universal suffrage and the final inclusion of all adults within the democratic process left little (or no) scope for new cleavages to be formed and/or mobilised upon. It is for this reason that the parameters of party competition are perceived as remaining broadly as they were in the 1920s[248]. This does not mean that the same parties exist, but simply that the same cleavage divides exist and they continue to shape the party system. In recent years there has been a mountain of scholarly works pointing out, however, that party systems are no longer as 'frozen' as Lipset and Rokkan once propagated[249]. The materialist/post-materialist divide

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[246] Derek W. Urwin: 'Perspectives on the Conditions of Regional Protest and Accommodation' in Stein Rokkan & Derek W. Urwin (eds.): *The Politics of Territorial Identity* (London: Sage, 1982), p.426.
[247] Seymour M. Lipset & Stein Rokkan (1967): op. cit. p.50.
[248] Stefano Bartolini & Peter Mair (1990): op. cit. p.57.
[249] See for instance Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan & Paul Allen Beck (eds.) (1984): op. cit. For evidence of empirical support of this position see Richard Rose & Derek W. Urwin: 'Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems since 1945', in *Political Studies*, Volume 18 Number 3, 1970, pp.287-319.

across the industrialised world has added another dimension to the debate[250], as well-educated, increasingly affluent citizens are perceived to be interested in, and politically mobilised around, 'new' cleavage-issues (i.e. the environment, peace etc.). In the particular case of Germany, meanwhile, the complexities of the unification and transformation processes have sown the seeds of another (territorial) cleavage divide (see chapter three).

Giovanni Sartori has challenged the body of work that regards the party system as a dependent variable, and he refers in his numerous works to the party system as an independent variable, with the underlying tenet being that of party control[251]. This implies that societal changes do not necessarily set the parameters of a party system and that changes only occur to the extent that parties lose their ability to set the agenda and subsequently lose their own influence on the system. In Sartori's words:

> A freezed (sic) party system is simply a party system that intervenes in the political process as an independent *system of channelment*, propelled and maintained by its own laws of momentum[252].

Given institutional structures and electoral mechanisms provide clear constraints on, and incentives to, political parties, but it is leaders who choose which political space to occupy, which ideological orientation to pursue and what political strategy they wish to employ. Parties react to the environment around them, and the rise and fall of new parties indicates that parties are sometimes unable to react in such a way as to remain dominant over all political processes in a given state.

Sartori's work would imply that the existence of a regional party in eastern Germany results from the inability of the 'western' parties to represent the differing strands of societal opinion in eastern Germany or to set the agenda for political discussion, as the momentum that generally leads to party system adaptation cannot overcome the unique challenge of anchoring itself to a 'new' society. Western German parties have been unable to

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[250] See in particular Ronald Inglehart: *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton: University Press, 1977).
[251] Giovanni Sartori: 'The Sociology of Parties: A Critical Review', in Otto Stammer (ed.): *Party Systems, Party Organisation and the Politics of the New Masses* (Berlin: Institut für Politische Wissenschaft an der Freien Universität, 1968), pp.1-25; Giovanni Sartori: 'From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology', in Seymour Martin Lipset (ed.): *Politics and the Social Sciences* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp.65-100; Giovanni Sartori (1976): op. cit.
[252] Giovanni Sartori (1968): op. cit. p.21.

institutionalise political representation to so that eastern German-specific sentiment is fully incorporated into political discourse[253].

Radical societal transformation has influenced the factors underlying political mobilisation, as (western) parties fail to grasp the specific nature both of the transformation process and the legacy of forty years of state socialism. If party systems mould themselves to societies over the course of time, then Sartori's arguments remain strong, with eastern Germany offering the almost unprecedented case of a unique set of political constellations being moulded onto another polity. The West German party system was placed onto a fledgling democracy that had contributed neither to the systems development nor its efficacy - and as such had found it difficult to adjust to a 'foreign' political way of life.

The role of societal cleavages, particularly with relevance to the East German case, depends on the relationship between society and party competition. New conditions of electoral competition dictate an increased propensity for change in political constellations[254]. This relationship has to be derived, at least during the initial stages of a society's development or configuration, from a polity's historical specificity - and in particular from the issues that trigger off the initial processes of mobilisation and politicisation. Hence a regional party in eastern Germany, articulating new-found interests and issues, fulfils a function in the German polity that 'all-German' parties have difficulty doing. This work hypothesises that the PDS has crafted this role for itself within the context of social, economic and political change, and that the transformation process has caused a realignment of the party system in as much as an eastern German regional party has stabilised itself in the 'new' political environment.

Wide-ranging and thorough (as well as often being complex) though such party system analysis is, literature on party system change still remains unable, however, to offer reasons for the very existence and proliferation of regional movements. That they are there, and are embedded in the cleavage structures of certain societies, is not disputed, but generally the reasons for this and for their expansion remain less clear-cut. Urwin contends that the majority tend to be products of the 'national' revolution that created, redefined and stabilised state structures across Europe. Parties like the *Südtiroler Volkspartei* in Italy, as well as, the *Slesvig Parti* in Denmark[255] are excellent examples of this. They fit into the party system as

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[253] Christopher S. Allen: 'Germany and the Comparative Political Party Experience: Sclerotic or Dynamic Institutions', in Christopher S. Allen (ed.): *Transformation of the German Political Party System: Institutional Crisis or Democratic Renewal* (New York: Berghahn, 1999), p.17.
[254] Stefano Bartolini & Peter Mair (1990): op. cit. p.147.
[255] Derek W. Urwin (1982): in Stein Rokkan & Derek W. Urwin (eds.): op. cit. p.429. Urwin does concede that not *all* regional parties result from this period of a state's history. The particular examples that he uses for this are the *Front Démocratique des Francophones* and the *Rassemblement Wallon* in Belgium.

articulators of clearly defined ethnic groups which ended up on the 'wrong' side of ethnic boundaries in the period of 19th century state-building. It is clear that the extended suffrage facilitated the organisation of parties for the protection of minority and territorial interests. Greater territorial communication and interaction were also evident[256]. But this democratic extension also facilitated other vote-mobilising factors such as class awareness. Clashes between 'peripheral' specifics and 'central' demands or influences also lead in certain cases to regional mobilisation. Language was traditionally the most salient of these clashes, and education and culture in general often provided high profile arenas for battle.

This brief review highlights the difficulties that analysts have had in classifying regional parties. No systematic method has been developed for analysing the factors that underpin their existence. And those authors that have discussed regional parties in any great depth often place too much stress on the importance of ethnicity in prompting territorial mobilisation. It is clear, however, that in order to be politically successful regional parties have to wrestle agenda setting functions from the major parties. Given the advantages that the national parties possess, this can be a difficult task. Secondly, they have to be able to politically exploit latent territorial identification (that is frequently spawned by structurally unique factors) to their advantage, stressing how they, and they alone, represent the interests of the indigenous population. The territorial cleavage divide has to be pronounced enough to prompt voters to cast their votes on these grounds, in the belief that the regional party is acting in their best interests. The typological analysis offered in section 2.4. further elaborates on this. It goes some way in filling the hole in the academic discourse by pinpointing the factors that contribute to the creation of a territorial cleavage divide, before illustrating how a regional party then acts on these to establish itself in the party system.

2.4. A Typology of Regionalism and how Regional Parties Mobilise Regional Particularity

The typology of is split into two sections in order to illustrate the differences between structures that facilitate the advent of regionalism and agents that enable regionalism to find political expression. Section 2.4.1. and section 2.4.2. outline the two key structural variables that foster a regionally distinct political environment, while sections 2.4.2.1 - 2.4.2.3. highlight the methods and means that distinguish regional parties in their articulation of this regional difference.

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[256] Derek W. Urwin (1982): ibid. p.429.

2.4.1. Structural and Causal Factors Inherent in Regionalism

The two factors discussed below contribute to conceptualising what a 'regional space' is – or, put another way, an area where a regional party may be able to stabilise itself within a regional party system. They are structural factors which a regional party may instrumentalise in order to illustrate how the territory where it is active is different from the nation-state as a whole. A regional space can be defined as the sum total of complex structural interactions within society that come together to create a unique political space in a given communication area. On account of differences in historical background, constitutional constraints and/or economic imperatives regional spaces can take very different forms. However, the importance of territory ensures that political competition functions in a different way to that of the larger nation-state of which the territory is a part. In political terms, nationwide parties are not able to encapsulate regional specificities into their programmes and platforms - and, as such, territorially specific can parties rise to prominence as advocates of regional interests.

The examples of regional spaces, and regional parties that are active in these spaces, that are noted below are not exhaustive. Cases discussed are done so primarily for their illustrative value, and are not meant to be seen within a comparative context. Every case is too different, and there remain too many individually unique variables to conduct a comparative study on the nature of all regional spaces. Hence comparative judgements need to be necessarily guarded. None the less, the broad underlying variables that lead to processes of regional space creation can be summarised under these two broad headings.

2.4.1.1. Cultural Variables

Cultural variables frequently play an important role in explaining the existence of distinct regional spaces. The nature of these cultural variables can be wide and varied and they can therefore range from territorial identifications to the existence of an indigenous language and from historical specificity to important and distinct regionally specific symbols and characteristics.

The nature of the peripherality outlined in section 2.3.2. can contribute to the creation of a unique territorial identity. Even where regions possess negligible institutional frameworks through which to exert influence in the wider nation-state, the medium of culture and ethnic difference may ensure that distinct forms of territorial identifications remain clearly evident.

Territorial identities may well be strengthened and sharpened on account of economic difference, but generally it is within the cultural context that they are based. Cultural identities stem from that fact that people are naturally tied to their territory through the process of socialisation that they go through as residents of that particular territory. More precisely, they identify with their kin, with their language as well as other cultural-ethnic traditions that often differentiate them from other citizens of the larger nation-state. Territorial identifications - a key component of a regional space - are prevalent across many regions of Europe and the democratic world, and it is clear that many exist within the context of a cultural movement that is based on (ethno-)cultural difference.

The terms 'ethnicity' and 'culture' are, however, frequently used and abused in both popular and academic discourse, and the understanding and application of both terms can differ greatly from study to study. This is because the nature of both ethnicity and culture remain highly contested[257]. Without wishing to enter the debate on the precise meanings of the two concepts, this work adopts an approach that identifies ethnic identities as being grounded in the belief that the group has its roots in a common ancestry, and notions of community are based both on birth and a shared native culture[258]. Some authors have described ethnicity as the key structural variable upon which *all* regional parties mobilise support[259] and it remains uncontested that ethnic claims lie at the root of much regionalism and therefore regional party success, not to mention territorial identity formation. This stems from the fact that ethnicity is indeed a powerful motor of identity creation.

Culture, while often used interchangeably with ethnicity, is understood here to mean to be a pattern of experiences, opinions, evaluations, knowledge and attitudes that exist in connection with a distinct social system. 'Indigenous' or 'unique' cultures can and do develop, or exist, more or less independently from other cultural systems within a given society (in the case of a nation-state). When discussing the nature of *territorial* identification, the notions of ethnicity and culture, defined as they are here, can and do frequently over-lap, and while authors may argue about the exact nature of the identification that they are

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[257] Stuart Hall & Bram Gieben (eds.): *Formations of Modernity* (Cambridge: The Open University, 1992).

[258] Andreas Staab: *National Identity in Eastern Germany - Inner Unification or Continued Separation?* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1998), p.127. The term ethnicity is derived from *Ethnos*, the Greek word for 'nation', and is seen as characterising common descent. Objective blood relationships do not necessarily have to exist, rather it is a subjective belief in a common line of descent which helps to define an 'ethnic identity'. It is for this reason, that, in the words of Max Weber, ethnic group identity is unique in that it is a *presumed identity*. See Max Weber: *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, edited by Günther Roth & Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), p.389.

[259] See for example Derek W. Urwin (1982): in Stein Rokkan & Derek W. Urwin (eds.). *"The salience and consciousness of group membership is variable over time, but always some kind of ethnicity lies at its base"* op. cit. p.428.

discussing, one thing does normally remain clear: the identification, be it ethnically or culturally based, is almost always *territorial* in its nature. The identity relates to a history, a set of events, people, practices, traditions, myths and legends that are related to a distinct piece of territory[260]. And it is this territorial identification that differentiates the region from the larger nation-state of which it is a part.

The territorial mobilisation of ethno-cultural difference in the form of ethnonationalism is widespread across Europe. Historical identities have been crystallised over long periods of time and some continue to sit uneasily within the present institutional structures within which they find themselves[261]. This is more overtly the case in the southerly and eastern corners of the continent, but ethnic tensions are still visible in other western European states. The examples of ethnic minorities being evident in a region of a state, and as such leading to the citizens of the region creating identities and allegiances with that territory, are therefore numerous[262]. Many 'ethnonationalist' regional parties are also in evidence across Europe, seeking national liberation from a (perceived) illegitimate and unjust central authority. They use the territorial cleavage within a state to further ethnonationalist aims and a large number of regional/national parties have arisen on the basis of ethnic origins and sentiments[263], focusing on intrinsic rights to justice and self-determination for a (persecuted) ethnic community. Or as Smith phrases it, ethnically based parties seek *"the restoration of a degraded community to its rightful status and dignity"* and through the aim of a separate political existence the *"goal of the restoration and the social embodiment of that dignity"*[264]. The use of the term 'ethnic' has, until relatively recently (i.e. the 1970s), found little resonance in the academic world, and tended to be widely ignored[265]. However, this

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[260]   The Welsh Eisteddfodau, for example, are unlikely ever to take place in the English border towns of Chester, Shrewsbury or Hereford, just as the Scottish Highland Games will not normally be seen in the cities of Carlisle, Newcastle or Durham. They remain cultural events that are intrinsically tied to their territory of origin.

[261]   The uneasy place of Corsica within the French political system, the Northern Irish question within the UK and the Basque problem within Spain are all representative of the uneasy place of historically defined communities within contemporary nation-states.

[262]   The number of minuscule regional parties that exist across western Europe are testament to this. Many ethnic regional parties exist as they find themselves on the 'wrong side' of national boundaries. Governments are often quick to recognise this, and in many cases special electoral rules are employed to enable the interests of the minority (ethnic) group to be articulated. Examples of this include the *Südschleswiger Wählerverband*, which has attempted to defend the cultural rights of Danes in South Schleswig and the *Slesvig Partei* which does the same for the German population on the Danish side of the border. The *Slesvig Partei* has been noticeably successful in doing this, and in 1978 it was claimed that 85 per cent of German identifiers supported the party, while 91 per cent of its support is derived from the party's German identification. Figures quoted in Stein Rokkan & Derek W. Urwin (1983): op. cit. p156.

[263]   David B. Knight (1982): op. cit. pp.514-531.

[264]   Anthony D. Smith: 'Towards a Theory of Ethnic Separation', in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 2 Number 1, 1979, p.22.

[265]   Walker Connor: 'The Politics of Ethnonationalism', in *Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 27, 1973, pp.1-21.

imbalance was seemingly redressed through the 1970s, even to the extent where it was claimed that ethnicity was over-used as an explanatory tool[266].

But over and above academic discussions as to the applicability of the concept, it is beyond doubt that ethnic consciousness has proven a powerful force in, firstly, fostering group identities, and, secondly, in mobilising groups of people to protect or enhance their ethnic integrity, or uniqueness, as well as their particular historical and/or cultural backgrounds and interests in the form of a party with the aim of specifically protecting their interests. Forms of mobilisation vary: militant ethnonationalism[267] is evident in a number of states, ranging from the terrorist tactics of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (and its political wing *Sinn Fein*) in its attempt to achieve Union with the Republic of Ireland, to *Herri Batasuna* (HB - and its often alleged representation of similarly brutal ETA activists) with its aim of constructing a separate Basque state outside the central authority of Spain and France.

The Basque case is, however, an excellent example of the complex political nature that ethnic identification (and regional party support) can take. Just because one perceives oneself as a member of a specific ethnic group, this by no means ensures uniformity of political will. Greenwood highlights five examples of differing Basque political orientation, ranging from attempts to achieve political autonomy within a federated state or as semi-autonomous provinces, to outright separatism for all of the seven traditional Basque regions in the form of a 'Basque Nation-State'. Other self-proclaimed Basques look more towards a withering of European states altogether, and the creation of a Europe made up of ethnic groups, while as a result of centuries of adverse political experience some display agnosticism and cynicism towards any form of political settlement. Greenwood also mentions a final group of Basques who, at the time of writing, were more or less favourable to what was then the regime[268].

These widely differing forms of ideology and political strategy go much beyond the appreciation of one's Basque identity, and hence it should be no surprise that alongside the all-Spanish parties there are a number of Basque nationalist parties. As Raento notes, "*the relative unity of Basque nationalists no longer exists, instead they have been divided into*

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[266] See Pierre Louis Van den Berghe: 'Ethnic Pluralism in Industrial Societies: A Special Case?', in *Ethnicity*, Volume 3 Number 3, pp.242-255.
[267] The term 'Ethnonationalism' originally dates back to writings by Walker Connor in 1973. By this he means "*internal discord predicated upon ethnic divergence*" and calls for self-determination by an ethnic group. For more analysis of this concept see Walker Connor (1973): op. cit. p.2; Walker Conner: 'Ethnonationalism in the First World: The Present in Historical Perspective', in Milton J. Esman (ed.): *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World* (Ithaça: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp.19-45; Walker Connor: *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[268] Davydd J. Greenwood (1988): op. cit. pp.85-86.

mutually antagonistic groups"[269]. In theory, these groups all share the original nationalist ideal of an independent, territorially unified and Basque speaking state based on a clear structural divide between Basques and 'others'. The reality is, however, that the Basques are bitterly divided over what 'national self-determination' should mean, how this should be achieved and who can legitimately decide this and how[270]. It is even the case that 'one-province' populist parties have grown within provinces in the Basque country[271]. The *Partido Nacionalista Vasco/Eusko Alderdi Jeltalea* (PNV/EAJ) has emerged as the strongest force in the Basque Country, drawing in conservative and Catholic Basques, alongside the smaller *Eusko Alkartsauna* (EA). The traditionally weak nature of the Spanish parties has increased their preponderance to split or simply vanish[272] - as was illustrated when the EA broke away from the PNV over inner conflicts within previous PNV governments. This has tended to create problems in regional government, as decisions adopted by a PNV leader have not always coincided with those of an EA President of the Basque government[273]. None the less, both parties support the Spanish state, and accept the general goal of autonomy as a means of satisfying their ambitions for Basque self-determination. In alliance with the all-Spanish PSOE (socialists) they have been able to form governmental alliances in the Basque autonomous region[274]. HB was only established in 1979 and has tended to appeal to disaffected youth, and in particular to the urban unemployed[275]. It is part of the Basque National Liberation Front (MNLV - as is the terrorist organisation ETA) and sees its principle aim of liberating the Basque homeland from Spanish control.

Ethnonationalism, of course, does not necessarily sought separation from the centre, and some nationalist movements (often the more successful ones) prefer to seek a 'better deal' for their region and their people. The Catalan *Convergéncia i Unió* (CiU), an electoral coalition that successfully embraces Christian Democracy, liberalism and socialism, is a case in point here. Since the legalisation of political parties in Spain in 1975, the CiU has dominated

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[269] Pauliina Raento (1997): op. cit. p.191.

[270] Pauliina Raento (1997): ibid. p.191.

[271] Raento uses the examples of the Christian-conservative *Union del Pueblo Navarro* (UPN) and its splinter group the *Convergencia de Demócratas Navarros* (CDN) in Navarra, as well as the *Unidad Alavesa* (UA) in Alava. Pauliina Raento (1997): ibid. p.192.

[272] The *Union de Centro Democratico* (UCD) dominated the formative years of Spanish democracy, winning two general elections (in 1977 and 1979), but successive election defeats in 1980 and 1981, as well as persistent internal conflicts, led the party to implode, and it disappeared from the party political map in 1981.

[273] Gabriel Colomé & Lordes López-Nieto: 'The Spanish Political Parties from Fragmentation to Bipolar Concentration', in Piero Ignazi & Colette Ysmal (eds.): *The Organisation of Political Parties in Southern Europe* (London: Praeger, 1998), p.243.

[274] Chris Ross (1996): op. cit. pp.487-506.

[275] Michael Keating: *State and Regional Nationalism - Territorial Politics and the European State* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), p.230.

Catalan politics, consistently seeking more autonomy for Catalonia within the centralist Spanish state, emphasising the importance of a flourishing Catalonian language and cultural development within broad, Spanish structures. As one author puts it, the CiU *"seeks the maximum power for Catalonia with the minimum trauma for the rest of Spain"*[276].

In the eastern German case, Marc Howard has even forwarded the provocative thesis that the structural dynamics of the transformation process in Germany have spawned an eastern German ethnicity, based on cultural and value beliefs underpinning 'Eastern Germanness'[277]. Although controversial, Howard's argument is based on his very broad definition of ethnicity, and, if this were to apply to other regions of the world, the number of ethnic groups would be truly immense (see section 3.2.2.1. for a further discussion of this phenomenon in eastern Germany).

It is clear that ethnonationalist political parties specifically use culture as a mobilising tool. Certain values are represented by many members of a group, they provide similar emotional linkages and arouse similar active tendencies. With this in mind, members of this group have the experience of sharing ideas, sentiments and desires[278]. A number of regional parties have grown out of cultures that long pre-date the modern state, as is the case in both the Basque Country and Catalonia where both cultures are bound by traditions and languages that clearly divide them from their Castilian neighbours. They have struggled for centuries to retain their ethnic identities in the face of modernisation and state-enforced assimilation – something that reached a peak during the Franco dictatorship[279]. External pressure to alter or suppress peripheral uniqueness in fact often served the purpose of crystallising this cultural core, and strenuous efforts were made to defend these core principles. Evidence of this can also be found in Scotland where the development of a Scottish consciousness had much to do with the attitudes and behaviour of the English. National institutions like the education system and the system of law have helped them to persist, as Scots of all walks of life learn to appreciate ingrained and institutionalised cultural difference within the United Kingdom.

Culture can and does act as symbolically integrative (through the use and acceptance of myths, symbols etc.) and as a basis for solidaristic political mobilisation against a collectively perceived threat or degradation. Clive Hedges has stressed the *"crucial cultural*

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[276]   Charles E. Ehrlich: 'Federalism, Regionalism, Nationalism: A Century of Catalonian Political Thought and its Implications for Scotland in Europe', *Space and Polity*, Volume 1 Number 2, November 1997, p.213.

[277]   Marc Howard (1995a): op. cit. pp.119-131.

[278]   Florian Znaniecki: *Cultural Sciences* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1963), p.85.

[279]   For an excellent discussion on the origins and development of politics and culture in both the Basque Country and Catalonia, see Daniele Conversi (1997), op. cit.

underpinnings" of nationalist ideology in places like Wales and Northern Ireland[280] and it is clear that many of the founding fathers of fledgling nationalist movements were primarily cultural nationalists[281] who perceived their national culture as being threatened by state centralisation. As the state offered the best opportunity of defending and protecting their particular culture and value system, cultural nationalists saw the necessity of aligning themselves with political nationalists in order to reach the central state - hence many regenerative cultural programmes were formed in political terms. In Catalonia, for example, only by forming alliances with the economically hegemonic business classes could adequate financial support be gained, and as a result cultural arguments were framed in such a way as not to harm the vested interests of economic elites. The cultural movement of the 'Renaixença' (dating from the 1840s to the 1870s) proved the ideal basis for nationalism to become more widespread, as the lost freedom of Catalonia and the renewed concept of ethnic identity prospered under the guidance of a cultural revival.

An extremely important cultural variable that often contributes to the creation of a regional space is an indigenous regional/national language. An ability to speak such a language also frequently acts as a cornerstone of a territorial identity. Languages that are only spoken by residents of a particular territory can be very obvious identity markers, due to the natural creation of 'in' (i.e. those who speak or comprehend the language) and 'out' (those who do not) groups. However, the experiences of the Basque Country and Wales[282], where less than fifty per cent of the citizenry speak the national language, illustrate that one *does not have to* be a speaker of Basque or Welsh to be clear and decisive in ones self-appreciation as a citizen of that region/nation. But it is none the less obvious that the existence of a unique language does act as an identity marker for a large number of people within these territories. Hearl, Budge and Peterson have, by using multiple regression analysis (taking into account the size of a region, population, sectoral unemployment, regional GDP, the degree of autonomy etc.), illustrated that only the presence of widely spoken language, and to a much

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[280] Clive Hedges: 'Problems in Combining Labour and Nationalist Politics: Irish Nationalists in Northern Ireland', in R. J. Johnston, David B. Knight & Eleonore Kofman (eds.) (1988): op. cit. p.102.

[281] Cultural nationalists had/have no or little interest in achieving an ethnically or culturally homogeneous nation-state. Their interests lay much more in preserving their right to speak a language, to celebrate festivals etc. Political Nationalists, on the other hand, saw value in breaking with the centre completely, and creating a nation-state within which such cultural expression could freely find voice. Their political goals were voiced in relation to the centre, and principally in their wish to have nothing to do with it.

[282] It is only relatively recently that English has risen to be the main mode of communication of Wales. Jenkins claims that Welsh remained the customary means of communication throughout the 19th Century and as late as 1890 roughly 60 per cent of Welsh citizens spoke the traditional language. In earlier periods (i.e. the 16th and 17th centuries) the figure is likely to have been around 90 per cent. See Philip Jenkins: *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990* (London: Longman, 1992).

lesser extent the degree of overall unemployment and industrial employment, are significant determinants of what they describe as ethno-regional voting[283]. This implies that although it is difficult to draw hard and fast conclusions, support for regional-nationalist movements appears to be based more on cultural than material grounds - and subsequently that socio-economic structural models of voting behaviour are not suitable for explaining regional political mobilisation.

It would be misleading, however, to place too much stress on the importance of language at the expense of other elements of cultural uniqueness when discussing the creation of a regional space. Collective memory, a unique history or a simple sense of belonging are also often a common motivator behind calls for the defence of cultural difference and the creation of territorial identifications – and it is for this reason, for example, that non-Welsh-speaking citizens of Wales continue to identify very strongly with their nation[284]. Basques[285], Catalonians[286], Flemings[287], Scots[288] and South Tyrolians[289] (to name but a few) see themselves principally as citizens of the region/nation where they live. This contrasts strongly with the state level identity of, for example, Northern Italians[290], most Walloons[291]

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[283] Derek Hearl, Ian Budge & Bernard Peterson (1996): op. cit. pp.179-180.

[284]   Charles Ragin (1979): op. cit. pp.619-634; Phillip Rawkins: 'Living in the House of Power: Welsh Nationalism and the Dilemma of Antisystem Politics', in Edward J. Tiryakin & Ronald Rogowski (eds.): *New Nationalism of the Developed West* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp.294-314.

[285]   There are numerous works on the history and development of Basque identity and Basque nationalism. See for example Stanley G. Payne: *Basque Nationalism* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1975); Robert P. Clark: *The Basques: The Franco Years and Beyond* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1979); Chris Ross: 'Nationalism and Party Competition in the Basque Country and Catalonia', in *West European Politics*, Volume 19 Number 3, July 1996, pp.488-506; Pauliina Raento: 'Political Mobilisation and Place-specificity: Regional Nationalist Street Campaigning in the Spanish Basque Country', in *Space and Polity*, Volume 1 Number 2, November 1997, pp.191-204; Daniele Conversi (1997): op. cit.

[286]   See Chris Ross (1996): ibid. pp.488-506; Daniele Conversi (1997): ibid.

[287]   See Lieven De Winter: 'The *Volksunie* in Flanders', in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit. pp.28-50; Lieven De Winter & Patrick Dumont: 'Belgium: Party System(s) on the Eve of Disintegration?', in David Broughton & Mark Donovan (eds.): *Changing Party Systems in Western Europe* (London: Pinter, 1999), pp.183-206.

[288]   For a particularly good analysis of national sentiment in Scotland and the SNP's place in this, see John Agnew: 'Models of Spatial Variation in Political Expression: The Case of the Scottish National Party', in *International Political Science Review*, Volume 6 Number 2, 1985, pp.171-196; See also Alice Brown et al.: *Politics and Society in Scotland* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998).

[289]   For an excellent account of the development and current position of the *Südtiroler Volkspartei* see Anton Holzer & Barbara Schwegler (1998): 'The Südtiroler Volkspartei: A Hegemonic Ethnoregionalist Party' in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. pp.158-173.

[290]   Carlo E. Ruzza & Oliver Schmidtke: 'Roots of Success of the Lega Lombarda: Mobilisation Dynamics and the Media', in *West European Politics*, Volume 16 Number 1, 1993, pp.1-23; Benito Giordano: 'A Place called Padania? The Lega Nord and the Political Representation of Northern Italy', in *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Volume 6 Number 3, July 1999, pp.215-230.

[291]   Jo Buelens & Ruth Van Dyck (1998): 'Regionalist Parties in French-Speaking Belgium', in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. pp.51-69.

and Swedes in Finland[292], emphasising how processes of identity creation take differing forms in differing spatial environments[293].

Regional symbols and characteristics often play key roles in (re)defining cultural movements and territorial identities and they contribute to their successful passage through generations. These symbols can be wide and varied, and only have genuine meaning to certain groups within society. They can be particular historical events that are remembered and celebrated, flags or symbols that taken on unique meanings, parades, processions, marches and so forth that have grown to be carriers of very distinct regional identities within the broader regional space. This is as group customs, traditions and institutions serve as a means of excluding those not perceived of as being within the 'in' community. They sustain special routines and foster feelings of distinctiveness, intrinsically excluding those who are by definition members of the 'out' community[294]. It is here that nationalism and regionalism clearly overlap as symbolic places, boundaries and frontiers often have a key place within the context of both *national* and *regional* self-appreciation.

Examples of the importance of tokens of national and regional identity are numerous, as they remain at the core of the psychological attachment that citizens have to particular territories and peoples. In recent times, the most salient and globally recognisable example of a people attempting to defend a key symbol of their regional/national identity concerned the importance of the Kosovo region to Serbs, on account of it being widely perceived as the cradle of the Serbian nation. Nationalists and ultra-nationalists have used the retention of Kosovo within Serbia as a cornerstone of their political platforms, subsequently leading to the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s[295]. The extreme importance of the territory of Kosovo as a symbol stems from the regions position as the heartland of the Serbian nation in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries as other parts of the Balkans (some of which were controlled by Serbs) were being successfully over-run by, amongst others, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Byzantines and Romans. When Turkish tribes overran Serb forces at the Battle of Kosovo Polje on the 28th of June 1389 it marked the end of the glorious years of Serbian rule in Kosovo and came to be seen as a pivotal moment that heralded centuries of harder times for the Serbian peoples. It is for this very reason that the Battle of Kosovo Polje and the territory

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[292]   Derek W. Urwin (1983): in Hans Daalder & Peter Mair (eds.): op. cit. pp.221-256.
[293]   Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. p.216.
[294]   Colin H. Williams: "Identity through Autonomy: Ethnic Separatism in Quebec", in Alan D. Burnett & Peter J. Taylor (eds.) (1981): op. cit. p.397.
[295]   For reasons of clarity, the term 'Yugoslavia' is used in this context to refer to SFRY – or the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as it was before the wars of the 1990s led to the breakaway of Croatia, Slovenia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia Herzegovina.

of Kosovo is so sacred within Serbian folklore, and Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic undoubtedly articulated popularly held sentiment when he stressed that the retention of Kosovo as a part of the Serbian nation was not (and never would be) an issue that was up for negotiation – as the symbol of Kosovo went to the very heart of what it meant to be a Serb[296].

While it is clear that all *nations* within nation-states[297] are built around national myths like that mentioned above, it is also the case that *regions* are also susceptible to myth-making – as the process is intrinsic in formulation of communities and 'we' identities. And it is certainly not merely a Balkan preserve to regard historical symbolism with such importance in modern day politics. Northern Irish politics, for example, is littered with references to past events and, particularly in recent years, the issue of where Northern Ireland's fraternal orders – The Orange Order, The Apprentice Boys of Derry and the Royal Black Institution - are allowed to march has come to be of great symbolic importance to the Loyalist, Unionist, Republican and Nationalist communities. Although only a relatively small number of marches are regarded as contentious[298], the symbolic importance of these occasions ensures that they are now high profile political exercises. The yearly scenes of violent disorder at the Drumcree church illustrate how the symbolic marking of historical events by marching through the streets of Northern Ireland's main cities (in the so-called 'Marching Season', lasting from the beginning of May until the end of August) has therefore come to be seen as a litmus test for the strength of the Protestant faith in Northern Ireland. Many hundreds of marches take place up and down the province, culminating on the 12th of July when William of Orange's protestant victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1689 is proudly commemorated.

Not all regional symbols and characteristics are so intrinsically divisive as the marches in Northern Ireland. The antics of secessionists in Northern Italy are treated with almost mild amusement by most other Italians, as 'Padanians' continue to mobilise around the Padanian

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[296] For a succinct analysis of the history of Kosovo and what it means to the Serbian nation, see http://www. cia.gov/cia/di/products/kosovo/history.html

[297] While this thesis does not aim to dissect the mobilising forces behind specifically national movements, it is clear that many *regional* parties refer to themselves as *nationalists* and as such the two concepts clearly overlap. The creation of regional and national identities are therefore closely entwined in many sets of circumstances. The external contexts of these identities distinguishes whether they are seen as national (i.e. Wales, Catalonia, Scotland and so forth) or regional (Northern Italy, South Tyrol and so on). .

[298] They are 'contentious' as the route that they take leads the Protestant marchers through predominantly Catholic areas. March organisers claim that the routes are 'traditional' and were originally mapped out when Protestants were in the majority in these areas. Catholics, meanwhile, stress that changing social demographics mean that some of the areas through which Protestants want to march are now overwhelmingly Catholic, and as such the marches take on a triumphalist tone, as they often commemorate historic Protestant victories over Catholics. Subsequently Catholics have often organised counter-demonstrations and have vociferously campaigned for certain marches to be re-routed.

flag[299] and even around a (self-proclaimed) Padanian state. There have been clear attempts to foster an identity in the Northern provinces of Italy by 'creating' the instruments of state-hood – although this has met with what can best be described as mixed success. While the sense of identity of Northern Italians in Padania is strong in that it is clear and distinct in its expressions of disdain for southern Italians, there is little positive identification with the *state* of Padania[300]. Furthermore, although the issues that these Northern Italians are articulating about the nature of the Italian state are taken very seriously by Northerners and Southerners alike, their attempts to create a Padanian state and create symbols of 'Padanianism' are looked upon with distinct intransigence.

Regional symbols are particularly important for the continuation of territorial identities in times of repression – as they often provide the only legal (or if illegal, largely undetectable or non-extinguishable) method of preserving regional cultures and the relationship between a territory and its population. Symbols act as a glue that holds together societies that are undergoing processes of forced assimilation with a dominant culture. Both the historic nations of the Basque Country and Catalonia fall into this category, as the repression that the Francoist regime placed upon them was in many ways counter-productive, as it lent symbols of nationalist culture (and particularly language) far greater importance and significance than they would have otherwise acquired.

It is not always the case, however, that cultural difference is mobilised in the political arena. In Galicia, for example, the masses have scarcely been disturbed by the activities of linguistic nationalists, primarily as the region has a long history of alignment with Madrid. Hence despite the existence of a Galician cultural movement and despite the nationalists best efforts, all-Spanish parties have persistently been able to dominate Galician politics.

This illustrates that cultural variables have to both *cross-cut* other societal cleavages if they are to be salient enough to promote political mobilisation. The very existence of distinct cultural phenomena and of unique territorial identifications based on this is sometimes not enough to spawn a regional party defending or promoting this territorial uniqueness. This is the case even if ethno-cultural factors continue to play important roles in crystallising territorial difference. Although an identity may exist and be widely held, it must be politically salient if it is going to be the basis for political mobilisation. It must be seen as more important than other traditionally strong cleavages like social class and religious

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[299] The League's symbol became the warrior Alberto da Giussano juxtaposed onto a profile of Lombardia. It is a historical-mythological reference to the oath of Pontida and to the Battle of Legnano where the towns of Padania rallied together to defeat the emperor Frederick Barbarossa. See http://www.leganord.org/eng/brief.htm
[300] Benito Giordano (1999): op. cit. pp.215-230.

denomination. The agents who seek to give voice to territorial identity must also have opportunity structures (in terms of resources, organisation and so forth – see section 2.5.) that allows them to be heard within the political process. The successful regional parties (as is discussed in section 2.5.) are the ones who have become most adept at fulfilling this role.

2.4.1.2. Socio-Economic Variables

Socio-economic variables are also key structural factors in creating unique regional spaces. This is particularly true when the economic 'system' is seen to be failing its citizens, or the citizens of a particular region, and social tensions arise as a result. This can be in a radical and abrupt way, as happened in Italy at the beginning of the 1990s, or it can be rather more subtle and slow moving, as was the case in Scotland in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Furthermore, if changes in the socio-economic base correspond, however roughly, to the parameters of a coherent set of cultural values (see section 2.4.1.1.) then the effects of these changes are be amplified considerably - as regional identification becomes apparent in a number of different spheres within society. It is for this reason that the most successful regional parties are those that exist in regional spaces where culturally unique societal traits are linked and interwoven with economic difference.

Regional parties have often not been slow to make political capital out of the claim that the national government has mismanaged a region's economic assets - whether this be as the region is economically under-developed (Scotland) or economically more advanced (western Canada, northern Italy)[301]. The key variable, however, remains the same: citizens grow uneasy and dissatisfied in the region or state within which they live, as the 'system' does not respond to their needs and demands, and/or the economic outputs fail to meet their expectations - prompting new or renewed territorial cleavage divides to come into existence.

Citizens of regions with a superior socio-economic status have been just as liable to exhibit regional consciousness as citizens from economically weaker regions. Subsequently, Europe's more affluent regions have often been where regional identifications and territorial cleavages have been most prominent (Flanders, Brussels, Bavaria, Northern Italy, South Tyrol, Catalonia and the Basque Country). The affluent position of these regions within their

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[301] This can find actual articulation in a number of different ways. The SNP and the Reform Party of Canada have stressed the 'centre's' waste of oil reserves, for example, while the Northern League has enthusiastically bemoaned the South's waste of northern taxes. See David F. Patton (1998): op. cit. p.510.

nation-states have prompted citizens to tend to regard themselves (often correctly) as net contributors to the nation's wealth, and as such are sceptical/critical of the central administration's redistributive fiscal and monetary policies. They perceive their diligence as being wasted on other less hard-working, even parasitic, citizens of other regions - hence a sense of popular discontentment arises within a particular territory. The case of Northern Italy and the *Lega Nord* is the most explicit modern example of this. Such developments illustrate that goals of increased self-governance and/or autonomy are rational not just in cultural terms, but also in fiscal and monetary terms, as groups of people come to view territorial reorganisation/representation as being beneficial to their economic and social well-being[302].

Northern Italy has witnessed the rise of a territorially defined party in recent years primarily on the basis of socio-economic variables prompting regional political mobilisation. The *Lega Nord* has established itself as the articulator of popular protest in northern Italy, directed principally at the inefficiencies, inadequacies and plain corruption of the Italian state[303]. The formation of a specific community in northern Italy long predates the existence of the *Lega Nord*, just as it also outdates the unification of Italy in the late nineteenth century. The community that the *Lega* represents have long displayed social and economic characteristics different from their southern counterparts. Robert Putnam has eloquently detailed the rise of a civic community in northern Italy, dating back to the eleventh century, and the existence of 'social capital' that saw northern Italians have more trust and belief in themselves and in the society within which they lived[304]. This did not necessarily lead to economic affluence and a peaceful life, but it always set the northern areas of the peninsula apart from those in the south[305]. This 'civicness', with its horizontal societal relationships and flourishing civil society, has been seized upon by the *Lega* as a basis for their calls for the creation of a separate state (Padania[306]), or, at the very least, an institutional reorganisation within Italy. Southerners are viewed as a money-grabbing, lazy and contemptible group, who, through their (alleged) control of the governmental process in Rome, proceed to squander hard earned Northern money. The *Lega* has successfully mobilised considerable amounts of

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[302]   Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. p.216.
[303]   Philip Daniels (1999): 'Italy: Rupture and Regeneration', in David Broughton & Mark Donovan (eds.): op. cit. p.77.
[304]   Robert D. Putnam: *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
[305]   Robert D. Putnam (1993): ibid. p.124.
[306]   After the LN's success in the 1996 elections (in September 1996), the party felt confident enough to unilaterally declare the 'new state' of Padania as being independent from Italy.

support around their calls for Northern solidarity[307], justice for Northern Italians and the right to group self-determination and self-rule.

The existence of a civic community coupled with dissatisfaction at the redistributive economic policies of the central Italian state prompted the *Lega* to actively manufacture a group identity and a feeling of community in northern Italy for its own political ends. The group identification had long been apparent, but it needed a political actor to mobilise it around a clear set of policy preferences (see also section 2.5.2.3.). The LN has succeeded in politicising a regionalist cleavage which cross-cuts the left-right axis formed by the two 'poles' that have risen to dominate the nascent Italian party system. The LN's electoral constituency is relatively stable, being based on combined socio-economic interests and the manifestation of a territorial identity. The LN subsequently sees little direct need either to moderate its policies (which can border on the racist on occasion) or to seek to re-enter electoral alliances[308].

Regions that suffer detrimental side-affects as a result of socio-economic change can also develop strong regional consciousness. More often that not, this has once again been linked with an expressly cultural understanding of one's own identification (i.e. in Wales[309] and Scotland), but it is also clear that the weaker economic position of, say, Scotland vis-à-vis England (and in particular when linked to the discovery of North Sea oil) prompted a much increased sense of regional injustice. This once again illustrates that regional consciousness is most likely to be embedded in regions where cultural uniqueness and material difference combine to reinforce each other.

The process of globalisation is likely to further extenuate systemic disparities across regions, as processes of economic and social change can play decisive roles in spawning political regionalism[310]. International capital is much more fluid than it has ever been before, and global multi-nationals have the ability to invest or withdraw from particular regions in a very short space of time. Regional economic development is, in many places, growing ever more dependent on inward investment from multi-national companies who have the power and scope to fundamentally alter the social and economic development regions. Directly linking this to a growth in regional consciousness is, at the moment, not possible, but it is

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[307] The LN is particularly successful in Lombardy (where it polled 24.6 per cent of the vote in 1996) and in the North-East (27.6 per cent in 1996), although it remains well represented across all of Northern Italy.
[308] This may, of course, change over time, as the fledgling Italian party system continues to change and develop. The LN certainly saw no reason to align itself with either of the two ideological groupings at the 1996 election, and it clearly benefited from the independence that this offered it. Philip Daniels (1999): op. cit. p.92.
[309] Philip Jenkins, in particular, claims that 'Welshness' is expressed above all through linguistic and cultural patriotism. See Philip Jenkins (1992): op. cit. p.66.

likely that in the future changing social and economic relationships will be fundamentally affected by the increasingly global nature of international capitalism.

Rapid socio-economic *change* has also proven to be a catalyst for political regionalism to develop. However, only rarely since political parties established themselves in the fabric of western polities have such processes been rapid and sustained enough to engender radically different constellations of political parties. Lipset & Rokkan's 'freezing hypothesis' illustrated how the influence of the two revolutions led to a crystallisation of support in many western European polities around the four major social cleavages. Yet, although social change has consistently been taking place[311], it has rarely been rapid enough, or drastic enough, to prevent the major parties from adapting to the new political environment. For social change to prompt the rise of a regional space, the effects have to be explicitly regional in their nature - and they have to challenge the way of life and/or economic well-being of the community in a radical and new way. Although this has not occurred frequently in the past, it does happen over time – and the globalisation of economic activity would indicate that there is likely to be an increased propensity for it to happen more frequently in the future.

Catalonia, for example, experienced an influx of immigrants in the 1960s (owing principally to its advantageous economic environment), spawning both drastic social and cultural change. Although Catalonian nationalism has traditionally been both more moderate and cultural than many other forms of ethnic nationalism, it remained clear that the 'new nationalism' of the 1960s spilt over from its intellectual basis into the population at large - a process that the rapidly de-legitimising dictatorship could not stem[312]. The changes that were underway within society as a result of large-scale immigration crystallised Catalonian self-perceptions further in their struggle to preserve their own identity and cultural heritage - and as such the parties that came into being in 1975 had little trouble mobilising Catalonians along this renewed territorial divide.

The process of economic modernisation within the Basque Country is also a clear example of a case where regional consciousness was sharpened as a result of demographic changes within the population. This modernisation was not merely an economic matter - it touched every level of society. The Basque people became *"proletarianised"*[313] and young

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[310] Yves Meny (1987): op. cit. p.4.

[311] An example of this is the steady change of balance between people living and working in rural environments, and those living in urbanised areas. Over the course of the twentieth century this change has been unrelenting - but it has not been rapid enough to throw major parties out of sync. In the words of Sartori, the party system has acted as a system of channelment, adapting to changing political circumstances.

[312] Daniele Conversi (1997): op. cit. p.140.

[313] Daniele Conversi (1997): op. cit. p.48.

Basques found themselves being displaced from the countryside to the cities. Immigrants also flooded the country from Castile (already seen as the principal oppressor in many Basque eyes), providing clear competition for Basques in search of work and a new role within Basque society. The issue of language was quickly relegated to a side issue (i.e. the Basques were now speaking the same language (Castillian Spanish) as the immigrants against whom they were competing) and the question of social background rose in prevalence. Despite the fact that the first unambiguous nationalist political organisation (the PNV) did not appear until 1895, Basque nationalism underwent a renaissance and was the clear beneficiary of this change in societal structure, as the issue of immigration saw Basque nationalist leaders (and principally Sabino Arana y Goiri) abandon cultural nationalism in many of their political statements. As Conversi notes:

> Modernisation can be seen as a fatal wound for which Basque nationalism claimed to the cure - appearing as a providential alternative to this chaotic human scenario[314].

This process of a change in the social structure, further re-enforced by another wave of immigration in the 1960s and 1970s, continued to shape Basque politics in the years after the fall of the Franco dictatorship, as the PSOE (the Spanish socialists) continued to achieve higher levels of support amongst (poorly paid, working class) immigrants. This prompted the PNV to continue to view immigrants as the chief manifestation of Spanish infiltration into their nation – and as such as the main threat to the PNV's party-nation identity[315].

Regional Parties make good use of regional disparities in economic wealth when creating a unique political platform (see section 2.5.2.3.). They tend to do this in one of two different ways: they may recognise that a region is visibly less affluent than the nation-state, and therefore lobby and fight for a redistribution of economic resources for the benefit of the regions citizens. The 'economic system' is seen as letting down the territories' citizenry, and a regional party will demand that the central government take action to rectify this imbalance. Alternatively, regional parties recognise that their region is both rich and affluent, and they subsequently seek to defend their wealth in the face of attempts by other (national) actors to redistribute it. The LN is the most celebrated example of this, and, on occasion, some of its politicians have gone as far as claiming that Southerners are so keen to get their hands on

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[314] Daniele Conversi (1997): ibid. p.48
[315] Chris Ross (1996): op. cit. p.493.

Northern Italian wealth that Northern Italy should leave the Italian state altogether in order to prevent this.

Examples of other regional parties using the tool of economic disparities to cement or improve their places in a political system are widespread. The SNP, for example, although created as long ago as the late 1920s, was only able to make genuine electoral process as the British state proved unable to deliver economic prosperity to Scotland. The diminished effectiveness of territorial management helped the Nationalists to gain popularity in the 1960s, and again in the 1980s and 1990s[316]. Nationalist claims in Scotland subsequently tend to be based on distinctly practical arguments about institutions, accountability and (economic) policies and rather less on ethnicity and cultural distinctiveness[317].

The party system in Scotland, although superficially the same as it has always been, can no longer legitimately claim to give Scots a regular chance of being on the 'winning side' - hence the failure of the system to accommodate Scots economic and political interests has led to the rise in the support for the SNP. Class and partisan dealignment, though initially slow, has certainly gone furthest in Britain's peripheral regions, as is emphasised by the failure of the Conservatives to win any seats in either Wales or Scotland in the 1997 election. The Conservative Party is increasingly identified with the South of England while Labour has been caught between the two stools of maintaining its Scottish base and recapturing support in the South of England - as was emphasised with the election of Tony Blair as Party Leader in 1994.

The crisis of Keynesian Welfarism highlighted intrinsic value differences between the Scots and English. Michael Keating stresses that antagonism in Scotland is still linked to a class basis, and is directed not specifically at the English[318], but rather at the English political Establishment[319]. This may in part be correct, but opinions in Scotland on the subject of the English do not always bear this out - as Scots themselves appear to believe that fellow citizens display 'anti-English' sentiments. A poll conducted in June 1999 by Scottish Opinion for the Daily Record, for example, highlighted that 66 per cent of Scots questioned agreed with the statement that 'many people in Scotland are anti-English'[320].

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[316] The SNP polled less than 15 per cent of the vote in the 1980s, increasing this to 21.5 per cent in 1992. At the 1994 European elections the SNP registered its higher ever proportion of the vote - 32.7 per cent.
[317] Michael Keating (1996): op. cit. p.182.
[318] Very small and insignificant fringe groups like *Siol na Gaidheal*, English Watch and Settler Watch did attract attention in the 1980s for their anti-English rhetoric and for attacks on property, but all main nationalist parties and movements have firmly repudiated them. Michael Keating (1996): ibid. p.183.
[319] Michael Keating (1996): ibid. pp.173-175.
[320] 'Scots reveal anti-English sentiment': *The Independent*: 29 June 1999, p.11.

Hence the SNP has challenged the hegemonic status of the major parties, as a territorial reconfiguration of British politics offered them a stronger role in representing Scottish material interests.

Other forms of material disparity include the embourgeoisement of western society that has also led to the weakening of traditional cleavages. As workers have attained greater material wealth, and as general increases in prosperity have been achieved, traditional socially mobilising variables have decreased in salience. This leaves the field open for other factors to challenge their position as key determinants of the vote. As De Winter has observed:

> Ethnoregionalist parties were more successful in introducing the new cultural and regional sources of identity because their offer referred to dormant or lower-order identities. These are the product of pre-modern cleavages: the opposition of local and regional cultures against the introduction of a homogeneous national culture by the centre, which is associated with a larger movement towards homogenisation (in economic, financial, judicial, military, diplomatic terms) linked to the emergence of the nation-state[321].

This analysis therefore shows that regionalist parties do not, as a rule, tend to profit from radical political or economic change unless the effects are territory-specific or the regional party happens to be in a particular advantageous starting position (i.e. the *Lega Nord's* criticisms of the Italian state as functioning on cronyism and corruption were given particular credence by the gift (in political terms) of judicial processes being concurrently launched by the Italian judiciary into the exact same allegations).

Section 2.4.1. has outlined a broad framework suitable for unpacking the factors that contribute to the creation of a 'regional space' in which cultural and socio-economic factors combine to engender territorial difference. This section has highlighted that such spaces exist on the basis of a structures that facilitate the creation of territorial cleavage divides that cross-cut other cleavages within the larger nation-state. It is the cross-cutting nature of this cleavage that lends the region/nation its unique status. Citizens of the regional space recognise the boundaries of their core territory, even if this is only implicit (as is the case in Northern Italy) and non-institutional. A clear set of cultural variables will be evident that distinguishes the regional space from the larger nation-state, often leading to the creation and reproduction of a unique territorial identity. This sense of 'uniqueness' becomes amplified if is reinforced by clearly definable socio-economic differences - both in terms of advantageous

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[321]   Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. p.218.

and disadvantageous economic positions vis-à-vis the larger state, and it is these regions where regional identities are strongest and regional spaces most pronounced.

2.4.2. Agency Factors in the Mobilisation of Regionalism

Having seen how structural variables contribute to the creation of regional spaces, it is time to turn to the role of agents in making sense of these variables within the political process. Section 2.4.2.1 - 2.4.2.3. illustrates how regional parties use the resources at their disposal to articulate territorial difference in mobilising political support on the basis of territorially exclusive political issues, sentiments and values. As agents within the political process they exhibit a number of characteristics that differentiate them from the 'national' parties and enable them to 'tap into' the regional uniqueness that is characterised by the cultural and socio-economic variables discussed above .

2.4.2.1. Party Leadership

Groups of regional elites have to translate the language of difference into understandable capital, in order for the citizens of a region to become aware of their 'differentness'. A conscious or sub-conscious regional identity will not prove strong enough to provoke political articulation at the regional level if the elites within the region do not clearly and succinctly argue the case for making it a salient electoral variable. The manifestation of a territorial cleavage divide within society has to become the key mobilisational variable in the battle for votes - otherwise regional issues will remain just one set amongst many. Elites need to create a regional/nationalist reinterpretation of a past history, of an economic situation, or of some other form of territorially salient issue, before presenting it to the populace in an accessible way[322]. It can be that, of course, regional elites try vociferously to do this - but fail as a result of a lack of enthusiasm from the indigenous group. But without an elite acting on regional uniqueness, the symbols, sentiments and characteristics discussed above are highly unlikely to shape voting behaviour.

Although it is by no means true that a single individual has to fulfil this role, it has been noticeable that prominent personalities like Sabino Arana y Goiri in the Basque County, and much more recently Umberto Bossi in Italy, have had a fundamental influence on their regional political movements. Charismatic and multi-functional leadership (in that one figure

takes on a number of the most important functions within a regional party) frequently occurs in the nascent period of nationalist/regionalist party development - something that is most visible in Catalonia, where Jordi Pujol still remains a dominant figure in the CDC[323]. Other regional parties display similar characteristics: to name but a handful:

- The *Volksunie* in Flanders was dominated by one if its founding fathers, Frans van der Elst, for over twenty years.

- Accomplished orator François Perin led the *Rassemblement Walloon* for a considerable number of years.

- Plaid Cymru changed profoundly under the 36 year tutelage (1945-1981) of long-time leader Gwynfor Evans.

- The SVP was led by Silvius Magnago from 1960 to 1989, and he had a decisive influence in pushing for greater autonomy.

- The *Union Valdôtaine* also had a long time leader (Luciano Caveri), who was prominent in dictating UV direction from 1945 to 1973.

- *Eusko Alkartsauna* (EA) is led by Carlos Garaicoetxea - one of the most dominant figures in post-Franco Basque politics[324].

Harmel and Svasand have defined the initial stages of party development as requiring a leader that can successfully display and mould together creative, communicative and charismatic skills. Regional parties are in particular need of these characteristics on account of their general need to generate a broader ideological appeal. The characteristics that Harmel and Svasand discuss enable the leader/the party to shape and effectively communicate the party's message and it would appear that a large number of regional parties have been the beneficiaries of such a form of leadership[325].

Yet as and when parties develop and stabilise it is clear that the nature and style of leadership often changes[326]. As the initial leaders vacate their positions it is vital that the regional movement remains organisationally strong, strategically focused and united (i.e. factionalism is avoided - although this is not always possible). This ensures that the party

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[322]   Colin H. Williams (1981): op. cit. p.395.
[323]   Chris Ross (1996): op. cit. p.498.
[324]   Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit. p.222
[325]   Robert Harmel & Lars Svasand: 'Party Leadership and Party Institutionalisation', in *West European Politics*, Volume 16, 1993, p.74.
[326]   Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): op. cit. p.223.

does not lose sight of its goals and avoids the temptation of descending into internal conflicts of direction and ideological outlook. This is what Harmel and Svasand describe as the second stage of leadership. The third stage is one of gaining credibility and reliability, particularly in terms of coalition formation and, where applicable, governmental performance. It is not inconceivable for leaders to see their parties through all three of these phases. De Winter claims that the founders of *Rassemblement Walloon*, the *Front Democratique des Francophones*, *Plaid Cymru*, the *Lega Nord* and the *Convergéncia i Unió* (CDC) in Catalonia were all still in leadership positions as their respective parties reached the stage of *Regierungsfähigkeit* (the ability to govern)[327].

While it is clear that all parties need effective elites, for regional parties they remain of particular importance. They have to convince the public at large that they have a cultural/territorial identity worth politically articulating over and above other societal cleavages. Arana in the Basque country is probably the most successful example of this, as he even managed to invent the key components of mythical Basque nationhood (i.e. the name, the flag and the national hymn). It is imperative that elites demonstrate to the wider electorate why and how the centre is 'discriminating' against the region in question by offering regionally specific answers to the questions that they themselves very often help to ask. Leaders embody the very nature of the project by being charismatic, visible and intellectually sharp.

The discussion in section 2.3. has already illustrated that although the structural dynamics of party system development alone can not dictate that a regional party will prosper, it is imperative that their is a place within that party system for a regional party to find a niche. If the 'national' parties are able to dictate and control political activity and debate, by setting the political agenda or adapting their own programmes to the challenge that regional parties offer, then it is unlikely that regional parties will be able to muscle in. But if the dynamics of a situation offer the chance for regional expression, then it is imperative that regional elites grasp the opportunity, or the regional issues will remain under-discussed and relatively unimportant.

2.4.2.2. Party Organisation

In order to mobilise regional uniqueness, regional parties tend to display flexible, decentralised organisational structures. Following on from this, decentralised party structures

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[327] Lieven De Winter (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998): ibid. p.223.

tend to facilitate the prioritisation of *policy* over *office holding*[328]. Strom argues that the more that decision-making within a party is decentralised, the greater will be its prioritisation of pursuing the defence of policy positions rather than pragmatic attempts to achieve governmental participation. Structures that are designed to give the grass-roots membership a sizeable say in deciding a party's policy will be likely to constrain its elites' scope for adopting electorally optimal policies (and thus maximising their chances of election to office). They are also likely to attract more activists to the party in the first place.

Regional parties have displayed a marked tendency to have de-centralised organisations - even if this is often still under the tutelage of one charismatic and respected leader. Regional parties see the necessity of increasing their 'embeddedness' within their region, and as such see increased value in a motivated and enthusiastic membership. For this reason regional parties tend to be strong at traditional campaigning (i.e. door-to-door canvassing, manning information stands and so forth). The membership tends to have disproportionate opportunities to take part in party activities and to fulfil representative functions. In the Basque Country, for example, the PNV has explicitly stated that all of the decisions that are taken within the party are to made with the principle of subsidiarity in mind[329].

Organisational structures therefore tend not just to be vertical, but also horizontal, as parties attempt to maximise political gain by involving as many members in positions of responsibility as is possible. Such an open and flexible party organisation, with the increased possibility of formal political participation on all levels of the hierarchy also produces a high level of political commitment. It has, therefore, become a trait of regional party activity that activists are highly energetic, motivated and visible (if often inexperienced)[330]. Hence regional parties often give the impression of being nearer to the citizen than other parties, as they have active and enthusiastic memberships pushing a uniquely regional policy line.

Regional parties often embed themselves into the regional culture by being active in other societal groupings. In regions, for example, where the indigenous language is perceived as being under threat, regional parties will seek to infiltrate and support pressure groups that actively seek to defend it. Where regional identities are strong, regional parties will seek to 'spread their net' over a wide variety of regionally specific organisations, so as to contribute to the civic and cultural life of the region. This is particularly true where parties have a large

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[328]   Kaare Strom: 'A Behavioural Theory of Comparative Political Parties', in *American Journal of Political Science*, Volume 34 Number 2, 1990, pp.576-579.
[329]   Beatriz Acha Ugarte & Santiago Pérez-Nievas: 'Moderate Nationalist Parties in the Basque Country', in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.98.

number of cultural nationalists, but it is evident in areas where 'political nationalism' remains dominant. If regional identification exists, regional party activists realise that they will be the only ones actively articulating this is in the political arena - hence a broad network of aligned groups within society ensures that the articulation of this message is clear, widely heard and inclusive.

2.4.2.3. Party Policy

Although it is obvious that all political parties have policies and strategies, it is noticeable that regional parties have frequently been seen to stress the importance of a coherent and relatively narrow set of 'core' territorially specific policies. In contrast to other major parties who tend to represent nationally salient societal cleavages (as, for example, is the case in Great Britain where the Labour Party has traditionally represented the working classes regardless of whether the workers concerned live in England, Scotland or Wales, or the DC did for Catholics across the whole of Italy), regional parties clearly take advantage of cleavages that either *divide* or *differentiate* the region from the national polity. This can be done in many different ways[331] and it is often the case that these key pillars of the territorially defined party's programme generate the electoral and activist base on which the party thrives.

The rise in the late 1980s and 1990s of regional leagues in the North of Italy is certainly an example of this, and provides one of the most surprising and contradictory challenges that any of the 'traditional' political forces across western Europe find themselves facing. The salience of the loosely formed set of core regional policies that they articulate, based on calls for a territorial re-organisation of the Italian state, generates widespread and heterogeneous support - forcing traditional political forces firmly onto the back foot.

The electoral successes of the *Lega Nord* most certainly have to be seen within the context of the rapid and complex changes that the Italian political system has undergone over the course of the last ten years[332]. The underlying dynamics of the end of the Cold War (see above), sub-cultural change within Italian society, institutional degeneration, economic stagnation and widespread (and high profile) corruption have completely changed the context within which political competition in Italy now takes place. This environment has proved

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[330] David F. Patton (1998): op. cit. p.511.
[331] Examples of 'Big Ideas' that are promoted by regional parties range from nationalist rhetoric, to language preservation and protection (particularly in Wales, Catalonia, Flanders and Quebec) or attempts at hindering the process of cultural homogenisation (as has periodically been the case for many regional parties).
[332] Martin J. Bull & James L. Newell (1993): op. cit. pp.203-206.

fruitful for parties and movements willing to advocate change, as *Forza Italia, Rete* and the Northern Leagues, amongst others, have illustrated.

The *Lega's* strategy has centred around attempts to introduce radical decentralisation of the Italian state, and in particular the introduction of forms of self-government in northern Italy[333]. Much of the often eccentric discourse in northern Italy centres on the (perceived) illegitimacy of (money grabbing, parasitic) Southerners ruling over the dynamic North. As Bull & Newell summarise, the 'Big Idea' of the *Lega* centres around a *"distinctive mixture of xenophobia (towards immigrants and Southerners) and hostility towards the corruption and efficiency of a centralised state, colonised by clientelistic political parties in Rome, but subsidised by Northern taxes"*[334].

The *Front Democratique des Francophones* (FDF) has essentially only ever had one idea – defending the interests of the Francophone residents of Brussels. It was formed in 1963 with this sole purpose in mind. It enjoyed a meteoric rise in popularity in the late 1960s, when the it rose to be the strongest party in Brussels. Since the mid-1980s, however, it has attracted less popular support (although its voter base does remain stable) – generally around the 11-12 per cent mark. The FDF's voters, however, remain spread over differing ideological and religious groupings, ensuring that FDF support remains noticeably heterogeneous – apart from the common bond of the French language[335].

Other regional parties also display a core group of policies, that are regionally specific and subsequently distinguish them from other (national) political parties. They can be based on the claims of cultural nationalists or more, as the LN does, socio-economic in nature - or of course an amalgam of both of these. The programmatic direction of regional parties is, however, inherently place-specific in nature, even if, as a result of governmental participation, they are also forced into holding positions on 'national' areas of policy (as happened in Belgium). The FDF in Brussels, however, remained a party that consisted of people with widely varying ideological backgrounds (liberals, socialists, Catholics) united by one common goal: the defence of the interests of the Francophone citizens of Brussels. The *Volksunie* and RW have also, if from a somewhat wider political platform, articulated key policy concerns on the subject of language recognition (for the *Volksunie*) and the defence of cultural rights in a linguistically divided state. This has latterly got to the point where *no*

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[333] Tom Gallagher: 'Regional Nationalism and Party System Change: Italy's Northern League', in *West European Politics*, Volume 16 Number 4, October 1993, pp.616.621.
[334] Martin J. Bull & James L. Newell (1993): op. cit. p.213.
[335] Jo Buelens & Ruth Van Dyck (1998): in Lieven De Winter & Huri Türsan (eds.): op. cit. p.56.

national parties exist in Belgium, as the cultural divide between Flanders and Wallonia has spawned two party systems.

Constitutional, democratic forms of ethnic nationalism have also been in abundance in other regions, as parties such as the Social and Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) in Northern Ireland strives to consolidate its base in Northern Ireland's Catholic community. Such movements attempt to mobilise more cross-class support, and hence the formulation of broader platforms based on left-of-centre support (as is the case with the SDLP), or support from the centre-right (as with the PNV/EAJ). This support is something that all broad based movements require, even if they still clearly possess a core, place-specific set of policies that are aimed at furthering the interests of a specific community.

2.5. Exploring the Typology in a German Context – Bavarianism and the CSU

Having created the analytical tool with which regional spaces and regional parties can be conceptualised, this section employs a truncated version of the typology within the German context by analysing the case of Bavaria and the CSU. This is as Bavaria and the position of the CSU will act as a benchmark for the analysis of the PDS that is conducted in later chapters. The typology can therefore be tested to illustrate how regional spaces (and regional parties that articulate regional difference) have developed within the confines of the Federal Republic of Germany.

2.5.1. Structural and Causal Factors inherent in Bavarianism

Bavaria has long been viewed as a state in Germany where the 'political clocks ticked differently'[336]. Although this polemical observation tells us, in reality, little about the ideological, economic, social and political particularities of life in Bavaria, it is clear that their is also a modicum of truth in such a claim. This section aims to illustrate exactly what this truth is.

Bavaria is not just one of Germany's oldest states, it is one of the oldest states in Europe. Its long history dates back to the sixth century[337] and throughout all of the

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[336] Willy Brandt, annoyed at the idiosyncrasies of Bavarian politics and Bavarian politicians, first coined this well-known phrase during his tenure as Federal Chancellor. It has since become a popular cliché used to emphasise Bavarian cultural and political uniqueness.

[337] Peter James: 'The 1998 Bavarian State Election', in *Representation*, Volume 36 Number 1, Spring 1998,

tumultuous events in German history its borders have remained largely unchanged. The crystallisation of these borders post-1945 within the Federal Republic has ensured that the 'Free State of Bavaria' has continued to be an object that even the most historically apathetic Bavarian will be able to associate with.

However, this is not meant to indicate that Bavaria is one monolithic social, economic and cultural territory. Within the state there are regions that have very clear identifications and self-perceptions. Some regions are renowned for being more conservative, others are traditionally regarded as more liberal, while culturally Bavaria has a number of distinct undercurrents. This is mirrored in other regional spaces such as, for example, the Basque Country, where differing cultural and economic traditions have also long been in evidence. Bavaria is, however, largely perceived to be a unitary *political* unit – and there is no question that Bavaria is a conspicuous core territory that is widely perceived (by both Bavarians and other Germans) as being a unique political communication area[338]. This is due in no large part to the successful process of cultural and political homogenisation that the CSU has been active in pursuing – as section 2.5.2. of this work will illustrate. Bavaria remains the largest of Germany's sixteen federal states in terms of territory, and the second largest in terms of population behind Northrhein Westphalia[339]. In many ways Bavaria and Bavarians pride themselves on their *Eigenständigkeit* (independence) and their unique history. This ensures and reproduces the belief that Bavaria is special and unique amongst German states. This has led to a clear and unambiguous Bavarian identity developing, and it is for this reason that the case of Bavaria is used as a German example against which the typology created in chapter two will be employed. The reasons for the creation and stabilisation of a Bavarian identity within a Bavarian regional space are discussed below.

'Bavarianism' is mobilised in the political arena by the regionally concentrated Christian Social Union (CSU). Unlike the PDS (and the vast majority of other regional parties) the CSU consistently polls majorities of the regional vote. Although there have been times when the CSU has not polled a plurality of the vote[340], the CSU bases its claim that it is 'Bavaria's Party' on the fact that it continues to register such high and consistent levels of electoral support. This makes the CSU one of the most successful of all regional parties in the democratic world.

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p.98.
[338] Alf Mintzel: in Dieter Oberndörfer & Karl Schmitt (eds.) (1991): op. cit. p.125.
[339] Northrhein Westphalia has approximately 17 million inhabitants, while Bavaria has around 12 million.
[340] An example of this was the 1994 European elections when the CSU only polled 48.4 per cent.

2.5.1.1. Cultural Variables

The nature of German history and the federal system of governance have facilitated the development of regional cultures in contemporary Germany – and it is clear that regionally unique sets of social and political circumstances have helped to create a patchwork of regionally identities across the length and breadth of the German state. The sense of territorial identity that is evident in Bavaria is perhaps the most explicit example of this. As it appears today, it is the culmination of a gradual process of homogenisation that has been ongoing over at least the 180 years of Bavaria's territorial intactness[341].

Since 1945 Bavaria has been through an extremely rapid modernisation and secularisation process – ensuring that traditional (often religious) beliefs, customs and attitudes co-exist with high-technology based industry and high standards of living. The historical roots of Bavaria's *Staatstradition* and Bavaria's rapid advances in economic prosperity have enabled Bavarian political elites to shape post-industrial society in a decidedly regional (Bavarian) way – permitting specifically Bavarian uniqueness to remain prevalent in all aspects of political and social life.

The Bavarian *Lebenswelt* and identity are best seen as a conglomeration of a number of phenomena[342]:

- Due to the nature of the Bavarian economy and the traditional family and social linkages that Bavarians have fostered, many Bavarians remain what Mintzel describes as *Kleinbürgerlich* (petit bourgeois).

- Bavaria is a largely rural state. This once again tends towards traditional conservative societal and family structures in local communities.

- Despite the rapid modernisation of the last forty years, Bavarians remain intrinsically (and irrationally) worried about elements of 'new-ness'.

- Bavarians are at times (ultra-) Conservative. Their political leanings are built on the bedrock of religiosity (most predominantly Catholicism, but also Protestantism) and conservative traditionalism – subsequently Bavarians are popularly perceived as being more to the political right than citizens of other federal states.

- In *Altbayern* in particular Catholicism remains a potent force. This bestows a strong religious, conservative culture on the indigenous population.

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[341] Alf Mintzel (1991): ibid. p.131.

- Conversely, in *Franken* and other mainly Protestant areas there can exist a harsh anti-Catholicism.

The brief list above indicates that, up until the late 1950s, Bavarian culture and self-appreciation was littered with 'anti-attitudes', as Bavarians (and particularly those in *Altbayern*) remained beset by what Mintzel saw as a clear inferiority complex[343]. This is best encapsulated in a package of 'anti-attitudes' that Bavarians were widely perceived as holding. These included:

- Anti- Big City
- Anti- Big Industry
- Anti- Liberal
- Anti- Prussian
- Anti- Intellectual
- Anti- Catholic/Protestant (either/or)[344]

The underlying inferiority syndrome transformed itself with the advent of the 1960s, and quickly metamorphosed into a confident pride in Bavarian *Eigenständigkeit*, as well as its economic affluence. Hence worries about inferiority have given way to an almost belligerent confidence in all things Bavarian, as traditional Bavarian conservatism co-exists with modernity, making Bavarian culture a unique hybrid. Such cultural uniqueness is subsequently replicated in the identity of many Bavarians.

Bavaria also remains the most strongly religious region of Germany. The Catholic Church has been a considerable force in shaping the social and cultural life of the Bavarian people, and large numbers of Bavarians still take part in church activities. The Catholic Church has traditionally had a very close relationship with the Bavarian state and with Bavarian people, stemming from the times of the House of Wittelbach in the Middle Ages. Between 1047 and 1057 three Bavarians were appointed Pope, and until Bavaria became a kingdom in 1806 it was virtually 100 per cent Catholic[345]. Only when Protestant *Franken* joined Bavaria did Protestantism gain a foothold within the Bavarian state[346].

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[342] For a fuller analysis of this see Alf Mintzel (1991): ibid. p.168.
[343] Alf Mintzel (1991): ibid. p.168.
[344] Alf Mintzel (1991): ibid. p.168.
[345] Peter James (1999): op. cit. p.98.
[346] For a detailed breakdown of the number of Catholics in Bavaria and Germany as a whole see Statistisches

With a population that is so predominantly Catholic, it is hardly surprising that the Catholic Church plays such an influential role in Bavarian social and cultural life. Bavarian political representation has also illustrated this. The Bavarian Patriots Party was the first manifestation of political Catholicism around 1850, and this was followed by the Catholic Centre Party (*Zentrum*) and, between the wars, the Bavarian People's Party (*Bayerische Volkspartei*) – the immediate predecessor of the CSU. Many Catholics continue to view the CSU as 'their' party, even though great efforts were made after the Second World War to establish an inter-denominational party and the relationship between Catholicism, Bavarianism and the CSU remains very close. In the 1998 election, for example, 58 per cent of Catholics voted CSU, while of the regular church goers the figure was 77 per cent[347].

There are, however, also a considerable number of Protestants in Bavaria – roughly 25 per cent of the population. Bavaria registers the highest proportion of Protestant church-attendees of any of the German *Gliedkirche*[348]. Protestants (and especially the church going ones) do also support the CSU in large numbers. This is as Bavarian culture is strongly shaped by (conservative) religious values – and the CSU both encourages and represents this within the political arena.

2.5.1.2. Socio-Economic Variables

Since the Second World War Bavaria has experienced a process of rapid socio-political change. In less than two decades (the 1950s and 1960s) Bavaria was transformed from a largely agrarian state to a predominantly industrial one. Bavaria is thus unique in the FRG as it experienced a relatively late transition from a society that was dominated predominantly by agriculture, crafts and small trades to those industries widely regarded as both industrial and post-industrial. In the years up to 1945 processes of industrialisation were concentrated mainly in the urban focal points of Nuremberg, Augsburg, Munich and North-East Franconia, while post World War II this base was broadened to include many more previously rural districts. Mintzel has observed that of the 100 agrarian districts (*Kreise*) that existed in 1939 only 17 (out of a combined total of 191) remained 'agrarian' in 1977, illustrating the rapid process of industrialisation that has taken place in recent years[349].

Bundesamt (1996): op. cit. p.99.
[347] *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen* quoted by Peter James (1999): op. cit. pp.98-99.
[348] Statistisches Bundesamt (1996): op. cit. p.98.
[349] Alf Mintzel: 'The Christian-Social Union in Bavaria: Analytical Notes on its Development, Role and

This rapid socio-political change is reflected in the proportion of the working population that is employed in the agricultural sector in Bavaria. The proportion fell steadily from 37.2 per cent of the labour force in 1946 to a mere 13.2 per cent in 1970. This is in stark comparison to the percentage of people employed in the industrial and craft sector, which rose from 33.6 per cent in 1946 to 48.9 per cent[350]. The 'tertiary sector' (comprising public and private services) subsequently gained in importance and whereas in 1946 only 15.7 per cent of the population were employed in this sector, by 1970 this figure was 23.8 per cent[351].

As processes of rapid social and economic change were underway the CSU was able to act as force of stability and continuity. This is as the party realised that the social and economic landscape in Bavaria was outdated and in need of drastic overhaul. The CSU's primary achievement was in managing these processes of modernisation (as the Bavarian *Staatspartei*) in such a way as to minimise the inherent social disruption that this could have caused[352]. Bavarians themselves were aware of the need to regenerate and restructure their economy, but were keen to preserve the traditional social structures and societal linkages that are so important to the Bavarian way of life. The middle-classes were, therefore, carefully protected from the harsher elements of economic transformation, as small and medium sized firms received state support and clear protection in their battle to compete with their larger competitors.

This rapid and widespread process of technological and industrial advancement has ensured that Bavaria remains an affluent state. It has also ensured that a form of social agreement came into existence between the middle classes and the large industrial firms which has lasted in the years after the rapid economic transformation. Hence economic transformation ensured not only that Bavaria remained socially conservative (i.e. advantageous territory for a Christian-Social party) but also affluent and devoid of major industrial fault-lines between the middle classes and industrialists – once again providing a sound political basis for the CSU to build upon. Hence Bavarians are consciously aware and proud of the advancements that have been made since World War II in the economic sphere. Rapid (and controlled) modernisation have brought together disparate groups within Bavarian society under the banner of 'Bavarianism' – ensuring that the already strong sense of Bavarian identity has been re-enforced through common experiences of economic affluence.

Success', in Max Kaase & Klaus von Beyme (eds.): *Elections and Parties* (London: Sage, 1978), p.194.
[350] Alf Mintzel (1978): ibid. p.196.
[351] Alf Mintzel (1978): ibid. p.196.
[352] Stephen Padgett & Tony Burkett (1986): op. cit. p.119.

The CSU has been an active and influential actor in transforming Bavaria from a largely agricultural state to one that is now regarded as a modern, high-technology based region. While it is clear that the globalisation of economic activity and the nature of the knowledge economy have forced every government within Germany to fundamentally change the way it regulates the economy, the CSU has actively encouraged rapid transformation in a way that no other party has. Furthermore, the CSU has concomitantly remained true to its conservative roots and has not neglected the traditional values that it has also espoused such as the importance of family, of Bavarian patriotism and Christianity (and principally Catholicism)[353].

The 1957 CSU government was the first to actively attempt to transform Bavaria's economic landscape. Although the CSU stresses the importance of the free market, it is clear that Bavaria's economic rejuvenation was not achieved as a result of market forces alone. Strategic subsidies and a clear tendency towards economic intervention helped to protect the more fragile parts of the Bavarian economy. This enabled small and medium size firms to remain economically viable and, importantly for the electoral chances of the party, to provide a sound social base for improving CSU support at the polls.

The outstanding success that the CSU has achieved in helping to promote regional prosperity is unique in Germany today. The CSU supported and encouraged processes of late industrialisation that have enabled economic prosperity to become widespread. Citizens of Bavaria recognise the key role that the economic policies of the CSU have played in permitting this to take place. Rarely has any region been so effectively modernised in such a smooth and orchestrated fashion and yet avoided considerable social and economic dislocation in some shape or form.

In view of the Bavaria's rapid economic transformation the CSU has adopted defensive policy positions that aim to retain as much as is possible of Bavaria's wealth. While CSU politicians have drawn short of calling for Bavaria to cease all payments that aim to recompense poorer federal states, section 5.1.1. illustrates that it is frequently CSU politicians who threaten to cut Bavarian payments towards the *Länderfinanzausgleich* if the CSU government perceives (frequently eastern German) state governments to be squandering the contributions. Such comments are, of course, treated with contempt by eastern German politicians as, firstly, it is not for the CSU to decide who governs where and what they do with their funds and, secondly, Bavaria itself has only recently turned into a 'giver' state and has, as such, made use of exactly the same payments for most of the post-1945 period.

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[353] Theo Waigel (CSU): in Hanns Seidel Stiftung (1995): op. cit. p.65.

2.5.2. Agency Factors in the Mobilisation of Bavarianism

Given that these structural factors differentiate Bavaria from the other German states, it is now time to turn in detail to the political actor that articulates this in the political process: the Christian Social Union (CSU). The CSU has not just taken electoral advantage of these differences, it has often played an active role either in extenuating them or in mobilising them to its advantage. It is for this reason that the CSU has so successfully defended 'Bavarian interests' within the political process.

Within Germany the CSU is a unique political party. It remains a regional party that, on account of its relationship with its sister party, the CDU, is still able to play a clear role in federal politics. It has also successfully integrated itself into the social fabric of its state and has come to be seen as being synonymous with Bavaria and Bavarianism. The CSU has successfully learnt to articulate the tenets of Bavarianism within federal and regional politics to such a degree that it is now regarded as a democratically legitimated *Staatspartei*.

Having outlined the nature of Bavarianism in section 2.5.1. the following section applies the typology outlined in section 2.4.2. to the case of the CSU. It illustrates that the CSU uses the structural variables evident in Bavarian society for its own ends - electoral success and the retention of power. The CSU has been successfully because it appeals to a broad cross-section of the electorate on the basis of a *territorial* cleavage divide outlined in 2.5.1. Section 2.5.2. therefore highlights the methods and the means by which the CSU successfully acts as the agent of Bavarian uniqueness within the political system.

2.5.2.1. Party Leadership

Strong and confident leadership is not something that the CSU has lacked over the years. In Franz Josef Strauss, the long-time leader of the party (1961-88), the CSU possessed one of the most charismatic and belligerent politicians of the post-war era. This mirrors the position of a large number of other regionalist/nationalist parties who have benefited from the clear strategic thinking and charismatic leadership of one individual person.

The leadership style of Strauss was of particular importance not just in galvanising Bavarians to vote for 'their' party, but also in the CSU's relationship with its sister party, the CDU. While the CDU moved away from the charismatic/authoritarian style of leadership that

was evident under Konrad Adenauer, the CSU experienced what amounted to a reversal of this process[354]. Strauss was a belligerent and enthusiastic speaker, who encapsulated the very nature of politics in his home state. Yet in its formative years after World War II, the leadership of the CSU tended to be much less bellicose and the leadership subsequently changed hands a number of times[355]. But on his election to the CSU leadership in 1961 Strauss enthusiastically shaped the party in an image based very much on the strong leadership he offered. Not even the period of CSU opposition at the federal level (from 1969 until 1982) could weaken his hand, and the fact that the CSU was no longer in the federal government actually, if anything, reinforced his domineering style of rule[356].

A look at the history of the CSU leadership reveals that it was only under Strauss that the charismatic role of chairman achieved quite the status it has now. Strauss' national political role allowed him considerable political freedom and a free hand to be a Bavarian voice in the grand politics of state. This went down well both with the CSU's regional politicians (who felt that they had considerably more freedom if Strauss remained active at the national level) and Bavarians in general, who saw Strauss as something of a strategist and 'big-game player'. Strauss made implicit (and occasionally explicit) claim to being the supreme architect of policy within the CSU: subsequently revealing his decidedly elitist view of internal party democracy – as a result of which party congresses took on something of a plebiscitary character. The CSU rank and file realised that Strauss had the ability to mobilise the Bavarian electorate (although it is worth remembering that he did not often find such popular resonance in other parts of Germany) – and thus in spite of the occasional rhetorical *faux pas* and political scandal he commanded (and received) great loyalty from the foot soldiers in his CSU base.

Strauss, in contrast to Edmund Stoiber, the current chairman of the CSU, was not able to dominate the regional political scene to nearly the same extent – something that Stoiber is able to do, on account of his role as the Bavarian *Ministerpräsident*. Stoiber is keen to stress that he is not interested in becoming Federal Chancellor[357] on account of the fact that, for him, the job of Bavarian *Ministerpräsident* is the highest accolade that any Bavarian can aspire to.

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[354]   Geoffrey Pridham: *Christian Democracy in Western Germany: The CDU/CSU in Government and Opposition, 1945-1976* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p.315.
[355]   Josef Müller (1945-49), Hans Ehard (1949-55) and Hanns Seidel (1955-61) did not, for various reasons, possess or develop the same commandeering leadership styles that both Strauss and Stoiber have in recent years. Müller was too preoccupied with attempting to create a cross-denominational Bavarian variant of the CDU, while both Ehard and Seidel placed considerably more emphasis on their positions as leaders of the Bavarian regional government. See Geoffrey Pridham (1977): ibid. p.317.
[356]   Geoffrey Pridham (1977): ibid. p.315.
[357]   He has definitively ruled this out on a number of occasions. See for example 'Worte der Woche', in *Die*

Stoiber is just as rhetorically powerful as Strauss and also commands a loyal base of party support – even though his political remit is much more regional than federal.

Bavarian leaders have, on occasion, revelled in attracting attention and controversy, and it is beyond question that Bavarian leaders have manufactured a freedom for themselves that other *Ministerpräsidenten* cannot (or do not) make use of. Robert Leicht, writing in *Die Zeit*, has summarised Stoiber's skill at using every ounce of available political capital and ensuring that every political opportunity is exploited to the full – all with the principal aim of making sure that Bavaria's voice is heard:

> The Bavarian Prime Minister feels almost compelled to seek Bavarian *Sonderwege* ... (special ways) ... the principals that led to the debate concerning crucifixes in classrooms will be replicated over the abortion issue and 'paragraph 218', just as they will be when the issue of German-Czech compensation comes to a special vote. ... The Bavarian government does not give a damn about Karlsruhe and Bonn, about the *Bundestag* or the *Bundesregierung* (Federal Government). If other politicians were to treat the *Rechts- und Staatsordnung* (system of laws and governance) with such disdain, then Stoiber and his supporters would be the first to denounce them as *Verfassungsfeinde* (enemies of the constitution) ... [358].

The CSU is therefore a party that has grown used to clear, unambiguous and politically strong leadership. Franz-Josef Strauss helped to shape both the role of the CSU in federal politics as well as the setting of parameters for electoral success in the Bavarian arena. The CSU membership has grown accustomed to seeing its leaders launch occasionally scathing attacks on federal politicians and the federal government, and the party faithful remain (as a rule) highly supportive of its leadership.

2.5.2.2. Party Organisation

The CSU makes the very most out of the resources at its disposal. When compared with the other political parties in Bavaria it has a large and enthusiastic membership (see below) as well as the material resources to spread its activities across the length and breadth of Bavaria. Furthermore, the de-centralised nature of the German political system enables it to empower members at the lower levels of micro-politics. This in turn offers members considerable incentives to take part in political activity, hold minor political office and feel they are making

Zeit, 21 March 1997, on http://www.archiv.zeit.de/daten/pages/1997/13/wowos.txt.19970321.html
[358]   Robert Leicht: 'Bayern: Stoiber pfeift auf Bonn und Karlsruhe', in *Die Zeit*, 31 May 1996, on http://www/archiv.zeit.de/daten/pages/1996/23/bayern.txt.19960531.html

a genuine contribution to the CSU's political success. Section 2.5.4. hypothesised that the empowerment of members within the political process was much more likely to lead to parties stressing *policy* issues in preference to *office holding* issues, and while it is clear that the hegemonic position of the CSU is something that the party fiercely defends, German federalism allows CSU (as well as other party) politicians at all levels to have a meaningful effect on the way that their local communities are run.

In spite of this diversity, the CSU has also benefited from belligerent and charismatic leadership. Section 2.7.2. illustrated threw more light on this phenomenon. It is, however, clear that Franz Josef Strauss in particular was fortunate when he came to power that the CSU had overcome its period of internal crisis in the mid-1950s and had already successfully completed the organisational reforms that would allow it to become the dominant force in Bavarian politics. It is against this background that Strauss was able to consolidate his position (and the position of subsequent Chairmen) within the CSU party hierarchy.

The reasons for this surround the jolts that the party suffered in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when competition with the Bavarian Party as well as the creation of a four-party governing coalition (that did not include the CSU) threatened the very existence of the party[359]. The CSU leadership realised that, over the long-term, in order to secure and/or extend its influence in Bavarian politics the CSU needed a broad organisational substructure that stressed social integration and political inclusion[360]. Or, as Mintzel has phrased it:

> A well-organised party anchored in all Bavaria's political communities and equipped with efficient machines was itself regarded as an important stabilising factor in social and political development[361].

Hence the CSU has made a concerted effort to increase its membership and broaden the span of its organisational scope. In 1955 the CSU membership was around 35,000, but by 1970 it had quadrupled to 140,000[362]. Through the 1980s and 1990s the CSU stabilised its membership around the impressively high figure of 170/180,000 and it remains by a considerable margin the largest membership party in Bavaria[363].

The CSU central party machine increased in terms of full-time employees from 14 in

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[359] For a detailed account of the CSU's development in its formative years see Winfried Becker: 'Gründung und Wurzeln der Christlich-Sozialen Union' in Hanns-Seidel Stiftung (1995): op. cit. pp.69-108; Christoph Henzler: 'Die Christlich-Soziale Union in den ersten Nachkriegsjahren', in Hanns-Seidel Stiftung: op. cit. pp.109-162.
[360] Alf Mintzel (1978): op. cit. p.204.
[361] Alf Mintzel (1978): ibid. p.205.
[362] Alf Mintzel (1978): ibid. p.205.
[363] See Hanns-Seidel Stiftung (1995): op. cit. p.713.

1955 to over 200 in 1972[364]. In the late 1970s the CSU had 120 offices across the length and breadth of Bavaria, compared to the 42 of the SPD, illustrating the depth of the organisational framework that the CSU had been able to compile[365]. This costly process of 'rearmament' within the CSU was conducted from the General Secretariat and the Provincial Executive Committee Management with virtually a total exclusion of the conventional organs of membership representation. All the organisational efforts 'from above' were aimed least of all at simultaneously extending democratic participation by members. The main organisation-policy aim was in turning the CSU not only into a mass party in the sense of having a large following of voters, but also into a mass membership party. This served the purpose of increasing the density of its organisation and membership throughout the whole of Bavaria and of creating, among other things, a reservoir of new, up and coming, political potential. In the 1990s the CSU was the envy of all other parties in Germany, as it continued to maintain a dense organisational network. The 2918 *Ortsverbände*, 110 *Kreisverbände* and 44 *Bundestagswahlkreisorganisationen*[366] enabled, as far as possible, every political community in Bavaria to be permeated organisationally and ensures that Bavarian citizens are mobilised for the CSU's political aims[367].

The internal structure of the party has remained authoritarian-oligarchic. Important decision-making processes are seldom initiated via the organs of membership representation (meetings of members or meetings of representatives) and transmitted upwards. On the contrary, such initiatives are launched in the party's top management and in the CSU parliamentary group in the Bavarian *Landtag*, as well as in the parliamentary *Fraktion* in Bonn. The elected delegates are generally reduced to mere legitimators of decisions which have long since been made elsewhere. In the words of Pridham:

> CSU Congresses have primarily performed an acclamatory function, acting as a trampoline for Strauss's ... (the leader of the CSU at the time) ... political gymnastics, with his major policy speech and re-election as chairman being the highlights of the occasion[368].

A clear hierarchy exists within the party and the CSU remains the most authoritarian major party in Germany today. Members and conference delegates tend to follow a domineering group of leaders (or leader, in the cases of Strauss and Stoiber) and populism is

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[364] Alf Mintzel (1978): op. cit. p.205.
[365] Alf Mintzel (1978): ibid. p.192.
[366] Peter Lösche: *Kleine Geschichte der deutschen Parteien* (Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1994), p.124.
[367] Alf Mintzel (1978) op. cit. p.208.

used as a mobilisational tool within the party. These tendencies are supported by excellent lines of communication between the upper echelons of the party and the grass-roots level. However, although the organisational make-up of the CSU is a clear help in channelling party control upwards towards the leadership, the CSU's communal politicians are also able to enjoy a great deal of autonomy in their particular local spheres of influence. This facilitates member participation in the political process and offers the ideal spring-board for voter mobilisation as elections approach.

2.5.2.3. Party Policy

The CSU's core set of regional policies has largely been outlined above. As a modern *Volkspartei*, the CSU offers a prime example of a party integrating different political cultures, religious orientations and social attitudes under the banner of territorial uniqueness[369]. When this is coupled with the economic affluence that CSU governments have overseen, it is clear why the CSU has become synonymous with Bavaria and Bavaria with the CSU. The CSU has successfully conceptualised the differing (and, on occasion in the past, conflicting) tenets of Bavarianism within one coherent political platform – a not inconsiderable achievement given the diverse nature of Bavarian politics and culture when the CSU was formed in 1946. Its success at doing this has ensured that no party has shaped the modern history of Bavaria to anything like the same extent as the CSU has – and this has ensured that the CSU continues to be perceived as Bavaria's advocate within both the regional and national political arenas.

The core set of policies is based on Christian values, conservative interpretations of concepts such as the nation, the role of the woman, abortion, the right to asylum, the role of the family and the importance of religion and economic modernisation. This big idea corresponds with the socio-political community that the CSU has itself helped to create in the Bavarian regional space.

The CSU has carefully moulded its 'big idea' to encapsulate all that is popularly regarded as positive by Bavarians. This naturally stems from the influence that the CSU has had, as the long-time governing party, in shaping and moulding the Bavarian political and economic environment. But the CSU has proven itself flexible and politically astute in articulating this. Its ideology does, at times, appear arch 'conservative' in its social policy, yet it can also be surprisingly progressive in adapting to economic and political change. The

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[368] Geoffrey Pridham (1977): op. cit. p.317.
[369] Peter Lösche (1994): op. cit. p.122.

underlying current of right-wing opinion is played up within the popular press to distance the CSU from the CDU and to help in establishing a unique profile that separates it from its sister party. But the underlying conservatism evident in the CSU is frequently in stark opposition to its pragmatic practical nature. The CSU realises that its 'big idea' involves it continuing to achieve hegemonic status in Bavarian elections – and in order to do this it must adapt and respond to rapid political and economic change. Bavarians wish to retain their affluence and wealth compared to other Germans, and the CSU is wise enough to realise that it must encourage investment, economic dynamism and pragmatism in order to achieve this aim. The CSU balances the interests of different economic groups (the middle classes, the self-employed and big business) as well as carefully protecting the interests of agricultural producers. This shows how the 'big idea' encompasses protecting the economic interests of the most productive sectors of the economy without causing social instability. From the 1950s and 1960s onwards Bavarian politicians have proven themselves to be open towards the future, ready to adapt and accept new technological advancements, ready to embrace new forms of development and *'Zukunftsindustrien'*, as well as the necessity of societal change. Edmund Stoiber also appears very much to accept this motto, as he synthesises calls to protect and court traditional Bavarian beliefs and customs, alongside the pragmatic embracing of modernisation and economic advancement.

The success of being economically progressive while socially conservatism has prompted a number of clichés to common into popular parlance that aim to describe this unique combination. "Laptops and Lederhosen, Kruzifix and Kapital, High Tech and Muttergottes" may all be meant as flippant representations of this reality, but they do encapsulate the Bavarian 'big idea' very succinctly.

The CSU mobilises support on account of both of the distinct variables discussed in the typology. This is clear evidence that the CSU is successful because it understands the nature of Bavarian identity and of what it means to be Bavarian. It has created a political platform that combines the socially conservative and reactionary elements of Bavarian culture with the modernism that is required to acquire and sustain material prosperity. The CSU has taken what would initially appear to be diverse groups within Bavarian society (Catholics, Protestants, the middle classes, those working in agriculture and so forth) and brought them together in one political *Heimat*. The CSU has skilfully transformed the nature of group identities in Bavaria by manoeuvring traditional ones to one side and replacing them with a clear Bavarian identity. In particular, the CSU has succeeded in taming the age-old animosity between Protestants and Catholics by creating a political culture and a cross-denominational

party with which all Bavarians can identify. This is one of the CSU's major achievements and its success in overcoming the traditional split between Bavarian Catholics and Protestants and developing a cross-denominational base have proved to be the fundaments of its continued political success[370]. The CSU has bridged the divide within Bavarian society between the confessions - even if Catholics still support the CSU in greater numbers than Protestants do. The first leader of the CSU, Josef Müller, fought, in the end successfully, for a party that was *überkonfessionell* (and "*a party that was characterised by liberal, civic virtues based on the Christian Weltanschauung*"[371]) - and it is the broad, conservative nature of the CSU's appeal that has enabled so many Bavarians to see it as the representative of the Bavarian state both internally (in Bavarian politics) and externally (in federal politics). The CSU is therefore seen as being synonymous with Bavaria and Bavarians - just as Bavarians view the CSU as 'their' party and 'their' political advocate. The CSU has manufactured a lasting and coherent territorial identity. In the words of former leader Theo Waigel "*the Bavarian identity is a priceless possession of the CSU*" and the CSU has succeeded in associating itself with the Bavarian state and the articulation of Bavarian territorial sentiment through its long tenure as Bavaria's party of government[372]. Bavaria is, thanks to the efforts of the CSU, a state where diverse groups of citizens express a clear territorial identification *as Bavarians*.

The CSU takes advantage, as other regional parties do, of its excellent party organisation and the good fortune it has had in possessing strong leaders. It has developed and dense network of branches and members and no other party in Bavaria is able to compete with the efficiency of the CSU's organisation. Activists are given plenty of opportunity to take part in political work and to stand for the CSU on elected bodies, even if the policy making structures of the *Land* party remain top-down. Members of the CSU are used to leaders dominating party affairs, and in Franz Josef Strauss and Edmund Stoiber the party has developed two of the most charismatic and rhetorically able politicians of recent times.

This is in spite of the fact that Bavaria is far less homogeneous and uniform than it may sometimes seem. Bavaria has three historico-political tradition zones. As a result of its genesis at the beginning of the 19th century the present state of Bavaria includes Franconia, Swabia and Old Bavaria. But in contrast to its Bavarian predecessors and opponents, the

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[370]   Both the Bavarian Party (in the immediate post-war period) and the Bavarian Peoples Party (during the Weimar Republic) have, at different times, mobilised considerable portions of the Bavarian vote. The same can also be said for the Catholic Zentrum party. They were never, however, able to expand over and above a narrow (and often divided) Catholic base.
[371]   'Die Parteivorsitzenden der Christlich-Sozialen Union', in Hanns-Seidel Stiftung (1995): ibid. p.682.

CSU has learnt to extend its political reach over these traditional boundaries and to represent Bavarians as a territorial community. Theo Waigel has summarised this thus:

> Since its inception the CSU has understood itself as a genuine *Volkspartei* (peoples party), within which all sociological groupings have the opportunity to find a political home. The programme of the CSU offers something to all sections of the Bavarian population - to women and men, to employers and employees, to those in the middle classes, the self-employed as well as those who work on the land and those who work in the public services[373].

The CSU is also a clear beneficiary of its dual role as a federal and a regional party[374]. It can exert influence on both federal and regional politics in a way that belies its relatively small (nationally speaking) portion of the vote. The platform that the CSU is able to exploit allows it, in the words of Edmund Stoiber, to *"keep Bavaria strong as well as to storm ('stürmen') Berlin"*[375].

The dual role of the CSU is important as on the one hand it remains a regional party, only competing for votes, members and resources in Bavaria. It has enjoyed an almost unbroken period of governance and gives forceful voice to the conservative and parochial tenets of Bavarian identity within the Bavarian regional space. These points make it indisputably *Bavaria's party*. But the CSU is also able to vocally articulate territorial sentiment in the federal arena on account of its unique relationship with the CDU. The CSU is not merely the Bavarian subsidiary of the Christian Democrats: it is a separate party that comes together with the CDU in the same *Fraktion* (parliamentary party). The CDU and the CSU may both regard themselves as centre-right, but they do have slightly different policy orientations and ideological standpoints. The CSU, reflecting its Bavarian constituency, sees itself as providing a counterweight to the more liberal wing of the CDU. It sees itself as a *conservative* party: something that the majority of member of the CDU would clearly not wish to describe the CDU as[376]. The CSU is therefore able to give voice and authority to Bavaria's conservative identity within the framework of a nationally powerful political organisation (the CDU/CSU *Fraktion* in the Federal Parliament).

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[372]   Theo Waigel (CSU): in Hanns-Seidel Stiftung (1995): op. cit. p.61.
[373]   Theo Waigel (CSU): in Hanns Seidel Stiftung (1995): ibid. p.23.
[374]   Alf Mintzel: 'Conservatism and Christian Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany', in Zig Layton-Henry (ed.): *Conservative Politics in Western Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp.145-146.
[375]   Edmund Stoiber (CSU): 'Worte der Woche', in *Die Zeit*, 21 January 1999, p.2.

2.6. Concluding Remarks

Chapter two has created a typology consisting of two parts suitable for analysing the core hypothesis of this work: that the PDS has been (and is) politically successful as a result of mobilising specific eastern German sentiment. The first part of the typology conceptualises what is meant by the term regional spaces and how cultural and socio-economic variables come together to create cross-cutting territorial cleavages with a larger nation-state. Socio-economic and cultural phenomena come together to foster regionally unique spaces. The next chapter of this work (chapter three) employs the typology to eastern Germany, enabling the cultural and socio-economic differences between eastern and western Germany to be conceptualised. The typology will be used as an analytical tool to illustrate that, like numerous other regions in the democratic world, eastern Germany is a region with a sufficiently strong sense of differentness and identity to be able to support a regional party.

The second part of the typology illustrates the manner and means that regional parties employ in mobilising territorial uniqueness. The forms of party leadership, organisation and policy that regional parties possess and/or advocate enables them to give voice to the regional uniqueness that was highlighted in the first part of the typology. Regional parties act as agents in the political process who make specific use of the territorial cleavages that structural variables help to create with a given society.

The chapter closed by testing the typology (in a somewhat truncated fashion) in the German case of Bavaria. It illustrated that Bavaria can be conceptualised as a regional space on account of the differing identifications that Bavarians express and as a result of the value and attitudinal differences that exist between Bavaria and the rest of Germany. Both cultural and socio-economic factors come together to produce what can best be defined as 'Bavarianism'. The CSU has possessed charismatic leadership, impressive organisational structures and a core group of regionally specific policies that have enabled it to shape itself as 'Bavaria's party'. The CSU has managed to gain a position of hegemonic power on account of politically encapsulating Bavarian uniqueness and voicing it within the national and regional political arenas.

The discussion in this chapter has also illustrated that the development and consolidation of parties representing regional interests is characterised by a multitude of differing, over-lapping and often original constellations of factors. Regional parties have successfully moulded these into a strategy emphasising territorial differences between region

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[376] Stephen Padgett & Tony Burkett (1986): op. cit. p.120.

and centre. The party has to mobilise a form of group identity, or regional identification, in order to create a niche for itself within the political life of that region. The party has to use the varying historical, social, economic, political and cultural tools at its disposal to articulate territorially salient issues that exist on account of a territorial cleavage divide within the political arena.

Therefore it is possible to summarise that the self-perception of a community and the subjective demarcation of 'in groups' and 'out groups', based on the development of cleavages within nation-states, fosters a consciousness enabling communities, firstly, to be created, and, secondly, to see themselves as regionally distinct and either in need of political representation or open to the claims of regional parties who bring regional consciousness to the fore. It is legitimate to stress the historical bases of such perceptions, although it remains possible for enigmatic and intelligent elites to foster such perceptions in ways to suit themselves. But, in whatever guise they ensue, a 'feeling of togetherness' and identification with a group and/or region is of paramount importance if regional parties are to be electorally successful.

The second part of the typology will be employed in chapters four and five. At the level of both rhetoric and policy, the PDS has been successful as a result of its articulation of unique eastern German sentiment (which is shown to exist in chapter three). By employing the typology in the final two chapters of this work it will be illustrated that the PDS is in a unique position: its political strengths are in the areas where eastern German preferences and attitudes differ from those of western Germans. In terms of party organisation and political rhetoric the PDS is also able to exploit advantages that are unique to it (i.e. its decentralised party structures, high membership, links to the GDR and so forth), and where other western parties are at an immediate disadvantage. Chapters four and five therefore illustrate that, like other regional parties, the PDS uses regionally specific political factors to its advantage. However, before this can be done, a conceptualisation of eastern German uniqueness needs to be completed. It is for this reason that the next chapter concentrates on illustrating how and why eastern Germany/eastern Germans differ from western Germany/western Germans.

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Chapter Three

3. The Creation of a Regional Space and the Process of Identity Creation in Eastern Germany

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3.1. Introductory Remarks - The Dual Influence of pre-1989 Socialisation and post-1989 Collective Experience

The initial chapter of this work highlighted that the PDS is a very complex phenomenon. It stressed how a number of approaches are applicable to the study of the PDS - but also that a study based principally on an understanding of the PDS as a regional party is notably lacking. The second chapter carried this argument further, discussing the place of regional parties within the literature on parties and party systems, before developing a tool suitable for investigating the hypothesis that the PDS has stabilised itself as such a regional party – a two-part typology of regional spaces and regional parties. This two-part typology offers a suitable analytical framework for, firstly, evaluating the development of a societal cleavage between eastern and western Germany and, secondly, enabling the author to illustrate why the PDS has become a regional party articulating particular feelings of regional distinctiveness.

The third chapter of this work will employ the first part of the typology created in chapter two to illustrate how an eastern German regional space and a form of eastern German regional identity have developed. It will show that a territorial cleavage divide exists in Germany between eastern and western Germany. Chapter two illustrated that at the base of regional party success is a clear territorial identification - which regional parties are subsequently able give voice to within the political arena. This chapter therefore deconstructs the fundaments of the eastern German *Trotzidentität* within the framework outlined in chapter two, illustrating that value differences, culturally unique factors, the socialising effects of life in the GDR and the situational effects of the transformation process have helped to foster a unique eastern German identity.

The terminology that is used to understand these processes of identity creation can, however, be complex, as well as sometimes plain contradictory. 'Eastern German identity' is a phenomenon that goes under a multitude of different pseudonyms, and subsequently is understood to mean different things. Some

commentators talk of '*solidarität*' (solidarity), or more specifically of an '*Ostidentität*' (eastern identity) or '*ostdeutschen Wir-Bewußtsein*' (eastern German consciousness), while others prefer terms like '*Trotzidentität*' (identity of defiance), '*Abgrenzungsidentität*' (an identity of demarcation), '*Ost-Trotz*' (eastern contrariness), '*Ostbewußtsein*' (eastern consciousness), '*neues ostdeutsche Selbstbewußtsein*' (new eastern German consciousness), '*Ost Lebensgefühl*' (Eastern feeling for life) or simply '*Ostalgie*' (eastern nostalgia) or '*Nostalgie*' (nostalgia). While all of these definitions have their merits, this work's preferred definition is 'identity of defiance', as it accurately describes the reactionary instincts that have drawn Easterners together.   Eastern Germans[377] consciously recognise that they belong to a section of society to which not all Germans belong. Eastern Germans are not western Germans. And vice-versa. This can become evident in the form of a negative attitude towards western Germans, or can simply be a placid recognition that one is a resident of the one of the states in the new *Länder*.   It is also, most importantly, underpinned by widespread value differences, attitudinal commonalities and feelings of community and solidarity. This chapter will empirically illustrate this.

As Rolf Rießig (amongst others) has pointed out, however, a new sense of regional solidarity does not mean that eastern German consciousness is a monolithic construct. As he puts it:

> When measured against the Federal Republic as a whole, the East is a specific social and communication area. In this sense it is a relative entity. This is, however, the only common denominator that binds the East together. It is different to the West[378].

The 'we' feeling stems originally from the collective experience, and the socialisation effects, of having lived under the SED dictatorship in the years up to 1989.   This is coupled with the situational particularities of living through the transformation from state socialism to capitalism – and all the complex dissatisfactions that this has fostered[379]. Taken together, these two processes have contributed to the creation of a specific regional space, a specific regional culture and

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[377]   As with 'eastern German identity', the concept of who in fact 'eastern Germans' are also causes definitional problems. The Federal Statistical Office will, for example, define the term in a different way to political scientists and sociologists. For the purpose of this work, eastern Germans are taken as being those citizens who lived in the GDR and are currently residents of the five states of eastern Germany and eastern Berlin.

[378]   Rolf Rießig: 'Der Osten will nicht verachtet werden', in *Die Tageszeitung*, 23/24 May 1998.

[379]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit.

a specific regional identity that differentiates eastern Germans from Westerners. As Lothar Fritze eloquently puts it:

> An eastern German identity has arisen out of a combination of typical characteristics from life in the GDR, similar difficulties under the new societal circumstances and similarities in interests that have arisen from the dissipation of the euphoria that originally surrounded unification. This identity ... is, seen genetically, a reaction to collective *Subalternität* ... seen functionally it is a protective wall against dreaded social and moral de-classification, as well as a medium of articulation for common eastern German interests[380].

Over and above arguments about the validity of the various definitions of eastern German 'differentness', it is clear that commentators are discussing a phenomenon that, despite its pervasiveness, remains inherently difficult to quantify. No one definition adequately reflects the multi-dimensional phenomena that this regional group identification has come to represent. Furthermore eastern German socio-cultural values are not homogenous. It is clear that the processes of socialisation in, for example, the villages of rural West Pommerania were (and still are) very different to those of citizens of industrial Saxony. The level of education that a citizen receives will also play a role in shaping value structures just as it clear that different generations of citizens in eastern Germany may have considerably different beliefs, values and attitudes on account of their life experiences. This is particularly true when one remembers that an 80 year old eastern German pensioner will have experienced the social, political and economic uncertainty of the inter-war years, twelve years of Nazi dictatorship and the Second World War, the life and death of the GDR and the transformation processes that followed unification in 1989. Eastern Germans are therefore not taken to have a uniform set of opinions, values and attitudes[381]. Carsten Zelle has illustrated this empirically by demonstrating that certain groups within eastern Germany are affected by the two processes of 'socialisation' and 'situation' in different ways. Former servants of the GDR regime, as one would perhaps expect, have much stronger socialist tendencies than other eastern Germans, and as such tend ideologically much more towards the PDS. This is

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[380] Lothar Fritze: *Die Gegenwart des Vergangen. Über das Weiterleben der DDR nach ihrem Ende* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1997), p.107.
[381] See Katja Neller: 'DDR-Nostalgie? Analysen zur Identifikation der Ostdeutschen mit ihrer politischen Vergangenheit, zur ostdeutschen Identität und zur Ost-West-Stereotypisierung', in Jürgen W. Falter, Oscar W. Gabriel & Hans Rattinger (Hrsg.): *Wirklich ein Volk? Die politischen Orientierungen von Ost- und Westdeutschen im Vergleich* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000),

further strengthened if they have been exposed to unemployment post-1989. This is in contrast to eastern Germans who had little contact with the disgraced GDR regime, and particularly those who have also been lucky enough to retain their jobs throughout this period, who generally remain more 'liberal' in their Weltanschauung[382]. Arzheimer and Klein, meanwhile, have illustrated the socio-cultural attitudinal differences that such differing experiences can lead to in a lucid fashion, highlighting, by employing multivariate analysis, that younger eastern and western Germans (between the ages of 18 and 24) have in fact *very similar* attitudes, orientations and belief structures. This is particularly true of those citizens in this age bracket who have been well-educated, indicating the importance of formal education in installing liberal democratic values[383]. Arzheimer and Klein also illustrate that older eastern German citizens, who had genuine life experiences in the GDR (and beforehand), tend to be much more reticent in their support for democratic institutions, political parties and the liberal democratic system in general. Eastern Germans do not, therefore, possess a homogeneous set of values and beliefs (see sections 3.2.1.2., 3.2.2.2. and particularly 3.2.2.3. of this work for an in depth analysis of this)[384]. In many respects it is also clear that the attitudinal preferences of eastern and western Germans are similar - most want to earn money, to drive bigger and faster cars, have families and to go on holiday to warm destinations[385]. They speak a common language and, to a large extent, they have a common history.

However, historical memory and lived experience ensure that every eastern German possesses *his/her* own GDR within themselves, and this helps to shape and characterise their behaviour and substantiate the territorial cleavage divide between East and West[386]. For Easterners, the GDR remains the object against which the

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pp.571-602.
[382]   Carsten Zelle: 'Socialist heritage or Current Unemployment: Why do the Evaluations of Democracy and Socialism Differ Between East and West Germans' in *German Politics* Volume 8 Number 1, April 1999, pp.12-14.
[383]   See Kai Arzheimer & Markus Klein: 'Gesellschaftliche Wertorientierungen und Staatszielvorstellungen im Ost-West-Vergleich', in Jürgen W. Falter, Oscar W. Gabriel & Hans Rattinger: *Wirklich ein Volk? Die politischen Orientierungen von Ost- und Westdeutschen im Vergleich* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000), p.396.
[384]   See also Kai Arzheimer & Markus Klein (2000): ibid. pp.364-396.
[385]   Laurence Falls has argued that eastern Germans have adapted to the post-modern, post-industrial world that they were thrown into in a very short period of time. For McFalls, the process of cultural unification is actually over: but very few people have actually noticed yet. See Laurence Falls: 'Die kulturelle Vereinigung Deutschlands: Ostdeutsche politisiche und Alltagskultur vom real existierenden Sozialismus zur postmodernen kapitalistischen Konsumkultur', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B11/2001, pp.23-29.
[386]   The effects that the GDR has had on post-unification political behaviour and attitudes in the East prompted *Der Spiegel* to dramatically claim that *"in the East the GDR is more alive than ever - just*

present reality in the FRG is measured - and this remains true for the former industrial worker in Saxony, the former dissident, the former party functionary and the former Stasi informer.   The GDR represents lived history and a common past, and it is irrelevant what social and political positions citizens previously adopted. Furthermore, the social integration of Easterners and Westerners since 1989 has not been the process of slow and continuous 'coming together' that most people expected in 1989: instead it has been characterised by what Stephen Kalberg calls *"tension, disjuncture, discontinuity, conflict, contempt, dislocation and discontent"*[387].   The 'coming together' has been nothing of the sort.   Western Germans, whether they realised it or not, were not willing to accept that their understanding of how political, economic and social life in a 'united Germany' was to be conducted should substantially change.   They remain(ed) sure of their identity and saw no need to question any of the underlying tenets of it. For western Germans there tend to remain only Germans - and Germans have the traits and characteristics that they ascribe to themselves as western Germans[388].   It was for eastern Germans to learn how to become like western Germans, not for citizens of both German states to reassess their positions and come together in one new nation-state.   Easterners were clearly not expected to continue to display differing cultural and psychological orientations to Westerners[389]. For this reason the rise and stabilisation of an eastern German identity of defiance is often seen as either a continuation of a socialist heritage, nostalgic looks back to the certainties of an expansive welfare state or a conscious rejection of western German norms and values[390]. Or, in the words of Dietrich Mühlberg:

> The differences evident in the identity of eastern and western Germans are based on the fact that Westerners see no reason to question their perceptions of themselves and the basis of their identity; but they expect eastern Germans to finally get over their problems (i.e. the wall in the head, the consequences of the SED dictatorship) and become 'normal' Germans (i.e. to learn to be democrats) and to become culturally more

without the socialism". Although the author does not necessarily agree with these sentiments, it is clear that the GDR is still a reference point against which current political, economic and social norms are measured. See 'Das rote Gespenst' in *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 10, 1999, p.22.

[387]   Stephen Kalberg: 'The Far Slower and More Conflict-Ridden Path to German Social Integration: Toward a Multi-causal, Contextual and Multidirectional Explanatory Framework', in *German Politics and Society*, Volume 17 Number 4, Winter 1999, p.35.

[388]   Dietrich Mühlberg: 'Kulturelle Differenz als Voraussetzung innerer Stabilität der deutschen Gesellschaft?', in *Berliner Debatte INITIAL*, Volume 11 Number 2, 2000, p.54.

[389]   Dietrich Mühlberg (2000): ibid. p.47.

[390]   Lothar Probst: 'Ost-West Differenzen und das republikanische Defizit der deutschen Einheit', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B41-42/1998, p.4.

chic (i.e. to get rid of their bad habits) ... [391]

As the sections within this chapter illustrate, misunderstandings and misconceptions of this sort have provided the basis for the invigoration of collective consciousness in the eastern states.

Regional identities are, therefore, not constructed in coherent, systematic ways. Each regional identity is constructed differently and the building blocks stem from a region's historical, political, cultural and economic specificity. This is as true for eastern Germany as it is for every other region in Europe. It is therefore logical that some factors play a particularly defining role in some regions, but not in others (i.e. language in Catalonia, but not in Northern Italy), whilst other factors often only come into play in very particular cases (i.e. religion in Northern Ireland and Quebec). The principal characteristics that have enabled a regional space to develop and a regional party to sustain itself in eastern Germany stem from the social, political and economic differences between individuals in the eastern and western *Länder*, brought on by the differing socialisation processes in the GDR and the FRG, and the perceived 'colonisation'[392] of the GDR that has taken place since 1989. This territorial cleavage is the reason that economics, politics and cultural life have taken different forms in eastern and western Germany since 1989. This chapter will illustrate that, as an eastern German identity of defiance exists, and enough regionally mobilising variables compliment it, eastern Germany is structurally fertile ground for a regional party to prosper.

3.2. The Stabilisation of an 'Identity of Defiance' in Eastern Germany

It is imperative that the existence of an eastern German 'identity of defiance' is placed in the societal context of life *before* 1989 as well as of life *after* unification. As Carsten Zelle has observed, "*it is not only socialisation ... (in the GDR) ... that has*

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[391] Dietrich Mühlberg (2000): op. cit. p.54.

[392] The term colonisation has been used both in popular discourse and in academic discussion. For a particularly vivid account of the so-called process of colonisation see Wolfgang Dümcke & Fritz Vilmar (Hrsg.): *Kolonialisierung der DDR* (Münster: Agenda Verlag, 1995). Michael Benjamin, a Communist Platform member on the PDS executive, speaks for a similar group of thinkers when using the term *Anschluß* to describe unification. They consciously invoke memories of the *Anschluß* between Germany and Austria in 1938, indicating their rejection of the capitalist state and society within which they now live. See Michael Benjamin: *Ostdeutsche Identität und ihre sozialen Grundlagen. Gedanken über linke Politik* (Berlin: Marxistisches Forum der PDS, Heft 6, 1996a).

influenced value structures post-1989, but also the present ... (economic, political and social) ... *situation*"[393]. It is therefore not an issue of 'ingrained' primordial linkages and perceptions, but rather *"context dependent situation specific constructions"*[394]. The eastern *Trotzidentität* has been rapidly created as a reaction to events and processes.   In the words of Stojanov and Sandmeier Easterners experience *"Fremdheitsverhältnissen"* ("feelings of strangeness") as they continue to struggle to view the German state, institutions and practices as truly their own[395].

Though it is undoubtedly true that eastern Germans are affected by the processes of socialisation and transformation to differing degrees, one can still justifiably claim that the two processes have combined to become a motor of identity creation as they affect, in some way, *the vast majority* of Easterners. Zelle himself admits that more eastern Germans than western Germans remain in favour of 'socialism'[396] – and his attempts to link this to a weaker economic position seem to

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[393]   Carsten Zelle: 'Soziale und liberale Wertorientierungen: Versuch einer situativen Erklärung der Unterschiede zwischen Ost- und Westdeutschen', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B41-42/98, p.34. Zelle and authors such as Thomas Gensicke have developed this approach as a synthesis of two 'traditional' approaches towards conceptualising the effects of GDR socialisation (see also Thomas Gensicke: *Die neuen Bundesbürger: Eine Transformation ohne Integration* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998), p.193) on eastern Germans. The first 'traditional' position emphasised the importance of the FRG in the lives of eastern Germans. Stolen 'glances over the wall', in the form of FRG television or visits from relatives meant that a 'virtual western socialisation' was perceived as concurrently taking place alongside the socialist one propagated by the SED (see for example Hans-Joachim Veen: 'Innere Einheit - aber wo liegt sie? Eine Bestandsaufnahme im siebten Jahr nach der Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B40-41/97, p.23). The political socialisation of Easterners in the GDR did not, therefore, represent a serious challenge to attempts to create a united political culture in Germany as Easterners were well aware of how the institutions and the political discourse in the FRG functioned. The opposite position to this stressed that socialisation in the GDR had to have an effect on the political orientations of Easterners. Voices like those of Martin and Sylvia Greiffenhagen quickly raised sceptical voices about the ability of Easterners and Westerners to overcome the 'Wall in their Heads', hypothesising that forty years apart would inevitably mean that Easterners and Westerns would need a considerable period of time to grow back together. See Martin & Sylvia Greiffenhagen: *Ein schwieriges Vaterland* (München: List, 1993). In recent years the 'situational' approach has grown in prevalence, as authors such as Gert Pickel have stressed that differing social and economic environments in East and West influence citizens in different ways (see Gert Pickel: 'Eine ostdeutsche 'Sonder'-Mentalität acht Jahre nach der Vereinigung? Fazit einer Diskussion um Sozialisation und Situation', in Susanne Pickel, Gert Pickel & Dieter Walz (Hrsg.): *Politische Einheit - Kultureller Zwiespalt? Die Erklärungen politischer und demokratischer Einstellungen in Ostdeutschland vor der Bundestagswahl 1998* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998), pp.157-177). For a more detailed review of these positions see Katja Neller (2000): op. cit. pp.575-576.
[394]   Rudolf Woderich: 'Gelebte und inszenierte Identitäten in Ostdeutschland', in *Identitäten in Europa. Welt Trends. International Politik und vergleichende Studien*, Nummer 15, Summer 1997, p.83.
[395]   Christov Stojanov & Stefan Sandmeier: 'Zu einer vernachlässigten Dimension postsozialistischer Transformation: (Re-)Modernisierung als Fremdheitsverhältnis', in Lars Clausen (Hrsg.): *Gesellschaften im Umbruch: Verhandlungen des 27. Kongresses der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie in Halle an der Saale* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1996), p.231.
[396]   The term socialism in eastern Germany is often seen to refer back to 'real existing socialism' of the GDR, whereas in other countries the term tends to have a more theoretical foundation. This is a unique problem that public opinion research agencies have to take into consideration when asking eastern

slightly miss the point that a broad cross-section of the eastern population *regardless of economic positions* has both more favourable leanings towards socialism and also expects the state to be more active in everyday economic life (see section 3.2.2.4.). This is a direct result of the processes through which Easterners, from all social strata, and of all political persuasions, have lived. Where Zelle is correct though is that his (impressive) analysis will only ever offer suggestive explanations, as proving causal linkages between such complex societal phenomena verges on the impossible. The fundamental point does, however, remain valid: eastern and western Germans have developed different identities, albeit with a number of similarities, as a combined result of the two processes highlighted: socialisation and situation.

Provocative and stimulating though such analysis is, it is clear that debates around the issue of 'eastern German identity' have tended to take place within a vacuum as far as other works on identity creation in other regions are concerned. The eastern German case is, for largely understandable reasons, seen as unique and not applicable for cross-national study. The analytical framework constructed in section 2.4. offers a vehicle that permits an attempt to be made at redressing this balance.

Section 3.2. applies the analytical tool of a typology of factors that contribute to regional identifications arising in the specific case of eastern Germany. There are a number of key facets of eastern regional identification - and the typology enables these to be drawn out and conceptualised. Chapters four and five move on to illustrate that it is these facets of eastern uniqueness that the PDS successfully mobilises within both the eastern German regional, and the federal political, environments.

3.2.1.   Cultural Variables

If we choose to define culture as the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, that is both widely understood and transmitted from one generation to another, then elements of a distinctive culture are clearly evident in eastern Germany today[397]. As Dietrich Mühlberg puts it, "*it goes without saying that*

Germans to offer opinions on what is obviously a very loaded term.

[397]   It is, of course, anything but clear what political culture actually is. This is not a debate that this work necessarily needs to go into, so for greater analysis of the definitional problems when discussing political culture see Max Kaase: 'Sinn oder Unsinn des Konzepts 'Politische Kultur' für die

cultural differences irritate ... (the relationship) ... between eastern and western Germans, even if ... (Easterners and Westerners) ... are linguistically and ethnically united"[398]. Before elaborating on what exactly these differences are in concrete terms (sections 3.2.2.3 – 3.2.2.5.) it is important to place them within the context of the processes of socialisation that lives in the FRG and GDR offered. When interwoven with the lived experience of social, economic, political and psychological transformation in the 1990s, it is clear that the parameters of a unique eastern German social, political and cultural community have been created.

Humans instinctively react to the environments in which they find themselves. This is just as true for a poor, homeless alcoholic as it is for an affluent, upwardly-mobile stockbroker. The structural conditions of a human's existence are evaluated (even if at only the most superficial level) and the opportunity structures that are at hand are used to make an individual's life more bearable/pleasurable.

Hence it is self-explanatory that a set of subjective orientations developed within the GDR in response to the constraints of life in East Germany. These were shaped and re-shaped by the conditions of life under the SED dictatorship. A similar process occurred in the FRG, only this time the norms, values and attitudes of Westerners were moulded by a very different political, social and economic system.

In the eastern German case, McFalls has described such a process as "*a creative historic, social and psychological response to the structures of real existing Socialism*"[399]. However, it is clear that these 'responses' were crafted specifically for life in an authoritarian dictatorship, not a free-market, liberal society. The structures (the institutions) of the present German state are not wholly in sync with the agents (the orientations vis-à-vis these institutions)[400]. This is as a result of the two phenomena mentioned above: socialisation and situation[401].

Hence it is valid to talk of a set of eastern German attitudes and norms in the

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Vergleichende Politikforschung, oder auch: Der Versuch, einen Pudding an die Wand zu nageln', in Max Kaase & Hans Dieter Klingemann (eds.): *Wahlen und Politisches System: Analysen aus Anlaß der Bundestagswahl 1980* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1983), pp.144-171. For a discussion of the concept in the context of German unification see Dietrich Mühlberg: 'Beobachtete Tendenzen zur Ausbildung einer ostdeutschen Teilkultur', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B11/2001, pp.30-38.

[398]   Dietrich Mühlberg (2001): ibid. p.30.
[399]   Laurence H. McFalls (1995): op. cit. p.140.
[400]   Detlev Pollack: 'Trust in Institutions and the Urge to be Different: On Attitudinal Change in Eastern Germany', in *German Politics*, Volume 8 Number 3, December 1999, p.82; See also Gabriel Almond & Sidney Verba: *The Civic Culture. Political Attitudes to Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963).
[401]   Carsten Zelle: 'Socialist heritage or Current Unemployment: Why do the Evaluations of Democracy and Socialism Differ Between East and West Germans' in *German Politics* Volume 8

years before 1989. 'East German consciousness' in its pre-1989 form had, however, little to do with the concept of the 'socialist national consciousness' that the SED attempted to create, principally because the SED's attempts at manufacturing an East German identity were based on the fusion of two incompatible concepts: class consciousness and national consciousness[402]. But a distinctive 'East German identity' *did* begin to take shape even if it did not necessarily correspond to the official 'socialist national consciousness' that the SED continued to invoke[403]. The true extent of the value differences between eastern and western Germans have only become visible in the pre-Wende era - as the institutions and structures that governed East German lives were swept away and West German ones replaced them[404].

Cultural lag, so it was widely perceived, prevented Easterners from embracing new societal norms quickly, as the adoption of new systems of governance does not inherently encourage rapid cultural adaptation to these norms. In short, culture needs time to 'catch up'. The *Sozialvertrag* (social contract) that existed between governors and governed in many central and eastern European countries no longer exists and many of the consistent variables of pre-1989 life (the certainty of employment, the existence of a broad, if paternalistic and limited, welfare state, the egalitarian nature of society and so forth) have been rendered obsolete[405]. Elements of the (unwritten, but widely understood) 'social contract' enabled citizens in the GDR to pursue private, material interests in exchange for complicity with the regime's socialist aims[406]. They did this in a 'private sphere' that has widely been termed the 'society of niches' (*Nischengesellschaft*), away from regimented and authoritarian public life[407]. This was allowed to take place as the state demanded a form of conditional loyalty from the citizenry, where if the citizen was prepared to perform the rituals that the state required of it (and kept any grumbles to the confines of the 'private' sphere) then the state would leave the citizen to pursue their own private goals in peace[408].

Following unification, Easterners found themselves in a quantifiably different

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Number 1, April 1999, pp.1-20.

[402]   Joanna McKay: *The Official Concept of the Nation in the Former GDR* (Brookfield, Vermont, USA: Ashgate, 1998), p.23.

[403]   Gebhard Ludwig Schweigler: *National Consciousness in Divided Germany* (London: Sage, 1975), p.74.

[404]   Heiner Meuleman: *Werte und Wertewandel. Zur Identität einer geteilten und wieder vereinten Nation* (München: Leske und Budrich, 1998).

[405]   John Ishiyama (1995): op. cit. pp.147-166. Yanqu Tong: 'Mass Alienation Under State Socialism and After', in *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Volume 28 Number 2, June 1995, p.215.

[406]   Jonathan Grix (1998): op. cit. pp.45-50.

[407]   Günter Gaus: *Wo Deutschland liegt* (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1983), pp.156-165.

[408]   Jonathan B. Grix (1998): op. cit. p.43.

structural environment, for which the 'niche society' and 'social contract' were obsolete.   Given the fundamentally different structure of capitalist society, the challenges of transition could not now be met by retreating back into niches.   The state would not provide work and security in return for silent compliance - as the mechanics of capitalist society demand active participation in securing and shaping one's own future.   Capitalism in the unified Germany requires the active articulation of one's interests in the form of open and proactive action.   Individuals in eastern Germany have had no experience of pluralist interest articulation and of competitive daily lifestyles, and as such cannot be expected to adapt to the differing societal forces around them overnight.   The society of niches in the GDR offered inadequate preparation for life in a capitalist, competitive society.   These processes are diametrically opposed to the socialisation processes that East Germans were publicly exposed to before 1989.

The socialisation process, and the apparent atomisation of an individual's existence within East German society, created a powerful motor of rapid identity creation in the early 1990s.   The collective consciousness in eastern Germany is an adaptation strategy in the face of the problems and conflicts that unification has created[409].   The collective experience of having to come to terms with the societal contours under capitalism quickly fostered solidarity with other Easterners who were experiencing similar difficulties[410].

As well as being exposed to the socialising influences (institutions, propaganda, every day experiences and so forth) of life in the GDR, Easterners have experienced a difficult transformation of their economic, social and political structures to new ones that remain less well received than they do in the West (see section 3.2.6.).   The euphoria that greeted unification was quickly replaced by disillusionment as the capitalist FRG proved unable to meet all the demands that the Easterners put on it.   These disappointments ranged from high-rates of unemployment and the subsequent loss of personal esteem that this entailed, to the de-grading of personal existences in the GDR.   Furthermore, in 1990 it appeared that Easterners tended to take the Unification Treaty at its word.   Despite the widespread wish for a rapid abolition of the GDR, Easterners still widely perceived the unification of the two

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[409] Helga A. Welsh, Andreas Pickel & Dorothy Rosenberg: 'East and West German Identities - United and Divided', in Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.): *After Unity - Reconfiguring German Identities* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997), p.135.
[410] Dieter Walz & Wolfram Brunner: 'Das Sein bestimmt das Bewußtsein (Oder: Warum sich die

Germanies as a coming together of two states as equal partners in search of a joint future. In reality, Easterners soon realised that this was far removed from the truth. Very little from the GDR was seen by western Germans as being worth retaining, and East Germany was effectively joining the FRG in much the same way that the Saarland had done in 1957[411].

Easterners have frequently been described, as well as popularly perceiving themselves as, "*immigrants in their own Land*"[412]. This refers, however, to psychological orientation and not physical position. Feelings of second class citizenship and immigrant status remain evident on account of the perceived status that Easterners see themselves as occupying in the FRG. The West German state expanded to become the all-German state – yet even though the population of *Germany* jumped by a fifth overnight, the structures of the new state were not able to adequately mould themselves to the demands, wishes and wants of Germany's new citizens. Hence dissatisfaction with the 'ready-made state' quickly ensued[413].

The psychological de-classification of eastern Germans has indeed affected *all* Easterners as it has hit (simultaneously) the upper, middle and lower echelons of eastern society[414]. The upper echelons of GDR society (the academic world, the military, those who worked for or were close to the SED power–centres, the bureaucracy and so forth) were almost immediately deprived of the positions they had in the GDR, as the state that they had served for many years served went out of existence. Although frequently able to re-build their lives in an economic sense, they remained forever deprived of the power and privilege that they once possessed in the GDR. In the middle classes (or what can best be understood as middle classes), the industrial and agricultural base of the GDR was crushed by the demands of global competition. Companies that were perhaps capable of restructuring their enterprises in order to modernise and remain competitive with western firms were closed down[415], just as were many of the more inefficient and non-viable eastern

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Ostdeutschen als Bürger 2. Klasse fühlen'), in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B51/97, p.13.

[411]   Helmut Meier, Bodo Reblin & Erhard Weckesser: *Die Schwierigkeiten der Ostdeutschen Bundesbürger zu werden* (Dresden: Clara Weg Verlag, 1995), p.19.

[412]   The existence of such feelings has been widely documented in both the academic world and the popular press. For a particularly lucid discussion of the issue see Dieter Walz & Wolfram Brunner (1997): op. cit. pp.6-20; See also Peter Pulzer (1992): in Gordon Smith et al (eds.): op. cit. p.325.

[413]   Richard Rose & Christian Haerpfer: 'The Impact of a Ready-Made State: East Germans in Comparative Perspective', in *German Politics*, Volume 6 Number 1, April 1997, pp.100-121.

[414]   Michael Vester: in Michael Vester, Michael Hoffman & Irene Zierke (eds.) (1995): op. cit. p.30.

[415]   Prior to the currency union of July 1990, the *Bundesbank* estimated that between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of eastern German firms could 'survive' the transition to a social market economy. In the event, barely 25 per cent did. This is no doubt due to the over-optimistic expectations that West

manufacturers. *FacharbeiterInnen* and the technically able were, therefore, deprived of their positions and were forced to seek work in industrial sectors where they often had neither the relevant competencies nor experience. At the lowest levels of GDR society the effects of rapid de-industrialisation were obvious as companies were forced to lay off nearly three million people in the course of just over twelve months[416] - throwing above all women, those with less qualifications, foreigners and the less socially mobile out of productive employment. That many citizens have since found employment is not the point. Their lives were fundamentally changed overnight and many of the old securities were taken away. Rainer Geißler has conceptualised this by stressing that social mobility in the eastern states has been at best horizontal, but often vertical – and vertically downwards, as the *Absteiger* ('those on their way downwards') have descended from positions of power and influence to lower-ranking positions within German society[417]. Although this clearly affected different citizens, in different positions on the social ladder, in different ways, it did affect *the vast majority* of Easterners in some shape or form[418].

Hence the eastern identity of defiance is therefore characterised by 'backs-to-the-wall' defensive undertones that stem from the psychological process of adaptation to a new state. The very structure of the eastern German population has been radically transformed in a very short space of time. This is a phenomenon that Westerners have not experienced because of their 'stable' position within German society. The extension of the FRG has also involved incorporating a population with very different social attitudes and experiences – spawning feelings of 'immigrant status' within Easterners towards what is ostensibly their own country[419].

Germans had of the East German economy, which was in a much worse condition than the East German figures had led western observers to initially believe. See 'One Year of German Monetary, economic and Social Union', *Deutsche Bundesbank* (Frankfurt: Deutsche Bundesbank Monthly Report, July 1991), pp.18-30 quoted in Stephen Padgett: in Gordon Smith et al. (eds.) (1992): op. cit. p.192.

[416] In October 1990 9.2 million Easterners were in employment, whereas by December 1991 this figure had plummeted to 6.2 million. See 'The Eagles Embrace', in *The Economist*, 30 September 1995, p.22.

[417] This, once again, is not a reflection of *material* circumstances within eastern Germany, but rather subjective self-understandings. It goes without saying that citizens who are unemployed, are on job training schemes, in early retirement (*Vorrühestándler*) have experienced a reduction in their social status, but Geißler claims that over and above these groupings in 1996 83 per cent of Easterners who have experienced a *Niveauwechsel* ('a change in their position within society') have gone downwards. See Rainer Geißler: *Die Sozialstruktur Deutschlands: Zur gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung mit einer Zwischenbilanz zur Vereinigung* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1996), p.245.

[418] Michael Vester (1995): op. cit. p.30.

Table 3
The Percentage of Easterners who view themselves as Second Class Citizens

Date	Percentage
December 1990	87
May 1991	84
November 1993	78
July 1994	74
October 1995	69
March 1996	74
May 1997	80

It is against this backdrop that attitudinal and value differences over a broad array of issues have stabilised. The complex interaction of pre- and post-1989 combined experiences have therefore seen a significant proportion of Easterners develop differing attitudes to Westerners. These differences range from foreign policy, health and welfare, the role of the state in general, the social and political system of the FRG and the nature of German democracy to attitudes to the GDR and the past. This was so much so that the ISDA and EMNID public opinion research organisations explicitly concluded, in 1994, that *"one cannot speak of a levelling out of attitudes across eastern and western Germany"*, as eastern preferences were quantifiably different to those of Westerners[420]. On a number (although not all) of key issues eastern Germans display quantifiably different value preferences than western Germans and it is as a result of these that a cultural eastern identity exists[421]. The PDS, as chapters four and five illustrate, is uniquely strong in representing this eastern political difference by filling the 'representation gap'.

3.2.1.1. Towards an Eastern German Ethnicity?

One of the most common forms of territorial identification, as was seen in section 2.4.2., has tended to be that which is based on belonging to an ethnic grouping that is resident in (or claims it should be resident in) an ethnic homeland. Conceptualising eastern Germans as an ethnic group is, however, of little assistance in

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[419] Geoffrey K. Roberts (1991): op. cit. pp.373-404.
[420]   Rainer Ferchland et al: *Ost-West-Wahlanalyse 3. Ergebnisse einer repräsentativen gesamtdeutschen Bevölkerungsbefragung in Zusammenarbeit mit EMNID Bielefeld* (Berlin: Institut für Sozialdatenanalyse e. V. (ISDA), Nr. 17, 1994), p.35.
[421] Rudolf Woderich (1997): op. cit. p.82.

understanding the nature of the eastern German identity – and the vast majority of academic analysis has refuted the idea of an eastern German ethnicity based on primordial ties, choosing rather to stress notions of a culturally distinct eastern political environment based upon more 'transient' phenomena.   The one notable exception to this broad consensus remains the provocative analysis forwarded by Marc Howard, hypothesising that by viewing eastern Germans as an ethnic group one is able to better understand the differences between Easterners and Westerners[422]. Although Howard openly admits that the concept of ethnicity verges on the indefinable, he claims that ethnic groups do rise and fall, and that ethnic groups base their claims on common histories and a coherence of attitude through common symbols[423]. Howard claims that although eastern Germans do not substantially differ from western Germans on the grounds of race, language or religion, Easterners constitute a separate group that largely remains together as one unit[424], is territorially fixed and possess powerful emotional linkages, including a combined past and values and continues to struggle in opposition to a clear and quantifiable other[425].

Curiously, particularly in view of the challenging nature of the hypothesis he posits, Howard subsequently proceeds to undermine his own argument. He claims that ethnicity is not, after all, the ideal vehicle for understanding the processes of identity creation in the eastern states as ethnic differences will not separate Germans from East and West in the longer-term. This appears logical, as ethnicity was actually the key argument *underpinning* German unification. Howard, however, eliminates the long-term applicability of using ethnicity as an explanatory tool as, firstly, the number of citizens who will have lived through state-socialism is shrinking. Secondly, he claims that the transformation process will, at some undefined point, come to an end. And thirdly western German hegemony is likely, once again at some point in the future, to be 'levelled out' as Easterners come to be 'equals' in terms of positions of influence, accumulated wealth and popular perception[426].

This work does not dispute that as time goes on fewer and fewer people will

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[422]   Marc Howard (1995a): op. cit. pp.119-131;   Marc Howard: 'An Eastern German Ethnicity? Understanding the New Division of Unified Germany', in *German Politics and Society*, Volume 13 (Winter 1995b), pp.49-70.

[423]   Marc Howard (1995a): ibid. p.124.   See also Daniel Bell: *The Winding Passage: Essays and Sociological Journeys, 1960-1980* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Abt Books, 1980), p.196.

[424]   A survey conducted by *Der Spiegel* in 1994 revealed that 80 per cent of eastern Germans would, given the opportunity, prefer to remain resident in the eastern states rather than in the western ones. See *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 33, 1994, p.111.

[425]   Marc Howard (1995a): op. cit. p.124.

[426]   Marc Howard (1995a): ibid. p.129.

be able to recall real-existing state socialism, but it does challenge the second and third of Howard's concluding points. The economic transformation process has in many ways been completed, as the structures and mechanisms of the social market economy (with one or two notable exceptions) are (and have been for a number of years) in place[427]. That these institutions may function differently (i.e. the system of collective bargaining, the differing patchwork of interest groups within society and so forth) is now a reflection of a divergent reality not an on-going transition. Eastern Germany remains an economic area that under-performs in comparison to western Germany – and this also needs to be seen as an expression of post-unification normality, not transition, and is likely to remain so for a very long time to come[428]. Eastern German civil society and politics are also running along a different track to that in western Germany. The socialising effects of life in the SED dictatorship have combined with experiences of the transformation process from state socialism to capitalism to create substantial distrust of the FRG's institutions and the politicians and elite actors who are active within them. The effects of unemployment and social insecurities have strongly hindered the development of a civic community along the lines of that in western Germany. Eastern Germans are much more likely to turn inwards towards family members and close acquaintances rather than become involved in the wider civil society[429].

The societal cleavage that exists between eastern and western Germans is indeed built upon differing cultural foundations: but as Howard's attempts have indirectly shown, this is not on the basis of an eastern German ethnicity, rather as eastern Germany has seen the crystallisation of an eastern German communication area and civil society, functioning around an *Ost-Gefühl* (eastern feeling) and an

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[427]   Lothar Späth forwards a particularly lucid account of the problems that are besetting the eastern German economy. He sees the economic problems of the East as a possible catalyst for economic reform in Germany as a whole. Lothar Späth: *Blühende Phantasien und harte Realitäten: Wie der Umschwung Ost die ganze Republik verändert* (München: Econ & List Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998), pp.90-91.

[428]   Productivity remains at a persistently lower level than that of the western German economy, and the prospects of the eastern German economy reaching these western levels in the foreseeable future appear slim. Hallett & Ma predict, using data that at the time of writing looks increasingly *over-optimistic*, that the productivity gap between East and West will take many years to close. As they observe "*if western productivity continues to grow at 2 per cent per annum, and if the East starts with productivity at 26 per cent of the Western level, then the East will need 20, 30 or 40 years to catch up if its productivity grows at 9.1, 6.7 or 5.5 per cent respectively*". Hugh A. J. Hallett & Yue Ma: 'East Germany, West Germany, and their Mezziogiorno Problem: A Parable for European Economic Integration', in *The Economic Journal*, Volume 103, 1993, pp.417-418.

[429]   Jonathan Grix (1999): op. cit. p.16.

eastern *Trotzidentität*. The next section of this work empirically illustrates what the cultural elements of this identity are.

3.2.1.2. The Past as the Present

The management of memory in the FRG, and particularly in the eastern states, has been one of the most contentious issues in post-unification Germany[430]. The debate has often been tinged with bitterness and recrimination and Easterners have found themselves having to defend their existences pre-1989 in a way that many never expected they would have to at the time of unification. Easterners have also openly reflected on the characteristics in their past that *differentiate* them from Westerners — in an attempt to re-legitimise their own lived experiences.

Communicative memory in eastern Germany is informal, non-structured and inclusive, occurring and re-occurring through the everyday interaction of eastern German citizens. It is an interchange of direct memory of the recent past through the prism of the collective[431]. Cultural memory, the type of which much younger eastern Germans are likely to possess, is much less spontaneous than communicative memory, and relies on *perceptions* of the past rather than *experience*. Hence eastern Germans across the age spectrum are in possession of pictures and assumptions about all aspects of the GDR, even if they differ, firstly, from reality, secondly, from the perceptions of other Easterners and thirdly, and most importantly, from Westerners — on account of Westerners having no or much reduced linkages to the GDR.

Humans are inherently 'forgetful'[432] and one should not consider memory of the GDR as a mirror image of the past as it really was, but rather as a *re-construction* viewed through the prism of the present. Memory is, by its very essence, a creative

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[430]   Jan Assman has chosen to stress two distinct ways in which memory is transmitted between societal groups and between generations. 'Communicative Memory' is a shared memory of the recent past. This is obtained through the social interaction of citizens who actively remember the events. 'Cultural Memory', according to Assman, is a formally constructed version of past events – which intrinsically leaves itself open to manipulation by groups within society (for example intellectuals, the media, politicians and so forth). See Jan Assman: *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: Verlag C.H.Beck, 1999). For further analysis of this in the West German context see Caroline Gay: *Reshaping the Myth: National Memory Management, Vergangenheitsbewältigung and the Dialectic of Normality in Post-War West Germany* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, MPhil Thesis, 2000).

[431]   Caroline Gay (2000): ibid. p.8.

[432]   As Freud once said, man needs to forget in order to remember. Wolfgang Thierse, the President of the *Bundestag* also referred to man as a *"Vergessendes Lebewesen"* in comments on the construction of a memorial to murdered Jews in Berlin. See Wolfgang Thierse: 'Vorwort' in Michael S. Cullen (ed.): *Das Holocaust Mahnmal: Dokumentation einer Debatte* (Zürich: Pendo Verlag, 1999), p.9.

process[433], deliberately selective and often conditioned through the prism of an individuals attitude to current reality – hence the GDR that Easterners possess in their minds will be unique to them, rather than a true reflection of reality. No society or community exists in a vacuum and historical memory forms an important part of individual self-understanding. As the Federal President Roman Herzog observed in a speech on 9 November 1998, *"living without remembering means to live without an identity and therefore without orientation"*[434] – hence the uniqueness of memory divides Easterners from their western counterparts as it forms a fundamental part of their self-appreciation.

Such differences in self-perception are more evident in the considerable proportion of the population that continues to regard itself as *eastern German*. As a result of the lack of an eastern German ethnicity (see section 3.2.2.1.), citizens of the eastern states do not have an ethnic or national identity to call into their consciousness on account of their feelings as 'outsiders' in the Federal Republic. This has led to a conscious distancing of western Germans, who are perceived as holding attitudes and norms that are at odds with those of eastern Germans. These differences are most evident in debates over social equality and individual freedom, the past (i.e. the GDR), socialism versus capitalism and in conceptions of Germany's place in the world.

Easterners remain strongly averse to what they perceive as western Germans dictating to them about, firstly, their past and, secondly, how they should lead their lives in the present. In 1995, 97 per cent of Eastern Germans were of the opinion that only those who had lived in the GDR had the right to *mitreden* on the subject of what it was like[435]. Easterners are also much more likely to view the GDR in generally more positive terms than western Germans (see table 4). In 1994 only 9 per cent of western Germans thought that the GDR had more good sides than bad, whereas 39 per cent of eastern Germans did so. Even fewer western Germans thought that this was the case in 1998 (6 per cent), and while it is true that fewer Easterners also thought this to be true (36 per cent), it is clear that over a third of all Eastern Germans still remained of the opinion that the GDR had more positive sides than negative ones. When one also considers that many more Easterners (36 per cent in both 1994 and 1998) thought the good and bad sides roughly matched each other (of Westerners,

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[433] Caroline Gay (2000): op. cit. p.12.
[434] Quoted in Caroline Gay (2000): ibid. p.7.
[435] 'Stolz aufs eigene Leben', in *Der Spiegel*: Nummer 27, 1995, p.49.

only 18 per cent thought this in 1994, 16 per cent did so in 1998), meaning that roughly two-thirds (75 per cent in 1994 and 72 per cent in 1998) of all eastern Germans *were not prepared to condemn* the GDR as having more bad than good sides.

Table 4[436]
Attitudes to the GDR in Eastern and Western Germany in 1994 and 1998 (per cent)

	GDR had more good than bad sides			
	1994		1998	
	West	**East**	**West**	**East**
Disagree Completely	43	12	50	9
Tend to Disagree	24	15	21	16
Both good and bad sides	18	36	16	36
Tend to Agree	6	22	5	25
Agree Completely	3	13	1	11
Middle Value	2.33	3.21	2.22	3.29

These figures highlight just how the issue of the GDR splits contemporary German society. The extremely defensive mentality of eastern Germans stems from the (perceived) dominance of western German actors within the institutions of the enlarged FRG and their prominent position in all decision-making arenas. Westerners have also been highly prominent in the institutionalised process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past). The institutionalised processes of 'working through' the history of the GDR have been very much 'top-down' and dominated by western Germans, and as such Easterners have felt distanced from the processes. Furthermore, the perceived lack of any questioning of the drawbacks and mistakes of West Germany/the present FRG have given the impression that Easterners need to question all aspects of their lives, while Westerners do not. Westerners are consequently perceived as passing judgement on Easterners[437].

Easterners are in possession of the experiences of life in the SED dictatorship that Westerners are not. This has led them to develop values and cultural orientations that lead them to have differing policy preferences and ideological orientations. In the

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[436]   DFG-Projekt 'Politische Einstellungen, politische Partizipation und Wählerverhalten im vereinigten Deutschland 1994 und 1998', in Katja Neller (2000): op. cit. p.580.
[437]   Geoffrey K. Roberts: "Emigrants in their own Country': German Reunification and its Political Consequences', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 44 Number 3, 1991, pp.373-404.

words of Peter Bender, Easterners remain *"unknowing socialists"*[438], as GDR socialisation leads Easterners to demand more from the state than western Germans, to value the egalitarian welfare system of the GDR and to see the virtues of full employment (see section 3.2.2.3. and 3.2.2.4). Easterners see dangerous (in their minds) parallels to their lives in the GDR, in which leaders and those in positions of influence remain far-removed from society and the people 'at the bottom'[439].

The *Abwertung* (downgrading) of life in the GDR has prompted Easterners to defensively attack many of the norms that are taken for granted by western Germans. Easterners react to the sidelining of their previous existences in the GDR by bemoaning deficiencies in the western German political, economic and social system and by granting certain institutions and processes from the GDR a much higher status of approval than they ever had pre-1989[440]. The paternalistic welfare state, the job security and the lack of unemployment are all highly regarded as a result of their existence (no matter how inefficient or ineffective) in the GDR. The anti-militarist/anti-fascist rhetoric of the SED also appears to have been upgraded into suspicion of NATO and the organisations of the international capitalist system (see section 3.2.2.5.). In response to their perceptions of political, economic and social inferiority within a united Germany, eastern Germans have therefore regained their solidarity and their identification with, if not pride in, the GDR.

Over 90 per cent of Easterners are of the opinion that they must take more responsibility for their own future – this is a direct result of the large number of western Germans that have come eastwards to help embed and (re)build the institutional and economic structures of the eastern states[441]. Over 70 per cent of Easterners also believe that the Westerners are no longer needed to control and direct the eastern transition process[442]. The methods by which unification was achieved and implemented have ensured that western Germans set the parameters for the everyday lives of eastern Germans. When this is coupled with their demographic dominance, it appears that a perpetuating process has been set in motion, where western Germans dominate political debate throughout Germany. As such eastern Germans are keen to blame their current disadvantageous economic situation (in terms of lower wage

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[438]   Peter Bender: *Unsere Erbschaft. Was war die DDR - was bleibt von ihr?* (Hamburg: Luchterhand, 1992), p.28.
[439]   Thomas Koch (1997): op. cit. p.97.
[440]   Dieter Walz & Wolfram Brunner (1997): op. cit. pp.13-19.
[441]   'Ein neues Selbstbewußtsein im Osten', in *Wochenpost*, 2 October 1996, p.4.
[442]   *Wochenpost* (1996): ibid. p.4.

levels and higher unemployment) on the method and mode of economic transformation – and inherently on the western German actors who directed it. Rarely is eastern Germany's economic plight diagnosed principally to be a result of the moribund East German economy that had to be transformed in 1989[443]. Opposition to what is widely perceived as the equivalent of an occupying regime (namely the 'new masters' from western Germany) is therefore common and often intense, just as is the discourse of blaming the *'Wessies'*[444] and such sentiments form a key part of the eastern German *Trotzidentität*.

3.2.1.3. Germany and its Relationship with the Outside World

Eastern attitudinal difference is evident across a broad base of issues and policy questions. Attitudinal differences were perhaps most starkly revealed in mid-1999 on the issue of the Kosovo War, when eastern and western Germans viewed the participation of German soldiers in an international crisis situation in very different ways[445]. In the words of Michael Stognienko, *"the NATO strategy was viewed much more critically in eastern Germany than in the western states ... and Easterners and Westerners appear to remain far from each other apart"*[446]. Opinions on the emotive issue of Kosovo may well have been highly charged, but the development of regional differences in opinion on the subject of, for example, NATO, the deployment of German troops in out-of-area activities and attitudes to Americans illustrate that the

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[443]   See Daniel Hough: "Made in Eastern Germany': The PDS and the Articulation of Eastern German Interests', in *German Politics*, Volume 9 Number 3, 2000, pp.125-148.
[444]   Claus Offe: *Varieties of Transition: The East European and East German Experience* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1996), p.180.
[445]   For example, an opinion poll conducted by Forsa at the end of March 1999 indicated that 25 per cent of western Germans were against the participation of the *Bundeswehr* in the NATO attacks on Yugoslavia, whereas 55 per cent of eastern Germans opposed it ('Kritik am Krieg wächst': *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 31 March 1999). By the beginning of May these differences remained evident as 44.4 per cent of Westerners compared to 21.5 per cent of Easterners supported the attacks. 20 per cent of Westerners and 42.4 per cent of Easterners rejected them ('PDS: Mehrheit gegen die NATO Angriffe' Emnid survey in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 3 May 1999, p.2). A further Emnid survey published on the 8th of May 1999 continued to highlight the view that eastern Germans were more sceptical towards German involvement in Kosovo, revealing that only 30 per cent of western Germans wanted to see the air-raids ending, while 49 per cent of eastern Germans preferred this option (see 'Umfrage: Deutsche halten Koalition trotz des Kosovokrieges für stabil', in *Die Welt*, 8 May 1999, p.4).
[446]   In spite of writing these words, Stognienko does not believe that an East/West divide has stabilised over the longer term, and he puts the divisions in levels of support down to the lingering anti-western (i.e. anti-NATO) sentiments of a population socialised in the GDR and the troubled experience of living through such a rapid process of transformation. See Michael Stognienko: 'Der Krieg in den Köpfen: Wie der Kosovo-Einsatz die Deutschen trennt und eint', in Lothar Probst (Hrsg.): *Differenz in der Einheit: Über die kulturellen Unterschiede der Deutschen in Ost und West* (Berlin: Ch. Links,

legacy of the Cold War may be more evident than many analysts initially believed was the case.   For example, in 1993, 59 per cent of western Germans favoured *Bundeswehr* participation in internationally controlled missions. Only 35 per cent of eastern Germans did so[447].   Table 5 illustrates that eastern Germans are less appreciative of Americans - something that, one would presume, is a legacy of the anti-American rhetoric of the pre-1989 years.

Table 5[448]
"As a general rule, do you like Americans particularly or are you not very fond of them?"

	Western Germany		Eastern Germany	
	Yes, I like Americans	No, I don't like the Americans	Yes, I like Americans	No, I don't like Americans
1991	51	22	37	23
1993	44	23	31	28
1996	53	18	34	22

Table 6[449]
UN Missions involving *Bundeswehr* troops (July 1996, in per cent)

	Total	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
I agree that the *Bundeswehr* should take part in out-of-area activities on behalf of the UN, under the supreme command of NATO, just as other countries do	29	32	19
The *Bundeswehr* should not take part in acts of aggression (*Kampfeinsätze*), rather just as a part of a peace keeping force	44	45	39
I am against every participation of *Bundeswehr* soldiers in activities outside of NATO territory	18	14	32
No Answer	9	9	10
Total	100	100	100

The Kosovo conflict was not the only area of international activity where the

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1999), p.73.
[447]   Rainer Ferchland et al (1994): op. cit. p.5.
[448]   Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher: *Allensbacher Jahrbuch der Demoskopie 1993-97* (München: K.G.Saur Verlag, 1997) p.1106.
[449]   Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): ibid. p.1143.

opinions of eastern and western Germans differed. The participation of *Bundeswehr* troops in UN peacekeeping missions has been persistently viewed in much more sceptical terms. Similar sceptical attitudes towards the role of NATO are also evident.

The propensity of Germans in the new *Länder* to offer less support to an active *Bundeswehr* is further highlighted if one takes specific policy scenarios into consideration. The debate surrounding the placement of NATO and German soldiers in Bosnia was such an issue:

Table 7[450]
The Stationing of *Bundeswehr* Troops in Bosnia
"Do you believe that it is correct that German troops are taking part in the NATO force in Bosnia, or should German Troops not be involved?" (September 1995)

	Total	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
I agree that German troops should take part	45	50	25
I think that German troops should not be involved	43	38	64
Undecided	12	12	11
Total	100	100	100

The above data would indicate that Easterners tend to possess more negative attitudes and value judgements towards institutions of the international security framework and particular to Germany's role with this. The increased emphasis on 'peace' and the non-German participation in international military activity have their roots in pre-1989 socialisation and the general disillusionment with the 'western world' as a result of the harsh introduction to it that many eastern Germans have received. It is not, however, the intention of this work to analyse the precise *reasons* for these attitudinal differences. The intention here is simply to illustrate that coherent patterns of attitudinal difference exist and how they have influenced the 'worldview' of a large section of the eastern German populace.

It is clear that before unification Germans in both the FRG and the GDR, in spite of some remaining similarities, were well advanced in the process of developing

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[450] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): ibid. p.1147.

separate identities within their states[451]. Hence, despite initial prognoses indicating that accession to the Federal Republic at the level of societal adaptation would be a relatively smooth process, it should be no surprise that eastern Germans in particular have found the process both challenging and, at times, dismaying. It is obvious that the vast majority of East German citizens wished to see 'their' state disappear, but it is just as obvious that everyday life within the confines of the East German dictatorship has left indelible marks on the East German populace - that have made incorporating oneself into new societal structures at times difficult[452]. This is not to say that forty years worth of 'indelible marks' have not been left on West Germans, but rather that socialisation within East Germany has proven very ineffectual preparation for life in the Federal Republic[453].

3.2.1.4. Eastern German Symbols and Characteristics

Cultural identification can also be demonstrated in other less explicit ways than those mentioned above. Hence despite the death of the GDR, regional symbols and characteristics remain much in evidence in the new federal states today, and they have come to form an important part of the eastern German cultural landscape. They take a number of different and varied forms (ranging from novels such as 'Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenalle' or 'Helden wie wir', to eastern German products, and even internet sites dedicated to eastern Germany and the GDR[454]) and are often seen as relatively uncontroversial ways of expressing nostalgic feelings towards a citizens' own past[455]. Eastern Germans have clearly experienced a combined past, differentiating and separating them from their western German counterparts - and this is particularly so as it is often such a controversial and contested issue. The *durchgaucken*[456] of officials and feelings of second-class citizenship have left eastern

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[451]   Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.) (1997): op. cit. p.8.

[452]   Mary Fulbrook: "Wir sind ein Volk'? Reflections on German Unification', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Number 44, 1991, pp.389-404.

[453]   Laurence H. McFalls (1995): op. cit. p.140.

[454]   Many such sites now exist, but two of the most popular are http://www.ddr-alltagskultur.de and http://www.ossiverband.de

[455]   Katja Neller (2000): op. cit. p.571.

[456]   'Durchgaucken' is a quasi-derogatory term that illustrates the need for all state officials in eastern Germany to have been cleared of (excessive) Stasi connections. Joachim Gauck was the official placed in charge of sifting through the mountains of Stasi files that were not destroyed in the dying days of the GDR, and, as such, if one has been 'durchgegauckt', then one can consider oneself free of the worry of being accused by Gauck (as the symbol of the institution) of co-operating too intensely with the East German secret police.

Germans on the defensive, in that they have to defend their pre-1989 existences in a way that they never expected[457]. Western Germans, of course, are not required to do this[458]. Historical particularity is, therefore, a clear characteristic that underpins the process of eastern German regional identity formation.

Symbols of 'eastern Germanism' are also evident in other areas of everyday life. The arguments concerning the trivial (or so one would have thought) issue of the *Ampelmännchen* (the little men who are on the red and green lights at pedestrian crossings) in the mid-1990s came to epitomise the lingering cultural clashes that were evident in reunified Germany[459]. Eastern Germans found such issues and examples as ideal prisms through which to reject the imposed uniformity that the western German system of bureaucracy and order was often perceived as placing them under.

The Trabant, to use another example, is no longer a car that is widely despised. Of the 3.2 million that were produced in Zwickau over the course of 30 years[460], 1.5 million were, in the mid-1990s, believed to still be on the roads across central and eastern Europe[461]. Once perceived as being destined for rapid extinction, fan clubs and societies have rapidly sprung up all over eastern Germany in order to celebrate the continued existence of what was once the butt of many western German jokes[462]. Eastern goods in general are sold in numbers that few would have predicted in 1989. Duckenfield and Calhoun do not shirk from describing the renaissance of eastern German products and icons as further contributing to "*the creation of an eastern German cultural identity*"[463]. They see the buying and selling of East German icons as an attempt to create and express an independent eastern identity without the need to

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[457]   See Peter Pulzer: 'Political Ideology', in Gordon Smith, William E. Paterson, Peter H. Merkl & Stephen Padgett (eds.): *Developments in German Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), pp.303-326; Peter Pulzer: *German Politics 1945-1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p19; See also Dieter Walz & Wolfram Brunner (1997): op. cit. pp.13-19.

[458]   Although the very fact that this is the case rankles with many eastern Germans, as they remain under the perception that unification should have seen the coming together of two equal states, and not the *Anschluß* one onto another (see chapter five of this work for more analysis of this).

[459]   Mark Duckenfield & Noel Calhoun: 'Invasion of the Western Ampelmännchen', in *German Politics*, Volume 6 Number 3, December 1997, pp.54-69. For information on the (ongoing) campaign to save the Ampelmännchen see http://interactive.de/ampel.html

[460]   Trabants were produced for thirty two years, from 1958 until 1990.

[461]   John Dornberg: 'Five Years After Reunification - Easterners Discover Themselves', in *German Life*, December 1995/January 1996.

[462]   In February 1998 there were still 378,000 Trabants registered in Germany. 140,000 of these (37 per cent of all Trabants) were in Saxony. This may be as Zwickau, where Trabants were produced, is situated in this state. The Trabant does, however, clearly have fans elsewhere - and even North Rhine Westphalia has a registered 4,300 Trabants within its state borders. See *Berliner Morgenpost*, 23 February 1998. Furthermore, many clubs and societies have sprung up in support of the Trabant. According to one (by no means all-inclusive) source, 123 such societies exist.   See http://www.trabinet.de.

[463]   Mark Duckenfield & Noel Calhoun (1997): op. cit. p.54.

form costly political organisations and groupings or the submission to existing institutional formulas[464]. Eastern Germans have refrained from exploiting the new institutional structures that have been imported from the West, or the channels of collective action that a nascent civil society offers them, when wishing to display dissatisfaction with particular policy choices imposed upon them. Eastern Germans appear to lack the self-confidence in their own identity to want to do this as they continue to search for, shape and re-shape the norms and values that differentiate them from western Germans. Hence one sees the peculiar phenomenon of the market acting as a prism through which this regional particularity is expressed.

This stems from the vast differences that were evident in the consumer worlds of the FRG and the GDR pre-1989. Having initially shunned eastern products in late 1989 and early 1990 in order to 'Test the West', eastern Germans quickly saw value in reversing this trend as and when they perceived the West as not being all that they had expected of it. Conrad Lay hints at the fundamentals behind such a phenomenon by observing that:

> The line that divided Germany for forty years was a division into two differing goods worlds. This was not just emphasised in two politically divergent ideologies, but rather in the lowly spheres of everyday life: in food and drink, in Jeans and TV sets, in coffee, refrigerators and gherkins, so in many of the things that cultural historians describe as 'material culture'[465].

Long before the East was opened up to the West in 1989 and 1990 it was clear that Eastern Germans knew and recognised western products, if only through the much publicised '*Päckchen von drüben*' ('packets from over there') and from infrequent visits. The extent of this is naturally somewhat difficult to quantify but statistics like the estimation that between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of all the coffee that was drunk in the GDR stemmed from the FRG illustrates how focused on West German products East Germans could be[466].

With the fall of the Berlin Wall Easterners wanted the long sought after opportunity to forget their own imitations and alternatives to the genuine western

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[464] Mark Duckenfield & Noel Calhoun (1997): ibid. p.55.
[465]   Conrad Lay: 'Der Siegeszug der Ostprodukte - Zur Mentalitäts- und Produktgeschichte der deutschen Vereinigung'. On http://www.oeko-net.de/kommune/kommune1-97/tlay197.html
[466] 'Jacobs Krönung', in particular, took on the status of being the most loved coffee imported from the West, carrying with it implicitly positive political propaganda. http://www.oeko-net.de/kommune/kommune1-97/tlay197.html

articles. Freedom became something tangible that could be eaten, tasted, smelt, put on, bought and owned. Even goods such as bread, milk and fresh produce were bought from western German producers, as the sales of eastern German goods plummeted. Western German produce was seen to be epitomising the Easterners wishes to forget their own dreary goods and lifestyles, and to start to live as their western brethren were doing.

These concepts of western material hegemony did not, however, last long. In concrete terms, this is evident in the wide variety of 'eastern goods' that have since made a comeback. Psychologically, Easterners were totally unprepared for Westerners to be so dismissive of anything that had its roots in eastern Germany - including, of course, almost all products that had been made in East Germany. The ambivalence of western Germans towards eastern products came to be seen as an indictment of the hard work, often in trying circumstances, that East Germans had invested in building their lives pre-1989. Hence the idea of 'Test the West' came to an end almost as quickly as it had commenced and in 1990 eastern Germans started to return to buying their own *Ostprodukte*.

The proportion of eastern Germans preferring to buy goods that are locally produced increased from 67 per cent in 1991 to 82 per cent in 1993[467]. In 1995 a mere 53 per cent of respondents said that they would buy products on the basis of quality and price, whereas 45 per cent said that wherever possible they bought eastern products. A mere 2 per cent preferred western German products above eastern German ones[468]. The range of *Ostprodukte* and eastern brand names that have come back onto eastern German shelves is subsequently wide and diffuse - Florena cream, Spee and Fit washing liquids[469], Rotkäppchen champagne[470], Spreewald gherkins, Foron refrigerators, Club Cola, Bautzener mustard, Burger crispbread, Nordhäuser Korn (schnapps), f6 cigarettes and Radeberger beer to name but a handful - and the strategies with which many of them are marketed play on the concept of eastern German togetherness and the combined feelings of identity that many Easterners continue to feel for one another. *"Der Osten hat gewählt: Kathi"* (The East has voted:

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[467] 'Wehre dich täglich': *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 52, 1993, pp.46-49.

[468] 'Stolz auf's eigene Leben': *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 27, 1995, p.42.

[469] Spee and Fit remain the market leaders in the eastern German cleaning substances market. See Thomas Ahbe: 'Ostalgie als Laienpraxis', in *Berliner Debatte INITIAL*, Volume 10 Number 3, 1999, p.89.

[470] 2.9 million bottles of Rotkäppchen Sekt were sold in 1991. This figure rose to 5.7m in 1992, to 10m in 1993 and to 17m in 1994. See 'Stolz auf's eigene Leben', *Der Spiegel*: Number 27, 1995, p.59.

Kathi) is one of the advertising slogans used by eastern Germany's leading producer of *Backmischungen*, explicitly referring to the products territorial and historical anchorage.   Karo cigarettes declared an *"Anschlag auf den Einheitsgeschmack"* in 1991, as they attempted to win back market share from their western German rivals[471]. One of Club Cola's slogans is yet more explicit - *"Club Cola - unser Cola"*, referring expressly to its past heritage, before continuing *"Von einigen belächelt, ist sie doch nicht tot zu kriegen: Club Cola aus Berlin"* ("Belittled by some, it's not for being wiped out: Club Cola from Berlin")[472]. This echoes sentiments felt by many eastern Germans - defend yourselves and do not be scared to fight back in the face of western German dominance.   Philip Morris, the biggest producer of cigarettes in the world, employs two differing strategic approaches in eastern and western Germany. Marlboro is the market leader in the West, while f6 is in the new *Länder*.   As the Philip Morris Press Office in Munich has been quoted as saying:

> F6 stands for the good, and the trusted, from days gone by and helps to express eastern German identity confidently.   F6 does not stand for misunderstood conservatism, but rather a piece of eastern German cultural history that is represented through the smoking of this cigarette, something that in the last few years has become a meaningful part of identity formation for the citizens of the new *Länder*.   The open and demonstrative identification with one's own taste as the expression of a newly developed eastern German consciousness therefore finds expression in the smoking habits of the citizens of the former GDR[473].

Despite the fact that the quality and the methods of production have changed considerably, and that f6 is owned by a world-wide company that has no roots in the eastern states, the powerful emotional message is clear.   The cigarette is 'one of ours' that does not want to turn western German - and we are pleased about it.   The marketing strategy for such products is always similar - the brand name is retained, even if the outward appearance is modernised, while the quality is improved to western standards.   Therefore both continuity and tradition are retained, while simultaneously expressing the new *Lebensgefühl* (mindset) of the post-1989 era[474].

The coffee market is perhaps the most extreme example of Easterners expressing their own territorial preferences.   Before 1989 up a large amount coffee

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[471]   See Rainer Gries: 'Der Geschmack der Heimat.   Bausteine zu einer Mentalitätsgeschichte der Ostprodukte nach der Wende', in *Deutschland Archiv*, Nummer 10, October 1994, p.1049.
[472]   Conrad Lay (1997): op. cit., p.3.
[473]   Quoted in Conrad Lay (1997): ibid. p.4.

that was consumed in the GDR stemmed from West Germany - yet by the end of 1998 Röstfein GmbH expected that *Rondo!* coffee, the most popular of the GDR brands, would sell over 6000 tonnes (making it the third most popular brand available in the eastern states)[475]. Such examples of a revival in eastern products are numerous, and it is clear that the days of western supremacy purely on the grounds of heritage are long over. When questions of subjective quality and taste arise, eastern German products are very much at the forefront of eastern German minds. This does limit the type of regional product to everyday goods and some slightly less common luxuries[476] - but the eastern German realises that his/her choices in the new shopping centres are decisions with clear subjective undertones, and although eastern products have strong historical significance, they are also vehicles for actual opinions.

It has become clear that eastern Germans do not wish to obliterate the GDR totally from their minds. Their present day picture of it may not match the reality of what it was really like, but it was, none the less, home for forty years - and as such many eastern Germans have no or little wish to see it completely written out of history. The symbols and characteristics mentioned briefly above are clear examples of how this historical memory is still relevant in identity creation and articulation today.

3.2.2. Socio-Economic Variables

The second variable within the typology created in chapter two concerned the importance of socio-economic variables in helping to foster a territorially specific form of identification and a regional space. It is to the nature of these socio-economic variables that this work now turns.

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[474] Conrad Lay (1997): ibid. p.5.

[475] Röstfein GmbH had reckoned that in 1997 they were likely to sell between 100 and 200 tonnes of *Rondo!* The company were forced to rapidly expand as a result of this renaissance, and in 1997 Röstfein doubled their number of employees from 40 to over 90. See 'Röstfein Kaffee feiert 90 jähriges Jubiläum': *Röstfein Gmbh*, Pressematerial, 1998.

[476] 'Regional products' are still very much on offer in the literary world from publishing houses such as Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf (based in Berlin), Eulenspiegel Verlag (also based in Berlin) and Faber & Faber (Leipzig). These institutions have published many books that are specific to life in both the GDR and in the eastern states. ORB and MDR also show a considerable number of East German films and television series, ensuring that memories of life in the GDR are accessible should citizens wish to take advantage of them.

3.2.2.1. Economic Disparity Between Eastern and Western Germany

Economic dislocation in the East has left the new *Länder* in a weak and, even in the long-term, economically disadvantageous position.   And, as section 2.4.5. illustrated, sustained economic disparity is frequently a catalyst for the creation of distinct regional identities. This economic difference has contributed to the process of identity formation in the East in that it has left many citizens deeply unsatisfied with the economic *system* within which they live, as it is the economic system that is seen as not responding to the needs of citizens of the eastern states. Eastern Germany is a territory that remains an economic laggard. This alternative development has its roots primarily in the ineffectiveness of the GDR's planned economy, as well as in the strategies of economic transformation adopted in the post-1989 period.

Figure 1[477]
Unemployment in Eastern and Western Germany (in percent)
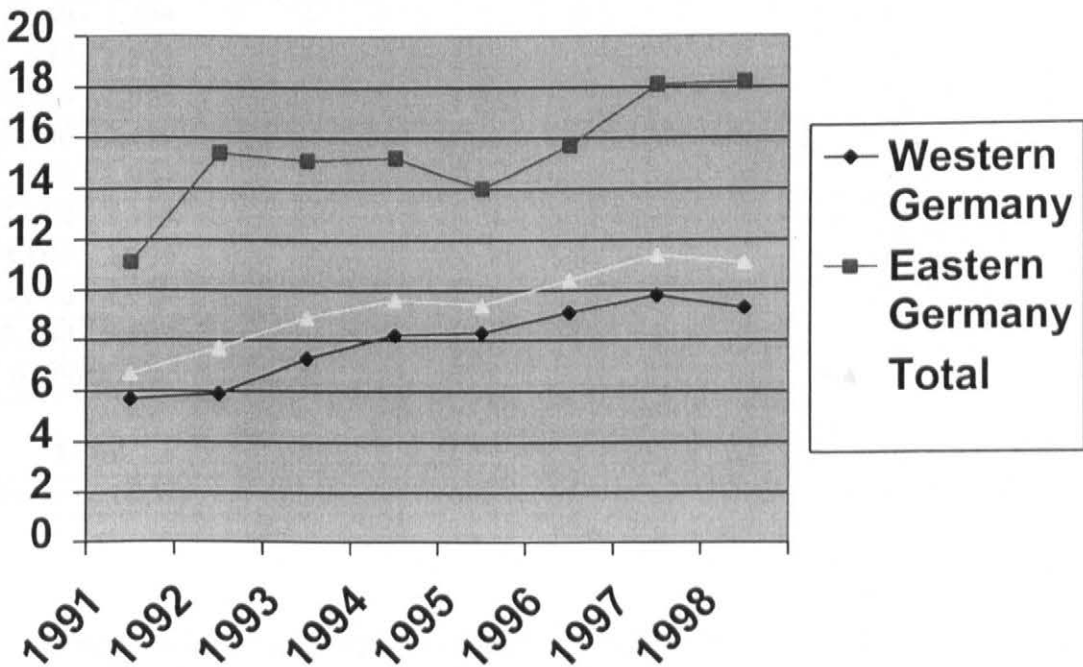
Figure 1 illustrates the differences in rates of unemployment that are evident between eastern and western Germany. Following the collapse of most of the labour intensive industries that existed in the GDR, the eastern states are afflicted with

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[477]   *Institute für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (IAB), Kurzbericht,*

pockets of severe structural unemployment. Furthermore, even in the pockets of eastern Germany that were sheltered somewhat from economic meltdown, the transformation from state-socialism to capitalism has caused considerable chaos in the job market. The weakness of the eastern economic base has ensured that the majority of Easterners have, at the very least, been forced to change jobs since reunification, while most have had to suffer periods of unemployment. Given that unemployment did not exist in the GDR the social and psychological affects of this are amplified greatly as Easterners find themselves unable to enjoy the respect being in employment is seen as offering.

Table 8[478]
Net Income per Month in Germany (in per cent)

	Germany		Western Germany		Eastern Germany	
	Per H'hold	Main Earner	Per H'hold	Main Earner	Per H'hold	Main Earner
Under 1,000 DM	1	2	1	2	2	3
1,000 - 1,249	2	3	2	2	3	7
1,250 - 1,499	3	5	2	3	5	12
1,500 - 1,749	3	7	3	5	5	13
1,750 - 1,999	5	9	5	8	6	16
2,000 - 2,499	11	18	10	17	14	24
2,500 - 2,999	12	17	11	18	14	12
3,000 - 3,499	13	13	13	15	16	7
3,500 - 3,999	10	8	10	10	10	3
4,000 - 4,999	15	8	15	9	13	2
5,000 - 5,999	11	5	12	5	7	1
6,000DM +	14	5	16	6	5	x
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Average (DM)	3,845	2,949	3,995	3,151	3,264	2,160

The promise of economic prosperity is, despite relative increases in individual prosperity, widely seen as being negated upon - as western Germany continues to enjoy economic affluence that is far greater than that in the East. Table 8 illustrates how western Germans still earn more, on average, than eastern Germans. The fact that levels of prosperity in eastern Germany are much higher than they were pre-1989

Nr.1/26 Februar 1999, p.11.
[478]   Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit. p.12.

is irrelevant: eastern Germans continue, as they have done throughout the period since unification in 1990, to measure their economic (as well as social and political) position in comparison to *Westerners* and not citizens of the other former state-socialist countries. And it is this direct comparison that leads so many Easterners to be dissatisfied with their economic position within the FRG. Table 8 and Figure 2 illustrate this more precisely.

Figure 2[479]
The Opinions of Eastern Germans Towards the Standards of Living in Eastern Germany
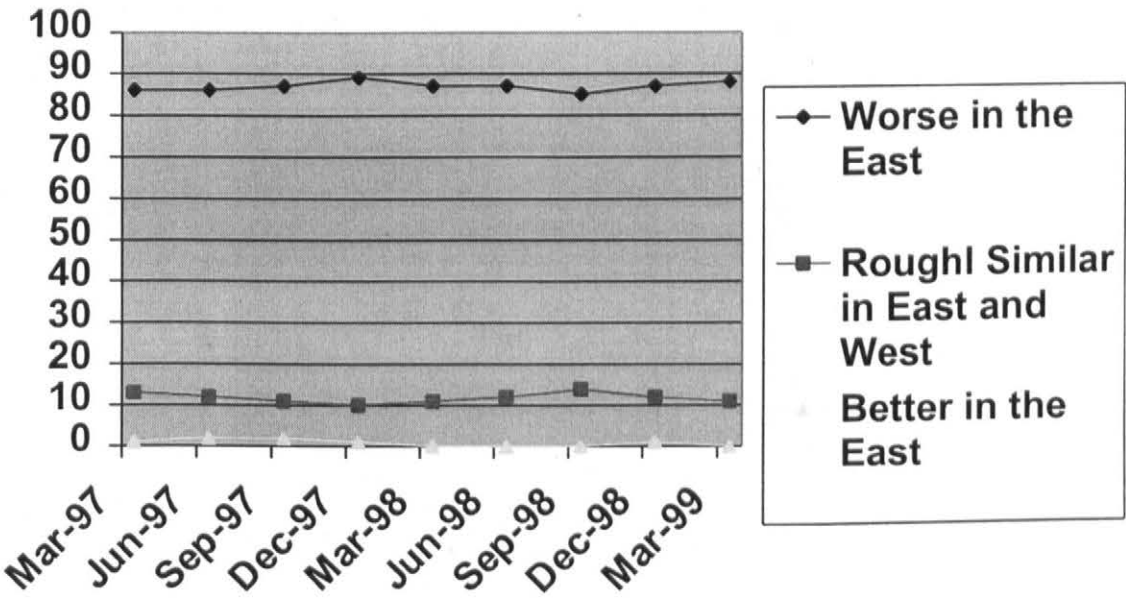
Figure 3[480]

The Opinions of Western Germans Towards the Standards of Living in Eastern Germany
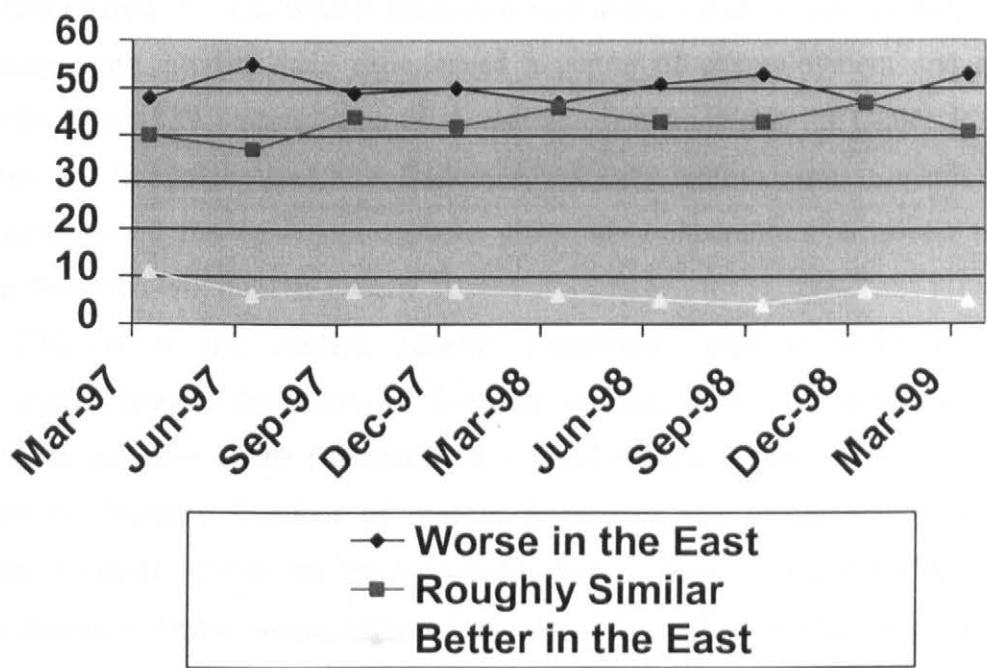
Dissatisfaction with the economic outputs of the social market economy has led Easterners to be much more critical of the economic system.   Section 3.2.2.4. illustrates that this has been conceptualised internally by Easterners in more positive interpretations of socialism and the role of the state, as these institutions offer the prospect of greater material security and lower unemployment.   Many Easterners *do* admit that they themselves are better off than they were pre-1989, but there is a widespread belief that eastern Germans *per se* are still suffering from economic disadvantages vis-à-vis Westerners.

3.2.2.2. Egalitarianism, Socialism and The Roll of the State

A strong undercurrent of the eastern German cultural identity touched upon above surrounds egalitarianism.   Easterners are perceived both as looking back with 'rose-tinted glasses' to the GDR and 'up-grading' the state-socialist system that is

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[480]   Emnid: *Umfrage und Analyse*, Heft 3/4, 1999, p.7.

now perceived in a better light than it ever was while it existed[481]. The 'upgrading' of certain GDR institutions *should not*, however, be taken as a form of collective amnesia towards the negative aspects of the SED dictatorship, rather it is a self-interested preference for the social welfare system and security that the GDR (in hindsight) offered[482]. The weaker economic base in the eastern states has also meant that many more citizens have experienced a period of unemployment and social insecurity since 1989 – phenomena that were largely unknown in the GDR. It is for this reason, it is hypothesised, that Easterners naturally tend to aspire towards more social equality and that they support greater government expenditure on 'social' issues - as it is they who will directly benefit[483].

Citizens of the western *Länder*, meanwhile, tend to show a heavy predominance towards the values of 'freedom' or 'individualism'. Between 71 per cent and 80 per cent of the population of western Germany said, in 1995, that the concepts of freedom, freedom of speech, *Rechtstaat* and democracy were very important to them. However, the *Sozialstaat*, social justice and a lessening of the income differentials were regarded by a mere 40 per cent of the western population as being of great importance. The picture in the eastern *Länder* was somewhat different. Between 57 per cent and 61 per cent believed the 'freedom' variables were very important, while 62-67 per cent regarded the second grouping as being of great importance[484].

The preference for egalitarian ideals has also been reflected in assessments of the concept of 'socialism'. Despite experiencing real-existing socialism in the GDR, Easterners have considerably greater appreciation for the ideal of socialism than their western counterparts, and they also associate many more positive facets of life with it. By 1998 as much as 26 per cent of the eastern German population even regarded communism as a positive concept[485].

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[481]   For a particularly thorough analysis of this phenomenon see Helga A. Welsh, Andreas Pickel & Dorothy Rosenberg: in Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.) (1997): op. cit: pp. 103-136.
[482]   Alison Mahr & John Nagle: 'Resurrection of the Successor parties and Democratisation in East-Central Europe', in *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Volume 28 Number 4, December 1995, p.294.
[483]   Carsten Zelle (1998): op. cit. p.34.
[484]   Carsten Zelle (1998): ibid. p.25.
[485]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.46.

Table 9[486]
Are you in Favour of Socialism in Principle? (eastern Germany, in per cent)

	Yes	No
December 1992	22	49
September 1994	33	40
May/June 1998	41	36

A direct comparison between the opinions of eastern and western Germans at the time of the 1994 and 1998 federal elections shows that considerable disparities exist in their evaluations of socialism. In 1994 only 21 per cent of Westerners had any sort of positive attitude towards socialism as a concept, whereas 58 per cent of Easterners did so (see table 10). In 1998 these figures had hardly changed, with 22 per cent of Westerners and 59 per cent of Easterners regarding socialism in a positive way.

Table 10[487]
Attitudes to the Socialism in Eastern and Western Germany in 1994 and 1998
(per cent)
Q. Do you Agree with the Statement that 'Socialism a Good Idea?'

	1994		1998	
	West	East	West	East
Disagree Completely	28	10	30	6
Tend to Disagree	17	8	17	11
Uncertain	25	20	24	22
Tend to Agree	14	25	15	31
Agree Completely	7	33	7	28
Middle Value	2.97	3.88	2.89	3.85

If one explicitly asks the question within the context of the failed socialist experiment in the GDR, then the differences remain just as apparent. They also remain surprisingly consistent over time, illustrating that their is a clear and distinct ideological divide between Westerners and Easterners over the issue of socialism (see Figure 4).

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[486] Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): ibid. p.43.
[487]   DFG-Projekt 'Politische Einstellungen, politische Partizipation und Wählerverhalten im

Figure 4[488]
Is Socialism a good idea that has been improperly carried out in the past (per cent)?
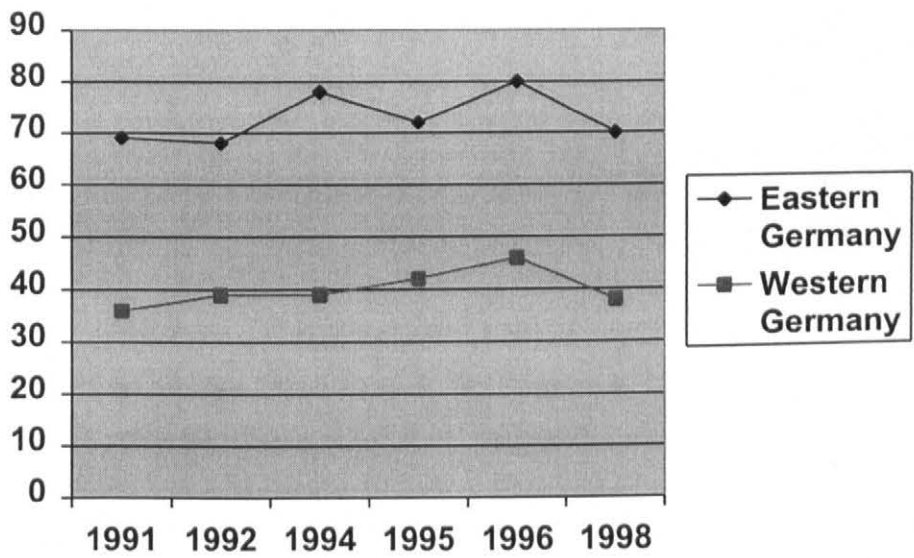
Although Easterners are aware of the (perceived) shortcomings of the contemporary German institutional and political framework (see section 3.2.2.3.), a particular factor is seen as crucial in regard to the fostering of the majority of tensions between Easterners and Westerners: the overriding dominance of capitalist economic structures[489]. Subsequently Easterners continue to hold attitudes that are socialist in nature – even if Easterners themselves are not actually aware of this[490].

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vereinigten Deutschland 1994 und 1998', in Katja Neller (2000): op. cit. p.580.
[488]   ALLBUS 1991-1994 and 1998, KSPW-Studien 1995 and 1996. See Katja Neller (2000): op. cit. p.579.
[489]   Stephen Kalberg (1999): op. cit. p.39.
[490]   Thomas Koch (1997): op. cit. p.97.

Table 11[491]

'What could be the correct way forward for Germany? That the state takes a more active role in shaping the economy, or that the individual shows more initiative and initiative is better supported?' (September 1998, in per cent)

Population	Total	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
That the State takes a more active role in the economy	21	15	42
That more personal initiative (*Eigeninitiative*) is supported	64	70	39
Undecided	15	15	19

A considerable number of Easterners appear highly sceptical of the ability of the market to solve society's problems. Not only would a majority of Easterners rather see a more active state, but a third also prefer to see companies being owned by the state: in order, one presumes, to stop their owners from making exaggerated profits (see tables 11 and 12). This is not replicated at all in western Germany, where only 8 per cent of Westerners prefer to see companies in public ownership. Three-quarters of Westerners prefer firms to be privately owned, compared to 38 per cent of Easterners.

Table 12[492]

'What is better, companies belonging to the state or companies being privately owned?' (September 1998, in per cent)

Population	Total	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
Companies belonging to the state	13	8	32
Companies being in private ownership	68	76	38
Undecided	19	16	30

Socialism is also ascribed more positive values than it was when the GDR collapsed. This stems from the chastening experience of experiencing the transformation process and the realisation of the flaws/problems of contemporary capitalism.

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[491] Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.42.

Table 13[493]

Under the Concept of 'Socialism' one thinks of ... (eastern Germany) (per cent)

	1990	1995
Bureaucracy	82	35
Outdated	74	46
Communism	69	63
Undemocratic	66	39
Peaceful	62	77
Egalitarianism (*Gleichmacherei*)	58	47
Camaraderie	43	75
Justice	27	50
Progressive	25	41
Welfare for all	25	49
The Future	19	42
Freedom	16	33

Capitalism, while certainly *not* wholeheartedly embraced by Easterners in 1990, is not something that Easterners positively identify with in the late 1990s either. Table 14 highlights how, over the course of five years, Easterners continue to associate 'negative' features with capitalism.

Table 14[494]

Under Capitalism one thinks of ... (eastern Germany - per cent)

	1990	1995
Profit	98	95
Entrepreneurship	95	83
Efficiency	93	75
Advancement	86	60
Economic Crises	83	92
Success	81	60
Exploitation	77	91
Class War	77	75
Freedom	65	37
Democracy	48	33
Welfare for all	29	6
Justice	26	7

The eastern German preference for increased state activity, socialism in general and their feeling that they, as Easterners, are in a position of institutionalised

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[492]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): ibid. p.43.
[493]   Allensbacher Archiv, Deutschland Umfragen: June 1990 and November/December 1995.
[494]   Allensbacher Archiv, Deutschland Umfragen: June 1990 and November/December 1995.

inferiority has lead many Easterners to particularly critical of what they see as the apathy of the central government in Bonn/Berlin. This in spite of clear attempts to alleviate economic dislocation in the East through tools such as the *Solidaritätszuschlag* (solidarity supplement), *Länderfinanzausgleich* (financial equalisation mechanism between states) and the huge financial investments that have been made in eastern German infrastructure and the eastern German business environment. Easterners still clearly believe that, as a peripheral group away from the 'centre' of western Germany, the central government is not doing enough to improve standards of living in the East and to achieve financial equality with the West. Figure 5 illustrates this explicitly.

Figure 5[495]
In its attempt to achieve equality of living standards in Eastern and Western Germany is Bonn doing too little?
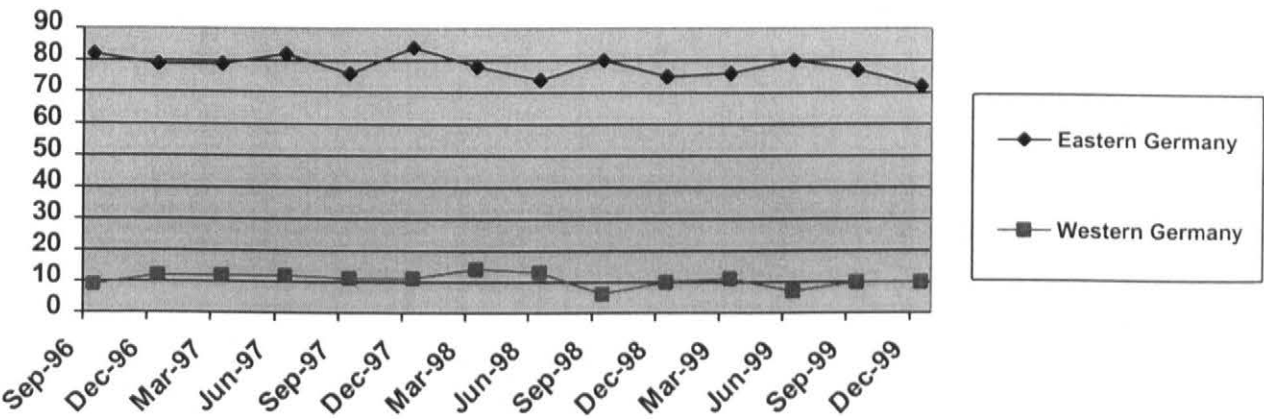
This section has therefore illustrated that Easterners possess attitudes and orientations that remain largely socialist in nature and egalitarian in their expectation. While freedom is widely accepted as a positive ideal, Easterners stress the need to achieve a greater parity of living standards in the FRG - principally as they view themselves as being the group who would benefit from such parity. The experience of seeing the SED dominate economic, political and social life in the GDR has not dissuaded the majority of Easterners that the state needs to take an active role in shaping the economic environment. This is in clear opposition to the dominant beliefs of western Germans, who have grown up with and a used to the state playing a

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[495] Emnid: *Umfrage und Analyse*, Heft 3/4, 1999, p.9

restricted (if still clearly defined) role in economic and social affairs.

3.2.2.3. Institutional Transfer and the Uneasy Acceptance of Democratic Structures

Lived experience has led Easterners to distance themselves from the institutions of the Federal Republic. This has become a clear tenet of the eastern German identity of defiance. Institutions and formal organisations of collective action need both to be formally embedded and supported within the broader socio-cultural environment – if they are not, then there remains the inherent risk of the institutions at best functioning poorly and at worst failing and collapsing (or being overthrown) altogether. Political cultures are not seen as changing quickly to new institutional settings and for this reason the institutional landscape of the FRG is viewed positively by Westerners, who have grown up and got used to the system over many years. The assumption when institutional export to eastern Germany is discussed is therefore that patterns of behaviour, routines and mental states of mind will struggle to take root in the differing socio-cultural environment of eastern Germany[496]. And it appears correct that lower levels of trust in politics, politicians, institutions and processes are clearly evident in the eastern states. Easterners remain unconvinced about western German democracy, even if they remain supporters of democracy as a system of governance[497]. Western German democracy is not seen to respond and reflect the views and interests of eastern Germans, as it is perceived as functioning on a western German agenda. Institutions clearly need to 'grow out' of a given society, and the direct placement of West German institutional structures has not ensured their acceptance and efficient functioning in the East. Western institutions need to be anchored in traditions, routines, attitudes, expectations and experiences that are not automatically created with the institutions themselves[498]. Numerous public opinion surveys have further confirmed the assumption that eastern Germans subsequently have less confidence in democracy as a whole[499].

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[496]   Detlev Pollack: 'Trust in Institutions and the Urge to be Different: On Attitudinal Change in Eastern Germany', in *German Politics*, Volume 8 Number 3, December 1999, pp.81-102.

[497]   Detlev Pollack & Gert Pickel: 'Die ostdeutsche Identität - Erbe des DDR-Sozialismus oder Produkt der Wiedervereinigung?', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B41-42/98, p.17.

[498]   Detlev Pollack: 'Das Bedürfnis nach sozialer Anerkennung. Der Wandel der Akzeptanz von Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft in Ostdeutschland', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B13/97, p.3.

[499]   There are numerous works that investigate this question in detail. One of most comprehensive is Dieter Fuchs, Edeltraud Roller & Bernhard Weßels: 'Die Akzeptanz der Demokratie des vereinigten Deutschlands', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B51-97, pp.3-12.

Such a distance from the institutions of the FRG stems from the high expectations that Easterners had when the GDR acceded to the FRG, and the subsequent disappointments that ensued when these expectations were not met. The cynicism that many Easterners felt pre-1989 has been re-called back into the consciousness, and as such Easterners remain sceptical about the ability of the FRG's institutional structures to fulfil their needs. Hans-Joachim Maaz has exhibited the most extreme elements of this by observing that *"instead of Honecker we now have Kohl, rather than the SED we now have the 'Treuhand'"*[500]. Although perhaps a little excessive, Maaz encapsulates the disillusionment and distance that many Easterners still feel towards their new state.

If Helmut Kohl's legendary promises of flourishing landscapes had been fulfilled[501], of course, then it is likely that the political landscape in the eastern states would now look very different. This is because when the political and/or economic 'system' is seen to be failing its citizens, or the citizens of a particular region, social tensions arise – inevitably having an effect on the political system. This can be in a radical and abrupt way, as happened in Italy at the beginning of the 1990s, or it can be rather more subtle and piecemeal as was the case in Scotland in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Furthermore, if changes in the socio-economic base correspond, however roughly, to the parameters of a coherent set of cultural values (see section 3.2.2.2) then the effects of these changes can be amplified considerably - as regional identification becomes apparent in a number of different spheres within society. It is for this reason that the most successful regional parties are those that exist in regions where unique cultural and societal traits are linked and interwoven with economic difference – such as eastern Germany.

The transformation process that has taken place in the eastern states has caused regional identification to take root for reasons to do with the method and manner of the transformation process. Unlike the other former Communist states of central and eastern Europe, the GDR did not need to create new political and economic structures from scratch. Even before the unification of the two Germanies on the third of October 1990, when the western German institutional structures were officially expanded eastwards to incorporate the GDR, it had become clear that East

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[500]   Hans-Joachim Maaz: *Das Gestürtzte Volk oder die verunglückte Einheit* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1991), p.28.
[501]   See footnote 138 for the exact wording of Kohl's famous promise of the forthcoming 'flourishing landscapes' in eastern Germany.

Germany was not going to attempt its own 'third way'[502]. No original or independent strategies were to be invoked. The West German system was, one or two noticeable exceptions apart, to become the all-German system.

Systemic inefficiency, in the sense that eastern Germans are quantifiably unhappier than western Germans (see below) with democracy, the social-market economy and the institutional arrangements within the Federal Republic, therefore distinguishes the eastern German regional space apart from one that exists in western Germany.

The transfer 'en masse' of the West German institutional system[503] onto the territory of the GDR was the quickest and easiest of the differing processes of transformation to complete[504]. As a result of being able to watch West German television[505], of occasional visits to West Germany, or perhaps of having relatives in the Federal Republic, many East Germans were surprisingly familiar with the societal system and much of what went on in the FRG. Hence it came as no surprise that they embraced the newly expanded institutions remarkably quickly.

Politically at least, East Germany was effectively annexed by West Germany[506]. Therefore, like most parts of West German life and culture, the Federal

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[502]   Unlike in Britain, the 'third way' in Germany has traditionally been seen as the theoretical alternative between socialism and communism. However, the meaning of the term has changed in Germany through the 1990s, and it does now tend to be understood in a much more Clintonian or Blairite sense.

[503]   The term 'institution' is meant here to be a very wide-ranging concept, incorporating bodies such as political parties, trade unions, industrial, agricultural and employer associations, guilds, churches, clubs and societies, cultural and sporting organisations etc. that come together to form the complex network of organisations that comprise a functioning civil society and liberal democracy.

[504]   There are numerous works that dissect the transformation process in detail. Alongside authors that have already been mentioned, see Scott Gissendanner & Jan Wielgohs: Conference Report: 'Einheit und Differenz - The Transformation of East Germany in Comparative Perspective', in *German Politics*, Volume 6 Number 2, August 1997, pp.181-189; *Die real-existierende postsozialistische Gesellschaft* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlich Konferenz der Brandenburgischen Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Gesellschaft für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung und Publizistik GmbH, 1994); Claus Offe (1994): op. cit; Karl-Rudolf Korte: *Die Chance genutzt? Die Politik zur Einheit Deutschlands* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1994). For a more critical view of the transformation process see Wolfgang Dümcke & Fritz Vilmar (Hrsg.) (1995): op. cit.

[505]   The picture that West German television offered East Germans, despite giving them insights into the material prosperity on offer in the Federal Republic and to the state's institutional structures, was later revealed to be inadequate in preparing them for 'die realexistierende Bundesrepublik'. The positive image of material wealth and democratic freedoms was in stark contrast to the economic insecurity and sense of helplessness that eastern Germans found themselves experiencing post-1989.

[506]   Within the West German Grundgesetz (Basic Law) two possible mechanisms existed for uniting the two states. Article 146 left the way open for the drawing up of a new constitution, with possibly a new assembly and probably a referendum to pass the document into law. This article was created in the very event of a reunification becoming possible, and gave the impression of two equal partners coming together in one state. However, Article 23 enabled states or territories to 'accede' to the Federal Republic, and this was the route the Saarland took into the Federal Republic in 1957. This method was, effectively, a legal and constitutional annexation, and was the option Helmut Kohl and his coalition partners, many argue to serve their political purposes, used to unify the two countries.

Republic's political parties, pressure groups, trade unions, employers' associations etc. all extended their structures eastwards. Indigenous political development was largely strangled, as western actors and methods dictated the entire process. Hence the fact that the western German system enjoys only uneasy acceptance should not be too surprising. Only when the 'system' has moulded itself onto the unique contours of eastern German society and reacts to its needs and requirements will Easterners perceive the system as not being akin to a *Fremdkörper* ("foreign body").

Contrary to popular belief, as early as 1990 East Germans displayed a reluctance to view the political and institutional framework of the FRG as being perfect. Only 13.2 per cent of Easterners were of the opinion that West German political and societal structures should be transferred en masse to the eastern states, while 82 per cent thought that sections of the West German institutional structure were *Verbesserungsbedürftig* (in need of improvement)[507]. In 1992, 65 per cent of Easterners thought that Germany still needed a new constitution, while in 1993 this figure had risen to 72.9 per cent. A mere 3.4 per cent of Easterners thought in 1993 that the *Grundgesetz* in its present form was a sufficient document for Germany in the 1990s[508].

The expansion of the West German party system remains a prime example of 'systemic inefficiency'. The West German political parties all expanded eastwards, as a rule by firstly aligning themselves with their eastern counterparts (that were once members of the umbrella coalition supporting the SED) and then by effectively taking them over. The SPD was the only major exception to this rule, as it attempted to build a base from scratch that was cleansed of any SED members - something that in hindsight was a key mistake in strategy. The citizens' movements and the concept of Round Tables quickly lost political relevance, as the institutional structures of West Germany became the institutional structures of the new united state. This prevented any organic, region-specific development (with the exception of the PDS, and, to a lesser extent of Alliance 90) from taking place. A party system that had developed over forty years in West Germany, moulding itself to the societal contours of that state and adapting as and when issues and cleavages rose and dropped in salience[509], was

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[507]   1058 Eastern Germans were asked in the surveys. See Helmut Meier, Bodo Reblin & Erhard Weckesser (1995): op. cit. p.6 for further analysis and details.

[508]   22.3 per cent of Easterners were of the opinion that a modified and updated Basic Law was necessary, and that if this took place then the need for a new constitution would be alleviated. Helmut Meier, Bodo Reblin & Erhard Weckesser (1995): ibid. p.19.

[509]   The rise of the Green Party in the 1980s is a clear example of a party arising to represent a clear

suddenly expanded to include the new *Länder* - an area with very different social and political backgrounds.

At the national level, the inner-policy making circles of the Federal Government, and hence those institutions that were (are) at the very heart of the policy making process[510], remained exempt from adaptation, and as a result the administrative structures and personnel of those responsible for relations remained firmly intact.   The transformation process, once loosely sanctioned in the *Volkskammer* elections of March 1990 was an external exercise carried out by western elites, with remarkably little active input from the East.

The quality of a democracy hinges not only upon citizens' sense of being represented, but also their perception that the political elites govern effectively[511]. Only when both of these prerequisites are met will the institutional patchwork of a state be widely supported. This is not something, according to popular wisdom, that can either be forced or rushed and as such the direct placement of institutional structures does not necessarily ensure their acceptance and efficient functioning. This is not just true for economic structures, but is also the case for democratic structures. Numerous public opinion surveys have confirmed the assumption that eastern Germans have less confidence than western Germans in democracy as a whole[512].

The rapid incorporation of the GDR into the FRG has not spawned widespread appreciation of the democratic system as it functions in Germany today. Easterners had grown used to being sidelined from the political process in the GDR, as the state paid all but lip-service to the ideas and opinions of the masses. Despite the introduction of democratic structures the high expectations of Easterners that democracy and freedom would enable them to achieve personal fulfilment have proven misplaced. Once again, the hopes of the unification period have not been fulfilled, and patterns of disenfranchisement and disillusionment that existed in the GDR quickly came back into the consciousness of many eastern Germans.

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segment of the electorate. This development was not instantaneous, and illustrated that as and when parties fail to rise to the challenges of systemic change and societal preference, then opportunities arise for other political actors to enter the arena.

[510]   The Federal Ministry of Economics (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft), the Finance Ministry (Bundesministerium für Finanzen), the Foreign Ministry (Auswärtiges Amt) and the Chancellor's Office (Bundeskanzlei) are principally meant here.

[511]   Herbert Kitschelt et al: *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation and Inter-Party Cooperation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.345.

[512]   For a thorough discussion of this issue see Dieter Fuchs, Edeltraud Roller & Bernhard Weßels (1997): op. cit. pp.3-12.

Table 15[513]

Q: "Is the democratic order that we have in Germany the best way of organising a state ("*Staatsform*"), or is there another that is better?" A: Democracy in Germany is the best 'Staatsform' (in per cent)

	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
1990	81	41
1991	77	34
1992	78	41
1993	75	32
1994	79	35
1995	70	28
1997	69	23

The experience of Western Germans with democracy is much more positive (tables 15, 16 and 17). Westerners tend to associate it with both freedom and material prosperity. This is in spite of the scepticism that the democratic order was faced with throughout the formative years of the FRG, and rests on the system being able to 'prove itself'. Easterners *do not* see the western German democratic order, imposed as it was from outside, as being the optimum mode of governance. They do not tend towards rejections of democratic systems *per se*, as the experience of a highly non-democratic form of governance remains too close at hand. They are, however, clear in their belief that the German model of governance needs an overhaul. Culturally distinct suspicions of political elites tend Easterners towards more direct forms of democracy, just as Easterners are eager to achieve more 'economic democracy' (in the sense of increased representation of the working classes in employment).

Table 16[514]

Q: "Is the democratic order that we have in Germany the best way of organising a state ("*Staatsform*"), or is there another that is better?" A: There are others that are better (in per cent)

	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
1990	8	19
1991	11	29
1992	6	20
1993	8	30
1994	6	25
1995	13	33
1997	11	37

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[513] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit, p.657.
[514] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): ibid. p.657.

Table 17[515]
"Is Democracy as it is practised in the FRG the best form of state organisation?"

	Western *Länder*	Eastern *Länder*
Yes	76	31
Other forms exist	9	28
Not Sure	15	41

There are also clear differences when the issue of the *Gesellschaftsordnung* (the ordering of society) is analysed.   Eastern Germans remain persistently less-satisfied with the ordering of society within the FRG, as the tables below illustrate.

Table 18[516]
Do you agree with the following statement? "I am convinced that our society is heading towards a large crisis. Politics as it now as is not going to solve these problems. We will only be able to do that if our political system fundamentally changes"

	Agree	Disagree	Undecided/Do not know
Population	43	33	24
Western Germany			
1986	16	61	23
1988	25	48	27
1995	30	50	20
1997	39	36	25
Eastern Germany			
1995	41	36	23
1997	59	18	23

Table 19[517]
"Is society ("*Gesellschaftssystem*") in the Federal Republic just or unjust?" (in percent)

	Germany	Western Germany	Eastern Germany
Yes, it is just	42	48	19
No, it is not just	33	28	53
Undecided, do not know	25	24	28

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[515]   Gerald R. Kleinfeld (1995): op. cit. p.248.
[516]   Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit. p.652.
[517]   Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): ibid. p.645.

The uneasy acceptance of West German institutional structures is visible in the spheres of pressure groups, trade unions and other forms of societal organisation, as they inevitably take time to develop 'into' the system[518]. Eastern Germans are neither as appreciative of the political system as they were when East Germany vanished, nor when taken in comparison to western Germans. The dissatisfaction with the political model of government in Germany today acts as an identity creator in as much as sentiment in the East follows a broad, underlying, less positive trend towards the political system than is the case in western Germany. This does not implicitly mean that the current institutional system needs, from an eastern German point of view, to be overthrown - rather that new, specifically eastern German concerns have to be suitably addressed in order for wider acceptance to follow.

Table 20[519]
"How proud are you personally of Germany's democratic institutions?"(1997)
(per cent)

		Western Germany	Eastern Germany
		1993	1993
Not Proud	**1**	4.6	10.6
	2	10.3	22.0
	3	30.5	41.8
	4	36.0	20.7
Very Proud	**5**	18.5	4.9

Politically articulating dissatisfaction with the transformation process has been difficult for all of the parties that stem from West Germany. Eastern Germans remain passive observers of politics and economics that is perceived to be running on a western German dominated agenda. This agenda stems from the numerical superiority of western Germans just as much as their prominence in many positions of influence. Western political parties are often, therefore, seen as being part of the problem, as table 21 helps to illustrate.

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[518]   Wendy Carlin: 'The New East German Economy: Problems of Transition, Unification and Institutional Mismatch', in *German Politics*, Volume 7 Number 3, December 1998, pp.14-32.
[519]   Thomas Blank (1997): op. cit. p.43.

Table 21[520]

Trust in Political Parties (on a scale ranging from -5, indicating no trust at all, to +5, indicating very high trust) in Western and Eastern Germany

	1992	1993	1995
The 'New' *Länder*	-0.95	-1.26	-0.50
The 'Old' *Länder*	-0.18	-0.52	+0.07

Table 22[521]

A Comparison of the Trust in Institutions in Eastern and Western Germany (1993)

	A great deal of trust		Quite a lot of trust		Little trust		No trust at all	
	East	West	East	West	East	West	East	West
Church	6	13	6	13	36	33	39	24
Police	5	12	30	54	55	29	9	5
Laws	10	12	30	45	47	35	13	8
Bundeswehr	5	11	31	34	41	44	23	11
NATO	2	8	18	41	45	39	35	12
Bundestag	4	4	19	30	50	49	27	17
European Community	2	4	24	29	45	49	29	18
Administration	1	2	17	26	61	55	21	16
Newspapers	2	3	15	32	55	51	27	13

Data published by Emnid also reveals that not only do Easterners have lower levels of trust in institutions and organisations in the Federal Republic, but those Easterners who express such sentiments most clearly are more likely to vote for the PDS. PDS supporters distrust *all* of the named institutions, with the perhaps expected exception of the Trade Unions, to a greater extent than the supporters of other parties. Chapters 4 and 5 illustrate how the PDS reflects such sentiments in its political work.

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[520] Surveys 'Einstellungen zu aktuellen Fragen der Innenpolitik' (IPOS), 1991-1993 and 1995. In Dieter Fuchs et al (1997): op. cit. p.9.

Table 23[522]

Party Preferences and Trust in Institutions: Percentage of Party Supporters Expressing Trust in the Given Institution (September 1999)

	CDU	SPD	FDP	B'90	PDS
Bundestag	53.8	47.8	31.9	59.3	28.4
Police	85.5	80.5	62.5	76.5	56.8
Parties	24.4	26.7	15.5	15.1	10.5
Trade Unions	49.5	63.7	46.7	56.6	51.8
Constitut-ional Court	84.2	72.9	84	82.6	58.8
Federal Govt	40.5	41.5	22.1	45.5	18
Justice System	76.7	63.8	63.2	67.1	38.8
Army	86.3	72.6	61.2	58.8	46.9
Verfassung-sschutz	71.5	63.7	55.9	65.7	16.6
Companies	56.5	48	64.1	44.9	17.8

In the words of Claus Offe, ships only sail in waters of suitable depth, and in the waters of what was the GDR the institutional ship of the FRG may indeed run aground[523]. Offe may be being unduly over-dramatic but anti-establishment sentiment widely felt in eastern Germany indicates the ground that still has to be covered.

Dissatisfaction with the economic and political institutions of the FRG is therefore much more widespread in the East than it is in the West. Easterners do not exhibit the same amount of trust in the institutional framework of the FRG as Westerners do. The economic and political system is viewed in a more negative light, as Easterners continue to express dissatisfaction with the efficacy of the institutional framework within which they now live.

3.3. Electoral Behaviour in Eastern Germany: The Stabilisation of a Regional Party System

Eastern German uniqueness has found expression in the nature of the regional party system that has developed in the eastern states. The stabilisation of the PDS as an eastern German regional party, the presence of the DVU in two legislatures, the

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[521] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann & Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit. p.667.
[522] Emnid: *Umfrage und Analyse*, 11/12, 1999, appendix.
[523] Claus Offe (1994): op. cit. p.46.

virtual non-existence of the FDP and B90/Greens has ensured that three 'relevant' (in the Sartorian sense) parties are evident in all of the six eastern legislatures with the exception of Berlin[524]. This is in stark contrast to the eleven western legislatures, where the PDS is not represented at all and the FDP and Greens (and occasionally the Republicans) consistently fight to achieve more than 5 per cent of the popular vote. The existence of two 'regional party systems' has ensured that the nature of party competition and party interaction is very different in eastern and western Germany.

The reasons for such a differentiation lie in the ability of the western parties to incorporate the differing eastern German attitudinal and value positions, as illustrated in this chapter, into their political platforms. Yet many authors who posited social-psychological models of electoral behaviour around the time of the *Wende*, hypothesised that, as the two Germanies came together, the western parties were likely to find virgin electoral territory in the eastern states and to dominate political activity there[525]. Easterners had had no direct experiences of the western system of political interest articulation and eastern German society was not likely to be rooted in the mosaic of cleavage divides that characterised western German political and electoral competition – yet the western parties were clearly convinced that they could mould and shape such apparently rootless terrain to their advantage[526]. If they had succeeded in doing this, then it is likely that the West German party system would have simply expanded and become the 'German party system'.

Following the *Volkskammer* elections of March 1990, and certainly after the Federal Election of October 1990, it did appear that the initial predictions (hypothesising that the western parties would be able to successfully move Eastwards) were largely proving to be correct. At these elections Eastern Germans gave the impression that they had quickly and easily aligned themselves to the contours of the West German party system. The challenge of adapting to a new political environment also appeared to have been met by the western parties with remarkable ease and in a remarkably short period of time. Although Alliance 90 and the PDS survived the

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[524] The Greens are not politically influential in the eastern part of the city, but their strong presence in western Berlin has ensured that they continue to achieve parliamentary representation in the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus*.

[525] Wilhelm Bürklin & Markus Klein: *Wahlen und Wählerverhalten – Eine Einführung* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1998), p.168.

[526] Within this mosaic it is, however, clear that two cleavages have traditionally been of particular salience in the Federal Republic: the religious and the class cleavage. See Bernhard Weßels: 'Gruppenbindungen und Wahlverhalten: 50 Jahre Wahlen in der Bundesrepublik' in Markus Klein, Wolfgang Jagodzinski, Ekkehard Mochmann & ·Dieter Ohr (Hrsg.): *50 Jahre Empirische Wahlforschung in Deutschland* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2000), p.132.

expansion of the western party organisations - their presence did not have any significant effect on the nature of the party system that developed. A combination of 'quasi-party identification'[527] with the western parties, fostered both by limited exposure to the western political system pre-1989 (principally through the medium of West German television[528]) and the effective profiling of the former *Blockflöten* in 1990, had assisted Easterners in coming to terms with the western political system and in making sense of their new environment[529].

Initial elections therefore indicated that the western parties had indeed been able to channel the interests of the former citizens of the GDR into their political platforms. The promise of economic affluence, representative democracy and individual freedom were widely perceived as being sufficient to anchor the western parties into eastern German civil society. However, the ability of the western parties to continue setting the agenda and articulating the particular concerns of eastern Germans did not continue in the same inevitable fashion that these initial developments had led most analysts to predict. Easterners soon came to resent the dominance of these foreign bodies within their political landscape, particularly as the socio-economic cleavages that had developed over years in the West had not been 'mechanically transferred' to the East[530]. Popular disillusionment with the political process (or *Politikverdrossenheit*[531]) subsequently grew across the eastern states.

Elections that have taken place since 1990 have revealed that the initial alignments of the eastern electorate were weaker than had perhaps been initially anticipated - and it can plausibly be argued that Easterners remain in a state of

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[527]   Carsten Bluck & Henry Kreikenbom: 'Die Wähler in der DDR: Nur issue-orientiert oder auch parteigebunden?', in *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*, Number 22, 1991, pp.495-502.

[528]   The level of knowledge that Easterners possessed was certainly high, although as the 1990s progressed it became apparent that it was mostly of a superficial nature. See Uwe W. Gehring & Jürgen R. Winkler: 'Parteiidentifikation, Kandidaten- und Issueorientierungen als Determinanten des Wahlverhaltens in Ost- und Westdeutschland', in Oscar W. Gabriel (Hrsg.) (1997): op. cit. p.480.

[529]   Dieter Roth disputed the existence of 'quasi-party identifications' in the March 1990 Volkskammer elections, describing the electoral behaviour of Easterners as *"issue voting in almost its purest form"*. However, after the 1990 election the existence of superficial party alignments was widely accepted. See Dieter Roth: 'Die Wahlen zur Volkskammer in der DDR. Der Versuch einer Erklärung', in *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, Number 31 1990, pp.369-393.

[530]   Cornelia Weins: 'The East German Vote in the 1998 General Election', in *German Politics*, Volume 8 Number 2, August 1999, p.50.

[531]   The term 'Politikverdrossenheit' dates back to the early 1990s and a debate sparked by then President Richard von Weizsäcker's criticisms of the German democracy. For a discussion of this in its broader context see Gregg O. Kvistad: 'Parteienverdrossenheit? Whither the German Party-State in the 1990s?', in Peter H. Merkl (ed.): *The Federal Republic of Germany at Fifty: The End of a Century of Turmoil* (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp.173-185.

prealignment rather than one of genuine alignment[532]. The initial alignments of voters with parties in the East produced a reversal of the traditional western European class alignment, as the working classes tended towards the CDU rather than the SPD. This original tendency has dissipated over the 1990s, even if eastern Germans continue to exhibit differing voting patterns in comparison to their western German counterparts[533]. Electoral volatility remains higher than in the West (see below), as Easterners appear more prepared to vote for the party which they perceive to best represent their interests at a given time[534]. Pollack and Pickel claim that in 1998 only 56 per cent of eastern Germans saw themselves as 'psychologically attached' to a party, whereas 72 per cent of Westerners did so[535]. Falter, Schoen and Caballero forward slightly different figures, but never the less make the same point when they claim that in 1998 37.8 per cent of Eastern Germans have no party identification whatsoever (compared to 26 per cent in western Germany). Their survey analysis also highlights that not only do fewer Easterners have strong or very strong party identifications than Westerners (24 per cent versus 32.4 per cent), but that the length of time that citizens possess such orientations is much shorter in the eastern states than it is in the West. Given that citizens of the GDR had no (or little) direct contact with the western German political parties before 1989 and that party identifications take significant amounts of time to develop, this should in itself not be too surprising, but the fact that only 24.4 per cent of Easterners (compared to 55.9 per cent of Westerners) possess sustainable party identification over "many years" indicates the considerable psychological differences are still very much in evidence[536].

Over the course of the Federal and State elections of the 1990s Easterners therefore developed sustainable patterns of electoral volatility. This is illustrated by

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[532] Russell J. Dalton: 'A Divided Electorate', in Gordon Smith et al. (eds.): *Developments in German Politics II* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p.44.

[533] Alan Ware (1996): op. cit. p.237.

[534] The proportion of the vote that each of the three main parties receives is also much broader in the eastern states than it tends to be in the western states. Examples from Mecklenburg West Pomerania highlight this. In the *Landkreis* of Demmin the CDU polled 51.7 per cent in the last communal elections, while it only registered 14.6 per cent in Schwerin II. The SPD registered 12.3 per cent in Rügen II, but 48.8 per cent in Wismar. The PDS is also susceptible to this phenomenon, although not to the same extent as the CDU and SPD. For example, whereas the PDS polled 36.4 per cent in Schwerin II, it only managed 16.3 per cent in Mecklenburg-Strelitz. See Dieter Wenz: 'Ein Land für Wählergemeinschaften', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 12 June 1999, p.16. For a detailed breakdown of the election results in Mecklenburg West Pomerania see http://www.mvnet.de/inmv/stala/wahl/kommunalwahlen.htm

[535] Detlev Pollack & Gert Pickel (2000): op. cit. p.124.

[536] Jürgen W. Falter, Harald Schoen & Claudio Caballero: 'Zur Validierung des Konzepts 'Parteiidentifikation' in der Bundesrepublik', in Markus Klein, Wolfgang Jagodzinski, Ekkehard Mochmann und Dieter Ohr (Hrsg.) (2000): op. cit. p.247.

the fact that in 1998 31 per cent of Easterners (compared to 21 per cent of Westerners) voted for a different party than they had done in the previous federal election (in 1994)[537]. Despite these clear tendencies towards electoral volatility, PDS supporters remain more likely *to continue* to support their party over a longer period of time. Over the course of the 1990s support for both the CDU and the SPD rose and declined in alarming (for the parties concerned) fashion, as both the state elections of 1998/99 and the Federal and European elections over the same period have illustrated. The CDU, in particular, suffered heavy losses in eastern Germany in the late 1990s, with a mere 58 per cent of those who voted for it in 1994 remaining loyal to the party in 1998[538]. At the 1998 election the CDU vote was down 15.3 per cent in Saxony, 12.1 per cent in Thuringia, 11.5 per cent in Saxony Anhalt, 9.3 per cent in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 7.7 per cent in Berlin and 7.3 per cent in Brandenburg[539]. Even the SPD, despite its considerable gains in eastern Germany in 1998, actually polled less votes in Brandenburg than it did in the 1994 federal election[540]. The PDS, meanwhile, has maintained a clear bedrock of support over this entire period[541]. In eastern Germany at the end of 1990, 35 per cent of PDS voters defined themselves as 'committed party voters', while only 15 per cent of CDU and 11 per cent of SPD voters regarded themselves as such. The Alliance 90/Greens (30 per cent) and the Republicans (27 per cent) had more committed supporters than the two main *Volksparteien*[542]. By 1993, 62 per cent of PDS supporters regarded themselves as having a strong party identification, while only 36 per cent of CDU voters and 24 per cent of SPD voters saw themselves as strongly committed to their party[543]. At the 1998 federal election the number of PDS supporters with a strong and durable party identification remained largely unchanged (61.7 per cent) – ensuring that the PDS

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[537] Cornelia Weins (1999): op. cit. p.51.
[538] Cornelia Weins (1999): ibid. p.51.
[539] Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.13.
[540] The SPD polled 1.5 per cent less in the federal election of 1998 than it did in the election of 1994. Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. pp.12-13.
[541] This was largely put down to the high identification that the servants of the former regime had with the PDS. While these citizens were still alive, it was largely expected that the PDS *would* retain a highly loyal electoral base. Following the elections of 1994, 1998 and 1999 this analysis has had to be revised, as the PDS, firstly, attracted broader sections of the electorate to its side, and then managed to retain them over a number of years. This was well illustrated in Saxony in 1999, where the PDS won over 48,000 Saxons who had not voted in 1994, 42,000 who had voted for the SPD, 21,000 former CDU voters and 13,000 voters from the Alliance 90/Greens. See Peter Porsch (PDS): 'Unsere Zukunft liegt nicht in der Gegenwart anderer Parteien, sondern in einer Partei als Netwerk demokratischer Bewegung', Speech at the sixth *Landesparteitag* of the PDS in Saxony, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 January 2000. See also http://www.pds-online.de/pressedienst/0002/09.htm
[542] Klaus von Beyme (1993): op. cit. p.106.
[543] Viola Neu (1994): op. cit. p.1.

remained, by a considerable distance, the party with the most loyal support in the eastern states[544]. The 1998 election also illustrated that the PDS is able to attract voters from *all* other parties - not just the ideologically adjacent SPD (from whom the PDS garnered an extra 80,000 votes) and the Alliance 90/Greens (who saw 40,000 voters leave them for the PDS in 1998[545]). This is illustrated by the 90,000 *CDU voters* who shifted their preference from the Union to the PDS between 1994 and 1998[546].

Despite the large increase in the SPD's proportion of the vote at the 1998 election[547], the PDS still *retained* a higher percentage of voters than the SPD was able to. 82 per cent of those who voted for the PDS in 1994 did so again in 1998, while only 80 per cent of SPD supporters did so - a fact that, when the impressive expansion of SPD support is taken into account, highlights just how loyal the PDS's voter base remains. As Infratest Dimap observed after the state elections of 1999, the PDS, in stark contrast to both the SPD and the CDU, has a large, committed and enthusiastic group of supporters - making it a strong and resilient political opponent in the eastern states.

> The PDS is not only ideologically anchored in eastern German society, it is also sociologically and organisationally rooted there. The relationships of (eastern) voters to the western German parties are rather more unstable, and traditional loyalty to a particular party plays a less important role in dictating voter support[548].

The PDS is not seen as part of the western German dominated political system - and as such the PDS has been able to mobilise support as a result of being a part of eastern German society. *"Virulent"* disappointment with *"western Germany, with the Federal Government and with Bonn politics"* enables the PDS to politically articulate the dissatisfaction evident with parts of the transformation process, just as the PDS can concurrently defend life pre-1989[549]. These were not issues when the western

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[544]   Katja Neller & Oscar W. Gabriel: 'Die Deutsche Nationale Wahlstudie 1998', in Markus Klein, Wolfgang Jagodzinski, Ekkehard Mochmann und Dieter Ohr (Hrsg.) (2000): op. cit. pp.553-555.

[545]   Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.36 and p.42.

[546]   If just the eastern states are considered, the PDS actually gained 130,000 votes off the CDU. Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. pp.36-37.

[547]   The SPD increased its proportion of the vote in eastern Germany from 31.5 per cent in 1994 to 35.1 per cent in 1998. The CDU lost 11.2 per cent, while the PDS increased its overall proportion by 1.8 per cent. The extreme right, following its weak showing in 1994, was also able to register a considerable increase: 3.7 per cent, as these parties improved from 1.3 per cent to exactly 5 per cent. See http://www.statistik-bund.de/wahlen

[548]   Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.11.

[549]   Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.11.

parties competed in the original elections after unification in 1990. The new and different electoral market that the processes of socialisation and situation have brought about are ripe for a home-grown party to mobilise such territorial uniqueness. Whereas in previous years disenchanted voters chose to abstain from the electoral process, the 1998 elections illustrated an increased willingness to engage in politics. While turnout at the 1998 election remained lower in the East (80.1 per cent) than in the West (82.8 per cent), this represented a 7.5 per cent increase on the 1994 figure[550]. And the PDS was able to benefit from this, as 44 per cent of its voter increase between 1994 and 1998 came as a result of a successful mobilisation of previous non-voters[551].

Eastern German elections, with the notable exception of the PDS and its supporters, remain characterised by voter mobility between the parties as well as significant non-participation. This is based upon a lack of clear and consistent (social) alignments between citizens and the SPD, the CDU and the smaller parties[552]. A third of Easterners changed party preference from 1994 and 1998, while only 69 per cent of citizens actually voted in both elections[553]. Citizens only build up party alignments over time, as they perceive a party to be consistently representing their interests. This is usually the case as cleavage divides stabilise within societies, and as parties mobilise around them. The nature of the cleavage divides in eastern Germany are, firstly, only very shallow, and, secondly, one of the major divides is the territorial one between East and West - from which only a specifically eastern German party can benefit.

The political environment in eastern Germany is also characterised by a markedly high degree of secularisation. While over 60 per cent of western Germans regard themselves as being a member of one of the Christian denominations, less than 30 per cent do so in the eastern states (see section 3.2.5). This has (had) key repercussions for the CDU in particular, as the CDU has traditionally relied on a

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[550]   Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.21.
[551]   Of the 430,000 people who voted for the PDS in 1998 but had not done so in 1994, 190,000 came to the party after not having voted at all in 1994. The right-wing parties, having started from a very low starting base, also mobilised considerable numbers of non-voters, as, unsurprisingly, did the SPD, who took advantage of the widespread feelings that governmental change was necessary. See Infratest Dimap (1998): ibid. p.36.
[552]   Matthias Jung & Dieter Roth (1998): op. cit. p.9.
[553]   Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.38.

religious (and especially Catholic) fundament for support[554]. While it is true to say that those Easterners with religious beliefs still tend in large numbers towards the CDU, it remains clear that this does not lend the CDU the structural advantage that it has traditionally done in the western states. Conversely, the atheist heritage of the PDS has prevented it from making any significant inroads into Christian elements of society, and the number of Christians who support the PDS is very small[555].

3.4. Reinventing Eastern German Self-Understanding

By employing the first part of the typology developed in chapter two, it has been illustrated that eastern Germans display quantifiable differences in opinions, attitudes and self-perceptions in a number of key areas that differentiate them from those of western Germans. These differences have prompted Easterners to consciously distinguish themselves *as Easterners* and have helped to stabilise the cleavage divide between eastern and western Germany.

Cultural variables play an important role in shaping the eastern German identity of defiance. The combined effects of being exposed to life in the GDR and of having experienced the transformation from real-existing socialism to the social-market economy ensure that Easterners exhibit differing values and attitudes to western Germans in a number of key areas. Easterners have quantifiably different attitudes to the past, and particularly to life in the GDR and 'what it was really like'. Easterners remain sensitive to what they perceive as judgmental attitudes by Westerners and are disappointed at the apparent willingness of western Germans to erase the GDR from memory. This leads them to retrospectively upgrade a number of aspects of life in the GDR that they previously did not perceive as being particularly important. It also gives Easterners the impression that they must justify their lives in the GDR, while Westerners are not required to undergo such rigorous processes of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

Attitudes of anti-Americanism and scepticism towards the role of German forces in international peacekeeping affairs are also widely visable. The Kosovo War

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[554] At the 1998 Federal Election the CDU polled 47 per cent of the Catholic vote, and 33 per cent of the Protestant vote across Germany. 21 per cent of those with no affiliation voted for the CDU. Figures from *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e. V.* on http://www.aicgs.org/wahlen/elect98.htm
[555] 1 per cent of Catholics and 2 per cent of Protestants voted for the PDS in 1998. 16 per cent of those with no religious denomination did so. There is an AG ChristInnen (Christian Working Group)

of 1999 illustrated this most explicitly, although eastern Germans were just as sceptical about the role that German forces played in Bosnia in the early-mid 1990s. Eastern Germans remain highly sceptical of the role and function of a post-Cold War NATO and strong pacifist tendencies demarcate Easterners from Western Germans.

In cultural terms, the most 'proactive' rejection of western German norms can been seen in the rejuvenation of unique eastern German symbols and characteristics. These range from the defence and preservation of small and relatively unimportant icons from GDR times such as the *Ampelmännchen* or the Trabant car, to explicit attempts to support, through the prism of the market, uniquely eastern German products in the all-German market place. The rejuvenation of brands once explicit to the GDR has subsequently been surprisingly widespread and successful.

Socio-economic differences between the eastern and western states are also important contributory factors in the stabilisation of an eastern German identity of defiance. Even the most cursory glance at the economic statistics reveals that eastern Germans are, in comparison with western Germans, more likely to be unemployed, more likely to earn less and the standard of living remains lower. However, it is not just the bear facts of the economic situation that act as a motor of identity creation: more important still is the widespread perception of economic inefficiency and uncompetitivness than Easterners perceive as existing in the eastern states. Even those Easterners who consider themselves as having profited from unification, and the transition to a market economy, still to tend to view the general situation of Easterners as being much more negative than it actually is. Furthermore, this imbalance appears likely to continue into the foreseeable future, as the eastern German economy and eastern standards of living remain behind those in the West. The importance of this economic cleavage is amplified as eastern Germans entered the FRG with the explicit expectation of 'living like Westerners' – so although the majority of eastern Germans are wealthier than they were in 1989, they have not achieved parity with western Germans. When this is combined with the widespread social dissatisfaction caused by the perceived *Abwertung* (downgrading) of eastern German lives pre-1989, it is clear that latent potential exists for a different set of political interests to be articulated. Chapters four and five tackle this point explicitly.

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within the PDS, although both its membership numbers and influence remain predictably small. See *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e. V.* on http://www.aicgs.org/wahlen/elect98.htm

The perceptions that the differential economic performance has spawned has contributed to Easterners supporting policies that would offer greater egalitarianism within Germany today. The value of individual freedom remains important, but there is an increasing perception that more emphasis needs to be placed on equality. Such support for egalitarian ideals has contributed to an increased appreciation of the concept of socialism in the eastern states. Citizens are broadly supportive of a more increased roll for the state in orchestrating and controlling economic activity. All of these characteristics stem from the complex, inter-twined phenomena of having lived in a state where such values were, even if very imperfectly, operationalised, as well as the having lived through the uncertain process of social, economic and political transformation that were set in motion by the process of unification.

This chapter has illustrated that eastern German perceptions and attitudes differ in a number of key ways to those of western Germans. It has illustrated what the territorial differences are in terms of values culture and socio-economic variables – and it is these differences that, so it is hypothesised, the PDS has been able, and has sought to, articulate within the political arena (see chapters four and five).

So far this thesis has therefore discussed the different approaches adopted when analysing the PDS and highlighted the lack of sufficient research into the PDS as a specifically regional party. The second chapter of this work developed a typology of the factors behind the development of a regional space as well as illustrating how regional parties successfully mobilise these variables. It also illustrated how the Bavarian CSU have long functioned successfully on the basis of their articulation of regional-specific interests in Germany's South-East. This chapter has discussed the process of identity creation that has taken place in the eastern states by using the typology outlined in chapter two to illustrate why an eastern German identity of defiance is now evident. It has also illustrated where eastern Germans have differing attitudes and values and where differing normative beliefs exist.

Chapters four and five will employ the second part of the typology in detail to examine the case of the PDS, illustrating how the PDS's activities in eastern Germany have enabled it to mould itself into a flexible organisation, representing the interests and beliefs of a broad cross-section of eastern German society.

Chapter Four

4. The PDS an a Successful Regional Party I: The Capacity of the PDS to mobilise Easternness.

4.1. Introductory Comments

Having discussed the nature of regional party success and eastern German self-understanding, chapters four and five move on to illustrate how the PDS has moulded itself into an articulator of eastern German uniqueness. Chapter three illustrated that an eastern German identity of defiance has stabilised in the eastern states, and chapters four and five illustrate how the PDS is the only party that is both able and willing to express this 'differentness' within the political arena. In order to effectively do this, the second part of the typology (section 2.4.2.) will be employed over *two* chapters. Party leadership and party organisation will be discussed wholly in chapter four. Chapter four will also highlight how the PDS has benefited from its structurally strong heritage in articulating cultural and socio-economic eastern uniqueness. Chapter five takes the discussion of the PDS's policy package a step further by analysing how the PDS has created a detailed policy package that corresponds with the key tenets of eastern German uniqueness that are outlined in chapter three. It illustrates that the PDS is able to actively make policy for eastern Germany.

The final two chapters of this work therefore look specifically at what the PDS says, how it says it, what it does, how it is represented and the general manner and method that the PDS invokes in articulating territorial uniqueness. By doing this, one can see that the PDS is a party that is comparable with other regional parties. The PDS, like other regional parties in western democracies, understands its electorate well, and skilfully adapts itself to the environment that has helped to spawn it.

Chapter four illustrates how the PDS leadership has skilfully the party to make it attractive to all citizens from all echelons of eastern German society. It also illustrates that the PDS, despite its ageing membership, is in an organisationally advantageous position vis-à-vis the other parties. Chapter four also highlights that, once these two criteria have been taken into account, the PDS has a sound platform from which to articulate eastern German uniqueness within the political arena. The PDS benefits and takes advantage of a number of

structurally advantageous phenomena that grant it the capacity to mobilise Easternness. The PDS is the only party with the capacity to mobilise a significant portion of the eastern electorate that feels underrepresented (as Easterners) in the political process. It is the only party that survives as a result of the East-West cleavage - and it is this cleavage, cross-cutting all others, that forms the key motor both of identity creation and political orientation in the eastern states – and this is exactly where the PDS's strengths in the eastern political marketplace lie. As a result of its heritage and regional roots, the PDS has successfully found a niche for itself as the *Anwalt der Ostdeutschen* (advocate of eastern Germans)[556].

Chapter five carries this argument further by discussing the PDS's policy package. This illustrates how the PDS acts on behalf of eastern Germans in concrete policy questions. The PDS attempts to make policies for Easterners. Regional parties advocate uniquely regional interests as a result of their deep roots and their understanding of differing regional value structures and attitudes. The policies that the PDS espouses, like the policies of all regional parties, are differentiated from those of the other parties by their expressly territorial form - and their representation of explicitly territorial sentiment.

Chapter five therefore concentrates on the PDS's policy package and the stress that the PDS itself places on articulating *uniquely eastern German policies*. Not only does this policy package set the party aside from other political parties, it represents a broad current of societal sentiment (as revealed in chapter three) in the political process. Chapter five reveals that it is in the areas where eastern German popular sentiment differs from that in western Germany that the PDS has developed policies that differentiate it from its competitors and subsequently reflect *uniquely eastern German preferences*. It is for this reason that other policy areas (pensions, the environment, tax issues and so forth) are not directly elaborated upon (although they are touched on implicitly at times), as although the PDS has policy proposals in all of these areas, they do not reflect the uniquely eastern German sentiment that chapter three illustrated exists.

Both chapters build on the notion that the western German parties have lost the power to set the agenda in the East, and with it their 'control' of the political system. The natural tendencies of parties dictate that they attempt to control the political process, by channelling the requirements of diverse groups within society into their programmatic positions. This is of key, strategic, importance to the PDS - as it is vital if new political parties are going to be able to create a place for themselves in everyday political discourse that they wrestle agenda

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[556] Ilse Spittman (1994): op. cit. pp.673-674. Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.10.

setting functions away from the 'major' parties[557]. The electoral viability of 'new' parties therefore depends initially on possessing the capacity to reach the electoral thresholds imposed by the electoral system - and the chances of new parties doing this are largest when there is a large increase in the size of the electorate, a new clientele emerges (defined in either social or attitudinal terms – see chapter three and sections 4.2., 5.1.1. and 5.1.2.), a particular set of events activate an existing social or attitudinal group and loyalties to (or alignments with) the established parties decline[558].

4.2. Leadership

Curiously, the very lack of a clear and definable eastern German regional elite does not hinder many citizens in the new *Länder* in their self-appreciation's as 'eastern Germans'. This is not what the original typology outlined in chapter two implied. It was hypothesised that regional elites are needed to articulate regional specificity and to instrumentalise territorial uniqueness. Elites are, so it was argued in chapter two, required to mobilise regional sentiment and awareness and to indirectly prevent political action being based upon 'national' issues and variables. Charismatic leaders are important in ensuring that a regional party remains visible and in the public eye. This puts extra emphasis on charismatic and articulate elites to tell people just why a regional party is needed within a particular political system.

In the context of eastern Germany, the reverse has happened. The explicit lack of an elite articulating eastern German territorial specificity ensures that a vacuum exists when it comes to expressing eastern German particularity. Western German politicians and businessmen are perceived as ruling eastern Germany, and eastern Germans themselves see very few of their brethren in elite positions within society. Elites are seen as distant and selfish in exploiting their positions of power. Apart from the legacy of the Stasi, East Germany is widely seen at the popular level as having been 'erased from German history' - and with it the lives and existences of its citizens, regardless of what they did pre-1989. This form of anti-identity in eastern Germany has not been articulated in a coherent fashion and as a result it is often multi-faceted and contradictory - hence it has become all the more

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[557] Giovanni Sartori (1968): op. cit. pp.1-25.
[558] Hugh Berrington: 'New Parties in Britain: Why Some Live and Most Die', in *International Political Science Review*, Volume 6 Number 4, 1985, p.449.

pervasive as Easterners have their own personal perceptions of what it means. Open articulation and propagation of this would have required a clear and coherent concept of what was meant by 'eastern German identity' (see section 4.4.) as well as lucid definitions of what differentiates eastern Germans from western Germans. This is something that, in the first ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, has been difficult as a result of the differing perceptions that eastern Germans had of the concept of eastern identity. For some it is blatant protest at the economic and social climate in the East today - so a reaction to the high expectations that many had at the beginning of the 1990s and of the East's economic underperformance when compared to western Germany. At the other extreme, it is a clear defence of a number of aspects of the GDR and what it stood for. For the majority though, it is somewhere in the vast sea of middle ground between these two polls.

However, with the onset of lingering economic under-performance and of perceptions of cultural difference that have come to stabilise themselves in the new *Länder*, it is clear that the territorial divide has 'settled down'. This is something that is further elaborated upon in chapter five of this work, where the nature of the PDS's representation of eastern German uniqueness is discussed.

It remains beyond question that eastern Germans are underrepresented at the highest levels of authority in the German state. The judiciary is predominantly staffed by western Germans, just as the upper ranks in most larger businesses are. At the political level, Professor Dagmaar Schipanski (CDU) failed in her attempt to become President of the Federal Republic in June 1999[559], a move which many would have welcomed in order to have symbolically shown high eastern German representation within Germany. The election of Angela Merkel to lead the CDU early in 2000 did appear to represent a shift in emphasis Eastwards, although in reality very few Easterners remain in prominent positions in political, economic or cultural spheres. Wolfgang Thierse ((SPD) the President of the *Bundestag*), and a handful of other party politicians (such as Claudia Nolte (CDU)[560], Vera Lengsfeld (CDU)[561], Paul Krüger (CDU)[562], Stephan Hilsberg (SPD)[563], Richard Schröder (SPD)[564] and

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[559] This, it must be stressed, was as a result of party political factors and had nothing to do with her eastern German biography.

[560] Claudia Nolte was elected on the land list from Thuringia and has been an MP since 1990. She was Minister for the Family, Pensioners, Women and Youth between November 1994 and October 1998.

[561] After deportation (to the UK) in 1988, Vera Lengsfeld returned to the GDR on the day the wall came down (9 November 1989). She became a member of the Alliance 90/Green Party, sitting in both the Volkskammer and the Bundestag from 1990. She very publicly left the Alliance 90/Greens in December 1996 to join the CDU.

[562] Paul Krüger, a Mecklenburger from Neubrandenburg, was Minister for Research and Technology between May 1993 and November 1994 and was deputy leader of the CDU/CSU *Fraktion* in the Bundestag from 1994 to 1998. He also published an influential paper on how the CDU could profile itself better in the eastern *Länder* in

Markus Meckel (SPD)[565]) have national profiles, but they are the exception to the rule that sees western Germans remaining in the political ascendancy. Often they are perceived as token '*Ossis*' in a western German dominated political world. Hence the concept of 'eastern German elites' remains noticeable by its absence[566].

Despite the lack of a definable 'eastern German elite', it remains clear that political competition in the eastern states is strongly influenced by personalities, and the nature of political debate is structured more by powerful personalities than it is in the West[567]. In a society where the parameters of political competition are not deeply ingrained, the importance of personalities in shaping political debate and party competition increases. This has been evident in a number of elections in the eastern states since 1990. The *Landtagswahlen* in Saxony and Brandenburg in 1994 in particular highlight this. The elections fell on the same day and the political and economic environments in the two states were, when viewed objectively, very similar[568]. Yet two different parties registered absolute majorities - based principally on the positive ratings of their leaders - Manfred Stolpe and Kurt Biedenkopf. Biedenkopf in particular was an "*unbeatable trump card*" in not just the 1994, but also the 1999 election[569]. 71 per cent of all Saxons said that they would prefer Biedenkopf as to continue as Saxony's Prime Minister in 1999 while a mere 5 per cent favoured his SPD opponent Karlheinz Kunckel. An amazing 89 per cent of Saxons were of the opinion that Biedenkopf had carried out his functions as Prime Minister well – of which 96 per cent of CDU supporters, 88 per cent of SPD supporters and even 82 per cent of *PDS supporters* were satisfied with Biedenkopf's work[570]. His popularity has much to do with Biedenkopf's strong defence of 'Saxon' interests and his successful profiling of himself against western heavyweights like Helmut Kohl. Biedenkopf, a largely unsuccessful western CDU politician

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1996 and as a result considerably increased his profile regionally. He is, however, one of very few other eastern German politicians to be widely known at the national level.

[563] Stephen Hilsberg has been a member of parliament for Bad Liebenwerda and Finsterwalde since 1990. He was a founding member and first speaker of the SPD in 1989 and 1990.

[564] Richard Schröder was a founder member of the SPD in East Germany.

[565] Markus Meckel, a former Foreign Minister of the GDR, has been MP for Prenzlau, Angermünde, Schwedt, Templin and Gransee since 1990. He is well known for his long-held (at least since the 1970s) political opposition to the East German regime and his role in helping to found the SPD in East Germany in October 1989.

[566] Gerhard Schröder's cabinet has two more eastern Germans in it, although neither are in possession of high profile portfolios. They are Christine Bergmann (Family) and Rolf Schwanitz (Staatsminister im Kanzleramt um den Aufbau Ost).

[567] Max Kaase: 'Is there a Personalisation in Politics? Candidates and Voting Behaviour in Germany', in *International Political Science Review*, Number 15, 1994, pp.211-230.

[568] This is in terms of economic indicators, as well as the social structure of the electorate.

[569] Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: 'Forscher: Biedenkopf überragen', in *Kölner Stadt Anzeiger*, 18 November 1999, p.1.

[570] Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: *Wahl in Sachsen: Eine Analyse der Landtagswahl vom 19. September 1999*

of the 1980s, has transformed himself into a Saxon *Landesvater* who has come to be associated with the Saxon *Land* itself[571].

In the Brandenburg state election of 1994 Manfred Stolpe was able to benefit from a similar, if less statistically impressive, wave of popularity. 81 per cent of all Brandenburgers wanted to see him continue as Minister President. Stolpe has been able to successfully refute allegations that he worked alongside the East German secret police before unification, subsequently profiling himself as an easterner who is having to struggle to make his way - much as the broader electorate is. His 'Easternness' is seen very much as an electoral asset. Even at the September 1999 state election, when the SPD was going through a period of particular unpopularity, 58 per cent of Brandenburgers said that they would prefer *Landesvater* Stolpe to continue as Prime Minister. A mere 13 per cent of citizens wished to see the CDU candidate Jörg Schönbohm replace him[572].

While the PDS does not possess such widely popular figures, the reformers within the party are, in the eastern states, articulate, well-known and viewed largely sympathetically. They are perceived as being politicians who stand up for particularly eastern German concerns. The four main examples of this are Lothar Bisky, André Brie, Hans Modrow and, of course, Gregor Gysi.

In the early 1990s Gysi became the most sought after talkshow participant in all Germany. Gysi has a wit and a telegenic nature that has enabled him to become the party's figurehead, and PDS supporters and critics alike acknowledge the important role that he has played in improving and modernising the PDS's image away from what tended to be seen as a party of stuffy former SED functionaries. Gysi's impending departure both from his position as leader of the PDS in the federal parliament (in the autumn of 2000) and his willingness to leave the *Bundestag* at the 2002 election subsequently pose the question of how the PDS will replace its figurehead and fill the void that he is bound to leave.

Lothar Bisky, leader of the party since 1993[573], has come to represent the reformist, hard-working, down-to-earth nature of the PDS in eastern Germany. Bisky is not a spectacular figure. His rhetorical skills are not like Gysi's. He enthuses less with charisma and style, and much more with his dedication and his workmanlike manner. This has led to

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(Mannheim: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, 1999), p.38.

[571] Forschungsgruppe Wahlen (1999): ibid. p.42.

[572] Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: *Wahl in Brandenburg: Eine Analyse der Landtagswahl vom 5. September 1999* (Mannheim: Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, 1999), p.35.

[573] Bisky also plans to stand down from his position as *Vorsitzender* in 2001, although he has shown every inclination to work within the parties structures in his other capacities as, amongst other things, leader of the PDS in Brandenburg and leader of a Commission looking into the party's programmatic renewal.

him being known as the "good man of the PDS"[574], or even the *"Integrations-Opa"* (father of integration) within the party, on account of his success at mediating between the party's different wings and ideological orientations[575]. This has appealed to the eastern electorate after much of the hope and anticipation of the immediate unification period dissipated[576]. Bisky also receives credit on account of being regarded as *aufmüpfig* (rebellious) pre-1989. As Vice-Chancellor of the *Filmhochschule* in Potsdam he fought for films to be shown in the GDR that SED bureaucrats were vehemently against. He was also known to be 'pro-Gorbachev': ensuring that as the *Wende* approached Bisky was viewed as anything other than a hard and fast SED die-hard[577].

André Brie, the long-time election manager of the PDS who left this position to become a Member of the European Parliament in the Summer of 1999, is a much more controversial figure within the party, but this has not detracted from his public profile as a reforming intellectual. Brie seeks to move the party away from its more dogmatic tendencies and to break with the traditional ideological rigidity of Marxist/Leninist political thought. Brie is not scared to break internal taboos (particularly with regard to criticisms of the GDR[578]), and his election campaigning and his tendency to throw light on controversial issues have ensured that the PDS remains focused on the problems of (eastern) Germans today, and not just on ideological disputes behind closed doors. Hans Modrow, the PDS's Honorary President[579], represents a very different figure to that of André Brie. Modrow represents the traditionalist wing of the party, and his presence is often seen as being of comfort to the stalwart membership of the PDS that was socialised in the GDR. He symbolises the defence of active participation in the GDR's societal structures, and a strong reluctance to condemn the GDR *per se*. He reassures the conservative membership that the reforming leadership will not go too far in abandoning left-wing principles - and Gysi, Brie and Bisky are well aware

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[574] See 'Rente statt Revolution', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 April 2000, p.11.

[575] See 'Und ewig lockt die Weltrevolution', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 6 April 2000, p.3.

[576] Despite not winning a *Direktmandat* in the 1998 federal election, Bisky was able to register 7.3 per cent more 'first' votes in the seat of Köpenick-Treptow than the PDS's proportion of the 'second' votes. This is quite a considerable achievement, only bettered amongst PDS politicians by Gregor Gysi in Hellersdorf-Marzahn (14.1 per cent), Christa Luft in Friedrichshain-Lichtenberg (9.5 per cent) and Petra Pau (9.1 per cent in the high profile seat of Mitte-Prenzlauer Berg). Citizens of these constituencies were prepared to vote for the PDS with their first, constituency vote, while switching to other parties with their second, 'proportional' vote. This indicates both active vote-splitting for tactical reasons and a likely resonance with the candidate. See Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.91.

[577] See 'Rente statt Revolution', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 April 2000, p.11.

[578] Sarah Wagenknecht and André Brie (1996): op. cit. For a particularly detailed account of André Brie's position within the PDS see Eva Sturm (2000): op. cit. pp.51-96. For a discussion of André Brie's most controversial statements on the GDR and socialism today, see Andreas Fraude: 'Die PDS in der Berliner Republik: Die 1. und 2. Tagung des 6. PDS-Bundesparteitages', in *Deutschland Archiv*, Nummer 2, 1999, p.174.

that alienating Modrow is likely to disillusion many of the rank and file. However, Modrow's public appearances are carefully orchestrated and there is a clear division of labour between Modrow, Brie and the other member of the PDS leadership. Modrow's support across broad sections of the membership is not necessarily reflected in the population at large: although this does not appear to have directly affected the electoral performances of the PDS in the eastern states[580].

During the 1998 election campaign the PDS continued its long-time strategy of fielding high-profile candidates in strategic constituencies. Following the author Stefan Heym's successful campaign in Berlin Mitte in 1990[581], the PDS once again attempted to persuade high profile candidates to stand on its 'open lists'. The most prominent of these was Gustav-Adolf "Täve" Schur, who became the *Spitzenkandidat* of the PDS in Saxony in 1998, as well as the direct candidate in Leipzig South. Schur, a popular former cyclist, remains a well known figure in the eastern states[582] and the PDS clearly attempted to use Schur to increase the party's popular profile. Schur was openly aware of his symbolic importance to the PDS, and he made no secret of his willingness both to call on his sporting background and to profile himself as a man of the (eastern German) people[583]. Schur conceptualised this by observing that:

> I know about life here ... (in eastern Germany). Those people in Bonn don't, and they are the one ones who want to make our decisions for us - to decide what is good for us and what is bad for us ... These people ... (in Bonn) ... who decide for the Eurofighter, who are prepared to spend millions on military intervention in Bosnia while they simultaneously rip huge holes in the welfare system, they are

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[579] Hans Modrow, the last Leader of the GDR, is also one of the 6 strong PDS group that sits in the European Parliament.

[580] Eva Sturm (2000): op. cit. p.316. One could conceivably argue that the PDS would have been able to increase its vote by even greater amounts in 1998 and 1999 if Modrow and the 'traditionalists' within the party had been less visible, but there is, of course, little way of ever substantiating this assumption. On the contrary, very few political commentators outside PDS circles predicted that the party would perform as well as it did in 1998 and 1999, so assuming that the PDS would have performed *even better* had it pursued a different electoral strategy appears impossible to empirically substantiate.

[581] Heym was not a member of the PDS, rather he stood on one of the PDS's open lists. Heym's position as a leading intellectual in the GDR, as well as his standing as a respected author, granted him a high profile in the campaign to win, possibly, the most high-profile constituency in Germany. The PDS attempted to attract another high profile candidate in *Berlin Mitte* in 1998, as it approached retired admiral Elmar Schmahling to stand on the PDS's open list. Schmahling was, however, forced to turn down this opportunity on account of questionable financial dealings that he had undertaken in the past.

[582] "Täve" is most widely known for his exploits in the *Friedensfahrt* (the Peace Race). Although the *Friedensfahrt* has enjoyed something of a resurgence in the eastern states in the late 1990s, the race enjoyed its heyday in the years before the *Wende*. The *Friedensfahrt* traditionally went through Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR, and was a magnet for the best riders from throughout the socialist world (and selected others from the West). Schur not only won the event twice (in 1955 and 1959), he was also twice world champion and, in 1990, was voted the most popular sportsman in the history of the GDR. See http://www.friedensfahrt.de

[583] Klaus Huhn: *Der Kandidat* (Berlin: Spotless Verlag, 1998).

not going to bring me into line. My vision of a democratic socialism is very real[584].

Schur has an excellent resonance with eastern Germans, as he represents a hero from a bygone age. Despite having sat in the *Volkskammer* from 1958 to 1990, Schur is still remembered for his sporting exploits and his positive contributions to the GDR sporting environment. At information stands Schur remained an exceptionally popular figure in the eastern states, as PDS supporters and critics alike came to see one of the legends of GDR sport. Schur never claimed to be a great politician as such, rather he chose to emphasise his hard working ethic and the importance of grass roots people working in the political process.

Schur is never likely to progress to the higher organisational ranks of the party, and a number of commentators have claimed that the PDS will have to continue to look for new leaders if it is to 'stabilise' itself (as opposed to 'transforming' itself, which is what it has continued doing, according to this critique, since 1989[585]). Under the tutelage of Gysi and Bisky the PDS has been on a continuous path of development with the aim of stabilisation within the German party system[586]. The next few years will highlight how successful the likes of Gabriele Zimmer, Petra Pau, Roland Claus, Helmut Holter and Dietmar Bartsch are in fulfilling this task. Gregor Gysi is clearly aware of the role that both he and Lothar Bisky have played in the PDS's development in the 1990s, but he has also articulated his concern that the party move on from this base and stabilise itself within the German polity:

> I am of the opinion that Lothar Bisky and I have performed historically important functions within the party that have enabled the PDS to successfully arrive in the Federal Republic. The next generation are now faced with the challenge of making the PDS a *Bestandteil* (component) within German society[587].

Despite (and often as a result of) its elderly membership, the PDS is also keen to promote younger members of the party into the public limelight. Angela Marquardt, a young punk from Mecklenburg West Pomerania, was General Secretary of the party for a number of years, and she has retained a prominent place both within the Executive, and in the eastern media. Marquardt, now also a member of the Bundestag, is one of a group of young, eloquent

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[584]   Täve Schur (PDS): in Maxi Wartelsteiner 'Täve kommt - und ist nicht mehr zu übersehen', on http://www.pds-online.de/disput/9808/39292.html and in *PDS Disput*, Number 8, August 1998.
[585]   For evidence of this approach see Gero Neugebauer: 'Die PDS zwischen Kontinuität und Aufbruch', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B5/2000, p.44.
[586]   See Horst Kahrs: 'Was kommt nach den 'Reformen' in der PDS?', in *PDS Disput*, Nummer 5, May 2000, on http://www.pds-online.de/disput/0005/03.htm
[587]   Gregor Gysi (PDS): 'Die PDS kann als Sekte untergehen', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 11 April 2000, p.8.

and sharp-tongued PDS politicians who present a very different, alternative image to the eastern electorate. As is often the case, the PDS is offering the populace something a little different, and it is no coincidence that the PDS attempts to promote and support younger politicians, in order to try and dispel its image as an 'old' party. At lower levels of political representation the PDS also actively seeks to present a younger face in eastern state parliaments, and in city and communal bodies. Roughly a quarter of the candidates on the first 30 places on the PDS list for the Saxony state election in the Autumn of 1999 were under 35, while the average age of the candidates on the entire list was a mere 43[588]. The PDS lists in other states have a similar age profile. Within the middle and upper echelons of its eastern *Land* organisations the PDS is also able to call on a broad and gifted generation of 35-50 year olds with considerable intellectual competencies[589], and more than two-thirds of the membership of PDS *Kreis-* and *Landesvorstände* are between the ages of 40 and 50[590]. Most of these elites came to prominence with very limited reform proposals as the GDR was collapsing in the late 1980s. They tended to belong to well educated groups within society who would, should the GDR have continued to exist, slowly have progressed into the leadership hierarchy of the East German state. Yet, as the GDR imploded, they often showed remarkably foresight in balancing tradition and modernisation by placing themselves at the forefront of the efforts to regenerate and transform the SED into the PDS - and subsequently giving themselves every opportunity to have a considerable influence on the party's future direction. They are the clear evidence of the party's attempts to present both a much younger public profile, and to offer younger citizens an opportunity to actively enter the political process[591].

The different ideological and historical backgrounds of the PDS elites therefore lends the party a unique public profile. And it is the 'differentness' and the Easternness of PDS politicians that allows them to most clearly articulate the feelings of many eastern Germans. The PDS elites are adept at touching on broader undercurrents of opinion, whether this be in an aggressive and witty way (Gregor Gysi), in a traditional, conservative fashion (Hans Modrow), a straightforward, workmanlike way (Lothar Bisky) or in an alternative, almost cheeky fashion (Angela Marquardt). PDS elites are not burdened by the responsibility of having taken part in the governmental attempts to improve the eastern economic and social

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[588] 'PDS-Vorschlag für die Landtagswahl', in *Neues Deutschland*, 18 May 1999, p.5.
[589] See Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit. p.12.
[590] Lothar Probst (2000): ibid. p.28.

landscape since 1989. And, despite talk to the contrary[592], the PDS is not likely to allow itself to become part of a federal coalition until at least the middle of the next decade - hence it can afford the luxury of playing, for the most part, the role of the political *Außenseiter*[593].

The PDS remains the clearest and most vocal advocate of what it (alongside many Easterners) sees as blatant discrimination within Germany today, and it is the rhetorical sharpness of PDS politicians on such themes increases the party profile.

By virtue of its politicians in eastern Germany, the PDS remains both visible and evident. The typology in chapter two suggested that some regional parties are built around the personality and beliefs of one figure: and while this would be exaggerating the importance of Gregor Gysi too much, it remains clear that he plays a pivotal function in fostering a quick-witted, snappy image for the party. This is well complimented by poster campaigns and election material[594] as well as the other PDS elites around him.

4.3. Party Organisation

The PDS has a strongly hierarchical and de-centralised party structure. This offers the PDS two key tools for maximising its presence and political effectiveness in eastern Germany: firstly, its large and highly motivated base of members and activists is easily (and frequently) mobilised to conduct both official and unofficial (in terms of 'spreading the word') party work, and, secondly, its considerable presence in eastern Germany's communal parliaments and town halls, increasing the PDS's visibility at the micro-levels of eastern German political life.

The federal structures of the FRG offer PDS members/activists ample opportunity to partake in political activity, and the PDS encourages its large membership to actively take part

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[591] For an analysis of the processes of elite renewal and the stabilisation of a younger party elite in Mecklenburg West Pomerania see Nikolaus Werz: 'Politische Parteien', in Nikolaus Werz and Jochen Schmidt (Hrsg.) (1998): p.95.

[592] See Klaus Halting: 'Die PDS schielt nach der Macht' in *Die Zeit*, 17 January 1997; 'PDS will im Bund bis 2002 Koalitionsfähig werden', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 6 December 1999, p.6; 'Minister Holter ragt Parteireform an', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 9 November 1999, p.5; 'Die PDS vor ihrem Bad Godesberg' in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 November 1999, p.4.

[593] Interview, PDS MdL in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 14 May 1999.

[594] The PDS has become well-known for its eye-catching posters at election time. They have ranged from short and simple messages like *PDS: Cool!*, *PDS: Geil!* (PDS: Sexy!), *Euro?:So nicht!* (Euro? Not like this!), *Kohl muß weg, Du muß her!* (Kohl has to go, you have to join in!) to *Drei Gründe PDS zu wählen: CDU, SPD und FDP* (Three reasons to vote PDS: CDU, SPD and FDP!) and *Der Osten wählt links* (The East votes left-wing). The PDS also uses posters of its key personalities like Gysi and Angela Marquardt. Slogans have tended to

in the political process. In eastern Germany, the PDS has 6,506 *Basisorganisationen* (local party organisations) meeting once a month. Membership numbers vary, and each *Basisgruppe* discusses issues and problems that have been brought down from higher bodies, before sending delegates to one of the 122 *Kreis- Stadt-* or *Bezirksvorstände* in order to contribute in formulating policy proposals at the communal/local level and/or to discuss issues that need to be dealt with at *Parteitage* (conferences). This gives members the opportunity to actively shape and be involved with party activity. The *Landesvorständen* (regional executives) also fulfil a mediating role in this process by formulating and co-ordinating policy at the state level. The *Vorstand* (executive), comprising 18 members, is the PDS's highest organisational body, remaining largely responsible for the directing the party at the federal level[595]. The PDS also possesses both working groups and interest groups that discuss policy issues (i.e. ecology, peace, socialism in Cuba and so forth), as well as 'Platforms', that are based on ideological orientation (i.e. the Communist Platform, the Marxist Forum). These enable members to take part in fora that contribute to the programmatic and policy development of the PDS[596].

The horizontal and vertical membership structures of the PDS correspond with those of other regional parties. They enable the membership to feel that they are contributing to the party's success, and contribute to high levels of commitment and motivation. However, highly committed memberships must also be, particularly in recent times, well supported by effective campaigning at the regional and national level, so as to ensure the party has a marketable image. And enthusiastic participation must not lead to internal disagreements as to the big picture, as this inevitably leaves the impression that the party is split, or that it is splintered into uneasy groups of factions. The PDS has (often) been perceived as being on the brink of ideological break-up, as factionalism between ideological and pragmatic wings of the party periodically get acted out. But the influence of a strong core leadership around Gregor Gysi, Lothar Bisky, André Brie and Hans Modrow have garnered enough agenda setting powers to continue to dictate general policy direction. This does not mean, however, that the membership of the PDS are 'powerless'. Debates within party fora and at *Parteitage* illustrate that the leadership often has to drag the membership along, and, as was evident at the Münster conference of April 2000, it is not unknown for the leadership to be defeated by the more

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remain short and simple and have often give the impression of cheekiness, vitality and the PDS as a somewhat different sort of party.

[595] See *Blickpunkt Bundestag – Forum der Demokratie*, April 3/99, p.34.

[596] For a detailed discussion on the work of these groups within the PDS, see Patrick Moreau (1998a): op. cit.

conservative *Basis* (see section 5.1.6. for further analysis of the events at this particular conference).

Over and above party structure, it is clear that the PDS makes very good use of the advantage it possesses in terms of membership numbers, activist numbers, the use of modern technologies and extra-parliamentary activity. Like other regional parties, the PDS is a disciplined, hierarchically organised party. This has been very well illustrated both in research conducted for this thesis, as well as in other works already published on party structure and organisation in eastern Germany. The most effective and efficient study of the organisational structures of the parties in the eastern states was carried out in 1995 researchers at the *Zentralinstitut für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung* in Berlin (published in 1996)[597]. Their detailed analysis of party structures and activities highlights that although membership numbers, funding and facilities do not correlate directly to electoral success, they are helpful in developing a public profile of a party and of making the party both visible and reachable at key times. Their analysis has shown that the PDS competes and often surpasses even the CDU in terms of effective party organisation - a factor that other regional parties are also able to do. Regional parties have slick, organised and efficient structures. They are often organisationally superior, or at the very least organisationally competitive, when compared to their national competitors. *Bundesgeschäftsführer* Dietmar Bartsch has emphasised that the PDS uses its organisational structures all-year round and is visible not just as and when elections are contested, when he claimed that *"the PDS is not just a party for election day, it is a party for everyday"*[598]. The PDS has a membership that is both high (even if numbers are presently dropping) and active. The KSPW Survey has illustrated that not only does the PDS possess more members than any other party in every eastern state (see table 24), but it also registers better in the index they employ to show levels of organisation (table 25)[599].

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[597]   *Endbericht des Kommission für die Erforschung des sozialen und politischen Wandels in den neuen Bundesländern e. V. (KSPW) Projekt 'Kreisparteien': Organisation, Politik und Vernetzung der Parteien auf Kreisebene in den fünf neuen Bundesländern* (Berlin: Freie Universität, Zentralinstitut für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung, 1996).

[598]   Dietmar Bartsch: 'PDS: Kein Auslaufmodell', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 16 April 1997.

[599]   The level of organisation is measured as the number of members in a party multiplied by 100 and then divided by the number of voters for that party. This enables one to see what percentage of a states population each particular party is able to (actively) mobilise to its cause.

Table 24[600]
Party Membership in the Eastern States as at 1 January 1995

State	CDU	SPD	FDP	Alliance 90/ Green	PDS
Mecklenburg West Pomerania	10,217	3,452	3,220	375	14,154
Brandenburg	9,505	6,750	3,848	492	18,258
Saxony Anhalt	15,461	6,207	5,908	478	18,270
Thuringia	19,685	6,012	6,138	470	16,173
Saxony	22,932	5,304	6,635	1,007	32,853
Total	77,800	27,725	25,749	2,822	99,708

Table 25[601]
The Level of Organisation of Political Parties in the Eastern States at 1 January 1995

State	CDU	SPD	FDP	Alliance 90/ Green	PDS
Mecklenburg West Pomerania	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.03	1.0
Brandenburg	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.03	0.9
Saxony Anhalt	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.02	0.8
Thuringia	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.02	0.8
Saxony	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.03	0.9
Total	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.03	0.9

The PDS is able to call on the services of more citizens of every eastern state than any other party except the CDU in Thuringia. This is a key explanation as to why the PDS is viewed as being both more visible and more active. Table 26 highlights how the PDS is a broad base of *Kreisparteien* each with a substantial membership.

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[600]   KSPW-Projekt (1996): op. cit. p.41.

Table 26[602]
The Strength of Membership at the *Kreisebene* in the Eastern States - 1995 (per cent)

Members	CDU	SPD	FDP	Alliance 90/ Green	PDS
Up to 40	0	0	1	84	0
41-180	5	39	53	16	1
181-400	21	42	43	0	18
401-700	33	19	3	0	42
Over 701	41	0	0	0	39

This is particularly true when one considers the organisational ratings of the SPD, the party against which the PDS is competing most vigorously for votes. The most recent data reveals that the PDS remains the party with the best organisational scores across the new states.

Table 27[603]
Party Membership in Eastern Germany 1995-1998

	Alliance 90/Greens	SPD	FDP	CDU	PDS
1995	2,827	27,177	24,569	71,804	101,033
1996	2,753	26,863	21,212	65,923	102,976
1997	2,949	27,441	16,213	67,703	96,097
1998	3,150	27,527	15,590	61,046	94,447

Table 28[604]
The Level of Organisation of Political Parties in the New States 1995-1998

	Alliance 90/Greens	SPD	FDP	CDU	PDS
1995	0.02	0.20	0.18	0.53	0.74
1996	0.02	0.20	0.16	0.48	0.76
1997	0.02	0.20	0.12	0.50	0.71
1998	0.02	0.20	0.11	0.45	0.72

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[601] KSPW-Projekt (1996): ibid. p.42.
[602] KSPW-Projekt (1996): ibid. p.45.
[603] Bundesgeschäftsstellen der Parteien, December 1998.
[604] Own calculations.

Table 29[605]
Party Membership in the CDU, SPD and PDS in each of the Eastern States

State	CDU		SPD		PDS	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1997	1998
Brandenburg	7,927	7,974	6,778	6,868	ca 15,000	14,950
Mecklenburg West Pomerania	9,150	8,729	3,311	3,470	11,926	10,614
Saxony	19,205	18,516	5,989	6,091	ca 25,000	24,333
Saxony Anhalt	12,567	12,130	5,123	5,233	13,861	12,107
Thuringia	17,074	16,342	5,662	5,589	12,950	12,210

In order to understand the importance of these figures, one must also consider exactly who the members of the party are. It is not just the case that the PDS has quantifiably more members, but also that it is able to mobilise more of them, more often than the other parties. This is of great importance when one considers how vital face-to-face contact at the grass roots level is in the eastern states - and is a weakness that Angela Merkel, the leader of the Christian Democrats, admits her party will have to live with over the long-term. As she has observed: "*We simply have not been able to build sustainable bridges to the most important societal groups - the trade unions, the churches and other similar associations*"[606] - as the CDU is not able to mobilise enough members to make itself widely seen. Of the PDS's total membership in May 1997, a mere 2 per cent were 29 or younger, 7 per cent were 30-39, 24 per cent were 40-59 and 67 per cent were over 60 years of age[607]. While this is undoubtedly worrying for the future *Nachwuchs* of the party[608], the large number of retired and early-retired members ensures that the *Knochenarbeit* of grass roots politics is well served[609]. The PDS membership is exceptionally active and it their work that has enabled the PDS to establish such a considerable presence in German micro-politics. As Dietmar Wittich has observed "*the public perception of the PDS at the grass-roots and regional levels is defined*

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[605]   Ute Schmidt: 'Sieben Jahre nach der Einheit: Die ostdeutsche Parteienlandschaft im Vorfeld der Bundestagswahl 1998', in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B1-2/98, pp.49-50. Nikolaus Werz and Jochen Schmidt (Hrsg.) (1998): op. cit. p.97; Patrick Moreau (1998a): op. cit. p.97; http://www.pds-online/sonnenklar/mitgliederzahlen.htm

[606]   Angela Merkel: in Dieter Wenz: 'Ostdeutsche Knochenarbeit', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 October 1999, p.20.

[607]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.122.

[608]   The PDS is under no illusions about this. For examples of this see 'Mangel an Mitgliedern plagt alle Parteien im Land', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 19 October 1995, 'Startschuß für Wahlkampf auf dem PDS-Parteitag', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung* 23 June 1997.

[609]   Dieter Wenz: 'Ostdeutsche Knochenarbeit', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 October 1999, p.20.

above all by the groups who have taken early retirement and pensioners. They are the ones that are seen at public events and at the information stands"[610]. There are 121 *einschlägige Basisgruppen* in Rostock alone with approximately 2,600 members[611], and every one of the groups serves one particular street or group of streets, ensuring that no letter box remains devoid of PDS literature and information[612]. Leipzig, meanwhile, has 51 *Ortsverbände* and *Basisorganisationen* and, at the beginning of 1999, a membership of 2,909 citizens. Of the membership, 71.2 per cent were either 61 or over, and a mere 3.92 per cent were 35 or under - once again indicating a reservoir of members who are likely to be able to dictate time to PDS activities[613].

Peter Christian Segall et al note that the electoral campaigning done by the PDS in 1998, as was also the case in 1994, was centrally organised and aimed at stressing the party's appreciation of the needs of the 'everyday man'. As they observe: "*the centralisation is channelled into an almost militant activism by the PDS not only at the state and communal level, but also at the micro-level in the new states. Such activism is only possible by virtue of the political strength of the PDS at the regional level*"[614]. This is as the PDS is served by a loyal, committed (often through personal linkages to the party fostered by many years of activity within the party) and enthusiastic membership that is united in its activism as it (the membership) remains convinced that it is doing the 'right thing'. Helmut Holter is certainly very much aware of the importance of such *Basisarbeit* (grass-roots work), and he stressed this in 1998 when he observed that:

the work of our members in chats over the garden fence, around the table in the pub, while having coffee with friends, as well as the many different forms of

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[610]   Dietmar Wittich: 'Zur Soziologie der Umwandlung der SED in die PDS' in Lothar Bisky et al (eds.) (1996): op. cit. p.181.

[611]   Lothar Probst: 'Wer ist die PDS? Einblicke in den Alltag einer postkommunistischen Partei', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 September 1997.

[612]   Dieter Wenz: 'Ostdeutsche Knochenarbeit', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 October 1999, p.20. Interview with Dr. Christian Westphal, *Kreisvorsitzender* of the PDS *Fraktion* in Rostock, 29 April 1999. Lothar Probst indicates, however, that the figures quoted by Wenz refer to 1997, as by June 1998 the number of *Basisorganisationen* had dropped to 105. See Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit. p.17.

[613]   Amazingly, 73 members of the PDS in Leipzig are 91 years of age or older! PDS Stadtverband Leipzig: *Mitteilungsblatt*, Nummer 2/3, März 1999, pp.4-5. It is, however, worth remembering that the CDU is also a party with what many would regard as an 'ageing' membership, even if this is not quite to the same extent as is the case with the PDS. The average age of the CDU membership is, for example, 56, while only 15.7 per cent of the membership is between 16 and 39. Of these only 1.8 per cent are under 24, while only a total of 4.7 per cent are 29 or under. See Klaus Escher and Hildegard Müller: *Empfehlungen zur Erneuerung der CDU* (Bonn: Pressekonferenz der CDU am 7 Oktober 1998), p.2.

[614]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.7.

engagement that the members of our party who are retired undertake, cannot be regarded highly enough[615].

The PDS *"Turborentner"*[616] (literally translated to mean 'Turbo-pensioners') are therefore a unique phenomenon in (eastern) German politics, as they remain a cohesive and enthusiastic group of party servants the like of which other parties only dream of possessing.

Empirically proving that the PDS has an active and enthusiastic membership is, however, not easy, as recording how many members man *Infostände* (information stands), stuff letter boxes etc. is virtually impossible. But Lothar Probst, in his micro-study of the PDS in Rostock estimates that in towns and cities with a considerable number of *Trabantenstädte*[617] the PDS is at a clear and conspicuous advantage on account of its ability to organise and mobilise its membership in an almost military fashion. Up to 500 of the so-called *Altgenossen* ('old comrades') ensure that households in Rostock are regularly serviced with PDS literature. The nature of the high-rise flats ensures that tens of thousands of households can be reached within an impressively short period of time[618].

The KSPW Survey of 1995 also reveals data that indicates that member mobilisation is high. The number of people who work for the PDS in an *Ehrenamtlich* (voluntary) position is a suitable indication of how the PDS mobilises sympathetic supporters.

Table 30[619]

The Number of *Ehrenamtliche Mitarbeiter/innen* of Political Parties in Eastern Germany in 1995 at the *Kreisebene* (per cent)

	CDU	SPD	FDP	Alliance 90/ Green	PDS
None	42	62	20	15	0
1-5	49	35	72	78	29
6+	9	3	8	7	71

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[615]   Helmut Holter (PDS): in Lothar Probst: *Die PDS: Zur Anatomie einer postkommunistischen Partei* (Schwerin: Paper given at a Konrad Adenauer Stiftung conference on the 10.3.98), p.13. Also quoted in Dieter Wenz: 'Ostdeutsche Knochenarbeit', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 October 1999, p.20. See also Dieter Wenz: 'Ein Land für Wählergemeinschaften', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 June 1999, p.16.

[616]   Patrick Moreau: 'Der Durchbruch der PDS im 'Superwahljahr 1994' – Demokratie in der Krise', in Heinrich Oberreuter (Hrsg.): *Parteiensystem am Wendepunkt? Wahlen in der Fernsehdemokratie* (München: Olzog Verlag, 1996), p.236.

[617]   *Trabantenstädte* are the suburban areas around many eastern German towns and cities where many high-rise blocks of flats exist.

[618]   For a fuller analysis see Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit. p.17.

[619]   KSPW Survey (1996): op. cit. p.49.

Ehrenamtliche work takes place where the parties are not in a position to pay supporters to work for them, but the supporters are none the less willing to actively assist in the parties activities. It is therefore clear to see that the PDS possesses an impressive human reservoir of helpers. This, however, is not the only thing that contributes to organisational efficacy. The KSPW survey highlights the strengths and weaknesses of all of the main parties in the East in terms of election offices, fax machines, computers, printers and newsletters. The PDS is seen, at the *Kreisebene,* to be making good use of the district newsletter (87 per cent of the PDS *Kreisparteien* have one, compared to 37 per cent of CDU and a mere 12 per cent of SPD parties at this level[620]), even though it is not quite as well catered for as the CDU in other areas. Technologically, the PDS fares well (in terms of computers in offices and fax machines[621]), as it does in terms of the number of *Wahlkreisbüro* and *Geschäftstelle.* However, the PDS is lagging in terms of *Besoldete Mitarbeiter/innen* (paid employees), as the CDU possesses at least one paid activist in 68 per cent of *Kreise* in eastern Germany, the PDS does in just 31 per cent. This is, however, largely compensated for in the number of *Ehrenamtliche* forces that the PDS is in possession of[622].

The PDS has also been eager to associate itself with numerous other associations within eastern German civil society. The PDS sees advantages in spreading its scope of influence as broadly as possible, and as such the party makes a concerted effort to be prominent in everyday life in eastern Germany. According to Segall et al, the PDS *"was and remains ubiquitous in most of the structures of cultural and associational life in the eastern states"*[623] and examples of the 110 associational groupings which are affiliated to the PDS include[624]:

- The Alternative Enquete-Kommission of Contemporary German History
- The Association of Anti-Fascists
- The Berlin Working Group of Tenants Associations (AGBM)
- Organisation for the Unemployed in Germany
- Federal Association on the Committees for Justice
- The German Peace Association (DFB)
- Interest Group for the Protection of the Social Rights of Former Functionaries of the Armed Forces and Customs Officials of the GDR (ISOR)
- The Interest Group of Emeritus and Retired Teachers

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[620]   KSPW Survey (1996): ibid. p.48.
[621]   KSPW Survey (1996): ibid. p.48.
[622]   KSPW Survey (1996): ibid. p.48.
[623]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.9.
[624]   Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): ibid. p.8.

Peter Porsch, the PDS leader in Saxony, has described the PDS's position within eastern German civil society thus:

> In the eastern states the PDS is deeply anchored in society. The party is known through the faces of its politicians at the communal level, in the *Wohngebiete* (residential areas), in the clubs and associations, in the trade unions and in the *Bürgerinitiative*. In the East we are clearly the party for the *Alltag*, the party that people feel they can approach[625].

It is therefore clear that the organisational strength of the PDS offers it clear advantages over its rivals. It has a large, well-disciplined membership, and has illustrated considerable skill at anchoring itself into eastern German civil society. Furthermore, the 1998 federal election *"revealed a clear mathematical correlation between the areas where the PDS was very well organised and its best election results"* - illustrating that it is a plausible hypothesis that the PDS's efficient organisation is leading to improved election results[626].

The PDS's organisational strengths have also enabled it to create a culture where people look towards the party for support. As Thomas Lutze has observed:

> election and regional offices as well as *Landesgeschäftsstellen* are genuine places where citizens can head for when they need information and assistance. They are places where those who are interested can simply pop by to drink a cup of tea or coffee, or to borrow a book. They are not places that are somehow hard to find, or large, expensive and imposing offices that on occasion might appear more akin to an archive ... [627]

For many Easterners the PDS is, in this sense, more than just a political party. It is a point of reference in a confusing world. And the open and friendly manner in which the PDS conducts itself represents, for many, a refreshing change.

It is not just the extra-parliamentary activity of the PDS that ensures that its message is conveyed - the communal activity of the PDS is also a key organisational strength - as the PDS's considerable presence at the micro-levels of political activity ensures that it remains visible within the eastern German community. The PDS is enthusiastic both in its support of initiatives that advocate increased communal independence, including in financial terms, and

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[625] Peter Porsch: 'PDS 2000 - Worauf es ankommt!', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 20, 19 Mai 2000, on http://www.pds-online/pressedienst/0020/15.htm
[626] Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.9.
[627] Thomas Lutze, PDS *Landesgeschäftsführer* in the Saarland: 'Ohne Verstärkung an der Basis, keine Basis bei den Wahlen', on http://www.pds-online.de/disput/9812/39759.html and in *PDS Disput*, Nummer 12, Dezember 1998.

in its activities that support political activities at the communal level[628]. The PDS is well aware that eastern Germans have little faith in the institutional structures that they were presented with in 1990, and seeks to bring democracy and responsibility much nearer to citizens. It aims to show, by efficient and visible communal activities that it is *Bürgernah* (near to the citizen) and effective in responding to calls for more political activity and responsibility at the lowest levels in the German political system. The PDS itself phrases its attitude to communal politics thus:

> (Communal politics is) ... the defence of communal independence against the detrimental communal politics pursued at the federal and state levels. By doing this the PDS hopes to, on the one hand, secure genuine improvements for citizens and, above all, the disadvantaged, and on the other hand support the democratisation and modernisation of society in the pursuit of the vision of a socially just and solidaristic world[629].

In the Party Programme of 1993, the PDS also unequivocally states that:

> The PDS stands for communal self-government as provided for by the Constitution but not implemented in practice. We are committed to the right and the real opportunity of communities, towns and districts to be able to administer and organise growing parts of public affairs on their own account[630].

In communal politics the PDS is well represented. Over 6000 eastern Germans sit in communal parliaments as PDS representatives. At the end of 1997, 1074 PDS politicians were active in *Kreistage* and *Stadträte kreisfreier Städte*, as well as the 195 politicians who were active for the PDS in Berlin's *Bezirksverordnetenversammlungen*. In the 84 towns with more than 25,000 citizens, the PDS has 911 seats, as well a further 5,000 seats in the *kreisangehörigen Städten und Gemeinden*[631]. In total, the PDS had 191 Mayors as well as 2

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[628] In an analysis behind the practical reasons for the PDS electoral successes of 1998, Helmut Holter lists "*das kommunalpolitische Engagement*" of the PDS as one of the factors behind the PDS's strong electoral performances. Other things he mentions are the party's reputation as being a *Partei für den Alltag*, the clear profile of the PDS, the PDS's role as a *Hoffnungsträger* and the effective election campaigning of the party. Helmut Holter in a speech to the extraordinary state party conference in Sternberg, 10 October 1998. Honorary President Hans Modrow echoed this at the 1999 Berlin Party Conference when he stated that clearing the 5 per cent hurdle at the 1998 Federal Election was "*a success for the thousands of members who make the PDS visible and viable at the communal level, and convincingly and enthusiastically represent the party in the day to day affairs of everyday politics*". Hans Modrow (PDS): 'Parteitag soll unserer strategischen Debatte Inhalt und Richtung geben', speech to the Berlin Party Conference of the PDS, 15 January 1999. See *PDS Disput/Pressedienst*, Nummer 1, 7 Januar 1999, p.3.

[629] Heiko Grohe (PDS): 'Anregungen und Vorschläge für die kommunalpolitische Arbeit der PDS 1998', in *Kommunal Spezial* (Schwerin: Kommunalpolitsches Forum Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V, March 1998), p.6.

[630] PDS (1993): op. cit. p.16.

[631] Heiko Grohe (1998): op. cit. p.5.

Oberbürgermeister, 73 of which were in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 42 in Saxony Anhalt, 39 in Brandenburg, 20 in Thuringia, 13 in Saxony and 4 were in Berlin[632]. In 1998 the PDS tried to offer specific support to its communal politicians (who often work for no financial recompense) by organising various activities that aid them in learning from others and in carrying out their duties in as efficient and effective way as is possible. These activities ranged from a conference for mayors, two weekend seminars for leaders of PDS groupings in communal parliaments, a *Kommunalpolitische Konferenz* in Leipzig as well as sittings of the federal party with communal politicians[633]. These are all in addition to the 'communal-political day' of the PDS (19 March 1998 in this case), when communal politicians were invited to a special conference in Saxony Anhalt.

The highly mobile membership and considerable presence in eastern German parliaments offers the party the perfect tool for establishing a strong presence on eastern German streets. This fact is not lost on the PDS activists themselves. The January 1996 party conference in Magdeburg settled on the motto of *Kommunen stärken, Gesellschaft von unten verändern* (Strengthen the Communes, Change Society from below) and the PDS has achieved greater visibility at the communal level not just because of the large number of activists it mobilises at election times, but also because of the effort and enthusiasm that the PDS puts into communal political activity all year round. As Heiko Grohe observes:

> Without its politicians at the communal level, the PDS would clearly not be the party that it is today ... competence, reliability and high personal commitment on social issues have become in many places the trademarks of PDS communal activity[634].

Dieter Kupfernagel, PDS *Oberbürgermeister* in Sangerhausen, further stresses this:

> I believe that it is in the communal political arena that the PDS can be at its most effective. It can be there for the citizens[635].

And in Saxony Peter Porsch has claimed that:

> Our political representatives in the communal parliaments have actively ensured that the PDS remains visible, that everywhere in Saxony the PDS is seen to have a face and that citizens are able to trust the PDS. The PDS's communal politics,

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[632] Heiko Grohe (1998): ibid, p.5.
[633] Heiko Grohe (1998): ibid, p.6.
[634] Heiko Grohe (1998): ibid, p.5.
[635] Dieter Kupfernagel: in *Die Zeit*, 19 July 1997.

with its emphasis of political activity being brought as near to the citizen as is possible, is the basis of our success, and this is going to remain so in the future[636].

The retention of as many jobs as is possible, *Kindertagestätten*, Youth centres, communal housing and libraries, fighting for affordable services, the support in questions of rent problems and the building of safe houses for women and the abused are all areas where the PDS retains a particular prominence at the communal level. It is precisely by doing this that the PDS is able to take advantage of its strengthens: as a membership party, as a milieu party as well as a pragmatic representative of eastern interests and of eastern protest[637]. Furthermore the PDS has proven itself to be totally integrated into the parliamentary procedures and mechanisms of communal governance. PDS politicians remain much more pragmatic and *sachorientiert* than, for example, is the case at either the regional or federal levels. PDS politicians are much less ideological and the PDS has carefully cultivated the image of a party that is much more interested in finding solutions to problems than in ideological conflict[638].

In Mecklenburg West Pomerania, the SPD-PDS coalition is seeking to reform communal political activity in order to give communal authorities more power to control their own affairs.   The PDS actively campaigns against proposed forced amalgamation of particularly small communes, claiming that while they are financially viable, it should be up to the citizens of the communes themselves as to what happens to them[639]. This is part of the PDS strategy of bringing democracy close to the citizenry, in order both to enrich democratic activity as well as attempting to dispel some of the cynicism towards politics in general. Article 182 of the coalition agreement clearly states that:

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[636]   Peter Porsch (PDS): 'Unsere Zukunft liegt nicht in der Gegenwart anderer Parteien, sondern in einer Partei als Netzwerk demokratischer Bewegung', speech at the sixth *Landesparteitag* of the PDS in Saxony, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 January 2000. See also http://www.pds-online.de/pressedienst/0002/09.htm

[637]   Dirk Rochtus et al: *Wer ist die PDS?: Zwei Beiträge zu Programm und Profil einer postkommunistischen Partei* (Bremen: Institut für kulturwissenschaftliche Deutschlandstudien, Universität Bremen, Heft 10, 1996), p.9.

[638]   Lothar Probst (2000): op. cit. p.6.

[639]   Gabi Schulz (PDS): 'Zusammenschluß von Gemeinden darf nicht zu deren Last gehen' (Schwerin: PDS Presseerklärung, PDS Pressestelle, Nummer 70, 6 April 1999). PDS politicians in Mecklenburg West Pomerania have, however, acknowledged that the unique structure of communal authority in Mecklenburg West Pomerania means that there are a large number of very small *selbständige Gemeinden* that remain too expensive to continue financing. In mid-2000 there were 1008 *Gemeinden*, compared to just 544 in Saxony - a state with a much higher population. 440 of the *Gemeinden* in Mecklenburg West Pomerania have less than 500 residents living there - a figure that both Arnold Schoenenberg and Klaus Böttger (both PDS *Landtag* MdL's) admit is far too high.   See 'Zu viele Gemeinden im Lande?   Debatte über freiwilligen Zusammenschluss oder Zwangsvereinigung', in *Neues Deutschland*, 11 April 2000, p.5.

In the medium term, the coalition is striving to change the communal constitution (*Kommunalverfassung*). Communes are going to be given more competencies, as well as the opportunity to exert more control over their own affairs ... the right of citizens to be involved in the political process, as well as the use of *Bürgerinitiativen* (citizens initiatives) will be expanded. The rights of *Ortsteilen* (city districts) and their administrations are going to be broadened. Children and young people will have the right to participate in communal activities that directly affect them[640].

The PDS works closely with the *Kommunalpolitisches Forum* (Communal-Political Forum) in the eastern states. The Forum is open in its nearness to the PDS[641] and aims to conduct studies and hold seminars on social and educational issues for communal politicians, as well as for the general public. Further to these attempts to educate citizens, the Communal-Political Forum aims to defend and expand the power and scope of communes everywhere in Germany.

The PDS is well aware that the communes in both the eastern and western states (although this is particularly true in the East[642]) often suffer from acute financial shortages. Both income tax and the *Gewerbesteuer* (trade tax) are no longer available as sources of income to communes - yet the communes have been delegated more responsibilities from not just the *Land* level, but also the Federal and European ones as well. If the communes are to function properly, and to contribute to a reconstruction of trust in public institutions, then they have to have a sound financial basis. As a result of this, the PDS proposed in May 1996 a thorough reform of communal finances[643]. The PDS also attempted to acquire extra subsidies for the particularly poor eastern communes[644]. Having largely failed in 1996, the PDS repeated demands in October 1999 for a fundamental reform of communal finance, in order to enable the communes to stabilise their precarious financial positions[645]. It has called for the establishment of an Enquete-Kommission into 'Reform of Communal Finance' (*Reform der*

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[640] 'Koalitionsvereinbarung IX. Selbstverwaltung der Kommunen ausbauen und ihre Leistungsfähigkeit sichern. Abschnitt 1: Kommunalpolitik' in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

[641] Bärbel Kozian (Vorsitzende des Kommunalpolitschen Forums Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V.): 'Jahresversammlung 1997 zog positive Bilanz', in *Kommunal Spezial* (Schwerin: Kommunalpolitsches Forum Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V, March 1998), p.2.

[642] According to the PDS spokesman on communal affairs in the Bundestag, Uwe-Jens Rössel, 50 per cent of communes in both Saxony and Thuringia are insolvent (*Zahlungsunfähig*). See *PDS im Bundestag Presseerklärung*: Kommunalreform, Nummer 2070, 11 March 1998.

[643] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/4597.

[644] *PDS im Bundestag Presseerklärung*: Kommunalreform, Nummer 2070, 11 March 1998.

[645] 'Einstieg in eine umfassende Reform der Finanzierung der Städte, Gemeinden und Landkreise' (A Comprehensive Reform of the Financing of Cities, Municipalities and Rural Districts). *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 14/1302.

Kommunalfinanzierung)[646] in a further effort to strengthen their financial basis across all of Germany. It has also attempted to increase financial support given directly to cities, municipalities and rural districts[647].

> In particular the eastern German communes are dependent from the financial payments given them by the *Länder*, since they have hardly any financial resources of their own. With a fundamental and far-reaching finance reform, as the PDS Parliamentary party proposes, the public purse would have to be redistributed in favour of the communes[648].

The PDS is clear and consistent in its advocacy of the need to grant the communal levels of government both more powers, and the financial power to effectively carry out their work. The need for this is particularly acute in the eastern states, and the PDS works closely, through its dense network of communal politicians and its links with organisations such as the communal-political forum to try and improve the scope and efficiency of communal activities. The PDS is adamant the subsidiarity should involve decision-making at the lowest political level, with the aim of making political activity transparent and *Bürgernah*.

4.4. Party Policy

All parties attempt to develop a popular package of policies that they hope differentiate them from other competitors in the political market place. Regional parties have frequently been seen to stress the importance of a coherent and relatively narrow set of 'core' policies that are uniquely specific to the territory they seek to represent. In contrast to the major (national) parties, who tend to mobilise around nationally salient societal cleavages, regional parties take advantage of cleavages that *divide* or *differentiate* the region from the national polity. The territorial cleavage divide between the eastern and western states is structural in nature, and it is the PDS that acts as an agent within the political process articulating this structural difference. The PDS, like other regional parties, specifically moulds its policy package to the social, cultural and attitudinal differences that make the

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[646] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/984.
[647] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/4597. Both of these motions were rejected, but the SPD and the Alliance 90/Greens acknowledged the necessity of financial reform at the micro-levels of German politics. Alliance 90/Greens did eventually call for the establishment of a commission of experts to investigate finance reform for municipalities, and the SPD followed suit after the Saarland brought a similar motion forward in the Bundesrat.

people of its region unique. Section 4.4. illustrates how the PDS does this is abstract terms, while chapter five discusses the policy package that the PDS has developed in more detail.

4.4. The Capacity of the PDS to Mobilise Community: Eastern German Identity and the PDS

> The Federal Republic of Germany swallowed the GDR whole. And now she is causing the FRG to have quite a stomach ache![649]

Chapter three illustrated that an eastern German identity exists and that it is underpinned by common sets of value-judgements, cultural orientations and attitudinal commonalties. A "*widespread (verbreitete) Lebensgefühl*" exists in the eastern states[650]. A process of identity creation has been of key importance in creating an environment where socio-cultural and economic issues increase in political salience within a uniquely territorial context: and the PDS, as other regional parties do in other regions, articulate such uniqueness within the political arena. The creation of a new eastern German sub-cultural within Germany, spawned by the structural changes that followed unification, is actively represented by the regionally concentrated PDS. The phenomena that underpin this are spawned by the socialising effects of life in the GDR and by the experience of living through the transition process from state-socialism to capitalism (see chapter three).

Empirical electoral research in Germany has long attempted to ascertain whether citizens who express strong tenets of an eastern German identity regularly vote for the PDS. Brunner & Walz have successfully illustrated that citizens who profess to possess a form of eastern German identity are indeed more likely to vote for the PDS. They claim that 85 per cent of citizens who have voted for the party did so as the "*PDS comes from the East, and is the party which most clearly represents eastern German interests*"[651]. Detlev Pollack and Gert Pickel, following their extensive works on eastern German identity and cultural difference in Germany, claim that PDS voters tend to be better politically informed and that they possess a self-identification that is different from that of Germany as a whole (*stehen in*

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[648] Lothar Bisky (PDS): Speech at the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.3.

[649] Gregor Gysi (PDS): 'Das rote Gespenst', in *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 10, 1999, p.25.

[650] Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.10.

[651] Wolfram Brunner and Dieter Walz: 'Zwischen Parteiidentifikation, Kandidatenbewertung und Issueorientierung. Bestimmungsfaktoren der Wahlentscheidung 1998', in Gert Pickel, Dieter Walz und Wolfram Brunner: *Deutschland nach den Wahlen. Befunde zur Bundestagswahl 1998 und zur Zukunft des deutschen Parteiensystems* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000), pp.92-93.

einer gewissen Distanz zu einer gesamtdeutschen Identität)[652] – i.e. they have an identity that is characterised by their socialisation and life experiences in the GDR and, following unification, in eastern Germany. This *Abgrenzungsmentalität* (mentality of demarcation) or *internaliserte Identitätsbegrenzung* (internalised limited identity) is specific to citizens of the eastern states and PDS voters are highly likely to be citizens who express such identifications most clearly[653]. They conclude by stating that:

> the PDS is the clear beneficiary of the existence of an eastern German identity, and the nature of this identification ensures that the PDS acts as a catch-all home for voters who wish to give political voice to the subjective degradation of 'all' eastern Germans[654].

For its part, the PDS clearly attempts to make political capital out of its eastern German heritage as well as what it sees as differences of attitude and experience between eastern and western Germans. PDS politicians are rhetorically able and articulate the feelings of eastern Germans, as illustrated in chapter three, in a unique fashion. The PDS's successful defence of the rights, interests and identity of eastern Germans forms the backbone of the detailed policy package that is discussed in chapter five.

PDS politicians shy away from deliberately discussing what an eastern German identity might be as they perceive that it will diminish the parties chances of developing into an all-German party. The PDS's unwillingness to accept that the party's *Westausdehnung* (westward expansion) has failed means that the PDS still concentrates considerable time, effort and resources in a forlorn cause. In terms of eastern German identity, the PDS is very flexible in its use of terminology: sometimes it talks of eastern German interests, on other occasions PDS politicians may use terms like solidarity, inner unity, eastern experiences or eastern uniqueness. In whichever way PDS politicians choose to phrase their arguments, it is clear they are talking about the very processes of identification that were discussed in the third chapter of this work. If the PDS were willing, as Ostrowski and Weckesser suggested in 1996[655], to concentrate on what it does best (i.e. give specific voice to eastern Germans within

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[652]   Detlev Pollack and Gert Pickel: 'Besonderheiten der politischen Kultur in Ostdeutschland als Erklärungsfaktoren der Bundestagswahl 1998 und die Rückwirkungen der Bundestagswahlen auf die politische Kultur Ostdeutschlands', in Jan van Deth, Hans Rattinger und Edeltrud Roller (Hrsg.): *Die Republik auf dem Weg zur Normalität? Wahlverhalten und politische Einstellungen nach acht Jahren Einheit* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000), p.136.
[653]   Detlev Pollack and Gert Pickel (2000): ibid. p.136.
[654]   Detlev Pollack and Gert Pickel (2000): ibid.. p.136.
[655]   Christine Ostrowski & Ronald Weckesser: 'Ein Brief aus Sachsen', in *Neues Deutschland*, 8 May 1996, p.1. See page 60 of this thesis for further discussion of their ideas.

federal and regional parliaments), then not only would the PDS be able to concentrate all its efforts on its *key strength*, but it would also have a long-term perspective in eastern German politics, as it hones its policy orientations to the specifically eastern environment. The PDS realises that eastern German *Trotzidentität* has come to be a protective mechanism against feelings of being economically less-well-off, socially disadvantaged and politically disregarded. As such, "*the PDS is perceived, over and above its core electorate, as the representative of eastern German interests ... and western Germans, who have until now made decisions on behalf of all of Germany, must reconsider this state of affairs*"[656].

PDS politicians are the only politicians who aggressively (and at times in a decidedly populist fashion) articulate such a defence of eastern Germany as a whole. Two examples here illustrate this. At the January 1999 Berlin party conference Gregor Gysi, the master of the eastern German soundbite, observed that:

> We have to make sure that the Federal Chancellor is serious about his promise to make eastern Germany his key priority. Up until now I have not heard a single substantial idea on this issue. I have heard neither how the Chancellor is going to promote economic activity, let alone how he is going to achieve sustainable ecological development, nor have I heard how he intends to create jobs in the eastern states, not to mention the many other things that have not been conceptualised ... I want to know: when is the Easterner who is on benefits, the Easterner who has to pay the same prices as a Westerner, going to at least be able to claim the same levels of social support? When is the Easterner who is unemployed going to be able to claim the same levels of unemployment benefit? When is the state, in the form of employees working in the public sector, going to pay the same rates to Easterners as what it does to Westerners?[657].

On the 31 March 1999, during a plenary session of the Mecklenburg West Pommerania state Parliament, Helmut Holter demanded to know:

> Where are the so-called 'flourishing landscapes'? Where is the equalisation of living conditions between the eastern and western states? The promises made by the CDU at the time of unification and at election times remain pure *Makulatur!*[658]

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[656] Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.7.
[657] Gregor Gysi: Speech at PDS Conference in Berlin, quoted in *Neues Deutschland*, 21 January 1999, p.10.
[658] Helmut Holter (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998), p.5163.

No politician from any of the western parties can utter such words. The PDS knows that it has not been responsible for any governmental decisions since 1990 - hence it devolves itself of responsibility for the economic malaise and the social dissatisfaction in the eastern states today. PDS politicians are able to articulate such widely held sentiments as they are not constrained by federal considerations, and western Germans are seen to have made the decisions that have led to the East's predicament (regardless of whether this is a true, or fair, judgement or not).

While neither the PDS nor the other political parties openly propagate the existence of an eastern German identity, it is clear that the PDS articulates region-wide feelings of solidarity within the political process. Paradoxically, the PDS continues to stress that it is an 'all-German' force to the left of the SPD[659], while simultaneously claiming the mantle of being the only party that can adequately represent eastern German interests in the political arena. In itself, this *is not* a paradox: but even the most cursory glance at the German party political landscape reveals the PDS to be much more effective at being eastern German than all-German. The PDS's strategy is, however, a paradox, as it strongly pushes its eastern profile while stressing its keenness to broaden its influence in western Germany and rid itself of its purely eastern German image. Yet it is its identity as an eastern German party that dominates in terms of space and coherence of approach. As the 1998 election manifesto claims:

> The PDS is the party that for years has consistently represented eastern German interests, thereby forcing the other parties to address eastern concerns. Every form of discrimination of eastern Germans that has been conceptualised in the federal parliament has been brought up at the behest of the PDS ... without the PDS eastern Germany would not be mentioned in a political context in the *Bundestag* at all[660].

In spite of claims in election programmes that the PDS unambiguously embraces eastern German *interests*, little is said about the existence or articulation of eastern German identity. This is principally as it is a divisive topic within the ranks of the PDS. Where eastern German identity is discussed it is seen to be a result of the unavoidable conflicts, at

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[659] In 1998 the PDS claimed in its election manifesto that *"the PDS is Germany's socialist party"* in a clear attempt to take the mantle away from the SPD. See http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/bt-wahlprogramm/praeambel.htm – paragraph 3.

[660] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/bt-wahlprogramm/praeambel.htm

both the moral and social levels, that Easterners have been forced to live through in the process of the transformation of the GDR[661].

The PDS is insistent and explicit in its articulation of eastern Germans self-perceptions as being 'different' to West Germans, and of being able to contribute valuable experiences towards the creation of a socially just, more egalitarian and 'fully employed' Germany[662]. This is in terms of attitudes, expectations and values. The PDS demands both equal treatment (in the form of an equalisation of wage rates, of greater access to employment, a recognition of past achievements and qualifications and so forth - see chapter five) of Easterners in the unified German state, as well as increased recognition of the GDR as being a part of German history as a whole. It demands that the subjective differences between East and West be respected and not seen as hindrances on the way towards 'inner unity'[663].

The PDS articulates the identity of defiance in eastern Germany in that it retains a distance from the fundamental principles of the FRG, as well as from a number of aspects of the FRG's institutional structures. This distance is not based upon a rejection of the Basic Law, but rather in radical changes to the functioning nature of both German democracy and the social market economy. The PDS in Saxony, for example, states that:

> ... within a ever more interdependent European Union, the relationships between the federal level within Germany, the regional level, the communal level and the European level need to be re-conceptualised. Decisions need to be taken at which ever level is most appropriate. A democratisation of the EU is a prerequisite for this, just as democratic control of the EU is necessary ... it also remains obvious that a democratic reconstruction of the German state is necessary if the state is to once again enjoy popular support and if the citizenry is going to feel that the state is actively articulating its interests[664].

Section 2.4.1.2. illustrated that changes in the economic structure of a region can alter the fundaments of party competition in a given region. Regional parties have established themselves in many western polities as a result of changes in the economic balance of a nation-state. This may have left citizens of a region feeling economically disadvantaged,

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[661]   Michael Benjamin: *Ostdeustche Identität und ihre sozialen Grundlagen. Gedanken über linke Politik* (Berlin: Marxistisches Forum der PDS, Heft 6, 1996a), p.13. See also Thomas Koch (1997): op. cit. pp.93-108.
[662]   In the Rostock Manifesto the PDS specifically defines these particular experiences as equality for women in the workplace, inter-disciplinarity in universities, experiences of greater solidarity in society, the benefits of job security and so forth. See Das Rostoker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand (1998): op. cit. p.6.
[663]   Lothar Bisky (PDS) articulated this by stating that "*we want the people of eastern and western Germany in the Berlin Republic to act as a stimulus for each other in the knowledge that they have clear cultural differences ... and these real-existing cultural differences should not be seen as a threat to anyone*". Lothar Bisky, in a speech to the PDS party conference in Berlin, 18 January 1999 in *Neues Deutschland*, 18 January 1999, p.4.

hence parties like, for example, the SNP in Scotland have grown to mobilise support based on regional economic self-interest. At the other extreme, some regions have benefited from rapid increases in regional prosperity, and regional parties have also incorporated this into their political platforms. The Lega Nord is the most obvious example of this phenomenon.

The forces of global capital have also aggravated the processes of economic regionalisation, as productive and economically efficient regions increase rapidly in prosperity, while more peripheral areas struggle to attract the investment and modern technologies needed to be able to adequately compete in supra-national markets. This also changes the balance of political power within both nation-states and regions, as the 'winners' and 'losers' perceive their political priorities as shifting. These can lead to the formation of new territorial alignments, based on new lines of economic interest.

The eastern states provide a unique example of a state-socialist regime and economic order being replaced by social-market structures, as well as a liberal democratic political institutions. The existence of West Germany ensured that the eastern states were presented with a 'ready-made' state, and that institutional expansion took place speedily, and without the need for discussions as to the mode and method of implementation[665].

Section 3.2.2. illustrated, however, that the economic and political system of the FRG has put down only superficial roots in the eastern states. The 'system' is not perceived as functioning at optimum speed. While material prosperity has unquestionably increased, Easterners do not accept the economic structures of the East as being able to fulfil their social, political and economic needs. They do not wish to see the structures of the FRG overthrown, but it is clear that amendments and alterations are required if eastern German interests are to be funnelled into the political and economic process.

Economic change has clearly been one catalyst in fostering territorial identification with eastern Germany. The PDS conceptualises this in terms of economic disadvantage and social discrimination. These claims, as section 3.2.6. illustrated, find considerable resonance in eastern Germany. As Ingrid Tschirch (PDS) has observed:

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[664] PDS Sachsen: 'Ein Land für die Menschen. Veränderung beginnt vor Ort', *Wahlprogramm 1999* (Dresden: PDS, 1999), p.8.
[665] Richard Rose and Christian Haerpfer (1997): op. cit. pp.100-121; Richard Rose, William Mishler and Christian Haerpfer: *Democracy and its Alternatives: Understanding Post-Communist Societies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

The economic and social divide between East and West is getting bigger, and it is becoming a divide that is principally one of economic wealth. Unemployment is double as high in the East, eastern German wages and pensions are only, on average, at about 80 per cent of what they are in the West[666].

Calls for the equalisation of not just costs, but also wages and pensions are persistently made by PDS politicians. Tschirch has once again observed:

78 per cent of eastern Germans are of the opinion today that both the Federal Government and the *Land* Government in Mecklenburg West Pomerania are not doing enough in their attempts to achieve an equalisation of living standards between the eastern and western states. And the 78 per cent are correct. The citizens of the eastern German *Länder* want equality - and not just verbally. They have had enough of the much vaunted individual freedom that is only as great or as small as someone's wallet. Differing wages for the same increases in living costs, higher proportional rents in the East than in the West - all of this deepens the rift. As such, all of the measures taken by the government in the name of savings, their so-called 'reforms', whether they are in the area of health, in the labour market or in the area of pensions, hit the East much harder than they do the West, as the above mentioned lower wages still have to pay, for example, for the more expensive medication or public transport[667].

Both the CDU and the SPD have attempted to reinvigorate the economic environment in the eastern states, and while they are continued to be perceived as being in control of the economy, the way is open for the PDS to openly articulate regional dissatisfaction. The earlier sections of this chapter indicate that the PDS is highly proficient at doing this.

However, it is not just the high levels of unemployment, increases in economic insecurity and so forth that have prompted a realignment of the party political system. Political inefficiency, in the shape of under-representation at the federal level and dissatisfaction with German democracy have only been articulated by PDS politicians. Chapter five illustrates how the PDS has chosen to do this, and the proposals that the PDS has for improving how the German political and economic system functions. In the economic sphere, the PDS questions the capitalist imperative of the governing parties:

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[666] Ingrid Tschirch (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5167.
[667] Ingrid Tschirch (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): ibid. p.5167.

the leading capitalist states are preoccupied with establishing a world order which
will consolidate their political and military predominance ... (and) ... we are united
in the resolute struggle against political muzzling, the dismantling of social life
and the destruction of human dignity. We are at one in striving for a world of
peace, freedom, social justice and democracy. Together we hold the opinion that
it is the capitalist character of modern society that is causally responsible for
endangering human civilisation and culture ... [668]

The PDS echoes eastern sentiments in that western German democracy and the social-
market economy are not as widely accepted as they are in the West. This is another key
fundament of the eastern German identity. The socialising phenomena of the GDR and the
experiences of the transformation process have dictated that many Easterners have much more
sympathetic impressions of socialism now than they did ten years ago - principally as they
look at their lives in the GDR through the prism of having experienced ten years within the
social market structures of the FRG. This has an important bearing on their attitudinal
approach to the structures and outputs of the FRG. More positive leanings towards socialism
have become key underlying tenets of the eastern *Trotzidentität*, and remain evident across
party lines and across the ideological spectrum. The PDS is the only party that actively
represents this in the political market, as it articulates the feelings of *"unknowing socialists"*[669]
in the eastern states. The left-wing bias in the PDS programme therefore reflects a current of
underlying attitudinal difference between eastern and western Germans. Easterners expect the
state to play a much more active role in their lives - and particularly in times of high
unemployment and economic difficulty[670]. They also bring with them attitudes that have been
sharpened as the during their time in the GDR. The PDS chooses to state it thus:

The socialist experiment in the GDR has left a crucial imprint on the biographies
of east German peoples. Their experiences embrace the abolition of
unemployment; far-reaching elimination of actual poverty; a comprehensive
social security system; significant elements of social justice, in particular a high
degree of equal opportunity in the education and health services as well as in
culture; new rights for women and youth[671].

Hence the statist rhetoric of the PDS finds an echo not just amongst its own supporters,
but also amongst eastern Germans who, for reasons to do with the PDS's past, or the

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[668] PDS (1993): op. cit. pp.3-4.
[669] Peter Bender (1992): op. cit. p.28 and p.116.
[670] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit.
[671] PDS (1993): op. cit. pp.8-9.

practicality of the PDS's policy alternatives, choose to vote for other parties. Chapter three highlighted the importance of socialism in the make-up of the eastern *Trotzidentität*, as well as the differences in value differences between eastern and western Germans. The egalitarianism, the active state and increased appreciation of welfare provision that Easterners, of all political persuasions, prefer, is only conceptualised by the PDS (see chapter five for the policy approaches that the PDS uses in doing this). For many PDS voters, the PDS subsequently forms a common denominator in terms of their general political orientation - much as the Catholic church has traditionally done for the CDU in western Germany, and for the CSU in Bavaria in particular[672]. By being broadly more supportive of socialism, Easterners have (perhaps sub-consciously) taken on board an identity marker that is in direct contravention of the prevalent sub-culture in western Germany - as well as being a clear recognition of their state-socialist past.

The PDS is the only party that talks of life 'how it really was' in the GDR. It also recalls selective recollections of the past. This may sound perverse to western ears, as it was indeed the SED who ruled in dictatorial fashion over the GDR for 40 years. But the PDS is the only party that is prepared not just to accept, but to also to actively defend much of the normal, everyday lives of citizens of the GDR. The glue of common experience is strong in shaping attitudes towards eastern Germans' new state. The PDS remains "*a piece of 'Heimat' that many eastern Germans do not wish to lose*"[673]. The fact that 97 per cent of Easterners are of the opinion that only those who lived in the GDR have the right to *mitreden* on the subject[674] ensures that discourse ventured by the western parties frequently falls into the category of *Besserwisserei*. The CDU and the FDP do not play-up their former existences as *Blockflöten*, and the PDS remains in the unique position of having liveable experiences within both the GDR and the transformation process that followed its demise. This gives it the *exklusiven Wissensbeständen* and unique experiences that are evident in the *Trotzidentität*[675] - just as it gives the party the credibility to selectively bring back elements of GDR everyday life into the public consciousness.

The PDS is vociferous in its denunciation of western German *Vormundschaft*. The vast majority of Easterners resent the overriding dominance of Westerners in the political and economic life of their new state. This is one of the most obvious and publicly visible

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[672] Tobias Dürr: 'Abschied von der 'inneren Einheit': Das Lebensgefühl PDS und der alte Westen', in *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 11/96, p.1352.
[673] Every second eastern German would have regretted it if the PDS had not achieved parliamentary representation at the 1998 Federal Elections. See Infratest Dimap (1998): op. cit. p.10.
[674] 'Stolz auf's eigene Leben': *Der Spiegel*, Number 27, 1995, p.46.

elements of the eastern German *Trotzidentität*. The PDS, as an eastern German party, is vehement of its criticism of this, as well as efficient in both its demands that this imbalance be corrected and its suggestions of how this should be done (see chapter five).

It should therefore be of no surprise that PDS politicians from both the left and right-wings of the party acknowledge the existence of a specific form of eastern German self-understanding. Michael Benjamin, a former prominent member of both the PDS Executive and the Communist Platform (KPF), once again argues that Easterners have (often sub-consciously) taken on board socialist values, and this provides the fundament of eastern German attitudinal difference[676]. The KPF and the Marxist Forum (MF) further discuss the evidence of increased solidarity between eastern Germans with explicit reference to a *positive* identification with the GDR. While the more extreme proponents of this approach like Sarah Wagenknecht, Ellen Brombacher and Benjamin represent not just a small proportion of the eastern German population, but also a clear minority from within the PDS, hindsight offers them the opportunity to draw attention to solidaristic tendencies that were also evident pre-1989[677]. Uwe-Jens Heuer from the Marxist Forum has observed, *"under the rubble of the GDR state, building blocks of a GDR identity are clearly visible"*[678] - as Easterners see value in recalling some of the more positive elements of life in the GDR. Although the opinions of ideological members of the PDS's left-wing do not, as a general rule, enjoy wide public acceptance, it is clear that when PDS politicians make points on the issue of eastern identity they do reflect a broader cross-section of eastern German popular opinion. Benjamin has been more populist than most in his public articulations of this, and one such example came in one of his publications on GDR identity in the new FRG. He declared that:

[675] Thomas Koch (1997): op. cit. p.96.

[676] Benjamin's Marxist beliefs lead him to describe this territorial identity as a form of 'false' consciousness, that will be replaced by 'genuine' class consciousness as, over time, workers realise their 'true' class interests. See Michael Benjamin (1996a): op. cit.

[677] Michael Benjamin and Sarah Wagenknecht are known in particular to hold very ambiguous positions on the building of the Berlin Wall and the nature of the GDR's achievements and legitimacy. See for example Sarah Wagenknecht: *Kapital, Crash, Krise ... Kein Ausweg in Sicht?* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein Verlag, 1998); Sarah Wagenknecht and André Brie: *Wie macht sich die PDS nicht überflüssig?* (Berlin: Neues Deutschland, ND im Club - Streitgespräch: Ein Tonbandprotokoll, 1996); Michael Benjamin (1996a): op. cit; Michael Benjamin: in Lothar Bisky et al (eds.) (1996b): op. cit. pp.231-236; 'PDS Vorstandsmitglied verteidigt Mauerbau', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 25 January 1999, p.1; Michael Benjamin: '7. Oktober - war da nicht was?', in *Junge Welt*, 7 October 1999, p.2.

[678] Uwe-Jens Heuer (PDS), in: Michael Benjamin (1996a): op. cit. p.1

> ... Eastern Germany has become a long-term economically underdeveloped
> region. It is dependent on the import of goods, technology and scientific
> knowledge, it is demographically deformed, it is incapable of pulling itself out of
> the economic malaise, it is ruled over by people not from the region and it is
> discriminated against. If one conceptualises colonisation as the political,
> economic and cultural dominance of a societal system over another[679], then one
> must concede that a number of very strong colonial parallels exist[680].

The mainstream of opinion within the party is more pragmatic on the issue than left-wingers like Benjamin and Heuer. The deep social, historical and psychological particularities of life in the GDR and of the transformation process are accepted as having spawned a complex feeling of community. Yet PDS politicians remain necessarily circumspect in defining this in a detailed fashion - as the eastern *Trotzidentität* is by its very nature (at both the academic and popular level) not an easily definable construct.

PDS politicians are rhetorically very able, and they remain adept at reflecting the ambiguities and contradictions that are inherent in the eastern *Trotzidentität*. They are skilled at calling on indisputable feelings of solidarity that do exist between Easterners. Peter Christian Segall et al. summarise this accurately when they observe:

> In the last analysis the PDS profiles itself as the defender of the past of every
> single eastern German - not just the former members of the SED and the citizens
> who worked in the public services in the GDR. The PDS does this by claiming
> that the 'West' can only think and act destructively. The PDS instinctively plays
> on the identity of eastern Germans[681].

The undertone is not so much that citizens of the eastern states are poorer, rather that they are both unequal (when compared to Westerners) and (they perceive themselves to be) powerless. The PDS appeals to the sense of community that has (re)arisen in eastern Germany. In this sense, the PDS is reactive rather than proactive, as it articulates the specific characteristics of an eastern German's biography within the political arena. The PDS does not wish to see the GDR regarded as a footnote in history, it does not wish to see Westerners tell Easterners how life in the GDR functioned and what was right and wrong with it, and it does not wish to see German politics existing over and above the needs and concerns of Easterners.

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[679] Wolfgang Dümcke and Fritz Vilmar provide the most authoritative interpretation of the colonisation thesis. See Wolfgang Dümcke and Fritz Vilmar (Hrsg.) (1995): op. cit. p.19.
[680] Michael Benjamin (1996a): op. cit. pp.12-13.
[681] Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.43.

The PDS is the only party that views the history of the GDR and the FRG on equal terms (see also section 5.1.2.), and as such it is the only party that is perceived in the electorate at large as being a genuine *Ostpartei*[682].

Elections in Berlin since the mid-1990s, and particularly the state election in 1999, are the starkest political illustration of this split German identity. Two parts of one city voted in fundamentally different ways. And this did not just happen in one election, it has happened persistently in a series of election since unification in 1990[683]. This is because eastern and western Germany have two pasts and two presents, and political activity functions on a very different agenda in the two societies as a result of this. The PDS has therefore come to be a very normal political representation of eastern difference.

The PDS does, however, often give the impression of talking about Easterners as one entity, even though the PDS is always at pains to admit that the eastern states and Easterners themselves are (correctly) highly heterogeneous in their attitudes and beliefs. PDS leaders are, however, skilled at elaborating on how different the eastern states are from the western ones. This is in both present day perception and structure, as well as through lived experiences. Their speeches are often rich in thematic variety and high on rhetorical skill. And while PDS politicians do not necessarily seek to worsen the divide, PDS politicians are more than willing to tell Easterners what brings them together and what differentiates them from western Germans. Helmut Holter gave a good example of this in 1999 with a broadside against the nature of the transformation process. He observed:

> ... citizens of the eastern states compare their experiences before 1989 and after 1989. The result is that the vast majority of the population is seeking neither to retain the current society evident in the FRG, nor that which they experienced in the GDR. And the western Germans ask themselves what has come of all the money that gone across the Elbe? What belongs together is actually not growing together. In fact, exactly the opposite is happening, German society is split right down the middle.
>
> The race to catch up in eastern Germany stopped in 1996. The *Aufschwung Ost* transformed itself into the *Abschwung Ost.* The rigorous privatisation policies of the Treuhand holding agency are getting their own back now, as even in Mecklenburg West Pomerania large-scale de-industrialisation is taking place. The divide between the East and the West is getting bigger, growth in eastern Germany is smaller than it is in the West, unemployment is growing in the East, while reductions are predicted in the West[684].

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[682] See Christoph Dieckmann (1999): 'Das Bier von Hier', in *Die Zeit*, 14 October 1999, p.14.

[683] See http://www.statistik-berlin.de/wahlen

[684] Helmut Holter (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998), p.5164.

Holter avoids direct mention of an eastern German sense of identity, but he indicates that as a result of both the socialising effects of life in the GDR and the difficult processes of societal adaptation post-1989, eastern Germans expect a quantifiably different FRG (whatever that may mean) from the one in which they now live. This is the type of *Trotzidentität* that the third chapter of this work conceptualised as being in evidence in the eastern states. Ingrid Tschirch, a former PDS MdL in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, further demonstrates the knack that PDS politicians have of relating the specific experiences of the transformation process to an individuals own life-experiences[685]:

> ... the solidarity and trust in the future dissipated as the excesses of capitalism became apparent. This occurred when in 1991, the old structures in the economic sphere, in administration, culture and the sciences were dissolved. As unemployment and short-time working grew more in regularity, as the insecurities not just in the world of employment, but also in the social system, in the unfathomable new masses of legal regulations and laws as well as the mountains of bureaucracy, the giant leaps in rents and tariffs, the claims for redistribution of eastern German land came flooding in, younger people saw their future prospects darken and the over 50s were consigned to the scrap-heap, doubts grew about the promises of politicians and the agreements that were set down in the unification treaty.

The PDS is open in its definition of this as 'discrimination' against Easterners. The parliamentary work and the programmatic initiatives of the PDS are subsequently unique in their attitudes towards the legal, social and political 'discrimination' of eastern Germans. The 1998 'Rostock Manifesto' leaves the reader under no illusions as to how such a position has come about:

> The results of eight years of constitutional unity are the results of political approaches that were wrong (*verfehlt*) from the very beginning. The political approaches pursued were anti-economic (*unwirtschaftlich*), anti-social and undemocratic[686].

In the 1998 Federal Election Programme the PDS is less forthright, as it concentrates on the outcomes that have thus resulted:

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[685] Ingrid Tschirch (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5167.
[686] Das Rostocker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand (1998): op. cit. p.4.

According to the Basic Law, should German unity be achieved, the population has the right to vote on the creation of a new constitution. This demand has remained unmet. Even today eastern Germany remains a special area (*Sondergebiet*) ... (and) ... the PDS is left fighting against inequalities of income and pensions, the evictions from homes and off property, the reduction or abolition of legitimate subsidies, against *Strafrente*, *Berufsverbote*, political *Strafverfolgung* and the abuse and discrediting of eastern German biographies[687].

None of the other parties defends widely perceived eastern German concerns about their qualifications, their previous working-lives or their 'biographies' in nearly as strong words[688]. The PDS touches this uniquely eastern German perception by stressing feelings of societal exclusion that Easterners still perceive (see chapter three). In the words of Gabi Zimmer, then former PDS leader in the Thuringian state parliament, and now PDS party leader, Gerhard Schröder and the SPD's *Aufbau Ost* " ... *needs to help to end the inequalities of incomes earned and the discrimination that citizens of eastern Germany still suffer*"[689]. The 'discrimination' of eastern Germans is not emphasised at all by the CDU or the SPD, even though, as chapter three revealed, this is a widely held sentiment in the eastern population. The PDS perceives social discrimination to be widespread in eastern Germany - something it has conceptualised in a number of different ways within the political arena. In the *Bundestag*, for example, the PDS has tabled a number of *Anträge* that specifically aim to alleviate material differences between eastern and western Germans. On the 22 of June 1999 Gregor Gysi and the PDS *Fraktion* (parliamentary group) submitted an *Antrag* (parliamentary bill) titled *Fahrplan zur Angleichung der Lebensverhältnisse und zur Herstellung von mehr Rechtssicherheit in Ostdeutschland - "Chefsache Ost"* (A Timetable for the Equalisation of Living Conditions and the Production of more *Rechtssicherheit* in Eastern Germany), containing detailed demands for more social justice, material equality and judicial 'fairness' for eastern Germans[690]. This is symptomatic of the parliamentary attempts that the PDS has made to secure material equality for eastern Germans.

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[687]   PDS: *Wahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus zur Bundestagswahl 1998: Für den politischen Richtungswechsel! Sozial und solidarisch - für eine gerechte Republik* (Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS, 1998), p.31.

[688]   'Die Doppelbiograhie der Bundesrepublik. Zum Phänomen der deutschen Zweistaatlichkeit', *Dokumente zur Geschichte der PDS* (Thesenpapier der Historischen Kommission beim Parteivorstand der PDS, on http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9903/doppelbiograhie.htm). See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 13, 31 März 1999.

[689]   Gabi Zimmer (PDS): 'Neue Lösungen für den Osten statt Festhalten am "Nachbau West"', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 14, 7 April 2000, on http://www.pds-online.de/pressedienst/0014/16.htm

[690]   See http://www2.pds-online.de/bt/themen/9906/99062407.htm

Another PDS approach towards the articulation of discrimination towards Easterners has been to denounce the lack of solidarity that is seen as being evident between the eastern and western *Länder*.   This is not limited to a few lines in its party programme.   In parliamentary debates the PDS is equally vociferous on this topic.   The PDS called an 'Aktuelle Stunde' in the Mecklenburg West Pomerania Parliament on 31 March 1998 (the title of which was the 'Reduction of solidarity between the old and new federal states') as it aimed to increase awareness of continued East/West animosity.   The leader of PDS parliamentary party, Catherina Muth, felt that the very nature of the unification process, dominated as it was by Westerners, with their structures, judgements and arrogant *Besserwisserei*, meant that talk of solidarity ever existing was somewhat misleading.   Muth expressed the opinion that Westerners have never shown the requisite social and psychological solidarity with Easterners as they were unwilling to accept that anything in 'their' Weltanschauung may need overhauling.   Or, in her exact words, *"In order to see solidarity weakening, that means that solidarity between the old and the new federal states did actually once exist!*[691]

PDS politicians do not recognise the huge financial subsidies that have come from western Germany[692] as being sufficient expressions of solidarity.   This represents popular feelings within eastern German society (see chapter three) recognising the immensity of the financial transfers from West to East, as well as the unambiguous material increases in wealth that have been experienced by many since 1990, but Easterners see no reason to except lower levels of wealth, employment and general standards of everyday activity than Westerners continue to enjoy.   It appears to both the PDS and to a swath of Easterners decidedly unsolidaristic that Westerners continue to enjoy a higher standard of living than they do.   Lothar Bisky articulated this point well by observing that *"the eastern German pensioner is not now being punished ... (it terms of lower pensions) ... just for his/her political orientation, as nowadays the criteria of his/her heritage suffices!"*[693].

Only when living standards and opportunity structures within society are perceived as being equal will the PDS regard Easterners as having attained equality within Germany.   Gregor Gysi, as is often the case, articulated these sentiments in a broader fashion in a 1996 Bundestag debate:

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[691] Catherina Muth (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5159.
[692]   By the end of 1998 these sums amounted to DM1369 billion!   *Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*: 'Deutschland von der Teilung zur Einheit' (Bonn: Bundesregierung, 1999) p.158.

German unity will be achieved on the day that the special legal treatment of eastern Germans has ceased, on the day that Easterners and Westerners earn the same, on the day that there are as many eastern Germans owning property on Sylt as there are currently western Germans owning property on Rügen and on the day that an eastern German becomes Prime Minister of a western German state - and on the day that all of these things do not interest anybody in the slightest. This shows how far this process still has to go[694].

The quest for inner unity may not be completed, but the PDS remains adamant that eastern difference is not one of the problems that have prevented this from happening. The PDS is of the opinion that Westerners have to learn to accept that the East is different: that it is not the West, and it never will be - and this should not be seen in any way as a threat. The East must be regarded as different in the same way that Bavaria is - and not in the threatening, critical way that it is at the moment. The PDS regards itself as merely a representative of a difference political culture and political heritage in the East, and it is time that citizens of East and West alike recognise the party as a representation of 'normality'. For, as Gysi puts it, *"those who want to see unity in this land will have to get used to both the PDS and to me. If people can't do this, then they are simply not going to get unity*[695].

Cultural and value differences are evident in many ways between eastern and western Germany, and PDS politicians are not just apt at picking up on the more obvious examples of these such as increased emphasis on egalitarianism, employment and the role of the state. Much of the vocabulary that is used when discussing eastern Germany is also resented by both Easterners at large, and the PDS in particular. Examples of this are plentiful. The term *'ehemalige DDR'* (former GDR) might appear innocuous to many, but the use of the word *former* indicates that, from a linguistic sense, there should be a 'new' GDR that has replaced it[696]. There, of course, is not, and it is indicative of the sloppy treatment that the GDR receives in western discourse that small, relatively unimportant point like this continue to rankle[697]. The impression is also often given that the eastern states are still tantamount to being "abroad". A not inconsiderable number of Westerners have never been to the eastern

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[693]   Lothar Bisky (PDS): 'Streit um langsamere Rentenanpassung', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 20 January 1996.

[694]   Gregor Gysi, speech to the federal Parliament on 11 September 1996, in Gregor Gysi: *Nicht nur freche Sprüche* (Berlin: Schwarzkopf and Schwarzkopf, 1998), p.19.

[695]   Gregor Gysi, speech to the Federal Parliament on 23 May 1996, in Gregor Gysi (1998): op. cit. p.15.

[696]   Interview with PDS MdL Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 17 May 1999.

[697]   It was pointed out in one interview that no one would think of talking about the *former* Gestapo or the *former* NVA. There has only been one Gestapo, and there has only been one National Peoples Army - just as there has only been one GDR. Interview with PDS MdL Mecklenburg West Pomerania, 17 May 1999.

states and continue to remain uninterested in most aspects of life there. Jürgen Hart, a well-known cabaratist from Leipzig, has commented that much that is reported on in the media, with the notable exceptions of ORB and MDR, has a tinge of foreign affairs about it, and an easterner can easily get the impression that the reporter is reporting from Leipzig, Dresden or Magdeburg as he/she just happens to be there, and must report something[698].

The term *transfer*, much used in the context of western money that has travelled eastwards since 1990, also has arrogant undertones. Gregor Gysi has openly bemoaned this in the Bundestag, in October 1997[699]:

> You ... (to a CSU member of the Bundestag) ... view the eastern states as being somewhere ex-territorial. Who is it who uses the word transfer? If Bavaria gets money from any of our federal institutions, then it is referred to as a *Bundeszuschuß*. But when the eastern states receive something, then it is called a 'transfer'. It is within *you* that the East is seen as a foreign entity, not within me ...

The PDS builds on these psychological undercurrents to illustrate what it believes are the processes that have led to the lack of suitable eastern Germany representation in the new German state. This stretches from the processes that were set in motion immediately following unification to the persistent under representation still evident today. Catherina Muth illustrated this explicitly by stating that once the GDR vanished, there was no obvious way for eastern Germans to raise a political voice in the united Germany:

> The parts of the unification treaty that did contain elements of solidarity between East and West Germany quickly grew to be, after the actual process of annexation had taken place, more disadvantageous for the citizens of the GDR than was originally expected, as the second partner that signed the treaty, ladies and gentlemen, the GDR, that could have represented the interests of the East German population, does not exist any more[700].

The direct behaviour of western politicians has also caused strong feelings of solidarity between eastern German citizens and the PDS. CDU and CSU politicians have periodically advised/warned/threatened Easterners about supporting the PDS at the ballet box.

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[698]   Jürgen Hart: *Die Zeit*, 19 July 1997.
[699]   Gregor Gysi, speech to the Federal Parliament on 9 October 1997, in Gregor Gysi (1998): op. cit. p.19.
[700]   Catherina Muth (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5160.

The PDS has been variously described as the *"SED Konzentrat"*[701], or the *"Stasis from yesterday"*[702], while politicians within the CDU have periodically demanded that the PDS be put *"morally on the same level as the DVU and the Republicans"*[703] as the PDS is not capable of existing democratically in the FRG as it *"does not in truth accept the Basic Law"*[704]. Edmund Stoiber (CSU) has even claimed that:

> the PDS conducts itself like the SED, and the situation is comparable to one where the NSDAP, under the leadership of Herman Göring, had simply re-named itself in 1946, and tried to carry on as normal[705].

As such observations imply, a number of western politicians have tried to paint a picture of the PDS as the SED re-incarnate - a vision that paradoxically has caused increases in the PDS's share of the vote[706]. The PDS has been able to use such accusations to turn the tables on western parties who do not understand the complexities of the eastern electorate[707]. Former General Secretary of the CDU Peter Hintze became a particular figure of disdain, following a series of undiplomatic remarks about the history and political goals of the PDS. Hintze was the driving force behind both the red socks (in 1994) and the red hands (in 1998) campaigns demonising the PDS. PDS politicians have been able to take the moral high-ground by depicting CDU and CSU politicians as stooping to populist rhetoric in order to try and increase their profile - principally in the West, where the PDS is still a tool with which the conservative parties can mobilise support. Catherina Muth and Dietmar Bartsch have epitomised the reactions of both the PDS and Easterners to such campaigns when they responded by stating that:

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[701] Peter Hintze (CDU): in 'Inhaltliche Auseinandersetzung mit falschen Parolen', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 October 1999, p.2.

[702] Bernhard Vogel (CDU): 'Vogel: 'Freistaat' heißt Unions-Domäne', in *Neues Deutschland*, 8 November 1999, p.5.

[703] Peter Hintze (CDU): 'Heftiger Streit in der Union über Haltung zur PDS', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 20 October 1999, p.1.

[704] Helmut Kohl (CDU): 'Blühende Landschaften? 'Zu diesem Satz stehe ich nach wie vor" in *Rheinischer Merkur*, 3 November 1999. See http://www.merkur.de Kohl has also recalled Kurt Schumacher's famous phrase directed at East German communists by denouncing the PDS as *"red-painted fascists"*. See Ann L. Phillips: 'An Island of Stability - The German Political Party System and the Elections of 1994', in *West European Politics*, Special Issue, July 1995, p.221.

[705] Edmund Stoiber (CSU): quoted in *Bild am Sonntag*, 5 May 1991, p.1.

[706] Hans-Georg Golz: 'Machtwechsel', in *Deutschland Archiv*, November/December 1998, p.876.

[707] Regardless of how well the western parties understand the parameters of political competition in the East, it is also clear that they are not averse to using the issue of the PDS as a stick with which to try and beat each other. The CDU and CSU, in particular, use the PDS as a picture of the enemy with to mobilise the more conservative elements of their electorate in western Germany. This is often in spite of the negative impression that it can

Through his 'red-hands' campaign, Herr Hintze has remained true to his virulent campaigning of yesteryear. Typically for the CDU, Herr Hintze is pedalling old slogans and symbols. This is a sign that, on the one hand, he wants to divert the citizens of the eastern states from the economic and social problems evident within eastern Germany - the causes of which lie in the policies of his party, the CDU. On the other hand, it is patently obvious that he can't think of anything new on which to campaign. He is producing a dull and dreary spectacle. We, on the contrary, are going to conduct a campaign that is based on arguments and a discussion of the issues[708].

Western politicians have persistently shown a misunderstanding of the political situation in the eastern states, as they try to conduct political activity on western guidelines. This leads to both resentment in the population at large (see chapter three), as well as support for the cheeky and resilient little *Ostpartei*. As Peter Porsch, the PDS leader in Saxony has observed:

CSU and CDU have once again proved themselves to be the organised arrogance of the western states towards the eastern ones, and concurrently the greatest danger on the path towards inner unity[709]

Erwin Huber, the leader of Bavarian *Staatskanzelei* caused particular waves in 1998 by demanding that if the PDS remains in government in certain eastern states, then financial transfers from the *Bund* would have to either be cut or stopped altogether. Huber was of the opinion that the PDS would simply waste the money on socialist projects that had no long-term future[710]. Furthermore, if coalitions continued to be formed in the East that were not too the CSU's satisfaction, he threatened that Bavaria would begin to pull its ministers out of federal committees and governmental bodies[711]. Huber's comments were backed by the leader of the CSU Parliamentary Party who observed that *"our friend Huber has articulated here a very widespread view among the Bavarian population"*[712]. It is clear that this looked

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leave in eastern Germany. For evidence of criticism of this approach see Richard von Weizsäcker: in *Die Zeit*, 10 November 1995.

[708] Caterina Muth and Dietmar Bartsch (PDS): *Rote Socken und rote Hände haben keine Angst vorm schwarzen Mann* (Schwerin: PDS Presseerklärung, PDS Pressestelle, Nummer 1000), 27 Mai 1998.

[709] Peter Porsch (PDS): 'Huber verläßt Boden des Grundgesetzes', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 Januar 1999.

[710] Erwin Huber (CSU) was quoted as saying that *"we are not going to permit money that is designated by the Bund and the federal states for the rebuilding of the eastern economy to be misused for the resurrection of the communist East"*. See *Die Zeit*, 14 January 1999, p.2.

[711] See *Der Tagesspiegel*, 16 January 1999, p.1.

[712] Stefan Kuzmany: 'Kein schwarzes Geld für den roten Osten?', in *Die Tageszeitung*, 9 January 1999, p.6. See also 'Empörte Reaktionen auf Hubers Vorstoß zur Einstellung der Ost-Hilfen', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 January 1999.

to many like another western attempt to dictate to eastern Germans. And it came as no surprise when Gregor Gysi, speaking for the PDS, offered Huber a sharp response:

> The threats issued by the CSU politician Huber indicating that financial support for the eastern states will be stopped, as, in his opinion, Easterners are not voting correctly, and the right parties are not coalescing in government, is nothing more than an attempt to alter the long-established right in the Basic Law stating that parties have the freedom to form coalitions as they think appropriate. People who want to replace politics with blackmail are only showing that they themselves are politically finished. The citizens of the eastern states are not, however, going to allow their electoral freedoms to be taken away from them - on the contrary, Herr Huber should perhaps pay a bit more attention to how many Bavarian firms make their profits through economic activity undertaken in the eastern states, only to pay their taxes in Bavaria - or not at all, as the case may be. None the less you are not going to hear me calling for a boycott of Bavarian firms who are active in eastern Germany[713].

The disgust that such comments cause in the East was further illustrated by Dietmar Bartsch:

> We eastern Germans are humble in our thanks to Herr Huber that he has not hesitated to march into the eastern states and ensure that order is restored![714]

In April 1998 Roland Koch, the CDU Prime Minister in Hesse, indirectly supported Erwin Huber's claims by observing that financial support for the *Aufbau Ost* should only be guaranteed if 'political responsibility' could also be ensured. Koch further added that it was unfair to expect the western states to look on while *"red governments economically run down the eastern states"*[715]. Dirk Wenz, a spokesman for the Hesse government further added that *"it is simply not fair that western German taxes are creating thousands of jobs in the eastern states, while the problems of the western states are pushed to one side"*[716]. PDS politicians once again articulated eastern German ire at such perceived western German arrogance.

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[713] Gregor Gysi (PDS): 'Huber verläßt Boden des Grundgesetzes', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 Januar 1999.
[714] Dietmar Bartsch (PDS): 'Huber verläßt Boden des Grundgesetzes', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 Januar 1999.
[715] Roland Koch (CDU): 'Koch will für Kredite Erfolgsgarantie: Hessischer Regierungschef wirft Osten Misswirtschaft vor', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 1999, p.8.
[716] Dirk Wenz: 'Koch will für Kredite Erfolgsgarantie: Hessischer Regierungschef wirft Osten Misswirtschaft vor', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 1999, p.8.

Christa Luft branded such remarks *"downright rude"* (unanständig), and a demonstration of the lack of understanding that was shown by Westerners towards the eastern states[717].

Attempts by western politicians[718] to characterise the PDS as a re-incarnation of the SED/as a communist party play into the hands of the PDS, as it is able to illustrate how distanced these Westerners are from the political realities in the eastern states. A look at the PDS's communal political activity would quickly illustrate that the vast majority of PDS politicians behave in exactly the same way as politicians of other parties do at this level. Rhetorical attacks on the PDS also ignore the fact that Easterners remain in a unique position: they have experienced a state and a whole system that collapsed around them, and this makes them particularly sensitive when it comes to comparing one societal and economic system against another. Citizens who have spent much of their lives in a society stressing egalitarianism have, in spite of an undoubted appreciation of parliamentary democracy, individual freedom and the social market economy, a much finer feeling for evidence of power, arrogance, injustice, bureaucracy and corruption. Party-politically the PDS has remained the only party that has represented theses feelings, as all other eastern parties are dominated by resources and members imported from the western states - and it is against this very important backdrop that the PDS has developed into an articulate of easternness.

But this does not mean that Easterners are unaware of the PDS's history and heritage. The PDS is widely (and correctly) perceived as being the *Nachfolgepartei* (successor party) of the SED, but this is, against a background of widely experienced social injustice and of broken and battered personal biographies, not solely disadvantageous. For segments of the eastern electorate this ostracisation represents a part of their own lives. The PDS is seen in certain socio-cultural milieus as a *Weggefährte*, as a party or a group of people that has been affected by the irritations and uncomfortable experiences of the last few years - but is still able to articulate feelings of *Trotz* and Easternness within the political arena[719].

Frequently the PDS's activities aim to save/defend particularly eastern German symbols or unique characteristics. Examples of this are surprisingly numerous. The PDS was

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[717]   Christa Luft (PDS): 'Koch will für Kredite Erfolgsgarantie: Hessischer Regierungschef wirft Osten Misswirtschaft vor', in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 1999, p.8.
[718]   There are also numerous examples of *Eastern* CDU politicians levelling dramatic accusations that tend to isolate themselves more than the PDS. Wolfgang Riemann, for example, claimed that *"if it had been down to the SED/PDS, then in Leipzig we would have had something akin to an East German Tiananmen Square massacre ... and the Prime Minister of this state would have been in a concentration camp"*. Wolfgang Riemann (CDU): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5168.

vocal in its defence of the *Gruner Pfeil*, a traffic arrow allowing cars to turn right despite the traffic lights remaining on red - and the green arrow has also become a common sight on western German roads[720]. The PDS also remained vociferous in its support of the eastern German *Ampelmännchen* - an issue which attracted considerable media attention, and had led to the retention of many (if not all) of the unique eastern *Ampelmännchen*. The PDS launched a number of campaigns arguing that the eastern figure, with his sun hat and bouncy walk, attracted more attention and appeared more personable - and as such had the effect of attracting the attention of the pedestrian and making him/her aware of the dangers of crossing the road. PDS members could be seen on the streets wearing *Ampelmännchen* T-shirts and selling other *Ampelmännchen* memorabilia[721]. The PDS used this peculiarly eastern symbol to remind and reassure voters that it too was from the East, and was prepared to fight any case where the West rode roughshod over eastern sensibilities.

The PDS also took the imposition of western German norms - in the above mentioned case in the form of a very stilted figure with an abnormally large head (which came to be known as a 'bubble head') - as another example of western practices simply being imposed onto eastern Germans. Easterners, and the PDS, saw no reason to dispose of their little figures for the (allegedly) characterless western version - and as such the PDS fought long and hard for the retention of this specifically eastern landmark.

The PDS has also been more than willing to defend the *Jugendweihe* - the traditional, non-religious ceremony that many Easterners go through around the time of their fourteenth birthday. The *Jugendweihe* was first recorded as taking place in 1852, as a non-religious replacement for confirmation, and although it also existed in the early twentieth century as well as in Nazi Germany, it was only in 1954/55, when the SED designated it an official *Festakt*, that it became a widely practised ritual[722]. Against many predictions, the *Jugendweihe* has survived the collapse of the GDR[723], and in recent years the number of

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[719]   Dietmar Wittich: 'Zur Soziologie der Umwandlung der SED in die PDS' in: Lothar Bisky et al (eds.) (1996): op. cit. p.184.
[720]   Statistics produced by the *Bundestag* indicate that 'Green Arrows' can be seen at between 400 and 500 crossroads in eastern Germany, and, since the new ruling allowing 'Green Arrows' in the western states was introduced on the 1st of May 1994, they are evident at around 160 in the western Germany as well. See http://www.bundestag.de/aktuell/wib95/895195.htm
[721]   The campaign was partly successful, as the *Ampelmännchen* are still visible in Berlin, Saxony, and Saxony Anhalt. See http://www.interactive.de/ampel.html
[722]   In 1955 less than 20 per cent of 13/14 year olds took part, but by 1989 this figure was over 90 per cent. In the FRG there were very, very few *Jugendweihe* ceremonies. See Andreas Meier: *Jugendweihe – JugendFEIER: Ein deutsches nostalgisches Fest vor und nach 1990* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997).
[723]   70,000 youngsters had their *Jugendweihe's* in 1993 (or 30 per cent of eastern Germans of the relevant age). 80,000 did so in 1994, while 85,000 did so in 1995. 95,000 did so in 1996 (or just under 40 per cent of eastern children who were 13 and 14). See Andreas Meier (1997): op. cit. pp.8-9.

Easterners who have been through the process has actually increased. The PDS remains the only party to *actively* support the retention of the ceremony - even though a wide cross-section of Easterners are in support of the *Jugendweihe*.

Table 31[724]
Are you of the opinion that the *Jugendweihe*, that stems from GDR times, should continue or should it be abolished? (Answers according to party preference (per cent))

	CDU/CSU	SPD	Alliance 90/Greens	PDS
I think that it should continue	62	83	88	100
I think that it should be abolished	14	2	7	-
I am undecided/do not know	24	15	5	-
Total	100	100	100	100

Much to the consternation of religious organisations, the PDS in Mecklenburg West Pomerania has took the unprecedented step of recognising the *Interessenverein Humanistischer Jugendarbeit* (The Interest Group for Humanistic Youth Work) as an organisation that should be permitted to gain money off the state (in the form of subsidies) in order to continue its role supporting and advising eastern German youngsters - and in supporting the institution of the *Jugendweihe*. As Andreas Bluhm from the PDS *Landtagsfraktion* in Mecklenburg West Pomerania has stated:

> The *Jugendweihe* has existed for over 100 years. Even today it represents for youngsters and for their families a high-point on the way to adulthood. Alongside this there are numerous information and education events, as well as projects based on the most diverse of topics. This should not be confused with religious confirmations ... (but) ... every organisation that conducts work with the younger elements of society has the right to apply for financial subsidies. This is exactly what the religious institutions are also able to do for the work they put in with youngsters[725].

The SPD-PDS coalition in Mecklenburg West Pomerania has also attempted to create an environment where Easterners support and buy products that stem from eastern Germany. This encompasses products that are new, and have appeared since unification, as well as older products that have survived/been revived from GDR times. While other parties in other states clearly also attempt to support indigenous economic development, the governing parties in

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[724] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit. p.587.

Mecklenburg West Pomerania are unique in their inclusion of such an explicit clause in their coalition agreements.

> In order to increase the presence of eastern German products in national and international markets the state government, together with the federal administration, will organise sales subsidies in a much advantageous fashion for eastern products[726].

These few examples illustrate how the PDS is keen to mobilise symbols of eastern uniqueness into its political platform. This is, of course, not always a straightforward task, as many symbols (coffee, cigarettes, washing powder and so forth) of Easternness do not easily lend themselves to political adaptation. But when a characteristic of eastern life is under threat or is seen as requiring a political advocate, the PDS is quick to jump to its cause. This naturally means that the PDS is not able to mobilise regional symbols and characteristics in quite such an enigmatic fashion as other regional parties. The PDS is not able to call on positive recollections or associations with 'nationhood', just as it does not resort to flag-waving separatism. But the PDS is able, when the time and the issue is right, to selectively support and advocate eastern German symbols that are unduly threatened by western German norms and traditions.

4.5. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has indicated that the PDS possesses the capacity to mobilise 'Easternness' within the political arena. It is in possession of a number of structurally advantageous variables that present it with a clear advantage over the 'western' parties. By applying the second part of the typology developed in chapter two it has been illustrated that the PDS is capable of mobilising territorial sentiment in a similar way (although of course in a nationally unique context) to other regional parties across the western world.

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[725]   Andreas Bluhm (PDS): *PDS für Anerkennung des Jugendweihevereins als Träger der freien Jugendhilfe* (Schwerin: PDS Presseerklärung, PDS Pressestelle, Nummer 73, 8 April 1999).

[726]   'Koalitionsvereinbarung II. Zukunftsfähige Arbeits- und Ausbildungsplätze schaffen und die Wirtschaftskraft stärken', Abschnitt 2 Teil 23: in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm For support of attempts to protect eastern German products from the vagaries of international capitalism see Rolf Kutzmutz's speech to the *Bundestag* in the plenary sitting of 5th February 1997. 'Absatzförderung für Produkte aus Ostdeutschland', *Bundestag Plenarprotokoll* 13/216.

The PDS has been lucky in that it has possessed a telegenic and charismatic leader. Gregor Gysi has managed to drag the PDS forward without disillusioning some of his more conservative supporters. His influence was of particular importance in the early 1990s, as the PDS sought to cement itself into eastern German political life, and his is an achievement that should not be underestimated. Gysi's appeal has enabled the PDS to go at least some way towards improving the party's popular image away from the SED and towards a form of 'normality'. Gysi, as well as the reformers in the PDS leadership who have been active around him, have been to mould the structural strength of the PDS in the East into programmatic positions that manage to placate a conservative membership yet still appeal to a broad spectrum of the eastern population.

The leadership of the PDS has also appreciated that the structure of the German federal system has enabled the PDS to offer enthusiastic and talented members the opportunity to *mitmachen* (take part) in political activity. The PDS has created a leadership hierarchy that effectively appeases all strands of ideological thinking within the diverse membership. Inner-party democracy flourishes, and members are given ample opportunity to exert influence both within the party, and for the party, within the parliaments and councils of the eastern German communes. The 'second tier' of leadership figures in the eastern German *Landtage* (such as Helmut Holter, Petra Sitte, Roland Claus, and Catherina Muth) have proven capable of shaping the PDS's profile in the lower levels of eastern German politics, just as the large pool of 30-50 year olds who work for the PDS in *Landtage, Stadträte* and at other levels of communal politics are seen as being hard-working, genuine and approachable. It is for this reason that the communal politicians of the PDS remain one of the party's great strengths over and above other parties in eastern Germany.

Importantly for the PDS's *Basisarbeit* (grass-roots work), the PDS is also in possession of a network of active and enthusiastic members who ensure that the PDS's message is passed on to the wider eastern German community in less formal arenas. This can often be over the coffee-table, in the local supermarket or at the bus stop. The effective)and often almost banal) extra-parliamentary activity of the PDS at the micro-levels of eastern German politics enables it to foster an image as *the* party of eastern German interests. The PDS remains embedded deep in eastern Germany's civil society and has managed to foster an image of a caring, compassionate actor in a harsh and unforgiving (new) environment. The PDS is now a broad church, that appeals to a number of broad strands within eastern German society. The key common denominator remains territory – as eastern Germans from many different sections of society are attracted by the PDS's 'eastern Germanness'.

Most importantly, the PDS has also managed to present itself as the representative of a community: eastern Germans. It gives voice to the unique eastern German identity within the political process. No other party is in a position to do this, as no other party is as deeply rooted in eastern German society and political culture. The PDS skilfully makes use of its heritage and ideological orientation in voicing concerns that are evident in the eastern German identity of defiance. It does not shirk from using populist terminology in articulating these sentiments, and this plays an important part in ensuring that Easterners identify with the PDS as the party that is 'fighting in their corner'. PDS politicians excel at rhetorically bringing concerns that are unique to the identity of defiance into everyday political discourse. The PDS, owing partially to its similar experiences in being forced to come to terms with a new multi-party political system, has been able to appeal to sentiments that are widely held across the eastern states (see chapter three) and has been able to act as a *Weggefährtin* along an uneasy path.

In order to further understand how the PDS garners support in eastern Germany one must move on and discuss how the PDS proactively articulates eastern German interests within institutional arenas. This chapter has concentrated largely on the structural factors that assist the PDS in articulating eastern German interests (i.e. effective leadership and party organisation), as well as highlighting how the PDS articulates eastern German identity within the political process. Chapter five moves the discussion on further to highlight how the PDS has articulated eastern German uniqueness in terms of policies it has developed and attempted to implement in regional and national legislatures. The PDS has a strong core of specific policy proposals that reflect the uniqueness of territorial sentiment in the eastern states. This is the nature of the 'big idea' that has proven to be so fundamental to the success of regional parties in the western world, and it is to this that the discussion moves next (chapter five).

Chapter Five

5. The PDS as a Successful Regional Party II: The PDS Making Policy for Eastern Germany

5.1. Articulation of a Particular Cause - A 'Big Idea'. The PDS and Eastern Policy Approaches

The fourth chapter of this work illustrated how the PDS has developed a capacity to mobilise eastern German territorial sentiment. By employing the typology that was developed in chapter two, it was highlighted that the PDS is skilful at adapting to the societal contours and structures around it in its attempt to articulate regional specificity. As the typology in chapter two revealed, this is a trait common to many regional parties. These variables range from a territory where the PDS has its political home to a visible and articulate leadership, and from the articulation of an eastern German 'Trotzidentität' to an efficient and effective party organisation. This chapter moves the argument forward by illustrating how the PDS puts forward its eastern German interests policy. This comes under section 2.4.2.3. of the typology. The PDS has developed a broad bundle of policies that articulate eastern German uniqueness and represent specific eastern German interests. This has enabled the PDS to develop, despite its disadvantaged starting position, a solid and loyal eastern German electoral base. The eight policy areas that are discussed in this chapter encompass the main areas of attitudinal difference between eastern and western Germans. The PDS has been able to incorporate the eastern German territorial difference as it was conceptualised in chapter three into its unique policy agenda. Hence this chapter takes the key planks of the eastern German identity of defiance and specifically 'eastern German interests' and illustrates how the PDS expressly articulates them within the political arena.

This fifth chapter thus concretises one of the main planks of regional party success - the notion of political articulation of a regionally specific bundle of issues. The PDS has developed political approaches and policy options that reflect and mirror the attitudes and opinion of a significant portion of eastern Germans – and as such the PDS is perceived by the electorate at large and the membership and activists within the party, as the party which best defends and forwards the interests and demands of eastern Germany. It is this 'big idea' which has led to the stabilisation of the party as a political force within the eastern states –

and subsequently to its dismal failure in the western states, where such a 'big idea' has no relevance. The immediate viability of the policies that the PDS has developed is not an issue - it is more the rhetorical significance and uniqueness of their political appeal that render them effective. Easterners see the PDS 'fighting their cause' and support it because of its territorial roots. The chapter is split into eight thematic subsections, illustrating how the PDS has developed a broad range of regionally specific policy alternatives. The sub-sections represent, as was stated at the beginning of chapter four, the policy areas where the PDS's approaches differ from those of the other main parties and where the PDS has created a clear and unambiguous *eastern profile* for itself.

The PDS generates eastern inputs into the political process, as well highlighting the (perceived) lack of sufficient eastern-specific political outputs. The sections below therefore illustrate the policy initiatives that the PDS has developed in order to specifically tackle eastern German problems and issues. The PDS has done this in a number of documents, the most prominent of which was the 1998 *Rostocker Manifest* (Rostock Manifesto). The manifesto, written principally by Christa Luft, economics spokesperson of the PDS and launched at the April 1998 conference, is a contribution to the debate over the economic and social future of eastern Germany[727]. It is seen as the most comprehensive attempt by the PDS thus far to articulate eastern German uniqueness, and has as its goal the economic and social rejuvenation of the eastern states. It is viewed as a direct challenge to the globalising forces of international capital[728], with the aim of tackling the most fundamental of eastern Germany's social and economic ills - high unemployment. Over and above the Rostock Manifesto, the PDS has produced, through the work of its working and interest groups, its work in local, regional and national parliaments a and through its election material, a wide variety of literature on the nature of its commitment to eastern German interests.

5.1.1. 'Eastern Germany'

Chapters three and four illustrated that the 'eastern German community' has a different set of attitudinal preferences to western Germans. The dual processes of socialisation and situation have ensured that 'eastern German interests' remain specific to citizens of the eastern states. These are quantifiably different to those in the western *Länder*,

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[727] Judith Dellheim: 'Ostdeutschland - Region in Europa, das 'Rostocker Manifest' europäisch diskutieren', in *Beiträge zur Wirtschaftspolitik: Globalisierung oder Regionalisierung?* (Berlin: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Wirtschaftspolitik beim Parteivorstand der PDS, 1999), p.28.
[728] Judith Dellheim (1999): ibid. p.36.

as they stem both from different societal processes and the different political culture that has subsequently developed in eastern Germany. This work has also stressed, however, that 'eastern German interests' are not uniform. The development of an eastern German identity of defiance (*Trotzidentität*) has not brought with it a coherent political outlook. The rise of the territorial identification that was discussed in chapters three and four is, however, based on a number of attitudinal and situational similarities. The PDS both *reflects* and *promotes* this. The following parts of this chapter illustrate the diversity of eastern German territorial claims, as well as the common denominator that links them all: the association that they have with the economic, political and social realities of life in eastern Germany both today, and in the past.

The PDS realises that conceptualising 'eastern German interests' is the key motor of its electoral support - even if it chooses not to define it as such in the public sphere - and this is as the typology of regional parties outlined in chapter two would suggest. Even the most cursory glance at the programmes of the major parties in Germany shows that the issue of eastern German uniqueness (in all its many facets) is highly divisive. The term *'Ostdeutschland'* is often generalised into a few paragraphs with little or no substance detailing exact policy approaches. It is for this reason that this section is titled 'East German Interests' – as it is in this fashion that political parties tend to bundle issues relating to the eastern states together.

As one would expect, the PDS handles the issue of 'eastern Germany' in a way that sets it apart from the other major German parties. Harry Nick observes that it is *the* issue that divides the CDU/SPD/Alliance 90/Greens apart from the PDS the most[729]. This is not so much in the area of economic and social policy approaches, although the PDS does differ considerably in its policy alternatives to these issues, but rather in interpretations of the extent and causes of eastern Germany's economic and social difference. The 'Rostock Manifesto' of 1998 threw ample light on how the PDS views the positions of eastern Germans within the current polity – something that clearly differentiates it from other parties and also represents the feelings of fear and forbidding that prevail in much of eastern Germany (see chapter three):

> The decision on whether something is good or bad is made with reference to whether it is good or bad for the western states. The majority of eastern Germans perceive themselves has having hardly any opportunity to influence decisions

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[729]   Harry Nick: *Alternativen '98? Die Wahlprogramme von SPD, PDS und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen im Vergleich* (Berlin: Diskussionsangebot der PDS, Grundsatzkommission der PDS, 1998), p.35.

made in the FRG today. GDR heritage is often sufficient reason to be discriminated against ... and the promise of blossoming landscapes has proven itself to be the biggest lie of unification year[730].

The emphasis that the PDS places on current governmental responsibility for the economic, social and political dissatisfaction in eastern Germany mirrors the popular feeling that the CDU, and to an extent the SPD, are principally responsible for the Easterners' current plight (see chapter three). The PDS does not mention the decrepit state of the GDR economy in 1989, and as such purposefully relieves itself of any of the blame for the economic difficulties of the last ten years[731]. The PDS in Saxony Anhalt, for example, explicitly blames post-1989 CDU policies for the unhealthy economic climate that prevails in that state. As a declaration from the February 1999 conference observes:

> since the beginning of the second legislative period in Saxony Anhalt, the financial, economic and labour market performance has been persistently poor - and this is as a result of the policies of the *Treuhand* holding agency and the CDU inspired de-regulation of Saxony Anhalt's industrial base[732]

The high rates of unemployment are seen as ensuing solely as the CDU led federal government has been pursuing 'neo-liberal' economic policies, that ensure the rich get richer and the poor get poorer[733]. The PDS articulates a widely held belief that the West has used and abused eastern German assets and economic capabilities. As Catherina Muth observed (in 1998) in the Mecklenburg West Pomerania state parliament:

> it is a mistake to believe that the Government was simply incapable of effectively tackling the problem of unemployment. Quite the opposite. The policies of the CDU/CSU and FDP have led to a nationwide redistribution of wealth and power in the direction of employers[734].

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[730] Das Rostocker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand (1998): op. cit. pp.2-3.

[731] 'Die Doppelbiograhie der Bundesrepublik. Zum Phänomen der deutschen Zweistaatlichkeit', *Dokumente zur Geschichte der PDS* (Thesenpapier der Historischen Kommission beim Parteivorstand der PDS, on http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9903/doppelbiograhie.htm). See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 13, 31 März 1999.

[732] Declaration of the fourth session of the fifth *Landesparteitag* of the PDS in Saxony Anhalt on the 6 and 7 February 1999 in Magdeburg. In *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 8, 26 Februar 1999, p.7.

[733] 'Keine Unterstützung für CDU-light-Politik' in *PDS Pressesdienst*, Nummer 45, 6 November 1998, p.1. See also speech by Gregor Gysi at the fifteenth *Gewerkschaftstag der Gewerkschaft Handel, Banken und Versicherungen* in Bremen, 28 October 1998, in *PDS Pressesdienst*, Nummer 45, 6 November 1998, p.8.

[734] Catherina Muth (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5160.

Peter Porsch reiterated a similar disdain for neo-liberal, capitalist polices following the 1999 elections in Saxony:

> The voters of Saxony have entrusted us ... (the PDS) ... with the key role of being the principal opposition party to the neo-liberal policies, representing the interests of a few large western German and foreign companies, of Kurt Biedenkopf and his CDU[735].

Although the eastern electorate certainly does *not* regard the SED as being relatively blameless for the poor starting position of the eastern economy, a significant minority of the electorate appears more eager to punish the mistakes of the last ten years rather than those of the previous forty. And it is this echo which the PDS both reacts to and actively promotes, as it is in precisely these areas, as chapter three highlighted, where eastern and western German preferences differ the most.

The PDS is explicit in its demands for 'a better deal' for eastern Germany in general. The PDS is exceptionally proficient at tabling motions and questions, at both the federal and regional levels, with the aim either of highlighting (perceived) governmental failures in the eastern states, PDS options for improvements or simply campaigns to bring things to the governments/population's attention. The PDS is able to talk about the 'big picture', and it is also adept at breaking it down into policy proposals within thematic areas - with an underlying emphasis being on a 'fair' treatment of Easterners:

> We want more competencies to be granted to eastern Germans in the key questions of their development. We want to have the courage to enable Easterners to come up with their own innovative solutions to problems. We want to strengthen the eastern states as a prerequisite to strengthening federalism in Germany and in a Europe of the regions[736].

Lothar Bisky continues by adding that:

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[735] Peter Porsch (PDS): 'Unsere Zukunft liegt nicht in der Gegenwart anderer Parteien, sondern in einer Partei als Netwerk demokratischer Bewegung', speech at the sixth *Landesparteitag* of the PDS in Saxony, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 2, 14 Januar 2000. See also http://www.pds-online.de/pressedienst/0002/09.htm
[736] Lothar Bisky (PDS): speech to the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.4.

> We do not want any *Dekret* that lifts eastern Germany over and above western
> Germany or that differentiates the East from the West. We are not in the game of
> replacing the failed ideas about the 'historic mission of the working classes and
> their Marxist-Leninist party' with that of the even more absurd idea of the
> 'historic mission of the *Ossi* and their PDS'. We want a relationship between East
> and West, put nice and simply, that is characterised by solidarity - where it is
> necessary - and fair and open competition - where it is possible - just like the
> relationship is between the North and South of Germany[737].

Without the PDS representing the interests of eastern Germans, many issues and
problems would not have been handled in parliament, as none of the other parties are likely to
have dedicated the same amount of time to them. On occasion issues have been placed on the
agenda by the western parties, but only after - on occasion years - of pressure from the PDS to
do so[738]. The PDS is adamant that other parties frequently reject their policies *per se* only to
place them on the agenda themselves in the future.

With specific regard to eastern Germany, the PDS places many *Kleine Anfragen* in the
Bundestag, with the aim of ensuring that the federal government has to answer specific
questions relating economic and political activity in the eastern states. Throughout the 1990s
the PDS remained the most vocal party in forcing the Federal Government to defend its record
in eastern Germany. On the 19 February 1999, for example, the PDS placed a catalogue of
demands on the (after September 1998) SPD led administration, demanding to know how the
Chefsache Aufbau Ost was proceeding. These included:

- How the cost of living, as well as average wages and salaries in the eastern and western
  states, had progressed since 1990, and how the government viewed these developments
  with regard to the aim of equalising living standards?

- Which academic qualifications and other certificates of achievement obtained in the GDR
  are not presently recognised in the FRG? Does the Federal Government see any

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[737] Lothar Bisky (PDS): speech to the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.4.

[738] An example of this came in September 1996, when the PDS placed a motion to retain special payments to 80,000 poorer pensioners in the eastern states. The governing coalition had proposed a bill stopping extra payments to pensioners in the East who received more than DM647 a month from 1 January 1997. All parties in the *Bundestag* (with the exception of Alliance 90/Greens) voted against the PDS's motion on the 5 December 1996. On the same day the CDU/CSU/FDP and the SPD proposed a bill guaranteeing elderly citizens in the East more social support - a demand previously made by the PDS, over and above the motion that had been rejected on the same day. See http://www2.pds-online.de/bt/themen/rb980802.htm A further example of this concerns a motion that the PDS proposed in order to try to introduce a yearly wealth report in 1996. After rejecting the motion, the SPD drew up an *Antrag* in mid-1997 calling for regular reports of both poverty and wealth to be drawn up. See *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/6527.

opportunity for increasing the number of the qualifications that could be recognised in the future?

- When will doctors, medics, artists, scientists, railway employees, postal workers and those in the public services, at both state and federal levels, be able to claim the *liquidierten Versorgungsansprüche* that they have been due since GDR times?

- How high is the proportion, at the federal level, of civil servants within the public sector who were, on the 3 October 1990, citizens of the GDR? How many of these are in upper ranking positions of service, and how does the Federal Government aim to increase the number of eastern Germans in such positions?

- Article 44 of the Unification Treaty states that the rights that come in to force with this (unification) treaty can be validated by citizens of the eastern states and Berlin. This article has not been, until now, acted upon. How and where can these rights be exercised? Does the Federal Government see any necessity to elaborate more on this article, so as to ensure clarity?

The PDS tabled a *Große Anfrage* on the subject of 'The Situation in Eastern Germany' (*Zur Lage in Ostdeutschland*), containing 232 individual (and very detailed) questions on the economic, social and legal situation in the eastern states since 1990[739]. This was followed in April 1999 by another *Große Anfrage* on the 'Development and Situation in Eastern Germany' (*Zur Entwicklung und zur Situation in Ostdeutschland*), containing 133 questions and demands[740]. These were supplemented by numerous other motions on specifically eastern German issues (see below) as well as a proposed 'Economic and Ecological Alternative Programme in the Eastern States'[741].

The work of the PDS in regional parliaments also illustrates the PDS's ability to conceptualise its eastern interests political platform in terms of policy initiatives. In comparison to the other parties in the eastern states, the PDS is a clear and consistent opposition *Fraktion*[742] and it has established itself, by a considerable distance, as the party that forwards that most parliamentary initiatives.

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[739] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/8369. The CDU/CSU/FDP Government replied with a 130 page document in May 1998.
[740] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 14/860.
[741] The main points of this were the creation of a long-term investment programme; efficient implementation of public money with the aim of creating employment; support for science and research; democratic control of the implementation of contracts distributed by the *Treuhand* holding agency and so forth. See *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/7519.
[742] This is, of course, with the exception of Mecklenburg West Pomerania where, since the 1998 *Land* election, the PDS has been a junior coalition partner.

Table 32[743]
Parliamentary Initiatives proposed by the PDS in the Eastern German *Landtagen* and the *Abgeordnetenhaus* in Berlin

	Gesetzentwürfe	*Anträge*	*Große Anfragen*
Berlin	14	96	5
Brandenburg	15	130	12
Mecklenburg West Pomerania	14	155	6
Saxony	19	186	24
Saxony Anhalt	15	158	6
Thuringia	9	123	6

Christine Ostrowski, a (former) PDS *Landtag* representative from Saxony managed to accumulate over 100 *Kleine* and *Große Anfragen* on her own[744]. The thematic areas that PDS initiatives refer to reflect the worries and insecurities that Easterners display. The sheer volume of them also ensure that the PDS is viewed as a party that is 'doing something'. In terms of social policy, for example, the PDS concentrated in the second legislative period on questions of rent levels and *Wohnungspolitik*, as well as levels of social assistance and pensions. These are interests that reflect the insecurity of Easterners about the cost of living and the insecurities they have experienced post-1989. In the area of economics the PDS has persistently stressed the need to tackle high unemployment and the importance of rejuvenating the regional economy (see section 5.1.4), while doing away with high cost prestige projects like the Eurofighter or *Transrapid*. This once again is a reflection of the eastern sentiment (chapter three). In terms of culture, the PDS has sought to retain eastern cultural uniqueness against the onset of western German domination (and particularly when theatres and cinemas are threatened with closure), while in the field of education the PDS has sought to expand the number of *Hochschulen* in eastern Germany and the number of training places available. The PDS is consistent in its call for better financing of communal politics (see section 5.1.4.), while in terms of *Innenpolitik* the PDS seeks equal rights for eastern Germans and those discriminated against as a result of their activities in the GDR (see section

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[743] These figures relate to the period from the beginning of the second legislative period of the *Landtage* until the 1ˢᵗ of January 1997. See PDS Parteivorstand (Hrsg.): *Studien zur inneren Verfaßtheit der PDS* (Berlin: PDS, 1997), p.16.

[744] See Christine Ostrowski: *Ossi's PDS-Gesetze* (Dresden: Projekt Piccolo, 1999). See also Jürgen P. Lang: *Das Prinzip Gegenmacht: Die PDS und Parlamentarismus* (Sankt Augustin: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Interne Studie Nr. 166, 1998), p.49.

5.1.2.)[745]. These summarise broad areas of PDS activity, although it is clear that across the legislative bodies of the eastern states the PDS remains active and vocal in many fields of interest.

The PDS is thus able and willing to voice particular regional sentiment in federal and regional political arenas. Its position as an eastern German outsider enables it be particularly vocal in its demands and criticisms of governmental policies. The PDS is also at an advantage as it has not been in a position to influence governmental policy, thus successfully enabling it to shift the burden of blame for eastern German dissatisfaction onto the western parties.

5.1.2. Defence of the GDR and of East German History

Alongside actively discussing the political and economic position of eastern Germany, the PDS is also adept at discussing the historical position of the GDR and the citizens of eastern Germans who used to live there. The PDS frequently tables motions and adopts policy approaches that seek recognition of lived existences in the GDR (see also section 5.1.1.). The PDS seeks to place the GDR at the same level of acceptance and legitimacy as the FRG. In the 1990-1994 legislative period these included initiatives aimed at securing more protection for officials who worked in the public sector in the GDR, the equal recognition of teachers from both East and West Germany, a *Bestandsgarantie* for companies that were to be revitalised and sold-off by the *Treuhand* agency, the *weitere Behandlung der Altkredite der LPG-Rechtsnachfolger* and an amnesty for spies[746]. This PDS is also keen, perhaps unsurprisingly, to draw a line under the GDR in terms of prosecuting officials who are accused of committing crimes before 1989[747]. This may seem a politically logical step for a party like the PDS to take, as members of the party are still embroiled in such cases, but it none the less finds a sizeable echo in society at large. Although there is little direct empirical data available on public opinion, it remains clear that a sizeable proportion of eastern Germans are unhappy with the relentless attacks on 'their' state and 'their' lives in the pre-

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[745] PDS Parteivorstand (Hrsg.) (1997): op. cit. p.18.

[746] For an enlightening analysis of the PDS's parliamentary activities in the 1990-1994 legislative period see Christian von Ditfurth: *Ostalgie oder linke Alternative? Meine Reise durch die PDS* (Köln: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1998), p.238. See also *R(h)einblick*, the monthly newsletter of the PDS Bundestagsfraktion.

[747] PDS Parteivorstand: *Fraktionsvorstand zu Schwerpunkten 2000: PDS schärft ihr Profil* (Berlin: PDS Pressemitteilung, Nummer 1156, 14 January 2000).

Wende period (see chapter three)[748]. In this respect, the SPD and the Alliance 90/Greens adopt similar positions to the CDU/CSU[749]. The PDS claims that, in view of the 60,000 judicial hearings and over 320 guilty verdicts, the German state should cease prosecuting those who held positions of authority within the GDR. The PDS proposed a law that would have ended the prosecution of GDR officials (*Strafverfolgungsbeendigungsgesetz*) on the 27 June 1995[750] (although in principal, a clause remained for exceptional cases). This proposal was, however, rejected.

Following the creation of the first SPD/PDS government in Mecklenburg West Pomerania in 1998, the PDS negotiated an amendment to the *Regelanfrage* examining the history of every citizen seeking to take up position in public service in Mecklenburg West Pomerania with regard to possible contacts with the MfS in the GDR. Paragraph 161 of the coalition agreement between the SPD and the PDS stated that:

> The Government of Mecklenburg West Pomerania will not require the *Bundesbeauftragten für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes* to investigate any individual person for activities relating to any work with the MfS unless there is suspicion to do so[751].

The PDS has, therefore, been active in defending specific groups within eastern German society against alleged discrimination at the hands of western Germans and the 'western German system'. It is loud and vociferous in its attempts to attain equality and fairness for the injustices that both it and significant portions of the eastern German populace see as being done to them since 1989. This has been done in direct, specialised attempts to revoke or review laws, as well as within the broader strategy of representing eastern Germans *per se*. Broad based discrimination on the basis of qualification or experience gained while living in the GDR is stringently opposed. As Lothar Bisky phrases it:

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[748] In March 1997 Allensbach did ask directly if a *Schlußstrich* (line) should be drawn under East German history, and 48 per cent of eastern Germans supported this notion. More surprisingly, and perhaps typical of the contradictory data that opinion polls sometimes reveal, 51 per cent of western Germans thought that such a line should be drawn! When a similar question was asked in June 1994 asking if too much time was spent 'working through' East German history, however, more eastern Germans (44 per cent) than western Germans (38 per cent) thought that this was true. See Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher (1997): op. cit. p.591.

[749] Harry Nick (1998): op. cit. p.36.

[750] See *R(h)einblick*: http//www2.pds-online.de/bt/themen/rb980802.htm

[751] 'VIII Die Demokratie stärken und die persönliche und öffentliche Sicherheit gewährleisten. Abschnitt 2 Überprüfungen', in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

We are continuing to fight for fair recognition of eastern German biographies. The discrimination and defamation of eastern Germans has to be stopped, as does the totally unnecessary humiliation of hundreds of people in the eastern states. We demand that everybody be treated equally. We demand an end to the political isolation (*Ausgrenzung*) of Easterners[752]

The PDS is particularly keen to dismiss any attempts at equating the GDR dictatorship with that of the Third Reich. Conservative politicians in particular have on occasion tended to place the two dictatorship on something of a par. The PDS, while not seeking to legitimise the crimes and offences that were committed in the GDR, is vehemently against this. This was evident, for example, in 1992 when the constitution of Saxony was passed in the Saxon Parliament in Dresden. The PDS was the only party that voted against the precisely because the PDS believed that in the preamble of the constitution there was insufficient differentiation between the two German dictatorships of the twentieth century[753].

The PDS has not, however, been so enthusiastic in taking part in institutionalised 'working through' of the GDR's history. This also, perhaps curiously, represents popular sentiment in eastern Germany, where the top-down approach to discussing the GDR in the Enquete Commission at the federal level left Easterners distanced from the process[754]. Easterners felt that Westerners expect them to be unduly critical of their own past, while subsequently refusing to discuss the contradictions that may have existed in the FRG. The Commission itself aimed more at establishing an historical record, and as such its audience was the *Bundestag*, scholars and citizens who had the staying power to sit through its lengthy and complex procedures. Indeed, although it was a public event, and hearings were held all over eastern Germany, the statist nature of the commission ensured that its work was simply too dry, aloof and unexciting for many citizens. Consequently interest in and knowledge about the Bundestag's Enquete Commission is not great. Furthermore, the Enquete Commission adopted a working brief that expressly indicated a preference for researching into the history and consequences *of the SED Dictatorship*[755]. This directly indicated that no

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[752] Lothar Bisky (PDS): Speech to the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.11.
[753] PDS-Fraktion im Sächsischen Landtag: Sächsische Verfassung und Wirklichkeit: Eine Festschrift der PDS-Fraktion der Sächsischen Landtag zum 5. Jahrestag der Sächsischen Verfassung am 26. Mai 1997 (Dresden: PDS-Fraktion im Sächsischen Landtag, 1997), p.1.
[754] Jennifer A. Yoder: 'Truth without Reconciliation: An Appraisal of the Enquete Commission on the SED Dictatorship in Germany', in *German Politics*, Volume 8 Number 3, December 1999, p.72.
[755] The full title of the commission was 'The Investigatory Commission on the Working-Through of the History and Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany'. See Jennifer A. Yoder (1999): ibid. p.71.

attempt was to be made to analyse the history of the two German states, or even of the *Alltagsleben* within the GDR, even if this second element was undoubtedly covered, to some degree, under the Commission's remit. And while no half-way rational individual is going to dispute that East Germany existed under dictatorial conditions, or that this had some gruesome consequences for the population, it is important to remember that the GDR was *not just* a Stasi state - which one could believe if one takes some of the exaggerations about the role and influence of the Stasi at face value. To many Easterners it appeared very easy to overlook, if one just concentrates on the effects of the dictatorship, the fact that the GDR did have more to its history than this (albeit very important) single point[756].

The PDS was highly critical of what it viewed as the party political nature (and in essence the western German dominance) of the Commission. The PDS was not permitted voting rights and it was excluded from the discussions that led to the proposal for a foundation aimed at continuing the process of working through the history of the SED dictatorship. Regardless of whether these procedural decisions were legitimate or not, the exclusion of the PDS meant that an expressly eastern German party was devoid of an institutionalised voice in questions concerning the GDR. In a final statement on the Commission's work the PDS claimed that *"the Enquete Commission could not and would not avoid instrumentalisation by political parties"*[757], adding that *"fundamental decisions on historical processes and developments, as well as on political and social systems cannot be decided by parliamentary majority"*[758]. The PDS thus remained highly critical of the commission's motives, its procedures and of its conclusions.

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[756]   Peter Bender: 'Deutsche Legenden seit 1990', in Peter Bender et al.: *Zeichen und Mythen in Ost und West* (Rostock: Universität Rostock, Rostocker Philosophische Manuskripte, 1999), p.8.

[757]   'Zum Schlussbericht der Enquete-Kommission 'Deutsche Einheit' des Bundestages', in *Dokumente zur Geschichte der PDS* (Gemeinsame Erklärung des Parteivorstandes und der Bundestagsgruppe der PDS, on http://www/pds-online.de/geschichte/9806/schlussbericht.htm). See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 26, 25 Juni 1998.

[758]   http://www/pds-online.de/geschichte/9806/schlussbericht.htm See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 26, 25 Juni 1998.

The majority of members in the Commission expressed an anachronistic and militant anti-communism, whose prejudices, clichés and anti-liberal undercurrents were not suitable for reaching historically sound judgements or feelings of mutual understanding. The generalisations that the GDR was an *Unrechtstaat*, the condemnations of GDR history as being only about dictatorship and criminality and, above all, the attempts to place the SED regime on a par with the Nazi regime simply lead to new walls being erected and to history being falsified[759].

The PDS has claimed that all of the western parties have disillusioned many Easterners - including parts of their own electorates - by dictating how the GDR should be perceived in popular discourse. The top-down nature of a process that has been dictated by the western parties has rode roughshod over the small, but significant, parts of life in the GDR that people wish to retain in their minds as positive recollections. The PDS has also been enraged by the refusal of western actors to carry out similar processes of historical self-reflection in the western states[760]. This is not, of course, an attempt to de-legitimise the FRG, rather it is seen as a useful process on the path to inner unity, as the FRG comes to terms with controversial issues like the imperfect de-nazification process of the 1940s and 1950s, as well as the impact and treatment of left-wing terrorism in later decades[761].

The PDS even drew attention to what it described as a much more constructive and thoughtful attempt at working through the history of the GDR in Mecklenburg West Pomerania[762]. Mecklenburg West Pomerania was the only state to create its own Enquete Commission in order to record how life in the GDR functioned, what mistakes had been made and what could be learnt from this. The CDU and SPD *Fraktionen* decided at the *Landtag* session of 17 May 1995 to constitute an Enquete-Kommission under the title of '*Leben in der DDR, Leben nach 1989 - Aufarbeitung und Versöhnung*' (Life in the GDR, Life after 1989 - Working Through and Reconciliation) - something that made Mecklenburg West Pomerania unique amongst federal states. The PDS originally voted against the creation of the commission in this particular form, preferring to attempt to change the nature of the commission by submitting a motion that would have changed the title from 'Working

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[759]　http://www/pds-online.de/geschichte/9806/schlussbericht.htm　See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 26, 25 Juni 1998.

[760]　'Die Doppelbiograhie der Bundesrepublik. Zum Phänomen der deutschen Zweistaatlichkeit', *Dokumente zur Geschichte der PDS* (Thesenpapier der Historischen Kommission beim Parteivorstand der PDS, on http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte/9903/doppelbiograhie.htm). See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 13, 31 März 1999.

[761]　http://www/pds-online.de/geschichte/9806/schlussbericht.htm　See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 26, 25 Juni 1998.

[762]　http://www/pds-online.de/geschichte/9806/schlussbericht.htm　See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 26, 25 Juni 1998.

Through and Reconciliation' to 'Realities, Contradictions and Chances for a New Political Culture'[763]. The PDS put forward four other proposed alterations, all of which were aimed at neutralising the pejorative (in the opinion of the PDS) terminology used by the CDU and SPD dominated parliament when creating the commission, and the commission itself when it commenced its work[764]. Hence it quickly became apparent that although the PDS was prepared to praise the workings of the commission in Mecklenburg West Pomerania at the federal level, it proved a difficult partner for the other political parties in the commission itself. From the beginning of the Commission's lifespan, in 1995, the PDS, as it had done at the federal level, stubbornly fought its corner about the legitimacy of the GDR, and the importance of recording not just "*Stasi, Stacheldraht und Schießbefehl*" (Stasi, barbed wire and orders to shoot) but also "*alltägliches Leben*" (everyday life)[765]. It was not prepared to see western Germans sit in judgement once more on eastern German life and lives.

The PDS was consequently very active within the Commission. But it was also obstructive on occasions, and the PDS used every opportunity to insist upon a less derisive tone in the discussion of the GDR[766]. One such example occurred as the Commission was deciding upon which academics should research which particular issues:

> In the course of the discussion it has become evident that members of the CDU and the SPD have considered asking academics from universities outside of eastern Germany to complete projects with regard to the work of this Commission, so as to ensure as much competence and neutrality as possible. The PDS group cannot support this. We would much rather see the qualities of academics who have been '*abgewickelt*' since 1990, and have been through a process of unemployment, before finding new positions in newly founded research institutes, both recognised and rewarded as outstanding academic personalities[767].

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[763] Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.621.

[764] Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): ibid. p.619.

[765] Interview with PDS MdL, Mecklenburg West Pomerania 17 May 1999.

[766] Four members of the Enquete-Kommission resigned in the course of the proceedings, mainly as a result of the blocking tactics and ineffectiveness of the Enquete-Kommission. Jürgen Pohl, the first person to resign, expressly stated that the blocking tactics of the PDS ensured that the Commission was not going to be able to carry out its work properly. He observed that is was not possible to work through history alongside people who were unable to look truth in the face. Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.633.

[767] Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.626. In this instance, the PDS's claim was rejected - and on 23 May 1996 in a debate in the Mecklenburg West Pomerania *Landtag* it was decided that the universities and polytechnics in the new *Länder* had been suitably 'cleansed' of GDR teachers, and that they most certainly could be trusted to carry out tasks that the commission set them. Unanimity couldn't however be reached on the proposal to do this. 15 *Aufträge* were distributed to different departments/professors for completion.

Like the populace at large, the PDS therefore remained somewhat distanced from institutionalised attempts to 'work through' the history of the GDR. This is not to say that the party has not attempted to come to terms both with the role that the SED played in the GDR, the broader implications that this has both for the PDS's political future, and the wider political environment in the eastern states[768]. Easterners themselves remain unconvinced by the work of the Enquete Commissions, as the commissions have not been able to articulate many of the complexities and contradictions that life in the GDR entailed. The dominance of the western parties (even if eastern politicians and academics, particularly in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, contributed to the process) has also done nothing to increase their popular legitimacy.

The PDS represents the defensive mentality of a broad swath of Easterners towards their lives in the GDR. The PDS represents a popular will to grant parts of everyday life in the GDR a form of legitimisation that Westerners are never likely to grant it. The PDS is therefore voicing complex feelings of collective memory towards the now defunct GDR - something that only it, as a product of the eastern German political environment, is in a position to do.

5.1.3. Democratising Democracy

Since the collapse of Nazi Germany in 1945, the Federal Republic has developed into one of the most stable democracies in the world. The reasons for this are easy to see. The Basic Law is excepted by almost about all political parties (this even includes most of the extremist fringe groupings), freedom of speech, political pluralism and human rights are rarely issues in normal political debate. As such, few of Germany's parties make the issue of democracy a key plank of their party programmes. The PDS is the exception. The PDS sees not only eastern Germans as being underrepresented in the political process, it sees fundamental flaws within the democratic structures of the Federal Republic as a whole. It has, however, no intention of overthrowing either the regime or the constitution (contrary to some of the more excitable analysis of the PDS that has been undertaken). It has committed itself completely to democratic means of political activity in order to try and achieve its goals[769]. The PDS does, however, want to alter some of the mechanics of the way democracy

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[768] For evidence of the PDS's discussions on the GDR, see http://www.pds-online.de/geschichte

[769] See the PDS's party programme on http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/programm/punkt5.htm for details of this. Commentators who view the PDS as an extremist political organisation claim that the PDS's belief that "*extra-parliamentary activity is decisive*" (see the PDS Party Programme on the above mentioned website)

in the Federal Republic functions. The PDS seeks to bring citizens into the political process, and to give citizens the opportunity of having more control over more aspects of their daily lives. The PDS looks to support the parliamentary model of democracy with elements of direct, plebiscitary democracy[770]. The PDS looks to encourage 'bottom-up' democracy, through the introduction of referenda and the rejuvenation of communal politics through policies that they have broadly titled a 'democratisation of democracy'.

The 'democratisation of democracy' initiative of the PDS corresponds with dissatisfaction in eastern Germany with the functioning procedures of democracy and its institutions (see chapter three)[771]. This is unique amongst the parties of the Federal Republic. A 'democratisation of democracy' corresponds with the collective wishes of large sections of the eastern German populace who feel that they are excluded from political, cultural and economic decisions. The PDS has pleaded, at different times, for a new constitution[772], a third chamber that deals specifically with social movements and eastern German problems and issues, as well as a thorough system of plebiscites[773]. These recommendations are enthusiastically received in the eastern electorate[774].

In the 1998 Federal Election Programme the PDS devotes six sides to the issue of improving Germany's functioning democracy[775]. The reasoning behind this, according to the 1998 Election Programme, is that:

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ensures that commitments to bring about political change through parliamentary majorities are illusory. Such an analysis tends to lack empirical basis. The PDS uses the term 'extra-parliamentary' to mean engaging with groups within civil society. That the PDS seeks to mobilise these groups (trade unions, particular interest groups and so forth) to its cause is self-explanatory – and it is something that all political parties attempt to do, whether they admit it or not. It does not mean that the PDS aims to revolutionise society in order to overthrow the democratic order – as even the most cursory glance at the PDS's societal activity reveals.

[770] As the constitutions of the eastern states were being drawn up in the early 1990s, the PDS made concerted attempts to have considerable measures of direct democracy included within them. These failed at the hands of the CDU/CSU and FDP. There are, however, lower thresholds for initiating petitions and referenda than there are in the West. See Arthur B. Gunlicks: 'The New Constitutions of East Germany', in *German Politics*, Volume 5 Number 2, August 1996, p.265.

[771] It is not solely in the eastern states where such attitudes are visible. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of 23 November 1998 bemoaned the lack of, and consequently called for, a *"democratisation initiative in the eastern states"*, much along the lines of the policies that the PDS is advocating. See *Süddeutsche Zeitung*: 'Neue deutsche Lehrjahre', 23 November 1998, p.3.

[772] The PDS calls for a new constitution in its party programme of 1993. See http://www.pds-online.de/dokumente/programm/punkt401.htm

[773] This claim has also received been repeated in the popular press. See for example 'Überall fordern Bürger Volksabstimmungen. Die Zeit ist reif für mehr Demokratie', in *Die Zeit*, 8 August 1998, on http://www.archiv.zeit.de/daten/pages/demokratie.txt.19980408.html

[774] Peter Christian Segall et al (1999): op. cit. p.38.

[775] PDS: *Wahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus zur Bundestagswahl 1998: Für den politischen Richtungswechsel! Sozial und solidarisch - für eine gerechte Republik* (Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS, 1998), pp.31-36.

Many people no longer believe in the ability of democracy to change societal conditions for the better ... The threat is looming of power becoming uncontrollable. In this situation, the necessity of democratic, public controls and the ability to shape democratic activity is urgent[776].

The PDS realises that citizens of the eastern states feel shut out of the decision making processes that shape their lives. This is at the political level, within the companies where they work and within other organisations such as trade unions.

The most recent policy document on 'democratising democracy' chooses to phrase the PDS's main aims as thus:

The PDS calls for: the power to decided within the eastern states instead of decisions being taken elsewhere *about* ... (my emphasis) ... the eastern states. In order to make this possible, more competencies have to be passed down from the federal level to the state and the communal levels – as an attempt at allowing more decentralisation in the federal structures of the German state – so as to enable a politics of social justice and socio-ecological development to be implemented[777].

The SPD/PDS state government in Mecklenburg West Pomerania has sought to actively put this subsidiarity into practice. In sections 184 and 185 of the 1998 coalition agreement they state:

Functional reform is going to continue. The government will examine which competencies can be passed down from the state level to the *Landkreise* and the *kreisfreien Städte* as well as which tasks can be passed down from these levels to the *Gemeinden*. In this context, the government will examine the case for the introduction of another level of communal government called the *Großen kreisangehörigen Stadt* ... the amalgamation of some smaller *Gemeinden* into more effective and modern units, on the basis of voluntary and democratic citizen participation will also be supported[778].

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[776] PDS (1998): ibid. p.31.

[777] Das Rostocker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand (1998): op. cit. pp.7-8.

[778] 'Koalitionsvereinbarung IX. Selbstverwaltung der Kommunen ausbauen und ihre Leistungsfähigkeit sichern. Abschnitt 1: Kommunalpolitik' in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

The PDS also concretised this in other elections: in Saxony, for example, the 1999 election programme for the *Landtagswahlen* explicitly referred to the need to lower the quorum for referenda from 450,000 signatures to 250,000, in order to facilitate more citizen inspired democratic participation[779].

The PDS is clear and consistent in both its calls for greater democratisation and citizen participation, and the SPD/PDS government at the state level has made clear attempts at achieving this. This corresponds directly with eastern German dissatisfaction at the perceived deficiencies in the democratic methods and procedures of the German state (see chapter three).

5.1.4. Unemployment

The PDS is the only party that voices parliamentary opposition to the structures of capitalist society. The PDS promotes the idea that capitalism as an ideology is detrimental to the economic, political and social future of not just the eastern states, but the western ones as well[780] and that the capitalist order that was imposed in the eastern states following unification is not only detrimental to the fundamental interests of the socially disadvantaged, but to *Easterners* per se[781]. It is consistent in its condemnation of the 'neo-liberal'[782] policies of both the Kohl government and the Schröder administration that has followed it. In the *Bundestag* Gregor Gysi has, once again demonstrating his eye for the witty remark, claimed that the Kohl labour market policies were merely successful in creating extra work for staff in unemployment offices, and his criticisms of the CDU/CSU/FDP government's record are both unrelenting and unequivocal:

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[779] See Eckhard Jesse (2000): op. cit. pp.69-87.

[780] PDS (1993): op. cit. p.6.

[781] Judith Dellheim (1999): op. cit. p.32.

[782] As has been mentioned in chapter four, 'neo-liberal' is a term much used by PDS politicians, yet, bar ascribing it to the politics of the Conservative Coalition under Helmut Kohl, it is very rare to hear any sort of definition of what is precisely meant by the term. Cuts in social services and benefits as well as increases in unemployment are frequently mentioned in the same breath, but conceptualising the meaning of the term is rarely, if ever, attempted.

> If it were the case that the reductions in company taxes and the reductions in the amounts of social support that the state provides were stimulatory factors in creating new jobs - and that is the theory - then we should theoretically now be begging for foreign labour to come and fill all of our vacant employment positions; however, this approach, that the government has been pursuing for 15 years, has in reality led to over 4 million registered unemployed, de-facto 6 million, in Germany today[783].

As the number of Germans not employed in gainful economic activity has stabilised at worryingly high levels, the PDS has actively campaigned for radical changes in approach to the support and regulation of the labour market. This clearly is a sentiment (chapter three) that is echoed in the eastern states, as the inability of the state to provide the population with employment is seen as a much greater 'sin' than it is in the western part of Germany - an attitudinal difference that is part of the socialist legacy of the GDR. Both the SPD and the CDU have attempted to create a dynamic impression in the eastern labour market - but the stubbornly high unemployment statistics have sill left many Easterners with the impression that the state is still doing too little in creating employment in eastern Germany (see chapter three). Hence the PDS has been the tub-thumper calling for a radical (if still somewhat unspecified) change of approach.

5.1.4.1. The PDS's Policies for Reducing Unemployment

The PDS election campaign of 1998 centred on the need for a change of government at the Federal level as a basic prerequisite for achieving any up-turn in employment statistics. The only plausible way of achieving this goal was to support the replacement of Helmut Kohl's CDU with Gerhard Schröder's SPD as the main party in government. The PDS perceived its role as putting the centre-left coalition under pressure to remember its social conscience (it termed this *Druck von Links* (pressure from the left) so as to make sure the government remained committed to policies of social justice, increased employment, support for the socially disadvantaged and so forth). In practice, and despite the Keynesian tendencies of the Finance Minister Oskar Lafontaine, the PDS quickly proclaimed itself highly dissatisfied with the work of the SPD/Alliance 90/Green government with regard not just to

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[783] Gregor Gysi, speech to the federal Parliament on 14 June 1996, in Gregor Gysi (1998): op. cit. p.17.

employment, but all manner of governmental activity[784]. The Schröder government was quickly condemned as being neo-liberal and in pursuing policies that we detrimental both to Germans on lower incomes, and to Easterners.

The PDS subsequently demanded (and continues to demand) socialist alternatives to the neo-liberal 'hegemony'. It broadly takes on Keynesian doctrines of economic demand management, with the state having a fundamental responsibility both in stimulating demand and providing its citizens with employment that enables demand to rise. This corresponds directly with the socialist legacy in eastern Germany. Like a number of socialist parties across Europe the PDS aims to counter high levels of unemployment by advocating policies such as legally enforceable reductions in the number of hours that employees are allowed to work, a reduction in the length of time that citizens are allowed to work throughout their lifetimes and drastic reductions in the amount of overtime that is presently worked in both Germany and the European Union[785]. In concrete terms, this was conceptualised in a motion put forward in the *Bundestag* requesting a maximum working week of 35 hours and, in the long-term, a five day week of just 30 hours[786]. The PDS also claims that drastic reductions in the 1.8bn hours of overtime that are worked yearly in Germany could create a further 600,000 jobs[787]. Helmut Holter has described this basic economic concoction as being not only beneficial in terms employment levels, but also in generating demand within the economy and of setting off a virtuous cycle of economic prosperity[788]. This populist approach to labour market strategy represents a clear articulation in eastern Germany of the need to 'do something' in order to reduce unemployment levels.

The PDS is looking for radical alternatives to the 'failures' of the 'neo-liberal' policies of recent years. The PDS makes no qualms about demanding the return of full

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[784]   At the rhetorical level, the PDS articulated such criticisms within a matter of weeks, and within months the PDS was tabling parliamentary initiatives demanding to know what had happened to Chancellor Schröder's promises to make the *Aufbau Ost* his *Chefsache* (key priority). Such initiatives included one placed in the *Bundestag* on the 19 February 1999 (see section 5.1.1. of this work); one in March 1999 on the '*Entwicklung und Situation in Ostdeutschland*' (On the Development and Situation in Eastern Germany - *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 14/860) and one on the 22 June 1999 on the *Fahrplan zur Angleichung der Lebensverhältnisse und zur Herstellung von mehr Rechtssicherheit in Ostdeutschland* - '*Chefsache Ost*' (a timetable for the equalisation of living conditions and for ensuring more *Rechtssicherheit* in eastern Germany - see http://www2.pds-online.de/bt/themen/9906/99062407.htm).
[785]   PDS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: 'Für eine andere Beschäftigungs- und Wirtschaftspolitik in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Beschluß der 4. Tagung des 4. Landesparteitages der PDS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Parchim, 15 and 16 Februar 1997', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 8, 21 Februar 1997, p.8.
[786]   This has also been written in to the party programme. See PDS: *Programme of the Party of Democratic Socialism* (Berlin: PDS, 1993), p.17.
[787]   *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/10015.
[788]   Helmut Holter (PDS): 'Arbeitsplätze gehen vor Profit', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 27 May 1997.

employment[789]. It is of the opinion that this is not just desirable, but vital for the restoration

of a citizens self-respect and for the good of society as a whole. It also believes that such an

aim is a viable one, even if only in the long-term. Lothar Bisky has chosen to articulate this

position thus:

> When we make the claim to a society with full employment, we make it very
> seriously. The right of every citizen to work if they wish to is, in our opinion, a
> human right that has to be fought for. If ever fewer people have to work ever
> longer hours, while at the same time more societally needy tasks cannot be
> successfully completed, then available work clearly has to be newly divided up
> and employment that benefits society as a whole newly defined[790].

The PDS is not scared of saying how it aims to go about doing this. It actively calls

for government participation in the economy, following the principle that the government has

to actively help to create as much employment as is possible. This is a clear representation of

the territorial sentiment illustrated in chapter three. The SPD/PDS government in

Mecklenburg West Pomerania states:

> (Active) ... unemployment policies and the programme 'Work and Qualification
> for Mecklenburg West Pomerania' (AQMV) are, in the current period of mass
> unemployment, indispensable. Job-creation schemes, further and re-education as
> well as the wage costs subsidy programme are going to form the backbone of our
> active unemployment policy in the future[791].

The PDS is, however, careful not to promise to solve Germany's large unemployment

position overnight[792], but it does claim to have new and different strategies for tackling the

problem. The PDS in Mecklenburg West Pomerania has, since it entered government in

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[789] Even André Brie, widely perceived as being on the social-democratic wing of the PDS, has concluded that full employment is both a legitimate and necessary goal. See André Brie (PDS): 'Erfordernis, Möglichkeiten, Schwierigkeiten und Inhalt eines Strategiewechsels der PDS', on http://www.pds-online.de/pressedienst/9951/06.htm See also *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 51, 23 Dezember 1999.

[790] Lothar Bisky (PDS): Speech at the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.2.

[791] 'Koalitionsvereinbarung II. Zukunftsfähige Arbeits- und Ausbildungsplätze schaffen und die Wirtschaftskraft stärken. Abschnitt 1 Teil 9: Arbeit und Ausbildung' in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

[792] Helmut Holter stated that the aim of the SPD/PDS government in Mecklenburg West Pomerania was to create between 15,000 and 20,000 new jobs within the state. Given Mecklenburg West Pomerania's high rate of unemployment, this is perhaps not as many as the PDS originally would have hoped, but it is none the less a considerable commitment. See Helmut Holter (PDS): 'Sparkurs der Bundesregierung wirkt sich verheerend aus', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 21 May 1999.

1998, looked to give an impression of dynamism, activity and energy[793], and it has not been shy from investing in programmes that are aimed at creating extra employment. The PDS in Greifswald, for example, proposes a regional 'Alliance for Jobs', with the aim of bringing together universities, research bodies, companies and trade unions under the supervision of the state in order to work together to increase employment[794]. It also proposes to expressly favour companies from the region when public contracts are distributed, as well as subsidising the development of small and medium-sized businesses[795]. Such an alliance is supported by the PDS *'Fraktionen'* or groupings throughout the eastern states. The PDS in Mecklenburg West Pomerania hopes that, even if unemployment figures do not drop drastically, it will be given credit at the next state election in 2002 for its willingness to try new approaches in tackling what seems an intractable problem. Easterners do, after all, appear to want to see more action and inventiveness from their governments (chapter three).

5.1.4.2. The 'Pilot Projekt Ost'

As such, it proposes a pilot project in eastern Germany that has become a key element of the PDS's entire employment policy package. It is aimed at prompting regional, economic development in the eastern *Länder*, at encouraging investment in technologically advanced industries and in, most importantly, creating employment. The SPD/PDS coalition in Mecklenburg West Pomerania phrases it thus:

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[793] The PDS has made every attempt to give the impression that it is a party of dynamism and of action, and its election activity is particularly geared to being as visible and as energetic as possible. See Peter Christian Segall and Rita Schorpp-Grabiak: *Die PDS vor den Europawahlen* (München: Akademie für Politik und Zeitgeschehen, Hanns Seidel Stiftung e. V, 1999), p.18.
[794] PDS Greifswald: *Mit guten Leuten und neuen Ideen in der Bürgerschaft* (Greifswald: PDS, 1999).
[795] PDS Greifswald (1999): ibid.

The state government of Mecklenburg West Pomerania will attempt, in the medium-term, to promote conditions that will enable the creation of sustainable employment at the federal level in the form of a publicly subsidised employment sector (ÖBS)[796]. The state government of Mecklenburg West Pomerania will support the federal government in an attempt to reform employment subsidies. Possible savings in the AQMV as a result of the employment policies at the federal level will be used to finance the creation of an ÖBS. Priority will be given to creating 1,000 jobs in the areas of youth social work and school social work[797].

Even though the PDS is open in admitting that the initial aims of the 'Pilot Projekt' are limited, it remains convinced that the project is the most important component available in addressing the economic difficulties in the eastern states, and is subsequently seen as a new approach towards "*social, political and cultural rejuvenation*" in all of Germany[798]. The three key thematic priorities of the *Pilot Projekt* are improvements in social justice, sustainable economic development and democratic subsidiarity to the eastern states[799]. It is an approach that clearly differentiates the PDS from other parties, and is something that the PDS at all levels is attempting to help construct[800]. In terms of economic policy, the state is encouraged to be active in attempting to alleviate economic difficulties. This once again is an articulation of widely held eastern German sentiment. Helmut Holter phrases the approach thus:

> The construction and the support of regional networks of economic activity in of primary importance for economic development in the eastern states. Reviving regional co-operation in the economic sphere and linking them to new, environmentally-friendly employment structures opens up future ways for prosperity in the eastern states[801].

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[796] The PDS has tended to use somewhat confusing terminology when referring to the publicly subsidised employment sector. In public debate and in the majority of PDS literature the term ÖBS is used. But in studies undertaken by the Mecklenburg West Pomerania government in 1999, and in particular with regard to the implementation of this policy in certain cities (notably Rostock), the term 'gemeinwohlorientiertes arbeitsmarktgefördertes Beschäftigungsprojekt' (GAP - subsidised employment project for the well-being of the community) has been preferred. Despite the different categorisations, the policy is the same. For details on the ÖBS in Rostock, see *Machbarkeitsstudie zu einem Öffentlichen Beschäftigungssektor in der Region Rostock* (Schwein: Ministerium für Arbeit und Bau, November 1998); PDS Rostock: *Kommunalwahlprogramm der Rostocker PDS 1999* (Rostock: Rostocker PDS, 1999), p.1.

[797] 'Koalitionsvereinbarung II. Zukunftsfähige Arbeits- und Ausbildungsplätze schaffen und die Wirtschaftskraft stärken. Abschnitt 1 Teil 11: Arbeit und Ausbildung' in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

[798] Lothar Bisky (PDS): Speech at the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, pp.3-4.

[799] Judith Dellheim (1999): op. cit. p.36.

[800] The ÖBS is mentioned in many election programmes of the PDS at the national, regional and communal levels, stressing how the non-profit sector is going to create jobs in the socio-cultural area.

An example of this is the strenuous efforts that the PDS has made at both the regional and federal levels to try and attract new technologies to eastern Germany. Since the idea was first mooted in 1998 the PDS has been vociferous in its attempts to attract Airbus to Rostock in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, with the aim not just of creating 2000 new jobs, but also of sending a sign to the industrial world that the eastern states are an attractive place to invest. The PDS MPs Gregor Gysi, Rolf Kutzmutz, Christa Luft and Dietmar Bartsch tabled a joint motion on the 9 November 1998 in the *Bundestag* expressly calling for active support from the government in trying to win the battle to see the new Airbus factory located near Rostock[802].

As was mentioned above, the PDS has very specific ideas on how to encourage increased employment within the public sector. These include the creation of the non-profit sector (the so-called *öffentlich geförderten Beschäftigungssektor* (publicly subsidised employment sector)) and programmes to support the expansion of the industrial and service base. While the non-profit sector formed only a relatively small part of the coalition's labour market strategy in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, its unprecedented nature ensured that it received more than its fair share of attention[803].

Christa Luft, the main force behind the *Pilot Projekt*, describes the logic and principles behind the PDS's 'non-profit sector' as thus:

> ... communal service agencies hive socially, culturally and ecologically worthwhile tasks into the public sector at the *market price* (my emphasis), in order to distribute them to public bodies and private actors. The service agencies would buy up the tasks in order to sell them on to the consumers, who would take advantage of these services at *politically* (my emphasis) set prices. The prices for the people or organisations who make use of these services would be orientated towards their ability to pay. The state would make up the difference between the price at which the service is sold and the price at which it has been bought. This will prove more cost-effective than funding mass-unemployment and crippling social security benefits ... the intention is to create a regular employment sector alongside the normal profit-orientated private economy and the publicly run companies and services that exist for the well-being of the community as a whole[804].

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[801] Helmut Holter (PDS): '83 Sitzung am 31. März 1998', in Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: *Zur Arbeit des Landtags in der 2. Wahlperiode 1994 bis 1998* (1998): op. cit. p.5164.

[802] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 14/25.

[803] The PDS put forward a motion attempting to create an ÖBS at the federal level which was, unsurprisingly, rejected by the *Bundestag's* other *Fraktionen*. The key difference between the SPD/Alliance 90/Greens and the PDS was that the other centre-left parties saw the ÖBS as, at best, a short-term solution. The PDS aims to see the ÖBS become a long-term institution within the German economy. See *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/7417.

[804] Christa Luft: *Abbruch oder Aufbruch? Warum der Osten unsere Chance ist* (Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998), pp.102-103.

The ÖBS (Non-Profit Sector) within the 'Pilot Projekt' is, therefore, intended to be an approach that offers the opportunity of bypassing the profit-making imperative. It is an articulation of eastern German scepticism towards capitalism. It is also part of the PDS's call for large scale subsidiarity and grass-roots democracy - an approach that a number of post-communist parties have since chosen to take[805]. The SPD/PDS coalition in Mecklenburg West Pomerania is the first state government that is faced with putting the PDS's employment policies into practice. This has proven particularly difficult in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, as the financial constraints of the government remain great, while the economic problems in Germany's poorest state mount. In 1999 the SPD/PDS government had DM164 million less at its disposal than in the previous year. None the less, Helmut Holter, the deputy Prime Minister and Construction Minister was still insistent that 8000 extra jobs could be created[806]. Holter stressed that the process of reducing unemployment was going to be a long-one, but he still predicted that the *Öffentlich geförderten Beschäftigungssektor* would be able to promote 3,500 jobs in the medium term[807]. Angelika Gramkow (PDS Parliamentary Leader in Mecklenburg West Pomerania) has, however, admitted that this is still something of a drop in the ocean[808]:

> 3,500 is not a large number of jobs ... but in view of the large unemployment here in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, it is a representation of the realities in this state that work that is useful to society ... (in the non-profit sector) ... but remains profitable, is still recognised across society and is also affordable.

Indeed, in view of the excessive rates of unemployment in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, the PDS had to look for *"new innovative ways in terms of labour market policies*[809] - and these take time to conceptualise. The SPD does (begrudgingly) support this key plank of the PDS economic strategy and, according to Harald Ringstorff, the Prime Minister of Mecklenburg West Pomerania, it is a *"further building block in our labour market policy"*[810]. By May 1999, the leader of the PDS faction within the Mecklenburg West Pomerania *Landtag* claimed that DM10m had been invested in the creation of the 'third

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[805] Gerald R. Kleinfeld: 'The PDS: Between Socialism and Regionalism', in Mary N. Hampton and Christian Søe (eds.): *Between Bonn and Berlin: German Politics Adrift?* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), pp.137-154.

[806] *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Landtags Nachrichten*: Jahrgang 9, Nummer 2, 1999, p.5.

[807] *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Landtags Nachrichten* (1999): ibid. p.5.

[808] Angelika Gramkow (PDS): *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Landtags Nachrichten* (1999): ibid. p.7.

[809] Helmut Holter (PDS): *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Landtags Nachrichten* (1999): ibid. p.5.

labour market' over the first six months of the SPD/PDS coalition[811] - although the project will only be effectively evaluated after a much longer period of time.

The PDS is, however, very aware of the need to remain credible on this issue. It is one thing to promise to reduce unemployment by a considerable number, but it is another altogether to achieve this in practice. Dr. Christian Westphal, leader of the PDS in Rostock city council, stressed that all of the jobs in the non-profit sector have to be financially viable in the long-term. The ÖBS cannot be an initiative that supports *Prestigeobjekte*, rather it must help improve services in schools, hospitals and so forth that are in and around the local community. Westphal was keen to stress how Easterners has been promised flourishing landscapes before, but the CDU had let them down - and this was not a mistake that the PDS could afford to make in either Rostock, or Mecklenburg West Pomerania as a whole[812].

The SPD/PDS government in Mecklenburg West Pomerania is particularly keen to create employment for younger members of society. By 2 November 1999, it reported that it had been able to create 1000 positions for 'Youth, School and Social Workers' within the non-profit sector[813]. This is in tune with the PDS's emphasis of providing every school leaver throughout Germany with the right to a training place - something that the PDS has also tried to have enshrined in the Basic Law[814].

Methods of financing the ÖBS seem fanciful at best: but this has not (yet) stopped the PDS from attempting to push the project through. The financial basis of the ÖBS rests on attaining levels of full employment that have not been seen in western countries for a number of years. Rather than spend billions of Deutschmarks on funding unemployment (DM163 Billion was spent on unemployment benefit in 1996, rising to DM 180 Billion in 1997[815]), societally beneficial work should be encouraged. When this is coupled with a redistribution of wealth from the rich and the super-rich down through society (and based on a re-shaping of the tax system) the PDS is of the opinion that an ÖBS is affordable. This is a clear attack on the widely held eastern belief that income differentials between the rich and the poor are too large. It also incorporates populist economic policies that have a positive resonance in the broader electorate on account of their simplistic and solve-all nature, even if very few economists propagate them as the answer to eastern Germany's economic ills.

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[810] Harald Ringstorff (SPD): *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Landtags Nachrichten* (1999): ibid. p.5.
[811] Angelika Gramkow (PDS): 'PDS steht zu hoher Investitionsquote und zum Einstieg in den ÖBS' (Schwerin: PDS Presseerklärung, PDS Pressestelle, Nummer 82, 4 Mai 1999).
[812] Interview with Dr. Christian Westphal, *Kreisvorsitzender* of the PDS Fraktion in Rostock, 29 April 1999.
[813] 'Soll und Haben in Nordosten': in *Neues Deutschland*, 2 November 1999, p.2.
[814] *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/8573.
[815] Das Rostocker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand: op. cit. p.22.

In more concrete terms, this would involve:

- A one-off tax (*Vermögensabgabe*)[816] on large sums of money, as well as on private wealth (*Grundvermögen*). This would apply to both private capital and to capital owned by insurance institutes and banks[817].

- The introduction of a 'Wealth Tax' (*Vermögenssteuer*)[818]. The PDS estimates that a Wealth Tax will enable the state to raise between DM9 Billion and DM30 Million[819]. This would be complimented by a reform of inheritance taxes (*Erbschaftssteuer*).

- A closure of tax loopholes.

- Increased tax revenues as more people are employed, and more people pay into the tax system.

- Increases in the social contributions of companies. This will be based on profits made[820].

The PDS is also vocal in support of active labour market policies for lowering the number of young people in Germany without gainful employment. This is a particular problem in eastern Germany, where not only do many younger citizens have no work, but there is an underlying tendency for groups of young people to lean towards right-wing political activity in the form of sub-cultures in towns and cities[821]. The PDS aims, through a

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[816] The PDS committed itself to this at the 1997 Schwerin conference. The Alliance 90/Greens demanded in their election programme in 1998 a one off levy on assets of over DM2 million. The PDS demand levies that are spread over 10 years. For those with net assets of between DM300,000 and DM500,000 there would be a charge of 2 per cent a year, and for assets over this it would be 3 per cent. See http://www2.pds-online.de/bt/themen/rb980802.htm

[817] The PDS has had a motion to this affect rejected in the *Bundestag* once. It involved the implementation of a 'luxury tax' (defined as being 6 per cent above the rate of value added tax) and a reduction in the rate of VAT for medication and for labour intensive services by 7 per cent. All other *Fraktionen* rejected this motion on 7 May 1998. See *Deutscher Bundestag*: Drucksache 13/9760.

[818] The question of the (re)introduction of a wealth tax arises periodically in political discourse, even though the Federal Court declared such a tax to be illegal in 1997. Hence, since the 1997 party congress in Schwerin, the PDS has talked more (although not exclusively) of a *Vermögensabgabe*, where one-off payments are demanded on large sums of property and wealth. In December 1997 the PDS conceptualised this in the *Bundestag* by bringing a motion calling for the introduction of a capital transactions tax. See *Die Rote Schanz: Zeitung der PDS Ingolstadt*, (Ingolstadt: PDS Stadtvorstand, Nummer 1, 1998), p.6.

[819] Heide Knake-Werner (PDS), Arbeitsmarktpoltiische Sprecherin der PDS: 'Die gesetzliche Rente wird seit Jahren kaputt geredet', in *Neues Deutschland*, 3 November 1999, p.3.

[820] Das Rostocker Manifest, PDS Parteivorstand: op. cit. p.22.

[821] The Grünau area of Leipzig, once the largest *Plattenbaugebiet* in East Germany, is known to have a strong right-wing sub-culture in youth clubs, and in smaller Saxony towns like Wurzen there is also known to be so-called *national befreite Zonen* (German zones) where foreigners are not welcome. The PDS sees a strong link between broad swathes of disenchanted, unemployed and bored youths and the increased presence of right-wing political activity. For evidence of this in elections see Charlie Jeffery and Daniel Hough: 'The German Election of September 1998', in *Representation*, Volume 36 Number 1, Spring 1999, pp.78-84. For evidence of 'German zones' see 'Breite völkische Bewegung', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 2 November 1999 or 'Wie kriegen Euch alle', in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 15 July 1995.

Sofortprogramm (immediate programme) to offer every young person an *Ausbildungsplatz* (training place) when they leave full-time education and after this a full-time job[822]. The PDS aims to change the constitution in order to give every citizen the right not just to jobs, training placements and education, but also to the right to accommodation[823].

The practicality of implementing these policies is not something that the PDS is likely to have to worry about in the near future. The PDS is only active in one eastern Government, and as the next election in the eastern states are not until 2002 (in Mecklenburg West Pomerania), it is unlikely that the PDS will have to test its policy agenda further against the realities of governmental participation. Even in Mecklenburg West Pomerania the PDS openly admits that the opportunities for implementation of such radical plans are small. This is no bad thing for the PDS. The PDS remains in a position where it can voice loud criticism of the federal government without having the opportunity to do a better job itself. The policy approaches above do not, as yet, meet with overwhelming support in the electorate. That having been said, the PDS is not seen as a party that is in possession of governmental competence[824]. But surveys by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung reveal that none of the parties enjoy particularly large support in terms of *Problemlösungskompetenzen* in eastern Germany[825]. However, the (the reforming leadership of the) PDS has understood that if it is going to remain able to articulate eastern German specificity, then the issues of democracy (section 5.1.3.) and employment are key battlegrounds. And the PDS has benefited in the last few years by having a different profile on these issues. Helmut Holter is clearly aware of this: *"The PDS will have to make the future nature of work and the democratisation of society its key issues in order to be the main political alternative*[826]. This remains in spite of the questionable nature of the practical (from a financial and a theoretical point of view) nature of

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[822] *"The state Government will ensure that there is a training place made available for all young persons ... the state government will also strive to offer every young person the opportunity of employment after their training has been completed".* 'Koalitionsvereinbarung II. Zukunftsfähige Arbeits- und Ausbildungsplätze schaffen und die Wirtschaftskraft stärken. Abschnitt 1 Teil 15 and Teil 16: Arbeit und Ausbildung' in *Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und dem Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Schwerin: Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1998). See also http://www.mv-pds-ltf.de/koalition/i00000.htm

[823] PDS: *Farbe bekennen* (Berlin: Parteivorstand der PDS, 1998), p.1.

[824] This is when figures collected by public opinion agencies are compared with those for the CDU and the SPD. Other sections of this chapter do illustrate that eastern Germans are, however, ascribing more and more *Problemlösungskompetenzen* to the PDS in certain areas. For example, in 1998 35 per cent of eastern Germans thought that the PDS would do the most towards equalising living standards between eastern and western Germany. 33 per cent thought that the PDS would do the most for families with children. A year later in 1999, around 20 per cent of the eastern German population thought that the PDS would be the most effective party in both these areas as well as in improving the situation of *Jugendliche*, and *soziale Sicherheit gewährleisten*. See 'Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Bereich Forschung und Beratung, Kumulierter Datenfile', in Viola Neu (1999): op. cit. p.4.

[825] See Viola Neu (1999): ibid. p.3.

[826] Helmut Holter (1999): op. cit. p.2.

the PDS's programmatic initiatives. None the less, it is clear that the PDS sees the issues of democracy and employment as the two issues on which it can continue to profile itself, as it clearly reflects a willingness achieve the goals of many eastern Germans - regardless of their practicalities in the cold light of day.

5.1.5. Social Justice

The PDS actively seeks to be regarded as the party of social justice. This corresponds strongly to eastern German feelings of egalitarianism and personal 'social injustices'. The attempt by the SPD/Alliance 90/Greens Government under Gerhard Schröder to restructure and balance the federal books entailed Finance Minister Hans Eichel pushing ahead with a package of savings measures. This led the PDS to increasingly profile itself as the only German party that proposes to protect the socially disadvantaged from the excesses of both global capitalism and the misguided (in the opinion of the PDS) policy options of the Federal Government. Throughout the election year of 1999 the PDS, therefore, continued to increasingly stress its commitment to 'social justice' - mirroring eastern Germans clear preference for social equality rather than individual freedoms. Eastern Germans also came to perceive and consciously appreciate this. The extent of this was shown by an Allensbach survey that was carried out in the eastern states in April 2000 which revealed that 56 per cent of Easterners perceived the PDS as the 'party of social justice'. Only 23 per cent were of the opinion that the SPD was the party that would most effectively strive for this (albeit fuzzy) ideal[827].

Despite the persistent refusal of the PDS to define what it understood by the term social justice[828], the issue of *soziale Gerechtigkeit* remained highly prominent in all PDS literature published in 1999. The 1999 communal election *Wahlprogramm* in Leipzig urged

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[827] See Toralf Staud: 'Ankunft im Modernen: Die PDS braucht ein neues Programm und einen neuen Chef', in *Die Zeit*, 6 April 2000, on http://www.archiv.zeit.de/zeit-archiv/daten/pages/200015.pds_.html
[828] It is assumed that such calls for more social justice centre around a better working and social environment for the 'socially disadvantaged'. An underlying presupposition that universal standards of social justice both exist, and are attainable, is evident within the PDS's political rhetoric. But it remains clear that such standards are by no means universally excepted - and the means and methods that different actors propagate in an attempt to achieve 'social justice' are therefore wide, diverse and often plain contradictory. The PDS remains skilled at articulating the worries of Easterners about their social and working environments, just as it is vociferous in its egalitarian, anti-capitalist rhetoric. Yet it (the PDS) is not willing to define its broad understanding of 'social justice' over and above basic calls for equality and more 'fairness'. But this is as it is not (yet) in a position where it is forced to - as only when it is required to implement the policies that it espouses will it be forced to consider the constraints and contradictions of governmental responsibility and idealist policy positions. For an analysis on the theoretical underpinnings of social justice, see David Harvey: 'Class Relations, Social Justice and

citizens on its front cover to *"Zukunft sozial gestalten"* (shape the future socially)[829] while the PDS in Bad Doberan (Mecklenburg West Pomerania) called its communal election programme *"For Social Justice and Human Rights"*[830]. These are representative of the numerous election programmes that the PDS produced in the eastern states in 1999. The PDS is adamant that " ... *(in view of) ... the dominant political discourse, we have developed suggestions, proposals and campaigns with the aim of increasing the amount of social justice in Germany today"* and that it is the only party that can be trusted to look after the interests of pensioners, the ill and infirm, the unemployed, those on social security benefits, those on lower incomes, those not in a position to defend themselves and those who feel anxious about the capitalist world around them[831]. Easterners, on account of their disadvantageous economic situation (in terms of levels of unemployment, wage levels and economic growth) and self-perceived disadvantageous social situation widely place themselves within this bracket, or alternatively have sympathy for the PDS's ideals.

The PDS has vociferously complained that the Federal Government takes money away from those who need it most. It also claimed that the government was reluctant to take money away from corporations and richer citizens. During the 1999 European election campaign, as well as during the state elections of the same year, the PDS was never slow to stress its role as the *"protector of the socially disadvantaged"*[832]. It also urged voters, on campaign posters, to *"sozial wählen"* (vote socially) - a clear play on the SPD's alleged move towards the centre-ground[833]. The political system in the eastern states, functioning largely around the socialist sub-culture that the PDS represents, and the social-market sub-culture represented by the CDU has been receptive to the calls by the PDS for a radical redistribution of wealth in the direction of the poorer segments of society. Lothar Bisky has recognised that the widely held public perception of the PDS 'on the left' and the CDU 'on the right' has contributed to a polarisation of the eastern political system on all social issues. As he phrased it:

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the Politics of Difference' in Michael Keith and Steve Pile (eds.): *Place and the Politics of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp.41-66.
[829]   PDS Stadtvorstand Leipzig: 'Leipzig 2000 - Zukunft sozial gestalten', *Wahlprogramm zu den Kommunalwahlen* (Leipzig: PDS, 1999).
[830]   PDS Kreisvorstand Bad Doberan: 'Für soziale Gerechtigkeit und Menschenwürde', *Wahlprogramm zu den Kommunalwahlen 1999* (Bad Doberan: PDS, 1999).
[831]   PDS Sachsen: 'Ein Land für die Menschen. Veränderung beginnt vor Ort', *Landeswahlprogramm 1999* (Dresden: PDS Landesgeschäftsstelle, 1999), p.2.
[832]   Interview with Catherina Muth (MdL), 13 May 1999.
[833]   The PDS has not been afraid to claim that it preserves the social democratic tradition in Germany better than the SPD is able to do. In view of the SPD's particularly poor showing in the Saxon state election of September 1999 the PDS unambiguously claimed, for example, that "the social democratic tradition is ... better preserved by the PDS". Quoted in David Patton (2000): op. cit. p158.

> The differing options on the issue of social justice are those proposed by the CDU and the PDS. If the elector wants to see improvements in the *Standort Deutschland* under the guidance of an economic party (*Wirtschaftspartei*), then the elector votes for the CDU. If he/she wants to see improvements and reforms under the principle of social justice, then they decide for the PDS[834]

The PDS's anti-capitalist stance has won it recognition as the party that continues to fight for the 'little man'[835]. The PDS has adopted an open and provocative attitude towards issues of social justice, as it realises that the populist rhetoric it espouses is well-received in the eastern electorate at large, and the PDS is unlikely to have to deliver on any of the demands that it makes. The PDS also attempts to use social justice as a lever with which it can increase contact with other societal groupings - so as to spread its influence across society as much as is possible. The PDS executive has explicitly called for discussions to take place on the issue of social justice between the DGB, individual trade unions, the farmers associations, the Christian churches and even the *Zentralrat der Juden* - all under the leadership of PDS politicians[836]. Regional and local politicians are encouraged to work with other societal actors, explicitly trade unions, *Betriebs- und Personalräten* to introduce new models of employment[837] and to exert responsibility in providing the fundaments of a socially secure existence for citizens[838]. The parliamentary motions put forward by the PDS at both the federal and state level also place issues of social justice at their centre; in Mecklenburg West Pomerania the PDS *Anträge* have centred on issues that defend the social rights of citizens: examples of this include attempts to guarantee lower rents and housing, labour market policies that aim to maximise employment through the creation of more jobs in the areas of care work and social assistance, criticism of the policies of the *Treuhand* successor organisation and attempts to save the Rostock shipping yards[839]. At the federal level the PDS is also not slow to campaign for more funding for housing and social issues instead of for 'prestige objects'. Klaus-Jürgen Warnick (a PDS MdB) observed in light of the final budget

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[834] Lothar Bisky (PDS) in: 'Und dann das Meisterstück', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20 November 1999, p.12.

[835] Interview with Angelika Gramkow (MdL), 19 May 1999.

[836] 'Angebot zum Dialog über soziale Gerechtigkeit: Bericht von den Beratungen des Parteivorstandes', on http://www.pds-online.de/parteivorstand/berichte/991101.htm

[837] See section 5.1.4.

[838] PDS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: 'Für eine andere Beschäftigungs- und Wirtschaftspolitik in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Beschluß der 4. Tagung des 4. Landesparteitages der PDS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Parchim, 15 and 16 Februar 1997', in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 8, 21 Februar 1997, p.8.

[839] Nikolaus Werz: Nikolaus Werz and Jochen Schmidt (Hrsg.) (1998): op. cit. p.95.

of the CDU/CSU/FDP government 1998 that the federal government persistently appears to get its priorities wrong - at the expense of the socially disadvantaged and eastern Germans:

> Our proposals (supported by the SPD and Alliance 90/Greens) to increase the funds for *sozialen Wohnungsbau* (the construction of social housing) by DM2.6bn and for *Städtebauförderung* (subsidies for construction in towns) in eastern and western Germany by DM1bn were rejected. But there still appears once again to be enough money for unnecessary expenditure like the *Transrapid*, the Eurofighter, over-priced parliamentary and governmental buildings in Berlin as well as tax breaks for the purchase of property[840].

The PDS adopted the slogan *Reichtum begrenzen, Armut bekämpfen* (limit wealth, fight poverty) in the 1998 election campaign, emphasising the importance of the 'social' in the parties platform. And this emphasis clearly had a resonance in eastern German society at large. In the October 1999 state elections in Berlin, 77 per cent of Easterners who voted for the PDS did so in the hope that the PDS would be able create a more socially just society[841]. The PDS is gradually gaining acceptance in the eastern states as the only party that is not prepared to accept the capitalist dynamic that ensures decreasing job security and higher unemployment. This was further highlighted after the publication of the Blair-Schröder paper in 1999. The PDS roundly condemned the SPD's shift rightwards, and while the joint paper caused only mild consternation amongst western social democrats, it caused widespread disillusionment within both the SPD and the PDS in the East - illustrating the differing political constellations in eastern and western Germany. The publication of the paper allowed the PDS to present the SPD as saving for savings sake, and present itself as the only trustworthy protector of the less well off. Gregor Gysi subsequently published a paper announcing 12 reasons why social justice is modern, attacking the western parties for negating on their obligations to protect the socially disadvantaged[842]. The PDS is also not averse to showing its more populist colours when it talks about this issue. The PDS often stresses the huge income differentials between rich and poor, relating this back to the relative equality (with obvious exceptions) of citizens incomes in the GDR. Gregor Gysi polemically commented in the *Bundestag* that:

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[840] Klaus-Jürgen Warnick (PDS): *Wohnen ist Menschenrecht* (Bonn: PDS im Bundestag, Rundbrief Nr. 15, December 1997), p.3.
[841] Infratest Dimap: *Wahlreport Berlin 1999* (Berlin: Infratest Dimap, 1999), p.12.
[842] Gregor Gysi (PDS): 'Gerechtigkeit ist Modern', Dokumente zur programmatischen Debatte on http://www.pds-online.de/programmdiskussion/9908/gysi-thesen.htm

Between 1983 and 1989 the number of income millionaires in Germany rose from just over 33,000 to around 56,000. Since 1989 the Federal Statistical Office (*das statistische Bundesamt*) has stopped announcing these figures publicly. Meanwhile, the number of income millionaires has risen by around 40 per cent, and now there are roughly 100,000. Of these 100,000 people, roughly 1,000 earn more than DM10 million a year. Can anyone explain to me how anybody can put in so much work that he/she should merit a wage of over DM10 million a year?! There is simply no justification for this, even if he/she were to work all day and all night and never sleep[843].

The PDS is, therefore, a vocal and visible advocate of 'equality' rather than 'freedom' and 'social justice' as opposed to 'economic individualism'. The PDS has taken advantage of the SPD's weakness in eastern Germany to profile itself in direct opposition to the CDU. The PDS subsequently appears to be the only party articulating the considerable eastern dissatisfaction with the economic realities of the German state. The PDS represents an expressly eastern articulation of the social need for fairness, equality and solidarity within the political process.

5.1.6. NATO, Kosovo and Foreign Affairs

The PDS articulates regional specificity on much of German foreign policy. Chapter three illustrated that eastern Germans, mainly as a result of their socialisation within the GDR, are much more sceptical about the role of NATO, the WEU and in their appreciation of what role (if any) German soldiers should play in international (peace keeping) affairs. Falling as they did in the Summer and Autumn of 1999, the elections to the European Parliament and to the *Landtage* in Saxony, Brandenburg, Thuringia and Berlin offered the PDS the ideal opportunity to profile itself as the 'anti-war' party - as the controversial 'Kosovo War' took place in the early months of the same year. The PDS incorporated this into the title of its 1999 European election programme by claiming that "*The Europe of the 21st Century needs Peace, Employment and Democracy*"[844] and one of the key slogans of the PDS election campaign subsequently became *Europa schaffen ohne Waffen* (Create a Europe without weapons). The 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia by NATO planes, with the active participation of German forces, explicitly highlighted, as was shown earlier in this work, the differences of opinion in eastern and western Germany on a number of aspects of foreign policy. Aside

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[843] Gregor Gysi, speech to the Federal Parliament on 27 November 1996, in Gregor Gysi (1998): op. cit. p.19.
[844] PDS: 'Für einen Kurswechsel in Europa. Das Europa des 21. Jahrhunderts braucht Frieden, Arbeit und Demokratie', *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS, 1999).

from the PDS, all parties that were represented in the *Bundestag* were in favour of the attacks[845]. The PDS, calling on the pacifist traditions of the *Friedensbewegung* (Peace Movement), as well as the clear popular reluctance of a majority of eastern Germans to support the bombings, spent the duration of the war condemning the actions of what it viewed as western imperialism. It profiled itself as the 'anti-war party', organising peace demonstrations[846], public displays of popular dissent[847], distributing anti-war newspapers and other 'peace-orientated' literature. Lothar Bisky illustrated how clearly the PDS was able to profile itself on the issue of Kosovo when he observed that:

> the opinion polls that the federal party has commandeered prove unequivocally that it is not just us, the PDS activists who are against this form of military activity by German soldiers. Our party is against it. The vast majority of PDS voters are against it. And the majority of Germans are against it[848].

Gregor Gysi further illustrated this in the *Sondersitzung* (special sitting) of the *Bundestag* on the issue of the Yugoslavian War on the 15 April 1999, when he bemoaned the ineffectiveness of war as a policy instrument.

> You cannot avoid one simple truth about this war. Not a single bomb that has been directed at Yugoslavia - and I have seen[849] all those people who have been injured by them, all the factories that have been ruined by them, the buildings that have been destroyed by them as well as a heating plant that has been put out of action by them - ensuring that 200,000 people are freezing in a city with no warmth - has been of any help at all[850].

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[845]   Only Alliance 90/Greens showed any sign of being hesitant in showing their support although Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer eventually managed to persuade his party to follow his line.

[846]   *Friedensdemonstrationen* (peace demonstrations) were organised in the majority of eastern Germany's major towns and cities. Most were held weekly, although special weekend demonstrations in Berlin were also periodically organised.

[847]   The PDS in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, for example, organised a concert in May 1999 called *Kunstler gegen den Krieg* (Artists against the War), where musicians and popular entertainers performed in the name of bringing the war with Yugoslavia to an end. Interview with Konstantin Brandt (PDS), AG Sport, Kreisverband Parchim, Mecklenburg West Pomerania, Schwerin, 20 May 1999.

[848]   Lothar Bisky (PDS), speech to the *Landesparteitag* of the PDS in Saxony on the 11 April 1999 in Schneeberg. *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15, 15 April 1999, p.4.

[849]   In early April 1999 Gregor Gysi paid a personal visit to Yugoslavia to speak with the Yugoslavian President Slobadan Milosevic. His visit was strongly criticised in Germany, although Gysi and the PDS claimed that it was an attempt at engineering dialogue between Milosevic and the West.

[850]   Gregor Gysi (PDS): *An die Stelle des Wahnsinns des Krieges wieder die Vernunft setzen* (Berlin: Landesvorstand der PDS Berlin, 1999), p.8.

The Kosovo crisis was a clear and unambiguous case of the PDS standing alone as a representative of eastern German sentiment. The PDS alone represented the majority opinion in the eastern states that rejected the NATO attacks on Yugoslavia.

For the PDS, the need to demilitarise international relations and to insert a civilian dimension to global conflict solution has the highest priority. The PDS is clear in its rejection of any expansion of the WEU into a military arm of the EU[851], and the party is of the opinion that Europe needs to be an area that is completely devoid of nuclear weapons[852]. The weapons industry should be transformed into an industrial sector geared to improving *"civilian production"* capacity[853], while NATO should be abolished altogether and Russia incorporated into a new European security framework[854]. Eastern Germans displayed deep unease at NATO's willingness to unilaterally launch attacks on Yugoslavia in 1999, and the PDS was active in stressing that if NATO was going to continue to have any role, it must be under the auspices of the UN. International law is something that the PDS continually stresses has to be adhered to at all times[855].

The OSCE also needs, in the opinion of the PDS, to be broadened into an organisation that fosters a non-military security structure across Europe, while the United Nations needs to be given much increased powers to enable it to effectively keep the global powers (principally the USA) in check[856]. The UN and the OSCE must, together, be the fundament of new European security structures (particularly in light of the proposed abolition of both NATO and the WEU), while expensive projects such as the Eurofighter and new attack helicopters should be rejected[857]. The role of the *Bundeswehr* should also be severely restricted: principally to one defending German and NATO territory, rather than as a part of *international Einsatztruppe* (international rapid-reaction force)[858]. The PDS envisages both the abolition of national service and a 65 per cent reduction in the number of *Bundeswehr* troops to around 100,000[859].

The PDS is therefore articulating the pacifist leanings of a citizenry that lived in a highly militarised state (the GDR) and is inherently more sceptical about the need and

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[851] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: op. cit. p.42.
[852] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid. p.42.
[853] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid. p.43.
[854] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid. p.43.
[855] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid. p.42.
[856] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid. p.43.
[857] 'Für eine 100,000 Personen-Armee', in *Neues Deutschland*, 19 May 2000, p.14.
[858] 'Für eine 100,000 Personen-Armee', in *Neues Deutschland*, 19 May 2000, p.14.
[859] 'Der PDS reichen 100,000 Mann', in *Neues Deutschland*, 17 May 2000, p.1.

legitimacy of armed combat in general, and German participation in such events in particular (see chapter three) than is the case in western Germany.

5.1.7. The Euro and The European Union

Eastern Germans remain more 'eurosceptical' than western Germans. This includes greater scepticism towards the institutions of the EU, as well as the processes of European integration and European enlargement. This came to a very public head in the immediate period in the run-up to the implementation of the Euro in 1999, but this should not overshadow the fact that latent scepticism of the integration process has long been persistently more evident across the eastern states than it has been in the West (see chapter three).

The PDS does define itself as a "*European socialist party*" within the context of the European Union[860]. But this acceptance, mirroring the territorial sentiment held in the eastern states, is certainly not unequivocal, and the PDS is quick to point out that it is highly critical of the EU in its present form[861]. Alonso Puerta observes, for example, that the PDS politicians are "*critical Europeans that are of the opinion - Europe yes, but not like this!*"[862]. Or, in the words of the PDS *Spitzenkandidatin* at the 1999 European election, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, "*the political nature and shape of the EU of the future is not yet known, and it is this that offers a left-wing party like the PDS the opportunity to exert influence on the future shape of the Union*"[863].

The issue of the Euro became a barometer of this. While the PDS *supports* the idea of a European wide currency in principle[864], it was exceptionally critical of the restrictive strait-jackets, in the form of the economic convergence criteria, that were placed on European economies in order to make them lean enough to enter. The PDS chose to stress the importance of creating what it describes as a 'social union' in order to protect against rising unemployment and increased economic insecurity - and to encourage an ecological, social and democratic process of European integration. The PDS remained the only party in the

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[860]   PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: op. cit. p.1.
[861]   PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid, p.1.
[862]   Alonso Puerta (PDS): 'Der Kampf gegen das neoliberale Europa braucht alle Kräfte', speech at the PDS Conference in Suhl, March 1999, in *PDS Disput*, Nummer 3, März 1999, pp.16-17.
[863]   Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (PDS): 'Wir wollen Europa schaffen ohne Waffen', speech at the PDS conference in Suhl, March 1999, in *PDS Disput*, Nummer 3, März 1999, pp.11-15.
[864]   The PDS does see advantages in a single currency: currency speculation between the currencies of European countries would be eliminated, granting investors more long-term security; costs of currency exchange would be abolished; it would be possible to directly compare the costs and prices of goods and services across the entire European Union, increasing economic transparency. See 'Euro? So nicht! Gemeinsame europäische Währung - Fragen und Antworten' in *PDS im Bundestag* (Bonn: Arbeitsbereich Außen- und Friedenspolitik, 1997).

Bundestag to vote against the implementation of the Euro, and as such it was articulating considerable popular sentiment in the eastern states. The PDS saw the advantages that were to be gained through a single currency as being beneficial mainly to large companies in order for them to be able to compete at the trans-national level. Such companies remain more mobile than workers are, and it is these companies that benefit from economies of scale. Hence the PDS demanded increased social protection in the face of the forces of international economic competition.

While accepting that these advantages were helpful to industry, the PDS energetically voiced concerns about the 'social' effects of the currency union. The PDS predicted that downsizing and increases in economic efficiency would inevitably lead to increases in unemployment, a decrease in wages (in the long-term) and a decrease in job security[865]. This corresponds to the negative feelings that many Easterners have with regard to future economic development in the eastern states. Small and medium sized companies will, according to the PDS, find themselves in a yet-more competitive market place - resulting in more job losses, as competition forces firms to streamline their operations. The social net would have to be drastically curtailed, so as to lower costs for companies to remain viable, and to allow countries to cut deficits in order to reel in their national debts. All of these effects were likely to be more pronounced, according to PDS politicians, in the East.

> The eastern states are already a test-bed in terms of neo-liberal economics. Eastern German employees are already told that if they do not work under the agreed wage agreements, then the firm will simply go bust. This process will simply be transposed onto the European level when the Euro highlights the fact that differing wage levels are paid for the same work on a Europe wide basis[866]

At its most populist, the PDS claimed that Europe was on the verge of a violent dumping competition in both low wages and decreasing social standards, as capitalism ravaged the weaker sectors of the European economy[867].

Hence the PDS is vocal in its call for more citizens rights in the area of social policy, and this became a central plank of the PDS's election campaign in 1999[868]. The PDS was the

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[865] For a detailed analysis of the PDS's position on the Euro, see Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann: *Die Euro-Falle: Plädoyer für ein soziales Europa* (Berlin: Dietz, 1999). For discussion of the likely effects of the Euro's implementation on jobs, job security and the labour market see in particular pp.116-117.
[866] Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (1999): ibid. p.121.
[867] 'Euro? So nicht! Gemeinsame europäische Währung - Fragen und Antworten' in *PDS im Bundestag* (1997): op. cit.

only German party, in the words of Lothar Bisky, that *"put issues of social protection, labour market policy and ecological politics ahead of the Euro"*, as such emphasising eastern German angst both about the social and economic environment, and the wisdom of joining the Euro-zone under present conditions[869]. The 'social union' that the PDS calls for is aimed at *"preventing competition to provide the lowest wages, the weakest forms of social protection and the most ineffective social and trade union rights"*, and represents clear eastern German demands for increased security in everyday life as well as a defence of the working classes[870]. EMU needs to be, in the minds of the PDS, regulated by the combined forces of not just a social union, but also an employment and ecological union - all flying in the face of the neo-liberal logic of the integration dynamic thus far[871]. The employment strategies advocated by the PDS at the European level mirror their national strategies: reductions in the number of hours that citizens work each day, every week, every year and throughout their lives; a reduction in the permitted amount of overtime and so forth[872].

The PDS also articulates issues that are of particular salience in the eastern states, as a result of experiences garnered in the transformation process, within the European arena. These include lack of suitable democratic representation in the political process in Europe (as well as in Germany), disquiet at high rates of unemployment (across Europe) and the dominance of large companies in the (German and European) marketplace. The PDS supports the introduction of a European constitution, as it aims to broaden its initiative to 'democratise democracy' onto the European level[873]. The PDS also stresses the need to make the EU more open to its citizenry, as it aims to democratise the EU's institutional structures and workings[874]. *"Now more than ever before the European Union is suffering from insufficient democratic legitimisation"*[875] claimed the PDS in its 1999 European election manifesto, before continuing:

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[868] The PDS produced a number of placards on this theme. They included "Demokratisch, Gerecht, Zivil. Für ein soziales Europa. PDS" (Democratic, Just and Civil: For a Social Europe. PDS), "Sozial und Solidarisch in Europa. PDS" (Social and Solidaristic in Europe. PDS) and "Europa für alle. PDS" (Europe for all. PDS).

[869] Lothar Bisky (PDS): 'Ein gemeinsamer Wille und Geist des Politikwechsels muß unsere Wahlkämpfe bestimmen', speech to the PDS Conference in Suhl, March 1999, in *PDS Disput*, Number 3, März 1999, pp.3-10.

[870] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: op. cit.

[871] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid; See also Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (1999): op. cit. p.125.

[872] PDS (1999): *Europawahlprogramm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus*: ibid.

[873] See André Brie (PDS): 'Zugunsten von Koalitionszwängen nicht Prinzipien aufgeben. André Brie über Bündnisse mit der SPD, Europapolitik und den Reformprozeß der PDS', in *Freies Wort*, 6 March 1999.

[874] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm

[875] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm

The European Parliament was indeed given more powers in the Treaty of Amsterdam, but one is still not in a position where citizens of the European Union can democratically take part in politics at the European level. The results of this are scepticism, mistrust and distance from the European Union and from the process of European integration[876].

These calls correspond to the PDS's national calls for a reform of the democratic procedures in the FRG, with a particular emphasis on increased citizen participation. The onset of ever closer union has made the reform of the political structures of the EU ever more urgent, as:

> ... it is now clearer than ever before that it is vitally important to politically reform the European Union. This is in order to correct the imbalance that currently ensures a contradiction between single market and economic and monetary union on the one hand, and the lack of democratic participation and of a political union on the other[877].

The PDS proposes to do this by:

- the inclusion of inviolable fundamental, human rights in European Union treaties[878].
- the *Beseitigung* of the increasing centralisation of power within the Executive branch and the bureaucracy through increased representative democracy, above all in the European Parliament (EP) and the national parliaments. This would include giving the EP the right to elect the President of the European Commission and the European Commissioners and the implementation of a single electoral system across all member states. It would also include giving national parliaments clear opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes at the European level.
- more opportunities for popular participation and for more direct democracy in European politics. In cases of fundamental importance to the future development of the EU, such as treaty changes, expansion plans and so forth plebiscites would be held in all member states.
- the democratisation of employment and economic activity. This would mean increased, institutionalised rights for trade unions, and for citizens to have the right of consultation at the work place[879].

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[876] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm
[877] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm
[878] It is clear that the parties of the left remain the biggest critics of the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties. The PDS, the French Communist Party, the Italian Communist Party, the Spanish Communist Party and, to an extent, the Portuguese Communist Party are all highly critical of the capitalist emphasis in these treaties. See Peter Christian Segall and Rita Schorpp-Grabiak (1999): op. cit. p.13.

Populist terms are also invoked. The PDS has, for example, called for the European governments and institutions to make a concerted effort to reduce stubbornly high rates of unemployment. In the words of Andreas Wehr the PDS suggests that:

> the aim of high levels of employment ... (should be taken) ... into consideration by the European Central Bank[880]. In the future this aim should be accorded at least the same priority as monetary stability. In the current situation, this means a clear drop in interest rates in order to stimulate demand[881].

The PDS claims that the 'guidelines' that currently exist with regard to encouraging employment at the European level are seen as being far too weak to have any genuine effect, and they must be lifted up to the level of high profile aims that individual governments have to fulfil - or they should be made to face financial penalties. The PDS repeats many of the claims that it forwards at the national level: overtime should be reduced across Europe, the working day, the working week, the working year and the amount of time citizens work in their lifetimes should also all be reduced[882]. Wehr provocatively claims, for example, that if the aim of a reduction in unemployment by half in each European state had been adopted (with appropriate financial penalties for non-achievement) as one of the convergence criteria for entry into monetary union, then unemployment would not be at its current high levels[883]. Lothar Bisky further demands that the European Central Bank be placed under political control, in the form of the European Parliament, so that coherent, transparent European-wide strategies be developed, by accountable politicians, in order to tackle Europe's disastrously high unemployment figures[884]. Alonso Puerta adds that only a European government can ensure that the Europeanisation of economic policies can be democratically controlled[885].

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[879] http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm

[880] Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann has explicitly called for the European Central Bank (ECB) not just to have price stability as its key aim, but also to take into account specific social and employment goals - i.e. to aim for full employment Europe-wide, and to create the economic conditions suitable for achieving *nachhaltige Entwicklung* (sustainable growth). See Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (1999): op. cit. p.125.

[881] Andreas Wehr (PDS): 'Nach der Währungs- nun die Beschäftigungsunion?', on http://www.pds-online.de/disput/9811/39712.html See also *PDS Disput*, Number 11, November 1998.

[882] See http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm and Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann (1999): op. cit. p.127.

[883] Andreas Wehr (PDS) (1998): op. cit.

[884] Lothar Bisky (PDS): 'Ein gemeinsamer Wille und Geist des Politikwechsels muß unsere Wahlkämpfe bestimmen', speech to the PDS Conference in Suhl, March 1999, in *PDS Disput*, Number 3, März 1999, pp.3-10. See also http://www.pds-online.de/wahlen/dokumente/europawahlprogramm/02.htm

[885] Alonso Puerta (PDS): 'Der Kampf gegen das neoliberale Europa braucht alle Kräfte', speech at the PDS Conference in Suhl, March 1999, in *PDS Disput*, Number 3, März 1999, pp.16-17.

Hence the PDS articulates deep-seated scepticism about the processes of European integration that are evident in eastern Germany. The PDS does not reject the EU as an institution, but it has grave misgivings about the European Union's democratic nature, its capitalist instincts and its manipulation by big business. European policy is an area where the PDS has been at its most successful in articulating territorial uniqueness in the eastern states. Western Germans have grown up with the European Union, and accept it as a fundamental necessity if Europe is to enjoy peace and prosperity in the future. Easterners, meanwhile, remain broadly pro-European, but this has not prevented critical standpoints from being taken on many of the EU's shortcomings. The PDS is the only party that articulates this in the political arena, and the PDS is not slow to put the CDU and the SPD in the same boat with regard to being responsible for developing and supporting some of the EU's *Fehlorientierungen*.

5.1.8. Bodenreform

The PDS also actively tackles the controversial issue of the *Bodenreform*. Many eastern Germans have either lost what they perceived to be their property (or are still unsure as to the future of what they currently own) as a result of the Kohl Government's policy of returning property confiscated during the SED dictatorship to its former owners. The PDS is against the continued insecurity on issues of property ownership, and as such actively supports the retention of the *Bodenreform* that was passed in March 1989 in the GDR. As the 1998 Federal Election programme states:

> We energetically condemn all attempts to reverse the law concerning the *Bodenreform*. The federal law on 'rights of property holders on property resulting from the *Bodenreform* of 6 March 1990' should be completely abolished[886].

The PDS is particularly critical of the *Entschädigungs- und Ausgleichsleistungsgesetz* (EALG) of 1994, which the PDS sees as a fundamental contravention of eastern German rights. The PDS accuses the Federal Government of serving the interests of western capitalists - and neglecting the interests of eastern Germans who, in some cases, see their livelihoods compromised as a result:

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[886] PDS Bundestagswahlprogramm (1998): op. cit. p.32.

The facts of the matter are that this law ... (the EALG) ... opens the floodgates for former owners of property (*Alteigentümer*) to claim land in eastern Germany back for themselves. This leaves eastern Germans in a permanently disadvantageous position. The land is been taken literally away from underneath their feet. This is not a suitable balance of interests between different sides, this is politics on behalf of a distinct interest group[887].

The PDS is therefore being an explicit defender of eastern German interests, in that it seeks to be the political articulation of eastern contempt for a policy that is perceived as assisting western German former land owners. The PDS remains convinced that:

only the concerted defence of the legally and judicially correct decision *not* too grant the owners of property confiscated in the period 1945-1949 their land back, safeguards the livelihoods of the many eastern German who have built their lives up, often over decades, on the basis of being the owners of this property. There still remain over 1.5 million hectares, fields, meadows, woods, heathland, that qualify as *Bodenreformland*. Everything else has long since got its western owner[888] ...

Lothar Bisky has further added that:

The aggressive defence of the *Bodenreform* is not a nostalgic attempt to defend former East German 'achievements' (*Errungenschaften*). Rather, it is a defence of the legitimate, and in the documents on unification expressly defended, interests of many eastern Germans - concurrently combined with a real opportunity to propagate something new for all of Germany[889].

Klaus Bartl, a PDS member of the state Parliament in Saxony has further added that:

Thousands of citizens and families have been chased off their property and are having to pursue long-winded and expensive legal claims in order to fight off the restitution claims of *Alteigentümer*. The principle of *Rückgabe vor Entschädigung* (the return of property in preference to compensation) deprives eastern Germans of their rights and is the cause of much *Lebenstragik* (personal tragedy) in the eastern states[890].

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[887] Lothar Bisky (PDS): speech at the Rostock Party Conference, 3 April 1998, in *PDS Pressedienst*, Nummer 15-16, 17 April 1998, p.13.

[888] Lothar Bisky (PDS) (1998): ibid, p.13.

[889] Lothar Bisky (PDS) (1998): ibid. p.14.

[890] Klaus Bartl (PDS): in PDS-Fraktion im Sächsischen Landtag: *Sächsische Verfassung und Wirklichkeit: Eine Festschrift der PDS-Fraktion der Sächsischen Landtag zum 5. Jahrestag der Sächsischen Verfassung am 26. Mai 1997* (1997): op. cit. p.8.

The northern areas of eastern Germany, in areas like Mecklenburg and West Pomerania, have suffered particularly strongly from the policy of 'return rather than compensate', as their large agricultural sectors have seen numerous claims made upon them. This has led the PDS to be particularly active at all level in Mecklenburg West Pomerania, as it seeks to avoid more land passing into the hands of western German owners. As Günther Rogin, the PDS leader in the Ludwigslust *Kreistag* has claimed:

> ... (there is a need) ... to change the existing laws on the land reform in order to alter the bias towards the previous owner. The *Kreistag* condemns the new and rejuvenated attempt to revise the *Bodenreform*, in contravention of the rights and interests of eastern Germans, and in particular eastern German farmers. The implementation of this law would have negative consequences for citizens who live and work in the country, as well as deepening and cementing eastern German disadvantages in terms of property ownership. This is completely unacceptable - particularly in the context of German-German growing together and the future development of inner-unity with Germany[891].

The PDS is therefore articulating territorial specific sentiment with regard to property ownership. The PDS is a vocal (if not particularly effective in this case) defender of eastern German property owners in the face of attempts by western Germans to claim land back that they once, many years ago, used to own.

5.2. Concluding Remarks

Section 2.4.2.3. illustrated that regional parties have a particular set of territorially specific policies which underpin their political support. The nature and scope of their policies will depend very much on the regional context. In many cases the policy package of regional parties will be articulated in 'ethnonationalist' terms, as parties seeking achieve improved rights and privileges for a particular ethnic group. In other cases they may involve achieving a restructuring of the nation-state (this may, of course, also be an intrinsic aim of ethnonationalist parties as well), the defence of economic prosperity or the preservation of a unique culture.

This chapter has illustrated that the unique policy package of the PDS is based around articulating eastern German interests within the political arena. In order to do this the PDS has understood what makes eastern Germans different (chapter three), it has understood how

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[891]   Günther Rogin (PDS): in *Kommunal Spezial* (Schwerin: Kommunalpolitsches Forum Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V, March 1998), p.3.

best it can take advantage of the structural assets it is fortunate enough to possess (chapter four) and it has developed unique policy approaches that both differentiate it from other all-German parties and allow it to effectively represent the demands of a broad cross-section of the eastern German population in the political process. The PDS remains the only political party to effectively conceptualise the attitudinal and value differences that were illustrated in chapter three within the national legislature, as well as the regional and local parliaments in eastern Germany. The policies on which the PDS has built its unique programmatic platform are therefore specific representations of eastern German interests – and it is by successfully re-adapting to the contours of political competition in the eastern states that it has created a niche for itself that enables it to rest agenda setting functions from both the SPD and the CDU.

The policy package that the PDS espouses may indeed not be widely regarded as applicable for solving the social and economic problems of eastern Germany, but there is a growing acceptance that in certain areas (the attainment of social justice, the defence of eastern German uniqueness, pacifism and so forth) the PDS is regarded as a capable and effective political actor. The PDS is taken seriously by electors as a legitimate actor that is seeking a 'better deal' for the citizens of eastern Germany. The policies that the PDS advocates represent, in a way that only a party with clear roots in the eastern German community can do, the feelings and dispensations of a large minority of the eastern German populace. This is as the PDS is the visible representative of the cleavage divide that splits the eastern and western states.

The PDS has successfully moulded elements of both continuity and change into its political platform. It has developed an agenda that neither rejects the GDR past, nor glorifies it. The PDS also manages to incorporate elements of theoretical continuity (i.e. egalitarianism, a rejection of NATO and of capitalist economics and so forth) and clear change (i.e. the acceptance that the market must play a role in economic management, proposals to 'democratise democracy' and so on) – incorporating key elements of the eastern German identity into its own political platform.

This chapter brings to a close the main body of the argument that runs through this thesis. The sixth and final chapter of this work brings the strands of the thesis' argument together and sums up the key findings.

Chapter Six

6. Conclusions

6.1. Summary of Research

This work set out with a number of key aims. Firstly, it aimed to throw new light on the reasons for the political success of the PDS in eastern Germany. It also aimed to construct an analytical framework suitable for analysing parties that restrict themselves (or are restricted by external constraints) to a particular territory: a typology of regional parties.

Chapter one highlighted that other authors have tended to adopt one of four broad, if often inter-linked, approaches when seeking to understand the political success of the PDS. Protest has been a key fundament behind PDS support, and all authors acknowledge the key role that it has played in the PDS's electoral stabilisation. Easterners have sought to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with elements of the society within which they now live by voting for the 'anti-establishment' PDS. This approach gained particular credence in the early and mid-1990s when the PDS successfully expanded its voter base beyond the hard core of former SED functionaries and supporters. In later years, however, the rise of the extreme-right has indicated that the nature of 'protest' has changed – and that the PDS voter base is more aligned with the party than many originally suspected.

The second approach tends to view the PDS more as the party itself wishes to be viewed: as a modern, reforming, socialist party. This is an approach that is advocated by a minority of authors, and those that tend towards it often do so from left-wing positions. None the less, it highlights that the PDS is clearly a left-wing party, whose ideological distaste of capitalism is resonant in their political work. The major problem that authors who adopt this approach inevitably come across is the PDS's clear and unambiguous failure to register any success at the western German polls. Socialist or not, the PDS remains a party that is a prominent and well-organised political actor in the East, but a non-actor in the West. While it is clear that all parties have heartlands as well as areas where their basis of support is weaker, the discrepancies in the PDS vote are too extreme to be classified as such. Hence the PDS remains an eastern German regional party, and not an all-German socialist party.

Proponents of the third approach have produced the most (in terms of quantity) academic analyses on the PDS, stressing what they perceive as 'extremist' and 'anti-democratic' tendencies. They see the PDS as a threat to Germany's stable parliamentary

system of governance, and are highly sceptical of both the PDS's aims and methods. This body of work does illustrate that the PDS is not yet a 'normal' party. It also points out that some of the extreme-left elements of the party have what can best be called ambiguous views on the nature of parliamentary democracy. However, this approach offers little in explaining the *political success* of the PDS. It concentrates on internal party mechanics (and often in a politically partisan fashion) and does not seek to explain how the PDS has reached where it is today.

The final approach discusses the PDS as a milieu based eastern German interest party. Much of the analysis that these authors offer helps to understand the nature of the PDS's success through its stabilisation within distinct social and cultural milieu. The PDS is seen as representing societal groups that remain unable or unwilling to come to terms with life in the FRG. It is therefore this author's contention that the analysis produced by these writers is the most enlightening in terms of explaining the longevity of the PDS, as it concentrates on the PDS's political work in its social, cultural and political *Heimat*. The one major drawback of this approach is its inherent short-termism. The PDS is still largely viewed as a transitory phenomenon that will fade away as Easterners become more like Westerners. This is in spite of the clear and unambiguous cultural, social and economic differences that exists between the new and old federal states.

This work has attempted to approach the study of the PDS from a hybrid regional perspective. While it is clear that all of the approaches discussed offer valuable insights into the development of the party, none of them explicitly discuss the PDS in the context of the cultural, economic, social and political cleavage divide that has stabilised along the former inner-German border. Hence rather than just concentrate on the internal mechanics of the eastern German case, a broad regionalist framework has been adopted, illustrating that the PDS has been politically successful as a result of its unique understanding and political representation of territorially specific interests. It is, therefore, successful because of its territorial anchorage – much as, so it was hypothesised, other regional (nationalist) parties are. It is for this reason that a typology of political regionalism and regional parties was created.

Chapter two explored regional parties in the context of the academic literature on both political regionalism and party systems. It illustrated that regional parties are not easy political actors to clarify and that they have been the subject of remarkably little academic research. Yet it remains clear that where they succeed, they make use of a territorial cleavage divide that exists between the region and the larger nation-state. Regional parties are able, on account of their anchoring within the economic, social and political structures of that

particular region, to articulate unique territorial sentiment within the political process. This may take any number of differing forms, but it is always based on the articulation of regional interests that 'national' parties are not ably to fully (and sometimes not even partially) incorporate into their political programmes. Chapter two aimed to create a tool that would enable this thesis to analyse the regional successes of the PDS in eastern Germany, as well as contribute towards a greater understanding of regional party success in the wider democratic world. The tool that was created was a typology of the structural and causal factors inherent in political regionalism and, secondly, of the agency factors in evident in the mobilisation of this regionalism.

The first typology aimed to highlight the structural processes that underpin the creation of a quantifiably differing political environment – defined in this work as a 'regional space'. It was hypothesised that the existence of a form of regional identification is necessary if a regional party is going to successfully mobilise regional political sentiment. The typology was also created in a flexible enough way so as to be able to incorporate other important factors that demarcate regions from the 'centre'. This is as no one factor alone is sufficient to explain the existence of a 'regional space'. Hence cross-cutting cultural and socio-economic cleavages were all seen to play fundamental roles in the creation of regional uniqueness and regional identities – and this became evident in the development of the typology in section 2.4., as well as in its application to Bavaria (section 2.5.) and eastern Germany (chapter three).

Furthermore, if the concept is to have any meaning for the population at large, the core territory must have some value – in emotional or psychological terms – to a significant number of the regions residents - and a significant number must therefore *identify* with the region as a unit. Citizens of the region will do this if, firstly, there are clear signs of difference available and, secondly, if societal actors are able to mould these structural variables into a coherent entity.

The analysis in section 2.4. illustrated that other structural factors also play important roles in creating the uniqueness of each regional space, even if they are not evident in each and every case. Where a number of territorially salient structural variables cross-cut (i.e. ethno-cultural difference and economic weaknesses) regional identities and the dynamics of regional difference will be of more salience. Both eastern Germany and, to an even greater extent, Bavaria are examples of regional spaces where a number of structural variables re-enforce the territorial divide. Although it is not possible to weight each case in real terms (each region is too unique for such an exercise to have any explanatory value), it is clear that a

propensity towards greater regional uniqueness, in the shape of a strong regional identity and regional political system, indicates that the regional space will be more clearly defined.

Economic disparity is one of the most divisive structural variables and in certain cases it has proven to be a key marker in regional debates. The case of Belgium remains the most explicit case, as the Dutch and French speaking areas of the country remain divided not just linguistically but also by differences in prosperity. Northern Italy and Canada also remain highly prominent cases of economic diversity shaping the nature of political debate and social attitudes in particular regions.

Having analysed the key determinants that lie behind the creation of regional spaces, the thesis moved on to discuss the methods that actors (parties) used in mobilising such differences within the political arena. Although regional parties are heterogeneous in nature, they still display a number of common characteristics and determinants that differentiate them from 'national' parties.

The second typology illustrated that regional parties *must* accomplish two tasks. Firstly, they must articulate tenets of a regional identity within the political process. Regional parties must appreciate what it is that psychologically and socially differentiates citizens of the region from citizens of the larger nation-state. They must then transform this into a recognisable set of regional policies and issues. This overlaps with the second imperative for regional party success: the creation of a 'big idea'. Regional parties need a key raison d'être: or set of policies with which they are instantly recognisable. Examples of this include the preservation of cultural rights (PC), the representation of an ethnic minority (the *Südtiroler Volkspartei*) and preservation of economic affluence (*Lega Nord*). Both the CSU and the PDS have their own 'big ideas': the representation of Bavarian and Eastern German uniqueness as well as the articulation of broader territorial interests in the political process.

The second part of the typology revealed that a number of other factors assist in the facilitating of regional party success: although it is clear that the variety of regional parties ensures that no other factors are as visible as the above two mentioned factors. Strong leadership appears to have been important in initially establishing and then stabilising a regional party within a given political system, and a number of parties have had both particularly charismatic leaders who have served their parties for many years. Both the PDS and the CSU have benefited from this phenomenon. In spite of the tendency for charismatic leaders to lead regional parties, it is also clear that the importance of motivating and empowering members has also been understood. Some parties have successfully mixed the

two phenomenon (PC, RW), while others have shifted the emphasis more towards member participation (FDF, PNV) in the knowledge that it is an important way of ensuring vote maximisation at election time. As later sections revealed, both the CSU and the PDS have clearly benefited from their strong organisational presence in their respective regions.

Chapter two also undertook to apply the typology to the cases of Bavaria and its regional party, the CSU. The CSU's role as a Bavarian regional party was discussed in order to illustrate that a party already exists that mobilises regional sentiment within the German party political system. The application of the typology emphasised that Bavarian interests and self-perceptions are uniquely articulated by 'Bavaria's party'. A distinct regional political culture has developed over and above Bavarian micro-regional cultures – and the CSU has grown, over the last thirty years in particular, to be the political representative of this. The CSU is therefore a regional party that articulates territorial sentiment much as the PDS does in eastern Germany – and as such a discussion of the methods and means that it employs in doing this is useful in highlighting the success that regionally specific political parties are able to enjoy within the Federal Republic. This Bavarian identity is more religious, traditional and conservative than that of other Germans. Bavarians are also highly conscious of this difference and the CSU has been electorally successful as it has encapsulated Bavarian identity into it's raison d'être. The CSU has indeed come to be seen as the political voice of Bavarianism and Bavaria in turn as a CSU state. The discussion of the CSU therefore illustrated that regional political mobilisation already occurs in the FRG – and that the PDS's success in the eastern states mirrors, from a structural point of view, that of the CSU in Bavaria.

Having developed the typology in chapter two and applied it to Germany's other regional party, chapter three carried the discussion further by applying the first part of the typology to eastern Germany. This enabled the cultural and socio-economic cleavages between eastern and western Germany to be de-constructed in terms of the creation of a separate sense of identity in the eastern states. The typology helped to illustrate that Easterners possess a set of attitudinal and cultural characteristics that differentiate them from their western brethren. These span a broad set of topics, issues and contentious social debates. The typology helped to demonstrate that it is the complex interaction of pre-1989 socialisation and post-1989 lived experience that has led to differing conceptions of the state, of German politics, economics and society as well as the place of the individual (western and/or eastern) German within this. While the eastern identity of defiance is clearly not a

monolithic construction, it is clear that when it is measured against the dominant norms that govern (western) German society, eastern Germans have clear and relatively unambiguous attitudes, expectations and preferences that have much more in common with those of other Easterners than they do with Westerners.

The second part of the typology was applied in chapters four and five to the PDS at the regional and federal level. The aim was to test the hypothesis that the PDS mobilises the key tenets of 'eastern Germanism' within the national and regional political arenas. It was hypothesised that the PDS was likely to exhibit similar characteristics to other political parties who prosper on account of their success at articulating particular regional political sentiment.

Chapter four emphasised that the PDS has been able to mobilise support as a result of the societal cleavage that the unification of Germany helped to spawn. The PDS has the capacity to mobilise Easternness as a result of its own political heritage (i.e. its 'eastern Germanness'), its political orientation (i.e. its left-wing nature) and its position as the only genuine eastern German political actor. The PDS is in possession of a number of organisational (its large and politically active membership) and genetic (in view of its heritage) advantages over the other political parties. The PDS is able to concentrate on articulating specifically eastern German concerns about broken biographies and the alleged discrimination towards Easterners, just as it is able to disown itself of political responsibility on account of its lack of participation in governing coalitions at the federal and regional level[892]. This has enabled it to tap-in to the unique set of political attitudes and circumstances that exist in the eastern states.

Chapter five discusses the unique policy package that the PDS has developed. The PDS's programmatic agenda centres around the political articulation of eastern German interests. Chapter three empirically illustrated the variables that contribute to the eastern German identity of defiance, while chapter four illustrated how the PDS has developed a capacity to articulate this. Chapter five illustrates that the PDS *proactively* articulates eastern German uniqueness as it has developed a policy package that is representative of eastern German specificity: in its scepticism towards the capitalist system, in its criticisms of the

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[892] This is in spite of the PDS participation as a silent partner in Saxony Anhalt (since 1994) and as an active, minority partner in Mecklenburg West Pomerania (since 1998). The lack of state elections in the eastern states in the forthcoming period (i.e. the next state elections in eastern Germany will be in the same year as the next federal election (2002) in Mecklenburg West Pomerania) indicate that this position is unlikely to substantially change in the foreseeable future. For an initial analysis of the SPD-PDS coalition in Mecklenburg West Pomerania see Manfred Gerner: 'Die SPD-PDS Regierungskoalition in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Nagelprobe für die Regierungsfähigkeit der SED-Nachfolgeorganisation', in Gerhard Hirscher & Peter Christian Segall (Hrsg.): *Die PDS: Zustand und Entwicklungsperspektiven* (München: Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2000), pp.97-108.

western German-led transformation process, its attitude to the GDR, its emphasis on a more active role for the state, its defence of 'social justice' and so forth.

The PDS concentrates on conceptualising eastern German uniqueness within the policy arena. This dictates that the PDS's policy package is a peculiar mixture of defensive, backwards looking policy proposals (i.e. attempts to 'upgrade' eastern German qualifications and experiences to a par with those of western Germans, to achieve an amnesty for GDR spies and to protect those who served in the GDR's *Dienstklasse* from 'social discrimination'), nominally left-wing proposals to alleviate eastern German inequalities (i.e. proposals to equalise wages rates in eastern and western Germany, to achieve increased social security for the unemployed, to fight against the *Bodenreform* and so forth) as well as the articulation of other regionally specific issues (i.e. eastern German scepticism of NATO, the mechanics and the policies of the EU, democracy as it functions in the Federal Republic etc.). This, so it has been argued, is what demarcates the PDS from its political competitors. It has developed an image and a political platform that conceptualises what Easterners perceive as differences between themselves and Westerners. And it is this platform that has enabled the PDS to achieve the electoral successes it has registered since the implosion of the GDR in 1989.

6.2. The Analytical Framework and Methodology

The analytical framework that was adopted in this thesis was an initial attempt at understanding the nature of regional party success. The framework itself could not build on any particular body of regional party literature – hence from the very beginning it was likely that it the framework would need to be modified through both experience and trial and error.

The typology has proven to be an applicable tool for analysing the core hypothesis. The first part of the typology enabled the nature of eastern German regional identification and territorial uniqueness to be placed within the context of other regions. This is, in itself, a unique contribution to the academic debates on the uniqueness of the eastern German transformation process. The second part of the typology enabled the author to discuss at an abstract level the key mobilisational and strategic factors that underpin regional party success. The typology proved to be a simple and applicable vehicle for highlighting and discussing the contributing factors in explaining the political and electoral success of regional parties.

However, there may in the future be scope for broadening and refining the typology in some way. Future research may seek to apply the typology to particular cases of regional

party success in other countries, and the findings of such research will no doubt help to enrich the typology through further application.

The methodology that this work employed was, in the author's opinion, also valid and rigorous. The opinion poll data employed in chapter three was spread across a variety of polling organisations, and care was taken to ensure that bias in the choice of data used was avoided. *Differences* between eastern and western Germans were stressed – while *commonalities* were acknowledged, if not elaborated upon. A vast array of PDS primary sources, spanning all policy issues, were collected and assessed. The analysis of the PDS's ideological and programmatical positions was therefore comprehensive. Much of this was/is available on the internet, but, wherever possible, attempts were made to obtain primary documents first hand. The same can be said for material produced by the PDS in the Mecklenburg West Pomerania state Parliament, where access to parliamentary debates and bills was easily available. The minutes of *Bundestag* sessions and the PDS's work in the federal parliament were obtained, for the most part, through electronic means – as the internet and the *Bundestag's* internet resources ensure that obtaining such data remarkably simple.

Interviews proved interesting and thought-provoking, although not particularly useful in the final welding together of the thesis's argument. Politicians and activists were always open and friendly, but dissecting political rhetoric from hard and fast fact was not straightforward. The semi-structured interviewing technique proved useful, as it enabled the discussion to continue in a reasonably controlled manner, while giving the respondent the opportunity to diverge to points of interest that they believed were important. Therefore while not perfect (as politicians too often used the opportunity to make implicit political points) this technique proved satisfactory.

6.3. The Core Hypothesis Reviewed

The core hypothesis of this work was that the electoral success of the PDS is based upon the political mobilisation of uniquely eastern German cultural, social and political interests. The analytical tools created in this thesis offered the opportunity for empirically testing such a hypothesis. And, as the analysis in chapters three, four and five highlighted, the PDS's electoral success in eastern Germany has come about as a result of its successful articulation of 'eastern Germanness'. Voters may not tend to grant the PDS high ratings when it comes to policy efficacy, but they do value the importance of having a uniquely eastern German actor on the national and regional political stage. The PDS possesses attributes that assist it in

doing this (party organisation, a visible and articulate party leadership, the unique articulation of regional symbols and characteristics and so forth) just as it has a policy package that represents the ideological undertones of the eastern electorate (see chapter five).

The introduction of the CSU illustrated a discussion of Bavaria's regional party highlights similarities with the PDS's position. Both political actors mobilise support along the cleavage divides that have grown to historically divide them from the wider German electorate as a whole. The structural distinctiveness of the Bavarian political, economic and social landscape has allowed/encouraged the CSU to develop a broad political platform that is more conservative, religiously orientated and economically flexible than that of the other parties. This correlates strongly with the ideological and attitudinal positions of the Bavarian electorate and has allowed the CSU to cement its position as a regional hegemon. The PDS, meanwhile, has proved very successful at adapting to the structural particularities of eastern German political, economic and social life. It, too, is firmly embedded within regional structures, it is in possession of regionally advantageous organisational and rhetorical features and is clearly 'at home' within the environment that helped to spawn it. The comparison of the two parties therefore revealed the underlying similarities in their political development, even if their policy positions and ideological orientations are diametrically opposed.

The PDS has, therefore, developed a political package that is unique and is representative of regionally specific sentiment. However, if the PDS were ever to be in a position where its policy approaches may have some influence on the national stage, then the issue of policy practicality would no doubt rise in salience. In its current situation, the PDS has achieved political success at the eastern German polls on account of fulfilling a function as an eastern German party. Opinion poll data and programmatic orientation illustrate this clearly. The PDS's rhetorical rejection of western German dominance, its perceived attempt at giving legitimacy to East German lives and its defence of territorially specific economic concerns and culturally unique eastern issues offers it political legitimisation in the eyes of the eastern German electorate. This is something that the other parties, on account of their western German heritage, are unable to do.

This work also posited a supplementary hypothesis stating that a key determinant of regional party success was the existence and high political and social salience of a territorial identification. The analysis in chapters two and three highlighted the complex mosaic of influences that contribute to the creation of regional identities, while chapters four and five illustrated how one particular regional party has garnered support around its existence. It was highlighted that regional parties do indeed prosper in regions where the population exhibits a

sense of regional consciousness. This is inherent in regional party success as regional parties need to create/articulate regional *difference* over and above other interests and salient cleavage divides. The *nature* of regional identities are, of course, moulded around regionally specific factors (be they historical, economic, social and/or political) and as such the scope of any analysis that crosses national borders would need to be very large if it were to be all-inclusive. Hence the evidence presented in chapter two is useful in highlighting that regional identities play significant roles in regional party success - but it is not able to illustrate causal linkages. Individual case studies of particular regional parties in their own regional environment are required to do this. Chapter two did, none the less, illustrate that if a regional party is going to be successful it needs to base its political profile around regionally salient issues: and for these issues to have sufficient enough salience to be recognised across the regional population, residents of the given area need to express a 'positive' (in whatever fashion) identification with their region.

The typology developed in chapter two is an analytical tool that will enable further research on this issue to be conducted and it is for future researchers to investigate the linkages that this thesis has highlighted further.

6.4. The Future Prospects of the PDS

At the time of writing, the future of the PDS is, as it periodically seems to be, somewhat uncertain. But this is nothing new. On a number of occasions through the 1990s the PDS was hypothesised as having reached its political and electoral zenith – only to continue confounding critics by remaining a vocal and visible actor at the local and regional levels in the eastern states, as well as at the national level. This was most evident in the 1998 and 1999 elections when the PDS was the only clear and consistent victor[893] in every poll in the eastern states.

The (impending) resignations of both Lothar Bisky and Gregor Gysi from their respective positions have added a new dimension to the debate on 'where does the PDS go from here?'. Without the two politicians who have most come to encapsulate and represent the PDS in the public arena there is an urgent need for new, energetic and effective replacements to be found. Given the importance of Bisky and, in particular, Gysi in keeping

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[893]   By this it is meant that the PDS continued both to improve, in terms of percentage share of the vote and on most occasions absolute shares of the vote, its standing vis-à-vis the other parties. For evidence of this see the appendix of election results since 1990 at the end of this work.

the party together and presenting an image of effectiveness and vitality this will not prove a straightforward task.

However, the PDS has (frequently) found ways of triumphing over adversity. And PDS politicians and activists remain in no doubt that the leadership 'Nachwuchs' is up to the task of carrying on the good work of both Bisky and Gysi[894]. Gabi Zimmer, Petra Pau, Petra Bläss, Helmut Holter, Roland Claus and Dietmar Bartsch are all energetic figures who have the ability to rise to the challenge of leading the party.

The PDS may have more to worry about in terms of political competition form a re-vitalised and eastward looking CDU led by the Mecklenburger Angela Merkel. Merkel's moderate and conciliatory style is likely to considerably improve the electoral chances of what came to be seen as a gentrified and distant CDU in the eastern states. This may challenge the PDS on issues of 'Easternness' and territorial uniqueness.

However, the key to PDS future success is likely to lie elsewhere. If all else remains equal (i.e. if Merkel proves to be a good rather than a truly outstanding leader, if the 'new' PDS leadership proves capable of offering sufficient direction and enthusiasm, if the party avoids major policy or rhetorical disaster[895] and so forth) then the future prospects of the PDS rest on it continuing what it does best: representing eastern German difference in the political arena. This thesis has highlighted that it is in this role that the PDS has been successful thus far. There is no guarantee that the social, cultural, economic and political differences that currently exist will continue ad infinitum. But for as long as attitudinal and value differences of the type that were discussed in chapter three do prevail - and there is every indication that this may be the case well into the medium and long-terms - then there will be scope for a party to articulate them in the political arena. And the nature of the eastern identity of defiance and the attitudinal and cultural differences that this thesis has highlighted indicate that a party with the PDS's resources, ideological inclinations and territorially specific advantages will remain in the best position to exploit them.

The analysis presented in this thesis has highlighted that the PDS certainly has more in common with the Bavarian CSU than either party likes to admit. Although ideologically at differing ends of the political spectrum, the parties prosper in the environments that have spawned them - as they react and mould political debate and activity within their respective

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[894] Interview with Catherine Muth MdL, Interview, 13 May 1999.

[895] The PDS Parteitag in Münster in April 2000 was widely viewed in the (western) media as such a disaster, when the Party Executive was defeated in a motion regarding the deployment of UN troops in international activity. It remains, at the time of writing, to be seen if the eastern electorate, with its strong peace-orientated inclinations, will pass so harsh a judgement on the PDS.

regions. This is of particular importance to the PDS as the westward expansion of the party has met with such dismal failure. The PDS has concentrated considerable resources on competing in western state elections and attempting to build a western base 'from the bottom up'; but to no avail. The most recent *Land* elections in the western states, in Northrhein Westphalia in May 2000, where the PDS was hopeful that the substantial working class electorate would offer it the opportunity to jump out of the 1 per cent ghetto, proved yet another electoral disaster - with the PDS polling a mere 1.1 per cent of the popular vote. Despite the alleged 'move rightwards' of the SPD and the 'neo-liberalisation' of not just German but European politics, the PDS is manifestly incapable of mobilising western Germans behind its claims that it is the party of social justice, economic equality, peace and progressive politics. The PDS's heritage (i.e. its previous life as the SED) prevents it from alleviating the impression that it is an *Überbleibsel* (left-over) of a failed and bankrupt regime. This must also be coupled with the fact that to the left of the SPD there appears to be no room for a socialist/communist political party within the German political system. The failings of the KPD are the most illustrative example of this, and a nation-wide anti-capitalist party does not appear to have an electoral base substantial enough to exist upon. This is as the SPD has managed the political agenda to incorporate left-wing political beliefs into its platform. And in spite of the personalisation of politics and the alleged drift towards the centre this appears to have changed little after unification.

But the federal system of governance allows, and in many ways positively encourages, *regional representation* within the political system. And it is clear that, as a pragmatic actor within eastern German state and communal parliaments, the PDS has 'normalised' its position as an eastern German regional party. It has also 'normalised' relations with Germany's other political parties and both eastern German politicians and citizens no longer regard the PDS either as an extremist or dogmatic political actor. Anything but, in fact, and at the communal level the PDS exhibits political pragmatism and flexibility in seeking to find solutions to an array of complex problems.

The comparison with the CSU presented in this work therefore offers the PDS the most productive route to political influence in the future. As an eastern regional party, working in unison with other political parties (although principally, one would presume, the SPD), the PDS will be able to capitalise on its social and political strengthens as well as exert more influence, over the longer term, on German politics at the national level. Tough though this may be for the PDS leadership and membership to accept, the realities of political competition in Germany indicate that the failed westward expansion of the party is not likely

to be reversible - and as such the PDS needs to seek to stabilise its electoral potential at around 30 per cent in the eastern states and/or seek to maintain the four directly elected MdB's it already possesses[896].

6.5. The Contribution of this Thesis to Understanding the Nature of Regional Political Mobilisation

This work has highlighted that although regional parties are heterogeneous and multi-faceted, it is possible to construct analytical approaches that adequately conceptualise the reasons behind their success. By creating a typology that separates the structures of political regionalism from the agency variables that regional parties take advantage of in articulating regionally specific sentiment, this thesis has created a framework that is applicable for the study of other regional parties in other parts of the world. This work is therefore a tentative attempt at illustrating the commonalities behind such apparently disparate political actors, while still offering the opportunity to analyse regional parties within their own national context. The combination of factors that must come together to enable regional parties to be politically successful (in whichever way they choose to define 'success') is indeed place-specific, but there do remain a number of cross-national factors that generally tend to spawn regional political mobilisation.

This work has subsequently stressed the importance of regional consciousness in permitting territorially specific regional issues to become salient enough to generate political support in the form of regional party representation. It has also illustrated that regional parties possess the capacity to mobilise regional uniqueness through such things as their (generally de-centralised) organisation, their manipulation of regional symbols/characteristics and/or history, their pragmatic articulation of changed electoral circumstances, their conceptualisation of a particular 'big idea' and so forth.

It is therefore apparent that this thesis has attempted to tread new ground. Nowhere have such complex phenomena as regional parties ever been conceptualised within one 'ideal type' framework – hence it should not be surprising that such attempts leave plenty of scope for future research (section 6.6.).

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[896] The five eastern Berlin constituencies offer the PDS the greatest opportunity of achieving directly elected political representation. The PDS also possesses a concentrated core support in Rostock, where Wolfgang Methling narrowly missed direct election to the *Bundestag* in 1998. Hence it is not unthinkable that the PDS

6.6. Possible Avenues of Future Research

The electoral performances of the PDS in the eastern states have ensured that other political parties no longer see it as a transitory phenomenon. No longer do the SPD and CDU long upon the PDS as a pariah – to such an extent that both parties are keen to learn from the PDS's successes as a representative of eastern German uniqueness. Even though the PDS has developed a unique role for itself in eastern Germany, the *Annäherung* (coming together) of all three parties in the eastern states is much greater than perhaps any of them would like to admit; particularly as both the SPD and the CDU attempt to 'steal the PDS's clothes' in terms of representing eastern German interests. A detailed comparative break-down of, firstly, the nature of policy change over the last 10 years in all three parties would highlight how the dynamics of the eastern German regional party system have affected policy outputs and, secondly, illustrate to what extent the PDS has contributed to setting the political agenda in eastern Germany.

Over the past decade it has become clear that, after initially attempting to ostracise the PDS, both the CDU, and certainly the SPD, have started to enter into discourse with the PDS in order to try and neutralise its political potential as an Eastern *Außenseiter*[897]. The mechanics of this political discourse remain very sketchy, and as yet the political interactions of the three main parties in the East are largely piecemeal and remain difficult to conceptualise and empirically break-down.

But it is clear that both the CDU and the SPD are attempting to deal with the PDS more and more on its own terms. The SPD has long swayed between denunciatory positions (best encapsulated by the 1994 'Dresden Declaration', stressing the distance between the SPD and the PDS and the SPD's subsequent unwillingness to enter into parliamentary agreements with the PDS) and positive declarations of intent that pull the PDS into a left-wing anti-CDU alliance (encapsulated by the Erfurt Declaration of 1997)[898]. The structures of federal

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may capture a direct mandate in this northern *Hansestadt* in 2002.

[897] Despite popular rhetoric to the contrary, both the SPD and CDU have worked with the PDS at the micro-level. Forms of co-operation between SPD politicians and those from the PDS have been much more common than those of the CDU and PDS. CDU candidates, for example, only won votes onto *Landräte* in Preignitz and Uckermark (both Brandenburg) in the mid-1990s with the help of PDS votes, while other forms of co-operation exist (or have existed) in Schwerin, Güstrow, Bernburg and Halle. See *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 February 1994; *Der Tagesspiegel*, 17 July 1994; *Der Spiegel*, Nummer 15, 1997; Daniel Hough: *The Creation of a Regional Divide: The PDS as a Regional Actor in Eastern Germany* (Birmingham: Discussion Paper in German Studies, University of Birmingham, Number 15, 1999), p.30.

[898] The Erfurt Declaration of 1997 was signed by trade unionists, church representatives, intellectuals and politicians bemoaning the state of the German nation and calling for an urgent change in the CDU government. The document called for the three parties of the left (the SPD, the Alliance 90/Greens and the PDS) to work together in order to achieve this aim. See Nick Hubble (1998): op. cit. p.78.

governance in Germany also allow the SPD to bring the PDS into governing coalitions in some states (Mecklenburg West Pomerania and to an extent Saxony Anhalt), while it continues to fundamentally reject all forms of co-operation in others (i.e. in Saxony). The apparently schizophrenic attitude of the SPD towards the PDS, facilitated by the de-centralised mode of governance in operation in Germany today, warrants much greater academic debate than it has as yet merited[899].

The CDU has also started to interact with the PDS in a way that it would not have done in the early 1990s. Although this is rarely in a direct way, it is clear that the CDU recognises that the PDS has become a political actor in the eastern states that has to be taken seriously. Furthermore, the CDU has started to question its own ideological position in eastern German politics and has begun to react to the eastern German criticisms that the PDS articulates. Examples of this include the discussion paper produced by Eckhard Rehberg from Mecklenburg West Pomerania that led to nationally salient discussions on the policy and ideological beliefs of the CDU in the eastern states[900]. But like the SPD - PDS relationship, there remains precious little academic analysis of how the CDU and the PDS interact at the regional and sub-regional levels. CDU politicians *are* prepared to work, in certain circumstances, with PDS politicians in eastern German communes, largely as PDS politicians are clearly able to put aside the ideological rhetoric evident at the national level in order to help find answers to difficult local problems. A discussion of the mechanics of CDU - PDS relationships at this level, once again in view of the PDS's relative permanency on the political stage, is noticeably lacking.

It is also hoped that the analytical framework that has been developed in this thesis can be honed and re-defined with the benefit of further application. Regional parties will continue to rise and fall, and only by analysis of the underlying factors behind this will students be able to understand the determinants of success that enable some to have a more enduring influence on the political system than others. Detailed analysis of more regional parties will no doubt

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[899] Although a broad base of literature has developed on the PDS, it has mostly concentrated on studying the reasons behind the stabilisation of the party within the German polity. Very little has been published on the relationship of the party to other political parties. Apart from a number of speculative articles, a gaping chasm therefore currently exists in terms of in-depth studies into the relationship of the two major left-wing parties in eastern Germany. The articles that have appeared on SPD-PDS relationships so far include Jürgen Hoffman & Viola Neu: *Getrennt agieren, vereint marschieren?: Die Diskussion über ein Linksbündnis bei SPD/Grünen und PDS* (Sankt Augustin bei Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Interne Studie Nr 162, 1998); Klaus-Jürgen Scherer: 'Die SPD und die PDS', in Peter Barker (ed.) (1998): op. cit. pp.182-193; Eckhard Jesse: 'SPD and PDS Relationships', in *German Politics*, in Volume 6 Number 3, December 1997, pp.89-102; Joachim Raschke (1994): op. cit. pp.1453-1464.
[900] See Eckhard Rehberg: *Identitätsgewinn im Aufbau Ost* (Schwerin: CDU Fraktion im Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, 1996).

enrich the typology created here, facilitating greater understanding of the dynamics of regional party activity.

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Appendix: Regional and National Election Results in the Eastern German States since 1990

Table 1
The 1990 GDR Volkskammer Election of March 18, 1990 (in per cent)

Party	Vote
Alliance for Germany	48.0
CDU	40.8
DSU	6.3
DA	0.9
SPD	21.9
PDS	16.4
BFD	5.3
Bündnis 90	2.9
DBD	2.2
Grüne-UFV	2.0
NDPD	0.4
DFD	0.3
AVL	0.2
Others	0.4

Table 2
The 1990 Federal Election in Eastern Germany (in per cent)

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin (East)
Turnout	73.8	70.9	72.2	76.4	76.2	76.0
CDU	36.3	41.2	38.6	45.2	49.5	24.3
SPD	32.9	26.5	24.7	21.9	18.2	1.3
PDS	11	14.2	9.4	8.3	9	24.8
FDP	9.7	9.1	19.7	14.6	12.4	7.7
Alliance 90/Greens	5.9	5.9	5.3	6.1	5.9	7.4
DSU	0.4	0.3	0.4	1.3	1.7	
Reps	1.2	1.4	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.5
The Grey Party	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.0
Others	0.4	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	9.2[1]

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[1] Of this 9.2 per cent the Green/Alternative List polled 8.8 per cent.

Table 3
The 1990 *Land* Elections in Eastern Germany (in per cent)

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin
Turnout	67.1	64.7	65.1	71.7	72.7	80.8
CDU	29.5	38.3	39.0	45.4	53.8	40.4
SPD	38.2	27.0	26.0	22.8	19.1	30.4
PDS	13.4[2]	15.7	12.0	9.7	10.2	9.2
FDP	6.6	5.5	13.5	9.3	5.3	7.1
Greens	2.8	4.2	5.3[3]	6.5[4]	-	5.0[5]
Alliance 90	6.4	2.2	-	-	-	4.4[6]
Reps	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.8	-	3.1
Others	1.9.[7]	6.3[8]	3.6[9]	6.5[10]	11.6[11]	0.5

Table 4
The 1994 Federal Election in Eastern Germany (in per cent)

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin (East)
Turnout	71.5	72.8	70.4	74.9	72.0	78.9
CDU	28.1	38.5	38.8	41.0	48.0	19.5
SPD	45.1	28.8	33.4	30.2	24.3	33.1
PDS	19.3	23.6	18.0	17.2	16.7	34.7
FDP	2.6	3.4	4.1	4.1	3.8	1.9
Alliance 90/Greens	2.9	3.6	3.6	4.9	4.8	6.9
Reps	1.1	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.7
The Grey Party	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	-
Others	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	2.2

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[2] At the 1990 *Landtagswahlen* the PDS campaigned on a combined platform with the *Linke List*.
[3] *Grüne/NF*
[4] *Grüne/NF/DJ*
[5] *Grüne/AL*
[6] *B90/Grüne/UFV*
[7] Of this 1.9 per cent the DSU polled 1.0 per cent.
[8] Of this 6.3 per cent FORUM polled 2.9 per cent and the CSU 1.1 per cent.
[9] Of this 3.6 per cent the DSU polled 1.7 per cent.
[10] Of this 6.5 per cent the DSU polled 3.3 per cent.
[11] Of this 11.6 per cent the FORUM polled 5.6 per cent and the DSU 3.6 per cent.

Table 5
The 1994/95 *Land* Elections in Eastern Germany (in per cent)

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin (East)
Turnout	56.3	72.9	54.8	76.6	58.4	68.3
CDU	18.7	37.7	34.4	42.6	58.1	23.6
SPD	54.1	29.5	34.0	29.6	16.6	20.2
PDS	18.7	22.7	19.9	16.6	16.5	36.3
FDP	2.2	3.8	3.6	3.2	1.7	1.1
Alliance 90/Greens	2.9	3.7	5.1	4.5	4.1	10.0
Reps	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.3	2.9
Others	2.2	1.6	1.8	2.2	1.7	5.9

Table 6
The 1998 Federal Election in Eastern Germany

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin (East)
Turnout	78.1	79.4	77.1	82.3	81.6	80.1
CDU	20.8	29.3	27.2	28.9	32.7	33.4
SPD	43.5	35.3	38.1	34.5	29.1	14.1
PDS	20.3	23.6	20.7	21.2	20.0	30.0
FDP	2.8	2.2	4.1	3.4	3.6	2.1
Alliance 90/Greens	3.6	2.9	3.3	3.9	4.4	7.9
Others	9.0	6.6	6.6	8.1	10.2	12.5

Table 7
The 1998/99 *Land* Elections in Eastern Germany

	Branden-burg	Meck – West Pomerania	Saxony Anhalt	Thuringia	Saxony	Berlin (East)
Turnout	54.3	79.4	71.5	59.5	61.1	62.5
CDU	28.7	30.2	22.0	51.0	56.9	26.9
SPD	38.2	34.4	35.9	18.5	10.7	17.8
PDS	25.3	24.4	19.6	21.3	22.2	39.5
FDP	3.1	1.6	4.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
Alliance 90/Greens	2.5	2.7	3.2	1.9	2.6	6.4
Reps	-	0.4	0.7	0.8	1.5	2.8
Others	2.2	6.1	14.4[12]	5.4[13]	5.0	5.2[14]

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[12] Of this 14.4 per cent the DVU polled 12.9 per cent.
[13] Of this 5.4 per cent the DVU polled 3.1 per cent.
[14] Of this 5.2 per cent the NPD polled 1.6 per cent.