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Marc Reginald Denison:

THE LANGUAGE OF INCIPIENT OPPOSITION;

THE DISCOURSE OF THE PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM IN GERMAN POLITICS 1989-1995

ABSTRACT

This work explores how the PDS, as legal successor to the SED and thus to a party emanating from a Marxist tradition, has sought discursively to deal with the task of adapting to the demands of the all-German polity and of establishing a place for itself on the far left of the German political spectrum. Leaning heavily on the work of the critical linguists whose central interest was in exploring the relationship between language and ideology, this study starts from the premise that language and ideology inform one another dialectically: language is constitutive of ideology. As establishing and maintaining dominant ideologies and/or honing or adapting these in accordance with external exigencies is central to politics, the relationship between language and politics (and language and history) is likewise a dialectical one. A particular focus is upon the attempts of PDS party leaders and ideologues to establish a mediating, 'super-discourse' capable of smoothing over the high-level of intra-party factionalisation and of legitimising the PDS as broadly as possible in the political establishment. Opposition is a thematic *leitmotiv*: the PDS's historiographic portrayal of the SED's and its own relationship to opposition movements in the GDR and the *Wendezeit* is examined, as is the high-level of intra-party opposition and the linguistic staging of the inner-party polemic on whether the PDS's self-styled, extra-system, oppositional role will allow its inclusion in conventional governmental alliances. In addition, aspects of the language of the vociferous political opposition engendered and encountered by the PDS are also considered.

THE LANGUAGE OF INCIPIENT OPPOSITION;

THE DISCOURSE OF THE PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

IN GERMAN POLITICS 1989 - 1995

A thesis presented by

Marc Reginald Denison

in the

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Department of German

in

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DECLARATION

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INTRODUCTION

THE PDS - AN INCIPIENT OPPOSITION

Broadly, the present work aims to take an inter-disciplinary look - of the type described by Grunert[1] - at the theme of opposition as it relates to the discourse of the *Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus* in German politics. In early February 1990 the party executive of the SED-PDS - the name which the erstwhile SED had borne since its *außerordentlicher Parteitag* in December 1990 - issued a resolution renaming it *Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus* (PDS).[2] The PDS thus emerged not as a newly founded party, but as the SED's legal successor. (We will have more to say on this issue below.) As a party emanating directly from a Marxist tradition, the PDS has, in the attempt to establish itself on the far left of the pan-German political spectrum, faced the inordinately complex task of adapting the discursive legacy of the monist, official East German state teachings enshrined in the 'dialectical materialism' of *Marxismus-Leninismus* to the fundamentally different demands of a 'pluralist' Federal Republic. As we will attempt to show below, the necessity of forging something of a discursive 'hybrid'[3] has necessarily yielded a particularly fascinating and graphic exemplary catalogue of how language is used in - and is an integral part of - the attempt to deal with the awkward problem of smoothing over what Trew has called, and described in some detail as, "glaring (ideological - MD) anomalies"[4]. (We will return to Trew in chapter 4 below.)

Our understanding here of the term *discourse* is a broad one; we use it to refer to spoken or written *utterances* enframed in text, this being a "piece of naturally occurring spoken, written or signed discourse identified for purposes of analysis or

---

[1]"[D]as Adjektiv 'Interdisziplinär' ist zur Summe linguistischer - also pragmatischer, logischer und semantischer Kategorien - zur Summe außerdem politologischer, soziologischer, psychologischer, ökonomischer und ästhetischer Kategorien zu erklären - bzw. zu dem, was aus dieser Bandbreite heraus für die vorliegende Problemstellung sinnig praktikabel erschien und erscheint. Eine pragmatisch-integrierte Sprachkritik macht nicht am Text, macht nicht an der Sprache halt." Gruner, Paul Hermann: "Inszenierte Polarisierung, organisiertes Trugbild - Sechs Thesen zur Sprache des Wahlkampfes." In: Opp de Hipt, Manfred/Erich Latniak (eds.): *Sprache statt Politik*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag GmbH 1991, p. 24

[2]See Arnold, Otfrid/Frank Schumann et al. (eds.): *Von den Anfängen. Eine illustrierte Chronik der PDS. 1989-1993*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1993, pp. 12, 22

[3]Colin Good has drawn an interesting parallel here with the situation faced by the SPD at the time of its crucial Bad Godesberg conference in 1959. See: Good, Colin: "Über die 'Neuen Linken': Der Versuch der PDS, eine neue Sprache des Sozialismus zu finden." In: Reiher, Ruth/Rüdiger Läzer (eds.): *Von Buschzulage und Ossinachweis*. Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag 1996, p. 265

[4]See Trew, Tony: "Theory and Ideology at Work." In: Fowler, Roger/Bob Hodge/Gunther Kress/Tony Trew: *Language and Control*. London, Boston etc.: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1979, p. 97ff.

description ... a language unit with a definable communicative function ..."[5] From a (linguistic) pragmatic point of view the utterance is seen as "what happens when a sentence, or even bits of a sentence, are transformed into real chunks of language in a real context of use ... Utterances are what make up actual spoken or written texts."[6] Under discourse are subsumed both the sub-categories of "face-to-face interaction" discourse and "staggered" discourse of the type described by Simpson.[7] The first type relates to "interaction between speakers who share the same physical context"[8]. The second relates to "communication ... between participants who are separated in space and time"[9], such as media language, advertising language - including electoral advertising - etc. This last discourse is aimed at an "invisible ideal consumer ..." (ibid.) with whom "actual viewers or listeners have to negotiate a relationship"[10].

In a party as complex and factionalised as the PDS it is self-evident that any understanding of an overall 'PDS-discourse' must take into account that it is a complex amalgam of competing sub-discourses, the aggregate of those discourses. For this reason our guiding (but not exclusive) perspective is that of the efforts of certain individuals - party leaders and key ideologues - to create what we call a mediating 'super-discourse' calculated to take in the differing aspirations of the party's many sub-groups and thus appeal to the greatest number of inner-party positions and make the PDS *politikfähig*. At the same time we will attempt to show how this discourse has a 'quasi cubist' dimension, where the attempt is to legitimise the party as broadly as possible within the new polity. (Party leaders are, after all, a party's most public figures, and thus particularly responsible for creating its public image.) Put another way, we focus - primarily - upon how the party (or, more specifically, what we might call its ideological 'think-tank') has attempted to surmount the task of having to appeal to fundamentally differing textual recipients in fundamentally different ways. This 'super-discourse' is of course a key manifestation of the "permanent contest for dominance between discourses which characterises much political debate"[11]. At the heart of political activity, we will argue below, is the attempt to establish dominant points of view.

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[5]Crystal, David: *An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Language and Languages.* Oxford: Blackwell 1992

[6]Simpson, Paul: *Language, Ideology and Point of View.* London: Routledge 1993, p. 120

[7]ibid., p. 121

[8]ibid.

[9]ibid.

[10]Fairclough, cited in: Simpson, ibid.

[11]Good, Colin: *Language, Politics and Ideology.* Unpublished Inaugural Lecture, University of Durham 1995

A fundamental criterion for choosing the material informing our discussions below has been, then, its relevance to our attempts to discover and describe the generation of this 'super-discourse.' Our selection of discursive material from the wealth of sub-discourses which can come under the general notion of 'PDS-discourse' (which, we understand broadly as including the PDS-related discourse(s) of other parties and of political commentators/journalists in general) has further been motivated, alongside by a fundamental consideration of its general thematic relevance to our general leitmotiv of *opposition* (see below) by, in particular, the following ancillary considerations:

*to give as broad a flavour as possible of the inner-party positions and their respective discourses ·

*to highlight the range of responses the party has generated from extra-PDS commentators

In pursuing this endeavour, we draw upon a very wide range of texts: press commentaries across the spectrum (from *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* to *Neues Deutschland*) magazine articles, electoral material, programmatic material, inter-disciplinary academic writing (articles in journals etc.), biographic and autobiographic material, newspapers and television interviews and chat-shows etc., in the attempt to give a flavour of the party's many faces.

One point must be emphasised at the outset: it is not, we will argue, that the linguistic devices underpinning the 'discursive somersaults' performed by the PDS in grappling with the complex task of holding together a party under whose auspices, as we will show, a plethora of ideological positions co-exist uncomfortably, is in any way unusual; we start from the premise that the features we describe are evident in the discourse of *all* parties. It is merely the case that as a party so beset with problematic heterogeneity and simultaneously taking on the arduous task of coming to terms with a highly problematic historico-political *'Altlast',* the PDS offers a particularly revealing picture of how recourse is had in any ideology to means which provide a level of abstraction/generality upon which potential anomaly might be viewed from a perspective in which it is by-passed or backgrounded - always assuming, of course, that the target audiences concerned accept the abstraction involved! As we will see below, the attempts in 1995, for example, of PDS leaders and ideologues to 'sell' an abstract conceptual model of *opposition*, in which the term was drawn widely to enframe both a governmental role within the system and a fundamental 'extra-system' oppositionality at one and the same time, fell foul of many in the party, for whom it was symptomatic of what was seen as an increasing position of opportunistic pandering to the demands and dictates of the political

establishment. A dominant discourse, as Townson has said, has to be credible; the hearts and minds of the groups it targets have to be won.[12] Real circumstances and/or pre-existing classifications may aid or frustrate attempts to establish its dominance. (Telling workers, for example, that unpaid *Mehrarbeit* was a *Normerhöhung* did not prevent the 1953 uprising in the GDR.). Dominant discourses are ones which become 'naturalised'. Their ontological stability is taken for granted: a *constructed* reality is taken to be what *really* is.

The aim is to treat the theme of opposition broadly: our interest is in examining not only the PDS's self-styled - as we shall call it - 'oppositional' role (cf. its well-known slogans, "*Wir sind Opposition*", "*Alle wollen regieren, wir nicht*", which we will discuss below) and the concomitant inner-party polemics upon that nature of that opposition, but rather to consider, too, some of the features of the discourse of the uncommonly vociferous opposition which the PDS, as the legal successor to a state party with a tarnished and compromised past, has engendered and encountered in its emergence onto the post-*Wende*[13] pan-German political scene. Spearheading that opposition has been CDU-sponsored Patrick Moreau, a leading French commentator upon the PDS, the language of whose sharply right-wing perspective upon the party we will examine in some detail. We look closely at the intra-PDS opposition[14]: at the party's high level of factionalisation and ideological in-fighting and at the concomitant attempts by party ideologues to articulate positions broad enough to take in the (fundamentally!) conflicting world-views.

GENERAL THEORETICAL APPROACH: CRITICAL LINGUISTICS

While we draw upon and bring together an inter-disciplinary range of (East and West) German and non-German perspectives, i.e. the work of prominent historians (e.g. Weber, Fulbrook), politicians (von Weizsäcker, Erhard Eppler, Jens Reich), politologists (Gorski and Markovits, Moreau, Pfahl-Traughber, Jürgen Lang, Gerner, Sontheimer) sociologists (Neugebauer, Stöss, Koch) psychoanalysts (Moser),

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[12]Townson, Michael: *Mother-tongue and fatherland.* Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press 1992; see p. 24ff.

[13]We use the term *Wende* to refer to the period in the GDR between autumn 1989 (when the drive for political change began to gather particular momentum) through to the 'free' elections to the *Volkskammer* in March of the following year.

[14]Neugebauer and Stöss's broad model of the main forces at work in the PDS touches upon precisely this intra-party *opposition*: "Während die Reformer und die kleine Gruppe der Fundamentalisten den Parteivorstand besetzen und dort auch mehr oder weniger gut miteinander auskommen, bilden die Traditionalisten die eigentliche *innerparteiliche Opposition*, eine Partei in der Partei. Der Vorstand bemüht sich redlich im Interesse des Organisationserhalts, die Traditionalisten einzubinden, was diesen de facto die Macht einer Sperrminorität zuweist ..." Neugebauer, Gero/Richard Stöss: *Die PDS. Geschichte. Organisation. Wähler. Konkurrenten.* Opladen: Leske & Budrich 1996, p. 302 (my italics)

journalists (Falkner, Huber) and linguists (Good, Reiher, Volmert, Townson, Schlösser, Burkhardt), our *primary* focus is a linguistic one; as such our attempt is to bolt an essentially linguistic perspective onto - and thus complement - the multiplicity of existing politological and sociological studies about the party. This aim was motivated in part by a general feeling that all too frequently (often highly emotive) politological, journalistic and historical commentaries appear to be lacking in the wherewithal to articulate their comments upon and/or objections to certain features of PDS discourse without recourse to emotive, reductive and simplistic categories. For example, PDS discourse is frequently accused of, and sweepingly dismissed as being, 'populist' or 'undemocratic' with little attempt to set the features upon which these accusations are based against any sort of comparative yardstick, i.e. to examine how the features of PDS discourse objected to are different from those witnessed in the discourse of other parties. All too often, too, an emotive truth/lie schema can be seen to creep into such studies which, we will presently seek to argue, offers something of a misplaced perspective in a world where 'objecitve truth' is an elusive and illusory goal and where notions of 'right' and 'wrong', 'true' and 'false' are frequently informed by little more than the bias of the individual commentator.

Our focus, then, is on the use of language in the political domain, with particular exemplary reference to the discourse - or more correctly *discourses* - of the PDS, and to the PDS-related discourses of extra-PDS observers; more specifically still, we focus upon - as our leitmotiv - the particular theme of 'opposition' within these discourses. This focus is not predicated upon a perception of language as a mere descriptive tool for 'reflecting' and relating putatively 'extra-linguistic' political events, upon a perception, in other words, which sees language and politics as two essentially distinguishable domains. It is a focus which recognises language as a central constituent of politics itself, dialectically inter-related to it, creative of that politics. This perception of the relationship between language and politics (which we view as a microcosmic model of a greater relationship between language and social reality in general) is firmly rooted in the tradition of critical linguistics centred around the work of Fowler, Kress, Hodge and Trew et al. at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s. While we have generally chosen to 'localise' theoretical explanations in the main body of the ensuing text as the means best suited to effecting - to re-invoke a worn phrase - a unity of theory and practice, a few general remarks upon the basics of the theoretical approach adopted by the critical linguists will be germane at this juncture.

In pursuing their central endeavour - exploring the relationship between language and ideology ("the value systems and sets of beliefs which reside in texts"[15]), the latter reject what Grace has called the "mapping view" of language, doubtless the most commonly held, whereby language is:

> regarded as ultimately representing ... a real world - an objective reality the existence of which is independent of any observers ...[16]

In this view:

> The real world is a closed system ... there is a single finite real world which is common to all mankind and, therefore, to the speakers of all languages.[17]

Here, language (texts, sentences, lexical items) is seen as reconstituting a small piece of that 'reality' which, as it were, has been 'sliced off'; it is conceived of as:

> a way of classifying everything that belongs to the real world: it is therefore analogous to a map. That is, the relation that exists between that language and the real world is analogous to the relation between a map and the territory which it maps ... Analogously, a lexical item in a particular language (in this view -MD) corresponds to a certain territory within the real world. The territory to which it corresponds encompasses just the set of real-world phenomena to which it may properly refer.[18]

This view of language Grace contrasts with what he calls the "reality construction" view, a central element in the credo of the critical linguists. Here, primacy is given to what Grace calls our "*effective* environment"[19], our environment as we *perceive* it and respond to it. This effective environment is a socio-cultural *construct*, not a natural one. The medium for its construction is language. As such:

> language is shaped by its culture and a culture is given expression in its language, to such an extent that it is impossible to say where one ends and the other begins, i.e. what belongs to language and what to culture ... it is impossible to draw a clear line between thinking i.e. bringing a thought into being and encoding the thought, i.e. putting it into words ... it is misleading

---

[15]Simpson, op. cit., p. 5

[16]Grace, George William: *The Linguistic Construction of Reality.* Beckenam, New York: Croom Helm/Methuen 1987, p. 7

[17]ibid., p. 26

[18]ibid.

[19]ibid., p. 3

> to talk without proper qualification of human beings as all living in a common objectively given world ... each language-culture system must to some extent have its own conceptual world that is the product of its own history - a world that has been created continuously by its speakers throughout history.[20]

Ultimately this is a position which recognises the mediating role played by perception[21] in the creation of reality, a reality which "has no meaningful structure except in connection with the standards we employ to ascribe qualities to it"[22]. (This, as Shapiro observes, is not the same as the subjectivist position "that there is nothing in the world until we cognise it or speak of it"[23].)

As such then, if the 'reality construction' view is accepted - and thus the view that the "representations provided by our languages are regarded as nothing more than the *models* which serve as surrogates for the real world"[24] and that "language mediates our world in both production and interpretation"[25]: we "formulate thoughts in language, and by formulating them we also form them"[26] - then politically motivated language must be about attempting to generate acceptance of a given *version* of reality, of what 'really' is/what 'really' happened in a given situation, to win acceptance for a particular "angle of telling"[27]. Language, as Good has observed, *is* politics[28]. Politics, in turn, *is* language. If we accept this premise, any model of reality can only lay claim to the status of 'truth' inasmuch as it might be the one most broadly accepted; its 'truth' value is not, however, an ontologically stable given. Such a model is open to subversion by a differing perspective, set of values or beliefs. For this reason our survey of PDS historiography in chapter 1, for example, is not based upon an approach which seeks to 'prove' or 'disprove' it as 'true' or 'false', but rather on one which seeks to exemplify - by setting it against different perspectives upon the 'same' reality described - by what means the PDS has sought to win

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[20]ibid., pp. 10, 11

[21]"[I]n the reality construction view, our sensory data are regarded as falling seriously short of constituting an adequate picture of the real world. They are considered to be very incomplete and unsystematic, are seen as not adding up to anything like a representative sample of what is out there. On the contrary, all we can do (according to this view) is invent explanations for the sensory data which are attempts to make sense of the whole of the sensory input. To put it differently, all we can do is theorise about reality, or to put it more precisely still, to construct models of it."(ibid., p. 6)

[22]M. Shapiro, cited in: Townson, op. cit., p. 20

[23]ibid.

[24]Grace, op. cit., p. 7

[25]Wilson, John: *Politically Speaking.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1990, p. 14

[26]S. L. Rubinstein, in: Towson, op. cit., p. 20

[27]Simpson, op. cit., p. 2

[28]Good, Colin: *Language, Politics and Ideology.* op. cit.

acceptance for *one particular way* of looking at its role (and that of the SED) in the '*friedliche Revolution*' which culminated in the disappearance of the GDR as a geo-political entity. As Fowler has put it, "comparison reveals the variety of representations"[29]. In examining PDS historiography, our interest is in the type of "confrontation of different views of 'the same' object"[30] whose very nature is at the heart of the critical linguist's rejection of the mapping model of language. Our premise here is ultimately that to talk of an inherent 'correctness' on the part of any of these models is meaningless; what we can challenge is how 'reasonable' this version is *perceived* to be by the audiences it targets, how widely accepted it is/has been and - with particular reference to the political domain - how successful it has been in the central political endeavour of self-legitimisation and marshalling support. ("[O]ne of the functions of politics is to generate acceptance in the public mind"[31].) Simpson sums it up well as follows:

> Exploring the distinction between truth and reality is another part of the critical linguistic creed. As particular linguistic codes embody particular realities, then nothing in language can be regarded as truly objective or neutral. Certainly while it is difficult to challenge [a] ... piece of language on the criterion of truth, the issue of which version of reality it functions to represent is entirely another matter.[32]

The eschewal of a 'normative' or 'prescriptive' approach is well expressed by Wilson who remarks that:

> In classic terms we are interested (from the linguistic point of view -MD) in *describing* what happened, not in *prescribing* what should happen. In order to understand what politicians do with language it is important to understand what it is possible to do with language in general.[33] (my italics)

With particular reference to the political domain Schelenz rightly observes that:

> Die politische Sprachkritik stellt den Sprachgebrauch in Bereich der Politik zu Diskussion. Der Linguist sollte primär nicht nach den politischen Inhalten

---

[29]Roger Fowler, cited in: Good, Colin: *Presse und Soziale Wirklichkeit.* Düsseldorf: Schwann 1985, p. 9

[30]Grace, op. cit., p. 18

[31]Lübbe, cited in: Townson, op. cit., p. 199

[32]Simpson, op. cit., p. 108

[33]Wilson, op. cit., p. 15

> fragen - Sprachkritik ist keine Sachkritik - sondern nach den Ausdrucksformen der Handlungsbeteiligten.[34]

As such, then, our focus is upon the mechanisms by which "things are made to look in language"[35].

It must be emphasised at this juncture that the eschewal of a prescriptive approach is not to imply that the ensuing discursive analysis will or even could be 'value-free'. If we start from the premise that there is no extra-linguistic 'objective reality', then critical linguists, as products of their socialisation, cannot but approach a text with a given set of constructed assumptions and beliefs. Thus, as Townson has rightly observed, there can be no neutral 'meta-language'; personal positions will colour even the most ardent attempts at 'objectivity'; thus:

> it is well-nigh impossible to discuss politico-linguistic phenomena without 'revealing' one's own political position ... Intellectual honesty and the need for more effective analysis both require that this should be clearly stated.[36]

Recognising the elusiveness of the goal, however, does not preclude striving towards it, and explicit analytical procedures at least reduce the interference from the position of the observer.

In the view of the critical linguist, then, choosing and generating acceptance of a particular way of perceiving some aspect of the 'real' world and its attendant processes - *selecting* from the infinite permutations on offer in language for representing it - must therefore be at the heart of any attempt to win support for a given ideology and, thus, must be at the heart of political action. Critical linguists start from the premise that language reproduces ideology which in turn is inextricably linked with the socio-political context in which it functions:

> Language (in the view of the critical linguist - MD) is not used in a contextless vacuum; rather, it is used in a host of discourse contexts, contexts which are impregnated with the ideology of social systems and institutions.[37]

> ... our perceptions and world view are conditioned by the language in which we are socialised.[38]

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[34]Schelenz, Bernhard: *Der politische Sprachgebrauch der Republikaner.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 1992, p. 28

[35]ibid., p. 4

[36]Townson, op. cit., p. 123

Explicit procedures for exploring how dominant ideologies are manifested in language, how language is integral to perception, thus allow a 'way in' to exploring *politically* motivated language, language aiming to persuade people to perceive things/conceive of things in certain ways, to share or accept an ideology. Politics and ideology, it must be stressed, are not thus understood as synonymous: politics, as well as referring to an institutionalised, day-to-day administrative and procedural routine in which we are not interested here, is about persuasion, it is about generating *acceptance* of ideologies, achieving their dominance, or about adapting and honing existing ideologies in the light of external exigencies; whether or not those who attempt to marshal support for a given way of perceiving the world actually 'genuinely' or 'really' share the ideology - the system of beliefs - they are constructing (and thus attempting to have others believe) is a very different and complex issue. We will dwell below upon this crucial and problematic disparity between (as we call it) 'tactics' and 'conviction'.

The issue of *selection* is a key element in the critical linguists' aim of describing "how ideological positions are reflected through linguistic choice"[39]. It underpins the critical linguists' system of transitivity (to which we give particular attention in chapter 4 below) which sets out to "show how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality"[40], how the *choice* of linguistic structure can effectively encode a particular world-view. Kress, Hodge, Trew et al. see language as "consisting of a related set of categories and processes" of "'models' which describe the interrelation of objects and events. These models are basic schemata which derive in their turn from the visual perceptual processes of human beings".[41] The choice of 'model' is dialectically inter-related to the world-view it enframes. As a simple example, 'X died', is a very different way of expressing the 'reality' of X's death, than is the focally different choice 'Y *killed* X', neither of which depart from what Simpson calls a "notional parameter of 'truth'"[42] - the 'truth' of X's death. The first model might be regarded as obfuscatory inasmuch as a syntactic structure has been chosen which selectively 'edits out' what many would perceive as a piece of information of fundamental causal relevance; this is a very different thing from saying, however, that it is 'untrue'. In other words, the critical linguist is interested in

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[37]Simpson, op. cit., p. 6

[38]Townson, op. cit., p. 24

[39]Wilson, op. cit., p. 12

[40]Simpson, op. cit, p. 88

[41]Kress, Günther/Robert Hodge: *Language as Ideology*. London, Boston etc.: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1979, p. 7

[42]Simpson, op. cit., p. 106

how a particular perspective upon a real world process is reflected in the choice of syntactic structure, in the selective mediation of information, in lexical choice, the choice of categories we use to describe things. As Trew observes:

> linking particular events to a network of causal relations and to structures of objects or forces is part of all judgement and perception. This idea is commonplace in philosophical and methodological discussion.[43]

A particularly graphic account of the role of *categorisation* in creating cognitive structures and thus shaping perception is provided by Edelmann[44] who observes that:

> Perception involves categorisation. To place an object in one class of things rather than another establishes its central characteristics and creates assumptions about matters that are not seen ... categorisations give meaning both to what is observed and to what is assumed ... a term *is* the thought it evokes, not a tool for expressing a pre-existing thought ... Political and ideological debate consists of very largely of efforts to win acceptance of a particular categorisation of an issue in the face of competing efforts on behalf of a different one.[45]

Edelmann shows how classification systems can neatly and conveniently gloss over complex causal relationships:

> Terms like 'mental illness', 'criminal' and 'drug abuse' focus attention on the alleged weakness and pathology of the individual, while diverting attention from their pathological, social and economic environments.[46]

We will have much to say on the circumvention of complex causality below.

Political actors select from the 'contradictory cognitions ... available for use'[47] in the attempt to marshal support for their own particular world-view or cause. As we shall see below in chapter 3, the PDS will have gained much if it can secure wide public acceptance and thus cognition of its categorisation of the broad range of positions

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[43] Trew, op. cit., p. 96

[44]see Edelman, Murray: *Political Language: Words that Succeed and Policies that Fail.* New York, London: Academic Press 1977, esp. pp. 23-41

[45]ibid., pp. 23, 24, 25

[46]ibid., p. 27

[47]ibid., p. 27

represented in the party as a healthy and positively-loaded *Pluralismus*[48], if it can secure preference of that cognition of 'reality' over another version of (or perspective upon) that reality, in which that selfsame breadth of positions might be enframed in more negatively-loaded terms such as 'disunity' or 'lack of direction'. Successful ideologies are ones which establish dominant perceptions:

> Wem es gelingt, sprachlich fixierte Perspektiven von der Wirklichkeit durchzusetzen, der hat den Kampf um die Durchsetzung politischer Positionen zu seinem Gunsten entschieden.[49]

Selective mediation is, of course, at the heart of contextualisation; the critical linguist, who rejects the mapping view's position that:

> content consists of the set of real-world situations to which [an] ... expression can truly refer, or of the conditions which a situation must meet in order to belong to that set[50]

and thus rejects its proponents' conception of linguistic expressions "as if their relation to real world situations were an immediate one"[51] must, perforce, reject the idea of 'autonomous text' which, as Grace puts it, "assumes that the expression so specifies its own meaning that it is completely understandable without reference to any contextual information ..."[52]; "we cannot", Grace says, "understand the relation between a linguistic expression and a real-world situation to which it refers unless we recognise the mediating roles played by the speaker and by the context of the speech event".[53] Ultimately, like Searle, critical linguists reject the 'zero context' notion of literal meaning proffered in traditional semantic theory, i.e. the idea that:

> the literal meaning of a sentence is entirely determined by the meanings of its parts and their syntactical combination in the sentence. This axiom has the consequence that the notion of the literal meaning of sentences is a context free notion and various authors have expressed the idea that the literal meaning of a sentence is the meaning it has in the 'null context' or the 'zero

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[48]"Vor dem Zusammenbruch des real existierenden Sozialismus gehörte Pluralismus zu den besonders geschätzten Grundwerten der westdeutschen Demokratie ... Pluralismus in Sachen Weltanschauung gehörte indessen nie zu den ostdeutschen Grundwerten." Teubert, Wolfgang: "Zum politisch-gesellschaftlichen Diskurs im Postsozialismus." In: Reiher/Läzer (eds.): *Von Buschzulage und Ossinachweis.* op. cit., p. 286

[49]Schelenz, op. cit, p. 19

[50]Grace, op. cit., p. 26

[51]ibid.

[52]ibid.

[53]ibid.

> context'; that is, the literal meaning is the meaning a sentence has apart from any context whatsoever.[54]

We share Searle's view that:

> the meaning of a sentence only has application against a background of assumptions and practices that are not representable as part of the meaning.[55]

In chapter 1, for example, we attempt to show how a basic proposition such as 'Hans Modrow is a reformer' acquires very different 'meanings' in different temporal and spatial frames of reference. The very superordinacy of keywords like *reform(er)* is what lends them the conflationary potential which make them so popular with and manipulable by the political actor. In other words, they can be readily transferred - with potential ideological benefit - between quite distinct frames of reference, which can be (conveniently) confused if the recipients are unaware that any uniformity suggested may reside more on the level of sign than of denotation. Historian Mary Fulbrook touches upon precisely this point in observing that:

> Words such as "socialism" and "communism" are common currency in the cut-and thrust of contemporary politics - and are not always used with the precision of meaning necessary for scholarly debate.[56]

and thus touches upon the crucial point that political debate and scholarly debate are two very different things. Fulbrook shows how it was precisely through a process of "political and analytical conflation"[57] that many on the right in Germany were able to seize upon the demise of 'Marxist-Leninist' socialism as evidence of the triumph of capitalism over a generic socialism per se; in other words the whole range of vastly different conceptions of socialism were sweepingly distilled into one manifestation of the category and the failure or demise of this single manifestation then presented - without any attempt to differentiate or relativise - as undermining or disqualifying the whole category. Fulbrook identifies how the CDU used its "Nie wieder Sozialismus" slogan to great effect in lumping together the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*) and the newly formed and "politically very different"[58] East German SPD (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) on the conflationary level of the

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[54]Searle, John R.: "*The Background of Meaning.*" In: Searle, John/F. Kiefer/M. Bierwisch (eds.): *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics.* Dordrecht: D. Reidel 1980, p. 221

[55]ibid., p. 223

[56]Fulbrook, Mary: *Studies in European History. The Two Germanies 1945-90. Problems of Interpretation.* London: Macmillan 1992, p. 4

[57]ibid.

[58]Fulbrook, ibid.

verbal form <*sozialistisch*>[59] This conflationary potential in language will form a key element in our discussions below.

Ultimately, our approach to language is based upon a recognition of its fundamental fluidity, upon a recognition that if language represents mere models of reality, which in turn is that language, then nothing in language can be hard and fast. Like Saussure, we see the relationship between sign and denotation as essentially arbitrary one[60]; meaning is derived from context. Schelenz aptly observes that:

> Wörter und Begriffe sind Symbole für die Gegenstände der Welt. Die Zuordnung zwischen dem bezeichnenden Lautbild und dem Bezeichneten ist dabei beliebig. Zwar muß die Zuordnung von Ausdruck und Inhalt in der Kommunikation weitgehend normiert sein, es bleibt jedoch der sprachlichen Kreativität (Performanz) des Menschen überlassen, Gegenstände und Sachverhalte im konkreten Kommunikationszusammenhang mittels varianter Ausdrücke zu bezeichnen. Diese Grundtatsache der Sprache bleibt im Bereich der Politik nicht ohne praktische Folgen. Wer etwas mit einem 'passenden' Ausdruck belegt, kann Alltags- bzw. Politik-Realitäten versteckt bewerten, verfälschen, verhüllen oder gar erst konstituieren[61]

and Mauthner observes that:

> Die Sprache ist aber kein Gegenstand des Gebrauchs und auch kein Werkzeug, sie ist überhaupt kein Gegenstand; sie ist gar nichts anderes als ihr Gebrauch. Sprache ist Sprachgebrauch.[62]

Kraus's aphoristic and percipient remark that

> Je näher man ein Wort ansieht, um so ferner blickt es zurück[63]

is true not only of the individual lexeme, but of language in general. The more broadly or deeply we contextualise, the more we shift perception(s) - and as meaning *is* perception, the more we challenge meaning.

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[59]See note I. at the end of this chapter.

[60]An enlightening account of the "Willkürlichkeit von Bennenungen" is provided by Burkhardt, Armin: "Palast versus Schloß oder: Wem gehören die Symbole." In: Reiher/Läzer (eds.): *Von Buschzulage und Ossinachweis.* op. cit., p. 137

[61]Schelenz, op. cit., p. 17

[62]Mauthner, Fritz: "Sprache und Sozialismus." In: Heringer, Hans-Jürgen (ed.): *Holzfeuer im Hölzernen Ofen.* Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag 1988, p. 37

If our premise is that language has no inherent, ontologically stable meaning, then this is a position which must, by extension, reject any position which categorises language in moralistic terms as *inherently* 'good' or *inherently* 'bad'. Klemperer's position that the Nazi party:

> durchtränkt ... Worte und Wortgruppen und Satzformen mit ihrem Gift, macht ... die Sprache ihrem fürchterlichen System dienstbar ... Man sollte viele Worte des nazistischen Sprachgebrauchs für lange Zeit, und einige für immer, ins Massengrab legen[64]

has been widely questioned for its failure to take into account the very specific and narrow socio-historical context in which that 'tarnished' language functioned. As Townson puts it:

> There can be no doubt that language can be used as a force for good or as a force for evil ... but it is a bold extension then to claim that language *per se* thus becomes good or evil, and it is even more debatable whether, within a given language, there is then a 'good' grammar and an 'evil' grammar.[65]

Townson touches here upon another important point: just as critical linguists eschew the pursuit of a prescriptive, normative 'true' version of an 'objective' reality, so they eschew a prescriptive, normative approach to questions of style as incompatible with a theoretical premise in which language seen is an integral part of *creative* perception. In this they would accord with Schelenz:

> Es kann jedoch nicht Ziel und Aufgabe des Sprachkritikers sein, als Moralist der Sprache aufzutreten, d. h. bestimmte Sprachnormen vorzuschreiben, nach denen man sich zu richten habe. Die Kritik muß sich an sprachwissenschaftlichen Kriterien (Wortmaterial, Wortgebrauch etc.) orientieren.[66]

In summary, then, ours is a position which is neatly summed up by Schäffner and Porsch:

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[63]cited in: Volmert, Johannes: "Die 'Altparteien' außer Fassung: Reaktionen und Kampagnen auf die Wahlerfolge der PDS - ein Pressespiegel." In: Brie, Michael/Martin Herzig/Thomas Koch (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde & Kontroverse Analysen.* Köln: Papyrossa Verlag 1995, p. 162

[64]Klemperer, Victor: *LTI. Notizbuch eines Philologen.* Leipzig: Reclam 1975, p. 22

[65]Townson, op. cit., p. 151

[66]Schelenz, op. cit., p. 24

> What we are interested in is not language (or words) in its isolation as a mere object of research; what interests us is how social reality is created and shaped by language ... our assumption is that social reality is not only reflected in language and in communication, but that it is also consistently renewed by and in communication.[67]

PERIODICISATION

Our treatment of the theme of opposition in PDS and PDS-related discourse is embedded in a framework which can (very!) broadly be said to be chronological:

In chapters 1 and 2 we take a close look at PDS historiography. The focus of our interest here is upon how the PDS (or, more specifically, its 'think-tank') has - as successor to the SED - generally presented the (problematic) 'reality' of its relation (and that of its political predecessor, the SED) to opposition movements in the GDR, in particular during the *Wendezeit*[68]. We look at 'competing' historiographies which offer very different perspectives of that same 'reality'. We argue that the PDS has relied heavily upon a discourse of what we call 'causal circumvention', in which complex causal problems are backgrounded and bypassed; in examining its linguistic features, we attempt to show how, inter alia, this discourse of 'causal circumvention' taps the conflationary potential of broad ideologemes such as *Opposition*, *Reform* and *Sozialismus* and suggests - at a high level of abstraction - a party past in which the ordinary members of the party rank and file - cast as the inner-SED *opposition* - marched hand in hand with the - on the level of signifier identical - extra-SED *opposition*. In this picture, we argue, a telescoping of temporal and spatial frames of reference plays a crucial role. While Moreau et al. have strongly challenged PDS historiography as a *Geschichtsfälschung* (see below), we will argue that this is an unhelpful perspective from which to voice criticism; it is hard to show, we will argue, how the PDS's historiographic picture can be said to depart from any broad 'notional parameter of truth'. What is at issue, we will argue, is the level of abstraction involved. In keeping with the theoretical premise outlined above, our general assumption here is that there is no ontologically 'correct' or 'stable' history which can lay claim to the status of 'absolute truth', to the status of enframing an 'objective reality'; history is about competing interpretations - each vying for broad acceptance - of often complex processes and events whose 'reality' is dialectically

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[67]Schäffner, Christina/Peter Porsch: "Meeting the challenge on the path to democracy: discursive strategies in government declarations in Germany and the former GDR." In: *Discourse and Society*. vol. 4 (1). London/New Delhi: SAGE 1993, p. 35

[68]see footnote 13

informed by the interpretation we give them. As such the way we fashion 'history' in language is an inextricable element in the creation of that history; it does not stand outside of language and independently of it.

In chapter 2 we set the inner-PDS *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*[69] described in chapter 1 against the backdrop of a wider, earlier, pan-German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, and examine the reliability of using - as has frequently been done - the features of 'causal circumvention' highlighted as an unproblematic basis for challenging the PDS's credentials as a democratic player. Our interest is not, we stress, in proving that the PDS is or is not undemocratic. Such a question is beyond the purview of a linguistic study. What we can address, however, is *how* the question is posited, against which background of assumptions, in what contextual situations. We look closely at just who it is who has frequently and vociferously challenged the PDS's democratic credentials and ask both whether this 'causal circumvention' can in any way be said to be exclusive to the PDS and whether it is not the case that, in the political domain at least, the highly superordinate term *democracy* - with its mythical, cult status - is not infrequently instrumentalised for the purposes of contravening the very values it is widely held to embody.

Our particular interest in chapter 3 is in the 'intra-PDS opposition' (see footnote 14 above), in the plethora of different and opposing forces which have made up the complex party tapestry in the period between 1989 and 1995. (At the same time we point to the evidence of an evolutionary background stretching well back into the GDR period.) We focus upon the ways in which leading ideologues have sought to generate a 'unifying' discourse - of which the overarching, vaguely drawn notion of *demokratischer Sozialismus* is emblematic - under whose banner the uncomfortable co-existence of the different party groupings with their fundamentally differing sub-discourses might be made to *look* comfortable. The ideologeme *Opposition* - straddling as it does the complex boundary between 'revolutionary' and 'revisionist' approaches (i.e. what kind of opposition to offer in a United Germany) - is itself, like *Sozialismus*, we argue, a central element in this 'unifying' discourse of 'lowest common denominators'. Ultimately, we argue, any uniformity of world-view suggested is located upon a very high level of abstraction, where the denotative essence of any *uniformly* accepted *demokratischer Sozialismus* seems to be little more than a vaguely defined opposition to the here and now, a nebulous attitude of defiance towards the pan-German polity, coupled, in many instances, with an equally vague and variously manifested attitude of 'GDR nostalgia'.

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[69]We will comment upon this term below.

In chapter 4 we focus upon the 'to govern or not to govern' debate in the PDS in the *Superwahljahr* 1994. In the wake of the PDS's surprising successes in the *Sachsen-Anhalt* State election (*Landeswahl*), the party was forced to readdress the nature of its oppositionality against a background in which it was increasingly becoming a force to be reckoned with, yet had consistently styled itself an 'extra-system' (and thus non-governmental?) opposition. Drawing a parallel with the *Realo/Fundi* debate which bedevilled the *Grüne* in the eighties, we examine the language of the highly complex polemic between what we call (mindful of a convenient, polarised oversimplification!) the PDS's 'pro-' and 'anti-involvement' camps: between, on the one hand, those (such as the 'pragmatic' leadership) who appeared to favour the party's incorporation into strategic, (quasi-) governmental alliances with other parties and, on the other, those in the PDS for whom 'opposition' appeared to mean strict non-involvement in what was perceived as the corruptive machinery of conventional power structures. In particular, we look at the discursive means deployed by an evidently 'pro-involvement' leadership in its attempts to effect a complex '*Spagat*': that of on the one hand now justifying (both within the party and without) the PDS's incorporation into establishment power positions while, on the other, simultaneously retaining the '*Bewegung*'-style oppositional (and *non*-governmental?) mantle. Central to this endeavour is again, we attempt to show, the tapping of the conflationary potential of highly superordinate terms such as *Opposition* and *Verantwortung* which allow a potential mixing of frames of reference and thus a potential (con-)fusion of what might easily be regarded as conflicting or contradictory perspectives. Exploring in some detail the critical linguists' system of transitivity in language, we seek to show in what ways the leadership's *Spagat* is manifested in the syntactic structure of key electoral promises. We look, too, at the linguistic staging of the '*Populismus-Debatte*' surrounding the PDS, seeking not so much to offer an elusive, empirically stable, yes/no-style answer to the question of whether or not the party is populist, but rather, as with our study in chapter 2 upon the party's 'democratic' status, to examine the linguistic environment in which the question has generally (within the political domain) been posited: *how*?, *by whom*? and in *what circumstances*? Ultimately we ask whether it is not the case that the term *Populismus*, like *antidemokratisch*, has been widely used in the political arena as a cudgel against the PDS by those whose unproblematic premise is the unchallengeable sanctity of their own position. It is hoped that drawing attention to some of the features of the 'linguistic climate' in which the debate has been conducted will help to prompt a more sane and rational debate upon this and other crucial PDS-related issues, a debate unhindered by emotional responses and emotive categories of the type we encounter so widely in current commentaries upon the party.

In chapter 5 we look at the integrative status of PDS 'oppositionality' by 1995, focusing in particular on the events surrounding the crucial 4th *Parteitag* in January of that year. We show how party leaders and ideologues attempted to proffer a widely drawn *Opposition* (in which the category was extended to include a governmental role), which constituted something of a 'composite model' taking in the inner-party positions on the nature of the party's oppositionality.

In particular, we look at how party leaders used language in the attempt to mediate a *Spagat* between now actively challenging (or being *seen*, at least, to actively challenge) the problematic 'traditionalist' forces within the party ranks - so much a condition for the party's acceptance by the political establishment - and simultaneously playing down the challenge upon these forces on account of their vital symbolic significance for considerable sections of the party membership and electorate. In the ensuing '*Stalinismus-Debatte*', as it was widely referred to in the press, the element of conflation, we will seek to show, yet again played a crucial role.

Notes:

I.

Where, in the attempt to illustrate the conflationary potential in language, our particular focus is upon lexemes as verbal forms, as signifiants, the terms concerned have been entered, if this has been thought helpful, in the following markings < ... >

(This we hasten to add, illustrates a *primary* focus and not any attempt to eschew a dialectic understanding of the relationship between sign and denotation; there is no suggestion that form can be considered entirely independently of content; we will comment below on the somewhat misleading *Leerformel* metaphor popular in linguistic analysis.).

Thus, the following would represent an attempt to provide a more graphic illustration of the conflation, on the level of verbal form, identified by Fulbrook above:

<*sozial*>istische Einheitspartei Deutschlands

is equated with <*sozial*>demokratische Partei Deutschlands

II.

PID is used throughout as an abbreviation for the weekly newsletter issued by then *Presse- und Informationsdienst des Bundesvorstandes der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus.*

CHAPTER 1
THE DISCOURSE OF CAUSAL CIRCUMVENTION (I): DEALING WITH HISTORY? - THE PDS AND *OPPOSITION* IN THE *WENDEZEIT*

> (die) ... Auseinandersetzung mit der DDR-Vergangenheit ... ist für die demokratietheoretische Einschätzung der ehemaligen Staatspartei von besonderer Bedeutung, zeigt sich hier doch besonders deutlich, inwieweit ein politischer Lernprozeß tatsächlich erfolgte.[1]

The above quotation typifies the stance adopted by numerous commentators in respect of PDS historiography: the PDS's 'democratic' credentials are to be measured in terms of its willingness to confront its past head on. In the present chapter we shall examine some of the typical features of PDS historiography and proceed - via a detailed examination of Heinrich Bortfeldt's crucial monograph of 1991 on the SED's transition to the PDS[2] - to examine, in chapter 2, the appropriateness of using these as a basis for assessing the PDS's '*Demokratiefähigkeit*'. One point must be emphasised at the outset. Given the well-documented wealth of inner-party positions (*Strömungen*) and the concomitant range of competing discourses at work under the party auspices, our (necessarily reductive) picture of PDS historiography is predicated largely upon (and thus seen through the primary perspective of) the historiographic discourse of party leaders (Bisky, Gysi et al.) and leading party ideologues (Brie, Neubert, Wolf). It is these latter whom we enframe as the 'PDS' whilst mindful of the reduction involved. The latter's work in relation to the party's GDR history, we will seek to show, can very broadly be understood as an attempt to locate what might be called a broad 'historiographic terrain'; in other words theirs is an attempt to formulate a conceptual model of, and thus secure an understanding of, PDS history which serves to legitimise the party as widely as possible, both internally (i.e. within the party; amongst the complex of forces which make up the party membership) and externally (before the voting public; within the political arena).

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[1]Pfahl-Traughber, Armin: "Wandlung zur Demokratie? Die programmatische Entwicklung der PDS." In: *Deutschland Archiv.* 4/95, p. 361

[2]Bortfeldt, Heinrich: *Von der* SED *zur PDS - Aufbruch zu neuen Ufern?* Berlin: Kommission Politische Bildung des Parteivorstandes der PDS 1990

THE PDS'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE SED

> Wir sind Mitglieder einer Partei, die aus den unterschiedlichsten Traditionen hervorging. Die Ursprünge unserer Partei liegen im Aufbruch des Herbstes 1989 in der DDR, als wir aus der SED heraus dazu beitragen wollten, die Gesellschaft in der DDR umfassend zu reformieren.[3]

Since its inception the PDS has faced a major problem: on the one hand it has had to seek discursively to divorce itself from, and establish an identity which clearly distinguishes it from, the SED, if it is to have any credibility as a player in the new system and find appeal - as has been its avowed intention - in the Western half of Germany; on the other, as something of a *politische Heimat* for large numbers of dispossessed and disorientated ex-SED members from whom it has generated much of its support, it must seek simultaneously to play down any condemnation of its political forerunner.

The PDS has adopted a number of strategies in attempting to deal with the complex task of asserting an identity separate from that of the SED while simultaneously taking on board its SED origins, a task made all the more complex by the PDS's decision to become the SED's *Rechtsnachfolger*. (These strategies form what we will discuss below as the discourse of 'causal circumvention'.) While many political commentators have suggested that the PDS's decision to become the SED's legal successor (initially as the SED-PDS) was motivated by a desire to secure its position as legitimate heir to SED funds[4], PDS historiography has generally remained silent on the issue of financial considerations; instead the decision not to dissolve the SED has been consistently presented as a mark of the PDS's political integrity in wishing not to shirk its SED legacy, but rather to undergo the agonising and cathartic process of taking that legacy on board and confronting the '*Altlast*' of the past. Typifying this sentiment is the following:

> Es ist ja wahrhaftig so, daß die PDS mit einem unerhört kühnen Anspruch angetreten ist. *Angesichts des gesamten Erbes der SED ... galt es, radikal aufzuräumen mit all dem, was in den letzten Jahrzehnten geradezu typisch für die SED war.*[5] (my italics)

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[3]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* Berlin 1993, p. 3

[4]see, for example, Krisch, Henry: "From SED to PDS: The Struggle to Revive a Left Party." In: Dalton, R.J. (ed.): *The New* Germany *Votes: Unification and the Creation of the New German Party System.* Providence/Oxford: Berg 1993, p. 173

[5]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt und wohin geht die PDS?* Berlin: Grundsatzkommission der PDS 1995, p. 4

Compare, too:

> Couragierte Genossen nehmen den Erneuerungsprozeß selbst in die Hand. Sie erkämpfen einen außerordentlichen Parteitag. Eine entscheidende Frage ist: Erneuerung oder Selbstauflösung? Die Partei löst sich nicht auf. Es beginnt der schwere Weg von der stalinistischen Partei zur Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus ...[6]

Where the link with an SED tradition is invoked, it is generally to suggest - in what a number of political commentators have come to regard as a *Komplexitätsreduktion* (propositional reduction)[7] typical of the PDS - that it ~~is~~ has remained as the SED's 'honest core'. In relation to the extract from the PDS's programme cited above, Pfahl-Traughber percipiently observes that:

> Gleichzeitig suggeriert das Zitat, die PDS sei selbständig aus der SED heraus - etwa als Minderheiten- und Reformflügel - entstanden.[8]

It is precisely this element of PDS historiography which has allowed commentators to make observations of the type that:

> der Intellektuelle Gysi (succeeded by Lothar Bisky as Party Chairman in January 1993; now Chairman of the PDS parliamentary party - MD) ... die Sache eines geläuterten Sozialismus recht überzeugend in der medialen Öffentlichkeit der Bundesrepublik (vertritt).[9]

The following arguments must be prefaced with the observation that simplified conceptual structures of this nature are not exclusive to the PDS; if the PDS simplifies 'reality' by pressing it into a linguistic mould which bypasses complex causal links between past and present, then Gysi is right to observe[10] that the reverse of this coin is the equally sweeping formula - frequently invoked by certain members of (in particular) the right and the press, and widely used "mit denunziatorischem

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[6]Behrend, Manfred/Helmut Meier (eds.): *Der Schwere Weg der Erneuerung*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1991, back cover

[7]For a detailed linguistic analysis of the workings of propositional reductions, see: Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit., pp. 33-55; for a politological examination of this question in relation to the PDS, see Langguth, Gerd: "PDS - Partei mit Doppelgesicht." In: *Die politische Meinung*. no. 297. 8/94, pp. 19-26

[8]"Wandlung zur Demokratie?" op. cit., p. 368

[9]Land, Rainer/Ralf Possekel: "Orthodoxie und Modernität. Vom Sinn der Richtungskämpfe in der PDS." In: *Die Neue Gesellschaft. Frankfurter Hefte*. 42. Jg. 1/95, p. 418

[10]cf., for example, "... kein einziger Journalist vergißt, bei der Bezeichnung PDS auch SED-Nachfolgepartei hinzuzufügen." Gysi, Gregor, cited from: Runge, Irene/Uwe Stellbrink (interviewers): *Gregor Gysi: "Ich bin Opposition"*. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1990, p. 14

Unterton"[11] - that the PDS is the *SED-Nachfolgerpartei*[12], thereby suggesting that the PDS is a monolith and glossing over the fact that it is a highly complex and factionalised political entity:

> Die Strömungen in der PDS sind vielfältig, widersprüchlich, kaum überschaubar. Zwar waren etwa neun von zehn PDS-Mitgliedern auch schon in der SED, aber da gibt es Traditionalisten und Reformer, solche, die aus der Vergangenheit gelernt haben, und andere, die sie eher verklären. Und es haben sich Gruppen und Grüppchen unter dem Dach der PDS zusammengefunden, die in der alten SED undenkbar gewesen wären.[13]

The concept of an 'honest core' is a recurring theme in PDS historiography:

> Die PDS bekennt sich zu jenem *aktiven* Teil der SED, der mit dem Stalinismus brach und gemeinsam mit anderen politischen Bewegungen des Herbstes 1989 die Gesellschaft der DDR umfassend reformieren wollte.[14] (my italics)

> Die Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus ist aus dem Reformwillen zehntausender SED-Mitglieder entstanden und wird im Wahlkampf 1994 ihre selbstkritische Auseinandersetzung mit der eigenen Geschichte fortsetzen.[15]

> Die PDS ist also gegenüber der SED eine ganz andere, eine neue Partei und wird es von Etappe zu Etappe ihrer Entwicklung mehr. *Was sie mit der SED gemein hat, sind viele Mitglieder, die ihre sozialistischen Ideale ernst nehmen.*[16] (my italics)

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[11]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 4

[12]Johannes Volmert ("Die 'Altparteien' ...", op. cit., pp. 162-180), has shown graphically that the refusal of large sections of the political establishment (especially the right) to refer to the PDS by its chosen name has been an essential part of their "Strategie der Stigmatisierung" (p. 174) and marginalisation of the party. This, he argues, is "eine Taktik, die gegenüber der DDR fast vierzig Jahre lang von Union und (CDU-affiliated - MD) Springer-Presse mit wechselndem Erfolg angewendet wurde. Von 'SED-Nachfolgepartei' über 'Ex-SED', 'Altkommunisten', 'Neosozialisten', 'Partei der SED-Kader', 'Partei der roten Bonzen' u.a. finden sich die altbekannten Formen der Negativ-Etiketierung. Offenbar kalkuliert man hier mit einer bei schlichten Gemütern verbreiteten Form der Sprachmagie: Wie allein der Name (CDU) einer Partei die demokratischen Weihen verleiht, so diskreditiert auf der anderen Seite allein der Name (PDS) eine Partei - als 'sozialistisch' = 'kommunistisch' = 'extremistisch'". (pp. 174-5)

[13]Nawrocki, Joachim: "Genosse Rentner." In: *Die Zeit*. no. 49. 1 December 1995

[14]*Neues Programm der PDS: Eine sozialistische Partei in Deutschland.* (Flyleaf advertising the PDS programme of 1993) Berlin 1993

[15]*Konkrete Oppostion: Opposition gegen Sozialabbau und Rechtsruck: Wahlprogramm der PDS.* Berlin 1994, p. 4

[16]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* Berlin: Parteivorstand der PDS 1991, p. 8

Notice the indeterminate "viele", which creates the desired *impression,* while leaving room for defeasibility. We shall deal further with the use of linguistic indeterminates below.

To this end, 'virtue' is made from the party's dwindling membership[17]: the party, argues Gysi in 1990, will be faced with

> ... einer weiteren Dezimierung, denn nicht alle werden den Druck aushalten, der zu erwarten ist ... [18]

which contains an unmistakable contextual implication that the PDS will be a core only for committed idealists whose convictions are strong enough for them to withstand the pressure from a hostile political environment without. (There is no suggestion here that the mass exodus form the party might have something to do with certain members' disillusionment with what they perceive as the PDS's unwillingness to effect a radical break with what commentators have often called "alte Denkmuster"; we will argue below that in its discourse the PDS has consistently performed a complex balancing act in which it has sought to adapt and 'graft on' some of the conceptual structures of dialectical materialism to the new political environment and in so doing has alienated a number of members - of whom Karin Dörre[19] has been a particularly prominent example - for whom the PDS's transformation process has not been radical enough). Compare, too:

> Andere frühere SED-Mitglieder dagegen, welche unter dem Eindruck der "Wende" für die Idee des Sozialismus überhaupt keine Chancen mehr sahen, haben aus diesem Grund seinerzeit die PDS ebenfalls sehr bald verlassen.[20]

(This last quotation raises the question - with which we will be confronted time and again and which we will examine in some detail in chapter 3 - of what is understood in PDS circles by "die Idee des *Sozialismus*"; as a highly superordinate term of the type whose ultimate semantic content "could hardly be specified"[21], the ideological potential of *Sozialismus* lies in its vagueness;on the level of signifier it can be used to suggest a broad body of overlap with the socialism actively called for by what Gorski

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[17]The PDS's membership fell from 2,300,000 in October 1989 to 131,000 in March 1994; for the relevant statistics see: Moreau, Patrick/Viola Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus und Linkspopulismus.* Sankt Augustin: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung 1994, p. 14 ff.

[18]Gysi, Gregor, cited from: Runge/Stellbrink, op. cit., p. 20

[19]see footnote 70

[20]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 5

[21]Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit., p. 38

and Markovits have called the East German "green" movement[22], i.e. the *Bürgerbewegungen* whose roots are to be found in the East German dissident movement which ultimately spearheaded events in the autumn of 1989 and with which the PDS, it will be argued, has sought to link itself precisely through the conflationary potential afforded by highly superordinate terms: it will be argued that SED/PDS conceptions of *Sozialismus*; *Reform* and *Opposition* - even among the so-called 'reformers' - do not overlap as neatly and unproblematically with those of the *Bürgerbewegungen* as PDS historiography has generally, we will show, sought to suggest: we will return to this question below.)

In bolstering up its image as the SED's 'honest core', the PDS makes frequent capital out of alluding to the notion of the *Wendehals*[23], widely invoked from the *Wendezeit* onwards, in suggesting that those who have fled the party have betrayed their ideals, while those who remain are prepared to take on board (the difficult cathartic process of) 'suffering' in the name of these ideals (thus circumventing the highly problematic notion that [at least some of] the PDS's members might well be said to have remained with the party quite simply because they are 'die-hards' wishing to cling on to the old order which the PDS, in part, is seen as representing).[24] When probed upon the problematic nostalgia and 'orthodoxy' of sections of his party's membership, Gysi parries the challenge with the following mental leap, in which virtue is made from what, ultimately, is necessity:

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[22]See Markovits, Andrei/Philip Gorski: *The German Left. Red, Green and Beyond.* Cambridge/Oxford: Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers 1993, pp. 237-263. The term is used broadly (and reductively) by Markovits and Gorski to refer to what they call the "independent GDR opposition" (p. 239) /"unofficial opposition" (p. 242) in the GDR, i.e. to the dissident movement/the citizens' action groups (*Bürgerbewegungen*) whose opposition to the SED and the 'official' opposition united in the *Nationale Front* challenged the very foundation of the system. (see p. 240 ff.; for more on the *Nationale Front* see footnote 21, chapter 2 below)

[23]cf. the following dictionary definitions of the term:

1. **Wendehals**: >Vogelart, der Familie der Spechte zugehörig< ... schon 1575 in übertr. Bed. "für den wetterwendischen Menschen" ... aktualisiert Okt./Nov. 1989 in der DDR als Bez. für SED-Genossen, die auf den revolutionären Zug der Reformen wendig aufspringen (wollen); Demo-Spruch: *kein Artenschutz für Wendehälse* ... (markings as in original - MD)

2. **Wendehals**, der (ugs. abwertend) *jmd., der aus Opportunismus [plötzlich] das politische Lager wechselt:* der Ausdruck "Wendehals", mit dem unter anderem der frühere SED-Chef Egon Krenz auf den Arm genommen wurde (Welt 12. 12. 89, 26) (markings as in original - MD)

Cited from: Paul, Hermann: *Deutsches Wörterbuch.* Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag 1992 (no. 1.); Drosdowski, Günther et al. (eds.): *Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache.* Mannheim, Leipzig, etc.: Dudenverlag 1995 (no. 2.)

[24]Even the following on the whole open-minded commentator expresses his reservations in respect of the *SED-Funktionäre* who have found a *poltische Heimat* in the SED: "Diese Art Funktionäre waren eine Pest, und ich bin mir nicht sicher, ob und in welchem Grade sie sich gewandelt haben." Christ, Richard: "Die Deutschen Ostler." In: *Der Morgen.* no. 96. 9/94

> Mir sind Menschen mit Vergangenheit, die damit umgehen, lieber als solche, die ihre leugnen.[25]

Something of the same idea is implied too in:

> Die Zahl derer, die sich heute darauf berufen, Träger und Mitgestalter zu sein, wird immer größer. Und an Politkern, die demokratische Umwälzung in geschickter Weise für sich nutzen oder gar mißbrauchen, mangelt es nicht[26]

about which a cynical observer might well observe that the emotive, rhetorical device of condemning those who have sought to boost their credentials as co-participants in the reformist movement comes within the context of a work which, in fact, seeks, to achieve exactly what it at one and the same time condemns.

Observe how the following polarised structure simultaneously leaves the impression that the PDS is exactly equal to the inner-SED reform movement:

> Innerhalb der DDR-Zeit war viel früher und viel tiefer, als man heute glauben möchte, innerhalb *eines nennenswerten Teils* (observe the unverifiability/unquantifiability here -MD) der SED-Mitglieder die Einsicht verbreitet, daß eine weittragende und prinzipielle Revision der damals offiziell vertretenen politischen und ideologischen Leitlinien ansteht ... Die Leute mit solchen Ansichten, in der Honecker-Zeit in der Minderheit, konnten 1989 Oberwasser gewinnen, weil sowohl die Masse der *Karrieristen* wie auch die so oder so belasteten Träger des bisherigen Regimes dann sehr rasch aus der Partei ausschieden.[27] (my italics)

Witness too:

> Es ist heute nicht gerade karrierefördernd, Mitglied in Deiner Partei zu sein. Aber wir wissen ja: Nur tote Fische schwimmen mit dem Strom. Die Opportunisten fliehen in andere Bereiche.[28]

Observe, in particular, the pathos in:

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[25]Cited in: Volmert, Johannes: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik: Ludger Volmer und Gregor Gysi im 'Nachtduell des ZDF'." In: Reiher, Ruth/Rüdiger Läzer: *Von Buschzulage und Ossinachweis.* op. cit., p. 250

[26]Modrow, Hans: *Aufbruch und Ende.* Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag 1991, p. 9

[27]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 5

[28]Irene Runge, in: *Gregor Gysi: "Ich bin Opposition".* op. cit., p. 13. The quotation in question stems from an extended interview, conducted by a personal friend of Gysi's, which is clearly constructed to present the PDS in as positive a light as possible; the publisher is the PDS-affiliated Dietz-Verlag.

> **PDS - Ein DDR Traditionsverein?** Vielleicht sind in der PDS die "Unverbesserlichen", die nicht bereit waren, sich mit ihrer Vergangenheit auseinanderzusetzen? **Das Gegenteil ist der Fall.** Während nicht wenige, die im Herbst 1989 der SED flugs den Rücken kehrten, heute so tun, als hätten sie nie in der DDR gelebt, *macht es sich die PDS mit der Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit, der Entartung, dem Scheitern des "Realsozialismus" und der Verantwortung jedes einzelnen dafür nicht leicht* Die GenossInnen halten es für unmoralisch, sich aus der eigenen Geschichte wegstehlen zu wollen. *Sie haben sich bewußt schwere Verantwortung aufgebürdet, weil sie anders keinen Weg in die Zukunft sehen.*[29] (my italics; bold in original)

And while it is true that many resignations were indeed predicated upon careerist considerations:

> Many party members had joined for career reasons: for them, the loss of the party's privileged status, especially in relation to filling state positions, was a reason to leave the party[30]

this packaging of 'reality' must be set against the equally valid perspective that:

> Those who remained in the SED after October 1989 often did so only to pursue their goal of the total transformation or even dissolution of the old party. Such people left in waves of resignations throughout the period *when the SED and the PDS did not change radically enough to suit them.*[31] (my italics)

Land and Possekel's historiographic picture puts the same 'reality' - that of party members fleeing the party - in a very different context from that widely proffered by the PDS:

> Die Auseinandersetzung um die Zukunft der SED-PDS blieb bis Januar 1990 unentschieden. Diejenigen (i.e. party members - MD), die die SED auflösen wollten, trafen sich zweimal in Bunsen-Saal der Humbolt-Universität. Sie betonten, daß die SED als Zentrum eines zutiefst undemokratischen Regimes diskreditiert sei, daß ihr ungeheures Eigentum nur durch skrupellose Ausnutzung ihrer Stellung angehäuft werden konnte, daß unter den Mitgliedern zu viele sind, die früher leitende Positionen in Partei und Staat

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[29]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 5

[30]Krisch, op.cit., p. 170

[31]ibid., p. 164

> innehatten und sich jetzt an die Partei klammern, weil sie nach einer Solidargemeinschaft suchen. Die Anhänger dieser Position vertraten die Forderung nach Auflösung der SED-PDS und nach der Neugründung einer reformsozialistischen Partei, oder sie plädierten dafür, daß die verschiedenen Strömungen die Chance nutzen, jeweils unabhängige Parteien zu gründen. *Viele traten aus der PDS aus, aber nur wenige dieser im Herbst 1989 politisch sehr aktiven SED-Miglieder haben seitdem in anderen Parteien neue politische Wirkungsmöglichkeiten gefunden.*[32] (my italics)

This interpretation of the motivation for the mass exodus from the party is noticeably lacking in PDS historiography. Indeed, we observe the internal contradiction: while on one level berating - what it widely packages as - the 'opportunists' for leaving the party when the immediate discursive aim is to suggest that a committed, idealistic core has remained, elsewhere the PDS has made capital from the *positive* general *impression* conveyed by a rebellious *Basis* fleeing the nest to boost its simplified, polarised discursive picture of a *Führung*-vs.-reform-minded-*Basis* model, where the suggestion is that the PDS has emanated logically from a reformist tradition. The same 'reality' is pressed into quite different conceptual moulds to suit immediate discursive purposes. As Straßner has put it:

> Es geht (in political communication - MD) um Sichtweisen, die ... subjektiv interessengeleitet (werden). Es geht um einseitige, eindimensionale, ausschließende, ausgrenzende Sichtweisen der Wirklichkeit, um interessengebundene Normen ...[33]

Here the suggestion is that those who flee the party are opportunists, there the suggestion is that they are would-be *reformers*. No more starkly do we witness the ideological potential inherent in packaging the same 'reality' in different ways than in the presentation of the overlap between the SED and PDS membership. For a PDS wishing to suggest that it is different from the SED while at the same time taking on board that tradition (for reasons we will discuss below), it is important to *suggest* a minimal degree of overlap, a point which does not go unnoticed by a television-viewer in 1994 who puts it to Gysi that:

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[32]Land/Possekel, op. cit., pp. 416-7

[33]Straßner, Erich: "Maximenverstoß als Regel. Zum Grundprinzip politischer Kommunikation." In: Opp de Hipt, Manfred/Erich Latniak (eds.): *Sprache statt Politik*. op. cit., p. 137

> [Zuschauer]frage: Die PDS sagt, nur fünf Prozent der SED-Mitglieder seien noch in der PDS, andere Parteien, die gegen sie antreten, sagen: 90% der PDS-Mitglieder waren in der SED.[34]

which Gysi deflects with the following anecdote:

> Ja, da ist beides richtig. Das ist wie in dem Witz über den Wettlauf von Chruschtschow und Kennedy. Im Westen stand in der Zeitung: Kennedy glänzender Sieger und Chruschtschow auf dem letzten Platz, und im ND stand: Chruschtschow belegte einen hervorragenden zweiten Platz, während Kennedy nur Vorletzter wurde.[35]

While Gysi's deflectionary anecdote might suggest that he perceives these representations as two sides of the same coin, it is hardly likely that he is unaware of the ideological advantage in *suggesting* a lower degree of overlap through the - sophistic? - invocation of a lower figure through a transfer of perspective based upon the use of a larger reference group (the SED) for effecting a comparison.

a)PDS = 5% *of* SED

b)PDS = 90% *in* SED

In other words, while a) and b) might actually refer to the same reality, the *impression* they convey is totally different; the case presented here offers a prime example of the manipulability of statistics, as highlighted by Murray Edelman[36].

Notice how in the following, too, the fact that the PDS is largely made up of SED members is put at a discursive remove; the suggestion is that the overlap is minimal:

> **Genauso wahr ist aber auch, daß die SED einmal 2,3 Millionen Mitglieder hatte. 2 Millionen davon gehören der PDS heute nicht an, sind entweder parteilos oder Mitglieder anderer Parteien.** Wenn man also schon alle ehemaligen SED-Mitglieder in gleicher Weise für die Mißstände unter dem früheren Regime verantwortlich machen wollte, müßte man 90% Prozent davon außerhalb der PDS suchen.[37] (bold in original).

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[34]Cited from: Köhler, Jörg/Hanno Harnisch (eds.):*Gregor Gysi: Freche Sprüche.* Berlin: Schwarzkopf & Schwarzkopf 1995, p. 12

[35]ibid.

[36]see: Edelman, op. cit., pp. 31-32

[37]*Wer ist das die PDS?* op. cit., p. 4

While it is true that that this utterance is preceded by the observation that "Wahr ist: die PDS ist aus der SED hervorgegangen. Außer den seit Januar 1990 neu eingetretenen etwa 5,000 neuen Mitgliedern der PDS waren alle früher in der SED", the textual structuring means that it is the former *impression* which remains freshest in our mind. Notice, too, how this attempt to deflect 'blame' clashes with the PDS's pathetic statements of personal guilt and of assumption of responsibility elsewhere (see below).

Moreau's observation that:

> 95% Prozent der Mitglieder (der PDS - MD) sind frühere SED-Mitglieder-An diesen Zahlen hat sich in der Zwischenzeit kaum etwas geändert[38]

is the representation of the 'reality' of the situation, the "angle of telling"[39] which is least flattering to the PDS and least favourable to a party eager to show that it has shed a politically tarnished past. By contrast, a graphic illustration of the impression with which the PDS wishes to leave with respect to its dwindling membership is offered by Heinrich, Graph von Einsiedel, a *parteiloser Kandidat* (see chapter 4 below) for the PDS in the 1994 Federal elections, who has clearly been convinced of the validity of the 'honest core' picture:

> Ich weiß nicht, wieviele Miglieder die SED hatte - wieviele davon sind noch in der PDS? Nach den anderen Millionen ehemaligen SEDlern fragt keiner. Ich glaube, die in der PDS sind sicher die ehrlichen demokratischen Sozialisten. Sie haben sich vielleicht eingeredet, in dieser DDR könnte doch einmal Sozialismus entstehen ...[40]

Compare also:

> Weder die formelle Kontinuität (with the PDS - MD) als Organisation (auch wenn sie im Falle der PDS sicherlich ein Fehler war), noch die unvermeidliche personelle Kontinuität *(auch wenn es sich nur um ein Zwanzigstel der SED-Mitgliedschaft handelt)* bestimmt das Handeln einer Partei.[41] (my italics)

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[38]Moreau/Neu, op. cit., p. 15

[39]Simpson, op. cit., p. 2

[40]Heinrich, Graf von Einsiedel, in: Schumann, Frank: *Der rote Graf.* Frankfurt/Oder: Frankfurter Oder Editionen 1994, p. 24 (interview)

[41]Brie, Michael: "PDS Ante Portas." In: *Blätter für die deutsche und internationale Politik.* 8/94, p. 936

This 'reality' looks quite different when cast as follows:

> Eine weitere heterogene, aber wichtige Gruppe bilden jene PDS-Mitglieder, die erst nach 1990 zur PDS gingen und deren politischen Bindungen zur PDS in der Umbruchskonstellation entstanden. Diese Gruppe bildet zwar nur einen kleinen Anteil der PDS-Mitglieder *(95% stammen noch aus der alten SED)* ...[42] (my italics)

The PDS has - as a legitimising tactic - consistently sought to boost its personal integrity through the invocation of the notion that this 'honest core' has been gradually reached, as we have said, through a cathartic process of suffering. This is frequently cast rhetorically in the form of pathetic quasi-religious imagery leaving the impression that PDS members are pilgrims or martyrs to their cause. Witness the title of a book published by the PDS-affiliated Dietz Verlag documenting the transition from SED to PDS - *Der schwere Weg der Erneuerung* (see footnote 6) - which is clearly heavy with religious allusion. Witness, too, the pilgrimage metaphor informing the following account of why Graph von Einsiedel, Bismarck's great-grandson, chose to join the PDS's ranks:

> Dieser Weg führte ihn (Einsiedel - MD) ... in eine Sackgasse ... also kehrte von Einsiedel um. Seitdem versucht er eine andere Straße ... Bei dieser ist er auf andere demokratische Sozialistinnen und Sozialisten gestoßen, die sich im Herbst 1989 auf dem Weg gemacht haben. Und denen hat er sich nun angeschlossen.[43]

The 'religious mode' reaches its apogee in the PDS's statements that it has actively taken on board its SED/GDR history, has actively chosen - Jesus-like - to become the bearer of the sins of the past:

> Im Unterschied zu anderen politischen Organisationen leugnet die PDS ihre Herkunft nicht. Sie steht zu ihrer Vergangenheit ... Sie bekennt sich zu ihrer Verantwortung, dort wo Sozialisten schuldig wurden.[44]

> In besonderem Maße tragen wir die Verantwortung für die Geschichte der SED und der DDR, aus der wir hervorgegangen sind.[45]

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[42]Land/Possekel, op. cit., p. 418

[43]Bisky, Lothar/A. Brie/C. Gohde/G. Gysi/A. Lederer, "Borniertheit erneut als politische Kategorie?" In: *Neues Deutschland*. 29 March 1994

[44]*Neues Programm der PDS* ... (Flyleaf advertising the PDS programme of 1993), op. cit.

Into this rhetorical schema fits the PDS's frequent invocation of its (pathetic) apology to the East German people:

> Wir haben uns bei den wirklichen Opfern von Unterdrückungsmechanismen in der DDR aufrichtig entschuldigt und bleiben dabei, daß dies Mindeste war, was wir tun konnten.[46]

> Der Parteitag beschließt, die SED nicht aufzulösen, ihr aber einen, ihrer Zielstellung entsprechenden Namen zu geben, und entschuldigt sich in aller Form beim Volk der DDR für die von der stalinistischen SED begangenen Fehlleistungen.[47]

The latter citation from the party's own (1993) historiography offers a very graphic example of the interaction between selection (i.e. selective mediation of 'facts') and causality: a diachronic comparison with the form in which the 'apology' was originally cast when it was "protokolliert nach Beschluß" at the party's *außerordentlicher Parteitag* of 8/9 December 1989 is highly revealing:

> 9. Dezember: In einem von den Delegierten befaßten Beschluß entschuldigt sich die Partei beim Volk der DDR dafür, "daß die *ehemalige Führung der SED* unser Land in diese existenzgefährdende Krise geführt hat".[48] (my italics) (Observe here the reductive *Führung*-vs.-*Partei*-&-*Volk* polarity)

The selective removal by 1993, then, of a mere two words ("ehemalige Führung") forming what may appear a minor relativisation has in fact effected a profound change in causality. The original apology (in essence given on the part of 'someone else') effects a discursive transfer of blame to the party *Führung*. (We shall have more to say on this matter below.) By 1993 this relativisation has been removed. We can make sense of the 'transformation' of the message if we see PDS discourse as made up of a problematic - and often contradictory - set of different 'legitimacy strands' (see below) with which the party has sought to legitimise itself with different textual recipients. Unsurprisingly, delegates at a *Parteitag*, for many of whom the PDS is, it seems reasonable to say, a vehicle - inter alia - for personal vindication, are offered something of an absolution through the formulation proffered in the

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[45]Bisky, Lothar/Gregor Gysi/Hans Modrow: "Sozialismus ist Weg, Methode, Wertorientierung & Ziel. Zu den fünf wichtigsten Diskussionspunkten der gegenwärtigen Debatte der PDS." In: *DISPUT*. no. 3-4. 1995, p. 28 (*DISPUT* is the name of the monthly party magazine.)

[46]ibid.

[47]Arnold/Schumann et al. (eds.): *Von den Anfängen. Eine illustrierte Chronik der PDS. 1989-1993.* op. cit., p. 11

[48]Zimmerling, Zeno: *Neue Chronik DDR: Berichte, Photos, Dokumente.* no. 3. 24 November-22 December 1989 2nd edition. Berlin: Treptower Verlagshaus GmbH 1991, p. 71

immediate context; on the other hand, a PDS eager to boost its personal integrity in the eyes of the political establishment must be seen, in presenting a formal historiographic account of itself, to be seriously and 'objectively' confronting and expiating its problematic past: hence the deletion of the relativisation where the immediate discursive requirement so dictates. Observe here, too, how an expressis verbis *statement* of apology is difficult to challenge because of the impossibility of determining what in fact a 'satisfactory' apology is, i.e. where it starts and ends; its ideological potential lies in its unquantifiability and unverifiability: there is no way of pinning down who has apologised to whom for what and indeed of pinning down who *should* apologise to whom for what! There is some contradiction between a PDS making rhetorical capital from a pathetic and sweeping general assumption of blame on the one hand whilst, on the other, simultaneously playing down any blame by presenting itself as the mere butt of a campaign of victimisation[49], as a scapegoat. Witness the rhetorical attempt to attenuate blame in:

> So unterschiedlich die politische Couleur der Gegner der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus, so einig sind sich alle in der Behauptung, die PDS müsse bekämpft werden, weil sie die "Nachfolgerpartei" der SED sei und damit verantwortlich für alles Schlechte, was in der ehemaligen DDR geschehen ist.[50]

The hostile political environment to which the PDS has been exposed has helped to reinforce the pathos of PDS utterances of 'suffering'. There is much evidence to suggest that the PDS has been thriving on the hostility heaped upon it by the political establishment, by capitalising upon the perlocutionary effect (i.e. the generation of sympathy for the PDS) of utterances in which (with not inconsiderable justification!) it pathetically bemoans its treatment at the hands of the political establishment. Michail Nelken, elected as the PDS representative for Prenzlauer Berg to the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus* in 1995, has revealed that:

> ... daß es die PDS überhaupt so gibt ... ist nicht ihr eigener Verdienst ... sondern da ist sie einfach hingestellt worden, die (the established parties - MD) haben sie einfach nicht mitspielen lassen, sie ist ausgegrenzt worden. 1990/91, wären die Herrschenden einigermaßen klug ... gewesen, ... hätten

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[49]This is not to deny that the PDS has indeed been widely and consistently subjected by large sections of the political establishment to a visceral and often irrational campaign of defamation underpinned by cold-war thought patterns. This issue is given particular treatment in chapter 4.

[50]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 4

> sie die Arme aufgemacht ... Also die hätten sie integriert ... Damit wäre sie weg gewesen ...[51]

a view upheld by Lothar Bisky:

> Bisher hat uns die Wahlpropaganda mit dem kommunistischen Schreckensgespenst nicht geschadet, vielleicht verschafft uns Herr Hintze noch mehr Wähler.[52]

This hints at the fact that the PDS, while publicly berating the political parties for ostracising it, was 'secretly' quite glad for a generally hostile political establishment to provide it with fuel for its "Kopf hoch nicht die Hände" campaign. One commentator percipiently remarked that the latter party slogan incorporated "fünf Worte, in denen sich Millionen Ostdeutsche erkannten; genial".[53] In other words, it encapsulated the suggestion that the PDS's own personal fate at the hands of an overweening political establishment was emblematic of the fate of East Germans across the board in being exposed to what has been called the "West German (unification - MD) juggernaut".[54] We encounter a problem here which we will encounter time and again in our examination of PDS discourse: a complex interplay - often disparity - between conviction (what PDS politicians *really* believe or feel) and political tactics, where reference must be made to a wider context in order to get beyond the surface semantics. (We will discuss in detail the question of political 'honesty' in our examination below of the PDS's pre-election pragmatism.) One observer has rightly remarked that the establishment's general hostility towards, and marginalisation of, the PDS has afforded it a 'unifying' level on which to avoid addressing the (as we shall see below) impossibly complex issue of its own factionalisation; these factions can hold together under the lowest common denominator of *victim*:

> Deren unterschiedliche Mitgliedschaft aus machtgewohnten Altkadern, Fundamental-Oppositionellen und heimlichen Sozialdemokraten wie Parteichef Lothar Bisky wird bislang vor allem *durch das Stigma der Entrechteten* zusammengehalten.[55] (my italics)

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[51]Michail Nelken, in: interview with the author; conducted in November 1995.

[52]Cited in: *Wochenpost.* 7 December 1995

[53]Weidemann, Charlotte: "Vordenker im Hintergrund." In: *Die Woche.* 26 January 1996

[54]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 262

[55]Reuter, Christoph: "Angst vor der eigenen Courage." In: *Stern.* 30 November 1995

The problem, we will argue below, for a PDS leadership increasingly *eschewing* its outcast role and seeking to embrace the political establishment through the increasing articulation of a desire to enter into strategic alliances already perceived as 'normal' by (in particular) leading East German SPD politicians such as Höppner, Ringstorff and Stolpe[56] is that this lays bare the party's deep ideological rifts; "... genau vor solcher Normalisierung regt sich die Angst in der PDS".[57]

Modality is a crucial rhetorical element in this 'discourse of suffering'. Observe, for example, the deontic[58] choice in:

> Sie (viele SED-Mitglieder - MD) *mußten* zusehen, wie die neuergründeten Bewegungen und Parteien ... die Probleme des Landes angriffen, die auch ihre Probleme waren[59] (my italics)

in which what is essentially a passive role is cast to suggest that the (SED) party members in question are nothing but victims, martyrs, forced into that passivity by an (overweening?) outside force (a nebulous *Führung*?). The basic proposition in its raw form "Sie sahen zu, als ... " assumes a very different motivational aspect.

It is only consistent, then, that we see Gysi as becoming something of a Jesus figure, the saviour of the party:

> Und dann kommt plötzlich einer von außen, von dem sie immerhin so viel mitgekriegt haben, der hätte es nicht nötig gehabt, der hätte auf seiner Strecke als Anwalt weitergehen können, der war durch den Apparat nicht diskreditiert ... [er] läßt sich (observe again the deontic modality! - MD) an die Spitze ihrer Partei stellen und wird sogar in der Zeit tiefsten Hasses

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[56]see Reuter, ibid.

[57]ibid.

[58]A very readable study of modality in language is offered by Simpson (op. cit., pp. 46-85) who observes that "*modality* refers broadly to a speaker's attitude, or opinion about, the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence". (p. 47) He proffers a model of four basic, and not neatly separable, modal systems:

1)deontic: concerns the level of duty/obligation/commitment ("may", must" etc.)

2)boulomaic: concerns a speakers wishes and desires ("hope", "regret" etc.)

3)epistemic: concerns "the speaker's confidence or lack of confidence in the truth of a proposition expressed" (p. 48) (e.g. "you may be right"/"you must be right")

4)perception: is closely linked with the epistemic system and "is distinguished by the fact that the degree of commitment to the truth of a proposition is predicated upon some reference to human perception, usually visual ... " (p. 50) (e.g. "it is evident that you're right")

[59]Bortfeldt, op. cit., p. 9

> gefeiert, als Demokrat und Erneuerer ... Bei den Alten und bei denen, die an der Partei hängen, wirst Du dann nicht nur zum *Retter der Partei*, sondern es baut sich diese emotionale Beziehung auf ...[60] (my italics)

Compare, too, the religious overtones in Irene Runge's:

> Oder *übernimmst Du ihre teilweise unreflektierte Schuld* und löst damit diese Dankbarkeit aus.[61] (my italics)

Consistent with the idea of a 'purified SED' is the PDS's recurrent attempts using a simplified and polarised *Führung* versus others construct to portray an 'innocent' *SED-Basis*, duped and at the mercy of, a vaguely defined *Führung* onto whom all blame is transferred.

> Und Gysi selbst teilte ... zur Stasi-Problematik ... eine Art Blanko-Ablaßschein aus. Die "politische Verantwortung für die Tätigkeit des MfS lag ausschließlich bei der Führung der SED," schrieb er ...[62]

> Der Widerspruch zwischen Verheißung und Realität wurde immer größer, viele Mitglieder der SED wurden insbesondere *durch die Führung* um ihr Ideal betrogen.[63] (my italics)

Observe the clear polarity - the 'reformers' and the (entire) *SED-Basis* on the one hand, the *Führung* on the other in:

> Besonders der Abschnitt 5 ist unter den neu entstandenen Voraussetzungen nur noch eingeschränkt gültig. Er geht davon aus, daß der Reformprozeß durch die SED insgesamt eingeleitet würde. Inzwischen ist er auch *durch Massenaktionen der Bürger und durch den Druck der Parteibasis gegen den anfänglichen Widerstand der Parteiführung erzwungen worden.*[64] (my italics)

> Hinweise und Signale aus Bezirken und Kreisen, *aus der eigenen Partei wurden von der Führung ignoriert.*[65] (my italics)

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[60]Gysi, in: *Gregor Gysi. Ich bin Opposition.* op. cit., p. 10

[61]ibid., p. 11

[62]Falkner, Thomas/Dietmar Huber: *Aufschwung PDS. Rote Socken - Zurück zur Macht.* München: Knaur 1994, p. 178

[63]Gysi, Gregor: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland." In: Gysi, Gregor (ed.): *Wir brauchen einen dritten Weg.* Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag 1990, p. 11

[64]Brie, Michael/ Rainer Land/ Hannelore Petsch/ Dieter Segert/ Rosemarie Will: *Studie zur Gesellschaftstheorie.* Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1989, p. 5

[65]Modrow, *Aufbruch und Ende.* op. cit., p. 10

The polarity emerges with striking clarity in:

> Die SED hat damals die Entwicklung nicht gefördert, sondern gebremst. Indem aber die Parteibasis der Führung nicht mehr folgte, half sie diese isolieren. Sie trug so indirekt dazu bei, daß die Oktoberereignisse 1989 friedlich verliefen.[66]

Observe, again, how the determinate "*die* Parteibasis" conveys the (unproblematic and unverifiable) impression that the entirety of the *PDS-Basis uniformly* withdrew its support for the leadership; crucial questions as to the nature and extent of criticism within that *Basis* are glossed over.

This *Führung*-vs.-others model has two important functions: firstly, it is expanded to suggest that the PDS's membership is drawn from precisely this nebulous - but *absolved* - and well-meaning *Basis*:, in other words, the party's 'moral majority'. Compare:

> Die 350 000 Mitglieder der PDS waren überwiegend früher Mitglieder der SED. Sie bekennen sich mithin zur eigenen Geschichte, wenngleich es vielen noch schwerfällt, *die eigene subjektive Ehrlichkeit* im Verhältnis zum objektiven geschichtlichen Versagen der eigenen Partei zu setzen.[67] (my italics)

Compare, too, the (agentless!) pathos of

> Sozialisten und Sozialistinnen ... sehen sich doch in ihren ehrlichen Bemühungen um eine gesellschaftliche Alternative betrogen[68] (by whom?, we might well ask - MD)

and:

> Subjektiv haben *viele* (note the indeterminate again! -MD) SED-Mitglieder zweifelhaft Gutes gewollt und tatsächlich geleistet, objektiv haben sie damit aber das System gestärkt, das sie so nicht gewollt haben.[69] (my italics)

a line of argument to which Karrin Dörre[70], upon leaving the party in early 1995, responds as follows:

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[66]Meier/Behrend: *Der Schwere Weg der Erneuerung.* op. cit., p. 8

[67]Gysi, Gregor:"Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 10

[68]Bisky et al.: "Borniertheit erneut als politische Kategorie?"

[69]Bortfeldt op. cit., p. 24

> Sich immer wieder mit den subjektiv gewollten schönen Zielen zu trösten. Das ist die alte Krankheit der Linken, zu glauben, Gutes zu wollen und dafür jeden Dreck zu schlucken. Wie lang wollt ihr die Öffentlichkeit und Euch selbst noch täuschen?[71]

In the following. the SED and its membership are presented as neatly separable poles:

> Wie konnte es geschehen, daß - *entgegen dem Willen der Mitgliedschaft* - die SED-Politik letztlich zu reaktionärer Willkürherrschaft gerann ...[72] (my italics)

Secondly, therefore, and crucially, the polarised *Führung*-vs.-*Basis* construct offers a sweeping personal absolution and circumvents the highly complex issue of personal involvement: we will deal with this aspect more fully below. We re-iterate the internal contradiction in the line of argumentation presented here: for one discursive purpose the SED-Basis is given blanket absolution. Elsewhere, where the 'honest core' is set off against the *Wendehälse,* the integrity of the many who left the party is clearly questioned; the latter are berated for their political opportunism.

It is only consistent, then, that we see PDS historiography at pains to link and identify its absolved *Basis* (that very *Basis,* so the construct goes, from which it has generated its membership) to the reform movement which culminated in the *friedliche Revolution.* The following is typical:

> Andererseits schlossen sich spätestens ab November 1989 die mit den bisherigen Verhältnissen unzufriedenen bzw. um die Zukunft besorgten Parteimitglieder entweder mit der neuen Bürgerbewegung zusammen oder sie traten ihrerseits (erstmalig) offen als *aktive* innerparteiliche Opposition auf ...
>
> ... Die kritischen und auf Reformen drängenden Kräfte in der SED haben es zwar nicht vermocht, die verkrusteten Strukturen der Honecker-Ära selber aufzubrechen. Sie wurden auf dem Hintergrund und zusammen mit der

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[70]Karin Dörre was a prominent member of the party *Vorstand*, editor of the party magazine, *DISPUT*, and a member of the *Berliner Abgeordetenhaus.*

[71]Dörre, Karin: "Ich will mich nicht länger verbiegen. Erklärung zum Austritt aus der PDS." In: *Die Trageszeitung.* 23 January 1995

[72]Adler, Helga: "Abschied von der Partei neuen Typus. Die PDS auf dem Wege zu einer demokratischen sozialistischen Partei." In: *Wir brauchen einen Dritten Weg.* op. cit., p. 51

oppostionellen Bürgerbewegung wirksam. Das diente zur Gewährleistung des unblutigen Verlaufes der Umwälzung.[73] (my italics)

This issue is a highly complex one for a number of reasons: there is no way of empirically determining the extent and nature of commitment to 'reform' within the SED; the problem with key-words like *reform* or *opposition* is that they are highly superordinate terms whose semantic content, we remember, is very difficult to specify.[74] In other words, the problem for the linguistician and politologist is that such words encapsulate a diverse range of differing visions which are never easily manageable; their usefulness to the political actor is that they can function as a unifier, can conflate, on the level of signifier, fundamentally different visions and thus gloss over a complex causal background of differences which emerge starkly from a wider contextualisation. Put yet another way, the conflationary possibilities of highly superordinate terms allows - as Colin Good has aptly put it - the 'conceptual obfuscation'[75] necessary to present a version of 'reality' which blurs and distorts political boundaries. Townson discusses in some detail the ideological potential of the extreme vagueness of many central political terms and shows how an overlap in the *signs* instrumentalised by different political groups - i.e. their use of identical verbal forms - is not always mirrored by a uniformity of denotation. Put simply, there is ideolgical advantage to be gleaned from the fact that 'same' terms can be - and are - used differently.[76] The terms we shall concentrate on below are in particular *Reform, Erneuerung, Opposition* and *Sozialismus.*

Trying to entangle the web of different conceptions of reform where they existed in the SED brings us up against a complex psycholinguistic, problem of the type described upon by Colin Good[77]: what we cannot do is read the minds of all SED members and in any way quantify or verify how they subjectively understood the concept of reform, or the extent to which they were committed to the need for it. What we can do, however, is identify features which relativise the conceptual

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[73]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt ...?*op. cit., p. 6

[74]Schäffner/Porsch, see footnote 21

[75]Good, Colin: *Language, Politics and Ideology.* op. cit. Good traces, inter alia, the shift in reference in the seventies of the term *Chaot*; in the student domain the term had come to signal a preference for demos and sit-ins as opposed to "participation in institutionalised dialogue as part of the democratisation of the university sector" and had been further politicised as term of reference for students with 'Marxist' proclivities; in the seventies it came to occupy a particularly prominent place in the public-political debate where it became an instrument in the right-left debate over the problematic relationship between the radical left and the terrorist movement. The outcome, Good observes, was a "more or less deliberate blurring of the distinction between legitimate political protest on the one hand, and violent criminal behaviour on the other".

[76]For an excellent discussion of the issues raised here, see: Townson, op. cit., esp. chapter 5.

[77]Good, Colin: *Die deutsche Sprache und die kommunistische Ideologie.* Bern and Frankfurt: H. and P. Lang 1975, p. 28 ff.

construct which the PDS has sought to create: a model suggesting that 1) there is a perfect overlap between, on the one hand, a body of SED members committed to reform and the PDS on the other (i.e. suggesting that the latter has been generated entirely from the former) and 2) that in its 'reformist' mode the PDS is a priori identifiable with the extra-SED reformist movement (described in detail by Markovits and Gorski as the "underground" or "unofficial opposition"[78]) of the *Wendezeit.*

We must preface our arguments here with the vital observation that SED was indeed not a monolith, was:

> bei weitem nicht eine Gemeinschaft Gleichgesinnter ... Das Bild bleibt unvollständig, wenn nicht berücksichtigt wird, daß in der SED - insbesondere bei dem der Intelligenz zuzurechnenden Teil - nicht weniger über notwendige gesellschaftliche Veränderungen und Reformen nachgedacht (oder besser: räsoniert) wurde als in der Bevölkerung insgesamt.[79]

There can be no doubt that there were voices in the SED which were critical of the regime[80] and that certain SED members indeed took part in the demonstrations that culminated in the *friedliche Revolution*:

> Die überhebliche und geradezu provokative Haltung der Parteispitze verbreiterte die oppositionelle Bewegung *bis in die Reihen der SED hinein.*[81] (my italics)

> An der SED-Basis gab es seit 1986 erhebliche Unruhen. Die Berichte der Staatssicherheit belegen dies in aller Deutlichkeit und demonstrieren, wie sich die Genossen zunehmend von der offiziellen Parteilinie abwandten. Sie sahen mehrheitlich in Gorbatschow ihren neuen Hoffnungsträger und wollten ganz eindeutig einen dementsprechenden Kurswechsel. *Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands war spätestens seit Glasnost und Perestroika*

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[78]op. cit., p. 241ff.

[79]Wittich, Dietmar: "Mitglieder und Wähler der PDS." In: Brie et al (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., pp. 59-60

[80]For a discussion of inner SED-unrest in the *Wende* and pre-*Wende* period see: Krisch, op. cit.; the genesis of an inner-SED movement calling for a modernised socialism is discussed in chapter 3 below.

[81]Weber, Hermann: *DDR - Grundriß der Geschichte 1945- 1990.* Hannover: Fackelträger 1991, p. 213

> *keine einheitliche Organisation mehr ... Der innerparteiliche Erosionsprozeß trug maßgeblich zum Untergang der alten Verhältnisse bei.*[82] (my italics)

This is not the same as saying, however, that there was a well co-ordinated, homogenous inner-SED reform movement, that the aspirations of certain members of an inner-SED reform movement were identical or, more importantly, that these coincided with those of the oppositional groups (in themselves, of course, highly diverse) which spearheaded the events that led to the fall of the wall. The PDS construct - which presents us with an 'absolved' *Basis* clamouring for reform in the face of an egregious and uncompromising leadership - simply circumvents and leaves unaddressed the crucial and complex question of *Mitläufertum*, of why the democratisation of a Stalinist[83] system was not possible, of whether the state of affairs which obtained in the GDR can be said to be symptomatic of any state predicated on a uniform ideology seeking to channel society along the lines of a rational schema. These issues the PDS leaves largely unaddressed. Weber shows how the poles of the *Führung*-vs.-well-meaning 'others' construct are indeed not as neatly separable as the PDS's historiographic picture suggests; the system obtaining in the GDR, he observes, was predicated upon the complicity of:

> auch jener Typ des Funktionärs, der jederzeit die von oben angeordnete (oft wechselnde) politische Linie befolgte, sich freiwillig unterordnete und Parteidisziplin übte, als diene er einem strengen Orden ... *Die Allmacht der Führung beruhte eben nicht nur auf den Sicherheitsorganen, sondern auch auf der stalinistischen Funktionärs-Hierarchie, wie aber auch auf der*

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[82]Gerner, Manfred: *Partei ohne Zukunft? - Von der SED zur PDS*. München: Verlag Thomas Tilsner 1994, p. 20

[83]This term has been used widely and indiscriminately with reference to the system that obtained in the GDR: we will discuss its instrumentalisation by the PDS below. We use the term here as defined by Weber in *DDR-Grundriß der Geschichte* (see pp. 13-15) who observes that "In der DDR blieb dieser Begriff (*Stalinismus* - MD) bis 1989 ein Tabu, seither wird er dort fast infltionär verwendet und verdeckt oft mehr, als er aufdeckt." (p. 13). Weber distinuishes between a broader *Stalinismus* ("als gesellschaftpolitisches System", p. 13) and a "Stalinismus im engeren oder speziellen Sinne - dies wäre Willkürherrschaft und Personenkult" (p. 13). This wider Stalinism is thus much more than the mere external features of mass murder, a fanatical personality cult and arbitrary rule which characterised Stalin's rule: "Der Stalinismus im allgemeinen wie im speziellen Sinne wurde nach 1945 auf die osteuropäischen Länder und somit auch auf die SBZ bzw. DDR - die ja zunächst abhängiges Besatzungsgebiet war - übertragen. Erst nach Stalins Tod und insbesondere seit dem XX. Parteitag der KPdSU 1956 versuchten die kommunistischen Parteien schrittweise und mehr oder weniger intensiv, durch einen 'Entstalinisierung' sowohl den Personenkult als auch die Willkürherrschaft, also den speziellen Stalinismus zu überwinden. Weitgehend unberührt blieb indes... die Machtkonzentration bei der Hegemonialpartei. Die entscheidenden Merkmale des Stalinismus als gesellschaftspolitisches System (das nicht einfach als 'Kommunismus' bezeichnet werden kann, weil diese Formen unter Stalin entwickelt wurden) bestanden weiter: 1. Der ideologische Anspruch, die Partei habe *'immer recht'*. 2. Das Organisationsprinzip mit dem hierarchischen demokratischen Zentralismus. 3. Das System der 'Nomenklatur' in der Kaderpolitik. 4. Das Erziehungs- Informations- und Organisationsmonopol von Partei und Staat. Trotz erkennbarer Ansätze von Modernisierung vieler Bereiche blieb so das gesellschaftspolitische System des Stalinismus (oder des Neo-Stalinismus) auch in der DDR unangetastet. " (p. 15; my italics)

> *Untertanenmentalität breiter Kreise der Bevölkerung, die in Unmündigkeit gehalten wurden* ...[84] (my italics)

For the purposes of identifying itself with the reform movement the PDS presents itself as a product of the *Wende* itself, thereby circumventing - for this discursive purpose - its problematic relationship with the SED which preceded it. Observe the (sophistic) nature of the assertion that:

> *Die PDS ist ein Kind vom Herbst '89.* Die Kräfte der Erneuerung brachen mit Ideologie, Programm und Struktur der stalinistischen SED und leiteten die Entwicklung zu einer demokratischen Partei ein.[85] (my italics)

We remember the programmatic assertion (cited above) that:

> Die Ursprünge unserer Partei liegen im Aufbruch des Herbstes 1989 in der DDR, als wir aus der SED dazu beitragen wollten, die Gesellschaft in der DDR umfassend zu reformieren.[86]

which is clearly constructed to offer the (unproblematic) suggestion that the *whole* of the PDS is composed of oppositional voices who championed reform in the *Wendezeit*. Falkner and Huber remark that:

> manchmal verharrt sie (die PDS - MD) ... noch in etwas alberner Roßtäuscherei aus vergangenen Zeiten. So heißt es in den internen Wahlkampfanleitungen 1994 kurioserweise: "Im Gegensatz zu den anderen Parteien hat die PDS eine relativ kurze Vergangenheit." Auch im Parteiprogramm versucht die PDS, sich allein als Kind der Wende darzustellen ...[87],

a picture which co-exists uncomfortably alongside that widely proffered by the PDS elsewhere, a (legitimising?) picture in which it harks back to its putative KPD and SPD origins. As well as allowing the PDS to claim common ground with the SPD (again, on the conflationary level of signifier: the problematic dimension of temporal disparity is backgrounded!), the reference to a KPD/SPD past simultaneously affords the PDS the possibility of by-passing a tainted SED-history and of locating its origins in a much older (and mythical?) tradition outside of the immediate and sullied context of SED reprehensibility:

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[84]Weber, op. cit., p. 15

[85]*Von den Anfängen* ... op. cit., back cover

[86]see footnote 3

> Die PDS ist aus der SED hervorgegangen und diese aus KPD und SPD im Osten Deutschlands ... Wer sich wirklich zur Geschichte der SED bekennt, muß die *ganze* wechselvolle Geschichte von KPD und SPD ... berücksichtigen ...[88] (italics in original)

Witness, too:

> Die PDS steht in *sozialistischen Traditionen ... Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht und Paul Levi bleiben unsere politischen Vorläufer.*[89] (my italics)

The very rich mix of perspectives we encounter in the PDS's discourse is a key component in the difficulty we encounter in speaking about the party (and allows the party to invoke a 'dialectical' counter-charge to any charge based upon the isolation of a particular perspective; we will discuss this point in some detail below.) It is unsurprising, then, that commentators upon the PDS all too frequently become entangled in the web of differing perspectives, as in the following, where the journalist concerned struggles with the contradiction of the PDS being both an 'old' and a 'new' party:

> Sei es aus Respekt vor der demokratischen Entscheidung der Ost-Bürger oder nur aus Machtkalkül. An der *neuen* Partei aus dem Osten kommen die Bonner nicht mehr vorbei ... Die Magdeburger Sozialdemokraten sollten mit *Honeckers linken Erben* koalieren ...[90] (my italics)

In its picture of the PDS as a *new* party made up of a reformist SED-nucleus, the PDS has largely left unaddressed the issue that - as numerous political commentators have pointed out - a significant portion of the PDS membership has been generated from, inter alia, ex-GDR officials who have found in the PDS a *politische Heimat,* and whose membership is in some cases predicated more on a nostalgic reverence for the GDR than for any commitment to pursuing a policy of 'reform' or to the notion (however vague) of a 'Democratic Socialism'. Where this issue *is* touched upon, it is to suggest that even the inertia and *Sprachlosigkeit* of the 'die-hards' was positively charged; witness the tenuous nature of the following:

> Sie (the SED-'Reformer' - MD) konnten aber auch deshalb die Zügel in die Hand nehmen, weil ein Teil der ehemaligen SED-Mitglieder von der

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[87]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 182

[88]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op.cit., p. 10

[89]Gysi, Gregor: *Ingolstädter Manifest. Wir - mitten in Europa. Plädoyer für einen neuen Gesellschaftsvertrag.* Berlin: Wahbüro der PDS 1994, p. 15

[90]*Regieren mit der PDS?* In: *Der Spiegel.* no. 27. 1994, p. 25

> Entwicklung zunächst so sehr verwirrt und vom klaren Scheitern des Systems derart beeindruckt war, daß er die Reformer unterstützte, auf ihre gute Absicht hoffend. Das waren zumeist *ehrliche Sozialisten*, die ohne selber direkt eine Opposition oder Ablehnung zum bisherigen "Realsozialismus" artikulieren zu können *oder zu wollen* (!- MD), dennoch begriffen hatten, daß eine grundsätzliche Umwertung der bisherigen Position unausweichlich wird, sofern man überhaupt ernsthaft an der sozialistischen Idee weiter festhalten will.[91] (my italics)

in which it might be said of those who follow the (putative) reformers that they have merely understood that they 'es gerne können wollen würden'.

The PDS has widely sought to link itself to the reform movement of the *Wendezeit* through the medium of a nebulous notion of inner-party *criticism* of the regime; this *criticism* can in turn, of course, be re-lexicalised as a form of *Opposition* to it, potentially allowing, on the level of <Opposition> a conflation with the *Opposition* [i.e. as a verbal form] widely used to enframe the (substantially different?) activities of the extra-SED reform movement and thus an obfuscation of their respective positions. (We will examine this point below.) However, political (and linguistic) commentaries have repeatedly pointed to the evidence that, unlike calls for change from parties outside of the SED, inner-SED calls for "Erneuerung" and "Reform" can rarely be seen to be aimed at challenging the one-party state, in other words, the leading role of the SED. Indeed, there is considerable evidence to suggest that for many of the critical voices in the SED, the existing structures were to be bolstered up quite precisely through a revision of their external features (involving, inter alia, divesting the party of an ageing leadership!). Good has show conclusively how this was certainly the case for the party leadership. Terms such as *Reform* and *Erneuerung*, *Umgestaltung* and *Dialog* were undoubtedly instrumentalised to secure the status quo[92]: the prevalent language of the (extra-party) opposition movement was usurped by the GDR leadership to suggest that change and reform had always underpinned the GDR's political existence:

> Dieser "Besetzungsversuch" war teil einer allgemeinen Strategie, die eine ganze Reihe Begriffe historisch belegen wollte ... Das Pochen auf die revolutionäre Vergangenheit läßt sich am besten als Abwehrversuch des

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[91]Wolf, Herbert: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 5

[92]see Good, Colin: "Der Kampf geht weiter oder Die sprachlichen Selbstrettungsversuche des SED-Staates." In: *Sprache und Literatur*. no. 67. 1991, pp. 48-55

> Staates gegen die Wiederbelebung ganzer Wortschatzbereiche durch andere verstehen.[93]

In other words the attempt represented a discursive strategy "nach der das Neue keinen Bruch mit der 'Tradition', sondern nur deren Fortsetzung darstelle ..."[94]. In this respect there is evidence that even SED-'reformer' and '*Hoffnungsträger*' (as he was often called), Hans Modrow, is no exception; observe how the "verbindende Klammer des Antifaschismus"[95] is invoked in the following:

> Auf die Frage nach *Reformen* in der DDR erinnerte Hans Modrow daran, daß die DDR seit ihrer Existenz eine Politik der Reformen betreibe. Eine der wichtigsten sei die Bildungsreform gewesen, mit der man den faschistischen Ungeist aus den Schulen gejagt hatte ...[96] (my italics)

The following extract from Good's study is revealing:

> Aber wie sehr sich die Partei auch winden oder mit den neuen Begriffen kokettieren mochte:
>
>> Modrow: Ja, weil ich für mich in Anspruch nehmen kann, nicht erst mit der 9. Tagung des ZK über Veränderungen, sagen wir es ganz offen, über *Reformen* nachzudenken ...
>> (Stimme der DDR; 'aktuell' am 22.10.1989)
>
> es war schon früh klar, daß die Versuche der SED, der Krise durch Entschärfung der Sprache derer, die sie entfacht hatten, Herr zu werden, die aufziehenden Gefahren durch Ent- oder Aneignung der neuen Sprache abzuwenden, nicht gelingen sollte.[97] (my italics -MD)

Indeed, as Good has pointed out[98], the term *Erneuerung* has a distinct tradition in SED-discourse in the "Begriffspaar" (Good) *Kontinuität* and *Erneuerung* (closely allied to widely intrumentalised rhetorical constructs in SED-speak such as

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[93]ibid., p. 48, p. 49

[94]ibid., p. 50

[95]Gerner, op. cit., p. 35. The reliance in PDS discourse on the ideologeme *Antifaschismus* is discussed in chapter 3 below.

[96]Extract from: *Neues Deutschland*, 26 September 1989, cited in: Lau, Karin/Karlheinz Lau: *Deutschland auf dem Weg zur Einheit: Dokumente einer Revolution.* Braunschweig: Westermann 1990, p. 14

[97]Good, Colin: "Der Kampf geht weiter ..." op. cit., p. 53

[98]ibid., pp. 49-50

"Vervollkommnung des Erreichten"[99]/"Vervollkommnung der Sozialistischen Gesellschaft"[100]), these terms being part and parcel of a world-view in which the sanctity of existing structures is not called into question.

Reference in PDS circles is frequently made to a strategic paper[101] co-authored by Michael Brie as 'proof' of inner-party dissent. This latter too champions an "Erneuerung des Sozialismus" and an "erneuerten Sozialismus"[102]. Yet again there is strong evidence to suggest that here, too, the sanctity of existing *structures* is not to be challenged; observe the standard '*Freund/Feind' Denkmuster* in:

> Nur ein Teil der Politiker der BRD und anderer NATO-Staaten geht davon aus, daß eine Destabilisierung der politischen und wirtschaftlichen Situation in Europa oder in der Welt heute die Lösung der anstehenden globalen Probleme weiter verzögert oder ganz unmöglich macht, nur ein Teil ist daher wirklich an Entspannung, politischer Stabilität und *progressiver Erneuerung des Sozialismus* interessiert.[103] (my italics)

Observe, too, the re-emergence of the conceptual pair discussed above: "Eine Reorganisation des politischen und wirtschaftlichen Systems der sozialistischen Gesellschaft ... erfordert ... Einheit von *Kontinuität und Erneuerung*."[104] (my italics)

If we are as yet in any doubt as to the authors' commitment to the the hegemony of the party, then it is clearly articulated in the following:

> Reformprozesse müssen durch eine politische Kraft geführt werden, die Handlungsspielraum besitzt. Dies ist unter den Bedingungen des Sozialismus in der DDR heute *allein die SED*, die *auf neue Weise* (Erneuerung! -MD) das Integrationszentrum für politische Parteien und Massenorganisationen, Bewegungen und Bürgerinitiativen werden muß ...[105] (my italics)

in which we have little more than a re-assertion of the validity of the *Nationale Front* model! There is no invocation of the question of the need for *new* political forces: the

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[99]Schäffner and Porsch (op. cit., p. 37) cite the following example from the SED's 1986 Party Conference: "Natürlich verlangt das Leben, das Erreichte zu vervollkommnen."

[100]See: Schäffner and Porsch, ibid., p. 43

[101]Brie et al.: *Studie zur Gesellschaftsstrategie*. op. cit.

[102]ibid., p. 6

[103]ibid., pp. 87-8

[104]ibid., p. 88

[105]ibid., p. 89

impression given is that the existing is to be optimised. We observe something similar in Hans Modrow's assertion in his autobiography that:

> Über die Notwendigkeit eines neuen Verhältnisses zwischen *den* Parteien, um eine breite Basis echter Zusammenarbeit zu schaffen ... wurde nicht gesprochen ...[106] (my italics)

The very reference to a determinate "*den* Parteien" clearly implies that the creation of any new party which might have challenged the SED's constitutionally guaranteed hold on power is precluded. Notice how close this comes to the tenor of a clearly preservationist leaflet issued - in response to the activities of the incipient *Neues Forum* - to party functionaries by a desperate and beleaguered SED in October 1989:

> Für einen schöpferischen Dialog *verfügen wir mit den in der nationalen Front der DDR vereinten Parteien und Massenorganisationen ... über alle erforderlichen Formen und Foren. Sie gilt es noch umfassender zu nutzen*, um - getragen von politischer Vernunft und staatsbürgerlichen Verantwortungsbewußtsein - die Antworten zu finden, mit denen wir dem Wohl des Volkes am besten dienen.[107] (my italics)

Markovits and Gorski are in doubt that the *Block-Parteien* of the *Nationale Front* were mere appendages of the SED; indeed as the 'official opposition' they are contrasted, we remember, with the "unofficial opposition"[108] centred around the *dissident* movement. This *categorisation*, it will be argued below, is vital.

The authors of the *Studie zur Gesellschaftsstrategie* cited above see the reform of the political system in primarily *economic* terms. This mode of thinking is located entirely within the tradition of the Communist ideology of the SED. Good[109] has described in detail the linguistic implications of the "Einheit von Politik, Ökonomie und Ideologie"[110] which entailed, in particular, a "Politisierung des ökonomischen Bereiches, die ein Grundpfeiler der kommunistischen Ideologie ist", an "Anwendung ökonomischer Begriffe auf Bereiche, die nicht undbedingt als 'ökonomisch' gedeutet werden müssen".[111] In other words, given the 'hermetic' ideological interaction

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[106]Modrow: *Aufbruch und Ende*. op. cit., p. 22

[107]Extract from: *Die Tageszeitung Berlin* (West) (ed.): *DDR-Journal zur Novemberrevolution*. Berlin 1989, pp. 88-9, cited in: Lau/Lau: *Deutschland auf dem Weg zur Einheit* ... op. cit., p. 14

[108]see above, footnote 22

[109]Good, Colin: *Die deutsche Sprache und die kommunistische Ideologie*. op. cit. (see, in particular, chapters 5 and 6)

[110]ibid., p. 80 (citation from *Neues Deutschland*. 11 December 1964)

[111]ibid., p. 84

between politics and economics, a revision of the political system is necessarily seen as predicated primarily upon the articulation of a reorganisation of the *economic* system, which leaves intact existing political structures. In this ideology politics *is* economics. (Good has shown, too, how this 'economicisation' also impinges upon the private sphere of individuals, at least in terms of verbal constructs.)[112] So it is that the authors of the *Gesellschaftsstrategie* declare that:

> Das geeignete Feld für den Beginn ergebnisorientierter Umstellungen im politischen System, in der Wirtschaft und in der Öffentlichkeit scheint *die ökologische Reorganisation der Wirtschaft und der Lebensprozesse der Individuen unserer Gesellschaft zu sein.*[113] (italics in original)

The idea, then, of a pluralist party system is not on the agenda. Whether or not a democracy thrives on political pluralism is a matter of politological conjecture. What is interesting for the critical linguist is that in invoking the highly superordinate term *reform*, the text does not raise - and therefore problematise - the *detailed* question of political structures: this interpretation of reform glosses over the complex causal inter-relationship between the political structures and the economic system, i.e. avoids the problematic notion that the faults of the economic system may lie in the political structures themselves.

Land and Possekel's excellent study of the origin and nature of inner-SED reform movement(s) identifies precisely this:

> Der reformsozialistische Diskurs innerhalb der SED ... vor 1989 hatte ... zwar eine allgemeine Kritik der Machtstrukturen des Realsozialismus geleistet, aber eine Analyse des eigenen Verhältnisses zur Macht vermieden. Die Option auf eine künftige Übernahme der Macht aus der kommunistischen Partei heraus gehörte zum Selbstverständnis der eigenen Rolle als Akteur möglicher politischer Veränderungen. Daraus ergab sich die paradoxe Situation, daß sie (the reformist intellectuals in the SED - MD) ein modernes politisches System ... mit den Mitteln der Gegenmoderne (einführen wollten).[114]

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[112]ibid. (see especially chapter 5)
Wolfgang Leonhard paints a similar picture in chronicling his politicisation in the pre-war Soviet Union: "In der Sowjetunion ist das *Leben* ja viel stärker politisiert als in jedem anderen Lande der Welt. Es gibt kaum eine Frage, die nicht 'politisch' betrachtet wird ..." Cited from: Leonhard, Wolfgang: *Die Revolution entläßt ihre Kinder*. Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch 1990, p. 33 (my italics)

[113]Brie et al.: *Studie zur Gesellschaftsstrategie.* op. cit., p. 91

[114]Land/Possekel, op. cit., p. 422

What is crucial too, as we touched apon above is that the PDS has been keen to cite examples of inner-SED disaffection to invoke its democratic credentials (and to suggest an *active* and *leading* role in the *friedliche Revolution*) under the banner of a generic inner-SED 'reform' movement which subsumes and by-passes individual conceptions of reform, in particular those which might not be compatible with the widely accepted notion in a united Germany that democracy is based upon a pluralist spectrum of parties. It is against this background that we must assess and relativise Gysi's invocation of "intellektuelle Vorarbeit" in the following extract from an exchange with Joschka Fischer:

> Fischer: ... Wir haben es ja auch noch mit einem Wunder zu tun: Es handelt sich da ja nicht um eine liebenswerte Protestpartei aus der ehemaligen DDR, sondern die steht in der Kontinuität der SED. Für mich ist bis heute schwer nachvollziehbar, wie die alte Staatspartei SED innerhalb weniger Stunden und Tage vom Saulus zum Paulus werden konnte.
>
> Gysi: Alles Klischees! Ich kann dir erklären, was du da für ein Wunder hältst. Es hat sich nämlich nicht in Stunden abgespielt. *Spätestens seit 1985 haben Intellektuelle in der SED Vorarbeit dafür geleistet.*[115] (my italics)

It might be argued, of course, that the authors of the *Gesellschaftsstrategie* were going as far as they could under the prevailing conditions, i.e. that to tackle the leading role of the party would have meant political and personal suicide. If, however, we accept that the PDS has sought to create a discursive model linking inner-SED reform to the kind of reform that would ordinarily be expected by, and accepted as 'democratic' in, Western democracies, then there is significant evidence in the case of Hans Modrow alone to undermine the absoluteness of the conceptual model that the PDS has sought to create. If we accept, too, that the authors of the *Gesellschaftsstrategie* failed to invoke the question of the need to re-examine existing structures because they were in no 'bargaining position' to do so, this 'defence' would certainly seem more problematic in the case of the "Hoffnungsträger"[116] Hans Modrow who, as the GDR's new *Ministerpräsident* from November 1989 to March 1990 and subsequently *Ehrenvorsitzender* of the PDS, was ideologically far less shackled than his predecessors. In their crucially revealing article examining the linguistic features of governmental declarations in Germany, Schäffner and Porsch reveal clearly that in the case of governmental declarations

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[115]From: "Streitgespräch mit Joschka Fischer." cited in: Köhler/Harnisch: *Gregor Gysi: Freche Sprüche*. op. cit., p. 102

[116]Modrow: *Aufbruch und Ende*. op. cit., p. 12

issued by Kohl, Biedenkopf and de Maiziere, the solution to the (ex-) GDR's problems are metaphorically linked to the conceptual domain of construction.

> The aim was to build a society built on new foundations and different values. This explains all the references to 'renewal, restructuring, reconstruction, transition from X to Y'.[117]

Schäffner and Porsch point out that in the government declaration - the first of its type in the GDR - given to the Volkskammer by Hans Modrow upon assuming office, the latter, by contrast, describes the objectives before him not in terms of reconstruction but *Erneuerung*. The crucial point is that:

> Although we find "renewal [Erneuerung]" in all the speeches, there is, however, a difference in the semantic content of the word ... Modrow speaks of a renewal of *the existing system* ... When de Maiziere Kohl and Biedenkopf speak of "renewal", they mean a new social system with new structures, values and mechanisms ... Although Modrow does mention PROBLEMS, he is still arguing within the traditional logical relations: the system is to be renewed by reforms, *but it is still the same social system. i.e. the basis of comparison for his kind of socialist society ('a better socialism') remains the same.*[118] (my italics; capitals in original)

In his autobiographical *Aufbruch und Ende*, a disgruntled Modrow berates the "'führenden Genossen'" (sic: the inverted commas are Modrow's: a clear attempt to distance himself from that *Führung*) for its "absolute Unfähigkeit", for its "Konzeptions- und Sprachlosigkeit" and its "Handlungsunfähgkeit"[119]which carries a clear contextual implication that Modrow takes issue not with the nature of the system itself, but rather with its ageing *Führung*. In other words, the solution lies in a change of that *Führung*, not in addressing the very basis of the system. Put another way, the very fact that Modrow berates the *Führung* for lacking "konzeptionelle Vorschläge zur Überwindung dieser schweren Krise"[120] suggests that the fact of there being a set of solutions to overcome the crisis within the given framework of GDR society is taken as a natural premise. Interesting, too, is that the state of affairs obtaining is categorised as a *Krise*, a lexeme which is undoubtedly negatively charged and betrays Modrow's less-than-positive attitude to the turn which events were taking.

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[117]Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit., p. 42

[118]ibid., pp. 42-3

[119]Modrow: *Aufbruch und Ende*. op. cit., pp. 9, 10

We observe, too, how the *Führung*-versus-*Basis* model is at times polarised even more starkly: absolution is offered to the rank and file by transferring the focus of blame onto an individual or individuals:

> In völliger Verkennung der Situation glaubte Erich Honecker, mit den Feierlichkeiten ... die politische Stabilität des Landes sichern zu können.[121]

Compare:

> Im Ergebnis harter Auseinandersetzungen brach das Honecker-Regime zusammen.[122]

> Wäre die DDR aber 1985 noch zu retten gewesen, wenn Honecker & Co. die Politik Gorbatschows nicht als abenteuerlich abgelehnt hätten, sondern der Moskauer Linie gefolgt wären?[123]

In other words we again have a model which glosses over the complex question of why thousands of party members were willing to offer their complicity in preparing for acclamatory celebrations to mark the anniversary of a country for whose political system they, according to Modrow[124], had already come to express their disaffection. This individualisation as a means of transferring blame is not without its historiographic parallels: Townson has argued convincingly that formulations such as Rudolf Buschner's "Bilanz der Regierung Hitlers":

> ... immediately individualise(..) and personalise(..) the epoch relieving the author of the need to search for systemic causes ... [125]

Townson identifies, too, how the reductive notion of a *Machtergreifung Hitlers* suggests "the imposition of a minority will"[126] and circumvents the more problematic notion that:

> Hitler did not stand alone ... he was at least tolerated, if not actively supported, across a broad band of the political spectrum.[127]

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[120]ibid., p. 10

[121]ibid.

[122]Meier/Behrend: *Der Schwere Weg der Erneuerung*. op. cit., p. 5

[123]Gysi, Gregor: "Letzte Ausfahrt Sozialismus." In: *Kursbuch. In Sachen Erich Honecker.* no. 111. Berlin: Rowohlt 1993, p. 151

[124]see Modrow: *Aufbruch und Ende*. op. cit., p. 10 ff.

[125]Townson, op. cit., p. 173

[126]ibid.

Straßner calls the process of transferring blame to an individual/individuals the "bewährte argumentative Ausgrenzungsstrategie"[128] and identifies the desperate attempts of the CDU in Schleswig-Holstein at the time of the Barschel-Affäre to 'limit the damage' by finding inner-party scape-goats upon whom all blame is heaped:

> Mit der Reduzierung und vor allem der Personalisierung auf diejenigen, die man partout nicht reinwaschen konnte, versucht man dann den Schaden möglichst zu begrenzen. Zugleich dient das Opfer der wenigen dazu, die Läuterung des ganzen zu demonstrieren, denn von ihnen kann man sich leicht distanzieren.[129]

We emphasise this point because of the importance, in evaluating PDS historiography, of bearing in mind that the discursive features for which the PDS is ritually criticised are by no means alien to the discourse of other parties across the political spectrum. We will have much to say on this subject below.

In *Aufbruch und Ende*, Modrow states, too, that his (and Wolfgang Berghofer's) ultimate aim was to secure a "demokratische Umwälzung im Zeichen der Perestroika"[130] We recall that when Gorbachev's process of Perestroika was launched it did not call into question the Communist Party's monopoly on power; political pluralism was championed when it became a historical inevitability.

Political commentators have pointed to other factors which they see as mitigating the 'democratic' credentials of the Modrow government. Gerner[131] describes in detail the Modrow government's preservationist attempts to maintain the *Staatssicherheit* in the form of a *Verfassungsschutz* (having first renamed it an *Amt für nationale Sicherheit*):

> Vor allem der weiterhin intakte Staatssicherheitsdienst war eine existentielle Bedrohung für die bisherigen Ergebnisse der Revolution. Viele befürchteten damals einen Putschversuch dieser Organisation und damit die Wiederherstellung des "ancien regime".[132]

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[127]ibid.

[128]Straßner: "Maximenverstoß als Regel ..." op. cit., p. 132

[129]ibid., p. 135

[130]Modrow: *Aufbruch* ... op. cit., p. 17

[131]Gerner, op. cit., p. 32 ff.

[132]ibid., p. 32

In particular Modrow's decision to appoint Schwanitz (Mielke's ex-deputy!) as head of this organisation[133] caused widespread resentment, especially with the *Runder Tisch*[134]. Gerner shows how the issue of the Stasi's continued existence was one of the major bones of contention between the *Runder Tisch* and the Modrow government:

> Das zentrale Konfliktfeld war jedoch in der ersten Phase die Auflösung des Staatsicherheitsdienstes. Das Bemühen, hierbei möglichst konservierend zu wirken, wurde sehr schnell sichtbar. *Der Versuch des Ministerpäsidenten die "Staatssicherheit" in einen "Verfassungsschutz" umzuwandeln machte deutlich, daß die alte Staatspartei nicht "kampflos das Feld räumen wollte". Das Bemühen, das alte "Schwert und Schild" der Partei zu retten war unverkennbar.*[135] (my italics)

Ultimately, Modrow was forced by the *Runder Tisch* and the force of public protest to abandon the idea of a *Verfassungsschutz.*

Gerner's account of the attempts to maintain the *Staatssicherheitsdienst* thus paints a very different picture of reality than is contained in the PDS's model which generally leaves - or seeks to leave - the impression that there was a perfect overlap between the inner-SED protest movement (with which, after all, especially 'reformist' figures like Modrow have been linked) and a mythical, monolithic opposition movement; while we can never in any way verify or quantify the precise extent of the PDS's involvement or overlap with the *Bürgerbewegungen* (the term *Opposition* after all, if we step outside the framework of a widely accepted institutionalised use of such an entity in a political system [cf. 'Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition'], enframes no hard and fast, immutable denotative core which could in any way be empirically quantified; in other words, it is impossible to specify where 'true' opposition starts and ends: what does and what does not constitute a satisfactory opposition is thus a matter of subjective perception), we can draw attention to interpretations of reality which relativise the impression generally left in PDS historiography that it marched hand in hand with these *Bürgerbewegungen.* Gerner's model invokes quite different polarities:

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[133]see ibid., p. 35

[134]This organ, convened by the church, was designed to fill the power vacuum which had arisen in the aftermath of November 1989 (especially following the withdrawal by the *Volkskammer* [the East German parliament] of the SED's automatic constitutional right to govern in December 1989) until such time as elections could be held. It brought together forces from both the *Nationale Front* (i.e. the SED and the 'Blockparteien') and the *Bürgerbewegungen.* (A detailed account is offered by Gerner, op. cit., p. 33 ff.)

[135]Gerner, op. cit., p. 34

> Dies (the decision to appoint Schwanitz - MD) erweckte den Unmut und Protest *der Opposition* und ließ das Mißtrauen an Modrow wachsen.[136] (my italics)

> Diese offensichtliche Hinhaltetaktik (of the Modrow government in refusing to come clear on the location of its central database - MD) veranlaßte *die Opposition am Runden Tisch* ein Ultimatum zu stellen.[137] (my italics)

> Die ehemalige Staatspartei, inklusive des Ministerpräsidenten, schlug nach dem Verzicht auf einen Verfassungsschutz *gegenüber der Opposition* einen wesentlich moderateren Ton an.[138] (my italics)

The following polarised conceptual picture of the 'new' and 'old' forces which together made up the *Runder Tisch* betrays a very clear distinction in Gerner's mind between a post-*Wende* 'reformist' SED and the various citizens' action groups/extra-SED reform groups:

> Dazu wurde auf Einladung der Kirchen ein zentraler Runder Tisch eingerichtet, an dem paritätisch die alten und die neuen Kräfte vertreten waren ... Die *alten Kräfte* setzten sich aus der SED und den vier ehemaligen Blockparteien zusammen ... Die *neuen Kräfte* (waren) ... anfänglich durch sieben Organisationen (footnoted as: *Vereinigte Linke, Sozialdemokratische Partei, Demokratie Jetzt, Neues Forum, Grüne Partei, Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte, Demokratischer Aufbruch* - MD) präsent ...[139] (my italics)

Sontheimer would challenge a 'broad' interpretation of opposition which allows the PDS to become co-initiators of the 'peaceful revolution' by a simple conflation of inner-SED opposition with the (on the level of *signifiant* identical) opposition that characterised the activities of the *Bürgerbewegungen*. His denotation is specific and unequivocal:

> Träger der Demonstrationen, deren Speerspitze die Stadt Leipzig wurde, waren die vielen kleinen Bürgerbewegungen, die in den unruhigen Sommermonaten aus ihrer weitgehenden Isolierung ausgebrochen und mit

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[136]ibid., p. 35

[137]ibid., pp. 35-6

[138]ibid., p. 36

[139]ibid., p. 33

> wachsendem Mut öffentlich *als Opposition zum SED-Regime* auf den Plan getreten waren.[140] (my italics)

The reform movement, then, was not a homogenous entity which neatly incorporated a uniform, reformist SED! Falkner and Huber observe, in response to Bortfeldt's monograph (see footnote 2 above) that:

> ... bei der Betrachtung des Außerordentlichen SED-Parteitags vom Dezember 1989 und der Zeit danach (werden) alle jene Sprengsätze konsequent ausgespart, die die Partei mit ihren Inkonsequenzen und ihren Versuchen zur Rettung der alten politischen und ökonomischen Macht in die ohnehin siedende Gesellschaft warf ...[141]

We have seen how even in the case of Modrow - widely championed as a 'reformer' - the championing of "Erneuerung" was not ultimately aimed at challenging the '*Wahrheitsmonopol*' of the SED. (Hence, no doubt, the agonised attempts to maintain the *Stasi*!).

If we look at the aspirations of the extra-SED opposition/reform movement - its enormous diversity notwithstanding[142] - we observe, crucially, that the call for political "Erneuerung", for reforms, was generally - across the board - aimed at much more than (a mere) economic transformation with a corresponding maintenance of existing structures:

> Proteste gegen den autoritären SED-Staat mit den vielfältigen Formen des Mißbrauchs und der Mißwirtschaft sowie *Forderungen nach Veränderungen des politischen Systems der DDR* waren der gemeinsame Nenner der ersten Oppositionsgruppen, die es wagten, unter den Augen de Staatssicherheit an die Öffentlichkeit zu treten.[143] (my italics)

Witness, for example:

> Die notwendige Demokratisierung unseres Landes hat *die grundsätzliche Bestreitung des Wahrheits- und Machtanspruchs der herrschenden Partei zur*

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[140]Sontheimer, Kurt: *Grundzüge des politischen Systems der neuen Bundesrepublik Deutschland.* München, Zürich: Piper 1993, p. 88

[141]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 183

[142]Markovits and Gorski's excellent study (op. cit., see esp. pp. 237-63) deals with the aspirations of the (extra-SED) reform movement during the *Wendezeit* in some detail: they show that oppositional groups were necessarily highly factionalised given the nature of a repressive system in which groups could only operate underground on a localised level.

[143]Lau/Lau, op. cit., p. 7

> *Voraussetzung*. ... Das erfordert die klare Trennung von Staat und Gesellschaft und ... *Parlamentarische Demokratie und Parteipluralität*[144] (my italics)

Compare, too, the following extracts from the *Gründungsaufruf* of *Demokratie Jetzt*:

> Vor wenigen Jahren noch galt der "real existierende" Staatssozialismus als der einzig mögliche. Seine Kennzeichen sind das Machtmonopol einer zentralistischen Staatspartei ... Trotz seiner unbestreitbaren Leistungen für soziale Sicherheit und Gerechtigkeit ist es heute offenkundig, daß die Ära des Staatssozialismus zu Ende geht. Er bedarf einer friedlichen demokratischen *Erneuerung*.[145] (my italics)

> Wir wollen *die wirkliche Wahl zwischen Programmen und deren Vertretern*. Wir wollen die Gleichberechtigung aller politischen Parteien und Gruppen, ausschließlich der Faschisten. *Wir lehnen den Führungsanspruch der SED ab* ...[146] (my italics)

In other words the aspirations of the oppositional movements which sprang up in the autumn of 1989 strike at the very heart of the GDR state system in challenging the leading role of the party.

We may summarise our arguments here as follows:

The PDS's conceptual model glosses over vital questions of causality and leaves the *impression* that the PDS is composed entirely of the 'reformist' voices within the SED. By linking itself to the *Wende*-period and - as a '*Mitgestalter*' - to the oppositional movements under the banner of a mythical unified reform movement, the PDS has sought to put the aspirations of inner-SED 'reformers' - who, the PDS suggests, now makes up the PDS! - entirely on a par with those of the oppositional movements. We remember the extract (cited above) from the flyleaf accompanying the party's second programme and observe the *impression* created:

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[144]"Zum Aufruf der Initiativgruppe 'Sozialdemokratische Partei in der DDR'." (Extract from: *Die Tageszeitung Berlin* (West) (ed.): *DDR-Journal zur Novemberrevolution*. Berlin 1989, pp. 88-9), cited in: Lau/Lau: *Deutschland auf dem Weg Zur Einheit* ... op. cit., pp. 7- 8

[145]cited in: Weber, op. cit., p. 214

[146]"Aus dem Aufruf der Bürgerbewegung 'Demokratie Jetzt', 30.9.89." (Extract from: *Wir sind das Volk*. Aufbruch '89. Teil I. Halle 1989, p. 36ff.), cited in: Lau/Lau: *Deutschland auf dem Weg zur Einheit* ... op. cit., p. 9

> Die PDS bekennt sich zu jenem aktiven Teil der SED, der mit dem Stalinismus brach und gemeinsam *mit anderen politischen Bewegungen* des Herbstes 1989 die DDR umfassend *reformieren* wollte.[147] (my italics)

Observe, here, the use of the nebulous notion of "sich bekennen" which performs the important function of forming a conceptual link between, and *suggesting* a parity of, on the one hand, the PDS, and, on the other, inner-SED critics of the regime /'reformers'(?), while stopping short of an (untenable?) *direct* equation of the two: a suggestion, after all, is defeasible. In addition to the suggestion that the PDS is simply the reformist "sub-set" of the SED, the conflationary potential of lexemes such as *reformieren* and *Opposition* is clearly tapped to create the unproblematic impression that there was a perfect uniformity of conceptions of reform among those - whether inside or outside the party - critical of the SED. We have observed that there is no such perfect overlap: the case of Hans Modrow - who is, after all, the PDS's *Ehrenvorsitzender* - alone offers compelling evidence that this is not so and undermines the absoluteness of the construct. We re-iterate, however, that this is *not* the same as saying that critical voices in the SED whose conception of (the need for) political renewal came close to/coincided with the ways in which it was understood in the extra-SED opposition groups were non-existent; it is rather the case that the reality is not as clear-cut as the impression left by the PDS's black and white model. (As we will see below, there is further evidence to suggest that the PDS is not composed entirely of 'reformers' convinced of the need for a move away from the monist thinking which characterised public discourse in the GDR. Falkner and Huber have shown how Sahra Wagenknecht - chairperson of the PDS's *Kommunistische Plattform* - is on record as expressly ruling out the notion of political pluralism:

> Aber auch den nach schweren Niederlagen und schweren Fehlern erlernten Pluralismus der Partei lehnt die kommunistische Avantgardistin ab: Für sie ist "programmatischer Pluralismus immer die Basis einer reformistischen, nie einer revolutionären Politik."[148])

Edelman has pointed to the ideological potential of:

> The Evocation of Mythical Populations as Reference Groups.
>
> Perhaps the archetypal device for influencing political opinion is the evocation of beliefs about the problems, or intentions, or the moral condition of people whose very existence is problematic, but who become the

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[147]see footnote 14

[148]Falkner/Huber: *Aufschwung PDS* ... op. cit., p. 160

> benchmarks by which real people shape their political beliefs and perceptions.[149]

While these reference groups can be substantiable, frequently they are spurious:

> Politicians' statements about unobservable people are often either impossible to verify or quite clearly invalid ... The facts regarding controversial political issues are typically so complex and so ambiguous that it is easy to find a set of allegations (or claims - MD) that both serve ... [a] rationalising function and are not manifestly untrue.[150]

In PDS historiography reference has been widely made, as we have said, to a vaguely defined inner-SED core of criticism. While it is very hard to pin down the nature and extent of the latter (i.e. verify it!), the very 'oppositionality' alluded to allows the motivation - whatever it may ultimately have been - underpinning the 'criticism' to be subsumed under such categories as *Opposition* and *Reform* and, thereby allowing the PDS the opportunity in its historiography to link itself with - on the level of <Opposition> (inter alia) the *dissident*[151] opposition groups which spearheaded the events of the *Wendezeit* (even if, as we have seen, there is considerable evidence to suggest that there was some disparity between inner-SED conceptions of reform and those of the *Bürgerbewegungen*). In other words, the wide semantic latitude afforded by highly superordinate terms such *Opposition* and *Reform* allows the PDS to present itself (unproblematically) as an integral part of the *active,* anti-SED opposition.

Crucially, too, the PDS's "kritische Stimmen" - sometimes "kritisches Potential" - model (see the quotation which follows) is part and parcel of that strand of PDS discourse in which the PDS seeks to procure legitimacy with its membership by offering it personal absolution, here by affording it a vaguely defined but positively charged body of motivation with which to identify. (We stress again that we are not questioning the fact that there was indeed a body of inner SED-criticism; what is at issue, however, is whether there is a perfect and unproblematic overlap between these and the PDS as a whole, and between these and the *Bürgerbewegungen.*) The following extract from a *Leserbrief* from the party magazine, *DISPUT*, typifies the conceptual model which party ideologues have sought to create and is evidence of the success of its reception among its membership at least:

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[149]Edelman, op. cit., p. 29

[150]ibid., p. 30

[151]The terminology here is crucial: this will be dealt with below.

> Die wenigen, die heute noch dabei sind, gehörten bereits in der DDR dem *kritischen Potential der SED* an ... Der PDS gehören heute *viele*, ehemalige SED-Mitglieder an, die schon früher im Kleinen bemüht waren, die Situation der Menschen erträglicher zu gestalten und die staatlichen Stellen an ihre Pflichten gegenüber den Menschen in der DDR zu gemahnen. In der PDS ist man heute nicht mehr aus opportunistischen Gründen, wie viele in der DDR[152] (my italics)

The same *Leser* proceeds to remark that the PDS contains individuals who:

> gegen dasselbe kämpfen, wie es das Neue Forum und andere Gruppen der Bürgerbewegungen tun[153] (my italics)

Observe how in the following (part of which we have already cited above), inner-party 'critics' are neatly relexicalised[154] as "Reformer":

> In der DDR-Zeit war viel früher und viel tiefer, als man heute glauben möchte, *innerhalb eines nennenswerten Teils der SED-Mitglieder die Einsicht verbreitet, daß eine weittragende und prinzipielle Revision der damals offiziell vertretenen politischen Leitlinien und Praktiken ansteht ... Die Leute mit solchen Ansichten* ... konnten aber auch deshalb die Zügel in die Hand

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[152]"PDS gleich SED?" (Leserbrief) In: *DISPUT.* no. 19. 1993, p. 23

[153]ibid.

[154]Kress, Günther/Robert Hodge (*Language as Ideology.* op. cit.) show how, in encoding communicable perception in language, "we inevitably impose our classifications on others, and on ourselves. Language plays a vital part in what has been called the 'social construction of reality'" (p. 5) At the heart of any ideology is the competition for acceptance of a given representation of 'reality', i.e. "the angle of telling" (Simpson, op. cit.; p. 2); Fundamental to this is lexical variation, "because ... this involves the occurrence of one option and a rejection of known alternative options" (Trew, Tony: "'What the papers say': linguistic variation and ideological difference." In: Fowler/Hodge/Kress/Trew: *Language and Control.* op. cit., p. 155). Trew, (ibid., pp. 117-155) offers an excellent study of the transformation of wordings (relexicalisation) and sentences in discourse in accordance with ideological perception/motivation/the attempt to motivate.

Johannes Volmert shows graphically that when it comes to relexicalisation - i.e. a strategy of "Umformulierung" (Volmert, "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 249), Gysi is a master of the art. (The page numbers in brackets which follow refer to J. Volmert's work. His remarks are marked thus: "..."; the remarks of the interlocutors he quotes are marked thus: «...».) In the course of an evening "Confrontainment" (p. 245) show, Gysi is pitted against Ludger Volmer of *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*, who accuses the PDS of having an «ungeklärten Programmlage». (p. 249) In seeking to deflect this charge, Gysi reformulates it with the attentuative «Programmatisch - is (sic) bei uns sicherlich einiges offen ...» (p. 249) and later again in deeming it «kompliziert» (p. 250): J. Volmert observes that "«ungeklärt», selbst schon eine moderate Formulierung deutet er (Gysi - MD) um in «kompliziert», ohne sich jedoch auf eine umständliche Rechtfertigungsstrategie einzulassen - was in dieser Situation auch gar nicht möglich und deshalb kaum erfolgversprechend wäre". (p. 250) Similarly, in deflecting the charge that the PDS has an «ungeklärte Vergangenheit» (p. 248), is «drei Stücke», a «Gemisch ... mit dem man sehr schwer systematisch zusammenarbeiten kann» (p. 250), Gysi again deploys a tactic of reformulation in asserting that «wir ja überhaupt nicht leugnen, daß wir in einem *Erneuerungsprozeß* stehen» (p. 251, my emhpases); J. Volmer has, of course, at no stage challenged a putative *Erneuerung*; the term is invoked by Gysi. An essentially negative perspective upon the forces at work in the PDS has been transmuted into a positive one through their distillation into an "Ausdruck (*Erneuerungsprozeß* - MD), den man gemeinhin als positiv wertende Bezeichnung betrachten muß". (p. 251)

> nehmen, weil ein Teil der ehemaligen SED-Mitglieder von der Entwicklung zunächst so sehr verwirrt und vom klaren Scheitern des Systems derart beeindruckt war, daß er die *Reformer* unterstützte, auf ihre gute Absicht hoffend.[155] (my italics)

This example shows very graphically how this aspect of PDS historiography very largely hinges upon, vague unquantifiable and unverifiable groupings - "nennenswerter Teil", "viele", "die Leute", "ein Teil" - whose extent and are hard to in any way "challenge" and which at the same time allow room for defeasing the (absolute?) impression they create. Witness the unverifiability of the following passage penned by the former GDR Deputy *Kultusminister*, Klaus Höpcke:

> Wem (whom? - MD) früher "Beulen" zugefügt worden waren (by whom? - MD), weil er seine persönliche Meinung ausgesprochen ... hatte, dem tat die neuartige, wirklich demokratische Willensbildung in der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus von Anfang an gut. Da wurde (note the passive! - MD) *etwas* (what? - MD) durchgesetzt, wonach *viele* sich schon lang gesehnt, was sie erstrebt hatten.[156] (my italics)

This example is particularly interesting inasmuch as, unusually, it engenders metalinguistic comment from the author:

> Wenn ich hier schreibe: *viele*, weiß ich natürlich, daß das nicht für alle in oder aus unseren Reihen gilt. Manchen Demokratieentwöhnten und auf Zentralismus Versessenen bereitete die Umstellung so große Schwierigkeiten, daß sie uns verließen.[157] (Observe how this leaves the impression that the 'opportunists' have left behind an 'honest core'! - MD; italics in original.)

What we have here in miniature is a discursive structure which we will encounter time and again in PDS writings: a dialectical attempt to pre-empt the objections of an imagined interlocutor and thereby disarm them; having created a particular impression, the author re-asserts his 'objectivity' through relativisation. While a dialectical form may appear 'objective' - and thus be used to bolster political legitimacy - Townson has rightly observed that:

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[155]Wolf, Herbert, op. cit., p. 5

[156]Höpcke, Klaus: "Nähe und Ferne des Vergangenen. Sich Erneuern: so heilsam wie schmerzhaft?" In: Gysi: *Wir brauchen einen dritten Weg*. op. cit., p. 36

[157]ibid., p. 36

> in language interaction the initiative participant is usually at an advantage - she who asks the questions to a large extent determines the answers.[158]

We shall look closely at this dialectical feature of PDS historiography in our detailed commentary on Bortfeldt's *Von der SED zur PDS - Aufbruch zu neuen Ufern*. For the time being we shall limit ourselves to the observation that this relativisation, while appearing 'objective', seems in fact to be used primarily to bolster up the simplified conceptual model of the 'honest core'; while admitting that "Andere arbeiten mit Mühe daran, Gegenmeinungen 'auszuhalten'"[159], the overall - but empirically unverifiable - impression created through the use of indeterminate numbers and quantities is that with which Höpcke leaves this line of argument:

> Für sehr viele aber, wenn nicht die meisten, gehört die wahrhaft praktizierte Demokratie innerhalb der Partei zu dem auf Anhieb Wohltuenden.[160]

As such, then, as "co-reformers", the PDS can claim to be a prime legatee and upholder of a vastly simplified - and mythical (?) - uniform, East German *Demokratiebewegung*, whose origins are located in the *Wendezeit* (and whose identifiability with the SED/PDS groups such as *Neues Forum* would, of course, challenge):

> Die PDS ist ein originär ostdeutsches Gewächs, mit zunehmend gesamtdeutschem Denken. Wir sind als einzige der im Bundestag vertretenen Parteien nicht unter die Glocke einer größeren Westpartei geraten. *Diesen Vorteil sollten wir auch nutzen, um ein Stück ostdeutscher politischer Kultur, ein Stück der großen Demokratiebewegung des Herbstes '89 und auch Traditionen der Runden Tische in der politischen Kultur zu erhalten. Politikroutine aus Bonn darf nicht auch noch uns verschlingen.*[161] (my italics)

Observe, how - (spuriously and ironically?) - a PDS in '*Ostalgie*'[162] mode foregrounds its status as a quintessential product of the GDR - i.e. its identifiability with the GDR - as a basis for putting itself at the forefront of a movement born of that GDR, yes, but also of a simultaneous opposition to the practices of the PDS's political predecessor! In other words, the PDS's argumentation turns, here, upon the

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[158]Townson, op. cit., p. 197

[159]Höpcke, op. cit., p. 36

[160]ibid., p. 36

[161]Lothar Bisky in: Oechelhauser, Gisela: *Lothar Bisky: "So tief bücke ich mich nicht."* Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1993, p. 114 (interview with L. Bisky)

[162]The term widely used to denote nostalgia for the GDR or certain features of it, yielding the adjective *ostalgisch*.

lowest common denominator of a GDR identity. To that end the *GDR* identity of the *Demokratiebewegung* is bolstered and maintained by it being set in conscious opposition to an overweening Western political culture, i.e. incorporated within the framework of an East-West conflict; the PDS frequently alludes to a mythical, 'morally superior' level of democracy seen by East Germany in the *Wendezeit*, a democracy soon sullied, it generally argues, by Western interference. (The problematic fact that West Germany's policy of accepting East German refugees as citizens of its own country [cf. East Germans' storming of the Federal Republic's embassies in Prague and Budapest in Autumn 1989] was a vital variable in the equation of forces which gave impetus to precisely that democratic movement in late 1989 is not invoked.) Observe too, however, Bisky's simultaneous mindfulness of the need for the PDS to transcend precisely that East-West divide if it is to have pan-German relevance; hence the invocation of the reductive and nebulous notion of "*gesamtdeutsches* Denken" - doubtless an attempt to redress the discursive balance. The PDS must be mindful, after all, of target audiences other than those in the East if it is to be a force of pan-German relevance. We will examine below the fundamental discursive problems which this poses for the PDS.

CONFLATING FRAMES OF REFERENCE

The PDS has been boosted in its historiographic attempts to link itself to the "Green"[163] reformist (dissident) movement by the fact that on a superficial level certain 'policy features' hint at a common identity (primarily, of course, on the level of *signifiant*). These are explored in detail by Markovits and Gorski:

* 1. both the "Greens" and the PDS have consistently argued in favour of an "erneuerten *Sozialismus*"/"demokratsicher *Sozialismus* " i.e. championed a vision closely bound up with <socialism> as sign. And though, in the following, Gorski and Markovits fail to address the notion (which we would, of course, challenge!) of whether there really is such a thing as a "pristine socialism,"(! -MD), they have rightly observed that:

> Even at this early stage, it had become very evident that Neues Forum's founders and sympathisers were not interested in departing from *Socialism*, let alone adopting Western-style capitalism. Whereas the exact terminology of the "third way" had not yet entered this milieu's vernacular, the concept had clearly been established: retain the good, that is pristinely *socialist* (?! - MD) features of the German Democratic Republic and develop them further

[163]We use the term here as used by Markovits and Gorski. (see footnote 22)

> in a second German state which was clearly independent of the Federal Republic. This new GDR was to protect and uphold civil rights, *allow the formation of a multiparty system* (N.B! - MD) and foster the proliferation of diversity in opinion and lifestyles.[164] (my italics)

Compare, too:

> Die Oppositionsgruppen der "ersten Stunde", *die die friedliche Revolution vorbereiteten und möglich machten* (notice this historiographic account's ascription of the 'credit' for *initiating* the events that led to November 9) fanden bei den Wählern (in the elections to the *Volkskammer* of March 1990 - MD) eine erstaunlich geringe Resonanz. Ihre Vision war und ist bis heute eine reformierte, *demokratische* Alternative einer *sozialistischen* DDR[165] (my italics).

On the level of sign (<*demokratischer Sozialismus*>), at least, there is nothing to separate the democratic socialism of the *Partei* des *Demokratsichen Sozialismus* with the "*demokratscher Sozialismus*" we encounter in the following:

> Deren (the GDR's - MD) bis dahin vorwiegend passive Bürger eilten von nun an in Massen zu den öffentlichen Straßendemonstrationen im ganzen Land, in denen zunächst ein anderer, wahrhaft *demokratischer Sozialismus* und schließlich unverhohlen die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands gefordert wurden.[166] (my italics)

The PDS's historiographic picture is boosted by numerous observations, such as the following, encountered in other historiographic accounts:

> Within the SED/PDS during this 1989-1990 period there was a struggle to overthrow the inner-party regime, thereby making the SED *a viable instrument for a reformed socialism.*[167] (my italics)

De-contextualised, the external from of this last, positively charged, yet extremely vague observation glosses over enormously complex questions of the extent (observe the lack of any identifiable agent!) and nature of conceptions of reform/socialism), hints at a unified inner-party reform movement with a uniformity of objectives and

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[164]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 248

[165]Lau/Lau, op. cit., p. 6

[166]Sontheimer, op. cit., p. 88

[167]Krisch, op. cit., p. 166

allows the PDS, on the level of sign, <reformed socialism>, to identify itself with the Greens. Compare, too:

> Die SED-Führung war unter den Druck einer unruhig gewordenen Basis geraten, die eine *Reform* der Partei anstrebte.[168] (my italics)

This last quotation is incorporated into the context of a historiographic account which is, in fact, very cautious about invoking the reformist credentials of the SED or the SED/PDS. Taken 'out of context', it could very easily be incorporated into - and used to boost - a polarised historiographic, conceptual model of the type (*Führung*-versus-"reformist" others [these 'others' in turn 'overlapping' with the extra-SED opposition movement]) which, as we witnessed above, has been widely proffered by the PDS. What it clearly shows is that without relativisation through wider contextualisation (in which, as we will attempt, shortly, to show, temporal and spatial perspectives are crucial), highly superordinate terms gloss over complex causal backgrounds; they present lowest common denominators which are often more 'manageable' for the historian and politologist (here, it would appear that the author uses "reform" simply to convey that within the frame of reference of the SED there were forces which departed from the prevailing party line - there is no attempt to put this opposition on an equal footing with that of the extra-SED opposition movement), yet readily manipulable by the political actor. The latter can 'confuse' or by-pass the frames of reference in which the conflated concepts respectively occurred - and cause historians and politologists to become confused and / or to struggle with their terminological repertoire if they are not sensitive to the conflation! Taken in isolation, the quotation above leaves us with the impression of a monolithic, 'reformist' *Basis* which might easily - through conflation - be (unproblematically) identified with the equally (in terms of the verbal form in which their motivation is enframed at least) 'reformist' *Bürgerbewegungen.* The positive signifier *reform* fails to address a complex causal background in which frames of reference are highly significant: from whose perspective was the *Basis* considered reformist, against which yardstick is this reformism to be measured?

We observe something similar in:

> Meanwhile party members at middle and lower levels, who had to defend and justify ever more unpopular policies, were themselves prompted to rebel.[169]

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[168]Sontheimer, op. cit., p. 90

[169]Krisch, op. cit., p. 167

Again we have - on a superficial level - a picture of 'reformist' rank and file at loggerheads with the leadership, a picture which promotes the PDS's conceptual model. What is problematic for us here is that we cannot preclude the fact that in some cases this rebellion - which included calls for "reform" - had a definite 'preservationist' dimension. In other words it incorporated, inter alia, an opposition to what was perceived as an incompetent leadership jeopardising the sanctity of the one-party state rather than any opposition to the fundamentals of the system. Put another way, there is an argument that "reform" was called for not as an end in itself, but rather was a means of securing limited cosmetic changes designed, quite precisely, to save and indeed strengthen the one-party system.

The following will make abundantly clear the 'usefulness' to the PDS of a telescoping of perspectives, incorporating both a temporal and spatial dimension[170]: if we look at:

> In early November, the entire GDR cabinet resigned and was replaced by one headed by a leading SED *reform* figure, Hans Modrow[171] (my italics)

we observe that the crucial point here is that Hans Modrow was widely dubbed a "reformer" within the frame of reference of the GDR (and, more narrowly, of the SED). He *did* go further than many of his SED colleagues. As we have seen, however, from the perspective of hindsight, from a present day perspective, from a perspective outside that of an SED-controlled GDR there are those who would claim that there is much to relativise Modrow's credentials as a reformer in the sense that we would understand the term in a political system underpinned by at least a formal commitment to pluralism, i.e. in the sense of a "grundlegende Reform des Systems im westlich-demokratischen Sinne"[172]. Recognition of this fact has led some

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[170]An excellent discussion of temporal and spatial point of view in narrative fiction is proffered by Simpson, op. cit., esp. chapter 2

[171]Krisch, op. cit., p. 170

[172]Sontheimer, op. cit., p. 91
It is interesting to observe how, in the following, Moreau appears to struggle with precisely this problem of overlapping perspectives: "Die taktischen Fehler von Egon Krenz stärkten die Ausgangslage seines Konkurrenten Hans Modrow. Dieser konnte die Unterstützung und das Vertrauen Moskaus für sich verbuchen und scharte einen *Oppositonsflügel* um sich (Wolfgang Berghofer, Gregor Gysi, Markus Wolf)." (cited from: Moreau, Patrick: *PDS. Anatomie einer postkommunistischen Partei.* Bonn, Berlin: Bouvier Verlag 1992, p. 455; my italics.) Observe, here, how that *opposition* is in fact primarily located within the narrow context of the SED, within that frame of reference; that opposition is not the opposition represented by the *Bürgerbewegungen*, a point which the signifier, unqualified as it is by Moreau here, glosses over. Observe how in the paragraph thereafter Moreau, interestingly, shifts the perspective: "Die von der SED-PDS immer wieder beschworenen, von der Regierung Modrow aber selten verwirklichten *Reformen* zielten nicht auf eine wirkliche Demokratie, sondern waren nur Mittel zur Rettung und Stabilisierung des Ancien Regime." (ibid.; my italics). Here the reformist credentials of that "Oppositionsflügel" are measured from the perspective of a much broader frame of reference, that of the new political environment into which the PDS (SED/PDS) now finds itself.

commentators to relativise Modrow's reformist credentials by deeming him a "*sogenannter* Reformer" or by entering (as we have sometimes done) the term *Reformer*, where associated with his name, in inverted commas. Sontheimer is much more cautious in his handling of a reformist Modrow; in viewing Modrow from within the narrower perspective of the GDR, as in the following, the author seems sensitive to the possibility of a potentially obfuscatory conflation of the type we have highlighted in (very evidently) avoiding the category *Reform*:

> Modrow war Bezirkschef der SED in Sachsen gewesen, hatte aber den Eindruck erweckt, *nicht so massiv in das Netz des Unrechtsregimes der SED eingesponnen zu sein* ... Im Rückblick zeigte sich, daß sie (die Regierung Modrows - MD), nicht der Motor einer durchgreifenden Erneuerung des politischen Systems sein wollte und konnte, sondern sich unsicher zwischen dem massiven Bedürfnis des Volkes nach Veränderung und den Beharrungs- und Schutzinteressen der alten Machtstruktur hin und her bewegte ...[173] (my italics)

- a political balancing act, incidentally, which, in one form or another, the PDS has been performing ever since.

The importance of this "Bezugsrahmen" - as Burkhardt calls it[174] - cannot be overstated. Burkhardt points to a similar confusion of perspectives in calling for much greater discernment to be shown in assessing the behaviour of individuals within a GDR context through the prism of contemporary (extra-GDR) standards and norms. With regard to the particular question of involvement with the Ministry for State Security he observes a widely held, reductive presupposition that:

> "jede Form der Zusammenarbeit mit dem Ministerium für Staatssicherheit ist moralisch verwerflich." ... Gerade diese selten in Zweifel gezogene Prämisse bedürfte dringend der genaueren Überprüfung, denn selbst bei moralischer Verurteilung des SED-Staates im allgemeinen und der Staatssicherheit im besonderen sind sehr viele unterschiedliche Formen und Motive von Zusammenarbeit und Verstrickung denkbar, die nicht notwendigerweise alle verwerflich sein müssen. *Schließlich konnte niemand vorhersehen, daß es einmal einen November 1989 geben würde, nach dem die politische Gesamtlage vollständig verändert wäre.* Kurt Biedenkopf hat das durchaus gesehen, wenn er in einem Interview mit der "Wochenpost" sagte: «Es kommt

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[173]Sontheimer, op. cit., p. 91

[174]Burkhardt, Armin: "Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." In: Reiher, Ruth/Rüdiger Läzer (eds.): *Wer spricht das wahre Deutsch*? Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag 1993, p. 131

> dazu, daß wir immer davon ausgehen, alle hätten gewußt, "daß das zu Ende geht". Das ist aber falsch. *Wenn ich das Verhalten eines Menschen im Jahre 1987 mit der Erfahrung des Jahres 1991 beurteile und nicht mit der Erfahrung des Jahres 1987, als Herr Honecker Staatsgast in Bonn war, dann ist das ein völlig unterschiedlicher Bezugsrahmen.*»[175] (my italics)

Land and Possekel's account of the emergence of the SED, too, invokes the category of *Reform*:

> Die PDS entstand aus der SED in zwei Schritten. Nach ... der Etablierung des "Kronprinzen" Egon Krenz, gingen *reform*willige SED-Mitglieder innerhalb der Partei in die Offensive.[176] (my italics).

On this level there is nothing to separate PDS reformers from the reformers of the *Bürgerbewegungen.* It is precisely on this level (i.e. at this degree of generality) that a PDS historiographic account could profitably stop. However, wider contextualisation reveals that the inner-SED drive for reform has very clear limits:

> Ziel war die Absetzung des gesamten alten Politbüros, *eine Neubestimmung der SED-Politik* ...[177] (my italics)

While there is, then, an overlap in crucial signifiers underpinning the different historiographic accounts - *erneuerter Sozialismus/Reformer* - we have observed the considerable disparity in the signified.

* 2. both the "Greens" and the 'reformist' SED/PDS consistently voiced their opposition to unification and adopted a stance of calling for a reformed, independent GDR. A central conceptual construct in the discourse of the Bürgerbewegungen was the widely proffered notion enframed as the *dritter Weg* (beyond the prevailing 'capitalist' and 'socialist' polities), a key feature of which was the desire to maintain the GDR as an independent unit.

As regards this policy feature, too, of 'maintaining the GDR', there is little, on a superficial level to separate the PDS and the *Bürgerbewegungen* The following exemplify the 'overlap' in this policy feature and the fact that the 'reformist' SED/PDS was not alone in wishing to keep the GDR in existence:

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[175]ibid., pp. 130-1

[176]Land/Possekel, op. cit., p. 416

[177]ibid.

> Für die Modrow-Regierung und die meisten Vertreter des Runden Tisches ging es zunächst noch um eine Rettung bzw. demokratische Fortentwicklung der DDR *als eigenen Staat.*[178] (my italics)

> Wie der "Aufruf 'Für unser Land'" vom 26.11.1989 ... zeigte, gab es in der DDR für diese Option (that of an independent GDR - MD) durchaus *eine über enge parteipolitische Grenzen hinausgehende soziale Basis.* Lepsius erinnert daran, daß etwa ein Drittel der DDR-Bevölkerung ihren Staat erhalten wollte.[179] (my italics)

It is precisely the important 'pro-GDR' element at the denotative core of the *dritter Weg* notion which would allow a 'reformist' SED/PDS, on the basis of the broad overlap between it and the *Bürgerbewegung* in respect of this issue, to lay subsequent claim to the construct for its own discourse (thus, of course, promoting the conflation of the PDS's position with that of the *Bürgerbewegung*). Witness:

> so hielt die PDS in ihrer Entstehungsphase ... weiter an der *Eigenstaatlichkeit der DDR* fest ... "Die Krise des administrativ-zentralistischen Sozialismus in unserem Land kann nur dadurch gelöst werden, daß die DDR einen *dritten Weg* jenseits von stalinistischem Sozialismus und Herrschaft transnationaler Monopole geht", so Gysi auf dem letzten SED-Parteitag im Dezember 1989 ...[180] (my italics)

The text from which the above account (from a leading sociologist) is extracted contains no further relativisation as to the respective roles of the 'reformist' SED/PDS and the *Bürgerbewegung*; problematic underlying disparities between them (which emerge from a wider contextualisation) with respect to the envisioned *form* which, over and above maintaining the GDR as a geo-political entity, the *dritter Weg* was to take, are not dealt with. Underpinning the notion of the *dritter Weg* was, however, much more than a simple commitment to maintaining the GDR. Over and above this element, we can, in fact, observe a crucial denotative distinction between the *dritter Weg* of the *Bürgerbewegungen* and that of the 'reformist' SED/PDS. We might, in this regard, make the following crucial observation: in his inaugural speech at the founding convention of *Neues Forum* (i.e. when it was inaugurated as a *party* on September 1991) Werner Schulz made the vital observation that he did not want the GDR back *as it had been*, that he was proud that the latter had met with its

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[178]Sontheimer, op. cit., p. 91

[179]Koch, Thomas: "Die PDS im Vereingigungsprozeß." In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde...* op. cit, p. 187

[180]ibid., p. 181

demise[181]. In other words, the desire for an independent GDR which was all the while expressed by the East German Greens was motivated less by a reverence for the GDR system that was, than by a desire to use the *territory* of the former GDR as a building block upon which to build something new; this contrasts with the pro-GDR stance evinced by the 'reformist' PDS/SED which, as we have seen, generally stopped short of calling into the question the very fabric of the one-party state, and indeed has often been tinged - particularly in *KPF*[182] circles - with unmistakable nostalgia for the old order: the GDR, observes the *KPF*'s chairperson, Sahra Wagenknecht, was:

> selbst noch in ihrem ärgsten Niedergang - das friedlichere, sozialere, menschlichere Deutschland.[183]

Put simply, the pro-GDR stance of the Greens is indubitably future-orientated, that articulated in SED/PDS circles has not been not without a preservationist - and later, in some circles, *restorationist* - dimension.[184] The *dritter Weg* of the respective camps *looks* identical; the denotation underlying the identical verbal form is not.

* 3. both expressed their distaste at what they perceived as domination and "colonialisation" by the West

* 4. both the incipient PDS and the East German "Green" movement (as described by Markovits and Gorski) have consistently championed the notion of "civil society":

> Given the excessive etatism of virtually all versions of the German Left, the group's (the East German "Green" movement's - MD) emphasis on the primacy of civil society as the most essential locus of progressive politics certainly seems significant.[185]

We will discuss below the PDS's championing of the "zivile Gesellschaft" as espoused in the writings of Antonio Gramsci.

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[181]See Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 261 ff.

[182]The PDS's *Kommunistische Plattform*.

[183]Wagenknecht, Sahra: "Anforderungen an die PDS." In: *Mitteilungen der Kommunistischen Plattform des PDS*. no. 58. Berlin 12/94, p. 5

[184]It is telling that at a PDS election rally, attended by the writer, held on East Berlin's *Alexanderplatz* shortly before the elections to the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus* of October 1995, FDJ-shirts and other SED/GDR memorabilia was still being sold at PDS stalls.

[185]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 253

Markovits and Gorski's categorisation is crucially revealing. The (extra-SED) oppositionists of the pre-Wende and Wende period are largely presented as *dissidents/dissenters*:

> ... the *dissidents* who opposed the GDR's Stalinism... Opposed to unification in all its forms, these *dissenters* carried the politics of *dissidence* well beyond the structures of the new Deutschland ...[186] (my italics)

> Eight individuals would represent the Greens' cause in the 1990 Bundestag: Wolfgang Ullmann and Konrad Weiss (Initiative Demokratie Jetzt); Werner Schulz and Ingrid Koeppe (Neues Forum) ... In the course of less than two turbulent years, these dedicated and brave *dissidents* of the Honecker regime had become representatives in the freely elected parliament.[187] (my italics)

For them, then, opposition is essentially *dissidence*; observe the syntactic-semantic parallelism in:

> Making matters worse was the fact that those who were clearly the "good guys" (by which the authors mean the groups which made up *Bündnis 90* - MD)- the *resisters, the regime dissidents, the oppositionists* were once again to be marginalised ...[188] (my italics)

In their historiography this dissidence draws upon a tradition - however disparate - of *active opposition*, involving considerable *personal risk* and frequently resulting in *personal exposure to the SED's regime's repressive measures*[189] - which stretches back well before the *Wende* period:

> Bündnis '90 ... was decidedly non-Stalinist ... and - singular among all the political actors in East Germany - it could claim an impeccable degree of *dissent* vis-à-vis the old regime. The Bündnis '90 activists were *victims* (NB! - MD) of the old order, not its secret service agents now masquerading as ardent Christian (or on occasion even social) democrats ... The other two partners of Neues Forum forming this alliance (i.e. *Bündnis '90* - MD) possessed equally impressive credentials as Neues Forum in terms of being *active opponents* of the East German dictatorship. Initiative for Peace and Human Rights had in fact been one of the oldest human rights organisations

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[186]ibid., pp. 237, 238

[187]ibid., p. 258

[188]ibid., p. 252

[189]which could not, after all, have been implemented without the complicity of sections of the population over and above an *SED-Führung*.

> in the GDR. Co-founded in 1985 by the well-known philosopher Wolfgang Templin, this organisation's members were *active participants* in the revolution of 1989.[190] (my italics)

Edelman has pointed to the key role of categorisation in shaping perception:

> Political and ideological debate consists very largely of efforts to win acceptance of a particular categorisation of an issue in the face of competing efforts on behalf of a different one.[191]

This categorisation is not accidental. Trew has shown how the concepts we use to describe things are linked together in a network; things are perceived in terms of each other:

> Even the simplest, most basic description of a particular thing or event, any judgement about its nature, involves classifying it and registering its similarities and analogies with other things. It is judged to be one of a kind, and if the judgement is correct then the particular fits into the network of connections that things of that kind have with things of other kinds.[192]

In other words, by using alternative concepts to describe "the same" thing, we can link - with the concomitant possibility of procuring ideological advantage - that thing to what Schäffner and Porsch call different "conceptual domains".[193]

Language, after all:

> mediates our view of the world in both production and interpretation. It is not that there is an underlying reality which we transform to suit our needs; it is rather that there are competing realities which become reflected in the various structures which we employ to talk about the world.[194]

(As a short aside, a most graphic illustration of this point is contained in the following extract from Leonhard's work [cited above] in which the author describes

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[190]ibid., p. 253

[191]Edelman, op. cit., p. 25

[192]Trew, Tony: "Theory at Work." In: *UEA Papers in Linguistics.* no. 6. Norwich: University of East Anglia January 1978, p. 40

[193]Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit., p. 33
John Humphries' admonition of Britisch Agriculture Minister, Stephen Dorrell, for categorising the BSE issue a "scare" (and thus attempting to have it perceived as such) offers a graphic illustration of the point: "You call that a scare? - 10 people have died!" Humphries, in: *Panorama Special Edition.* BBC 1. 25 March 1996.

[194]Wilson, op. cit., p. 14

his gradual politicisation as the son of a German Communist émigré in the pre-war Soviet Union:

> Schon nach kurzer Zeit war es uns in Fleisch und Blut übergegangen, eine Erhöhung der Lebensmittelpreise in den kapitalistischen Ländern als "neues Zeichen der verschärften Ausbeutung der Arbeiter" zu werten, die Erhöhung von Lebensmittelpreisen in der Sowjetunion dagegen als einen "wichtigen volkswirtschaftlichen Beitrag zum Aufbau des Sozialismus; baufällige Häuser im Westen wurden von uns sofort als "Beweis für den grauenhaften Lebensstandard der Werktätigen" bezeichnet, dieselben baufälligen Häuser in Moskau waren Überbleibsel der Vergangenheit.[195])

In a GDR context, then, the tradition of dissidence is widely perceived in historiographic accounts to be firmly rooted in the Lutheran church:

> ... die revolutionären Umbruchprozesse sind nicht aus dem "Nichts" entstanden. Hauptsächlich unter dem Dach der evangelischen Kirche formierten sich vornehmlich junge Menschen, die sich kritisch mit der Wirklichkeit des Staates auseinandersetzten.[196]

Witness the anaphoric equation of opposition and dissidence in:

> ... opposition in the German Democratic Republic had been growing during the eighties, predominantly in church-based and other related, broadly speaking "alternative", groupings, such as ecological and peace movements ... official texts attempted to legitimate the arrest and harassment of such *dissidents in the church-based groups* as Vera Wollenberger in 1988 by subtly appropriating and colonising the discourse of *this incipient opposition.*[197] (my italics)

and *dissidents* are widely perceived to be 'victims', the objects of 'repression', those who *actively* (cf. Markovits and Gorski above) opposed the regime (i.e. publicly call into question, at considerable personal risk, the very fundamentals of the system).

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[195]Leonhard, op. cit., p. 28

[196]Lau /Lau, op. cit., p. 5

The tradition of dissidence in the Lutheran Church is examined in some detail by Markovits/Gorski (see esp. chapter 8)

[197]Good, Colin: *Language and Totalitarianism. The Case of "East Germany."* Unpublished Inaugural Lecture, University of Surrey, 27 November 1991. (Reproduced in part as "Sprache im totalitären Staat: Der Fall DDR." In: Reiher, Ruth (ed.): *Sprache im Konflikt.* Berlin, New York: de Gruyter 1995, pp. 263-76)

It is noticeable how PDS historiography rarely invokes the category of *dissidence,* preferring rather the broader categories of *reformer* and *oppositoneller* to the narrower *dissident,* so strongly linked as this is widely perceived to be (in the context of the GDR) with a very distinct - but (for a PDS wishing to identify itself with the extra-SED opposition) problematic - tradition of 'active' political resistance under the auspices of the church and, not infrequently, victimisation by the state. Trew would call the shift from perceiving the reform movement's activities as *dissidence* to the perception of them as (a generic) *opposition* a "substantial rewording", one which "may involve a shift from one theory or ideology to another" and "widening the range of possible participants"[198]; in reverse, the shift in perception from *opposition* to *dissidence* "introduces new restrictions on the range of participants ... which can go with it"[199]. Widening the range of participants is part and parcel of what Trew describes as a whole process of explaining events through the medium of "a higher level of generality or abstraction"[200].

Markovits and Gorski et al. would thus question whether 'gripes' at certain external features of the system constitute *active* opposition to the regime of the type they ascribe to the extra-SED reformers. It is telling that out of a random sample of 10 current members of the PDS who were also members of the SED, and who claim to have stood in opposition to that SED (or, perhaps more correctly, its *Führung*) - i.e. to be part of that party's "kritisches Potential" - 9 of those questioned revealed that they had not taken to the streets during the demonstrations which resulted in the demise of the SED.[201] One of those asked responded to the observation that the PDS has sought to usurp the mantle of the *Bürgerbewegung* as follows:

> Ich bin der Meinung, daß viele damalige SED-Genossen, die heute der PDS angehören, die Erneuerung in der SED und ihre eigene Rolle glorifizieren, auch in diesem Sinne, daß sie versuchen sich mit Neues Forum usw. gleichzusetzen. Es wird vergessen, daß viele erst auf die Idee gekommen sind,

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[198]Trew: "Theory at Work." op. cit., p. 53. Trew compares the "substantial rewording" with the "conservative rewording" which "remains within the terms of the given theory or ideology". (p. 53)

[199]ibid.

[200]ibid. p. 52

[201]Survey conducted by the writer; Berlin 1995
cf. Bortfeldt (*Von der SED zur PDS* ... op. cit.; p. 10): "Die Revolution im Herbst 1989 war wahrlich nicht von dieser Partei ausgegangen. Mit diesem Schmach müssen *alle* (! my italics - MD) einstigen SED-Mitglieder leben." This comes within the context of a historiography which seeks, we shall argue below, to dialectically generate an *impression* which simultaneously redresses the problematic proposition (that the 'reformist' SED were *not* co-initiators of the *Wende*) proffered on an expressis verbis level.

> als der Zug schon rollte (ich sehe das bei mir selber, aber ich glorifiziere mich nicht, ich habe schon an den Verhältnissen geklebt ...).[202]

On the level of <opposition> the PDS (as the inner-SED opposition can identify itself with the dissident movement; to style itself a *dissident* force, against a background in which dissidence in the GDR is located in a very distinct and particular tradition of oppositionality would, on the other hand, exceed the bounds of political credibility. In the historiographic picture painted by Gorski and Markovits the categorisation allows for a clear distinction between the "Green" movement (this terminology itself constituting a convenient reduction, of course) on the one hand and the SED (PDS) on the other. Note the polarities in:

> ... the *ruling SED* wasted little time in lambasting these developments as "counterevolutionary" and "inimical to socialism" ... the party made a special effort to deploy its youth organisation as the most vocal critic of the increasingly *dissident* scene.[203] (my italics)

(This offers further evidence of what many historiographic studies have perceived as the untenability of the PDS's *Führung*-vs.-others construct; the extra-SED opposition was opposed by much more than just the party *Führung*.)

In the PDS world-view the categorisation blurs what in historiography elsewhere is perceived as a clear distinction between dissidence and (passive?) critique and leaves a grey area of broad overlap. Gorski and Markovits further categorise the SED as the "Leninist" as opposed to "non-Leninist" left, and in so doing themselves evince the (inevitable?) simplifying tendencies inherent in any historiography. Compare the crass over-simplification in:

> The PDS and its supporters, *hard-line communists* ... the PDS's unabated Leninism ...[204] (my italics)

We will argue below that the PDS is anything but a homogenous entity with a unified hard-line world-view whose motivation can be easily and unproblematically reduced to these categories.

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[202]Interview conducted by the writer, March 12, 1996 with Dr. Sabine Hartwig, delegate for Weimar at the party's 4th *Parteitag* (January 1995)

[203]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 249

[204]op. cit., pp. 260, 261

WHODUNNIT?: OBSCURING AGENCY

What emerges from the PDS's attempts to deal with its past is a body of discourse which - like so much of PDS discourse - is at once complex and contradictory.

> Mit ihrem Verhältnis zur Vorgängerpartei SED tut sich die PDS nach wie vor schwer.[205]

The essential oxymoron - the duality, the contradictoriness - of the PDS's position in offering a dual perspective of itself as an 'old' and 'new' party - was neatly summed up by Hans Modrow in the following remark made to the party executive at their meeting of 25 August 1990[206]:

> Die PDS ist eine neue Partei, die sich zu ihrer Geschichte bekennt.

Here we have a party pursuing two contradictory objectives: of establishing an identity separate from that of the SED, yet simultaneously taking on board the history of that very party. We have seen how the party has in part sought to deal with this contradiction through the message that the very fact of its assuming this burden is evidence of its political integrity - and thus of its status as a 'new' party. We have touched, too, upon the pursuit of causal circumvention: a condemnation of the past which is simultaneously accompanied by attenuation or relativisation, in particular through the transfer of blame.

The duality is evident at every level of PDS historiography. It is brought out in the speech act above: it is inner-textual, as our detailed examination of Bortfeldt's monograph will show; and it is inter-textual. At times an attempt is made to secure legitimacy through a direct and 'honest' assertion of the assumption of personal blame or condemnation of this or that feature of the SED regime, elsewhere an attempt is made to secure legitimacy through the contradictory assertion that the PDS was actively involved in the opposition movement, that it is the SED's '*geläuterter Kern*' and that it has divested itself of its hard-line communist orthodoxy.

On the one hand we do indeed encounter remarks condemnatory of the SED regime and remarks in which the PDS both distances itself from the SED and abjures SED policy:

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[205]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 182

[206]Modrow, Hans: "Wir wollen ein Deutschland, besser als DDR und BRD." In: Modrow, Hans/Klaus Steinitz: *Für ein neues Deutschland, besser als DDR und BRD. Für Arbeit, wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung und soziale Sicherheit.* Berlin: Parteivorstand der PDS 1990, p. 18

> Beanspruchte die SED für sich die Rolle einer "Vorhut", so will die PDS Teil der Linken in Deutschland und Europa werden ...[207]
>
> Mit der PDS wird es keine Verklärung der gesellschaftlichen Realitäten in der DDR geben. Wir werden uns allen Bestrebungen widersetzen, die antidemokratischen, antiemanzipatorischen, illiberalen und antiökologischen Realitäten in der DDR zu leugnen.[208]
>
> Bereits im Dezember 1989 haben wir auf dem Außerordentlichen Parteitag mit der SED-Programmatik radikal gebrochen.[209] (We re-iterate that an illocutionary act of *declaring* a breach, as was in fact the case [the 'breach' having been decided by way of a formal resolution] is not the same as 'actually' breaking with that programme; we will pursue this point in chapter 3 - MD)

On the other hand, we observe a definite reluctance elsewhere to apportion blame to that selfsame SED, especially where it is presented, through a transfer of blame, as a 'purified' body upon which, the PDS suggests, it has drawn; noticeable here is the fact that the SED is rarely invoked as an agent which brought about those features of the SED past which the PDS condemns. Fundamental and problematic questions of causality are thus circumvented: the SED was, after all, made up of *individuals* who each, in their individual way, contributed to its workings and many of whom are now in the PDS. To legitimise itself with these members the PDS must go some way to vindicating their personal biographies.

The PDS has attempted to deal with the duality (of having on the one hand, if it wants to be accepted as a 'democratic' player in the 'new' polity, to condemn the regime through expressions of horror at its reprehensible features (at "großen Fehlern, Irrtümern und leider auch schlimmen Verbrechen"[210]), while on the other having to stop short of addressing the - for its members - painful question of how these came about and who caused them) through another feature of what we will continue to call the discourse of 'causal circumvention': syntactic constructions which, as numerous commentators have pointed out, delete or obscure agency, i.e. which identify and express abhorrence at the effects, but which ultimately 'hedge' with respect to who or what caused them and leave us with the impression that the SED regime's faults were the product of something of a *force majeure.*

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[207]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 6

[208]Bisky et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 28

[209]Modrow, Hans: "Wir wollen ein Deutschland ..." op. cit., p. 18

The party programme is a case in point. Falkner and Huber make the vital observation that the PDS's 1993 programme makes mention of the SED only once and berates the PDS for the fact that:

> Analysiert man die Aussagen der PDS zur Vergangenheit auf ihre Hauptrichtungen, so findet man den Totalitarismus in den Farben der SED durchaus zutreffend beschrieben. Allerdings stellen sich die Prozesse stets weitgehend anonym dar ... Ungestellt bleibt zumeist die Frage, warum die Stalinisierung von SED und DDR mit dieser Mitgliedschaft - auch mit denen, die jetzt zur PDS gehören - möglich war ...[211]

Pfahl-Traughber observes that in the PDS's 1993 programme

> wird doch noch nicht einmal ansatzweise nach den *Ursachen* für die Deformierung des Sozialismus in der DDR gefragt.[212] (my italics)

In this agentless discourse impersonal verbal and reflexive constructions abound. As constructions with only one (what Halliday has called) "inherent participant"[213] (Trew calls them constructions incorporating "non-transactive[214] process terms"[215]), their ideological potential lies in the fact that:

> das 'Wirklichkeitsmodell', das sie zum Ausdruck bringen, eine Version von Kausalität ausdrückt, die "eine implizite oder inhärente Kausalität ist, spontan und selbst verursacht".[216]

The following is typical:

> Die Politik des Massenmords und einiger anderer der schlimmsten Seiten des Stalinismus hat es in der DDR nicht gegeben, aber Repression, Zentralismus und Dirigismus, Intelligenzfeindlichkeit, die Mißachtung von Demokratie und

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[210]Bisky et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 28

[211]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., pp. 182-3

[212]Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 361

[213]cited in: Good, Colin: *Presse und Soziale Wirklichkeit.* op. cit., p. 21

[214]For a fuller discussion see chapter 4 below.

[215]c.f. Trew: "... transactive process words can combine with two linguistic items, syntactic agent and affected participant (and a sentence with a transactive verb represents a causal process in which one thing - or group of things - affects another). Non-transactive process words combine with only one item (and sentences with non-transactive verbs represent events as processes with only one participant)." Cited from: "Theory at Work." op. cit., p. 52

[216]Good: *Presse und soziale Wirklichkeit.* op. cit., p. 22 (citing Kress/Hodge)

> Menschenrechten *zogen sich* durch die gesamte Gesellschaft der DDR und der SED.[217] (my italics)

Witness, too, the *Eigenkausalität*[218] in the following extracts from the party's 1993 programme

> *Es gab* jedoch auch Fehler, Irrwege, Versäumnisse und selbst Verbrechen ...
>
> *Es gelang nicht,* die erforderliche ökonomische Effektivität zu erreichen und sie mit wirtschaftlicher und politischer Demokratie konsequenter ökologischer Orientierung zu verbinden ...
>
> *Es kam* zu einer falschen, in großem Maße von Mißtrauen gegen die Bevölkerung des eigenen Landes erfüllten Sicherheitspolitik.[219] (my italics)

Agentless passives, too, are a characteristic feature of PDS historiography:

> Betroffen und nachdenklich angesichts der Irrtümer, Fehler und Verbrechen, die im Namen des Sozialismus *begangen wurden* ...
>
> Bis zur Unkenntlichkeit *entstellt wurde* das, was als Aufbau des Sozialismus gedacht war, durch die von Willkür, Grausamkeit und Bürokratie erfüllte (by whom? - MD) Herrschaft des Stalinismus ...
>
> Eine überzeugende alternative gesellschaftliche Produktions- und Lebensweise mit dem Ziel solidarischer Individualitätsentfaltung und im Einklang mit der Natur *wurde nicht geschaffen.*[220] (my italics)

as is a high level of nominalisation:[221]

> Alle *Versuche zur Erneuerung und Rettung* des Sozialismus *wurden* letztlich *blockiert.* (Observe, here too, the agentless passive.) ...

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[217]Bisky, Lothar: "PDS '95: Solidarisch. Alternativ. Bundesweit. Fünf Jahre PDS: Aufgaben und Herausforderungen." In: *DISPUT.* no. 3-4. 1995, p. 4 (speech given to 4th Party Conference, January, 1995)

[218]See Good, Colin: *Zeitungssprache im geteilten Deutschland.* München: Oldenbourg Verlag 1989, p. 47

[219]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* 1993. op. cit., pp. 9, 10

[220]ibid., pp. 4, 10

[221]whose reductive mechanisms we shall examine in some detail below (see esp. chapter 4)

> Bürokratische *Verstaatlichung* beherrschte das gesellschaftliche Leben. (Observe, here, how an inanimate nominalisation occupies the syntactic actor-position.) ...
>
> Hinzu traten *Bevormundung* der Rechtsprechung, *Verletzungen* der Freiheit von Wissenschaft und Kultur, Mediengängelei.[222] (my italics)

This noticeable lack of agency (backgrounding as it does, highly problematic questions as to just who *was* responsible for the reprehensible features the PDS catalogues) is highly reminiscent of SED discourse:

> Abstract agents were highly typical of the official SED discourse before the autumn of 1989.[223]

Trew has shown clearly how obscuring agency is part and parcel of a system of transformations in which processes - often problematic - can be explained (away) through "reference to causes of a higher degree of generality or abstraction than one that figured at the start".[224]

Ultimately this agentless discourse of causal circumvention creates the impression that an SED regime can be neatly divorced and isolated from the individuals who upheld it. Where agents are named, they are either individuals or abstract "mythical others"(Good)[225]. Good et al. point in particular to the instrumentalisation of the category of *stalinism (stalinist)* as a '*Buhmann*' (see example footnoted as no. 220 on page 83) even more abstract than a *Führung*:

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[222]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* 1993. op. cit., p. 10

[223]Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit. p. 46
We are not attempting to suggest here that the obscuring agency is in any way exclusive to the discourse of the SED or the PDS, nor do we cite this observation to suggest that the discourse of the PDS bears little or no difference to that of the SED; PDS discourse across the board (naturally) displays a much wider ideological diversity and incorporates a far greater range of discursive practices than the 'monolithic', 'ritualised' discourse of the SED, caught as it (broadly) was in the ideological stranglehold of the monist ideology of dialectical materialism. What we are suggesting, however, is that the SED sought to overcome the problematic disparity between its political theory and political practice in the GDR through recourse to a high level of abstraction: to those mechanisms in language which (might!) allow problems and inconsistencies to be smoothed over (on a discursive level at least) at a high degree of generality. The discourse of the PDS is likewise fraught with problem and contradiction: in chapter 3 below we attempt to show how party ideologues have sought to create a 'unifying discourse' which attempts to deal with the highly problematic heterogeneity of the PDS's membership and voter-base and which seeks to find a uniform basis for the (necessarily abstract!) visionistic 'democratic socialism' which the party has taken on board. This 'unifying' discourse, we attempt to show, necessarily operates at a high degree of generality. Likewise, the PDS's historiographic attempt to grapple with the problem of acknowledging/assuming SED 'guilt' while all the while playing it down is likewise predicated upon the abstractive mechanisms to which recourse is widely made in *any* ideology in the attempt to deal with problematic anomalies.

[224]Trew: "Theory at Work." op. cit., p. 52

[225]Good, Colin: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* Seminar paper delivered at the University of Durham, January 1995 (reproduced in part as "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., pp. 265-85)

> Ein Begriff, dem in dieser neuen Version von *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* immer mehr Bedeutung zukommt ist *Stalinismus*. "Wir haben mit dem *Stalinismus*, mit einem *staatsbürokratischen Sozialismus* gebrochen" (Gysi). Über die Aufrichtigkeit dieses Anspruchs kann zwar der Linguist nicht befinden. Aber der Diskurs zeigt klar, daß *Stalinismus* ... instrumentalisiert worden ist.[226] (italics in original)

Little attempt is made in PDS historiography to deal with the issue that a 'Stalinist' system, too - as Weber suggests in the quotation cited above - presupposes personal involvement.

All the features of the discourse of 'causal circumvention' outlined above - the sweeping and pathetic, (rhetorically effective) assumption and recognition of 'blame' and blameworthiness coupled with the simultaneous discursive somersaults performed in attenuating the very blame assumed, the degree of abstraction (broad, highly superordinate terms, suspension of agency etc.) - have led numerous political commentators to see in PDS historiography more of an attempt to create a *veneer* of effecting a '*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*' than any real desire to face a painful head-on confrontation with a problematic past; Moreau's observation is typical:

> Die neue Namensgebung, die Kriminalisierung der alten Führung und die öffentliche Schuldanerkennung der SED/PDS sind ... keine ernsten Abschnitte in einer tiefen Erneuerung der Partei, sondern Anzeichen ihrer unter Zwang erfolgten Anpassung an ein immer feindseliger werdendes politisches, soziales und gesellschaftliches Umfeld.[227]

We will return below, however, to the question of the reliability of Moreau et al's one-sided, reductive attempts to use these features characterising the PDS's discourse in relation to its history as a basis for arguing - as Moreau et al have consistently done[228] - that the PDS is 'anti-democratic'.

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[226]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 272

[227]Moreau, Patrick: "Die PDS: eine postkommunistische Partei." In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte.* B 5. 1992, p. 36

[228]cf.: "Die Verpackung der SED veränderte sich, ihr *antidemokratischer* Inhalt aber blieb." Moreau, ibid., p. 43 (my italics)

EXCURSUS: HEINRICH BORTFELDT: *VON DER SED ZUR PDS - AUFBRUCH ZU NEUEN UFERN?* - A DETAILED COMMENTARY.

Broadly, PDS historiography can be seen as a dialectical attempt to bring together perceptions of how it 'really' was (in the GDR and in the *Wendezeit*) which co-exist uncomfortably. We now proceed to a detailed examination of Heinrich Bortfeldt's crucial monograph of 1990. This work, we shall attempt to show, offers a revealing catalogue of all the features of PDS historiography outlined above; as such it presents us with a graphic, microcosmic model of what the PDS has generally sought to achieve in its historiographic discourse overall; in other words, we witness a dialectical attempt to create a conceptual 'super-model' appealing to the broadest possible range of parties to the debate upon the history of the PDS and its political forerunner.

Bortfeldt's monograph on the PDS's emergence from the SED in the period between the *Wendezeit* and the *Volkskammerwahlen* of March 1990 clearly encapsulates the crux of the problem facing the PDS since its inception: of walking the tightrope between past and present, 'old' and 'new':

> Eines mußte jedoch klar sein. Wer lieber die Rechtsnachfolge einer stalinistisch geprägten Staatspartei antritt, statt sie aufzulösen, mußte sich im klaren sein, daß er die gesamte Erblast dieser alten Partei mit sich umherschleppt. (page 31)[229]

Interestingly, the monograph remains silent on the problematic notion that the PDS's decision to become legal heir to the SED might have been financially motivated: instead the chosen angle of telling is one which perceives it as a self-inflicted burden, as a kind of self-flagellation, as evidence of the PDS's head-on confrontation with its past.

Bortfeldt's monograph seeks to surmount the (arguably) insurmountable: to effect a substantiable divorce between the SED-PDS (the two acronyms having until February 1990 been linked by a hyphen!), while the self-conscious task of having to painstakingly set off one against the other in an attempt to establish a new, democratic identity for the fledgling PDS perforce effects a link between the two - with the concomitant danger of serving only to reinforce a common identity.

The tone of Bortfeldt's work - and indeed a significant number of similar PDS-related writings in this period - is in parts almost 'confessional' (this goes hand in hand with

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[229]All subsequent page numbers in brackets refer to Bortfeldt's work.

a strand of quasi-religious allusion running through the monograph: this shall be given fuller treatment below). In other words, Bortfeldt is at pains to show that the sins of old and the mistakes made by an incipient PDS have been recognised and are being actively atoned for; in this respect the work has something of a cathartic function, allowing its author to gradually exorcise the ghosts of the past. Far from shying away from the PDS's problematical inheritance, Bortfeldt actively invokes it. At face value, therefore, it would seem that he is seeking to discuss the evolution of the PDS in as objective a manner as possible. The very title in the form of an interrogative reveals something of the approach adopted in attempting to deal with a dubious past and the questionable identity of a 'new' political party: Bortfeldt is eager to emphasise that his treatment of the evolution of the PDS is anything but dogmatic, it is open to question and discussion. Indeed, on its front cover the monograph is presented as a *Diskussionsangebot der PDS.* What we can expect, then, is a dialectical form and this is precisely what we get: the seemingly rational treatment of thesis and antithesis. The work is a *Diskussion* inasmuch as at crucial stages Bortfeldt seems to pre-empt an imagined interlocutor. The very 'objective' form, then, provides him with a potentially powerful discursive tool: while donning the mantle of 'objectivity' by treating thesis and antithesis, Bortfeldt can, where necessary, undermine - or partially discharge - any objection or counter-argument which might arise in the mind of the reader (the 'interlocutor') simply by himself identifying (with) and/or invoking it - thereby exemplifying the 'new' and 'honest' approach.

Section 1, *Das Vorspiel*, deals with an implicit question: to what extent do the ordinary rank and file members of the party - nebulously enframed as the "Mitgliedschaft" - bear responsibility for the vices 'objectively' exposed? This is a vital question inasmuch as Bortfeldt must establish a fundamental core of integrity within the ordinary party membership around which the PDS can grow. On one level, the party and its membership are perceived as blameworthy. They are weak and ineffectual, "orientierungslos", plagued by "Verunsicherung", "verschreckt und irritiert" (page 8), "ohnmächtiger, aber auch zorniger ... ängstlich, verunsichert und auch irritiert" (page 9). This inertia (however motivated) stands in stark contrast to the activities of the "Bürgerbewegungen, die die Situation im Lande nicht mehr ertragen konnten" (page 7), who had the courage to challenge the regime and whose activities Bortfeldt, having donned the mantle of honest objectivity, cannot but deem "die ersten machtvollen Demonstrationen" (page 9). The SED membership, by contrast, "hielt sich von der Straße fern ... blieb am Straßenrand stehen" (page 9), in other words the role of the party *Genossen*, he suggests, was essentially a passive one, and in being "auf Zentralismus fixiert" (page 8), were merely puppets of the centre, according it blind faith (note again the religious overtones): "Noch *glaubten*

viele daran, daß die Führung einen Ausweg wisse" (page 8; italics mine). In other words Bortfeldt seems to make no bones about exposing the party of old in all its reprehensibility, as, for example, in his exposure of SED election-rigging (page 6), or in berating the *Führung* for supporting the ruthless suppression of the student protest in China (the idea is spelled out twice). However, it comes as little surprise that an antithesis is presented: Bortfeldt clearly seeks to offer the *Mitgliedschaft* absolution through a discursive attempt to narrow the focus of blame by transferring it to the *Führung*; at a couple of stages the focus is further narrowed when it is suggested that one individual - Honecker - is the true culprit: cf. page 9, "Der Parteimoral entsprach es auch nicht, gegen den eigenen Generalsekretär zu demonstrieren". In the first section references to the *Führung* abound. (It might well be argued that in the telling insistence with which the word is repeated, Bortfeldt is exploiting the very negative connotations associated with the lexeme *Führer* and its cognates in the public discourse of the GDR, which, in the wake of the Third Reich was assiduously avoided as part of the GDR's 'anti-fascist' state policy.[230]) In general blame is laid at the feet of the *Führung*, sometimes packaged as the "Regierung"/"Mitglieder der Regierung" (page 4), the "Regierenden" ('zwischen dem Volk und den Regierenden befindet sich die Polizei' - citation of the words of Günter Simon, page 4), or "das Politbüro"/"das Politbüro des ZK" (page 7). This is summed up on page 8:

> In Wirklichkeit hatte diese *Partei- und Staatsführung* mit ihrer Verweigerung von Reformen das Land an den Abgrund eines Bürgerkriegs gebracht. (italics mine)

(Who, we might well ask, has deemed these [ultimately peaceful] demonstrations a "Bürgerkrieg"? How can the country be engaged in 'civil war' if the people and the *SED-Basis*, as Bortfeldt suggests, form a united front against an egregious *Führung*. Is there not room here for perceiving in this lexical choice evidence of Bortfeldt's own less-than- positive attitude to the protest movement?)

On page 3 the problem lies in the "Schizophrenie in der Haltung der SED-Führung", the "halstarrige SED-Führung geriet immer mehr in die Isolierung". On page 8 the *Parteiführung* is berated for having "keinerlei Konzept, wie der neuen Situation zu begegnen war". This again carries the implication that in fact the situation might have been salvageable had a more competent *Führung* been in power, and hints that the problem is perceived as lying not in the very nature of the political system itself, but

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[230]For a detailed discussion of *Antifaschismus* in the GDR, see: Schlosser, Horst Dieter: *Die Deutsche Sprache in der DDR zwischen Stalinismus und Demokratie. Historische, politische und kommunikative Bedingungen.* Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik 1990, p. 31 ff.

rather in the mismanagement of a few incompetent individuals. We find something similar in:

> Trotz großer Unzufriedenheit hatten nur wenige erkannt, daß diese Partei von Grund auf ... verändert werden mußte. (page 10)

Reforming the party alone does not ultimately challenge the sanctity of the one-party state. There are numerous references to those punished, or even expelled by a dictatorial party for daring to voice their discontent and refusing to toe the party line. Bortfeldt goes into great detail in quoting the relevant statistics. Clearly he wishes to identify the existence of a broad basis of opposition from - and, by extension, to a broad basis of moral rectitude - within. In this regard there are numerous references to "Austrittswellen" and "Austritte" of party members which began in 1988 (p. 4). (The danger here, of course, is that those remaining in the party will be seen as the die-hards, the careerists; Bortfeldt must take care to show that this is not so, as part of the nucleus for the fledgling PDS will come from those remaining with the SED. Later, for different discursive purposes, an incipient PDS would brand those who left the party in the *Wendezeit* and after "Wendehälse" to boost the impession of the the party as a residual core of committed idealists).

In contrast to the *Führung*, then, stand the "Mitglieder der Partei, die Kritik an der Parteiführung und ihrer Politik übten", those whom the leadership condemned as "Nörgler, Meckerer und Kapitulanten" (page 4); Bortfeldt is keen to show that there was a critical body within the SED, a body of "Realisten und Kritiker" (page 6), even if it did lack the courage to articulate its criticisms. The *Nischengesellschaft* metaphor is invoked to describe inner-SED life: "auch in der SED gab es Nischen" (page 10); the ability, Bortfeldt suggests, to recognise a reprehensible state of affairs and discuss these *in private* was not the exclusive preserve of ordinary members of the public dissatisfied with their lot. The whole problem, Bortfeldt feels, lay in the "Ausschaltung (by whom? - MD) der Parteibasis von zentralen Entscheidungsprozessen" and in the "Entfernung der Parteiführung von den Realitäten und dem tatsächlichen Leben in den Parteigruppen und der Basis" (page 9); having engaged the "objectivity mode", Bortfeldt cannot but, as we have seen, refer to the party membership as supine and disorientated. However, he carefully avoids condemning it out of hand, trying rather to effect something of a discursive change of emphasis: this is a party all at sea, a party which is suffering, a party in chains because of a dictatorial leadership, a party wishing to articulate its true desires (whatever these may be) but unable to do so - in short, a party to be pitied. We remember the modal choice on page 9:

> Sie (viele SED-Mitglieder) *mußten* zusehen, wie die neugegründeten Bewegungen und Parteien ... die Probleme des Landes aufgriffen, die auch ihre Probleme waren.

The implication is that an oppressed and frustrated membership has been bludgeoned into submission by a dictatorial agent (the *Führung*) rather than being intrinsically entrenched in a 'Stalinist' approach. It is a membership which is well-meaning, yet powerless and intimidated:

> Das 7. Plenum des ZK der SED vom Dezember 1988 und der angekündigte Umtausch der Parteidokumente dienten genau dem Ziel, kritisches Potential in der Partei mundtot zu machen, es *einzuschüchtern*, zu disziplinieren (page 6) ... Die Bezirks- und Kreisorganisationen fühlten sich *alleingelassen.* (page 8; italics mine)

Whether this is accepted, or whether the latter serves only to make the *Mitgliedschaft* appear all the more pathetic is doubtless ultimately a matter of personal response.

What is evident, however, is that a schema of definite and indefinite constructions allows Bortfeldt to hedge on the problematic question of the extent of membership involvement. The true magnitude of the numbers involved - i.e. of those in the party who did or did not support democratic processes - can really only remain a matter of speculation. At times Bortfeldt seems to suggest as much in using the following attenuative language to qualify any suggestion that an absolute number - i.e. *all* members of the party - shared a particular view or acted in a particular way; the very vagueness of the constructions, however, allow Bortfeldt to create the desired impression, while leaving him room for defeasibility: "in *Teilen* der SED", "*viele* SED-Miglieder" ... "Die Parteiversammlungen ... waren *vielerorts* eine offene Anklage gegenüber der Parteiführung" (page 9; my italics). At crucial stages, then, there is a clear implication that an absolute number could be involved, i.e. that the vague body that is the *Mitgliedschaft* was as a whole supportive of the changes/was critical of the status quo, more unequivocally so in:

> Die Sprachlosigkeit der Führung und das Verdrängen der Probleme wurden für *die* SED-Mitglieder immer beklemmender (page 8; my italics)

and as a matter of interpretation in:

> Mitglieder der SED, die für eine politische statt militärische Lösung plädierten, wurden von den Hardliners als knieweich, als schlappe Liberale abgestempelt. (pp. 6-7)

Similarly on page 9 it is "*die* Partebasis" - i.e. as a *whole* (?) - which is "ohnmächtiger aber auch zorniger".

In other words, while the objective mantle will not allow a defence of the rank and file in terms of absolutes throughout, there is, through the absolute language used at key stages, a clear invitation to see the membership as a whole as persecuted. At the same time Bortfeldt hints that that the party is founded upon a body of latent oppositional strength, which can later be tapped in building up the PDS.

That there is a clear aim to offer the membership absolution (whatever numbers are ultimately involved) through 'objective confession' can be clearly gleaned from the final paragraph of the first section. The members of the former SED will have to live with the *Schmach* (p. 10) of that party's failure to take part in transforming GDR society. Having made this point, having pre-empted the antithesis by invoking it as his own objective observation, Bortfeldt now feels vindicated in adducing the crux of his argument, emphasized all the more through its textual positioning at the very climax of this section. The message with which he leaves us is that:

> der Verlauf und der friedliche Charakter dieser Revolution wäre nicht erklärbar ohne die Duldung, das Sympathisieren, auch das *aktive* Mittun *nicht weniger* Mitglieder dieser Partei (p. 10; my italics),

which of course - upon *close* inspection - can be seen to stand uncomfortably alongside Bortfeldt's own 'objective' recognition of the membership's supineness! As in a court case, however, the 'defence' is given the opportunity to sum up last - with the distinct advantage that its arguments will remain freshest in the minds of the jury!

It will again be a matter of personal response whether the reader will or will not accept this causality, this interpretation of 'reality', will or will not accept that such an observation has been borne out through what has been related hitherto. A truth/lie schema is meaningless; for Bortfeldt the important point is that he has left the reader with a positive image of the SED rank and file, some of whom - as the party is gradually honed down and transformed - will play an active role in the moral rejuvenation of the fledgling PDS.

On page 9 Bortfeldt argues that ever since the détente process of the seventies more and more people in the GDR were moving away from Stalinist modes of thinking and were instead turning to democratic values and the recognition of human rights. We observe the enormous vagueness in the "deutliche Wandlungen" that were intensified - Bortfeldt maintains - through the perestroika policies set in motion by Gorbachev and - crucially for Bortfeldt - were taking place both "in der DDR-Gesellschaft und in der Mitgliedschaft" (page 9; italics mine). Notice the structure

again, however, the discursive 'back and forth': it appears that Bortfeldt feels that he might have overstepped the mark in adducing a 'positive' thesis and he consciously subverts his own position by adducing an antithesis:

> Aber die SED war auch ein "Kampfbund Gleichgesinnter". Bei allen stalinistischen Strukturen, die sich negativ auf das Mitgliederleben ausgewirkt hatten, war es für manch einen mehr als das Ende einer Karriere, aus dieser Gemeinschaft ausgeschlossen zu werden ... Die Revolution war wahrlich nicht von dieser Partei ausgegangen. (page 10; inverted commas in original)

It is hardly surprising, then, that we find Bortfeldt somewhat caught up in the duality of his own dialectical discourse. We have already mentioned that there is at times reason to question causal links; at other times we witness what can only be described as blatant contradiction and confusion. How, we ask ourselves, does the view put forward on page 9, namely that "Das Menschenrechts- und Demokratieverständnis war dadurch in diesem poststalinistischen System aufgebrochen", this being symptomatic - as we have seen - of developments within the party too, tie in with the observation made only a few lines earlier that "die meisten Parteimitglieder waren *obrigkeitsgläubig bis zum bitteren Erwachen*" (italics mine). The answer is that there is no answer: we are left to effect a discursive synthesis for ourselves. To some the approach will doubtless convey a positive overall impression of 'honesty objectivity' and 'rationality'; others will perceive it as contradictory and obfuscatory. To successfully legitimise itself a party must win acceptance of its discourse (or, more correctly, its discourses) as credible.

What we must bear in mind throughout is that this work is a political pamphlet: while its external form might be such that it is presented as an 'objective' account of SED/PDS history, it can be seen to have a clear aim: to establish legitimacy - in Straßner's view a primary aim of any political writing[231]. The problem for Bortfeldt - and the abiding problem for the PDS - is that this legitimacy has to be secured in different ways and before a diverse set of target audiences:

1) through an 'honest' recognition of personal blame and SED reprehensibility, especially in the eyes of the 'democratic' political establishment clamouring for the SED/PDS to be 'brought to justice'.

2) at the same time through a - possibly contradictory - attenuation of that picture inasmuch as the PDS must establish before the establishment that it has a minimum

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[231]see: Straßner: "Maximenverstoß als Regel ..." op. cit., p. 138

of integrity, of democratic credentials to set itself up as a player in the new political system.

3) At the same time the PDS must secure legitimacy with its membership - especially those who have found in the PDS a *politische Heimat* - by representing its interests and playing down condemnation of the GDR, the SED and the individuals who made up that party. The importance to the party of the traditionalists in its member-base is evident in the recognition (from Bortfeldt himself) as late as 1994 that:

> Bisky, Gysi und Brie grenzten sich energisch von kommunistischen Vertretern der "reinen Lehre" ab; Andererseits ist die PDS auf die Traditionalisten in der Partei als organisatorische Basis angewiesen.[232] (inverted commas in original)

4) In addition, the PDS must legitimise itself as representative of the interests of the largely East German voter-base upon which it is reliant - which has involved a concomitant propagation of GDR nostalgia and a continued relativisation of the faults of the GDR state system: we shall deal more fully with this point below.

In a nutshell, Bortfeldt's pamphlet contains an inherent (and irreconcilable?) tension: on the one hand there is a need to 'honestly' expiate the sins of the past and come to terms with the SED '*Erblast*', on the other enough positive qualities must be found in order to substantiate and vindicate the decision to keep the party in existence and lay the framework for its subsequent healthy development. It is hardly surprising, then, that the work is at times contradictory and nebulous in character, as Bortfeldt struggles to maintain an acceptable dialectical balance.

A telling example of the at times confused signals the work transmits is the very question of the party's role within the new spectrum of political pluralism. On the whole Bortfeldt seems to suggest that the PDS, unlike its predecessor, is happy to accept its role as one party among many, is happy to *earn* acceptance through its newly-found integrity:

> Es entstand der Eindruck, daß hier keine alte Monopolpartei tagte, sondern eine Solidargemeinschaft, die wußte, daß sie für lange Zeit von der Macht ausgeschlossen sein würde und sich Vertrauen ganz neu erwerben müßte ... (page 31)

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[232]Bortfeldt, Heinrich: "Auf daß der Wind sich drehe!" In: *Deutschland Archiv*. 4/94, p. 342 (commentary on the 3rd *Parteitag* of the PDS)

(Note, here, the impersonal, agentless "Es enstand ... ", which conveys an impression of universality: the '*Erscheinungsbild*' is an objective reality, it is suggested, evident to all, not merely the subjective impression of the author.)

Witness also:

> Dieses Programm wurde geschrieben für eine Partei, die keine Staatspartei mehr war und sich verstehen wollte als eine linke Oppositionspartei, links von der SPD. (p. 33)

Compare, however, the language of the *Vorspiel,* (page 3) in which there are unmistakable hints of what Good et al have called "alte Denkmuster". There is an undeniable suggestion that the central role of the SED could have been preserved had the right initiatives been taken in time, had the party been transformed from within. The failure of "real existierender Sozialismus" was unavoidable not because the one-party system *per se* might have been undemocratic (this isue is simply not problematised) and thus reprehensible, but because the system - and by extension the SED - lacked "Innovationskraft und Demokratie". (p. 3). The ideas expressed here are reminiscent of those of Mikhail Gorbachev who, in trying to secure 'democracy' in the Soviet Union on the basis of a reformed Communist party, was for a long time unwilling to relinquish that party's monopoly on power. Compare Bortfeldt's:

> In der Verweigerung gegenüber einer *DDR-eigenen Perestroika* gab die SED nicht nur das Heft das Handelns aus der Hand, sie verlor an Initiative, an Glaubwürdigkeit. (page 3; my italics)

The implication is clear: had the SED acted wisely and used the 'options' available to it, it might well have had "eine andere Rolle im Transformationsprozeß ... als sie dann tatsächlich einnahm". (page 3)

There is an unmistakable tone of nostalgia in these words - in respect of a "Krise" which, according to the wording of the first paragraph was only "in gewisser Weise" pre-programmed: the implication is that it could have been stopped in time *within the existing systemic framework.* One cannot help asking whether Bortfeldt is not making virtue from necessity here, whether he has not, in fact, become a proponent of shared political power because of the inevitability of events - in much the same way as the PDS later came to support unification, albeit as the culmination of a *gradual* process, despite its initial hard-line anti-unification stance.

At telling moments, then, a clear political message breaks through the external 'objective' form, sometimes incorporating *alte Denkmuster.* At times this manifests

itself in sweeping absolutes which are anything but objective in character. So it is that Bortfeldt makes the highly questionable assertion that:

> Derjenige (Honecker - MD), *der die Hauptverantwortung für die Krise in der SED und im Lande trug*, durfte noch seinen Nachfolger wählen ... (page 12; my italics)

Page 30 sees something of a turning point. Suddenly the party seems to shed its indecision and ineffectuality when the *Basis* (note, again, an unquantifiable collective nominal) comes rushing to its aid. The party has achieved, Bortfeldt suggests, a new purity through the initiative of its very core, the honest members of the rank and file who stand in stark contrast to the once corrupt and dishonest *Führung*. Note the pseudo-religious overtones in the following:

> In diesem kritischen Moment gingen von der Basis, von Initiativgruppen, entscheidende Impulse *zur Rettung* dieser Partei aus. *Es war eine Kraft* mit einer konstruktiven Funktion *entstanden*, an die nur noch wenige *geglaubt* hatten an dieser Bewegung war der fast zerstörte Gysi spürbar gewachsen, sie hatte dieser Partei ... *neuen Atem eingehaucht.* (page 30; my italics)

Again the positive impression conveyed by the construct turns on unspecified numbers and quantities. Observe the inherent causality of the impersonal "es war ... entstanden" (how?/through whose agency?) which makes an essentially problematic transition look causally self-evident. The sudden change in tone is unmistakable. The language used to describe the party and its activities is now imbued with a much more dynamic and vital quality as the 'new' party sheds the mantle of the persecuted and prepares to meet the challenges ahead. It is a force at once rejuvenated and revitalised, and much of the language used to describe it has an inherently positive semantic value:

> Über diesem Parteitag schwebte nicht das Schwert der Auflösung. *Optimismus* und *Zuversicht* waren inzwischen eingezogen. Es herrschte sogar *Aufbruchstimmung* ... [Es] präsentierte sich *in mancher Hinsicht* (note the vagueness! - MD) eine *neue* Partei. Unter den 595 Delegierten befanden sich *viele junge* Leute ... Die Atmosphäre war *offen* und sogar *ausgelassen* ... für einen Blick zurück blieb wenig Zeit. (page 31; my italics)

Here an obvious comparison is drawn between the detailed description of the '*Erscheinungsbild*' of this *Wahlparteitag* and the extraordinary party SED-PDS congress of early December 1989. Witness the seemingly 'incidental' detail incorporated into the description of the latter: while on a superficial level it might seem superfluous (having a 'fictive' quality) clearly it is not. The picture of the

earlier Party Congress serves as a foil, a yardstick by which to measure the progress made by the party at the time of the *Wahlparteitag* (24/25 February 1990). Gone by February 1990 is the earlier mood of self-abnegation characteristic of the sufferer and martyr, the pathos inherent in Bortfeldt's observation that:

> Die Delegierten (at the *außerordentlicher Parteitag* - MD) saßen auf harten Holzstühlen bei stickiger Luft. Die Nächte wurden durchdebattiert, da kaum Nachtquartiere bereitgestellt waren ... bei den Marathonsitzungen war Kondition gefragt. (page 23)

The 'new' language stands in stark contrast to that of the earlier sections which presented a picture of a party both persecuted and in the throes of agonised 'soul-searching' and self-definition, a party to be pitied. This "Agonie" (p. 27), this agonised quest for absolution and a new image has, as has already been observed, an unmistakable religious dimension: note, for example, the very title of section 5, "Auflösung oder Nichtauflösung. Die SED-zwischen *Agonien* und basisdemokratischem Neubeginn" (p. 27); like Hamlet in his famous soliloquy the party must consider the moral implications of possible suicide - in its case *political* suicide by dissolving the party. Now that a turning point has been effected, a firm foundation-stone has been laid for the party's development and while a more cynical reader might be more dubious as to the soundness of the causality of this swiftly effected 'resurrection', Bortfeldt clearly feels that it leaves him in a new position of strength to air views which are at once far less gingerly and unequivocal. So it is that in section 7 the old language of antipathy towards West Germany re-emerges - e.g. in styling (not without grounds?) Kohl's attendance at a political rally in Erfurt as West German "Einmischung" (p. 34) in what are essentially East German political proceedings. Inasmuch as it has had the "Mut" (p. 34) this quality is emphasized again and again) to raise itself to a new level of moral integrity through an agonised cathartic process of suffering - all adversity and hostility notwithstanding - the PDS can be compared favourably, Borteldt suggests, with other parties who have relied on 'external' help, on help from the old class enemy, West Germany:

> Demgegenüber wirkte der Wahlkampf derjenigen, die die Regie ihren Schwesterparteien aus der Bundesrepublik überließen, überwiegend hausbacken. (page 34)

Through the wit of its main political mouthpiece, Gregor Gysi, the party has acquired a dynamism, Bortfeldt suggests, which puts its political rivals in the shade. The examples of Gregor Gysi's wit selected for citation are unequivocally anti West-German in tone: the PDS's party programme is not imported (!) from West Germany (still seen very much in traditional SED terms as a *foreign* capitalist and imperialist

power), their honorary Chairman is an East German citizen. While Bortfeldt is careful to ascribe these utterances to Gysi, their very incorporation without further comment from the author suggests that these are sentiments which Bortfeldt shares. (This is particularly the case where Gysi's Kohl anecdote is related on page 35: the latter seems misplaced in a 'serious' historiographic pamphlet whose external form clearly aims to convey broad objectivity. Through his very textual selection Bortfeldt has made it clear that he shares Gysi's view that Kohl, in his corpulent person, embodies what is perceived as self-satisfied, West German materialism (c.f. "Wir haben Mut zum Träumen und zwar nicht nur von der DM"; page 35).

Numerous commentators have argued that it is precisely the PDS's anti- West-German stance, its function as a mouthpiece for East German interests[233], which gives the PDS its identity. Indeed, Bortfeldt seems to suggest as much on page 28:

> Mitte Januar wurde auch offensichtlich, daß eigenes Gestaltungspotential für eine erneuerte, radikal-demokratisierte DDR nicht mehr gegeben war, was grundsätzliche Identitätsprobleme für die SED-PDS aufwarf.

Here Bortfeldt touches upon a problem which the PDS has sought to grapple with discursively ever since: how to be a representative of East German concerns and yet have an appeal in a united Germany. Mindful of this, then, and of the 'objective' dialectical form he has championed, Bortfeldt immediately and self-consciously pre-empts possible objections as to the one-sidedness and narrowness of such a generalised point of view. Immediately he usurps the counter-claim which a dialectical opposite number might make:

> Sie (die PDS - MD), stand als Anwalt für das Bewahrenswerte in der DDR und für die sozial Schwachen. Dabei wurde jedoch ein Bild von der Bundesrepublik gezeichnet, das an alte Einseitigkeiten erinnerte ... (page 35)

This appears something of a remarkable statement in the light of what has preceded it, unless, however, we bear in mind the need to appear 'objective' on at least a superficial level. It is precisely this tension - the need for 'objectivity' on the one hand and the need to get across clear, politically motivated messages as to the basis for the PDS's raison d'être on the other which, as has already been stated, makes the monograph contradictory and vague in parts. The form however, allows Bortfeldt to take two steps forward and one step back. He might retract some of the force of a point he has made - be it directly or indirectly - but the point is nevertheless made.

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[233]We will discuss below the problems inherent in trying to specify semantically the frequently cited notion of "East German interests."

What is important is the creation of an *impression.* A jury member might be asked to ignore inadmissible evidence, but can its members really be expected to obliterate it from its mind?

This is a pattern we see running right through the monograph. On page 24 Bortfeldt cites Schumann's defence - at the extraordinary conference of the SED-PDS - of the millions of 'upstanding' members of the party rank and file:

> Dem Systembezug standen jedoch Aussagen gegenüber, die Millionen SED-Mitglieder von der Mitverantwortung freisprachen. Ihnen, die sich "allzeit guten Glaubens, mit Herz und Hand für den Sozialismus auf Deutschem Boden" eingesetzt hatten, wurde eingeräumt, "eine gute Spur in der deutschen Geschichte gezogen zu haben." (Bortfeldt citing Schumann)

The counter-view is immediately pre-empted, as a self-conscious Bortfeldt moves to redress a possible over-statement of his case. Witness the attenuation in the polarised, causally tenuous *subjektiv/objektiv* model cited above:

> Subjektiv haben viele SED-Mitglieder zweifellos Gutes gewollt und tatsächlich geleistet, objektiv haben sie damit aber das System gestärkt, das sie so nicht gewollt haben. (page 24)

- a clear example of the awkwardness of trying to achieve both legitimacy through exoneration and legitimacy through condemnation and/or recognition of reprehensibility at one and the same time!

The 'objective' dialectical form - the projection of a multiplicity of different and contradictory images and the adopting of essentially opposed positions - makes PDS historiography very hard to challenge (any challenge to a given proposition [thesis] can be readily countered through selective identification of a counter-proposition [antithesis] presented elsewhere) unless we are prepared to step outside of the substantive framework and question the intensity of the dialectic and the fusability of thesis and antithesis. This mode of argumentation is, of course, in no way exclusive to the PDS; Bortfeldt's work offers a graphic example of a discursive form ritually used to marshal support for a given ideology.

THE PDS AND THE GDR

Political commentators have generally agreed that the PDS has set itself up as something of - and made political capital out of its status as - a mouthpiece for the 'interests'[234] of East Germans:

> Aus ihrem Wahlprogramm (of 1990 - MD), das auf dem Wahlparteitag vom 24./25. Februar geschlossen wurde, geht, wie auch aus dem von Gysi gehaltenem Referat, folgende *Strategie* hervor. "Die PDS gehört zu den Kräften in unserem Lande, die sich entschieden gegen die Vereinnahmung der DDR durch die BRD zur Wehr setzen." Die Partei versuchte sich als Anwalt für die Interessen der DDR-Bürger darzustellen und setzte dabei primär auf die ängstlichen und unsicheren Wähler.[235] (my italics)

(Doubtless the PDS's consistent self-portrayal as an "Anwalt" alludes to the status of its most vocal mouthpiece, Gregor Gysi, as a renowned lawyer for East German dissidents[236]; we can leave open the question of whether, as the media has consistently sought to suggest, the latter abused his position.)

If the above picture suggests that the PDS has championed (what we will continue, reductively, to call) East German interests on wholly tactical grounds, the we must relativise the picture by observing that numerous instances of very positive and committed acts of assistance by PDS members have been registered:

> in Sachsen-Anhalt hat Ministerpräsident Höppner, der mit Duldung der PDS regiert, keine schlechten Erfahrungen gemacht ...[237]

> Was den Wahlstrategen der CDU/CSU aber vor allem ein Dorn im Auge ist, ist die engagierte Basisarbeit der PDS-Mitglieder in den neuen Ländern. Auf vielen Ebenen entfalten sie Aktivitäten, die Kontakte schaffen, Gemeinschaftsbewußtsein fördern, Hilfe geben und ein Forum für - wie immer geartete - Meinungsäußerungen bieten ... Die breite Verankerung in Nachbarschaften, Clubs, Vereinen, Verbänden, Gewerkschaften zeigt den

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[234]see footnote 233

[235]Gerner, op. cit., p. 38

[236]cf.: "Während des Wahlkampfes schlüpfte Gysi, geschätzter und populärer Rechtsanwalt, in die Rolle eines Anwaltes der DDR. Diese Rolle übernahm auch die PDS. Sie stand als Anwalt für das Bewahrenswerte in der DDR und für die sozial Schwachen." Bortfeldt: *Von der SED zur PDS*. op. cit., p. 35

[237]Dönhoff, Marion Gräfin: "Keine Bösewichte. PDS: Nicht verteufeln, sondern mitregieren lassen." In: *Die Zeit*. no. 46. 10 November 1995

> West-Parteien auf, was sie in fünf Jahren deutscher Vereinigung versäumt haben.[238]

The PDS has doubtless been aided by what many commentators from both East and West have perceived as an overbearing and self-righteous stance among some West Germans[239] in their attitudes to the East and by what Austrian observer, Richard Christ, perceives as:

> die stupende Unkenntnis, mit welcher der Westen im Osten die Geschäfte führt.[240]

Ironically, it is, on one level, precisely *because of* its identifiability with the SED and the GDR that the PDS - as a quintessentially East German product - has been able to secure popular support among East Germans and on this level, the PDS has been keen to boost its identifiability with the GDR, if not the SED:

> The frustrations of German Unification have led to serious resentments on the part of the former East Germans vis-à-vis the dominant West Germans ... It is ironic that the PDS, the direct successor of the Stalinist SED derives much support ... by being a clear East German creation in a world where everything of substance seems to be West German.[241]

Wittich puts it like this:

> Die PDS wird zwar in der ostdeutschen Bevölkerung weitgehend als Nachfolgerpartei der SED wahrgenommen, aber das ist, vor dem Hintergrund verbreitet wahrgenommener sozialer Ungerechtigkeit, eigener gebrochener und veränderter Biographien - nicht nur ein Nachteil. Für Teile des ostdeutschen Wahlvolkes repräsentiert sie damit auch selbst gelebtes Leben. Vor allem aber wird sie in einigen wichtigen, sozio-kulturellen Milieus Ostdeutschlands als Weggefährte wahrgenommen, als eine Partei und als Gruppe von Menschen, die ebenfalls von den Umbrüchen und Irritationen der letzten Jahre betroffen wurden und die sich dazu politisch verhalten.[242]

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[238]Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 176

[239]"Ein Teil der östlichen Wähler wählte die PDS vermutlich aus Trotz: so schlecht war das alles doch gar nicht, auch wir haben damals viel geleistet: und ein anderer Teil ... tut dies aus Protest gegen die 'arroganten Westler', die glauben, alles besser zu wissen". Marion Gräfin Dönhoff, op. cit.

[240]see: Christ: "Die deutschen Ostler." op. cit.

[241]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit.; p. 262

[242]see Wittich: "Mitglieder und Wähler der PDS." op. cit., p. 80

This very fact offers some explanation as to why the *Bürgerbewegungen* who, after all, also championed East German interests against the West German 'juggernaut'[243] have failed to secure as much of the popular vote as the PDS. Moser argues, too, however, that West Germans' reluctance towards introspection in respect of their own past is bolstered by the (unreasonably? - MD) expectant and demanding attitudes of many unsure and insecure Easterners whose perception of the reality of unification is channelled through the reductive category of *colonialisation* and related concepts:

> Die moralische und wirtschaftliche Selbstherrlichkeit vieler Westdeutschen brauche ich hier nicht noch einmal zu beschreiben. Eine gewisse Verhärtung gegen die Einkehr bei sich selbst kommt aber auch zustande durch die klagende, anklagende und fordernde Haltung vieler Ostdeutscher. Es ist dort

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[243]For a thought-provoking account of some of what has been perceived as some of the linguistic manifestations of this 'juggernaut' attitude, see Kramer, Undine, "Von Ossi-Nachweisen und Buschzulagen" In: Reiher/Läzer: *Von Buschzulage* ... op. cit., pp. 55-67; briefly, Kramer points to the use of terms such as *Buschzulage* as evidence of an attitude of "schwer revidierbare Überlegenheitsgefühle" (p. 63) on the part of some West Germans towards the GDR. The latter term, initially used to refer to the special remuneration given to colonial officials for serving in the colonies has been used pejoratively in the Post-*Wende* era to refer to the 'indemnification' given to West German officials for being prepared to help in the reconstruction of the territory of the 'colonised East' and for 'putting up' with the putative hardship entailed; its use, argues Kramer, "stigmatisiert ... das gesamte Gebiet der ehemaligen DDR und pauschal die Menschen, die dort leben" (p. 58) and is part and parcel of a "sprachliche Grenzziehung" (p. 58) which necessarily promotes a psycho-social German divide - "... gerade weil sprachliches Verhalten stets auch soziales ist". (p. 63). She observes with some consternation the evidence of the term's increasing normalisation, inasmuch as by 1996 the *Berliner Zeitung* - by contrast with previous years - was using it without signalling its discomfort with the term through its insertion in inverted commas or its italicisation. Kramer points to evidence of a "sprachliche Mauer" (p. 55)/"sprachlichen Abgrenzung" (p. 59) in the use of the terms *ost, west* and *deutsch. Ost* appears to be used for relativisation purposes much more frequently than *west*, even though frequently the "Komponente *ost* in der Zusammensetzung mit *deutsch* ... für die Information des Lesers nicht notwendig ist". (p. 59). This, she concludes, hints at the fact that the starting point is per se from the *West* German perspective, a logical consequence of the fact that "im allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch der Bundesrepublik das Wort *deutsch* lange synonym zu *westdeutsch* verwendet wurde", (p. 60) and reflects that the asymmetrical use of the terms *ost* and *west* are manifestations of a latent prejudice "durch das eine Gruppe (nämlich die ehemaligen DDR-Deutschen) von einer anderen Gruppe (den Bundesdeutschen) negativ markiert wird ... (p. 60) *Ostdeutsch* wird in diesem Zusammenhang zu einem aggregierten Begriff, der eine psychische Distanz der Gruppe der Deutschen West zur Gruppe der Deutschen Ost schafft." (p. 61) Likewise, the term *deutsch* is frequently used in reference to *West* Germany alone, in respect of which phenomenon Kramer cites the following telling example: "einige deutsche Politiker (machen) in Deutschland Urlaub ... während andere in die Lausitz fahren." (p. 62) It is to be hoped, Kramer concludes, that this *Westlastigkeit* is based more upon a lack of reflection than a "Dominanzanspruch einer Gruppe ... und die soziale Geringschätzung der anderen". (p. 62) (Kramer does push a point, however, in protesting that the use of *Frankfurt* as synonymous with *Frankfurt am Main* is discriminatory towards Frankfurt/Oder, given the relative size and importance of the two cities. The inhabitants of Moscow [Scotland], for example, would doubtless not object to a natural association between the sign *Moscow* and the Russian capital.) On the whole, however, Kramer points to evidence that the hope lies primarily in the younger, emerging generation, for whom the psycho-social divide appears to becoming increasingly irrelevant. This would tend to bear out, Kramer observes, Professor Ruth Reiher's observation that "die gegenwärtig noch überwiegenden negativen Bewertungen im Laufe der Zeit eine größere Streuung erfahren und sich im Zuge einer Annäherung der Wertesysteme nivellieren". (cited by Kramer, p. 64). This does not bode well for a PDS which, as we shall see below (chapter 3), appears to rely heavily upon precisely this psycho-social divide. (MD)

> gerade unter Intellektuellen üblich, die Vereinigung beharrlich unter dem Aspekt der Übernahme, der Kolonialisierung, der Eroberung zu sehen.[244]

No political force has been more vociferous in categorising (and thereby encouraging perception of) unification as an act of imperialism, an "Anschluß", (thereby alluding to the National Socialist regime's annexation of Austria) than the PDS:

> Durch den Anschluß an die BRD in Gestalt von fünf neuen Bundesländern ist ihre (the former GDR's - MD) künftige Entwicklung vorbestimmt, wenn man von den nichtkalkulierbaren sozialen "Unkosten" und den unvorhersehbaren Rückwirkungen auf die alten Bundesländer absieht.[245]

What is more ironic still in terms of the PDS's status as a mouthpiece for East Germans is the fact that Moser, from a psychoanalytical perspective, perceives East Germans' "klagende, anklagende und fordernde Haltung" vis-à-vis West Germany as a sub-conscious means of 'getting back' at their *SED* overlords[246]: their pent-up anger at the SED regime is re-directed at those in authority (the West Germans who run the institutions!) in the new system; it is the PDS as the official legatee of that system which has been sensitive to this trend, tapped the "angestaute Wut" (Moser; see footnote 246) and made *political* capital from it. For Moser, the mutual recriminations are the butt of *political* instrumentalisation:

> Es ist manchmal schwer ... außerhalb des Beschuldigungskampfes zu bleiben und darauf zu vertrauen, daß vernünftigere Kräfte zum Tragen kommen.[247]

We note here again the essential duality of the PDS position: on the one hand its very attempts to secure legitimacy with an East German reference group whose interests it has chosen to champion requires that it bolster up its East Germanness through the propagation of 'ostalgia'; clashing with this attempt to secure legitimacy is its attempt, of course, to secure legitimacy with the political establishment as a whole, which requires that it offer evidence of its 'newness', its willingness to divorce itself from - and condemn - its SED and GDR past. Constructions such as that cited above:

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[244]Moser, Tilmann: *Politik und seelischer Hintergrund.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag 1993, pp. 62-3

[245]Neubert, Harald: *War der 'Realsozialismus' zu retten?* Berlin: Kommission Politische Bildung des Parteivorstandes der PDS 1991, p. 4

[246]c.f. Moser (op. cit., p. 63): "Man geht vielleicht nicht ganz fehl, wenn man vermutet, daß es auch große von früher angestaute Wut auf die Machthaber der Partei gibt, die nun auf die Westdeutschen verschoben wird ..."

[247]ibid.

> In besonderem Maße tragen wir die Verantwortung für die Geschichte der SED und der DDR, aus der wir hervorgegangen sind[248]

are thus doubtless crafted to send the 'dualist' signals upon which the PDS must rely: the latent presupposition is that there must be something reprehensible about the SED/GDR if the PDS has to (pathetically) assume responsibility for it. This suggests that the PDS is recognising - and distancing itself from - the SED and its 'sins'. At the same time, the assumption of the *'Altlast'* reinforces the PDS's very identifiability with the SED (i.e. anything but its move away from that party!), a link which, by all accounts, must be made if the PDS is to tap the "angestaute Wut" referred to above.

The PDS thus relies on the German-German psycho-social divide and yet must work against it (or at least be seen to do so) at one and the same time. Doubtless there is room for the argument that the PDS has sought to deal with this dualism through the very insistence of its anti-*Spaltung* stance; the sheer force and frequency with which the latter category (*Spaltung*) and it cognates is invoked in the discourse of the PDS serves to re-emphasise the very divide against which the party says it is its mission to work - and thus offers evidence of its continued value to the PDS:

> Wir sind im staatlich vereingten Deutschland angekommen (Note the pun! - MD). Und dieses Deutschland ist gespalten - ökonomisch, sozial, kulturell und auch psychisch ... auch Europa ist auf neue Weise gespalten ...[249]

In the following, for example, *Spaltung* is ascribed to the political establishment as an active policy:

> die Herrschenden setzen auf *Spaltung*: West gegen Ost, deutsche gegen Ausländer, Lohnabhängige gegen Sozialhilfeempfänger. Die eigentlichen gesellschaftlichen Widersprüche werden so verschleiert ...[250]

and the category is hammered home in the picture of societal disarray presented:

> Entsolidarisierung und *Spaltung* ... setzen auf *Spaltung* ... Die PDS findet sich weder mit der Ost-West *Spaltung* noch mit der sozialen *Spaltung* und erst

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[248]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 28

[249]Gregor Gysi: "Wer Zukunft will, muß die Gegenwart Verändern. Ausschnitte aus einer Rede auf der 2. Tagung des 2. Parteitages in Berlin am 21. Juni 1991". In: Harnisch, Hanno/Hannelore Heider: *Gregor Gysi. Einspruch! Gespräche, Briefe, Reden.* Berlin: Alexander Verlag 1992.

[250]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen zum weiteren Weg der PDS." In: *PID.* no. 48. 1994, p. 19

> recht nicht mit der politischen Methode der *Spaltung* ab ... einen tatsächlichen Beitrag zum Abbau der inneren *Spaltung* ...[251] (my italics)

In a nutshell, a cynical observer might argue that what is essentially a divisive and destructive message is presented in constructive terms by a PDS in 'Brutus-is-an-honourable-man mode'.

We will argue below that essentially the championing of East German interests has been a double-edged sword for the PDS: in the short term the 'strategic' dimension of this approach has served as a basis for the PDS to mobilise a not inconsiderable segment of the East German population (20%) while in the long term its status as a *Regionalpartei* runs the risk of ultimately leaving it politically redundant with the further convergence of the two Germanies.

While Gerner observes that one of the decisive factors in the demise of the GDR was the leadership's inability "eine eigenständige nationale Identität in der DDR herzustellen"[252], there is no little irony in the fact that in this respect the PDS has shown considerable success. Not infrequently the PDS paints a picture of the GDR which sees the party harking back to the days of yore; here the PDS makes frequent reference to isolated features (indeed laudable in themselves!) of the GDR system, such as low rents, full employment and child care facilities, sometimes explicitly:

> Wir sind, weiß Gott, keine Anhänger mehr der früheren Kommandowirtschaft. Aber ich frage mich, weshalb diese Kommandowirtschaft Sozialleistungen erwirtschaften konnte, die bei Annäherung an die reiche BRD an die ärmere DDR (sic.) für deren Bevölkerung soziale Einschränkungen bringen soll! Ich dachte, da kommt mehr bei raus.[253]

> Viele schätzen die DDR aufrichtig für ihr antifaschistisches Selbstverständnis, weil das Privateigentum an Produktionsmitteln im wesentlichen abgeschafft war, es keine Ausbeutung von privaten Eigentümern gab, aktive Friedens- und Abrüstungspolitik betrieben wurde (leider ergänzt durch ein militantes Erziehungssystem), die sozialen Unterschiede wesentlich geringer als im Westen waren ... Arbeitslosigkeit praktisch nicht existierte ...

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[251]ibid.

[252]Gerner, op. cit., p. 19

[253]Gregor Gysi in his speech on the PDS's 1990 electoral programme for the *Volkskammerwahlen*. Cited in Gerner, op. cit., p. 38

> Vergessen wir nicht, selbst ein so scharfer Kritiker der Verhältnisse in der DDR wie Robert Havemann erklärte, im besseren Deutschland zu leben.[254]

(an argument whose extreme is located in the world-view of Sahra Wagenknecht and the *Kommunistische Plattform*[255]), and sometimes indirectly:

> Die deutsche Sprache wurde durch schreckliche Neuschöpfungen verunziert. Im Osten tauchen Begriffe wieder auf, die viele Menschen nur für ferne Welten gültig glaubten: Betriebsstillegung, Konkurs, Pleite, Arbeitslosigkeit. Daß es hierbei nicht um Wortspiele geht, hat inzwischen jeder gemerkt. Die genannten Wortungetüme stehen für die schlechter werdende wirtschaftliche und soziale Situation.[256]

Trew has shown how the causality behind complex processes can be re-interpreted through "deletion or rewording"[257]. Ultimately, through the simple process of textual selection, of the selective mediation of 'facts' or isolated features, the PDS presents a picture of GDR 'reality' which yet again circumvents a complex causal background. Gerner describes in detail the catastrophic economic situation in which the GDR found itself by 1989[258] and comes to the conclusion that:

> Es wäre eine "Roßkur" notwendig gewesen, eine grundsätzliche Änderung der Wirtschaftspolitik in der DDR, um Leistung und Verbrauch wieder in Übereinstimmung zu bringen. Dazu hätten Sozialleistungen massiv abgebaut werden müssen, und unrentable Betriebe hätte man schließen müssen.[259]

In other words, unemployment might indeed have become a very real factor in the GDR too, had it remained in existence. The PDS cuts out this background[260] in its *Ostalgie.* This is not to invalidate the arguments of those who favoured a slower path to unification or to deny the validity of the grounds for perceiving the presence of an, at times, overweening West German 'juggernaut'; however, the economic situation in which the eastern half of Germany currently finds itself is predicated upon a complex interrelationship between present *and* past, in other words this complex

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[254]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 12

[255]see footnote 183

[256]*Wer ist das die PDS?* op. cit., p. 22

[257]Trew: "Theory at Work." op. cit., p. 55

[258]Gerner, op. cit. (see p. 30 ff.)

[259]ibid., p. 31

[260]For graphic evidence of the GDR's miserable economic situation by the *Wendezeit*, see: "Die Volkswirschaft in der Realität." In: Lau/Lau: *Deutschland auf dem Weg zur Einheit* ... op. cit., p. 64 ff.

'reality' cannot be simply and unproblematically reduced to the ex-GDR's economic situation in the new Germany, to the unification process. The 'ostalgic' strand of the PDS's discourse of causal circumvention frequently seeks to do precisely this: to suggest, by simply cutting out the 'complicating factors', that unification alone is responsible for the economic woes which has befallen certain sections of the population. Markovits and Gorski have pointed out that East German *Lokalpatriotismus*, as they call it[261], was particularly manifest in the politics of the *Gerechtigkeitskommitees*[262] of mid-1992:

> the committee issued an appeal in which it deplored widespread unemployment, sharp increases in rent and other costs, reduced social services and the prospect of losing long-occupied homes. *Above all, the appeal made it clear that the committee regarded all of these calamities befalling the East Germans as the direct results of the unification process, as well as the ensuing West German dominance.*[263] (my italics)

Although its founders Diestel and Gysi emphasised the *Überparteilichkeit* of the *Gerechtigkeitskomitees*, there is much evidence to suggest that these were largely PDS-led[264]. Moreau sees them as part of an overall PDS *Bündnispolitik*[265]. Moreau is doubtless not wrong to observe the tactics both surrounding their founding ("Die Tatsache, daß die Gründung der Gerechtigkeitskomitees im Sommerloch erfolgte, sicherte dem Ereignis zudem die fast ungeteilte Aufmerksamkeit der Medien") and in their name ("wer ist schon gegen Gerechtigkeit?")[266]. The highly superordinate nature of the category *Gerechtigkeit* makes it virtually unchallengeable: it is a *Leerformel,* of the type described by Topitsch[267], a key-word, as Townson calls it[268], a lowest common denominator which unites through positive connotation rather than through any tangible denotation. (We will discuss in chapter 3 below the wide

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[261]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 262

[262]"In the middle of July 1992, a group called the Committee for Fairness constituted itself to protest what East Germans consider their mistreatment at the hands of West Germans and the federal government." ibid.

[263]ibid., pp. 262-63

[264]see Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., pp. 42-4; Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., pp. 62-3

[265]In keeping with his consistent sharply right-wing view of the PDS as a party with the uniform aim of infiltrating and undermining the existing 'democracy', Moreau sees these *Gerechtigkeitskomitees* as "nur ein Aspekt der subversiven Tätigkeit der PDS". (*Die PDS zwischen* ... op. cit., p. 45); we will return to this question below.

[266]ibid., p. 43

[267]see Topitsch, Ernst: "Über Leerformeln. Zur Pragmatik des Sprachgebrauches in Philosophie und politischer Theorie." In: Topitsch, E. (ed.): *Probleme der Wissenschaftstheorie. Festschrift für V. Kraft.* Wien Springer 1960, pp. 233-64; we will return to Topitsch below.

[268]Townson, op. cit., p. 203

recourse in PDS discourse to highly superordinate terms.) Here, then, the PDS makes unification the monocausal scapegoat for the East Germans' fate[269]. We will witness below, however, that for quite different discursive purposes in 1994 German (re-?)-unification was re-cast as an emancipatory process (see chapter 5).

Ultimately the PDS has been boosted in its *Ostalgie* by the fact that:

> Gegenwärtig belasten vorwiegend noch Alltagsprobleme das Leben der Bürger der DDR. Die Geschichte gerät unter den aktuellen, dramatischen Geschehnissen, für den einzelnen leicht in den Hintergrund, es gibt andere Sorgen. Doch nichts wäre für die weitere Entwicklung schädlicher als die Verdrängung der letzten vierzig Jahre[270]

and in particular upon the fact that:

> Allerdings wird die 40-jährige Diktatur in der DDR auch nach dem Verschwinden des zweiten deutschen Staates nicht folgenlos bleiben. "DDR-Bürger" wird es noch eine Zeitlang geben, obwohl es den Staat DDR nicht mehr gibt.[271]

Having made itself the *Anwalt* of "Hundertausende [, die] ins soziale Abseits und damit an den Rand der Gesellschaft geschickt (werden)"[272], in its status as a quintessential product of the GDR, the PDS has relied in its discourse upon the suggestion that its fate at the hands of a hostile political establishment is a microcosmic model of the fate suffered by East Germans in general at the hands of an overbearing and uncaring Federal Republic. Bortfeldt observes that:

> Die Ostdeutschen ... wenden sich artikulierter gegen ... negative Pauschalisierung gelebten Alltagslebens in der DDR und lassen eine verstärktes "Wir-Gefühl" erkennen; auch das verschüttete Selbstbewußtsein kommt wieder zum Vorschein. *Selbstgefälliger Umgang mit Ostdeutschen*

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[269]c.f Moreau (*Die PDS zwsichen* ... op. cit., pp. 43-4): "Im Gründungsmanifest der Gerechtigkeitskomitees wurde an die Diktion des PDS-Programms angeknüpft. Die Bürger in den neuen Bundesländern fühlten sich als 'Menschen zweiter Klasse'. 'Deindustrialisierung, Zerstörung der Landwirtschaft, Massenarbeitslosigkeit, sozial unverträgliche Mietsteigerungen' und vieles andere mehr hätten 'die Hoffnungen zerstört, die mit der deutschen Einheit verknüpft waren.' Die Ostdeutschen müßten 'ihre Interessen selber aussprechen und wahrnehmen. Dazu rufen wir auf ... «Komitees für Gerechtigkeit» zu bilden, die überparteilich sind und zu denen jede und jeder Zutritt hat'."

[270]Weber, op. cit., p. 242

[271]ibid., p. 243

[272]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 24

> *einerseits und Verteufelung der PDS andererseits lassen nur einen Solidarisierungseffekt untereinander entstehen.*[273] (my italics)

Observe the suggestion, again, that an absolute number of (i.e. *all*) East Germans may be involved.

This line of argumentation culminates in the observation that:

> Wer im Osten politisch Erfolg haben will, muß sich den Problemen der Ostdeutschen als Partner zuwenden und sich politisch mit der PDS auseinandersetzen.[274]

This is Bortfeldt's unmistakable political message: the PDS is *the* (one and only) '*Sprachrohr*' for East German interests, voting PDS is *the* shibboleth for a GDR identity (despite the fact, of course, that 80% of East Germans have taken their vote elsewhere!). While, of course, the PDS does represent a significant section (whose nature we examine in some detail in chapter 3) of the East German population, the PDS's *Sprachrohr* construct turns on a 'false converse'; while it is true that

Support for PDS > implies (statistically) East German origin (if we treat as insignificant the 1% of the West Germans who have voted PDS)

the converse that

being East German in origin > implies support for PDS

is manifestly not (given that 4/5 of the East German electorate have chosen to vote for other parties). Put simply X implies Y, but Y does not imply X; the PDS is one symbol of a GDR identity, but it is not the one and only symbol.

It is only consistent, then, that in its *Ostalgie*-related discourse the PDS should offer definite signals of anti-unification and anti West-German sentiment. As we have observed, the unification process has consistently been deemed an *Anschluß* . For the purposes of bolstering up an East-West divide we witness the re-emergence of thought patterns characteristic of cold war discourse. At times the complex causality underlying the GDR's reprehensible features[275] and that country's ultimate demise is reduced to the interference of the West:

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[273]Bortfeldt: "Auf daß der Wind sich drehe!" op. cit., p. 342

[274]ibid.

[275]The issue of the complex causality behind the GDR's demise is examined in great detail by Gerner, op. cit., chapter 1.

> In den 50er Jahren führte zum Beispiel der kalte Krieg, *die politischen und ökonomischen Angriffe aus dem Westen gegen die DDR* zu einer gewissen Akzeptanz der Sicherheitssysteme. Die langjährige Nichtanerkennung der DDR führte auch zum Verständnis für übertriebene staatliche Symbolik.[276] (my italics)

Observe how the - putative - stifling of the (mythical?) *Demokratiebewegung* referred to above is also reduced to the monocausal factor of Western interference:

> Die Volksbewegungen in den osteuropäischen Ländern führten am Ende der 80er Jahre zum Zusammenbruch der erstarrten politischen Herrschaftssysteme und setzten für kurze Zeit wesentliche Demokratisierungen des gesellschaftlichen Lebens in Gang. Heute zeigt sich: *Die herrschende kapitalistische Produktionsweise und die dominierenden politischen Systeme verhinderten, daß die demokratischen und sozialistischen Ideale dieser Bewegungen verwirklicht werden konnten.*[277] (my italics)

(There is room here for - at the very least! - problematising the notion that the vast majority of the East German people favoured unification with the West!)

With reference to the PDS's 1993 programme, Pfahl-Traughber observes, with some justification, that:

> Überhaupt zeichnet sich die Auseinandersetzung der PDS mit der DDR-Vergangenheit durch eine überaus selektiere Wahrnehmung aus ... Hinsichtlich des Scheiterns des sowjetischen Modells macht das Programm ausschließlich außenpolitische und gesellschaftliche Rahmenbedingungen verantwortlich: "in einem sozialökonomisch, politisch und kulturell zurückgebliebenen Land, ständig bedroht von einer kapitalistischen Umwelt" wurde "der Versuch, eine sozialistische Ordnung zu schaffen" ... von Anfang an beeinträchtigt. Daß die dann als Entartungserscheinungen *genannten* Formen von "Willkür, Grausamkeit und Bürokratie" (Massenmord und Terror werden nicht *genannt*) auch etwas mit der Ideologie und den Organisationsprinzipien der Bolschewiki zu tun hatten, problematisiert der Programm-Text nicht[278] (my italics: observe how Pfahl - Traughber, too, appears to recognise that *naming* is not *addressing*!)

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[276]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland." op. cit.

[277]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* 1993. op. cit., p. 4

[278]Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 362

and thus identifies the causal circumvention which we have already highlighted. Pfahl-Traughber argues emotively, too, that the PDS's expressions of distaste at the GDR's reprehensible features:

> zeigt zwar, daß die PDS sich in einer gewissen Distanz zum DDR-System wie zum Stalinismus in der ehemaligen Sowjetunion sieht ... Dabei kann aber nicht per se von einem Veränderungsprozeß grundsätzlicher Art gesprochen werden, stellen die zitierten Äußerungen nur allgemein bekannte historische Tatbestände dar ... Sie (the expressions of distaste - MD) finden sich im Rahmen einer eindeutig positiven Beschreibung der DDR: Es wird im Zusammenhang mit der Staatsgründung von berechtigten (mythical? - MD) "antifaschistisch-demokratischen Veränderungen im Osten Deutschlands" ... gesprochen. Daß die Entstehung der DDR wenig mit demokratischen Entwicklungen und mehr mit der Errichtung einer Diktatur unter der Führung der SED zu tun hatte, scheint der PDS selbst heute noch nicht bewußt zu sein.[279]

Consistent, too, with the PDS's attempts to on one level offer absolution, as we have seen, to the *SED-Basis*, is the sweeping discursive exoneration given to East Germans across the board[280]. Again absolution is offered through individualisation; what the PDS circumvents here is the problematic question of how the aggregate of the parts - i.e. of all these individually laudable (and unverifiable!) aspirations - could form such a problematic whole. Observe the re-emergence of the *subjektiv gut gewolltes* model in

> Auf der anderen Seite werden wir die Bemühungen und die Ergebnisse der Tätigkeit von Hunderttausenden Mitgliedern der SED, Hunderttausenden Bürgerinnen und Bürgern der DDR für eine sozial gerechtere und humanere Gesellschaft niemals in Abrede stellen oder geringschätzen ... Niemand hat das Recht sie zur Leugnung ihrer Biographien zu zwingen, ihre Biographien geringzuschätzen und darauf zu verzichten, ihre Erfahrungen für die Gestaltung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zu nutzen.[281]

Notice, here, the syntactic parallelism: SED (/PDS) : *Bürger und Bürgerinnen der DDR*; coupling the activities of its political predecessor with those of East German

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[279]ibid., p. 361

[280]This is in no way to suggest that the PDS should be hell-bent on trying to invoke and 'prove' the 'guilt' or complicity of citizens of the GDR. It is rather the case that the PDS here, too, simply circumvents a problematic causal background.

[281]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 28

citizens in general the PDS, as the SED's political successor, is reinforcing its position as the mouthpiece for East Germans. Observe, too, that if this conceptual model is established in an East German mind, then any attempt to challenge personal biographies within the ranks of the PDS (as in the case of involvement with the Ministry for State Security) will be viewed as a challenge on the collective East German biography per se. Yet again the argumentation turns on the lowest common denominator, highlighted above, of a GDR identity. We have drawn attention to the "Solidarierungseffekt" highlighted by Bortfeldt. It must be emphasised here that while the 'tactical' dimension of this last message might be considered 'morally' questionable (i.e. playing on and inciting insecurities as a means of gaining popular support), the substantive nature of the PDS's opposition to a certain West German tactlessness is not groundless: there can be little doubt that prevailing attitude of an a priori (moral?) superiority among some West Germans, what (West German) psychoanalyst Tilmann Moser has identified as "die Heftigkeit der westlichen Beschuldigung und der hohe Grad von Herablassung"[282] (which finds its physical expression in Markovits and Gorski's "juggernaut") has served the PDS's ostalgic cause. This, argues Moser, is one of the main factors which threaten the pursuit of a healthy pan-German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Günter Gaus has identified a long tradition of a certain West German condescension towards the East. The latter, head of West Germany's *Ständige Vertretung* in the GDR for six and a half years, wrote his seminal work on the GDR[283] as a means, he states in his introduction, of counteracting the prevailing West German cliché of a polarised GDR: an egregious state party on the one hand and on the other a grey, faceless and oppressed people deprived of a private biography, of private happiness, by an "allmächtige, allgegenwärtige Staatspartei"[284]; in a nutshell, his stated aim is to counteract a

> primitive(s) Bild von der DDR als perfekter Gewaltmaschine, die den Menschen kaum Luft zum Atmen läßt[285]

and in which individuals are subordinated to the "so dominante wie undifferenzierte bipolare Kategorien"[286] - described in some detail by Pätzold and Pätzold[287] - of

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[282]Moser, op. cit., p. 52

[283]Gaus, Günter: *Wo Deutschland liegt. Eine Ortsbestimmung*. München: dtv 1987

[284]ibid., p. 8

[285]ibid., p. 116

[286]Reiher, Ruth: *Sprache im Konflikt*. op. cit., p. 15 (introduction)

[287]see: Pätzold, Jörg/Margita Pätzold: "Gemeinsame Sprache, geteiltes Verstehen. Anmerkungen zur Systematik von Verständigungsschwierigkeiten zwischen Deutschen Ost und Deutschen West." In: Reiher: *Sprache im Konflikt*. op. cit., pp. 244-62

either *Täter* (or *Mitläufer*) on the one hand, or *Opfer* (or *Widerständler*) on the other. In his eminently balanced account, Gaus argues that the two Germanies have much more in common than is often apparent from official West German propaganda. Central to his thesis is his observation that:

> auch drüben, im anderen deutschen Staat, die private Nische der bevorzugte Aufenthaltsort der Bürgerinnen und Bürger der DDR ist - wie bei uns, wie überall.[288]

The refusal to recognise the centrality or indeed the existence of the "Nischen innerhalb des Sozialismus der DDR"- in other words the people's "Rückzug ins Private"[289] coupled with a demonstration of the minimum of allegiance required by the authorities - is not, argues Gaus, only to be found among GDR's ideological hardliners, for whom the official teachings of Marxism-Leninism - the "Sein und Bewußtsein einer entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft" with its "neuen Menschen"[290]- do not officially allow for the much clearer delineation between public and private that characterises the West German political system[291]. Gaus observes that:

> Die bunderepublikanischen Agitatoren gegen die DDR, *Politiker wie Publizisten*, die auf diesem Feld arbeiten, haben ebenfalls ihre Schwierigkeiten mit der mitteldeutschen Nischengesellschaft: weil deren Freiräume ihre Darstellung der DDR als einem Ort, an dem es nur *Schergen und Opfer*[292] gibt, widerlegen. *Die hiesigen Agitatoren sind bemüht, die Menschen drüben in unserem Bewußtsein* (through, in part, simplified conceptual structures which turn on rigid bipolar categorisation - MD) *zu entprivatisieren: sie in unseren Augen zu grauen Schatten in einem*

The authors show how, in an interview between a West German television journalist and East German author, Erwin Strittmatter, the 'conflict' between the two parties is located largely in the unwillingness of the latter - as an author whose works found favour with the East German state - to allow the journalist to subordinate his personal, East German biography to the simplified bipolar conceptual schema of *Täter/Mitläufer* versus *Opfer/Widerstandskämpfer* which underpins her conceptualisation of the relationship of the individual East German citizen to the East German state and which is so much a part of her West German socialisation.

[288]Gaus, op. cit., p. 7

[289]ibid., pp. 115, 116

[290]ibid., pp. 115, 116

[291]see Good: *Die deutsche Sprache und die kommunistische Ideologie.* (op. cit.) for a study of the linguistic implications of this politicisation of the *Privatsphäre*: In the GDR the term *politics* was widened to refer to aspects of individuals' lives which in West Germany would generally be regarded as having little or nothing to do with politics.

[292]With respect to the 'earlier' *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Moser, too, points to the danger of a bipolar simplification, in questioning the usefulness of a "Proklamation von moralischen Urteilen, die daran festhält, ein Volk in Böcke und Schafe einzuteilen". op. cit., p. 57

> *allgegenwärtigen, allgewaltigen Willkürstaat zu machen.* Dazu passen dann nicht die Privatheit der Nischen, das private Glück und Unglück in ihnen, die Staatsferne, in der ein großer Teil des Lebens in der DDR statthat.[293] (my emphases)

Interestingly, Gaus observes that while the existence of the *Nischengesellschaft* was initially denied by large sections of the West German political establishment, the Federal Republic's assumption of diplomatic relations with the GDR made this increasingly untenable: the subsequent gradual and grudging acceptance of its existence was, argues Gaus, predicated upon an expedient misinterpretation of the term as a:

> Besonderheit des kommunistischen Regimes ... als die notgedrungene Flucht ins Private, durch welchen Beigeschmack die agitatorische Brauchbarkeit wiederhergestellt wird. Gerade das, eine Besonderheit der DDR, sind die Nischen jedoch nicht[294]

and points to

> Ausnahmen davon (from having the "Existenzmittelpunkt im privaten Bereich" - MD) hüben wie drüben, ein besonderes Engagement im allgemeinen, öffentlichen Fragen, und gar noch ein solches Engagement außerhalb der dafür vorgesehenen Normen, SED und ihre Ableger dort, etablierte Parteien und Verwandtes hier.[295]

The simplified packaging of the GDR as a totalitarian state of oppression served to reinforce the prevailing ideology of what Gaus ironically calls "der totalitäre Antikommunismus ... die irrationalen Ängste vor linken Ideen generell in unserem bürgerlichen Mehrheitsgemüt ..."[296], as a foil for what was thus presented as a 'perfect' Federal Republic; voicing his "Skepsis gegenüber dem eigenen Nest", Gaus berates a West German withdrawal into an "eigene Scheinwelt"[297] and observes that many of West Germany's four million unemployed would be only too glad to use the *Schrebergarten* to improve their standard of living, the very *Schrebergarten* whose yields were a fixed item on the GDR's *höchstrangigen Jahreswirtschaftsbericht* and

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[293]Gaus, op. cit., p. 116

[294]ibid., p. 117

[295]ibid.

[296]ibid., p. 118

[297]ibid., pp. 118, 119

thus a constant butt of official West German humour[298]. In getting beyond the abiding cliché, argues Gaus, he hopes to 'undemonise' the power of the SED in the minds of West Germans:

> Bedenkt man, wie viele Westdeutsche mit ihrem *totalitären Antikommunismus* von nüchtern-normalen Kategorien des politischen Denkens in Europa entfernt sind, dann erhellt sich der nützliche Sinn solcher Entdämonisierung.[299] (italics in original)

For Gaus, the resonance enjoyed by his work among ordinary East German citizens (even though it was not officially available in the GDR) is predicated upon their recognition that he had sought to move away from the stereotyped picture of the GDR often painted in the West: "Sie fühlten sich ernst genommen".[300]

The substantive thrust of the PDS's '*Totschlag*' arguments is thus not wholly groundless. It is this very fact which has allowed the PDS to effect a discursive distraction: to confuse the very real justification for 'self-defence' against the West German 'juggernaut' with a less-than-justified attempt to circumvent the question of the nature of *Mitläufertum* within society. While it is true that East Germans are not accountable to their counterparts in the West, they *are* accountable to themselves and future generations. A healthy *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* requires causal questions to be addressed not suppressed. Weber pinpoints the problem:

> Die Diktatur wurde von Personen ausgeübt, von solchen die sich aktiv schuldig machen, *aber auch von hörigen Mitläufern.* Die hierarchischen Strukturen des totalitären Stalinismus bestanden im Machtmonopol der Parteiführung, die sich anmaßte "immer recht" zu haben. Bei diesen Gremien liegt die Verantwortung und Schuld für Unterdrückung und Verfolgung. Doch die Machthaber und ihre Handlanger konnten sich auf viele Karrieristen oder "Gläubige" stützen, die das System mittrugen. Die Bereitschaft zu einer veränderten Sicht, zu demokratischem Umgang und zum "aufrechten Gang" erfordert die kritische Analyse sowohl der politischen Strukturen *als auch der persönlichen Verhaltensmuster*, denn beides hat die 40-jährige SED-Herrschaft ermöglicht.[301] (my italics)

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[298]ibid., p. 120 ff.

[299]ibid., p. 8

[300]ibid., p. 9

[301]Weber, op. cit., p. 243

Moser goes further. For him a healthy pan-German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*[302] requires, too, that West Germans effect, in their dealings with Easterners, a practicable balance, that they counteract a "Widerstand gegen eine Einkehr bei sich selbst", as a precondition for "die Fähigkeit zu sittlicher Solidarität, die die Möglichkeit zu Verurteilung und vorübergehendem Ausschluß vom öffentlichen Leben offenläßt".[303]

It is precisely this last possibility - that of a sane and healthy 'moral' judgement unhindered by emotive categories - that an ostalgic PDS would have foreclosed on the grounds that Western arrogance has gone too far. In other words, something in the reductive, bipolar conceptual schema underpinning Western attitudes has afforded the PDS *seemingly* pertinent grounds for arguing one extreme, the (blanket) unchallenageability of personal biographies ("Recht auf die eigene Biographie"), despite its wholly contradictory assertion elsewhere that it will not shirk that past and will address it head on.

Pfahl-Traughber has identified in the PDS's discourse in relation to it GDR past what he perceives as sophistic textual constructions incorporating (unverifiable and unquantifiable - MD) "Gegensätze ..., die nicht notwendigerweise etwas miteinander zu tun haben"[304]. He observes that despite, on an expressis verbis level, arguing vehemently in favour of "keine Verklärung der gesellschaftlichen Realitäten in der DDR", the "5 Punkte" programme (a *Positionspapier* presented by leading party ideologues for ratification at the party's 4th Conference in January 1995) proceeds to invoke the sophistic notion that:

> Wir werden der These vom "Unrechtsstaat DDR" widersprechen, weil sie in ihrer Konsequenz bedeutet, der DDR das Existenzrecht abzusprechen und ihren Bürgern vorzuwerfen, sich auf ein Leben in der DDR auf der Grundlage ihrer Verfassung und Gesetze eingestellt zu haben.[305]

The (hidden!) agent here is, doubtless, 'the West': the argument turns upon a presupposed East-West conflict in which the role allocation is that described by Pätzold and Pätzold: an offensive West versus a defensive East.

Pfahl-Traughber responds with some justification that:

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[302]We are well aware, here, that this term has widely been deemed an unfortunate one: see chapter 2 below.

[303]Moser, op. cit., p. 52

[304]Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 363

[305]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 28. Cited in: Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 363

> Die Feststellung, die DDR sei ein Unrechtstaat gewesen, bedeutet nicht automatisch, allen Bürgern der DDR etwas vorzuwerfen.[306]

We see a similar, sophistic "Gegensatz" in the following, in which the unverifiability (and spuriousness?) of the asserted proposition is again underpinned by a removal of agency:

> Mit der These vom "Unrechtsstaat DDR" wird versucht (by whom? - MD) die DDR und Hitlerdeutschland gleichzusetzen. Diese Gleichsetzung (by whom? - MD) verzerrt und verfälscht die gesellschaftliche Realität in der DDR ebenso, wie sie den Faschismus verharmlost.[307]

With particular reference to the "5-Punkte" programme, one critic responds to this line of argumentation as follows:

> Mit der glänzenden Idee vom "Recht auf die eigene Biographie" ist es der PDS-Führung gelungen, den Militanten eine Balancierstange für die Zwecke lebensgeschichtlicher "Bewältigung" in die Hand zu drücken. Aber wie steht es mit den Verallgemeinerungen, die aus der Geschichte der DDR zu ziehen wären? Einerseits ein avantgardistisch-zentralistisches Monstrum andererseits doch auf keinen Fall Unrechtsstaat (weil das eine Gleichsetzung mit dem NS-Staat bedeute - *warum eigentlich*?).[308] (my italics)

The demise of the GDR and the issue of dealing with its 'Stalinist' past has given fresh impetus to the ongoing question of addressing the National Socialist legacy and has rekindled a modified version of the *Historikerstreit*[309]; while the thrust of that debate was initially essentially centred around whether or not Germany's past could - or should - be relativised in terms of the atrocities committed under the Stalinist regime, since unification there has been an increasingly heated debate as to the

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[306]Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 363

[307]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 23

[308]Semler, Christian: "Kautsky dringend gesucht!" In: *Die Tageszeitung.* 16 January 1995

[309]A highly readable introduction to this complex polemic, which began in the mid-eighties, is to be found in: Paterson, William: "The Present of the German Past - a British Perspective." In: *Politics and Society in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.* vol. 2. no. 1/2. Spring 1990, pp. 39-45.

In 1986 the historian Ernst Nolte "argued that it was now time to introduce some 'grey tones' into the analysis of the Third Reich; to free historical analysis from its domination by simple moral categories and to relocate the Holocaust as only one of a whole pattern of twentieth-century genocides." (Paterson, op. cit., p. 40). The 'revisionism' of Nolte et al. was strongly challenged by leading sociologist and political philosopher, Jürgen Habermas.

grounds for comparison between a 'Stalinist' GDR and the Third Reich[310]. It is against this background that we must view the sophistic "Gegensätze" cited above.

The PDS argument turns upon a spurious presupposition that *any* desire to question or challenge a problematic GDR past is automatically predicated upon a hell-bent equation of the GDR and the Third Reich. To this end the PDS invokes a term which (unlike its antonym) is not an established concept in constitutional theory and has a decided ring of mythicality: tellingly, no mention is made of just who it is that has levelled the accusation of "Unrechtsstaat" at the GDR and who it is that has sought to equate the two. In respect of the exculpatory aims of *some* - especially on the right -, the substantive thrust of the PDS's claims is, of course, not without grounds. Gaus points to a tendency in the vociferous anti-communism of West German public discourse towards presenting the GDR as a totalitarian police state without relativisation, thereby putting the GDR on a par with the Third Reich; Gaus argues that the GDR was not a *Willkürstaat*[311] (to the extent that the Third Reich was or in the way that characterised what Weber has called a "Stalinismus im engeren Sinne"[312] - MD); despite an extensive police presence there was a tacit agreement between the regime and the *Nischenbewohner* who:

> wissen sehr genau - und auf das Wissen ist Verlaß - wie weit sie gehen können, was sie tun und was sie lassen sollen, damit sie unbehelligt bleiben ... Es gibt den Druck einer ständigen Aufpasserei nicht ... das Gefühl, mit willkürlichen Maßnahmen könne jederzeit in die Nischen hineingegriffen werden, drückt nicht auf die Stimmung der großen Mehrheit, es existiert nicht. Man wirft nicht reflexhaft vor jeder Unterhaltung einen Blick über die Schulter, um zu sehen, wer hinter einem steht ...[313]

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[310]There has, of course, too, been a long tradition in the discourse of the Federal Republic in which it sought, in the process of what Townson (op. cit., p. 166) calls *Abgrenzung*, to "brand the new East German state with the mark of fascism by applying fascist terminology to it ... There is a clear tendency here to regard the German language as used in East Germany as the natural successor to the language of Fascism, this being a linguistic extension of the - politically very useful - view that the political system in the East German state shared the characteristics of National Socialism - a very useful argument, *because it absolved West Germans of the need to reflect on the true origins of German Fascism*." (Townson, op. cit., pp. 169, 177; my italics)

The reverse was, of course, also true inasmuch as "Die Massenmedien der DDR lenkten die Aufmerksamkeit stets auf ein bestimmtes Vokabular, das dann als Beweis für die Existenz nationalsozialistischen Sprachguts in westdeutschen Texten herangezogen wurde. Als paradigmatisches Beispiel fungierte das Wort *Führer* in Zusammensetzungen wie *Betriebsführer* und *Geschäftsführer*. Cited from: Good: "Sprache im totalitären Staat: Der Fall DDR." op. cit., p. 269.

[311]Gaus, op. cit, p. 116

[312]Weber, op. cit., pp. 13, 15 (see footnote 83)

[313]Gaus, op. cit, p. 124

Again, however, as with the question of addressing personal biographies, the PDS blurs the distinction here between, on the one hand, *legitimate* grounds for seeing in the GDR a state in which, in the perception of many, there was indeed a high level of *Unrecht* with, on the other, the aims of some politicians (of the right, in particular) who *can* be said to instrumentalise emotive terms like *Unrechtsstaat* (as part of their sweeping undifferentiated view of a totalitarian GDR[314]) for *political* ends, i.e. whose aims in beating the PDS with the 'communist' stick are more about self-legitimation and political gain than an attempt to deal constructively with the past as an end in itself. (In this narrow world-view, any conception of the notion of an *Unrechtsstaat* would doubtless be bound up with challenging the very legitimacy per se of any ('socialist') system which deviates from, and thus questions, the sanctity of what is perceived as an unimpeachable West German norm.[315])

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[314]On this point, see in particular chapter 4 below.

[315]It is highly questionable, incidentally, whether the emotive and ambiguous notion of an *Unrechtsstaat* automatically - where applied to the GDR - implies an equation with the Third Reich. Carsten Schatz of the PDS's *AG Junge Schwule* argued that he had heard the term *Unrechtsstaat* only in connection with the Third Reich and that any use of the term in connection with GDR was therefore a means of reinforcing a connection between the Third Reich and the GDR in peoples' minds. However, a street survey conducted (by the writer, October-November 1995) with a random sample of 20 Berliners (7 from the East and 13 from the West), who were asked for an immediate response to a) the term *Unrechtstaat* and then b) to the notion of an *Unrechtsstaat. DDR*, revealed the following telling results: in the case of a) only one of those interviewed mentioned the Third Reich and in the case of b) not one of those asked formed any automatic mental association between the two regimes.

CHAPTER 2
THE DISCOURSE OF CAUSAL CIRCUMVENTION (II): AN "UNDEMOCRATIC" HISTORIOGRAPHY?

Having examined the features of the 'causal circumvention' underpinning PDS historiography, we return to the question of the appropriateness of using these as a basis upon which to assess the PDS's "democratic" credentials.

SUPPRESSING THE PAST

The features we have observed - in particular with respect to the circumvention of individual complicity - might be said to bear out, in part at least, the view, in its most absolute form espoused by Markovits and Gorski et al., that:

> the PDS-led view ... would like nothing better than *complete silence* regarding the SED's and Stasi's crimes against the East German people.[1] (my italics)

We have witnessed a definite trend in PDS historiography towards 'dealing' with the past with speech acts of (seeming) condemnation, but which frequently leave the impression that they are designed to effect a short, sharp and painless break with that past without invoking painful questions of causality - especially as the party struggles to secure its political survival.[2] Naming, as we have mentioned, is not addressing.

However, does this constitute grounds for branding the PDS "undemocratic"? There is a substantial argument to suggest that this is indeed the wrong perspective. If the epithet of *undemocratic* can be applied to the PDS on this basis, then there is compelling evidence that it can be similarly applied to certain sections of West Germany's political establishment, in particular the right: Markovits and Gorski are not without grounds in arguing that the German Right's "'this time we'll do it correctly'"[3] stance in respect of the 'new' *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* facing Germans - i.e. its seemingly vehement desire to punish Communists to make up for past sins of omission in failing to adequately deal with Nazi criminals and their legacy -:

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[1]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 259

[2]For a detailed discussion of this struggle see Krisch, op. cit.

[3]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 259

> is cynical for two reasons: First it conveys the image that the Right now harbours some kind of remorse concerning the leniency with which the Nazis were treated in the Federal Republic. In reality, this travesty of justice occurred precisely at the behest of this very Right which is now clamouring for the punishment of the Communists. Second, by turning on East Germany's Communists with an unprecedented vengeance, the German right tries to convey to the world that Communism, if anything, was even worse than National Socialism, thereby once again trying to exculpate Germany from its Nazi past.[4]

In other words, Gorski and Markovits perceive evidence of a 'cover-up' *on both sides* in the new *Historikerstreit.*

For Volmert, the right's (and, in part, established left's) vehement, hysterical, moralistic, "einseitig (i.e. West German - MD) betriebene 'Bewältigung der DDR-Vergangenheit'", its "peinlich genaue und unnachgiebige Ausleuchtung der DDR-Vergangenheit" (which Burkhardt - see below - has called a "Vergangenheits*über*wältigung") is an over-compensation for "verdrängte Schuldkomplexe" in failing to pursue a "konsequenten Aufarbeitung der Faschismusgeschichte":

> Was im Westen niemals ernsthaft und nachhaltig versucht wurde, wird nun - in der Rolle des "Siegers" - am Objekt des "roten Totalitarismus" nachgeholt.[5]

Indeed, argues, Burkhardt, the (unfortunate) term *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has itself been part and parcel of a suppression strategy:

> Wer die Vergangenheit bewältigt, der steckt sie - salopp gesprochen - in einen wohlverschnürten Karton und bringt sie in den Keller der Geschichte ... Eine Schuld wie die der Deutschen, läßt sich nicht "bewältigen", d.h. abschließen und hinter sich bringen ... Die bloße Existenz des Wortes Vergangenheitsbewältigung suggeriert dabei, daß sich die Vergangenheit in der Tat bewältigen ließe. Das ist jedoch ein Trugschluß. Retrospektives Bewältigen im strengen Sinne ist unmöglich. Nur Gegenwart und Zukunft lassen sich (möglicherweise) bewältigen ... Auch Aufarbeiten, so der

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[4]ibid.

[5]Volmert "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 174

> bevorzugte Terminus der Neuen Linken, läßt sich das Vergangene eigentlich nicht.[6]

Whilst mindful of Burkhardt's caveat, we will continue to use the term for the sake of expediency. The complex issue of a pan-German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is dealt with from a psychoanalytical point of view by (West) German Tilmann Moser. Describing the ongoing psychological consequences of suppression - whose mechanisms he describes in some detail - of the National Socialist past, Moser is in no doubt that "Die moralische Aggressivität der westlichen Forderung, drüben die Vergangenheit zu bewältigen" represents, in part, an attempt at *delegating* responsibility for its own "unbewältigten Vergangenheit des Nationalsozialismus":

> Mit Delegation - ein familientherapeutischer Begriff - ist die Abtretung einer Last oder einer Aufgabe gemeint, die ein Familienmitglied stellvertretend für alle übernehmen soll.[7]

Ultimately, Moser agrees with his East German colleagues in perceiving the dangers inherent in what is deemed a West German *Schattenprojektion*, described as:

> (meist unbewußte) Vorgänge ... bei denen ungeliebte, gehaßte, gefürchtete Seelenanteile einem anderen untergeschoben und dort, geliebt, verachtet, bewundert oder bekämpft werden können.[8]

In other words, Moser is here reinforcing Gorski and Markovits' observation that the process of condemning the Stalinist past is not free from an attempt to avoid dealing with the National Socialist legacy and the painful question of West German suppression of a sordid past.[9]

Markovits and Gorski single out the East German Greens (in which, as we have said, they include all those groups - such as *Neues Forum* - who made up East Germany's 'dissident' movement) as occupying a moral higher ground in calling for retribution in respect of this "sordid chapter of German history"

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[6]Burkhardt, Armin, "Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." op. cit., pp. 126, 141-2

[7]Moser, op. cit., p. 49

[8]ibid., p. 51

[9]Of that suppression Burkhardt ("Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." op. cit., pp. 126-7) has said: "Trotzdem blieben Kriegsschuld, Kriegsverbrechen, Unterdrückung und Massenmord für lange Zeit das zentrale Tabuthema der Bundesrepublik, und vor allem der Nachkriegsgeneration wurde Mitte der 60er Jahre klar, daß die Geschichte der Nazi-Zeit und die übergroße Schuld der Deutschen von den Eltern und Großeltern nicht aufgearbeitet worden waren. Wohl weil die Schuld von den meisten heute nicht mehr als persönliche begriffen wird, hat sich das Verhältnis der Deutschen zu ihrer Vergangenheit inzwischen zwar gewandelt, aber es ist vielleicht wirklich nur ein besonderer

> for the sake of justice and the rights of individuals whom the East German regime victimised and not *for the sake of politics,* which in the Left's case has meant silence and in the Right's case has meant revenge.[10] (my italics)

Good has shown how equally in West Germany, where the established parties' credentials as 'democratic' players are generally taken as a given in the established political arena:

> in the period of the late 40 and 50s, and even into the 60s, the National Socialist past and the crimes committed against humanity were absent[11] from public discourse or else, where they were spoken about publicly, this tended to be either in the form of expressions of loathing at the crimes that had been committed or else in figurative language, which presented the phenomenon as some sort of spontaneous natural occurrence (*'Eigenkausalität'*! - MD), visited upon the German people ... what was common to the discourse of what Haug called *Der Hilflose Antifaschismus* was the occlusion of questions concerning the nature of participation of the population ... [12]

- features not a million miles removed from those we find in the contemporary *agentless* discourse of the PDS in which on the one hand discursive absolution is given through individualisation ("Recht auf die eigene Biographie"!) while at the same time we find speech acts in which the PDS both expresses its disapproval of the GDR regime and promises that there will be no obfuscation in respect of the past. What Townson has said of a certain type of response to the National Socialist past:

> It would indeed be wrong not to express horror and disgust at the deeds perpetrated by the German fascists, but the critique, the coming to terms with the past cannot stop at the expression of disgust[13]

might equally be said of the PDS's historiographic discourse. From a psychoanalytical perspective, Moser calls this a discourse of "Unantastbarkeit": there is, he argues, a "mächtige Denkströmung" prevalent in West Germany in which loud declarations of blanket condemnation and apportioning of blame are used quite

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Verdrängungstrick, die ungeliebte Geschichte dem Kulturbetrieb zu überantworten, der sie dann in Ausstellungen, auf dem Theater, in Film und Fernsehen mumifizieren kann.

[10]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 259

[11]Burkhardt (op. cit., p. 127) observes that "Auch die Linguistik nach dem Kriege entzog sich zunächst der Pflicht der Aufarbeitung des Geschehenen. Sie ergriff die erste sich bietende Gelegenheit, die ungeliebte jüngere deutsche Vergangenheit über Bord zu werfen.

[12]Good, Colin: *Language, Politics and Ideology*. op. cit.

[13]Townson, op. cit., p. 173

precisely to *obscure* a deeper - *causal* - reappraisal of the past; the very unchallengeability of the (often highly emotive) categories concerned allows for the circumvention of uncomfortable background questions of causality; this, argues Moser, makes the *veneer* of '*Aufarbeitung*' a matter of *political* expediency:

> Es gibt also einerseits eine mächtige Denkströmung, die an einer globalen Beschuldigung der Deutschen für Krieg und Holocaust festhält, andererseits aber gar nicht daran interessiert ist, die Verstrickungen wirklich zu erhellen und das Hineingleiten in das Unfaßbare zu verstehen. Wissenschaft und Aufarbeitung treten damit in einen Gegensatz *zu einem politischen Credo*: nämlich der ständig proklamierten Mahnung, die Naziverbrechen der Deutschen als unhinterfragbar einmalig und geschichtstranszendent zu sehen.[14] (my italics)

The very force of this "Denkströmung", then is, in a sense, a means of effecting a short, sharp, less uncomfortable break with the past: the psychological consequences are, however, lurking under the surface. Paradoxically, argues Moser, the "Verweigerung der Einfühlung" which is at the heart of surface acts of condemnation entails increased accusations of a refusal to confront the past head on.[15]

The SED dealt with its National Socialist past by presenting it as a uniquely West German phenomenon: the Federal Republic was presented as the sole heir to the Third Reich in particular by virtue of its "capitalist" status: in terms of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy fascism was, as we observed above, a feature of *Spätkapitalismus*[16] and the conceptual obfuscation in this circular, self-referential mode of argumentation thus allowed the GDR to claim

> the sole position of being the direct descendant of the "good" Germans and the moral Germany[17]

i.e. the descendants of Germany's 'progressive' KPD and working class tradition. Markovits and Gorski have shown that this process even extended to having East German schoolchildren believe that East German soldiers fought among the ranks of the Red Army and to a complete circumvention of the issue of the genocide of the Jews:

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[14]Moser, op. cit., pp. 52-53

[15]ibid., p. 53

[16]See Schlosser, op. cit, p. 31. We will return to this issue in chapter 3.

[17]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit, p. 242

> Jews were never acknowledged as particular victims of National Socialism ... East Germans were more than happy not to have to deal with that issue. They revelled in the state's myth that - miraculously - Nazis and fascists existed only to the left of the Elbe river. The Holocaust was purely a West German problem in the eyes of East Germany's political elite.[18]

Jews were compensated "never as Jews, only as anti-fascist victims of fascism"[19]. In the Federal Republic, however, public discourse, while not denying the existence of the phenomenon, not infrequently bypassed, as we have seen, uncomfortable questions of causality and, in part, transferred the focus of blame by hinting that the Third Reich lived on in the GDR. (The process was facilitated, of course, by the conceptual conflation afforded between "'*National* Socialism' as a totalitarian regime up to 1945 and that form of 'Socialism' which was imposed on East Germany after 1945"[20].) In this respect public discourse in the Federal Republic can be said to display similar traits to the discourse currently deployed by the PDS: acts of condemnation on the one hand, causal circumvention on the other.

Equally significant is the fact that the GDR's "official opposition" (to use Markovits and Gorski's terminology) - the *Block Parteien*[21] - were unproblematically swallowed up by their Western 'counterparts'. Markovits and Gorski assert that it:

> was nothing short of tragic to see how the formal bloc parties which had been spineless backers of the SED regime for nearly forty years had suddenly emerged with massive West German assistance as the major political players in a West German dominated GDR.[22]

If the PDS has generally sought in its discourse to 'extinguish' problematic elements of a problematic past, the same, argues Austrian observer Christ, can be said of the established parties:

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[18]ibid.

[19]ibid.

[20]Townson, op. cit., p. 172

[21]For a discussion of the status of these *Blockparteien* in the political system of the GDR see, Sontheimer, op. cit., pp. 79-80: "Die DDR war Staat der SED. Die übrigen Parteien wurden zwar nicht eliminiert, weil man sich den demokratischen Anschein eines Mehparteiensystems erhalten wollte, doch sie wurde auf die unterwürfige Anerkennung der politischen Führungsrolle der SED verpflichtet und lebten als sogenannte Blockparteien ganz im Schatten der SED. Diese überließ ihnen zwar einige subalterne Funktionen und Mandate, hatte aber von ihnen bis zuletzt keine echte Opposition zu befürchten. Die Blockparteien waren faktisch gleichgeschaltet ... Für die ersten Wahlen im Oktober 1950 gab es bereits eine Einheitsliste der Nationalen Front, dem (sic! - MD) Bündnis aller Parteien und Massenorganisationen, d.h. im Grunde keine echte Wahlmöglichkeit mehr."

[22]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., p. 252

> ... - wie sauber sind denn die anderen Parteien in Punkto Herkunft ihrer Mitglieder? In der DDR existierten sogenannte Blockparteien, Feigenblätter vorgeblicher Demokratie ... Wo ist diese buntgescheckte, liebedienerische Gefolgschaft der SED abgeblieben ...? Nun die Ost-CDU ist zu Teilen - samt ihrem Parteivermögen - in der Bonner Schwesterpartei aufgegangen. *Kohl hat ihnen den Segen erteilt, womit ihre Vergangenheit gelöscht war. Erfüllungsgehilfen der SED? Keine Erinnerungen mehr daran ... wäre es gerecht einem SED-Mitglied Wandlungsfähigkeit abzusprechen, die beim SED-hörigen CDU-Mitglied wie selbstverständlich vorausgesetzt wird?*[23] (my italics)

The West German CDU, in particular, was no doubt helped by the mere fact of sharing a common acronym with its East German namesake: in Saussurian terms, a common signifier allowed obfuscation of the fact that behind that signifier were two quite different signifieds! While there is room for debate over the issue of the block parties' identifiability with the SED, the question is worthy, at the *very* least, of problematisation. In his survey of some two hundred articles over a broad spectrum of the German press at the time of the PDS's astonishing electoral successes in mid-1994, Volmert observes a poignant textual 'omission' on the part of the "Protagonisten (CDU and FDP - MD) der Ausgrenzung (of the PDS - MD)":

> Die Sprecher der CDU und FDP *vermieden in ihrer Propaganda jeden Hinweis darauf*, daß sie nach dem Zusammenbruch der DDR die SED-nahen "Blockflöten" mitsamt ihrem Vermögen übernommen haben, daß dort fast ihr gesamter Mitgliederbestand mit dem der Vorgängerparteien identisch ist.[24] (my italics)

Selecting what and what not to say is, as we have said, at the heart of any ideological mediation of 'reality'.

Richard von Weizsäcker observes something similar at work in the fact that on the one hand the PDS is not infrequently condemned out of hand as undemocratic via negatively loaded epithets such as *postskommunistisch* (no more vociferously than by Moreau)[25] while on the other

> die mit uns befreundete ungarische Regierung ... von einer politischen Kraft geführt (wird), welche nach unserem hiesigen Jargon postkommunistisch

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[23]Christ: "Die deutschen Ostler." op. cit.

[24]Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 175

[25]see Moreau: PDS. Anatomie einer postkommunistischen Partei. op. cit.

> heißt. Ähnlich steht es heute in Polen, mit dessen Regierung wir ebenfalls verbunden sind ...[26]

and notes that for the purposes of providing the necessary parliamentary majority in the *Hauptstadtdebatte* the 'democratic' credentials of the PDS were not called into question by grateful members of the pro-Berlin camp.

On this basis, Gorski and Markovits would challenge the 'democratic' credentials of the established parties. Among these, the West German Greens stood out, they argue, in holding off from moving into the East to "devour their fledgling East German counterparts"; for them it is the Greens' "respect for autonomy" - their relative lateness in emerging on the East German scene - which is truly democratic:

> To most Greens, this annexation was much too fast, too undemocratic and, above all, market propelled.[27]

True, this last quotation blurs the distinction between the authors' stance and that of the Greens, but the overlap emerges within the context of the study as a whole:

> The dictates of the Federal Republic "colonised" the GDR, whose indigenous political forces were losing their autonomy by the day ...
>
> This upright and moral stance (the decision not to form an electoral alliance with the East German Green movement until after the pan-German elections of 1990 - MD) cost the West German Greens their parliamentary presence.[28]

Bündnis 90, formed from the fusion of *Neues Forum*, *Initiative Demokratie Jetzt* and *Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte* in February 1990 consistently invoked its rigid independence from West German 'intervention' as the very centrepiece of its democratic commitment.[29]

Christ sees the labelling of the PDS as an undemocratic force on the basis of both its origins and its historiography as primarily a matter of *political* tactics rather than a concern with the *substance* upon which that accusation is based. In this respect, he points, to the telling nature of the temporal context: it is particularly and precisely at

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[26]Weizsäcker, Richard von: "Weder klug noch fromm." In: *Die Zeit*. no. 46. 10 November 1995.

[27]Markovits/Gorski, op. cit., pp. 236, 256, 235

[28]ibid, pp. 256, 236

[29]Markovits/Gorski cite Wolfgang Ullman of *Demokratie Jetzt*: "We have no partners and we are proud of it ... it would be a peculiar understanding of democracy if we had to let West German politicians tell us what to do ..." ibid., p. 253

the time of the "Sachsen-Anhalt-Modell"[30] in the period preceding the Federal elections of 1994 that the Right launched its anti-PDS "*rote Socken*" campaign with a vengeance and became particularly vehement in calling the PDS's credentials as a *democratic* player into question:

> Und nun zur Lektion über Demokratie ... Dazu muß man wissen, was die Wahl zum Magdeburger Landtag ausgelöst hat ... Volksfront! schreit die Union empört, weil sie wittert, es könnte ein Modell für die Bundestagswahlen sein. Und was passiert? Die PDS, eine im Bundestag vertretene Partei, wird in ihrer Legalität angezweifelt! Eine Partei, für die in einem Bundesland jeder fünfte Wähler votiert hat! *Was heißt hier Demokratie*? ... Eine Partei wählen, die uns von der Macht bringen will ... das gibt's nicht![31] (my italics)

Falkner and Huber present a similar picture:

> Zur Zeit hat der Ruf nach dem Verfassungsschutz wieder Hochkonjunktur. Seit den Erfolgen der PDS in ostdeutschen Ländern und Kommunen wittern die "wehrhaften" Demokraten hinter dem smarten Lächeln Gysis die aus der Gruft der Weltgeschichte gestiegene häßliche Fratze des Kommunismus. Kurz nach den Wahlen in Sachsen-Anhalt war es die in Berlin erscheinende Tageszeitung "Die Welt", Springers Kampfblatt für etwas gröber geschnitzte Konservative, die gleich an zwei aufeinanderfolgenden Tagen das Bild vom Sicherheitsrisiko PDS bemühte. Zunächst wurde aus einem Lagebericht des Kölner Bundesamtes für Verfassungsschutz zitiert, in dem die PDS unter Hinweis auf die Kommunistische Plattform und deren revolutionäre Ziele als "Partei ohne eindeutig *demokratische* Grundorientierung" charakterisiert wird".[32] (my italics)

Before this 'turning point' the tenor in party headquarters, argue Falkner and Huber,

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[30]The events surrounding the regional elections in Sachsen-Anhalt are dealt with in some detail in chapter 4; briefly, the PDS fared particularly well in these elections, prompting deliberations inside the SPD as to the possibility of forming a red-green '*Minderheitsregierung*' 'tolerated' by the SPD. The right was aghast at this scenario, seeing in it a possible 'Modell für den Bund'.

[31]Christ: "Die deutschen Ostler." op. cit.
Von Weizsäcker makes a related point in identifying the problems inherent in the fact that a party often has the democratic mandate of those who take the positive ideals - which others see as mere political tactics or, in the case of the PDS, nostalgia - at face value; the PDS has, in part, indeed been given the democratic mandate of some young idealists who believe in the PDS as a vehicle capable of securing a certain brand of 'utopian' socialism (irrespective of whether we see their idealism as misguided or not - MD): "was heißt da postkommunistisch, wenn ein junger Brandenburger oder Berliner einen Weg zum Sozialismus auf den demokratische Prüfstand stellen will? Es wird vielleicht schwer für ihn sein, sich damit zu bewähren, *aber soll er es nicht als Demokrat versuchen dürfen?* Cited from: Von Weizsäcker: "Weder klug noch fromm." op. cit. (my italics)

[32]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., pp. 170-1

> lautete ... unisono: Das Problem PDS würde sich schon von selbst erledigen.[33]

The branding of the PDS as undemocratic is thus, Falkner and Huber argue, predicated primarily on *political* tactics as opposed to soundly substantiated substantive grounds.

In this scenario, the established parties - especially the right - have taken their own "democratic" credentials as a given: this will be discussed in further detail in chapter 4.

This becomes all the more telling when set against a background in which there is evidence that the political establishment had in fact hitherto *profited* from the PDS's *integrative* function. Falkner and and Huber have argued powerfully that in acting as something of a magnet and vent for disaffected members of the 'old guard' the PDS prevented groups which might have challenged Germany's 'democratic' order from 'going it alone' and adopting a more fundamentally 'subversive' stance. As such the PDS, argue many, can be said to have indirectly *strengthened* Germany's democratic system. In attempting to answer why the conference of Interior Ministers failed in December to agree to the CSU's initiative to have the PDS watched by the *Bundesverfassungsschutz,* Falkner and Huber observe that:

> Vielleicht schreckte man einfach davor zurück, eine Partei, der mitten im Umbruch objektiv eine große soziale Funktion bei der Integration und Bindung der ehemaligen DDR-Elite zukam, voreilig in die verfassungsfeindliche Ecke zu stellen. Ohne die PDS hätten sich viele der abgewickelten MfS-, NVA- und SED-Kader möglicherweise oder sogar sehr wahrscheinlich "unkontrolliert" in militanten Bünden gegen das demokratische System der Bundesrepublik zusammengeschlossen. Daß von diesen Gruppierungen am Ende viel größere und tatsächliche Bedrohungen für die Stabilität der Bundesrepublik ausgegangen wären als von der Strömungspartei PDS, steht außer Frage.[34]

Berlin electoral analyst Richard Stöss is in no doubt that:

> (Die PDS - MD) ... trägt wesentlich zur politischen Stabilität und inneren Einheit Deutschlands bei ... selbst die, die sie als stalinistisch oder kommunistisch attackieren, können auf ihre systemstabilisierende Wirkung

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[33]ibid., p. 173

[34]ibid.

> nicht verzichten. Immerhin dient sie als politische Heimat und parlamentarische Vertretung in den Gemeinden. Damit sorgt sie dafür, daß diese Leute in unserem parlamentarischen System repräsentiert werden.[35]

Neugebauer and Stöss argue that a party's representative and integrative functions are dialectically intertwined: in representing a certain body of interests a party - whether consciously or unconsciously - asserts those interests within the frame of reference of the polity as a whole: integration takes place precisely here, in the complex interrelationship between part and whole[36]:

> Die international vergleichende Forschung konnte vielmehr nachweisen, daß mit der Repräsentationsfunktion tendenziell auch die Integrationsfunktion verbunden ist. Parteien tendieren unabhängig von ihrer sozialen Basis, ihrer Interessenfärbung und ihrer Politik dazu, ihre Anhänger in die bestehende Ordnung zu integrieren ...[37]

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In articulating the interests of a significant East German minority united essentially by its:

> Zugehörigkeit zu einem regional (und sozial) abgegrenzten Milieu, die Teilnostalgie bezüglich der DDR, die Wahrung von Interessen der DDR-Eliten in der neuen Gesellschaftsordnung und schließlich die antiwestliche und modernisierungsfeindliche Grundhaltung[38]

the PDS, argue Neuegebauer and Stöss:

> dient als Ansprechpartner für das antiwestliche Potential im Osten, vertritt deren Interessen, Ziele und Werte und setzt sie in Programme und Politik um ... Die PDS nimmt mithin als regional begrenzte, aber politische

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[35]Stöss, Richard: "Gelassener mit der PDS umgehen." In: *Focus*. no. 46. 1995. (interview)

[36]"In dem Begriff des 'Teiles' liegt notwendig eingeschlossen der Bezug auf eine 'Ganzheit'. Nur wenn es eine gemeinsame Grundlage für die auf spezifische Wünsche ausgerichteten Parteien besteht, wird der politische Kampf nicht zum Auseinanderbrechen der Gesamtheit führen. Nur wenn es Entscheidendes gibt, das eint, kann Trennendes ausgeglichen werden ... Parteien können sinnvoll nur agieren, wenn ihre Auseinandersetzungen in einen *gemeinsamen Wirkungsraum* eingebettet sind." Neumann, Sigmund, cited in: Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 15

[37]Neugebauer/Stöss, ibid.

[38]ibid., pp. 304-5

> einflußreiche Milieupartei wichtige Repräsentations- und Integrationsaufgaben wahr ...[39]

This view is shared by sociologist Thomas Koch; the latter argues that though prima facie the PDS may be considered to be (subjectively) promoting German-German discord, the very fact that the PDS has been active in heightening East German citizens' awareness of their democratic rights and possibilities in the new polity and has consistently invoked (and challenged) the unification treaty as a basis for its claims means that on one level it can be said to have *objectively* strengthened the Federal Republic's democratic system. He observes that:

> die in den alten Bundesländern bewährten und auf den Osten übertragenen Institutionen Regelsysteme und Organisationsformen (bieten zwar) vielfältige Möglichkeiten der Interessenartikulation, doch um sich dieser Möglichkeiten zu bedienen, fehlte es an entsprechenden Regelkenntnissen, an Know-how und Routinen, an finanziellen Ressourcen ...[40]

and that the PDS has gone a long way towards filling the gap:

> Die erstaunliche und von vielen Beobachtern zunächst nicht erkannte Verankerung der PDS in der ostdeutschen Gesellschaft beruht unter anderem darauf, daß Mitglieder und Sympathisanten der Partei sich in einer Vielzahl von Verbänden, Vereinen, Initiativen engagieren ... So eignen sie sich Orientierungs- und Verfügungswissen über Regeln, Reviere und Rituale der neuen Ordnung an und vermitteln es weiter. Damit leisten sie einen wichtigen Beitrag zur realen Binnenintegration in Sinne der Wahrnehmung gegnüber Möglichkeiten der kommunikativen Vernetzung, der Vermischung und Definition von Interessen.[41]

This is underpinned by the fact that, as we will see in chapter 3, the PDS has a very large, politically highly aware, intellectual base.

The discourse of causal circumvention, then, contains obvious 'obfuscatory' (or, depending upon one's perspective, 'palliative') elements: agentless acts of condemnation and the transfer of blame. It can be seen in part as the PDS aiming to effect a discursive fusion between the need to procure legitimacy through being seen to distance itself from the past on the one hand and the need to act as a mouthpiece

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[39]ibid., p. 303

[40]Koch, Thomas: "Die PDS im Vereinigungsprozeß." In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., p. 189

[41]ibid., p. 197

for the interest of its ex-SED membership/East German voter-base on the other. For many commentators, however, the fusion is unconvincing as its tactical dimension so distinctly blurs the boundary between what is a 'true' recognition of the reprehensibility of the SED past ('conviction') and what are mere considerations of strategy.

In the light of the considerations outlined above, however, the appropriateness of challenging the PDS's *democratic* credentials on the basis of the historiographic features outlined must be handled with some caution. We must emphasise at this juncture that our interest here is not in providing a hard and fast answer to the question of whether or not the PDS is indeed 'undemocratic'. Addressing that question is beyond the purview of what is, first and foremost, a linguistic study. Our interest is primarily in examining the discursive environment in which the question is posited, i.e. *how*? and *by whom*.? What Burkhardt has said in relation to handling the complex issue of personal involvement with the *Staatsicherheitsdienst* is equally germane at this juncture:

> Der Linguist kann sich nicht in Fragen der juristischen Bewertung von Einzelfällen einmischen, aber er kann auf Erscheinungen im öffentlichen Sprachgebrauch hinweisen, die geeignet sind, eine angemessene Diskussion anstehender Probleme zu be- bzw. verhindern.[42]

What emerges very strongly from our examination of the political establishment's approach to the question of using PDS historiography as a basis for assessing its status as a 'democratic' party is that the PDS's historiographic discourse has been widely assessed by politicians and political observers in isolation from a problematic contextual background in which similar discursive features are to be witnessed in the established parties' own dealings with the past - be it in respect of the earlier *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* or the 'new' one. Furthermore, as Volmert has clearly shown[43], the established parties (especially the right) have generally started from the (for them) unproblematic premise - widely informing textual presuppostionality - that they are per se "democratic", while generally failing to invoke the catalogue of assumptions and criteria on which their understanding of the highly superordinate, intensionally shallow (but connotatively supremely positive) term is based. In this polarised, symbolic world of good ('democratic') versus bad ("undemocratic"), where the substantive has widely given way to the emotive, any firm basis for establishing the poles has rarely been invoked:

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[42]Burkhardt: "Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." op. cit., p. 128

[43]see: Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit.; we look closely at Volmert's findings in chapter 4.

> Der Mangel an wissenschaftlich ausgewiesenen Fragestellung, begrifflicher Präzision, methodischer Klarheit und systematischer Analyse in der PDS-Literatur ist ungewöhnlich. Dies gilt insbesondere für die beliebte und in der Regel einzige Fragestellung im weithin dem Extremismus-Ansatz verpflichteten Schrifttum, ob die Partei glaubhaft mit der DDR-Vergangenheit gebrochen hat und heute mit den Beinen auf dem Boden der freiheitlichen demokratischen Grundordnung steht ... Bei einer methodisch anspruchsvollen Untersuchung würde man ... einen Kriterienkatalog erwarten, um Einstellungen, Forderungen oder Verhaltensweisen eindeutig als demokratisch oder antidemokratisch (hier: als linksextrem) zu qualifizieren.[44]

It is against this background that we must be careful to assess and relativise any labelling of PDS historiography as "undemocratic".

Townson has described in detail the function and effect of 'key words' such as *Demokratie* in political discourse.[45] The latter is a prime example of what Topitsch has called:

> bestimmte sprachliche Formen (,die - MD) durch die Jahrhunderte als belangvolle Einsichten oder sogar fundamentale Prinzipien des Seins, Erkennens und Wertens anerkannt wurden - nicht obwohl sondern gerade weil und insofern sie keinen oder keinen näher angebbaren Sach- oder Normgehalt besitzen.[46]

Their vague denotational core frequently procures them a mythical quality, a quality which makes them, as Topitsch has pointed out, virtually unchallengeable, "neither verifiable nor falsifiable"[47]. As part of what Pareto calls *Wortmusik*[48], their function is primarily emotive. In the words of Townson

> Key words form an important part of a power strategy: they are used to persuade, gain and maintain support, to control ... Their effect (that of key words like *Freiheit*, *Gerechtigkeit*, *Demokratie* - MD) is achieved by

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[44]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 12

[45]Townson, op. cit. (see esp. pp. 197-204)

[46]Topitsch, op. cit., pp. 233-4

[47]Townson, op. cit., p. 203

[48]cited in: Topitsch, op cit., p. 261

> connotation, which is promoted from a secondary to a primary characteristic ...[49]

Townson cites Cattaneo who observes that these *Leerformel* (Topitsch), while frequently invoked to "create a favourable atmosphere" are instruments in a power/legitimising strategy: "our political life is dominated by irrationality and myth".[50]

One of the great myths, Straßner observes, is that the democratic system in the Federal Republic is predicated upon the honesty of politicians. Indeed, the very title of his incisive essay examining the (obfuscatory) ways in which the CDU (particularly in Schleswig-Holstein) handled the *Barschel-Affäre* - "Maximenverstoß als Regel. Zum Grundprinzip politischer Kommunikation"[51] - hints at the conclusion he draws form his attempt to secure "die Erhellung des Prinzips politischer Sprachhandlung"[52]: namely, that the habitual flouting of the Gricean truth maxim is part and parcel of the political arena's workings. Strassner's essay gives a graphic account of politicians instrumentalise concepts like *honesty* and *integrity* - as integral features of their *democratic* mandate - quite precisely as a means of distracting and diverting, of obscuring. Put simply, the instrumentalisation of honesty and related concepts on an expressis verbis level is not infrequently used to obfuscate, to obscure (a substantive) honesty itself. We shall have more to say about the maintenance of a mere *veneer* of honesty below. For the time being we shall limit ourselves to the observation that political actors are so successful in maintaining that veneer, that they have indeed engendered and sustained a myth - with a concomitant expectation among the general public as spectators - that the political arena is one in which "nach den Schillerschen Prinzipien vom Theater als moralischer Anstalt verfahren wird"[53].

Straßner argues compellingly that this is not so:

> In der politischen Kommunikation geht es nicht um ein Befolgen der Regeln, die aus den grundlegenden *ethischen* Voraussetzungen abgeleitet werden und die in der normalen Kommunikation von den Mitgliedern der Sprachgemeinschaft eingeklagt werden können, wenn auch nur *moralisch*, nicht juristisch. Es geht in der Politik um Erfolg, der offensichtlich nicht erzielt werden kann durch streng sachbezogene, wahre, einsichtige,

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[49]Townson, op. cit., p. 203

[50]ibid.

[51]Straßner, op. cit.

[52]ibid., p. 129

[53]Moser, op. cit., p. 52

> nachvollziehbare Aussagen, Begründungen, Erklärungen, Beweise, Argumente. *Es geht nicht um die Wahrheit, sondern um ein Lügen, Betrügen, Täuschen, Ablenken, Heucheln, aufs Kreuz legen, das aber als eigene Wahrheit ausgegeben wird* ... Die sprachliche Handlungsweise entfernt sich von der des Alltags, setzt darauf, Gedanken zu verwischen und beim Adressaten nur ein allgemeines Gefühl des sicher Geführten und Geleiteten auszulösen. *Dazu dienen Leerformeln, Stereotypen, Schlagwörter* ...[54] (my emphases)

Demokratie is one of those *Schlagwörter,* a *Leerformel* in a Topitschian sense. For Straßner the vital point is that in the 'political theatre' the (Gricean) co-operative principle operates within much narrower parameters:

> Sprache (wird) von Politikern zwar zielgerichtet eingesetzt ..., aber nicht im Sinne einer Kooperation mit mit den Bürgern, sondern nur mit den eigenen Gesinnungs- und Parteifreunden.[55]

We might *expect* (i.e. demand) honesty from a 'moral' perspective: but as realistic spectators in the theatre of politics we should not expect (i.e. expect to *find*) it there; one of the features of our 'democracy' is arguably its ability to sustain a relatively broad ideological freedom despite politicians' general lack of respect for the wants and desires of the political spectators they purport to represent. We have seen that the features of causal circumvention evident in the PDS's (obfuscatory) historiographic world-view are equally to be witnessed in the established parties' treatment of a problematic history; the 'democratic' credentials of these parties are not, however, called into question. Von Weizsäcker et al. have called for the PDS to be accorded the same chance as the other parties have had to assert its democratic credentials and thus for the *Richtungskämpfe* in the PDS to be taken seriously.[56]

If we challenge the PDS's obfuscatory tactics from a notional 'higher' moral perspective, we might argue that its historiographic discourse is 'undemocratic', where democracy - as one of the present system's quintessentially positive symbols - is taken to be predicated upon absolute truth. If this is our perspective, however, the problem is that it speaks for *all* parties leaving us at best with a hopeless task of relativisation. *All* parties have recourse to, and take advantage of, "das ganze Instrumentarium manipulativer Taktiken und Strategien"[57]. Where we must be

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[54]Straßner, op. cit., pp. 137-8

[55]ibid., p. 137

[56]see: von Weizsäcker: "Weder klug noch fromm." op. cit.

[57]Straßner, op. cit., p. 138

particularly careful in responding to the notion of an 'undemocratic' PDS historiography is when *democracy* or its antithesis - the latter lexeme having so persistently and forcefully been invoked against the PDS - is part and parcel of a *political* strategy of self-legitimisation, where that aim is not to illuminate but to obscure, where it part of simplified, polarised conceptual structure of a notional Communist (and therefore 'anti-democratic') *Buhmann* challenging an unimpeachable 'democratic' establishment[58]. Put simply, we must be careful to assess in what context and *by whom* that charge is levelled, and be wary of reductive, over-zealous and emotionally charged responses which amount to little more than Burkhardt's *Vergangenheitsüberwältigung*[59]. As Schelenz rightly observes:

> Das Mißtrauen gegenüber der Sprache ist der Ansatzpunkt der politischen Sprachkritik.[60]

Von Weizsäcker has questioned the right's attempt, via the 'old' tactic of conflation (all *socialists* together!) to use the PDS as cudgel with which to undermine the democratic credentials of those on the Left prepared to consider making political overtures to it[61]:

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[58]This polarised, 'cold war' conceptual world is looked at more closely in chapter 4 below.

[59]In his linguistic study ("Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." op. cit.) of the discourse generated by the dismissal of the Humboldt-University's Rector, Professor Fink, on account of alleged (but barely substantiated) connections with the Ministry for State Security, Burkhardt shows clearly how the whole issue was largely devoid of any concrete evidence; the ensuing polemic was fuelled largely by the "... vorgefaßten Meinung und der politischen Einstellung des jeweiligen Sprechers/Schreibers und von Unterstellungen, wie sie für den sogenannten 'Enthüllungsjournalismus' nicht untypisch sind ... ohne die Fundierung durch überprüfbare Fakten läuft aber die emotionale Solidaritätsbekundung inhaltlich ebenso leer wie die aggressive Beschuldigung und kategorische Ausgrenzung". (pp. 130, 135) The debate was thus handled by both supporters and opponents of the Professor on a largely emotionalised, symbolic level, on which, Burkhardt argues, it was perceived "weit eher als *Politikum* denn als Juridikum". (p. 137; my italics) This generated a polarised polemic, in which Fink became a "Symbolfigur nach beiden Seiten" (p. 135); Fink's supporters - for whom the latter was a symbol of 'renewal' - offered hasty (but helpless, visceral) declarations of solidarity (a "Vor-Vertrauensbekundung", p. 134) while his opponents levelled equally insubstantiated accusations of complicity and guilt ("Vor-Verurteilung", p. 136) (which, in departing from the 'Rechtsstaat' principle of 'innocent until proved guilty' can only be put down, Burkhardt argues, to a visceral "Verschwörungshysterie" (p. 133); Burkhardt observes that "Die in der Vergangenheit real existierende Stasi wird als (Verschwörungs)-Mythos in die Gegenwart hineingeholt ... auf die man Schuld abladen kann und auf die sich die Aggression ad hominem richten läßt ... hier sind geheime Ängste und offenkundige Affekte am Werk, die eine ruhige Rationalität der Auseinandersetzung verhindern. (p. 133) What Burkhardt observes, then, is that the polemic surrounding Fink is a metaphor for the way in which the past has ritually been dealt with: its complex issues are pressed into a highly emotionalised and politicised either/or, for/against schema: "Vor-Vertrauensbekundung und Vor-Verurteilung sind die beiden Formen dessen, was ich 'Vergangenheitsüberwältigung' nenne: den meist von sehr gegenwärtigen Interessen bestimmten Versuch, sich der Vergangenheit zu bemächtigen, *ohne sie dabei anzublicken.*" (p. 137; my italics)

[60]Schelenz, op. cit., p. 24

[61]"Wenn es aber um eine Kommunal- oder Landtagswahl in den östlichen Bundesländern einschließlich Berlin geht, dann dient die PDS als Wahlkampfkeule in der Hand der einen westlichen Partei, um mit ihm auf das Haupt der anderen westlichen Partei einzuschlagen. Ohne Zweifel hat dies der eine dieser beiden Lager kurzfristig Erfolge gebracht, zumal es das andere Lager tief verunsichert hat. Am meisten aber hat es der PDS selbst genutzt". (von Weizsäcker: "Weder klug noch fromm." op. cit.)

> Wenn jemand der Meinung ist, daß eine der zu unseren Wahlen zugelassenen Parteien *nicht demokratisch sei*, dann möge er zum Verfassungsgericht gehen und das Undemokratische dieser Partei dort einklagen. Dieses aber zu unterlassen, *dafür auf der anderen Seite in einem Wahlkampf zu profitieren, daß man eine Partei pauschal als undemokratisch bezeichnet, halte ich für keinen sauberen Weg. Das ist weder intellektuell noch moralisch, noch politisch sauber* (sic! - MD: observe the telling tacit recognition of a disparity between politics and morality)[62] (my italics)

If it is argued that PDS historiography is undemocratic because its ostalgic dimension extols the virtues of the GDR and thus of a non-pluralist state with a considerably higher degree of ideological control than we are subject to in Western democracies, the picture must be relativised with the following observations: on the level of sign, the reductive notion of *DDR-Nostalgie* conflates - and thus fails to differentiate between - a wealth of different propositions, in particular between a form of GDR nostalgia which craves restoration of the GDR as a 'Stalinist' SED-led political system on the one hand, and a wistful form of nostalgia for certain external features (often perceived through rose-coloured spectacles) of the country of one's socialisation on the other. While we do find positions, such as that of Sahra Wagenknecht cited above, which have a 'Stalinist' or 'restorationist', dimension, there is room, at least, for seeing the picture from another perspective: '*Ostalgie*' is as much tactical as it is ideologically motivated; in other words, it is as much about creating a GDR 'cultural identity' based upon a selective (psycho-socially highly effective) pastiche of the regime's better features as a basis for offering the PDS's membership a *Seelenmassage* and for (opportunistically?) marshalling support from disappointed Easterners (to allow the party to survive in the present polity!) as it is any commitment to, or concerted attempt to promote or restore, the Communist SED politics of the GDR polity that was, or to subvert (to use Moreau's emotive terminology, see below) the present order; we will see below the evidence which suggests that the party's ideological leaders accept the present, United German polity as the basis for their political actions; what Moreau's sharply right-wing world-view will not accept, however, is any position which questions the ultimate sanctity of the fundamentals of the present order; in this world-view, this is a priori subversion (see chapter 4 below). There is a valid argument that the PDS's influential ideological leaders who, as we shall see below, have widely been deemed "modernists", "reformers" and "social democrats", may well have allowed a GDR nostalgia running into restorationism to go unchecked in the attempt to hold the party together; we remember the words cited in chapter 1:

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[62]ibid.

> Die Strömungen in der PDS sind vielfältig, widersprüchlich, kaum überschaubar. Zwar waren etwa neun von zehn PDS-Mitgliedern auch schon in der SED, aber da gibt es Traditionalisten und Reformer, solche, die aus der Vergangenheit gelernt haben, und andere, die sie eher verklären ... Ein zu schneller Erneuerungsprozeß und die Klärung der Widersprüche würde die Partei zerreißen.[63]

From this perspective, the substantive nature of the SED and its political regime can essentially be seen as an irrelevance. The invocation of the SED is a symbolic one, one used to inform a(n arguably) more important mental association: that of a GDR identity. Mathematically this might be represented as follows:

PDS = ex-SED = GDR (because of the strong identity between party and state in the GDR[64])

thus

PDS = GDR.

It seems that CDU-sponsored Moreau's reductive picture of the 'ostalgic' element of PDS historiography[65], incorporated into his overall account of a monolithic PDS whose entire motivation he in turn presses into the emotive and simplistic mould of 'subversion'[66], fails to problematise this dimension: the highly complex interplay of tactics and conviction, the probelmatic circumstance that the ideological leadership's[67] less than unequivocal stance vis-à-vis GDR reprehensibility might well in part (at least) represent a tactical attempt at effecting a practicable *Spagat* between the highly complex forces at work in the party, which, - to simplify hugely! - may be broadly divided into 'traditionalist' and 'pragmatic'/'modernist' ('social democratic'?) wings. The following extract from Falkner and Huber's account is revealing of this tense co-existence, and the leadership's need to be mindful, in its policy formulation, of a range of contradictory inner-party positions:

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[63]Nawrocki: "Genosse Rentner." op. cit.

[64]cf.: "Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands ist der bewußte und organisierte Vortrupp der Arbeiterklasse und des werktätigen Volkes der sozialistischen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik." Cited from: *Programm der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands.* Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1989, p. 5

[65]cf.: "Bei dieser DDR- und Kommunismus-Nostalgie, die auch von einem Großteil der PDS-Wähler geteilt wird, handelt es sich nicht um eine vorübergehende Modeerscheinung, sondern um einen Beleg dafür, daß die PDS sich als unfähig erwiesen hat, die eigene Geschichte aufzuarbeiten und zu bewältigen. Die Dominanz reaktionärer Einstellungsmuster zeigt, wie schwer das Erbe der SED immer noch wiegt. Die PDS bleibt in ihrer Mehrheit, wie das Neue Forum sie charakterisiert, eine 'Partei der ewig Gestrigen.'" Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 19

[66]ibid. (see esp. pp. 8, 14, 84)

> Auf dem PDS-Februarparteitag von 1991 hatte es Gysi denn auch noch spürbar schwer, sich mit seiner konstruktiv gemeinten "antikapitalistischen Position" bei gleichzeitiger Ablehnung einer alles in den Dreck ziehenden "Fundamentalkritik" am neuen Deutschland nachhaltig Gehör zu verschaffen. Und nicht umsonst sah er sich auch zu einer deutlichen Verteidigung seiner Einschätzung genötigt, die SED sei im Laufe ihrer Entwicklung zu einer reaktionären Partei verkommen. Beifall gab es an dieser Stelle nicht.[68]

Put simply this highly problematic contextual background quite simply serves to relativise Moreau's absolute account. Markovits and Gorski's "complete silence" picture takes on a very different perspective if we perceive the leadership as essentially attempting to chart a course between two poles (in themselves fluid and with all manner of gradations in-between): on the one hand, the 'traditionalists' who are unconvinced of the claim that the SED-led GDR was in any way more unlibertarian than the Federal Republic, or of the need for the PDS (as SED successor) to adopt an apologist stance[69]:

> Die ostdeutsche Bevölkerung hat ... die reale Erfahrung, welche grundlegenden sozialen Rechte in der DDR schon realisiert und heute wieder verloren gegangen sind ...

We remember Sahra Wagenknecht's observation that:

> Im Vergleich zur BRD war die DDR in jeder Phase Ihrer Entwicklung - selbst noch in Ihrem ärgsten Niedergang - das friedlichere, sozialere, menschlichere Deutschland. Wir haben daher keinen Anlaß, uns bei den bürgerlichen, den westdeutschen Kapitalismus von Beginn an tragenden Parteien CDU und SPD für unsere Herkunft und Geschichte zu entschuldigen[70];

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[67]by which we mean persons such as Gysi, Bisky, Brie: see chapter 3 below.

[68]Falkner/Huber, op. cit. p. 178

[69]"Eine dritte Position, die in der Öffentlichkeit vor allem durch die Kommunistische Plattform innerhalb der PDS repräsentiert ist, kann mit Vorsicht als *ideologisch restaurativ* bezeichnet werden. Es wird prinzipiell an den Grundstrukturen des früheren Staatssozialismus als 'eigentlichem Sozialismus' festgehalten. Die damit verbundenen Auffassungen umgreifen ein sehr weites Spektrum, von einem demokratischen Staatssozialismus bis hin zu einem krassen Sozialismus, der in jeder Liberalisierung, erst recht in Pluralisierung oder Demokratisierung die Ursache für den Untergang des Staatssozialismus sieht." Brie, Michael, "Das politische Projekt PDS - eine unmögliche Möglichkeit." In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS. Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., p. 29 (italics in original)

[70]Wagenknecht, Sahra: "Anforderungen an die PDS." op. cit., pp. 2, 5
Falkner/Huber (op. cit., pp. 151-67) offer very graphic evidence of the KPF's increasingly hard-line "Stalin-Apologetik" (p. 154), citing, inter alia, Sahra Wagenknecht's assertion that: "Das in der Stalinzeit entstandene und später von den osteuropäischen Ländern in den Grundzügen übernommene ... Gesellschaftsmodell ist die auf Grundlage unterentwickelter beziehungsweise zerstörter Produktivkräfte, allgemeiner Not und existentieller Gefährdung der Grundfesten des neuen Systems historisch notwendige und - soll eine bürgerliche Gegenrevolution wirksam verhindert

on the other, the 'radical reformist' wing of the party, who have consistently and vociferously called for the leadership to offer a much more outspoken condemnation of the party's GDR past. This faction finds a particularly outspoken mouthpiece in the party's strongly libertarian[71] *AG Junge GenossInnen* who have called, in particular, for a head-on confrontation with the personal complicity issue which the leadership has consistently been seen, publicly, to circumnavigate[72]. The following extract from Falkner/Huber's study reveals how - in contrast with the discourse of causal circumvention outlined in chapter 1 - the *JG* are unequivocal in perceiving the events spearhead by the *Bürgerbwegungen* in positive terms ("success") [despite, of course, the former's disaffection with the turn which events would subsequently take], and are unequivocal in identifying precisely these *Bürgerbewegungen* as the bearers of that success:

> 'Die Vergangenheit hat gezeigt', so heißt es im sogenannten "Widerstandspapier" (= a paper delivered at the JG's Magdeburg Conference

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werden - einzig mögliche Form eines realisierten Sozialismus." (p. 158). This earns from Falkner/Huber the observation: "Noch einmal im Klartext: Wo immer Kommunisten in einer Zusammenbruchssituation das Ruder übernehmen, müssen sie sich nach Maßgabe der Studentin und Politikerin Wagenknecht zu den Praktiken des Stalinismus greifen." (ibid.)

[71]Our understanding of this term will become clear in chapter 3 below.

[72]The following extract from a motion passed at the *JG*'s Federal Congress in Magdeburg in December 1994 (just before the party's crucial 4th *Parteitag* in January 1995) is revealing: "Ohne den kritischen Umgang mit unserer Geschichte wird eine weitere Erneuerung der PDS nicht möglich sein. Dies gilt besonders für 40 Jahre DDR, aber auch für die Zeit der Anfänge der Arbeiterbewegung bis hin zur Übergangsphase von SED zu PDS. Im Zentrum muß dabei nach wie vor die Aufdeckung der Strukturen und Mechanismen von Herrschaft und Unterordnung, Anpassung und Verdrängung, Repression und Ausgrenzung in der sozialistischen Bewegung stehen. Denn nur auf dieser Basis ist sowohl eine glaubwürdige Kapitalismuskritik als auch die Verhinderung eines (weiteren) Rückfalls in traditionelle Denk-, Handlungs- und Organisationsformen möglich. Das schließt ausdrücklich ein, die eigene Stellung und das eigene Wirken, also die persönliche Verantwortung in diesem System nicht nur zu erklären, sondern auch auf Grundlage heutiger (Ein)Sichten kritisch zu bewerten. Wissenschaftliche Aufarbeitung ersetzt diese persönliche Bewältigung nicht, sie kann sie nur begleiten. Besonders in der für die PDS so schwierigen Frage des Umgangs mit politischen Biographien einzelner Mitglieder wird deutlich, daß eine Bewältigung der eigenen Vergangenheit nur dann möglich ist, wenn diese auf Grundlage einer radikalen Kritik an DDR und Stalinismus erfolgt. Das schließt eine differenzierte Bewertung der DDR-Geschichte ein. Ohne eine solche Kritik ist ein differenzierter Umgang nicht möglich. Resultat sind Nostalgie, Verklärung, Rechtfertigungs- und Legitimationszwang. Notwendig ist vor allem eine konsequente Abgrenzung vom Hang zu autoritärer Politik und stalinistischen Positionen einzelner Mitglieder der PDS. *Das schließt für uns eindeutige und unmißverständliche Erklärungen zu solchen Positionen ein.* (This offers clear evidence that the *Junge GenossInnen,* too, are unconvinced by the leadership's attempt to fuse differing inner-party positions - MD). Die verbale Beschlußlage des Sonderparteitages der SED vom Dezember 1989 reicht dazu nicht mehr aus. Der eindeutige stalinistische Grundkonsens der PDS muß in der politischen Auseinandersetzung deutlich werden." Cited from: "Positionen zur zukünftigen Politik der PDS. Beschluß der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Junger GenossInnen in und bei der PDS." In: *ak.* no. 374. 11 January 1995
Indeed, there is ample evidence that the *JG* can itself be broadly divided into two camps, 'East' and 'West', with (perhaps ironically) the *East* German members generally calling for a much more confrontational approach to condemning what they perceive as an unlibertarian GDR. The differences emerged starkly at the *JG*'s 3-day Conference in November 1995 at which Angela Marquardt (its [East German] spokesperson) called (yet again!) for a much more radical critique of GDR history; this prompted a response which one commentator percipiently describes as follows: "Diese öffentliche Mäkelei mochte West nicht, das diene nun wirklich nicht der Sache, sondern dem Klassenfeind ... Die Ost-Replik, von Menschenverletzungen bis Militarismus, klang, als ob die CDU sich an Gysi reibt." Cited from: Lingenthal, Rainer: "Grabengefecht - Junge Linke Ost und West im Klassenkampf untereinander." In: *Wochenpost.* no. 48. 23 November 1995

> in January 1994 - MD) von Magdeburg, 'daß dort, wo Opposition sich der gesellschaftlichen Logik ... entzieht, sich nicht an die Rolle hält, die von ihr erwartet wird, überraschende Erfolge erzielt werden können.' Und unmißverständlich wird dann gesagt, worauf man sich dabei bezieht: 'Gandhi oder die Bürgerbewegungen in der DDR sollen dafür beispielhaft genannt werden. Auf Gewalt reagierten sie mit zivilem Ungehorsam und entstiegen damit dem ihnen zugedachten Feindbild'.[73]

(This touches upon another crucial element in the democratic/antidemocratic debate: Falkner and Huber identify the invocation and championing of Gandhi and the *Bürgerbewegungen* as strong evidence of the fact that the *JG*'s commitment to 'alternative' politics, its refusal to become sucked into what it perceives as the corruptive machinery of bourgeois, capitalist society "stützt sich ... auf eine durchaus nicht gewalttätige Tradition"[74].)

The picture painted here makes abundantly clear the need to bear in mind that a party discourse is the aggregate of its competing 'component' discourses. There is no uniform party discourse. While the leadership and leading ideologues might attempt to create a unifying 'super-discourse' with which to project the party's more public image (a discourse which takes in and attempts to combine different elements from the discourses of the party sub-groups and is particularly evident in 'unifying' programmatic[75] text-types), we must always be mindful of the discursive

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[73]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 169. Falkner/Huber offer a very sane account of how the *JG*, in its dealings with "autonome Gruppen" for whom it has an obvious affinity and sympathy, is the "in die PDS hineinreichenden Teil jener Grauzone zwischen der demokratischen und der radikalen bis extremistischen Linken". (p. 168) They offer evidence of how the *JG* has consistently hedged upon the question of the need to have recourse to violence, but observe that the group's political 'Selbstverständnis' is not directly predicated upon it and that hitherto (by 1994 - MD) no acts of violence perpetrated by *JG* members or sympathisers have been registered. This offers some relativisation, they show, of the picture frequently offered by the right, in which inner-PDS contacts with extreme left groups has consistently been adduced as further evidence of the PDS's subversive practices.

[74]ibid., p. 169

[75]Pfahl-Traughber's study (op. cit.) of both PDS programmes, the party's *Verfassungsentwurf* and the "5 Punkte" (see footnote 45, chapter 1; footnote 3, chapter 5) of January 1995 is predicated upon the valid observation that a study based upon "Programmatische Texte als Untersuchungsgegenstand" alone can yield only a "begrenzter Erkenntnisgewinn, was mit dem besonderen Charakter der Untersuchungsgegenstände zusammenhängt ... Es handelt sich um offizielle Texte der PDS, d.h. hier wird das Bild der Partei, daß sie sich selbst gegeben hat, zum Gegenstand einer Analyse gemacht. (For the linguist interested in perceptions of reality this is of course crucially revealing - MD.) Eine Gesamteinschätzung kann so allein nicht vorgenommen werden, bleiben doch über eine Auseinandersetzung mit den Texten hinausgehende Aspekte notwendigerweise bei der Betrachtung außen vor. Zu diesen Aspekten gehört insbesondere das Verhältnis von Parteiprogramm und Parteiwirklichkeit, das grundsätzlich für die Analyse der Programme politischer Parteien von Bedeutung ist, verkünden diese doch gerne wohlklingende Erklärungen, um so die breite Öffentlichkeit ansprechen zu können. Für die Partei am Rande des politischen Spektrums mit einer Vergangenheit wie der PDS gilt dieser Vorbehalt noch besonders, muß sie doch aus taktischen Gründen bestrebt sein, sich ein seriöses Image zu geben." Pfahl-Traughber, op. cit., p. 359 (my underlining) What Pfahl-Traughber fails to address, however, is in what ways the PDS programmatic aims represent a departure from the 'tactics' of other parties whose 'democratic' credentials are taken as a given.

compromise involved and of the existence of problematic sub-discourses. In the following chapter we will examine the particularly high-level of factionalisation in the PDS and attempt to show in what ways a unifying 'super-discourse' has been generated in the attempt to deal discursively with the fundamentally opposing discourses operating beyond (what we will identify as) the lowest common denominator of a *demokratischer Sozialismus*.

Moreau's reductive picture of PDS motivation seems simplistic at a time when the PDS is agonising over its political profile. (He will have become painfully aware of the pitfalls of premature and sweeping predictions, having deemed the demise of the PDS by the time of the Federal Elections in 1994 pre-programmed![76])

CONCLUSION

We can make sense, then, of the discourse of causal circumvention if we see it as a complex interplay of what we might call 'legitimacy strands', as an attempt by the PDS to legitimate itself by catering, at one and the same time, to the wants and needs of whole range of dfferent target audiences, both inside and outside the party; as such the PDS is attempting to successfully fuse a whole range of different perspectives of itself. Straßner, as we observed above, has pointed to the centrality accorded by politicans and political parties to self-legitimisation.[77] The attempt to bring these strands together can be see on the inner-textual 'local' level, in other words is:

> inner-lexeme: cf. in broad categories such as *Opposition* and *Reform* (which conflate problematic frames of reference)
>
> inner speech act/sentence: cf. *Es gab Irrtümer* ... (recognition of reprehensibility fused with, at the same time, a refusal to apportion blame!),

on the inner-textual 'global' level, by which we mean that opposing signals at different stages in the text are brought together within the framework of the dialectical structure identified above; cf. Bortfeldt's text:

> on the one hand, the SED membership "hielt sich von der Straße fern ... " (see p. 87 above)

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[76]"Der Untergang dieser Partei scheint kurzfristig unvermeidbar." Moreau: "Die PDS: Eine postkommunistische Partei." op. cit., p. 35

[77]Straßner: "Maximenverstoß als Regel ... " op. cit., p. 138

> on the other: " der Verlauf und der friedliche Charakter dieser Revolution wäre nicht erklärbar ohne die Duldung, das Sympathisieren, auch das *aktive* Mittun *nicht weniger* Mitglieder dieser Partei ... (op. cit. p. 91 my italics)

and, as we shall see below, on an inter-textual level, where modified messages are presented to different target audiences.

Our study of the discourse of 'causal circumvention' has sought to show by what linguistic means the PDS has attempted to achieve a viable fusion of these highly problematic and frequently contradictory strands. Though by no means exhaustive, the table at the end of this chapter sets out some of these strands schematically and illustrates their uncomfortable co-existence.

The attempt, however, is one thing, the success of that attempt quite another. Numerous commentators have been uncomfortable with the degree of what they see as the contradiction, duality, hedging and ambivalence in PDS historiography, offering evidence that they are unconvinced by the attempted fusion. As Grace has observed:

> although our language does influence our perception, it does not do so to the extent that we cannot overcome it if there is sufficient motivation for us to do so.[78]

The fusion of positions in PDS historiography has been largely perceived in 'tactical' terms, and as such, as a 'tactic', as something 'insincere', it blends in perfectly with a perception, in its extremest form enframed in the world-view of Moreau, that:

> Der begrenzte politische Wandel, (of the PDS - MD) ist deshalb im Grunde nur eine Verteidigungs- oder Überlebensstrategie, die Antwort auf ein als feindlich empfundenes politisches, wirtschaftliches und soziales Umfeld. Von innerer Überzeugung war dieser Wandel sicher nicht geleitet.[79]

As we said above, the 'tactic' takes upon a different perspective when set against the contextual background of a leadership struggling to hold the party together and deal with the inner-party *Richtungskämpfe.* Where we must, then, be aware - and wary!- is where, as is ritually the case in the political arena, objections of 'tactical manoeuvring' on the part of the PDS are unproblematically pressed into reductive (politically motivated) conceptual schema, in other words where these inform, for example:

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[78]cited in: Wilson: *Politically Speaking.* op. cit., p. 14

- a polarised *democratic/antidemocratic* schema, in which the emotive terms function largely on a connotative (as opposed to substantive) level, the democratic credentials of the established parties are accepted (unproblematically) at face value, and the similarity of traits in the latter's discourse to those manifested in the discourse of the PDS is not problematised. (If the PDS can be nealty packaged as "Stalinist" on account of its historiographic 'hedging', does this then mean that the right, which could also be seen to avoid confronting a problematic past head-on, is "Hitlerist?")

or, by way of a further example:

a - rather meaningless - truth/lie schema such as that underpinning Moreau's accusation that the PDS has single-mindedly pursued a distortion of 'reality', "im Wege einer einzigartigen Geschichts*fälschung*"[80]; politicians and political observers are apt to start from the (positivist) premise that there is an 'objective reality' which an objective language can recreate: it is hard for the critical linguist who starts from the premise that there is no objective reality outside of the competing discourses which lay claim to it[81] inasmuch as language and 'reality' inform each other in a dialectical process (a view, shared, however, by no means all linguisticians) to accept Moreau's objections in this form[82] The crucial aim of politically motivated language is, after all,

> jede andere als die in der jeweiligen Ideologie enthaltene Wirklichkeit auszuschalten, die Realität so abzubilden, erfahrbar zu machen, wie er der weltanschaulichen Denk- und Sehweise zukommt.[83]

As such language is an integral part of reality. It is constitutive of it.[84] It is not the case that that a process can be enframed in ontologically 'correct' terms. What we can question, however, is the level of generality, of abstraction inherent in the PDS's *version* of reality, and the mechanisms used to procure it. (It is barely possible to

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[79]Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 82

[80]ibid., p. 10

[81]One of Townson's central theses is "the denial of an 'objective reality' outside language and independent of it" (op. cit., p. 123), which he proffers in convincing opposition to the position adopted by the "positivists, who 'viewed the world of experience as possessing a coherent structure unimposed by the perceiver' and believed that 'we can speak *correctly* about objects and situations, which for Shapiro is 'predicated on the indefensible theory of meaning and is a misleading way to represent the relationship between speech and phenomena'". op. cit., p. 21

[82]As Good has rightly observed: "The relationship between language and politics, language and ideology and, therefore, language and history, is a dialectical one." Good: *Language, Politics and Ideology*. op. cit.

[83]Straßner, Erich: *Ideologie-SPRACHE-Politik*. Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag 1987, p. 36

[84]Townson, op. cit., p. 32

sustain the argument, for example, that the PDS's claims that the party incorporates ex-SED reformers departs from a broad, notional parameter of 'truth'. If something is felt to be 'wrong' with this assertion it is surely not that it represents a 'lie'.)

Moreau's picture of PDS historiography and 'ostalgia' sees it as a solely tactical construct predicated upon the uniform and single-minded motivational factor of postcommunist 'subversion'. This speaks for Moreau's perception of the PDS per se: into this conceptual world fits Moreau' understanding of the PDS's single-issue interest groups (*IG*s and *AG*s) as exclusively Gramscian constructs, aiming *solely* to locate the *Spannungsfelder* in society and 'stir up trouble' (see chapter 3 below). What Moreau's reductive account fails to invoke is the enormously problematic dimension of what happens when individuals within a party *do* act out of personal commitment as opposed to strategy: while there is no way of empirically divorcing tactics from a 'genuine' conviction, can all the work of the *IG*s and *AG*s, the numerous - and well-documented - acts of assistance provided by the PDS to East Germans at local level really be pressed into the *sole* motivational category of *Störaktionen* aimed at ultimate subversion? Can they never be an end in themselves?[85] Can 'honest' recognitions of personal shortcomings such as that of Dr. Hartwig cited above *only* be about postcommunist tactics? Moreau's eagerness to select only those perceptions of PDS-related reality which conform to his reductive, pre-conceived ideological model is particularly evident in the 'catch 22' in which he has the party leadership: where some would perceive the hybrid formulations of the type we encountered above as evidence of a (tactical) 'pandering' to the position of 'traditionalist' forces in the party, to Moreau it is nothing more than a mark of its reprehensible, 'true', "anti-democratic"[86] status, of its lack of any 'real' commitment to the German democracy or to a 'true' desire to confront the past; it is an insidious *subversive* tactic. Where, however, that same leadership attempts to use its influential position within the party to divest it of 'traditionalist' positions (as was particularly evident in the period preceding its 4th *Parteitag* in January 1995 - see chapter 5 below) Moreau's ideological standpoint precludes any perception of such a process as a possible drive for change or a 'genuine' desire to rid the party of troublesome factions; neither, (if we see the leadership's activities in more cynical terms) will Moreau's world-view allow it under any circumstances to stand as little more than a pragmatic (many have argued *opportunist*) attempt to make the PDS maximally *politikfähig* and 'voteworthy' in the established arena. In his cold-war world, it is

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[85]At a PDS *Basisgruppe*-meeting in Weimar in 1994 the author was witness to a booksale aiming to raise money to provide milk for Cuban children as part of the PDS's *Cuba Si* campaign. He had no reason to doubt the genuine commitment - as an end in itself - of those involved in the campaign.

[86]"Die Verpackung der SED veränderte sich, ihr antidemokratischer Inhalt aber blieb." Moreau: "Die PDS: Eine postkommunistische Partei." op. cit., p. 43

emotively enframed as nothing but a manifestation of a dictatorial, SED-style concentration of power, of an "Allmacht des Parteipräsidiums"[87], of a reprehensible refusal to accept positions which elsewhere Moreau has himself adduced to offer evidence of the PDS's "undemocratic" status. Put simply, where the party leadership allows 'traditionalist' positions to go unchecked, this is evidence of its postcommunist nature; where it attempts (for whatever reason) to force through positions which co-exist uncomfortably with that "traditionalism" this is evidence of ... yes, its postcommunist nature, its continued commitment to a hard-line Leninism:

> Diese Machtkonzentration in den Händen weniger erinnert an die bekannte Praxis des *Leninismus*. Es zählt nur die Effizienz; Oppositionelle werden neutralisiert oder aus der Partei gedrängt ...
>
> Die Tatsache, daß die Kommunistische Plattform nur zwei Sitze im Parteirat hat, andere kritische Strömungen sogar keine, beweist, daß dem Präsidium der PDS gelungen war, sich auch diese Instanz, die die innerparteiliche Demokratie stärken sollte, weitgehend *gefügig zu machen* (! - MD)[88] (my italics)

(Into Moreau's 'subversion' schema fits his understanding of the leadership's 'tolerance' of the KPF [in the attempt to hold the party together? - MD] as a "Doppelstrategie" and a "Tarnstrategie"[89], as an attempt to exploit the KPF as a foil for a 'truly' socialist PDS. While there is room for debate as to the substantive nature of Moreau's assertion, it is noticeably cast in the emotive rhetoric of cold-war spy-thrillers.)

Josef Klein has proffered an interesting relativisation of the absoluteness of a Moreau-style perception of 'how it really is' with regard to power-relationships

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[87]cf. "Das Präsidium setzte sich zusammen aus dem Parteivorsitzenden, seinen Stellvertretern, den Leitern der Kommissionen, dem Schatzmeister und den Fraktionsvorsitzenden der Partei in der obersten Ebene, sowie weiteren gewählten Mitgliedern. (Vgl. 28 Abs. 2 des Statuts der PDS vom Februar 1990). Der Parteivorstand wurde 1991 von 70 auf 18 Personen reduziert. Danach wurde das Präsidium abgeschafft. Dem Vorstand gehörten fortan nur noch Anhänger der Linie Brie-Bisky an ... Die innerparteilichen Verhältnisse sind durch einen streng limitierten Pluralismus (Pseudopluralismus) gekennzeichnet. Die *Allmacht des Parteipäsidiums*, heute ist es nur noch eine kleine Gruppe innerhalb des verkleinerten Parteivorstandes (Gysi, Brie, Bartsch, Bisky), ist ungebrochen. Der offiziell abgelehnte *'demokratische Zentralismus'* kehrt also durch die 'Hintertür' zurück". (Cited from: Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ..." op. cit., pp. 12, 7; my italics.)

[88]ibid., pp. 12, 13

[89]ibid., p. 50

within the PDS; in his review of Moreau's work *Was will die PDS?*[90] he acutely observes that:

> ob jedoch der Hinweis, daß das Präsidium den Vorstand kontrolliert, einen ausreichenden Beleg (for the operation, as was argued in Moreau's work, of a "für kommunistische Parteien typisches Prinzip" - MD) darstellt, mag *angesichts der gängigen Praxis in anderen Parteien durchaus bezweifelt werden.*[91] (my italics)

Doubtless the far left in the 'New Labour' party would agree.

So far we have - consciously - made the task of dealing with PDS historiography easy for ourselves by seeing it largely from the perspective of party ideologues seeking to handle the ambivalence inherent in the PDS's position. We have talked generally of a PDS, with little regard to the high degree of ideological factionalisation within the party. What must be continually borne in mind is that, as we have touched upon above the PDS - like any party - is not a homogenous entity. Acronyms for political parties are per se reductions of reality which gloss over the fact that a body of party 'ideology' is, as we have said, a complex amalgam of different and (in particular in the case of the PDS) conflicting discourses. The point might appear an obvious one, but it is often sidelined by political spectators eager to find simple modes of interpretation for highly complex issues and who thus, as appears to be the case with Moreau, press their perception of party reality into the categories of a rigid, preconceived schema. The PDS is a party more factionalised than most. To fail to assess the huge body of discourse which has emerged under its auspices against the contextual background of its *Richtungskampf* is to form a simplistic and ill-informed picture of this multi-faceted party. Moreau *describes* in some detail the different groups at work within the PDS but on the whole presses them into the mould of a PDS monolith with the *uniform* aim of *subverting* the current order.

Certain sections of the right have been keen to brand the PDS as a whole *linksextremistisch* on the basis of the 'sensational' activities of its *Kommunistische Plattform*. The use of *extremistisch/extrem* both implies *Verfassungsfeindlichkeit*[92]

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[90]see: Moreau, Patrick: *Was will die PDS?* Frankfurt/Main: Ullstein 1994

[91]Schmidt, Josef: "Die Lasten der Vergangenheit." In: *Das Parlament*. 9 June 1995

[92]Schelenz (op. cit., p. 117) draws a distinction between *extremistisch* and *radikal*: "extremistisch (und damit verfassungsfeindlich) sind politische Parteien und Aktivitäten strenggenommen nur dann, wenn sie sich nachweislich gegen die freiheitliche demokratische Grundordnung richten und als deren Gegner im Verfassungsschutzbericht aufgeführt werden."

and alludes - via a conflation of the signifier *extremistisch* - to a common ground[93] between the PDS and far right wing groups such as the *Republikaner* (commonly styled *rechtsextremistisch*). Unsurprisingly, Moreau warns the democratic establishment that:

> Die PDS ist heute die einzige linksextreme politische Organisation, die innerhalb des politischen Systems der Bundesrepublik eine Rolle spielen könnte.[94]

it is interesting to note that the *Verfassungsschutz* is more careful to relativise in its categorisation: it talks not of a *linksextremistische* PDS per se, but of "Linksextremistische Positionen *in der* 'Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus'"[95] (my italics), thus stopping short of calling into question the democratic credentials of the PDS as a whole. The distinction is a crucial one. It points to the fact that the *Verfassungsschutz*, too, is aware of the problematic *Richtungskämpfe* in the PDS, the *Strömungen*, to which we now turn.

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[93]This Falkner/Huber (op. cit., p. 171) perceive as "die bei Konservativen in Deutschland so beliebte Gleichsetzung von Rechts- und Linksaußen, die nebenbei bemerkt, häufig auf eine Verharmlosung rechtsextremistischer und neofaschistischer Gewalttaten hinausläuft".

[94]Moreau, Patrick: "Das Wahljahr 1994 und die Strategie der PDS." In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte.* B 1. 1994, p. 21

[95]*Verfassungsschutzbericht 1993.* Bonn: Bundesministerium des Innern, p. 55

1. 'honest' dealing with history	2. establish credentials as democratic player in new political system	3. establish legitimacy with membership 'politische Heimat"	4. establish legitimacy with ex-GDR populace
statement of active dealing with past	statement of active dealing with past		
stated assumption 'sins of past'; i.e. SED-Erblast; apology to GDR people	PDS is a 'new' party; divorces itself from SED; PDS is *reformist nucleus* of SED		
	PDS is a product of the *Wendezeit*; 'by-pass' SED-history: SPD origins		
	transfer of blame		
PDS berates itself for lack of personal involment in bringing about *Wende*, for supineness; '*Mitverantwortung/ Mitschuld*'	PDS was 'actively' involved as 'reformers'	"subjektiv gut gewolltes"	"subjektiv gut gewolltes";
	"subjektiv gut gewolltes"		"Recht auf die eigene Biographie"
statements of condemnation of SED	statements of condemnation of SED (with some relativisation)	play down condemnation of SED (e.g. non-invoation)	identify with SED as quintessential product of GDR
statements of condemnation of GDR	statements of condemnation of GDR	play down condemnation of GDR	'*Ostalgie*'
			anti West German
			"Anwalt" for East German interests
	'acceptance' of unification		anti-unification

CHAPTER 3
A *SOCIALIST* OPPOSITION?: THE DISCOURSE OF LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATORS

> Das Parteiprogramm ist das Balanceergebnis eines gründlichen, nicht zuletzt von der Parteibasis getragenen Streits. Nichts sollte stattfinden, was diese Balance gefährdet. Die PDS ist weder eine sozialdemokratische Partei noch eine kommunistische Partei. Doch sie vereint in sich nicht zuletzt Kommunisten und Sozialdemokraten.[1]

The aim of the present chapter is to examine the PDS's particular brand of socialism and the question of whether it forms a viable basis upon which to come to terms with the - as we will attempt to show - highly complex and problematic heterogeneity of both the PDS's membership and voter-base. At the heart of the party's "schon lang bestehende konzeptionelle und mentale Heterogenität"[2] are fundamental differences as to what kind of opposition to direct at, or what kind of oppositional role to adopt within, the new polity: an opposition based on an orthodox 'class warfare' mode of conceptualising society, or an opposition based upon a recognition that these categories are outmoded in a post-industrial society?; an opposition based upon an acceptance of the present polity and its structures as a building-block to a better society or a fundamental rejection of the validity of these structures?; an opposition which allows involvement in strategic political alliances or an opposition which perceives such involvement as essentially corruptive? (This last aspect will be given particular treatment in chapter 4.) The PDS's oppositionality, we will argue, represents a complex amalgam of all - and more - of these (by no means mutually exclusive!) positions. We will attempt, too, to show how, faced with this unwieldy body of inner-party discrepancy, leading party ideologues have sought to locate a 'unifying' discourse, a discursive level which takes in and smooths over the fundamental contradictions with which the party is riven; in other words, we will attempt to show how they have sought to deal with the vastly differing inner-party conceptions of *Weg* and *Ziel* and the question of how best to marry them. This, we will argue, has (necessarily) yielded a highly abstract and causally vague body of language (of which highly superordinate keywords such as *Opposition* and - as is our particular interest here - *Sozialismus* are an integral feature), whose essential mechanisms we will seek to highlight. At the same time we look at the party's

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[1]Wagenknecht, Sahra: "Anforderungen an die PDS." op. cit., p. 2

[2]Land, Rainer/Ralf Possekel: "Orthodoxie und Modernität ..." op. cit., p. 415

equally heterogeneous body of voters and ask whether the sheer diversity of their motivation in voting for the PDS can be linked with a broad, unifying commitment to a *demokratischer Sozialismus* whose substantive nature (i.e. denotative content) might form a viable basis for a radically new society. Throughout our examination of the invocation of *Sozialismus* as a unifying basis for the PDS's 'oppositional' vision, and of the ways in which the party is a "komplizierter Zusammenhalt mehrerer differenter Gruppen"[3], we will attempt to draw attention to the very real limitations with which we are faced in trying, in language, to capture that complexity, as language is never a mirror of, but rather reduces - and indeed is itself a key consitutent in - the complex processes which together make up the world around us. It is hoped that this will highlight the pitfalls of drawing - as has all to often been done - simplistic conclusions about this chameleon party.

RESCUING THE SIGNIFIANT *SOCIALIST*

> Der *sozialistische* Charakter der PDS ist in ihrer Geschichte begründet, von ihren Mitgliedern gewollt, von ihren Wählerinnen und Wählern akzeptiert, in ihrem Programm und Statut festgeschrieben und in ihrem Namen hervorgehoben.[4] (Observe here the unquantifiability and unverifiability of these statements - MD; my italics)

Kari Palonen has shown that the PDS is one of a number of parties which, in moving away from *Communism* (as potent symbol of a very specific and tarnished post-war tradition) following the turbulent events of 1989/90, styled itself a party belonging to a generic movement categorised as *socialist,* a move which incorporated:

> historisch betrachtet, eine Lockerung der Abgrenzung ... die im ideologischen Namen enthalten ist, sie stellt damit sozusagen einen Versuch dar, zur Situation um den Ersten Weltkrieg zurückzukehren. Es wird an diejenigen appelliert, denen die Grenzen zwischen Sozialdemokraten und Kommunisten schon immer als nur relative erschienen.[5]

More specifically: a widening of the category *socialism* allows the PDS[6] and other ex 'communist' parties to move away from the narrower frame of reference in which

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[3]ibid., p. 416

[4]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 26 ff.

[5]Palonen, Kari: "Der Parteiname als Synekdoche?" In: Reiher, Ruth (ed.): *Sprache im Konflikt.* op. cit., p. 452

[6]by which we mean, in particular, those party ideologues charged with the task of making the PDS's political vision relevant to the new political environment.

socialism was incorporated in the Marxist-Leninist teachings of the GDR ("Sozialismus war und ist in der kommunistischen Theorie nur eine historische Übergangsstufe zum Kommunismus").[7] In 'by-passing' this frame of reference, *socialism* now draws upon a much older tradition which, in Germany, might allow the PDS - as a legitimising tactic?- to claim common ground with the Social Democrats (especially through the conflation afforded by the *signifiant* <social>. We remember the attempt to identify common ground in:

> Die PDS ist aus der SED hervorgegangen und diese aus KPD und SPD im Osten Deutschlands. Wer sich wirklich zur Geschichte der SED bekennt, muß die *ganze* wechselvolle Geschichte von KPD und SPD und der noch breiteren Arbeiterbewegung ... berücksichtigen.[8] (italics in original)

where PDS overlaps with SED - which overlaps with KPD & SPD - which in turn overlaps with SPD - thus allowing a reading whereby PDS overlaps with SPD.

Widening the category here, however, means making it vaguer: while the extension of the category *Sozialismus* is broader, the intension - its denotative content - is perforce vaguer; that is, it exists, as we shall see below, on a(n even) higher level of abstraction.

Championing *socialism* allows the PDS to retain a central ideologeme from the 'bread and butter' discourse of old, an ideologeme whose symbolic, connotative function will be a useful 'comforter' to those party 'hard-liners' ("die bei der Stange gehalten werden müssen, damit die Partei nicht zugrunde geht"[9]) who are less than satisified with the PDS's gradual move away from the rigid ideology of orthodox Marxism-Leninism as the party adapts to the demands of its new political surroundings. At the same time, however, the ideologeme *socialism,* while clearly tapping into the discursive legacy of the SED, lends itself more readily to the invocation of a wider tradition than does the narrower category of *communism*, so tarnished as it is in its reference to a much more distinct tradition[10]. (We will examine below the evidence of leading party ideologues' increasing disaffection with the term *communist* and its attempts to divorce the PDS from it.) In other words, it is easier to locate (a widened) *socialism* in the new polity; it is a *lowest common denominator* in the attempt to bridge the gap between old and new, it is a level upon

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[7]Schlosser, Horst-Dieter, op. cit., p. 32

[8]Gysi, Gregor "Was will die PDS in Deutschland." op. cit., p. 10

[9]Good, Colin: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 266

[10]cf., for example, the SED's programmatic statement: "Der Kommunismus - unser Ziel." (cited from: *Programm der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*. op. cit., p. 103)

which a traditional Marxist-Leninist world-view might be adapted to the demands of the new environment. The very party name *Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus* is emblematic of the attempt to bridge that gap: a central element of orthodox Marxist-Leninist discourse is combined with one of the central ideologemes, whose mythical qualities we touched upon above, of Western political discourse[11]:

> Da alle Sozialisten bleiben (sic), aber in einer Demokratie mitmischen wollten, einigte man sich auf den Namen "Demokratischen Sozialismus".[12]

Our attention now turns to the PDS's self-styled role as a socialist opposition and to an examination of the language of the PDS's 'socialist' vision. We will attempt to show that in this respect the political discourse of the PDS has recourse to a vague, highly abstract, highly superordinate, catch-all body of language capable of glossing over fundamental inner-party differences in world-view, of unifying disparate, contradictory (and potentially mutually exclusive?) party factions. The sign *socialist/socialism* is itself an integral part of that abstraction. As we touched upon above, we understand the term *superordinate* as used by Schäffner and Porsch who, in discussing the linguistic features of the "Bericht, Debatte and Direktive" in the public discourse of the SED, pinpoint the use of "the most general (superordinate) terms whose semantic content could hardly be specified". In effect, they point out, such superordinate keywords, "maximally vast in ... extension, and maximally reduced in ... intension"[13] are part and parcel of a strategy of propositional reduction, of abstraction, designed to present a simplified and harmonious world-view primarily on the level of signifiant. The ideological potential of a potent sign - a keyword (Townson) - like *socialism,* which reduces and suggests homogeneity and uniformity, is thus that it can be harnessed to circumvent and gloss over fundamental causal problems, contradictions and antagonisms residing in the signified; these are simply buried below the potent surface form - and can thus be circumvented discursively.

It is hard to see how, unless on the level of sign, a - say - 'hard-line' 'Marxist-Leninist' (some would say 'pro-Stalinist') socialism such as is espoused, for example, by the party's *Kommunistische Plattform,* might be married to a more widely drawn socialism formally committed to a plurality of world-views.

From its inception, the PDS has, as we have said above, championed "die Idee des Sozialismus". The reasons for doing so doubtless represent a complex amalgam of

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[11]Which is not to say, however, that the lexeme did not figure largely in the political discourse of the SED too!

[12]Eppler, Erhard: "Rotkäppchen und die PDS." In: *Der Spiegel.* no. 1. 1995

[13]Schäffner, Christina/Peter Porsch, op. cit., pp. 37, 38

motives: a tactical attempt to maintain political credibility inasmuch as an ex-SED which all too rudely abandons its orthodox Marxist Leninist legacy could easily be accused of political opportunism; a (partly tactical) attempt, as we have said, to make the past relevant to the present; an attempt at self-preservation, at offering those disaffected with the changes[14] a '*Seelenmassage*', a '*politische Heimat*' in which their past is vindicated; and last, but not least, a 'genuine' commitment to a 'visionistic' 'socialist' utopia, however nebulous and as yet amorphous this vision may as yet be.

Having championed *socialism*, the PDS must both legitimise and attempt to define what lies behind it, in other words articulate a viable 'socialist' vision, following, in the emotive words of Moreau, the "definitiven Sieg des Kapitalismus über den 'real existierenden Sozialismus'"[15] and a generally acknowledged *Rechtsruck*[16]; that socialism as a concept must be broad enough to find appeal on both an inner- and an extra-party level. We will attempt to show that the thrust of the PDS's discourse in this respect has been to de-antagonise: to use language to present a harmonious vision - enframed as *socialist* - in which the classic problems between *Weg* and *Ziel* are circumvented, at least linguistically, in the attempt, too, to overcome the high level of inner-party fictionalisation and ideological disparity and find a basis on which to hold the party together.

Having taken *socialism* on board, how has the PDS sought to rescue the category and *legitimise* it? Firstly by emphasising that what obtained in the GDR was not *socialism*, but 'socialism gone wrong'. Indeed this aberration is frequently neatly packaged and thrown away as *real existierender Sozialismus*:

> In Wahrheit aber ist nicht Marx tot, sondern Stalin, und *fehlgeschlagen ist nicht der Sozialismus, sondern nur dieser besondere, real existierende* ...[17] (my italics)

There is perhaps some irony in the fact that the expression so widely instrumentalised by the SED as a pillar upon which to support the (mythical) world of the *entwickelte sozialistische Gesellschaft* and so much the butt of ironical

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[14]Marten-Finnis calls these "Konservative - ehemalige Staats- und Parteifunktionäre des alten Regimes, die in der PDS eine neue politische Heimat gefunden haben (und) durch die PDS eine Bestätigung ihrer Biographie erfahren (wollen)". Marten-Finnis, Susanne: *Pressesprache zwischen Stalinismus und Demokratie - Parteijournalismus im "Neuen Deutschland" 1946-1993.* Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag 1994, p. 138

[15]Moreau, Patrick: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., p. 148

[16]Good, Colin: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 266

[17]Heym, Stefan: "Neue Hoffnung für die DDR" In: Heym, S.: *Stalin verläßt den Raum.* Leipzig: reclam-Verlag 1990, p. 271

observations from Western political observers should now be subject to a similarly ironic invocation by the SED's political successor: Good has identified that one of the PDS's prime linguistic ploys has been to apply the "discredited language of the GDR ... to the new situation".[18] (We remember, too, the PDS's heavy reliance in its historiography on the concept of the *Wendehals*, a term initially activated during the *Wendezeit* to discredit the PDS's own political predecessor: see chapter 1.)

Compare, too, the neatly separable poles in:

> Sozialismus - darunter verstehen wir eine Gesellschaft, in der die Entfaltung, Freiheit und Würde des einzelnen Voraussetzung für die Entfaltung, Freiheit und Würde aller ist. Diese Vision ist durch die gleichnamige, aber *entgegengesetzte Praxis des Realsozialismus* diskreditiert ...[19] (my italics; observe, too, the degree of superordinacy of the terms of this socialist vision! - MD).

(Elsewhere, as we have seen above, an 'impure' socialism has been cast off as a 'Stalinist' aberration, as a "(staatsbürokratischer) Stalinismus" or as "Staatssozialismus"[20]. Similarly, the attempt is frequently made - via a polarised conceptual schema - to rescue Marx, through a conscious setting-off of the master's theories in their (mythical) 'pure' form against the 'debased' form enframed in *wissenschaftlicher Kommunismus* i.e. in the "von Stalin geprägte[n] dogmatische[n] Schema des sogenannten *Marxismus-Leninismus*"[21]. (my italics) Note how this is clearly implied in the following:

> Es gibt eine Gruppe von Genossinnen und Genossen in der PDS, die großen Wert darauf legen, durch ihre Mitgliedschaft und ihre politischen Aktivitäten eine Bestätigung ihres bisherigen Lebens, ihrer Biographien zu erfahren ... Indem sie ihr Leben verteidigen, verteidigen sie gewollt oder ungewollt häufig zugleich eine Geschichte, die in diesem Umfang Verteidigung nicht verdient. Ihr programmatischer Ansatz ist meist ein nicht nur marxistischer, sondern auch ein *marxistisch-leninistischer* (*einschließlich der höchst*

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[18]Good, Colin: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit.

[19]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland." op. cit., p. 9

[20]see footnote 69, chapter 2

[21]Neubert, Harald: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie - Antonio Gramsci.* Berlin: Kommission Politische Bildung des Parteivorstandes der PDS 1990, p. 4

> *zweifelhaften Momente*), weil auch dies zur Bestätigung ihrer Biographien erforderlich ist ...[22] (my italics)

A vociferous proponent of the notion of a 'true' socialism has been Stefan Heym (whom the PDS in 1994 championed as a *parteiloser Kandidat* in its *offenen Listen*[23] and who proceeded to represent the PDS/Linke Liste in the Federal parliament after winning outright in his Berlin electoral district in the 1994 federal elections). In October 1989 Heym had enframed (as we have in part cited above) the notion of an undebased socialism as follows:

> In Wahrheit aber ist nicht Marx tot, sondern Stalin, und *fehlgeschlagen ist nicht der Sozialismus, sondern nur dieser besondere, real existierende*: der andere bessere, in dessen Namen so viele tapfere Menschen ihre Ideen gaben und ihr Blut, steht noch aus. Und der Gedanke liegt nahe, jetzt da sich der Wandel anbahnt im Umfeld der Republik, dem *wirklichen Sozialismus,* in dem die Menschen Brüder werden und Hand in Hand Freiheit und Gerechtigkeit, ihr Leben gestalten, auch hier zum Durchbruch zu verhelfen ...[24] (my italics; observe here, again, the highly superordinate terms of Heym's socialism: it is a harmonious (and simplistic) world, indeed a distinctly eighteenth century Enlightenment note is struck, resonant as the "Menschen Brüder werden" is of Schiller's "*An die Freude*": we shall have more to say about abstract definitions below.)

This leaves intact a vague (and mythical?), unsullied *generic* and 'real' socialism to which the PDS can lay claim upon the basis of the conflationary potential residing in the signifier *Sozialismus*; a <*socialist*> unity party and a party of Democratic <*Socialism*> can - at the very least on the level of *signifiant* - tap into a <socialist> tradition. (Elsewhere, of course, the PDS's right to a priori lay claim to a generic socialist tradition - to style itself "Träger solcher (sozialistischen - MD) Ideale"[25] - has been challenged, no more vociferously than by an SPD fearing encroachment upon its political terrain.) The idea of a 'true' socialism abounds in PDS writing;

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[22]Gysi, Gregor: "Brief an die Mitglieder." In: *PID.* no. 49. 1992, pp. 2-5 (Cited in: Moreau/Neu, *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 19)

[23]see chapter 4

[24]Heym: "Neue Hoffnung ..." op. cit., pp. 271-2

[25]"Das sozialistische Ideal, das heißt der Traum von einer sozial gerechten, solidarischen, friedlichen, humanen, ökologischen und demokratischen Gesellschaft ohne Krieg, Hunger und Elend, in der jeder Mensch seine Fähigkeiten entwickeln kann und reale Chancen zur Bedürfnisbefriedigung besitzt, ist ebenfalls unsterblich. Die sozialistischen Parteien als Träger solcher Ideale dürfen sich nicht auflösen.". Gysi: "Was will die PDS?" op. cit., pp. 9-10

elsewhere it is cast as "die sozialistische Ursprungsidee"[26] or simply "die Idee des Sozialismus":

> Andere frühere SED-Mitglieder dagegen, welche unter dem Eindruck der "Wende" für *die Idee des Sozialismus* überhaupt keine Chancen mehr sahen, haben ... seinerzeit die PDS ebenfalls sehr bald verlassen.[27] (my italics)

On this level, then, the socialism of the PDS - whose socialist credentials, whatever they may be, are presupposed, is a propositional reduction par excellence: the enormous body of complex questions which underlie any visionistic notion (the classical disparity between *Weg* and *Ziel*!) can be quite simply circumvented by ignoring them; they lie hidden behind a potent, visionistic sign, a key-word whose bold surface form suggests uniformity of purpose (particulary useful for a PDS struggling to overcome its factionalism!), simplifies, presents us with a simplified fixed and unproblematic goal with a specific departure point, a goal yet to be achieved but achievable; in this world-view socialism is something fixed and immutable, it transcends the notion that it (socialism):

> takes many and diverse forms, and is a continually developing concept.[28]

What the polarised model of a 'true' socialism at odds with a debased socialism does is to (deliberately?) background - and thus fall to address - the complex inter-relationship between socialism in theory and socialism in practice, the question of whether or not those systems obtaining in the GDR and in other Eastern bloc countries might not be the inevitable outcome of any attempt to channel a society along the lines of a pre-conceived, rational, 'socialist' schema[29].

Legitimising socialism has involved, too, recourse to the 'socialist' writings of ideologues who, while they may be located in a broad 'Marxist' tradition, are not immediately locatable in a Marxist-Leninist context, particularly by virtue of the fact that their work was banned during the 'Communist' GDR period: as such, then, their

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[26]cf.: "Der Begriff des Sozialismus ist diskreditiert, Wer ihm anhängt, kommt in den Verdacht, stalinistische Zeiten zurückzuwünschen. So sehr wir das verstehen, es bleibt doch auch Tatsache, daß die sozialistische Ursprungsidee nichts von ihrer Aktualität eingebüßt hat." (Cited from: "Programm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus". In: *Wahlparteitag der PDS, 24/25. Februar 1990. Materialien.* Berlin 1990, p. 88

[27]Wolf, H.: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 5

[28]McLean, Iain (ed.): *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics.* Oxford: University Press 1996, p. 459

[29]A profound *literary* presentation of this point, of the difficulty in channelling the complex human psyche with all its conflicting and contradictory motivations along the lines of a utopian, systemic vision, is presented by Dostoevsky in *Notes from the Underground,* in which a central theme is quite precisely that humans do not always act in their rational self-interest and indeed choose to fly in the face of it.

work is perceived by leading PDS ideologues to be as unsullied as the Socialism promoted by the PDS. Antonio Gramsci is a case in point and will be discussed in some detail below.[30]

A UNIFORM IDEOLOGY? SOCIALISM AND THE PDS'S MEMBERS AND VOTERS

The PDS's members

> Die PDS ist ein Kunstprodukt, die ist sozusagen ein Zerfallsprodukt einer ehemaligen Staatspartei. Die Leute, die da drin sind, stellen geistig ein dermaßen buntes Feld dar - von traditionellen Linken bis zu Leuten, die unter anderen politischen Bedingungen bei den Sozialdemokraten wären oder sogar viel weiter rechts: Leute, die früher dafür gesorgt haben, daß alles schön ordentlich und ruhig ist, daß es keine Kriminalität gibt, daß die Jugendlichen nicht zu lange Haare haben - Kleinbürger. Die wären unter anderen gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen in irgendeinem bayerischen oder westdeutschen Dorf CDU-Wähler ...[31]

The following is typical of how, in PDS discourse, uniformity of socialist vision exists largely on the level of sign:

> Die PDS - das ist der bislang erfolgreiche, *wenn auch nicht konfliktfreie Versuch*, den unverzichtbaren demokratischen und emanzipatorischen *Grundansatz sozialistischen Denkens* und Handelns wiederzubeleben und damit das Streben nach einer solchen Alternative aus der Sackgasse des gescheiterten Realsozialismus herauszuführen.[32] (observe again, how "Sozialismus" is rescued through the invocation of the debased "Realsozialismus"; my italics)

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[30]"Es war zu einer verhängnisvollen Praxis geworden, daß viele Parteien in der kommunistischen und Arbeiterbewegung, darunter auch die SED, lange Zeit lediglich die Traditionslinie von Marx, Engels, Lenin und zunächst auch Stalin anerkannten alle praktischen Erfahrungen, die nicht ins Bild paßten (sind) mit Borniertheit und Intoleranz verworfen oder wenigsten ignoriert worden. Was den italienischen Kommunisten Antonio Gramsci angeht, so hat er sich auf seine Weise ebenfalls kritisch das theoretische Erbe von Marx und Engels sowie der führenden Köpfe der II. Internationale zu eigen gemacht. Erst in jüngster Vergangenheit setzte sich die Erkenntnis von der außerordentlichen Bedeutung Gramscis für ein modernes Geschichts- und Politikverständnis, für eine demokratische, sozialistische Politik und Kultur durch. " Neubert H.: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit., pp. 3-4

[31]Michail Nelken, in: interview with the author, November 1995 (op. cit.)

[32]Brie, André/Michael Brie/Judith Dellheim et al.: *Zur Programmatik der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus*. Dietz Verlag, Berlin 1997

The above contains a discursive strategy which we encounter time and again in PDS discourse: the - as it were- 'throwaway' sub-clause ("wenn auch nicht konfliktfreie Versuch"), in which fundamental disparities among the PDS's members and voters in the understanding of what lies behind the sign *socialist* are simply side-stepped through subordination to a less focal position in the sentence. Observe the structural subordination of "Unterschieden" to the *unifying* "einig" in the main clause of the following

> *Bei allen Unterschieden* in der PDS sind sich alle einig: gewaltfreie Veränderung und nur demokratische, andere gibt es nicht.[33] (my italics)

Compare, too, the attempt to gloss over the crucial and fundamental inner-party tensions by casting them as something of a rather irrelevant question of shading:

> Bislang galt für alle Sozialisten, *gleich welcher Couleur*, (! - MD) als ganz unstrittig, daß die wesentlichen Gebrechen dieser Welt so oder so und zwangsläufig aus dem Wesen des heute wieder global herrschenden kapitalistischen Systems entspringen.[34] (my italics)

However:

> Die Unterschiede der Gruppen sind jedoch mehr als nur Nuancen einer Grundfarbe. Schattierungen gibt es in jeder Partei. Bei der PDS geht es jedoch um mehr.[35]

The sheer heterogeneity of the PDS's membership and voter base is not only frequently glossed over by the PDS; it is common for reductive political commentaries to side step the PDS's problematic factionalisation[36] and to treat the

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[33]"Koalitionsbereit?" In: *Wochenpost*. 7 December 1995 (interview with Lothar Bisky)

[34]Wolf, H.: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 17

[35]Koch, Thomas: "Die PDS im Vereinigungsprozeß." op. cit., p. 195

[36]Any model of the sheer heterogeneity of the PDS membership must take account, too, of its complex mix of social and socio-economic groups. Wittich ("Mitglieder und Wähler der PDS." op. cit., pp. 58-80) has shown that "hinsichtlich ihrer sozialen Zusammensetzung ist die PDS ein relativ heterogenes Gebilde" (p. 70) of many in themselves heterogeneous sub-groups: e.g. pensioners, those in early retirement, unemployed, white-collar employees who have been able to make the transition to employment in the new structures on account of the (in particular administrative) skills acquired in the GDR, self-employed persons and "Akademiker in Forschung, Wissenschaft, Bildung, Kultur, Rechtspflege, u. ä. die z.T. mit ihrer individuellen Biographie sozialistischen Ideen eng verbunden sind. Diese Gruppe ist in sich außerordentlich heterogen. Sie umfaßt sowohl 'sozial Erfolgreiche', wozu jene zählen, deren berufliche Qualifikation auch unter marktwirtschaftlichen Verhältnissen verwertbar ist, bzw. jene, die per höherer Qualifikation und Flexibilität andere verdrängen konnten. Sie umfaßt aber auch 'soziale Absteiger'. Diese Gruppe ist auch politisch in sich heterogen. *In den politischen Diskursen und Richtungskämpfen innerhalb der PDS stellt sie Akteure aller Richtungen.* (ibid.) (my emphases)

PDS as an easily manageable monolith with a uniform, easily identifiable political aim; Neugebauer and Stöss rightly observe that:

> das Schrifttum über die PDS meist unterkomplex ausfällt, weil die zwieschlächtige Gestalt der PDS als Rechtsnachfolgerin der SED und als politische Partei in einem demokratischen Parteiensystem nicht erkannt und analysiert wird. In den Augen der meisten Autoren stellt die PDS ein "Politikum", eine Bedrohung oder eine Enttäuschung dar.[37]

Moreau, while *describing* in minute detail the factions existing within the PDS, largely ignores this dimension in drawing the highly reductive conclusion that the PDS's single-minded and uniform aim is to subvert the establishment:

> Die Behauptung des bekannten Extremismusforschers Patrick Moreau, "die PDS bekämpft das herrschende System mit allen Mitteln" erscheint uns jedenfalls maßlos übertrieben und wird auch nicht vom Autor hinreichend belegt".[38]

In one of the most incisive studies[39] on the forces at work in the PDS and on the party's intellectual origins in the SED, Land and Possekel shed much light upon the complex amalgam of political groupings which make up the PDS. As their observations are invaluable, the following brief survey of some of the main forces at work in the party membership will rely heavily on their findings.

In Land and Possekel's representation of the party membership structure, a model comprised of two broad groupings - ideologically motivated intellectuals versus a large body of non-ideological pragmatists - overlaps with a more refined model, where "mehrere intellektuelle Minderheiten" (p. 415)[40] are identified, each striving for "konzeptionelle Hegemonie". (p. 415). The categories identified by Land and Possekel are as follows:

* the traditional 'bread and butter' communist 'hard-liners' (often called the 'traditionalists') adhering loyally to the categories and conceptual structures of the discourse of GDR-style Marxism-Leninism, championing notions such as the avant-garde role of the party (party hegemony), a planned economy, the unity of party and state ("Die für die staatssozialistische Gegenmoderne essentielle Metastruktur"

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[37]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., pp. 11-12

[38]ibid., p. 13

[39]Land/Possekel: "Orthodoxie und Modernität ..." op. cit.

[40]The page numbers given in brackets here refer to Land/Possekel's study, op. cit.

(p. 420)) and the traditional determinist mode of communist thinking. The categories in which they perceive the world are deeply rooted in the era of Communist anti-fascist resistance and the founding period of the GDR. Their most vocal mouthpiece is the *Kommunistische Plattform*[41].

* the pragmatists: for Land and Possekel these form the majority of party members, the "ihrem Selbstverständnis nach eher unideologischen, pragmatisch orientierten Funktionseliten der ehemaligen DDR." (p. 418)[42] It is this large but on the whole visionless group that the fledgling PDS leadership was eager to incorporate into the party ranks on account of their "Profunde Sachkenntnis ostdeutscher Gegebenheiten" (p. 418) which has helped steer the PDS to important successes at local level. After all:

> Es war ein offenes Geheimnis, daß diese Personen ihr Verhältnis zur SED nicht über ideologische Dogmen bzw. ihre Kritik bestimmten. Sie vertraten kein politisches Reformkonzept. Zu DDR-Zeiten war ihre Mitgliedschaft in der SED vor allem von der Möglichkeit bestimmt, praktisch agieren zu können - als Wirtschaftsmanager, als Lehrer, als Verwalter. Der Habitus dieser Leute erinnert in keiner Weise an Revolutionäre oder idealistische Umstürzler.[43] ... In dem Maße, wie diese Personen im Zuge der deutschen Vereinigung aus dem Staatsapparat, den Schulen, dem Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsbereich, sowie zum Teil aus der Wirtschaft gedrängt wurden, nahmen sie das Projekt der PDS an. Es bot das, was sie brauchten: eine unrevolutionäre und diesseitige Politikperspektive, die das Agieren unter den nunmehr Bedingungen einer westlichen Gesellschaft legitimierte. (p. 418)

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[41]Party ideologues have been keen to stress, however, that the KPF's representation in the PDS is very limited: "Die Kommunistische Plattform, selbst gespalten in der Frage des Verhältnisses zum Stalinismus, teilweise auch einem Luxemburgismus oder Trotskismus anhängend, konnte nie mehr als 5% der Delegiertenstimmen auf Parteitagen mobilisieren. Ist es dann nicht sinnvoll, sie eingebunden zu wissen in eine demokratische Partei?" Brie, Michael: "PDS Ante Portas." op. cit., p. 939

[42]cf. „Die Mehrzahl der Mitglieder war früher in der SED und ist fortgeschrittenen Alters. Allerdings stammen viele Neumitglieder aus der jüngeren akademischen und alternativen Szene, viele auch aus der Kulturszene des Ostens. Die Altmitglieder werden als der sogenannte stalinistische Kern identifiziert, also *rank and file* von Staatssicherheit, Armee, Zentralkomitee und obere Verwaltungsbürokratie. Aber sowohl Zuschreibung wie auch das Urteil stimmen nur zum Teil: In der PDS sind auch viele SED-Mitglieder, die 1989 keine höheren Funktionen bekleidet hatten und zum Reformflügel gehört hatten, der Gorbatschow oder Janos Kadar zum Vorbild hatte. Außerdem sind viele der seit 1990 'abgewickelten' akademischen und staatsverwaltenden Funktionseliten in der PDS vertreten; sie sind eher Bürokraten als Stalinisten." Reich, Jens: "Das Zünglein an der Waage." In: *Die Zeit*. no. 27. 1997 (my italics)

[43]This observation must be set against the attempt in PDS historiography - to which we drew attention in the previous chapter - to suggest that those who have remained in the PDS are idealists ardently committed to a socialist cause (whatever this may be).

It is precisely this group who have been keen to avoid divisive and crippling debates as to the political course which the party should chart, which might put in jeopardy their *politische Heimat.* It is this group of active party members motivated primarily by, as we shall argue below, a vague "reservatio mentalis"[44] vis-à-vis the new system (equally prevalent among the PDS's membership) who are responsible for the 'donkey-work' which has underpinned PDS success at local level[45]:

> Die Ergebnisse der Kommunal- und Bundestagswahlen von 1994 zeigen, daß die Stärke der PDS inzwischen weniger auf dem Modernismus ihrer Führung beruht als auf der Sachkompetenz der pragmatisch orientierten, eher konservativen und DDR-nostalgischen Mehrheit, die sich überwiegend aus Vertretern ehemaliger DDR-Funktionseliten rekrutiert. (p. 424)

* The "'Moderne Sozialisten' oder 'Modernisten'" (p. 416; inverted commas in original) who accept the "Grundstrukturen der 'Moderne'" (p. 415) as a basis for their political vision and activity, and who wish to market the PDS as a "Reformpartei ..., die eine neue, zweite Modernisierung des Westens mit weitgehenden emanzipatorischen Prozessen verbindet (p. 415) ... ihr Weltbild (ist) durch eine Rezeption westlicher Moderne(theorien) beeinflußt ..." (p. 416) It is these party members such as Gysi, Bisky and Brie ("schon vor 1989 innerhalb der SED ... intellektuelle Hoffnungsträger für eine Reformpolitik[46]" (p. 417)) who have taken over the leadership of the party in alliance with the pragmatists with whom they have sought to keep the KPF and other 'orthodox' communists in check. ("Das Tandem Bisky-Gysi steht für die Allianz der pragmatischen Mehrheit mit der modernistischen Führungsgruppe." (p. 418)) They are responsible for devising the intellectual constructs which allow the party to be held together. We will attempt to show below the importance of the medium of language for achieving this. Their politics have a 'visionistic' dimension, aimed in part at articulating a basis for an improved world-order. What is difficult here, as with the assessment of any political utterances, is that political convictions are based upon a complex amalgam of both ideals and opportunism in varying and unquantifiable measures. Determining whether the calls

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[44]The preferred term of Neugebauer/Stöss; see below

[45]Wittich (op. cit.) has shown that this group has a strong "Rentner and Vorruheständler" component with time on their hands to devote themselves to promoting the party cause, especially at election times: "Das öffentliche Bild, das die PDS an der Basis und auf regionaler Ebene bietet, wird vor allem durch die Gruppen der Vorruheständler und der Rentner bestimmt. Sie sind bei den Veranstaltungen zu sehen, sie stehen an den Ständen usw. Auf überregionaler Ebene dagegen, beim Auftreten einzelner PDS-Mitglieder in den Medien, in parlamentarischen Gremien usw. präsentiert sich die PDS vor allem mit den jüngeren Angehörigen der Angestellten- und Akademikergruppen, sie bietet also hier ein anderes Bild" (p. 71)

[46]See the previous chapters for a discussion of the problems involved in assessing the nature of this *Reformpolitik.*

for an improved world-view represent conviction or opportunism (here made all the more complex by the fact that the PDS's political survival is per se predicated upon a very necessary acceptance of certain features of the new political environment) is a highly problematic task; we have no way of getting into the minds of political actors and finding out what they *really* think. We can, at best, be made aware of the pitfalls of drawing all too swift conclusions based upon the acceptance of surface utterances at face value.

* the anticapitalist fundamentalists: those who fit neither neatly into the category of communist hard-liners nor into that of modernisers. Their essential characteristic is vehement intellectual opposition to the new political environment and a much more pronounced rejection of the status quo than generally characterises the modernists. However, their opposition to the present does not necessarily mean championing the past. In this group we might include certain members of the *Junge GenossInnen* who, while radically opposing the leadership's basic peace with the new system, are radically opposed to the hardline communist/Stalinist(?) politics of the KPF and are eager to pursue a more radical confrontation with the past and condemnation of the political practice of the SED. They are those who champion:

> eine antikapitalistische Fundamentalopposition, radikale Kritik, die bewußt auf eigene Gestaltungsansprüche verzichtet. (p. 415)

What Land and Possekel fail to problematise, however, is the - necessary - reductiveness of their model. While these categories pinpoint general and broadly identifiable trends in the PDS they are by no means hermetically isolated from one another, by no means mutually exclusive. They are useful points of orientation but they can never come near to recapturing the complex tapestry that is the PDS. Firstly, they are of course by no means exhaustive; secondly they are arbitrary, not fixed and immutable.[47] Human motives, motivations and convictions do not fall into neatly identifiable units but are rather interrelated in a complex and empirically indeterminable amalgam. So it is that Bisky and Gysi are frequently deemed "pragmatists" in wishing to adapt the PDS to the demands of the contemporary political environment. (Indeed, we have used - and will use - the term to mean precisely this in the present study.) However, in Land and Possekel's model this

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[47]Neugebauer/Stöss (op. cit.), for example, deal with the PDS's complex inner-party heterogeneity with the following system of categories: "Die innerparteilichen Machtverhältnisse sind unübersichtlich. Erkennbar sind *drei, in sich wiederum differenzierte, ideologische Großgruppen: moderne Reformer, traditionalistische Sozialisten und basisdemokratische Fundamentalisten.* Sie treten als Plattformen, Arbeitsgemeinschaften oder sonstige Gruppierungen auf und bilden eine gesonderte Entscheidungsebene, die quer zum vertikalen Parteiaufbau liegt. Während die Reformer und die kleine Gruppe der Fundamentalisten den Parteivorstand besetzen und dort auch mehr oder weniger gut miteinander auskommen, bilden die Traditionalisten die eigentliche innerparteiliche Opposition, eine Partei in der Partei." (p. 302; my italics)

categorisation is, as we have seen, inappropriate, as the sign *pragmatist* has been given a very distinct - but arbitrary!- definition within the context of *their* model[48]. Context is everything. The 'anitcapitalist fundamentalists' are frequently referred to as "Radikalrefomer". The boundaries between the categories used for the different groupings are thus by no means rigid. What this highlights, then, is the fundamental difficulty we encounter in speaking about the PDS - and indeed about all complex processes. Language, as we concluded in the preceding chapter, is simply not in a position to recreate the complex party fabric or indeed any 'reality': as soon as we fashion the real word in categories we reduce, we:

> represent the world as a system of recognisable objects: habituated categories of perception and action which simplify the society's management of itself

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[48]Manfred Gerner (*Partei ohne Zukunft?* op. cit.; see esp. pp. 134-45), for example, proffers a model of different *motivations* for membership of the PDS. In a nutshell these are 1) a "soziale Komponente". (p. 135) Gerner relates how studies have shown that very large numbers of PDS members interviewed revealed that they had joined the PDS because it afforded a safe haven in the turbulent new political environment; in one study cited by Gerner more than 90% of members of the *Landesverband Sachsen* cited the fact that the PDS afforded them a *politische Heimat* as the main reason for their membership. 2) A fundamental rejection of the 'capitalist' present; i.e. a significant body of members revealed that they had joined the PDS out of opposition to prevailing circumstances. 3) A 'political' motivation: "Neben den bisher skizzierten Motiven spielen auch politische Aspekte im engeren Sinne eine Rolle, die auf die Mitgestaltung der Gesellschaft durch die Partei hinauslaufen. Die Organisation PDS erhält somit auch eine funktionale Bestimmung - sie wird als Mittel der Politik betrachtet." (p. 137) The overarching motivating factor uniting these fluid and in no way neatly separable categories is for Gerner a sense among the membership of "defeat": "Die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung seit 1989 wird "nahezu ausschließlich als kollektive Niederlage reflektiert, als Niederlage der Partei, als Niederlage der ganzen Bewegung." (p. 135) This doubtless corresponds to what Neugebauer/Stöss perceive as a "reservatio mentalis" vis-à-vis the new political environment (see below). His attempt to make sense of all of these factors culminates in the transposition onto his model of a further (necessarily reductive) model where the distinction is largely perceived to be between young and old: "Es läßt sich der Schluß ziehen, daß aufgrund dieser 'biologischen Überalterung' die Mitgliederstärke weiter abnehmen wird. Die ungünstige Alterspyramide korreliert auch mit der Motivation und dem Aktivitätsniveau. Viele ältere Genossen sehen in der Partei ihre politische Heimat, in der sie mit Gleichgesinnten vereint sind. Die PDS ist für diesen Personenkreis in erster Linie ein 'Nostalgie-Club'. Gerade hier haben sich alte Denkstrukturen aus der SED-Zeit erhalten. Nach außen wird dieser Personenkreis kaum aktiv. Nur eine Minderheit der PDS-Mitgliedschaft ist aktiv. Das sind vor allem jüngere Genossen, die ihre Motivation für das Engagement in der Partei in erster Linie aus politischem Gestaltungswillen heraus beziehen." (p. 145). Observe, here, how Gerner's conclusion that the active members of the party are the young departs from Wittich's observation that *Renter* and *Vorruheständler* determine the public image of the PDS at local and regional level (manning stands etc.) - i.e. are the politically active. The discrepancy doubtless resides, here, in the two authors' different conceptions of what it is to be 'politically active' (yet again pointing to the difficulty of semantic specification and the importance of context!), Gerner perceiving it in a more narrow sense to be bound up with a "Gestaltungswillen" not necessarily present among those who turn up at political rallies and man stands. It typifies the contradictions which necessarily emerge when we compare different constructions of reality which rely on differing conceptual models incorporating the categories arbitrarily invoked by the individual author. (Even where there is an overlap in the surface form of the categories underpinning differing models, the subjective understanding of their denotative scope will vary from construction to construction.) Gerner does, however, touch upon the crucial fluidity of any attempt to press complex human motivation into the mould of a linguistic category: "*Außerdem dürfte im konkreten Fall nicht ein Motiv alleine den Ausschlag geben, sondern ein ganzes Bündel von Antrieben dafür verantwortlich sein, daß man Mitglied der PDS ist.*" (p. 138; my italics) We can identify broad trends, yes, but no schema can ever capture or empirically quantify complex human motivation. We can use categories as signposts to point us in the right direction: recognising the fluidity and reductiveness of all categorisation is, however, vital.

> and its habitat ... In a nutshell, we see the world in terms of the categories through which we and our society have constituted it.[49] (my italics)

What this shows, too, by extension, is the danger of ascribing PDS motivation to broad, sweeping and reductive categories (often enframed in polarised models) which do not do justice to the party's complexity. (To talk, for example, of a division into pragmatists and traditionalists glosses over the fundamental heterogneneity within these groups themselves - circumventing, for example, the 'radical'/'non-radical' dimension - and the problem we have of capturing the complex, overlapping psychological motivation of the *Strömungen* which comprise them.) We must stress, then, that the categories highlighted above are in no way exhaustive. They are emblematic of a convenient manageability which is at the heart of all of our attempts to capture the complex processes of life. (In chapter 5 below on the inner-party debates which came to a head in the weeks preceding the party's crucial 1995 conference we take the process of discrimination a stage further in looking more closely at the different groups at work in the PDS, in the hope that it will bear further witness to this complexity, notwithstanding the attempt of party ideologues to locate a broad basis of ideological uniformity.)

Land and Possekel argue that it is the modernist intellectual wing of the PDS which is responsible for holding it together. ("Ohne sie hätte keine die heterogene Mitgliedschaft integrierende Identität gefunden werden können." (p. 417)) They are its "Führungskern" (p. 417) and (crucially) have the programmatic upper hand.[50] Land and Possekel show that this wing contains many of the reformist[51] voices of the SED. Tracing the genesis of the inner-SED reformist discourses, of the evolution of the political identity of these modernists, they pinpoint the gradual emergence, from the late seventies onwards, of modernist ideals among young intellectuals in GDR institutions of higher education, especially after hopes of liberalisation following Honecker's accession to power proved unfounded. The reception of non-Marxist

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[49]Fowler, R: "Linguistic Criticism." In: *UEA papers in Linguistics*. no. 11. Norwich: University of East Anglia Press, January 1980, p. 2

[50]It is, then, broadly these 'modernist intellectuals' to whom we largely refer in talking of "PDS ideologues" searching for a unifying discourse. We are well aware of the reduction here. Hans Modrow, for one, often perceived as the mediator between pro-communist elements in the party and the 'modernist' faction centred around Bisky, Gysi and Brie, was a crucial co-author of the "... fünf wichtigsten Diskussionspunkten der gegenwärtigen Debatte der PDS" which formed the centrepiece of discussion at the 4th Party Conference in January 1995. (see chapter 5, footnote 3 below) Doubtless his inclusion represented an important symbolic attempt to achieve a consensus by drawing widely upon the different currents running through the party; cf. Gerner: "Hans Modrow spielt besonders für ältere PDS-Mitglieder eine wichtige Rolle; sein Auftreten dürfte auf diesen Personenkreis ermutigend wirken - ist er doch ein Repräsentant der 'alten Garde', der das Image des 'ehrlichen Hans' für viele hat. Eine typische Äußerung ist beispielsweise folgende: 'Solange der Genosse Modrow in der Partei ist, bin ich auch in der Partei.'" (Gerner, op. cit., p. 138)

[51]see footnote 46

thinkers played an increasing role in the drive to fashion a "'Sozialismus mit menschlichem Antlitz'." (p. 419; inverted commas in original) The perestroika period brought these reform discourses out of the woodwork. There were increasing calls for communist ideals to be subjected to an overhaul[52] (alongside calls for reform substantiated on the basis of an 'ethical' criticism of party adherence to Leninist norms and on the basis of the requirements of the scientific and technical revolution). Land and Possekel see the "kleine, heute in der PDS *programmatisch* dominierenden Intellektuellengruppe" (p. 419; italics in original) as emanating primarily from that group of intellectuals in the GDR who proffered theories championing certain principles of what Land and Possekel call "modernism"; among the features Land and Possekel identify are:

* individualism: Michael Brie, for example, championed it in rejecting the hypersynochronisation of GDR society and its underestimation of the importance of autonomous subjects

* markets: the command economy was called into question ("Die Entstaatlichung von Unternehmen und ihre Reorganisation ... galt nicht mehr als ein taktisches Zugeständnis an den Kapitalismus, sondern geradezu als Voraussetzung für Emanzipation." (p. 420)

* Land and Possekel show how figures such as Rosemarie Will increasingly imbibe the *Rechtsstaat* concept of a separation of party and state, calling for an ("Abschied von der These, wonach das Recht vor allem Instrument der herrschenden Klasse und ihres Staates sei." (p. 420)

These features are doubtless precursors to the programmatic equivalents we now find in the current PDS programme and show the - numerous - appraisals of the PDS's programmatic commitment to them as being purely 'tactical' to be simplistic:

> Das Bekenntnis zur Marktwirtschaft und Rechtsstaatlichkeit ist in den Augen der tonangebenden Intellektuellen der PDS also nicht etwa primär taktischer Natur. Auf der Ebene gesellschaftstheoretischer Entwürfe haben sie sich von jeglicher orthodoxer Sozialismusnostalgie befreit. (p. 422)

While Moreau is not wrong to identify an undoubted 'functional' and tactical dimension in the PDS's programmatic championing of these features, his attempt to reduce the complex background causality which motivates their presence in the PDS

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[52]which Land/Possekel (op. cit.) see as reminiscent of social democracy's struggle with a Communist interpretation of Marxism.

programme simply to a strategy of *subversion* - of which he has consistently accused the *whole* of the PDS - is tenuous to say the least:

> Die Parteiprogramme der PDS, die einen weiten Bogen von ökologischen über demokratische bis hin zu sozialen Zielsetzungen spannen, haben im Sinne dieser Unterwanderungsstrategie *einen rein funktionalen Charakter. Der Kern der PDS-Tätigkeit konzentriert sich auf die subversive Praxis.*[53] (my italics)

However, Land and Possekel argue that the modernism of the intellectuals of the late SED period was fraught with a complex duality: while championing key features of modernism, they never relinquished the notion of the vanguard role of the party, never addressed their own position in the drive towards reform (a point we touched upon in the preceding chapter):

> Daraus ergab sich die paradoxe Situation, daß sie (reformist intellectuals in the SED; MD) ein modernes politisches System gewissermaßen durch die kommunistische Diktatur einführen wollten: Errichtung eines modernen politischen Systems mit Mitteln der Gegenmoderne ... (p. 422)

> Für einen Moment sah es im Herbst 1989 so aus, als würde die Revolution die Macht in die Hände der SED-Reformer treiben. Sie wollten die SED reformieren und die Gesellschaft transformieren, ohne auf die Macht und den Staat zu verzichten. Ein avantgardistisches Verständnis der eigenen Rolle in der politischen Praxis bedingte eine Hypertrophierung der Partei und die Bereitschaft, im Interesse des Parteierhalts weitergehende Kompromisse einzugehen. Diese Perspektive ist dafür verantwortlich, daß die Reformsozialisten noch im Herbst 1989 die Opposition der Bürgerrechtler geringschätzten. Sie waren außerstande, zu begreifen, daß die Zulassung der Opposition und deren Beteiligung an der Macht gerade die Voraussetzung dafür gewesen wäre, Reformfähigkeit überhaupt herzustellen ... Diese Blockade erklärt auch die erstaunliche Nachsicht, mit der die kurzsichtige Politik des Machterhalts der Modrow-Regierung toleriert wurde. (p. 422-423)

This is of crucial significance in answering the question why, as Land and Possekel point out, the modernist intellectuals of the SED did not in the main go over to the Greens or the SPD but largely remained with the PDS. It is precisely this complex psychological commitment to the party and its avant-garde role which was doubtless a key factor in prompting the modernists to enter into an alliance with the large and

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[53]Moreau/Neu: "Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus ..." op. cit., p. 14

disaffected mass of largely unideological *DDR-Funktionseliten*. Land and Possekel argue that in throwing themselves into the effort to hold the party together (as the PDS), the modernist intellectuals of the PDS effected a "Selbstblockade" (p. 423) and condemned themselves to a perpetual balancing act as "Moderatoren des Kompromisses" (p. 423) (especially in pandering to the GDR biographies of the party's disaffected members - MD; we witnessed in the preceding chapters the PDS's historiographic attempts to offer its members blanket absolution). For this reason any genuine commitment to articulating a new, forward-looking, modern socialism is subordinated to, or at least heavily mitigated by, practical concerns. "Die Fixierung auf das Projekt PDS" (p. 424) meant stagnation:

> So ist innerhalb der PDS die Debatte über die prinzipiellen Ursachen für das Scheitern der Sozialismusidee, um Neuansätze im Zusammenhang von Moderne und Emanzipation und um die Weiterführung der Reformbewegungen der 80er Jahre zum Erliegen gekommen (p. 423) ... Der Reformdiskurs ist in der Allianz der "Modernisten" mit diesem Flügel weitgehend auf der Strecke geblieben. (p. 424)

A highly complex tension thus resides in the discourse of the modernists (those in the party responsible for its programmatic character, the 'ideologues'): on the one hand a desire to hold the party together at all costs entailing the need to engineer compromise; on the other, a desire to make the PDS a modern socialist party which in itself contains a complex mix of motives: on the one hand a genuine commitment to a better world, the roots of which can be traced back to the inner-SED reformist discourses of the eighties; on the other, a commitment to these ideals for tactical and opportunist reasons (these intellectual having realised that to stand any chance of gaining influence in the new political environment they have to at the very least be seen to accept certain basic features of modernism). It would be simplistic, however, to see the 'visionistic' element of the incipient discourse of the PDS as merely tactical; as Land and Possekel rightly observe, the social pull of communist parties cannot merely be reduced to categories such as *careerism*, *privilege* and *repression*:

> immer spielte auch die *Vision* einer neuen und besseren Gesellschaft, eine geschichtsphilosophisch gestützte Zukunftserwartung eine wichtige Rolle. (p. 419)

So it is with the modernist intellectuals in the PDS. It is quite precisely this problematic dimension underlying their political motivation which Moreau consistently chooses to ignore. We will attempt to show below that having, as Land and Possekel rightly identify, taken on the task of mediating and relativising, the modernists have condemned themselves to the highly distracting task of articulating

a reformist discourse which can operate only at a very high degree of abstraction, where the language is 'broad' enough to take in and smooth over - discursively at least - the huge contradictions and tensions residing in the party.

The PDS's voters

Koch has identified a singular lack of homogeneity among both the PDS's membership *and* its voter base: In response to Angela Marquardt's[54] declaration that "Die Bundesrepublik will mich nicht und ich will die Bundesrepublik nicht," he observes:

> Auch in dieser selbstbewußten wie ablehnenden Haltung können sich viele Mitglieder und Anhänger wiederfinden, *wenngleich sich jene Abwehr aus sehr verschiedenen Motiven speisen dürfte.* Handelt es sich um eine Kausalbeziehung oder stand die Ablehnung der Bundesrepublik von Anfang an fest? Erwächst sie aus einer Systemopposition gegenüber den herrschenden Verhältnissen oder ist kulturelle Fremdheit die Ursache? Resultiert sie aus antiwestlichen Ressentiments, aus einem Unbehagen an der parlamentarischen Demokratie oder gründet sie sich auf eine weitreichende Reformalternative? *Wir finden im Umfeld der PDS von alldem etwas.*[55] (my italics)

Given the sheer diversity of motivation for support and/or membership of the PDS - much greater than for any of the established parties - Koch can only find any degree of uniformity upon a high level of generality: that of "kein affirmatives Verhältnis[56] to the Federal Republic. This corresponds, as we shall see below, to what Neugebauer and Stöss have called a general "reservatio mentalis" (see below) among the PDS's members and supporters with respect to the Federal Republic. Jens Reich casts the unifying dimension in terms of a similar abstraction:

> Sie ist die einzige Partei, welche die neue ostdeutsche landsmannschaftliche Identität, *eine Trotz- und Abwehrmentalität* uneingeschränkt artikuliert.[57] (my italics)

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[54]Angela Marquardt has been the leading light of the party's *AG Junge GenossInnen* and been responsible for youth and student issues in the party executive. She was elected *Stellvertretende Bundesvorsitzende* in January 1995.

[55]Koch, Thomas: "Die PDS im Vereinigungsprozeß." op. cit., p. 186

[56]ibid., p. 186

[57]Reich: "Das Zünglein an der Waage." op. cit.

We will have much more to say about the PDS's voter-base below when we ask the question whether this level of abstraction can really form the basis for the uniform, 'systemic' vision *suggested* by the potent sign *socialist*, or whether it is not rather the case that the ideologeme is itself an integral part of a set of language strategies designed to find lowest common denominators upon which to background complex causal issues.

OVERCOMING DIVISION - IN LANGUAGE AT LEAST

The ideological heterogeneity which characterises the PDS is a good deal more complex than is suggested by the following (reductive) attempt of Bisky's to play in down through the invocation of a polarised 'generational conflict' model in which the 'front' is drawn between young and old:[58]

> Jüngere sind in ihren Politikvorstellungen oft wesentlich kritischer als Ältere. Auch die PDS hat einen Generationenkonflikt.[59]

How has the PDS attempted to overcome its singular diversity? Firstly by extending the category of *socialism* so widely as to make its denotational import (minimal in its intension) correspond to little more than a (simplistic) opposition to the here and now; witness, for example:

> Die wirkliche Gesamtalternative, welche tatsächlich die heutige Gesellschaft in ihrem Gebrechen und Unerträglichkeit ablöst, heißt aber nun einmal "Sozialismus", *wobei es ganz gleichgültig ist, welche konkreten Definitionen*

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[58]Wittich (op. cit.) has drawn attention to the danger of simplistic acceptance of the media's general reductive picture of the PDS as the "Partei der '*Alten*'" (Wittich, p. 58; my italics) which conflates two broad conceptual domains: i.e. "old" in biological terms, and "old" in terms of ideologically outmoded. However "Nähere Betrachtung aber offenbart Widersprüchliches; Zwar sind etwa zwei Drittel ihrer Mitglieder älter als 55 Jahre, aber nur ein Drittel ihrer Wähler gehört dieser Altersgruppe an (p. 58). Die PDS findet in den jüngeren Altersgruppen deutlich mehr Akzeptanz als sich in der Mitgliedschaft ausdrückt. Anders ausgedrückt: sie ist als Wahlangebot für Jüngere attraktiver, als sie es als Organisationsangebot ist. Zumindest unter dem Aspekt der Altersstruktur deutet sich zugleich an, daß die PDS, die die Masse ihrer Wähler im Osten hat, sich hier etwa an die gleichen Wählergruppen wendet wie die SPD im Westen" (pp. 75-6). In a nutshell, some 2/3 of the PDS's *membership* is older than 55; some 2/3 of the PDS's voters are, in fact, younger than 55; the answer to the discrepancy doubtless lies, inter alia, in the fact the membership incorporates a disproportionately large number of pensioners, "vor allem aus Arbeiter und Angestelltenberufen. Sie vor allem sind Träger der Tradition der Arbeiterbewegung. Die Treue zu dieser Tradition bindet an die Partei" (p. 70); these *Rentner*, while contributing to the comparatively large proportion of *Rentner* who *vote* for the PDS (see Wittich, p. 77), form, of course, in terms of the reference group 'PDS membership', a much greater part of the overall picture.

[59]"Koalitionsbereit?" (interview with Lothar Bisky) op. cit.

> *man im übrigen sonst noch mit dem Sozialismusbegriff verbunden hat oder noch verbinden wird.*[60] (my italics)

Here again, what - as we shall see - are absolutely fundamental differences inside the PDS as to what form socialism should take are buried below the widely drawn surface form - the signifier *socialism* - and thus simply circumvented discursively. The attempt to tap the lexeme's unifying potential is nowhere more evident than in the following fascinating observation:

> Die in der Öffentlichkeit gängige Einschätzung, es sei in der PDS seit einiger Zeit der offene Streit zwischen den "Reformern" und den "Konservativen" (sprich: Altkommunisten), ist zwar nicht ganz falsch (note the litotes - MD), jedoch weniger als die halbe Wahrheit. (note the unverifiability! -MD) Es wirken innerhalb der PDS seit längerem einige sich unterscheidende (note the attenuative lexical choice! There are doubtless grounds for arguing that "sich widersprechende" might have been a more appropriate perspective - MD) Strömungen, die sich im Grunde *nur darin einig sind, daß sie "den Sozialismus" wollen.* (! - MD) Sie gliedern sich nicht nur in die Positionen der "Reformer" und der sich als Kommunisten verstehenden Anhänger einer kompletten Radikalablösung des Kapitalismus (insbesondere in der "Kommunistischen Plattform").[61] (my emphases; inverted commas in original)

The determinate "*den* Sozialismus" conspires to make what is a fluid and abstract vision look like a fixed goal which can be *uniformly* pursued. Wolf's conception of socialism here (all the more significant as his work is offered the personal endorsement, in the introduction, of party Chairman and leading PDS ideologue, Lothar Bisky), is an attempt to locate a level of unity predicated upon the lowest common denominator of commitment to a socialism whose essential substance is merely that it is that which the present system is not. It is not hard to offer the semblance of a united front when the only criterion for that unity is an antipathy towards certain features of the present system, when commitment is primarily to socialism on a level where it is little more than an abstract symbol of a vague and better future. Whether the aggregate of isolated and entirely disparate instances of disaffection in the here and now can be translated into a uniform and systemic vision, the basis for an improved world-order, is an entirely different matter. The PDS's 'anti-present' discourse has frequently earned the party the charge that "sich die

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[60]Wolf, H.: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 15

[61]ibid., p. 12

PDS-Politik nicht aus Inhalten generiert[e]"[62], i.e. of being programmatically destructive, of having no *positive* concrete and constructive vision to offer. In his speech to delegates at the third party conference Bisky drew attention to the PDS's abiding problem:

> Im übrigen finde ich, daß wir im Formulieren dessen, wogegen wir sind, deutlich profilierter in der Öffentlichkeit erscheinen als mit präzisen Aussagen wofür wir positiv eintreten. Dieses Verhältnis sollten wir durch die Arbeit am Wahlprogramm deutlich verändern, zumindestens günstiger gestalten. Das erleichtert es potentiellen Wählern, selber zu erkennen, warum man PDS wählen soll.[63]

As we shall see below, however, the sheer contradictions faced by the party have yielded a party programme which has prompted one commentator to observe that:

> Die PDS besitzt eine programmatische Breite, die gut für zwei Parteien reichen würde.[64]

Bound up with the PDS's 'alternative to the status quo' socialism is the related position, frequently articulated, that it is not bound to any particular world-view:

> Die Mitgliedschaft in der Partei ist aber nicht an ein bestimmtes weltanschauliches Bekenntnis gebunden.[65] (my italics)

- a surprising and not uncontradictory assertion from a party at one and the same time programmatically committed to a vision uniformly packaged as *democratic socialism.*

As Straßner has rightly shown, however, the purported denial of an ideology or an ideological commitment is in itself a fundamentally ideological act.[66] Gysi's statement above to the effect that the PDS is not tied to a "bestimmtes weltanschauliches Bekenntnis" stems from 1990; by way of diachronic comparison, observe the continued relevance - in 1995 - of this message in:

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[62]Lang, Jürgen: "Nach den Wahlen 1994: PDS - Strategie im Wandel?" In: *Deutschland Archiv.* no. 4. 1995, p. 371

[63]Bisky, Lothar: "Drei Jahre Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion - Alternativen der PDS." In: *DISPUT.* no. 13-14. 1993, p. 4

[64]Kupper, Mechthild: "Biographie Wagen." In: *Wochenpost.* 7 December 1995

[65]"Programm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990. op. cit., p. 90

[66]Straßner: *Ideologie - SPRACHE - Politik* ... op. cit. (see esp. chapter 1)

> Wir, die wir von einer "einheitlichen Wissenschaft und Weltanschauung" kamen, haben doch zu lernen, daß man theoretisch streiten, aber doch gemeinsam für bezahlbare Mieten eintreten kann. *Die PDS-Mitgliedschaft ist laut Statut nicht mehr an eine bestimmte Weltanschauung gebunden.*[67] (my italics)

Note how the PDS again invokes and uses the discredited past of its forerunner as a motivating factor in the present. Observe too, the attempt to present unity on the level of the *Sachfrage* of affordable rents; there is no attempt here to invoke the problematic interrelationship between rents and the economic system at the heart of a prevailing ideology (we will have much to say on the PDS's invocation of 'practical issues' in the next chapter).

Witness, too, the rhetorical fusion of 'anti-ideology' and 'anti-present' in:

> Die PDS ist keine Weltanschauungspartei. Sie vereint Menschen aus unterschiedlichen sozialen Gruppen und gesellschaftlichen Milieus. Menschen verschiedener *linker* (note the unifying lowest common denominator -MD!) Politikrichtungen und unterschiedlicher Weltanschauungen. Sie versteht sich nicht nur als Interessenvertreterin sozial Benachteiligter (observe the sheer 'catch-all' breadth of the category!), sondern spricht alle jene an, die sich mit den gegebenen sozial ungerechten, ökologisch zerstörerischen und patriarchalischen Verhältnissen nicht abfinden wollen.[68] (my italics)

By denying an ideological commitment the PDS again makes virtue from necessity and kills at least two birds with one stone: utterances which signal a move away from rigid, ideologically-grounded thinking can be used to bolster up the suggestion of the PDS's 'renewal', its move away from the dogmatic and monist past of the SED; the PDS can take advantage here of the fact that the notion of ideological commitment has, after all, a distinctly negative resonance in Western political discourse, bound up as it frequently is, with notions of dogma and illusion:

> Wenn uns der Begriff Ideologie in politischen Auseinandersetzungen begegnet, zielt er fast immer auf eine Herabsetzung, auf eine Diffamierung des Gegners. Aussagen werden als ideologisch abqualifiziert, weil sie angeblich wirklichkeitsfremd oder auch wirklichkeitsverdeckend sind, durch Vorurteile oder interessenbedingte Voreingenommenheit bestimmt, weil sie

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[67]"Koalitionsbereit?" op. cit. (interview with Lothar Bisky)

[68]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 24

> bewußt Tatsachen verschleiern, wirkliche Absichten und Ziele unkenntlich machen sollen ... Als Ideologie werden Auffassungen bezeichnet, die sich als die allein wahren verstehen.[69] (my italics)

More important is the fact that on the level of the lowest common denominator of anti-ideology the PDS can gloss over its internal contradictions and come to terms with - as the media has frequently put it - its *Sammelbecken* status; how else, if not on the level of language, do party ideologues take on the task of marrying, for example, the 'revolutionary' (and not unequivocally anti-restorationist) stance of the party's *Kommunistische Plattform* enframed in the bead-and-butter categories of class warfare with, say, the party's more 'revisionist' elements, some of whom, at least, have broken with the deterministic mode and are prepared to see the party pursue a socialism predicated upon an "Optimierung des Bestehenden"[70].

Elsewhere the notion of an 'anti-ideology' is repeatedly framed, as Good[71] rightly observes, as a healthy "Pluralismus",[72] the SED's ideological difficulties with which[73], as we observed in chapter 1, has been so problematic an aspect of the SED legacy for a PDS coming to terms with its 'history'; in a nutshell, then, the PDS recognises the potential of lexical choice in mediating one and the same 'reality': potentially divisive, de-stabilising and irreconcilable *Meinungsverschiedenheit* is relexicalised as "Pluralismus" - thus providing a level on which antagonisms and disparities can be glossed over. At the same time, the instrumentalisation of the notion has doubtless helped to elicit sympathy for the PDS as a 'moderate', 'open-minded' and 'modest' party. Plurality has become a veritable centrepiece of PDS ideology:

> Vor Beginn der 2. Tagung des 2. Parteitages (der PDS - MD) im Juni 1991 rauften sich das Präsidium und die Landesvorsitzenden zusammen, um zu

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[69]Straßner: *Ideologie - SPRACHE - Politik* ... op. cit., p. 1

[70]cf.: "Michael Brie machte auf dem 3. Parteitag deutlich, daß *Revolution* beibehalten, aber neu definiert werden müsse: «Man müsse aufhören, Revolution immer nur als einfache Negation, als Umkehrung der bestehenden Verhältnisse zu sehen. Revolution könne auch als Optimierung des Bestehenden verstanden werden.» Cited from: Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit. p. 275

[71]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit.

[72]After all, "Diese Gruppen (grass roots movements and platforms inside the PDS - MD) brachen mit einem Grundprinzip marxistisch-leninistischer Parteien, nach dem innerparteiliche Fraktionen verboten waren" Phillips, Ann L.: "Umwandlung der SED - Die PDS ein Jahr danach." In: *Berichte des Instituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien.* 42/91, p. 9

[73]"Die DDR war keine pluralistisch organisierte Gesellschaft. Infolge der absoluten Dominanz einer Partei bestimmten ausschließlich deren Ziele und Wertungen Inhalt und Form der öffentlich-politischen Kommunikation. Das hervorstehende Merkmal der öffentlichen Kommunikation war fehlende Diskursivität. Nicht kontroverse Meinungen wurden 'für die Bürgeröffentlichkeit gedacht und sprachlich formuliert.' Statt dessen wurden die von der Partei gedachten Ziel- und Wertvorstellungen proklamiert und argumentativ begründet." Reiher, Ruth: "Das 'Zu-sich-selber-Kommen'." In: Reiher/Läzer (eds.): *Wer spricht das wahre Deutsch?* op. cit., p. 148

> versuchen, der Öffentlichkeit ein geschlossenes Bild der PDS zu vermitteln ... In der Öffentlichkeit wurde damals vielfach eine Spaltung der PDS erwartet. Deren Führung zeigte sich allerdings entschlossen, drohende Dissoziationstendenzen durch verstärkte Toleranz gegenüber innerparteilichen Gruppen, Fraktionen und Minderheiten sowie durch die Akzeptanz von Mehrheitsbeschlüssen zu konterkarieren. Das bedeutete allerdings, daß die Widersprüche nicht gelöst, sondern als faktischer Bestandteil der PDS anerkannt wurden, *daß Pluralität als Methode zum Strukturprinzip erklärt ... wurde.*[74] (my italics)

The oxymoron of uniformity in plurality would emerge starkly, as we shall seen below, at the time of the party's fourth conference, when party ideologues were faced with the problematic task of imposing limits on the PDS's 'anything goes' position, i.e. of delimiting "Pluralismus" - a term whose very semantic component makes it an essentially limit*less* notion; the same conference, too, at which the PDS could be seen to be still riven with internal contradictions, would be highly revelatory of the viability of plurality as a basis upon which to locate a political vision. As Neugebauer and Stöss observe:

> Mit Beendigung des Dauerwahlkampfs im "Superwahljahr" brachen die alten innerparteilichen Konflikte wieder auf. Die Hoffnung der Parteiführung, auf dem 4. Parteitag im Januar 1995 einen Minimalkonsens herzustellen, erfüllte sich nicht.[75]

What is more, the PDS's ideological leaders have sought to deflect criticism (especially from hard-line 'orthodox' quarters within the party) that it has 'sold out' on orthodox Marxism by attempting to locate its (formal) commitment to pluralism firmly within the context of a 'pure' Marxist tradition:

> In einem seiner (Marx' - MD) ersten Artikel, es ist der erste, der in den Marx/Engels-Werken überhaupt abgedruckt ist, wendet sich Marx gegen die preußische Zensurinstruktion vor allen Dingen mit der Verteidigung dieses Pluralismus: "Ihr verlangt nicht, daß die Rose duften soll, wie das Veilchen, aber das Allerreichste, der Geist, soll nur auf eine Art existieren dürfen? ... *Ich glaube, wir stehen ganz und gar in der Tradition von Marx, wenn wir*

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[74]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 50

[75]ibid., p. 301

> *innerhalb der Partei diese Unterschiedlichkeit hüten, achten und als eine große Chance miteinander ansehen.*[76] (my italics)

This is part and parcel of a process, identified by Colin Good, in which the PDS has sought to construct "a new version of a founding father, Marx, through a different selection from the master's writings"[77] in an attempt to amalgamate 'old' and 'new', in an attempt, in other words, to graft - through fresh contextualisation"[78] - something of the Marxist(-Leninist) legacy onto the new political environment. Observe, how in the following, the call for an "Optimierung des Bestehenden" re-emerges via the suggestion that Marx would have recognised the reformability of capitalism if he had had the benefit of historical experience (the presupposed proposition being that capitalism is indeed reformable):

> Marx hat den Kapitalismus ausgezeichnet analysiert. Seine dialektisch-materialistische Methode ist für uns unentbehrlich, *wenngleich Marx die dem Kapitalismus innewohnende Reformierbarkeit nicht erkennen konnte.* Der Sozialismus war bei ihm eine Vision für die vom Kapitalismus befreite Gesellschaft. Eine Theorie des Sozialismus hat Marx nie entwickelt.[79] (my italics)

Interestingly, however, despite the fact that the PDS has on one level abjured any uniformity of world-view, despite its formal rejection of the "Modell 'der marxistisch-leninistischen Kampfpartei der Arbeiterklasse'[80] mit ihrem Monopolanspruch auf Wahrheit und Macht", we note the intrusion of language which continues to hint at a continued commitment to the reductive notion of a pre-ordained, *uniform* schema relevant to - and binding upon? - all, as a PDS champions a "gemeinsamen Suche nach *der* Wahrheit".[81]

During the course of a television debate Gysi is presented with the following problematic notion by Ludger Volmer of Bündnis 90/the Greens:

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[76]Brie, André: "Zum Programm der PDS." In: *DISPUT.* no. 3-4. 1993, p. 35

[77]Good, Colin: *Language, Politics and Ideology.* op. cit.

[78]ibid.

[79]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 13

[80]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 6

[81]ibid.

ibid. Compare, for example: "In ihrer gesamten außenpolitischen Tätigkeit läßt sich die Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands von der historischen *Wahrheit* leiten, daß ..."(cited from *Programm der SED*, op. cit., p. 83)

> Aber Herr Gysi, solange Sie die kommunistische Plattform haben, das sind Antidemokraten. Das ist uralter, krudester Leninismus. Und bevor Sie sich nicht von diesen Leuten trennen, glaube ich, sind Sie nicht kooperationsfähig.[82]

Pressed by Volmert on why the PDS has refused to eject its problem factions, Gysi yet again invokes the language of a discredited 'Stalinist' past to justify the PDS's current position; "ejecting problem factions" is relexicalised using the emotive "Säuberungsaktion", that notorious euphemism for Stalin's atrocities:

> Wir haben ja eine - sag ich mal - *Säuberungsaktion* hinter uns, nämlich von Januar bis März 1990, mit vielen Ausschlüssen. ... Dann ham (sic) wir gesagt ... Wir müssen inhaltliche Entscheidungen treffen.Wir können nich (sic) in *das alte SED- Schema* zurückfallen und uns immer nach unserer gerade beschlossenen Linie - sag ich mal jetz (sic) ne (sic) *Säuberungsaktion* starten.[83] (my italics)

(We can leave open here the question of the *motivational* appropriateness of the term - i.e. whether the huge reduction in the PDS's numbers in the immediate post-*Wende* period was not more a question of mass *exodus* ["Massenaustritte"[84]] rather than - as is suggested here - a *party-led* expulsion on ideological grounds.)

The rhetorical invocation by the PDS - as here - of its discredited political forerunner and its practices to call into question certain features of the 'new' polity is a common feature of PDS discourse; compare:

> Nehmen Sie doch nur das, was die Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung im Umgang mit uns betreibt. *Mich erinnert das fatal an die Politik der Abteilung Agitation des Zentralkomitees der SED.* Neue Aussagen werden immer wieder aus Pressemitteilungen abgeleitet, die auf der Grundlage von Aussagen von CDU-Politikern zustande kommen ... ein Franzose, Patrick Moreau, sammelt all diese CDU-inspirierten Pressetexte zusammen und verfertigt daraus eine neue Synthese - das führt wiederum dazu, daß alle Medien darauf eingehen - schließlich argumentieren CDU-Leute wieder

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[82]Cited from Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ... op. cit., p. 257

[83]ibid., p. 258

[84]see: Wittich, op. cit., p. 59 ff.

> damit ... Ein ganz einfacher Mechanismus, der mir sehr bekannt vorkommt. *Das ist das SEDhafte an der CDU.*[85] (my italics)

The PDS's selective invocation of the SED is revealing: where the immediate discursive purpose, then, is one of challenging the practices of the established political parties, the SED is actively invoked. On the other hand, a PDS acting as a vehicle for vindicating the biographies of its members, some 95% of whom were members of precisely that SED, seems much more reluctant to invoke its spectre; as such, then, Moreau's characteristically absolute assertion that:

> Über die Rolle ihrer Vorgängerorganisation SED, die alleine verantwortlich für die Zustände in der früheren DDR war, verliert sie [die PDS - MD] *kein Wort.* (my italics)

can be seen to require considerable relativisation![86]

Closely linked with the notion of pluralism is that of *offene Strukturen* itself inextricably linked with the PDS's attempts, as we shall see in the following chapter, to strike the extra-system *Bewegung* keynote which characterised the Greens a decade before. Gysi goes on to observe that:

> Also Sie können doch nicht bestreiten, daß die PDS insgesamt eine sehr demokratische Partei ist ... Wir haben offenere Strukturen als viele andere Parteien. Vergleichen Sie doch mal 'n (sic) Bundesparteitag der PDS mit 'm Bundesparteitag der CDU, dann wissen Sie, wo Demokratie herrscht und wo nich. (sic)[87]

The PDS has consistently put its ideological factionalisation to good use by favourably comparing its (necessarily!) high level of ideological debate and (problematic!) diversity with the stasis that is seen to characterise other parties, thereby reinforcing its - as we shall see below - neo-Marxist picture of a sluggish and immutable establishment and reinforcing its own status as a very necessary motor for change.

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[85]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen." In: Falkner/Huber: *Aufschwung PDS* ... op. cit., p. 313 (interview)

[86]Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 8

[87]Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 259

DEFINING SOCIALISM

Having rescued *socialism*, the PDS is faced with the inordinately difficult task of defining it:

> Die Aufrechterhaltung des Sozialismus-Symbols, *die permanenten Interpretationskampf mit einschließt*, ist Voraussetzung für das Überleben der PDS in Ostdeutschland.[88]

Having so consciously taken on board a sign so potently visionistic, the PDS is faced with the complex task of justifying what lies behind it, of articulating how it might be used as a basis for offering any alternative to what is already on offer - and broadly accepted - in the establishment. Not surprisingly, we will argue, this has entailed the introduction into PDS discourse of a high level of abstraction, of propositional reduction, which - linguistically at least - offers the illusion of a trouble-free, de-antagonised, visionistic 'socialist' world. The SPD and the Greens, by virtue of the simple fact alone that they are an established factor in the equation of establishment politics[89], are to a far lesser degree than the PDS - operating from a position of weakness[90] - fraught with the debilitating *Interpretationskampf* identified by Raschke. We re-emphasise at this juncture that the linguistic devices underpinning this abstraction are by no means exclusive to the PDS. They are standard to all political actors and parties; it is simply that the very particular case of the PDS taking on the inordinately difficult task of seeking to overcome the plethora of contradictions highlighted above offers so *graphic* an illustration of features in language which facilitate the backgrounding, spurious resolution or circumvention of complex causal questions.

To this end, the discourse of the PDS's socialist vision has recourse to fairly standard linguistic strategies which 'de-antagonise' and de-problematise. The PDS *does* - of course - offer definitions of its socialism, but this must be qualified with the observation that the 'definitions' we encounter of this in itself highly superordinate keyword are frequently - simplistically - framed in other highly superordinate terms,

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[88]Raschke, Joachim: "Vor dem Umbruch des Parteiensystems? Die nachholende Modernisierung der Wähler und die Strategien der Parteien." In: *Blätter für die deutsche und internationale Politik.* Bonn, 7/95, p. 796

[89]For one former Green actor's appraisal of the high level of integration and acceptance now enjoyed by the Greens in the West German polity, see Krieger, Verena: *Was bleibt von den Grünen?* Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag 1991

[90]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit.

which while 'sounding nice'[91] are vast in their extension and minimal in intension; in other words, the 'definitions' rely heavily on key-words of the type identified by Townson. The connotative effect of these terms is positive, but their dentotative core is likewise extremely hard to pin down:

> Das bedeutet, daß unser Sozialismus-Begriff ein Höchstmaß an *Demokratie* und *Liberalität* einschließt. Es geht nicht um die Frage, ob und wieviel Demokratie und Liberalität sich eine sozialistische Gesellschaft leisten kann, sondern darum, daß ihr sozialistischer Charakter von der Realisierung umfassender *Demokratie* und *Liberalität* abhängt.[92] (my italics)

Here we have, then, a 'definition', but one which operates at a high level of abstraction, making it extremely hard to 'challenge' in terms of its lofty aims or in terms of a (meaningless) true/false schema; what we might challenge, however, is the level of abstraction involved. Of course, we re-iterate that all political discourse has frequent recourse to terms which are highly superordinate in character, but the PDS - we re-iterate - is in the disadvantaged and unenviable position of having to start from the (impossible?) premise of having to justify the need for, and define, a systemic *vision*. (The established parties are not faced with this task: their political mission is located firmly in the existing polity which is at best to be revised. Their commitment to the 'capitalist' present is taken for granted, indeed rarely is *capitalism* invoked on an expressis verbis level; starting from the here and now and not having to justify a vision per se reduces the level of abstraction required. *Capitalism* after all generally describes an *existent* societal form which can be categorised - i.e. talked about - 'retrospectively', per se reducing the level of generality necessary to enframe it in language [insofar as this is at all possible!]. *Socialism*, in enframing a vision located in the future, in being visionistic, can only be categorised in projected terms, necessarily promoting mythicality. As such, then, *socialism* is a label to which particularly wide recourse can be had). The terms of the PDS's vision, as presented above, hardly facilitate semantic specification inasmuch as they are vague in their denotative content and fail to address the complex causal dimension of *how* and *by whom* the vision is to be achieved. The above 'definition' exists in something of a 'vacuum': there is minimal contextualisation of the terms in the textual environment from which this 'definition' is extracted. Much the same might be said of the following presentation of the PDS's "demokratisch-sozialistische Ziele":

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[91]Moreau/Neu *(Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus...* op. cit., p. 36) observes how the aim of Höpcke, one of the authors of the first party programme, was to make it sound "sympathisch"; which political actor or party, we might well ask, does not pursue this aim!

[92]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 26

> Die PDS ist eine Partei, die sich in Deutschland für demokratisch-sozialistische Ziele einsetzt. Allgemein geht es ihr um die Gestaltung einer friedlichen, demokratischen, ökologischen, sozial gerechten und solidarischen Gesellschaft.[93]

The logical conclusion of a *socialism* drawn so widely and predicated upon such superordinacy, where commitment is primarily to the *symbolic* nature of the sign rather than to any hard and fast underlying *substantive* denotation, is that that socialism becomes a Topitschian *Leerformel.*[94]. Topitsch's term is, however, somewhat unhelpful inasmuch as no term is completely devoid of denotative content; it is rather the case that we are faced with a context-based sliding scale:

> Although it would be wrong to regard them (key-words - i.e. highly superordinate terms - MD) as completely devoid of denotative meaning, this meaning is not of prime importance - indeed the "actual" references are interchangeable, and ultimately it is not possible to state whether a term is used "correctly" or "incorrectly" with reference to a given or imagined political construct.[95]

(To say that socialism - diverse and abstract as its individual conceptions are - means 'everything and nothing' is not the same as saying that it means nothing at all.) In the broad and vague discourse of the PDS, the ideologeme *socialism* and its cognate *socialist* thus have a 'stabilising' function similar to the that which we encounter so graphically in SED discourse, where the terms' intension, too, is frequently minimal; and while the particular foregrounding of the *socialist* sign is doubtless a carry-over from SED discourse, the particular feature of using vastly extended, highly reductive signs on a largely symbolic level is a typical feature of all political discourse in the service of *any* ideology - we need go no further than the right's use of *Freiheit* in a highly reductive, polarised conceptual schema such as "Freiheit statt Sozialismus"[96].

We might single out the particularly graphic instrumentalisation of the lexeme *demokratisch* in PDS discourse as a signifier whose denotative content is similarly subordinated to its - connotative - symbolic value; it is used to bolster; PDS writing is literally peppered with the sign. With only a very vague contextualisation of the term, as is frequently the case, it is extremely hard to get at its meaning. In the

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[93]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 2

[94]Topitsch, op. cit., pp. 233-64

[95]Townson, op. cit., p. 203

[96]see Toman-Banke, Monika: "Die Wahlslogans von 1949 bis 1994." In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte.* B 51-52. 1994, p. 52

following the extension is vast, the intension minimal and the "democratic traditions" referred to have something of a mythical quality:

> Ihr (das der PDS - MD) politisches Selbstverständnis schöpft die Partei aus den Strömungen der deutschen und internationalen und internationalen Arbeiterbewegung, aus den revolutionären und *demokratischen Traditionen* des deutschen Volkes und aus dem Antifaschsimus.[97] (my italics)

The following is a fairly typical example of how *Demokratie/demokratisch* exist largely on the level of sign:

> Als *demokratische* Partei tritt die PDS für ihre Ziele mit *demokratischen* Mitteln gemäß dem Grundgesetz ein. Sie respektiert die Prinzipien der parlamentarischen *Demokratie.* Zugleich sieht sie die Notwendigkeit der umfassenden *Demokratisierung* aller Bereiche der Gesellschaft, zum Beispiel durch Stärkung von Elementen direkter *Demokratie.* Nicht der revolutionäre Sturz der parlamentarisch-*demokratischen* Ordnung und die Errichtung irgendeiner Diktatur, sondern die konsequente *Demokratisierung* Deutschlands ist das Ziel der PDS.[98] (my italics)

Positive sounding speech acts are reinforced through the invocation of the positively loaded *democracy* and *democratic*, but yet again semantic specification is difficult. (We will comment below upon the high level of nominalisation underpinning the PDS's 'democratic socialism'). Witness also, for example:

> Ich habe keine Befürchtungen, daß wir die zweite SPD werden. Das wäre überflüssig. Bei allen Unterschieden in der PDS[99] (!- MD) sind sich alle einig: gewaltfreie Veränderung und nur *demokratische,* andere gibt es nicht.[100] (my italics)

which begs the question of what kind of change is envisioned and what means of procuring these might be labelled 'democratic'. Witness, too, the following extract from a prolonged interview with Lothar Bisky, where again "demokratisch" is invoked as a positive symbol with little denotative specification:

> Gisela: Was ist dein politisches Credo?

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[97]"Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990, op. cit., p. 90

[98]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 2

[99]Observe again, here, the standard dialectical approach, to which we have drawn attention above, of countering through pre-emption.

[100]"Koalitionsbereit?" op. cit.

> Lothar Bisky: Ich halte am dem fest, was ich schon am 4. November 1989 gesagt habe: *Demokratische Interessen* haben über denen der Partei zu stehen. Und aus heutiger Sicht füge ich hinzu: Parteiinteressen haben sich Bürgerinteressen unterzuordnen.[101]

It is hardly surprising, then, that in a process where one highly superordinate term is explained in terms of another, there is a high degree of self-referentiality. Put simply, X is defined in terms of Y and Y is defined in terms of X, a mode of argumentation which Topitsch calls a "Zirkelschluß"[102]. This is exemplified in what we might call the conceptual pair *Demokratie/Sozialismus*: the two stand in close association (barely surprising in the case of a Party of *Democratic Socialism*![103]) and inform and define each other, provide each other's context. The following highly reductive - but positively charged - title of a PDS monograph functions on a very high level of abstraction:

> Der Weg zum *Sozialismus* heißt *Demokratie.*[104] (my italics)

Compare, too:

> Jeder Versuch des Vorankommens zu *sozialistischen* Verhältnissen ist zum Scheitern verurteilt, wenn er nicht *demokratisch* zustande kommt, wenn er nicht ein Mehr an *Demokratie* hervorbringt.[105] (my italics)

We remember the quotation above:

> Das bedeutet, daß unser *Sozialismus*-Begriff ein Höchstmaß an Demokratie und Liberalität einschließt ... ihr *sozialistischer* Charakter (hängt) von der Realisierung umfassender *Demokratie* (ab). (see footnote 92; my italics)

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[101]Oechelhäuser, op. cit., p. 72 (interview with Lothar Bisky)

[102]Topitsch, op. cit., p. 237 ff.

[103]The following extract from a statement from Stefan Heym as to why he decided to stand as a candidate on the PDS's *offene Listen* offers an interesting implication that *Demokratie* and *Sozialismus* eframe hard and fast, uniform goals and circumvents the notion of a problematic interrelationship between sign and denotation: "Warum trete ich zur Wahl für den Bundestag ... auf der Offenen Liste der PDS? ... Wenn nun Menschen mir heute anbieten, mich für den Bundestag zu nominieren, damit ich sie dort vertreten kann, und zugleich mit ihnen die Ideen, für die ich immer geschrieben habe, so fühle ich mich verpflichtet, das Angebot anzunehmen. Das Angebot kommt von der PDS, der Partei, die sich als Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus bezeichnet. *Für Demokratie und Sozialismus bin ich immer gewesen, und ich bin es noch. Insofern ist da Übereinstimmung.*" cited from: *Die andere Stimme: Stephan Heym.* Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS 1994, p. 1 (my italics) (The pamplet in question contains Heym's introduction, biographical notes, extracts from his works etc.)

[104]Werner, Harald/Peter Schott: *Der Weg zum Sozialismus heißt Demokratie. Diskussionsangebot der PDS.* Berlin: Controvers 1992, p. 5

[105]*Wer ist das, die PDS?* op. cit., p. 9

Compare, too:

> Gerade jetzt ist die Zeit gekommen, sich wieder als Sozialist zu bekennen. Dieser Begriff ist endlich wieder frei geworden (! - MD). *Für mich besteht Sozialismus in mehr Demokratie*, mehr sozialer Gerechtigkeit, mehr Machtkontrolle.[106] (my italics)

Democracy is in turn informed by *Sozialismus*; witness the syntactic-semantic parallelism[107] in the following:

> Herbert Wolf nimmt in der Öffentlichkeit des Landes zunehmende Bedürfnisse nach dauerhaft wirksamen Lösungen der gesellschaftlichen Probleme unserer Zeit wahr. Überzeugt, daß solche Lösungen nur mit *radikal-demokratischer*, letztlich *sozialistischer* Politik erreichbar sind ...[108] (my italics)

> Gramscis Erbe ist für alle *demokratischen* und progressiven, vor allem für *die auf Sozialismus orientierten Kräfte* auch heute hilfreich, um nach neuen gangbaren Wegen heraus aus den ökonomischen, sozialen und Menschheitsproblemen unserer Zeit ... zu suchen.[109] (my italics)

In other words, put starkly, *Sozialismus* = *Demokratie* and *Demokratie* = *Sozialismus*.

Witness, too, how, this self-referentiality is not only 'cross sign'. It also has an internal dimension, in that a sign is defined in terms of itself. In the example from *Wer ist das, die PDS?* cited above (see footnote 98) the process of "*<Demokrat>*isierung" is to be achieved by the strengthening of "direkte *<Demokrat>ie*". Consistent with this mode of logic is the following:

> Jeder Schritt wirklicher Demokratisierung ..., des Abbaus sozialer Ungerechtigkeit, der Erhöhung kommunaler Selbstbestimmung ist ein Schritt in Richtung Sozialismus. Dabei verstehen wir Demokratie als Einheit von repräsentativer, kommunaler, unmittelbarer und Wirtschaftsdemokratie.[110]

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[106]Heinrich Graf von Einsiedel, cited in Schumann: *Der Rote Graf.* op. cit., p. 22

[107]The term is Good's; see: Good: *Die deutsche Sprache und die kommunistische Ideologie.* op. cit., p. 36

[108]Lothar Bisky, introduction to Wolf, H.: *Woher kommt ...?* op. cit., p. 3

[109]Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie ...* op. cit., p. 19

[110]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 27

In other words we are presented here with a definition, yes, but some observers might challenge its scope - and identify a certain spuriousness - on the grounds that the variable of *Demokratie* has been left untouched. Mathematically this might be represented as something like $6x = 3x + 2x + x$, where x has been left undefined. It seems meaningless, however, to challenge this 'definition' as a mere 'pseudo-definition' or a 'non-definition'. It *is* a definition, however vague it may be; any definition is necessarily a reduction, rendering a perception of that definition as 'true' or 'false' meaningless:

> auch die exakteste ... Definition ist ein Willkürakt des Definierenden und darf nicht als Ersatz für Wirklichkeit, geschweige denn als Wirklichkeit selbst mißverstanden werden. Sie kann, wenn sie ernsthaft ist, die Verständigung, den Verkehr erleichtern. Das ist viel; mehr gibt sie nicht her ...[111]

What is at issue here is where that 'definition' lies on an empirically unquantifiable level of abstraction, and how 'satisfactory' or 'acceptable' that definition will be to the individual perception. What to one is spurious and misleading is to another reasonable and convincing.

Observe how *democracy* informs itself in the following highly superordinate attempt to define *demokratischer Sozialismus*:

> Bei der Neuformulierung des Inhalts des *demokratischen* Sozialismus, den wir anstreben, müssen wir uns ebenso wie Gramsci davon leiten lassen, daß Sozialismus nicht die Verwirklichung eines abstrakten, vorgefaßten Gesellschaftsmodells sein kann, sondern das Ergebnis der Lösung realer Widersprüche und Probleme der bestehenden Gesellschaft, in deren historischer und wandelbarer Konkretheit, im Sinne von Fortschritt, Gerechtigkeit, Humanismus, *Demokratie.*[112] (my italics)

The 'internal self-referentiality' is equally evident in:

> Demokratische Strukturen sichern, daß die Partei eine handlungsfähige Partei ihrer Mitglieder ist, und gewährleisten demokratsiche Willensbildung von unten nach oben.[113]

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[111]Mackensen, Lutz: *Verführung durch Sprache. Manipulation als Versuchung.* München: List Verlag 1973, p. 25

[112]Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit., p. 19

[113]"Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990. op. cit., p. 90

While it is not illogical to argue that democratic structures might produce informed, democratic thinking, the substantive nature of what lies behind *democracy/democratic* as sign is circumvented. By way of an example of the difficulty we encounter in pinning down the denotative content of highly superordinate terms, Schäffner and Porsch cite the following example taken from SED-speak which is striking in its syntagmatic, self-referential similarity to the above:

> In the account to the X1th Congress of the SED (1986), for example, the task was set to "shape the socialist relations of production in such a way that they promote the dynamic development of the productive forces in the interests of strengthening socialism".[114]

As Good rightly observes, classically ideological texts are "semantically closed, definitional, self-referential and axiomatic".[115] The public discourse of the SED[116] in the service as it was of the uniform, closed ideology of dialectical materialism necessarily exhibited this self-referentiality to a high degree. It is problematic to say the least, however, to argue that the self-referentiality which we encounter in the discourse of the PDS is a legacy of SED discourse, inasmuch as political discourse in the service of any ideology exhibits self-referentiality to varying and unquantifiable degrees. One need only bear in mind the standard academic approach of defining the terms which underpin an argument and then weaving the argument around the pre-defined terms. These terms operate over a complex sliding scale of extension and intension, of propositional reduction: after all, as soon as we interpret 'reality', as soon as we conceptualise it and attempt to order it we reduce it. As Mackensen puts it:

> Wenn wir etwas sagen, produzieren wir die "Welt" in unsern Worten mit der komplizierten Methode der "Sprache" nach; wir "worten" sie. Doch ist dieses Bemühen letztlich ein Versuch mit unzulänglichen Mitteln; jede Abstraktion

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[114]Schäffner/Porsch, op. cit., p. 38

[115]Good: *Language, Politics and Ideology*. op. cit.

[116]We must stress here, that we mean precisely this - the *official* discourse of the SED - and not, as is frequently erroneously perceived to be the case, a putative 'language of the GDR': "Öffentlich existierte für jegliche politische Diskussion nur ein einziger Diskurs. Im privaten Bereich sah das anders aus: Eine oft zitierte Metapher spricht von einer *Nischengesellschaft*, in der die Menschen von der Allgegenwärtigkeit des Staates in ihrer Privatsphäre Zuflucht suchten. Eine der sprachlichen Folgen dieser Erscheinung könnte man als die Fähigkeit bezeichnen, von der offiziellen Sprache des öffentlichen und daher politischen Diskurses auf die Sprache des Privaten umzuschalten. Was an alternativen Diskursen vorhanden war, z.B. in den Kirchen, existierte oftmals nur in schemenhafter Form." (Cited from Good: "Sprache im totalitären Staat ..." op. cit., pp. 267-8)

> vereinfacht; *immer ist das Urbild vielgestaltiger als sein Spiegelbild;* immer stimmt, was wir sagen, nur für diesen und jenen Fall ...[117] (my italics)

This invokes, then, complex questions of degree and extent, of the level - ultimately unquantifiable empirically - of that reduction, of the move away from 'reality'; this is all the more problematic as our interpretation of this 'reduction' has a highly subjective dimension: what to one is a 'broad' definition is to another spurious, scratches the surface. Our arguments vis-à-vis the abstracted language of the PDS must, then, be set against these observations, and, given the problems in quantifying that abstraction, are perforce predicated on a substantial degree of viscerality.

These reservations notwithstanding, we will continue to argue that the language of a PDS facing the inordinately complex task of defining and 'legitimising' a 'socialist' vision must perforce operate at a high level of abstraction. The PDS has, then, sought to 'define' its particular brand of democratic socialism using standard highly superordinate terms. It would seem the wrong perspective, however, to see this definition exclusively in 'tactical' terms, merely as PDS sophistry or obfuscation. There is ample room for seeing in this abstraction, too, that the PDS is quite simply a victim of its very own *Sprachlosigkeit*[118]: while the high degree of superordinacy is in one respect a 'solution' - which, as we said above, may indeed have a 'sincere' dimension - inasmuch as it helps the PDS deal with the immediate problem of circumventing complex causal issues, while it may be perceived as a tactical way of dealing with the immediate problem of locating a vision, it is at the same time a problem for the PDS, inasmuch as the PDS has had great difficulty in finding categories which are not already the preserve of other parties. Asked "Für welchen Sozialismus ... die PDS noch (steht)", Bisky responds:

> Lassen Sie mich das in einigen Grundzügen beschreiben. Die Eine-Welt-Konzeption spielt eine Rolle, auch die Überwindung der sozialen Ungerechtigkeit, die Abwehr der ökologischen Katastrophe und die Absage an jedwede Großmachtpolitik. Sozialismus ist für uns verbunden mit Demokratie, Solidarität, Emanzipation des Menschen, Überwindung des Patriarchats und den Menschenrechten.[119]

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[117]Mackensen, op. cit., p. 29

[118]It must be stressed here that the invocation of the loaded term in no way represents an attempt to bind the PDS into an extreme left-extreme right conceptual schema, suggestive as the term *Sprachlosigkeit* may be of an inability or refusal to address Nazi atrocities. In this respect, see Townson, op. cit., pp. 170, 175

[119]"1995 muß es zur Entscheidung kommen." In: *Die Tageszeitung.* 16 January 1995 (interview with Lothar Bisky)

which earns the response that "Das würden so auch viele SPD-Politiker sagen. Sind Sie ein Sozialdemokrat?"[120]. The abiding problem for the PDS has indeed been one of defining a vision 'broad' enough to circumvent the internal problems residing in the gap between *Weg* and *Ziel* while at the same time forceful and pertinent enough to distinguish the PDS from its left-wing rivals. As Marten-Finnis puts it:

> Seit 1990 fragt die PDS neu nach dem Charakter der Epoche, leiht sich aber als Antwort die semantischen Felder von den Grünen und westdeutschen Linken (DKP, "K"-Gruppen, westliche Frauen-, Dritte Welt- und Friedensbewegung) und bringt sich damit um die Chance, eigene politische Ansprüche zu formulieren ...[121]

What Marten-Finnis fails to address, however, is the question of in what ways the PDS actually *could* have anything 'new' to offer. We will discuss below the importance to a party of representing a relevant line of conflict within society, and whether there is any room for a PDS in the schema of conflicting values that characterise the prevailing order.

While consistently striving to present a 'united front' to an outside world, 'internally', the party has recognised the problem (highlighting, of course, the importance of bolting this contextual dimension - i.e. whether a text is designed primarily for consumption within the 'closed'[122] world of the party ranks or by a 'wider public' at large; what many German media commentators have referred to as the *parteiinterner/-externer* dimension - onto any discursive picture of the party):

> der PDS-Vorstand (räumte) schon in seinem schriftlichen Bericht an den Februar-Parteitag von 1991 ein: "Für die programmatische Arbeit besteht eine Schwierigkeit gegenwärtig darin, die globalen Bedingungen nicht nur zu beschreiben und vor ihnen zu warnen, sondern konkrete, linke, politikfähige Konzepte für einen realistischen politischen Weg von hier und heute zu dort und morgen zu unterbreiten Damit verbunden ist die Frage, wer denn die neuen Subjekte linker Politik sind, die derartige Konzepte realisieren. Offensichtlich hilft uns das alte Klassenverständnis nicht weiter."[123]

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[120]ibid.

[121]Marten-Finnis, op. cit., p. 139

[122]Given the media-pervasiveness of the contemporary world (against which no party is immune) it would be naive, of course, not to expect *in camera* deliberations to 'filter through' (as is the case here!) to the 'outside world' of public consumption.

[123]Cited from: Falkner/Huber: *Aufschwung PDS* ... op. cit., p. 184

One way in which the PDS has dealt in the short term with the problem of finding subjects for a socialist vision has been quite simply to bypass it: a key feature of the 'visionistic' utterances highlighted in this chapter is, it will have been observed, their heavy reliance on devices in language which obscure agency: nominalisation, passivisation, reflexivity. The following offers a graphic example of this reliance.

> Wir haben die Vision einer lebenswerten Welt. Als Sozialistinnen und Sozialisten wollen wir dazu beitragen, um jene noch unbeschrittenen Wege zu finden, durch die die Menschenrechte auf Freiheit, Solidarität und demokratische Mitbestimmung, auf Arbeit, Wohnung und Gesundheit, auf Frieden und Naturerhaltung ... *durchgesetzt werden können.*[124]

Again, however, the suspension of agency straddles a complex boundary between tactical motivation and, simply, *Sprachlosigkeit.*

An acceptable bringing together of *Weg* and *Ziel* requires much more than the attempt by leading ideologues at the 4th party conference to circumvent the problem by offering a mere *expressis verbis* equation of the two:

> Sozialismus ist für uns Weg, Methode, Wertorientierung und Ziel.[125]

Observe, here, the re-emergence of a synergist dimension (which we see so often in PDS discourse - see below) in the attempt to 'hide' the internal contradictions through subsumation under a broadly drawn, overarching *Sozialismus* category.

Good has concluded that:

> There are no obvious ways for the successor party of the old Socialist Unity Party of the German Democratic Republic to locate itself on the left of the German political spectrum. Taking up the causes of environmentalism, women's liberation or the third world is insufficient; too many other parties have already occupied these issues for the PDS to make them solely their own.[126]

Into this schema of *Sprachlosigkeit* fits what we might call the PDS's 'pick and mix' socialism, its (hopeful) invocation of a wide range of diverse and disparate socialist theories and thinkers under the banner of (an elusive and illusory?) synergy:

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[124]Gysi, Gregor: *Ingolstädter Manifest. Wir - mitten in Europa. Plädoyer für einen neuen Gesellschaftsvertrag.* Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS 1994, p. 1

[125]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op. cit., p. 26

[126]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit.

> Wir schöpfen aus der Geschichte des humanistischen Denkens, insbesondere aus den dialektischen und materialistischen Auffassungen von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, Wilhelm Liebknecht und August Bebel, Eduard Bernstein und Karl Kautsky, Rosa Luxemburg und Karl Liebknecht, W. I. Lenin und Antonio Gramsci und ihrer nachfolgenden vielfältigen Weiterentwicklung.[127]

Witness, too:

> Die PDS steht in sozialistischen Traditionen: Antimilitarismus, soziale Verantwortung und Kampf um Demokratie sind Erbteile, zu denen wir uns bekennen. Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht und Paul Levi bleiben unsere politischen Vorläufer.[128]

Observe how the problem of bridging 'progressive' and 'orthodox' positions is achieved discursively through a synergist fusion of the maximally extended categories of 'modern' and 'classical' theories:

> Die PDS ist eine pluralistische Partei, die an keine Weltanschauung gebunden ist. Sie hat nicht *eine* Theorie, sondern schöpft aus *den* Theorien der Moderne - natürlich aber auch aus klassischen Texten.[129] (italics in original)

And while we would disagree strongly with Moreau's hysterical conclusion that the broad mix is designed to harness as much support for the PDS as possible in order for the party to pursue its (as Moreau would have it) unified, single-minded aim of toppling the existing polity[130], his observations on the attempt in the first party programme to locate broad, lowest common denominators are germane (despite failing to problematise the question of how this is any different from what party ideologues ritually do when faced with internal contradictions; British observers familiar with the 'Blairing of Labour' will be only too familiar with the potential in discursive breadth for *suggesting* unity):

> Das Programm hatte einen stark eklektizistischen Charakter. Es stellte eine bunte Mischung aus kommunistischen, grünen, sozialdemokratischen, feministischen sowie radikal- und basisdemokratischen Elementen und Forderungen dar ... Um einen modus vivendi im Verhältnis der Strömungen und Plattformen untereinander zu finden, war die PDS gezwungen, den

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[127]"Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990, op. cit., p. 90

[128]Gysi: *Ingolstädter Manifest* ... op. cit., p. 15

[129]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen. op. cit.,p. 313 (see footnote 85)

[130]cf.: "(Die PDS - MD) konzentriert all ihre Kräfte auf eine destruktive Opposition gegen die marktwirtschaftliche Ordnung." (Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 8)

> kleinsten gemeinsamen Nenner zu suchen und dabei jede unnötige Formalisierung zu vermeiden.[131]

Unsurprisingly, the only way of effecting this synergy is on an abstract discursive level of inherent causality: in the following a reflexive requiring only one inherent participant[132] reduces the complex causality behind the synergist vision and conspires to make a credo of harmony from disharmony look readily achievable:

> Darüber hinaus ist der politische Pluralismus in den heutigen so unerhört komplexen Gesellschaften eine entscheidende Bedingung, um im Wettbewerb sozialistischer, sozialdemokratischer oder radikalökologischer Vorstellungen Antworten auf die neuen gesellschaftlichen und globalen Herausforderungen zu finden, *die sich aus der gegenseitigen Bereicherung der unterschiedlichen Konzepte entwickeln können.*[133] (my italics)

This level of abstraction is mirrored in the party's second programme[134]:

> Die konkreten Ziele der sozialistischen Bewegung *ergeben sich* (as if by magic - MD) *aus den realen Widersprüchen und Konflikten und aus den herangereiften Entwicklungspotentialen, nicht aber aus einem abstrakten Geschichtsplan.*[135] (my italics)

in which the category *abstraction* is itself invoked for rhetorical effect in the context of what amounts to a very telling meta-abstraction!

Observe, incidentally the invocation of *Widersprüche*, a central ideologeme of the marxist-leninst discourse of dialectical materialism, as a motivating factor in the discursive move away from the orthodox categories of the class-conflict model. Good has shown how the invocation of central ideologemes from the 'old' discourse of the SED, frequently with amended denotation, is a key feature of the PDS's 'hybrid' 'unifying' discourse, its attempt to marry 'pragmatic' and traditional, 'orthodox' positions:

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[131]ibid., p. 36

[132]For a discussion of inherent causality and inherent participants, see "Transitivity in Language", chapter 4 below.

[133]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 17

[134]One of the prime textual functions of a party programme being, after all, to locate as broad an inner-party 'common ground' as possible. "Hinsichtlich des politischen Selbstverständnisses kommt den Programmen wichtige Bedeutung insbesondere für die Binnenintegration der Mitgliedschaft zu, welche bei aller Einsicht in politische Rücksichtnahmen sicherlich nur begrenzt Positionen hinnehmen würde, die ihr diametral widersprächen." Pfahl-Traughber: "Wandlung zur Demokratie?" op. cit. p. 360

[135]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* Berlin 1993, p. 12

> The "tradition" continues to make itself felt in a number of ways. It may be dealt with overtly, as a problem ... it may be put to rhetorical use, even as it is being denied, or it may be present in what we might call "trace" form in the new discourse ...
>
> The traditional vocabulary of the "class struggle" is clearly difficult to abandon, given the need to keep alive the appeal to the outlook of the *Traditionalisten.*[136] The key term *Kampf*, for instance, sometimes makes its appearance when it is clearly motivated primarily more by this consideration. The phrase *von den aktuellen Kämpfen ausgehen* [= Brie, in *DISPUT.* no 3/4 1993; p. 33 - MD] as part of the justification of the new, more realistic, pragmatic approach against the charge that such an approach is *reformistisch* or even *systemkonform*, taps the motivating potential of the old language ...[137] (italics in original)

Into this schema fits the ideologeme *Revolution* which we shall proceed to discuss in our examination of the influence on the party of Antonio Gramsci.

DISCURSIVE BREADTH - CHAMPIONING GRAMSCI

Part and parcel of this hybrid discourse is, as we mentioned above, the foregrounding of ideologues whose vision, while broadly locatable in a marxist/communist tradition, can be moulded more readily to meet the demands of the new political environment. One such ideologue given particular prominence by the PDS is Antonio Gramsci, whose theories we now turn to in some detail, as there are strong grounds for seeing the foregrounding of this ideologue as emblematic and exemplary of what the PDS has sought to achieve in language: to overcome contradiction and irreconcileability through breadth. His theories are given particular prominence in a monograph (published in 1990) by Harald Neubert[138], a leading PDS ideologue, who is keen to engage the 'healthy pluralist' mode:

> Im Programm der PDS, das auf dem Parteitag vom 24./25. Februar 1990 angenommen wurde, wird der Name von Antonio Gramsci unter denen genannt, aus deren "dialektischen und materialistischen Auffassungen" die

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[136]Lang observes that: "In der Tat wäre es für die PDS - sieht man von statutarischen Hindernissen ab - ein leichtes, die 2500 erkennbaren KPF-Sympathisanten (in the PDS - MD) abzustoßen. Aber die breite Masse dahinter, die sich in ihrem Glauben an die gute Sache des Staatssozialismus von der KPF am besten vertreten fühlen, sind *das* Standbein der PDS im Osten. See Lang: "Nach den Wahlen 1994 ..." op. cit., pp. 375-76 (italics in original)

[137]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien*? op. cit.

[138]Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit., p. 3

> Partei ihr theoretisches und politisches Selbstverständnis schöpft. Die Tatsache, daß ... neben Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, August Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg, Wilhelm und Karl Liebknecht auch die Namen von Eduard Bernstein und Karl Kautsky genannt werden, beweist ein neues Verhältnis der Partei zum geschichtlichen Erbe. *Dies ist ein beredtes Zeugnis der Erneuerung der Partei.* (my italics)

As we have observed above, naming is easy; *addressing* is an entirely different matter.

Neubert is keen to stress that Gramsci's vision - though banned in the GDR - is locatable in a communist tradition encompassing Marx and Engels, whose symbolic invocation alongside Gramsci is doubtless of vital significance as a comforter ("eine wichtige Brücke zu ihrer eigenen ideologischen Vergangenheit"[139]) to the party's 'old guard'; Neubert - as we remember (see footnote 30) - is keen to stress the link:

> Was den italienischen Kommunisten Antonio Gramsci angeht, so hat er sich auf seine Weise ebenfalls kritisch das theoretische Erbe von Marx und Engels, sowie der führenden Köpfe der II. Internationale zu eigen gemacht ... (Neubert; p. 4[140])

Neubert bemoans that the Communist recognised only the "Traditionslinie von Marx, Engels, Lenin und zunächst auch Stalin" (p. 3), thereby preparing the ground for locating Gramsci in that very line. Observe, again, how the invocation of a (mythical and unverifiable?) tradition foregrounds broad uniformity.

Simultaneously, however, this 'vision' is broad enough to encompass a more 'revisionist' dimension, more in keeping with the wish of party pragmatists (with a position championing an "Optimierung des bestehenden"[141]) to see the PDS dispense with any commitment to a rigid avant-gardism and adopt a political approach more tenable in, and adaptable to, the new environment. In a nutshell Gramsci's vision as presented - and championed - by Neubert, advocates a move away from a hard-line, one-party, avant-garde, monist, 'revolutionary' communism incorporating a violent overthrow of the existing order and a seizure of power (in the form of a "Manöverkrieg")[142] by an elitist few, and champions a 'revisionist' approach in

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[139]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 279

[140]All page numbers in brackets below refer to Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit.

[141]see footnote 70

[142]"Gramsci wandte sich de facto gleichermaßen gegen das Konzept Trotzkis von der permanenten Revolution wie gegen das Konzept von der Revolution als einem einmaligen offensiven Akt der Eroberung der Staatsgewalt ("Manöverkrieg") und plädierte für den Weg, der über die politische

which the achievements of bourgeois society are acknowledged[143] and accepted as a basis from which to progress - by way of a gradual "Stellungskrieg" - to a "socialist" order. Central to this 'vision' is a polarised conceptual structure in which a broadly drawn "zivile Gesellschaft" is championed against an equally nebulous "politische Gesellschaft". (p. 8). The latter is referred to as the "staatlich-institutionellen Organisationsformen der Macht" (p. 8), the former - the unverifiability and mythicality of whose group(ing)s we shall examine below - the "ökonomischen und sozialen Beziehungen, die Basis einer Gesellschaft, die nichtstaatlichen gesellschaftlichen Organisationsformen ..." (p. 8). Gramsci calls for a party to exercise "hegemony" (p. 11) - which he contrasts with the very negative "Herrschaft" (p. 11) - by winning over civil society as a basis for running political society. The difference is between "'Herrschaft' in Gestalt exekutiver Staatsmacht und die der politischen, geistigen und moralischen Führung mittels 'Hegemonie'".[144]

Despite its 'reformist' bent, Neubert is still keen to invoke the sign *Revolution* in stressing the 'revolutionary' nature of this vision:

> Auch er war, der allgemeinen kommunistischen Meinung entsprechend, damals überzeugt, daß die sozialistische *Revolution* auf der Tagesordnung stände. (p. 18)

As Good has observed of related attempts to 'redefine' *Revolution*:

> Revolution und ähnliche Konzepte waren bereits in der postrevolutionären Phase der Wendezeit problematisch geworden. Dennoch war und ist *Revolution* ein viel zu zentrales Ideologem, um fallengelassen zu werden ... Das Wort ist auf jeden Fall ein heißes Eisen und äußerst ambivalent. Es muß in die neue, pragmatische Weltanschauung hinübergerettet werden ... Es wird argumentiert, daß die neue Bedeutung von *Revolution* in der Geschichte des Sozialismus verwurzelt ist ...[145]

What we have, then, is a model which might be proffered in the ideological attempt to bridge the divide between the party's orthodox anti-capitalist Marxists and its pragmatic wings; after all, there is no general agreement among the 'socialists' in the

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Auseinandersetzung innerhalb der bestehenden bürgerlichen Gesellschaft führt und nichts anderes ist *als eine von innen heraus bewirkte Transformation der gesamten zivilen Gesellschaft* ("Stellungskrieg bzw. Positionskrieg"); my italics. (Neubert, ibid., p. 10)

[143]Gramsci "ging. von der Verteidigungswürdigkeit der Errungenschaften bürgerlicher Demokratie aus" (Neubert, ibid., p. 18)

[144]Moreau: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., p. 151

[145]Good:"Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 275

PDS's ranks as to how best to proceed towards socialism (i.e. about the *Weg*) and indeed what the ultimate vision is. It offers an (albeit abstract) level upon which the different party factions might work together within the framework of the existing order, yet simultaneously invokes the ultimate prospect of a *radically* new order - i.e. one in which 'revolutionary' change will have come about. Observe here, how the conflationary potential of the sign *revolutionary* is tapped: the problem of where revolution starts and ends in the minds of different individuals is neatly and simply circumvented behind a sign which straddles and blurs the boundary between what is achieved (i.e. state) and what is achievable/yet to be achieved (i.e. action). Seen from another perspective, Gramsci's broad vision might be said to provide a means of defusing an inter-related polemic, in offering, on paper at least, a level upon which to reconcile the aims of the 'pragmatist reformers' and the 'radical reformers'[146]; the locating of the vision in the conflict areas of a broad and vaguely-defined *zivile Gesellschaft* (set off - simplistically - against a *politische Gesellschaft* in a reductive bipolar schema) provides a broad basis upon which the 'radical reformers' - such as the *Junge GenossInnen* whose rejection of capitalism and commitment to fundamental change is not, however, predicated upon a backward-looking socialism such as is enframed in the model of class conflict - might be brought into the picture; their reluctant acceptance of the here and now has consistently been coupled with a refusal to give primacy to what they perceive as the egregious structures of the established political fora which are to be bypassed if the PDS is not to be 'sucked in' and 'neutralised' in the way that - as they perceive it - the Greens were. (In other words, an *Optimierung des Bestehenden* is to be achieved by by-passing the established political structures). For the pragmatist reformers (Gysi, Bisky et al.) it might be said to simply provide, in calling for practical solutions to the problems symptomatic of the prevailing polity, a basis for 'getting on with it', for realistic action in, and acceptance of, the here and now, and offers the prospect of a Hegelian synergy once the 'right solutions' have been found; in other words, this is a position of optimisation through involvement, be it in the established fora, be it in the interests of a vaguely drawn civil society. It seems reasonable, to see in Neubert's efforts as much a tactical attempt to keep the 'old guard'[147]. on board as any real

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[146]We must stress again the (very necessary) reductiveness of our model. The inner-party situation is a good deal more complex than is suggested by reductive categories enframed in easily manageable polarised models such as 'orthodox Marxists' vs. 'modernist reformers' or 'modernist reformers' vs. 'radical reformers'; the 'reality' is a complex amalgam of a whole plethora of different psychological motivations, not easily identifiable or extricable, which cannot be reproduced empirically by any language system.

[147]"die bei der Stange gehalten werden müssen, damit die Partei nicht zugrunde geht"; Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 266

incitement - as Moreau vociferously suggests - to subversive activity[148]. In other words Neubert, in invoking Gramsci, is attempting what Gramsci before him spent much of his life attempting: to reconcile fundamentally different political visions, to bridge the gap between commitment to fundamental change starting from the basis of bourgeois society whose achievements are acknowledged and a 'revolutionary' transformation of that society based on violent overthrow.[149] Put a more cynical way, the attempt is to sell to the old guard a 'new' acceptance of the existing polity by locating that acceptance within an 'old' tradition, a 'communist' tradition which is drawn broadly, where 'revisionism' and 'reformism' might be allowed to co-exist happily; at the same time the 'radical fundamentalists' are offered a vision whose essential dynamic is located in 'the people' and not - as this faction sees it - in the corruptive machinery of the status quo. As such, the attempt is, as Moreau rightly observes, "(den) Zusammenhang von Reform und Reovlution zu klären ... Zu der für das *Überleben* (surely the important point - MD!) der PDS notwendigen Anpassungsstrategie (in making itself a viable party in a united Germany - MD) lieferte Gramsci Methodolgie und eschatologische Vision"[150]. (my italics)

Let us now proceed to a brief survey of the language of the Gramscian vision, before examining the question of its broad re-emergence in the discourse of the PDS.

It would be hard to find a more graphic catalogue of language with an inherently positive semantic component of *unity*, *uniformity* and *harmony* than we encounter in the Gramscian vision as described by Neubert; it calls for:

"Gleichberechtigung", (p. 12) the party's "Führungsfunktion in einem *Bündnis*", "*Zustimmung*", (p. 12) a "Suche nach einem *Konsens gleichberechtigter Partner*", (p. 12) a "*Bündniskonstellation*"; (p. 12) the exercise of power "muß sich auf einen zu bildenden historischen *Block* der *Mehrheit* des Volkes stützen" (p. 12) the party "muß sich mit allen Sektionen dieser *Klasse verbinden*" (p. 13) and be an "*organischer Teil*" (p. 13), "organisierende und führende Kraft der Klasse" (p. 13).

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[148]We touched, in chapter 2, upon how, in the cold-war world of Moreau, the PDS's single-issue *Arbeits-* and *Interessengemeinschaften* are reduced to a recreation of twenties soviets and are perceived as forming the basis for a *Bündnispolitik* (Moreau: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., p. 154) with the single-minded aim of crushing the capitalist consensus: "Das Ziel der PDS besteht darin, auf allen Gebieten der zivilen Gesellschaft die Konfliktzonen auszumachen und in jedem Spannungsfeld oder jeder Kluft eine spezifische Botschaft zu vermitteln. Kernpunkt ist der Widerstand gegen den sozialen Konsens, wo immer er möglich ist." (Moreau, ibid., p. 156).(We might well argue that the PDS's *IG*'s and *AG*'s are just as much an attempt to invoke the Green model of the 80s as the party attempts - as it has consistently done - to strike the '*Bewegung*' keynote. This will be dealt with in chapter 4)

[149]cf.: "Sein (Gramsci's - MD) Bemühen, die herannahende Spaltung der sozialistischen Partei in Reformisten und Revolutionäre zu verhindern hatte keinen Erfolg." (Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit., p. 6); "Gramsci übernahm in dieser Zeit auch die Führung der Partei, nachdem er sich mit seinen Auffassungen gegen die sektiererischen Positionen Bordigas durchgesetzt hatte." ibid., p. 7

[150]Moreau: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., p. 147

The party's essential role is one of bringing about "sozialen und politischen *Integration*". (p. 14) (all italics mine)

Crucially, Neubert argues:

> Sein (Gramsci's - MD) Integralismus bedeutete nicht, die nichtproletarischen Kräfte für die Durchsetzung der spezifischen Klasseninteressen des Proletariats zu gewinnen; deren Interessen denen des Proletariats einfach unterzuordnen, sondern er verlangte von der kommunistischen Partei, sich zum *Fürsprecher aller Interessen* (! MD), das heißt *aller Bündnispartner* zu machen. (p. 14; my italics)

The proletariat, argues, Gramsci, must understand the wishes of the peasantry, "muß diese Klassenforderungen seinem revolutionären Übergangsprogramm einverleiben"; if the party champions only the proletariat it will be unable to carry out its "*gesamtgesellschaftliche,* nationale Funktion". (p. 14; my italics)

Ultimately Gramsci (and Neubert) are on a classical and (elusive?) quest for an "*Einheit* zwischen Theorie und Praxis, zwischen den intellektuellen Schichten und den Volksmassen, zwischen Regierten und Regierenden". (p. 15; my italics)

The vision operates at a very high degree of abstraction. The group(ing)s it champions are extremely broad (*Block, Bündnis, Klasse, aller Interessen, aller Bündnispartner* especially "die auf Sozialismus orientierten Kräfte" (p. 4), unverifiable, empirically unquantifiable and ultimately mythical. (We might well question, for example, if there is a uniform peasant class with uniform interests). Natural antagonisms are simply circumvented and obscured through the invocation of an inherently unifying language where the lowest common denominator is simply that - unity; how and by whom this unity is to be achieved is left a at a very high degree of generality, with very little explicit causality. How is this 'causal circumvention' achieved? In other words, what conspires to make the unachievable look achievable? For one thing, recourse is had to a large number of means which background and obscure problematic questions of agency. To that end, we encounter a very high level of nominalisation: "die *Durchsetzung* der spezifischen Klasseninteressen" (p. 14); "nach der *Übernahme* der Macht". (p. 12) (all italics mine) Nominalisation, in being outside indications of tense, conspires to blur the distinction between what is and what is desirable. A large number of relational constructions[151] show no causal transaction from actor/agent to affected; cf.: "Ihre [that of intellectuals - MD] Funktion *besteht darin,* Konsens zu erreichen"(p. 15);

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[151]see "Transitivity in Language" in chapter 4 below.

"daß der demokratische Zentralismus 'eine organische Einheit zwischen Theorie und Praxis, zwischen den Intellektuellen und den Volksmassen' ... *erfordert*" (p. 15); "während die grundlegende Aufgabe eine nationale war, d.h. das Erkennen des Terrains und die Feststellung der Elemente von Schützengräben und Befestigungen *erforderte* ". (p. 10) (all italics mine) Recourse is had to an inherent causality[152]; observe in the following how things fall into place 'naturally', through the invocation of reflexives requiring only one inherent participant: "Auf diese Weise darf *sich* Machtausübung (observe the nominalisation! - MD) einer Klasse nicht auf die Herrschaft einer kleinen, auserwählten, machtbewußten Elite *gründen*, sondern muß *sich* auf einen zu bildenden (by whom?! - MD) 'historischen Block' der Mehrheit des Volks *stützen*". (p. 12) (all italics mine) Observe how inanimates occupy the 'actor' position ("*Machtübung* darf sich ..."; "*die so verstandene Bündniskonstellation* bildet ... einen 'historischen Block'"). (my italics)

Georgia Green offers a graphic description of the polysemous nature of nominalised forms; they can cover a broad semantic spectrum taking in, inter alia:

* the fact that something has been done, or is a certain way
* the extent to which something has been done, or is a certain way
* whether or not something happens
* the act of doing something
* the products of some action
* the way something was done[153]

There is clearly ideological potential to be had from choosing a form which blurs the distinction between state and action/process, between what is achieved and what has yet to be achieved, between what can and what may never be achieved. Gramsci's notion of a "democratic centralism", for example, calls for a "ständige *Anpassung* der Organisation an die reale Bewegung" (my italics) where the boundaries are blurred between a complex (mythical and unrealisable?) *process* (requiring *agents*!) and (a readily achievable or already achieved) state. Put simply the nominal conspires to make something complex and barely tangible *appear* concrete and realisable. The example just cited is embedded in an environment which, for sheer abstraction and complete suspension of agency, is second to none:

> Der 'organische Charakter des Zentralismus' kann nur in Gestalt des demokratischen Zentralismus existieren, der sozusagen ein 'Zentralismus in

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[152]see ibid.

[153]Green, Georgia M.: *Pragmatics and Natural Language Understanding*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 1990, p. 50.

> Bewegung ist', was eine ständige Anpassung der Organisation an die reale Bewegung bedeutet. Die müsse verbunden sein mit der Akkumulation immer neuer Erfahrungen. Der Zentralismus sei 'organisch' weil er die Bewegung, d.h. die historischen Veränderungen, berücksichtigt, 'was bedeutet, auf organische Weise die historische Realität zu erfassen'. (p. 15)

We shall have much more to say about causal abstraction in our survey of transitivity in language in chapter 4.

Gramsci's 'democratic centralism' is based upon "Übereinstimmungen" and "Gemeinsamkeiten" (p. 16) and, says Neubert, should have taken into account the "soziale, politische, weltanschauliche, kulturelle Vielfalt in der Gesellschaft". (p. 16) The overlap with current PDS ideology is unmistakable here. Neubert, like Gramsci seeks to deal with the contradictions inherent in any rational schema, the refusal of the world to subordinate itself to neat categories, by making virtue from necessity, by making this his credo, the centrepiece of his vision: his socialism is based upon the championing and acceptance of heterogeneity and plurality, of the *Widersprüche* in society; in other words, harmony and uniformity (motivated by the language we identified above) are to be gained on a level of generality which embraces otherwise problematic plurality and heterogeneity and offers harmony through the acceptance of disharmony. Here is Neubert's means of bridging the gap between *Weg* and *Ziel*:

> Eine wesentliche Erfahrung aus dem Scheitern des bisher praktizierten Sozialismusmodells besteht darin, daß die Formen, Wege, Methoden, hierfür sehr vielfältig sind. (p. 19)

- not an unuseful notion for a PDS struggling to hold together groups with fundamentally different ideas as to how to put socialism into place and what form it should take; the fundamental (and irreconcilable?) diversity of approach is encapsulated in the sheer breadth of PDS conceptions of the term *Opposition*, whose semantic specification, as we shall see in chapters 4 and 5, has yet to be pinned down by the PDS with any degree of uniform, inner-party acceptance: is it an opposition to 'capitalism' based upon the old class warfare model, is it an opposition (though not motivated by a commitment to the supremacy of the proletariat) predicated upon a refusal to become involved in the governmental institutions of the prevailing order, or is it opposition which can be understood in fairly standard establishment terms, i.e. as the antonym of a governmental role, where the party's prime aim is to increase its influence in the existing order by striving for power within the framework of the established structures? An overall 'PDS discourse' - one key discursive component of which is a 'unifying discourse' which attempts to locate a level of abstraction

capable of circumventing problematic discursive disparity - represents a complex tapestry of this and numerous other competing and contradictory discourses.

Socialism then, says Neubert, is about embracing the problems, the "Widersprüche" in society, and evening these out where they occur:

> Bei der Neuformulierung des Inhalts des demokratischen Sozialismus, den wir anstreben, lassen wir uns ebenso wie Gramsci davon leiten, daß Sozialismus nicht die Verwirklichung eines abstrakten, vorgefaßten Gesellschaftsmodells sein kann, sondern das Ergebnis der Lösung realer Widersprüche und Probleme der bestehenden Gesellschaft, in deren historischer und wandelbarer Konkretheit, im Sinne von Fortschritt, Gerechtigkeit, Humanismus, Demokratie. (p. 19)

Observe, here, how "Lösung" clearly straddles the problematic boundary between complex process and achieved state. Observe, too, the component of nominal presuppositionality: the fact that the nominal stands outside of indications of time (i.e. as something problematic *yet to be* achieved) allows the existence of a solution to be taken for granted. The Gramscian *Widersprüche* are drawn broadly. Their lowest common denominator is that - whatever they are - they will be evened out by a (mythical) socialist movement; there is a natural presumption that the groups concerned would necessarily wish this nebulous and vague socialist movement to make itself "Fürsprecher" for its interests. The synergist dimension which has been so prevalent a feature of PDS discourse is clearly in evidence in the Gramscian vision: there is a natural textual presupposition that the aggregate of all individually resolved conflicts would naturally form a harmonious overall picture, thereby circumventing the problematic notion of what happens when the resolution of one conflict is predicated upon the creation of another. The suggestion is that a uniform, harmonious movement will magically fall into place as the 'filtering out' and crystallisation of all individual socialist conceptions and aims:

> keine politische Bewegung kann sich angesichts der komplizierten Wirkungsbedingungen, der vielfältigen Erfahrungen, der unterschiedlichen Formen, Ziele und Methoden der Aktion dauerhaft und erfolgreich behaupten, wenn sie nicht kritisch und schöpferisch alle geschichtlichen Erkenntnisse, Erfahrungen, Impulse usw. immer wieder aufs neue verarbeitet. (Neubert; p. 3)

Similarly, Gramsci's democratic centralism is based upon the "Akkumulation immer neuer Erfahrungen". (p. 15)

As with Bortfeldt's monograph we observe the dialectical approach as Neubert struggles to achieve a *Spagat* between political realism[154] and the need to sweeten the bitter pill he is offering the party's old guard. While Neubert offers an expressis verbis recognition that in adapting the Gramscian world-view to meet the demands of a modern environment "man nicht in den Fehler verfallen (darf), Antworten auf alle aktuellen Probleme finden zu wollen", the reductive and abstract notion of a *uniform* goal (*demokratischer Sozialismus*) predicated upon a (realist) diversity of approach hints quite precisely at a concomitant attempt to proffer an all-embracing schema which would represent a panacea for *all* societal ills.

It is hardly surprising that Neubert's dialectical attempt to proffer an ideological 'super-model' which might override problematic inner-party factionalism and tie together the legitimacy strands we identified in chapter 1 should yield some contradiction. It is telling that in a work which - pragmatically - champions plurality and a move away from a determinist, dogmatic and uniform world-view on the one hand[155], on the other hints at the primacy to be accorded a Leninist party avant-gardism as Neubert pre-empts the objections of aghast party conservatives; Neubert seems at pains to locate Gramsci's conception of the party role in the Leninist tradition familiar to the SED's old guard:

> Ohne Zweifel befürwortete er (Gramsci - MD) die führende Rolle der kommunistischen Partei als unverzichtbare Voraussetzung für die sozialistische Umwälzung. Hier stand er *ganz in der Leninschen Tradition.* (p. 13; my italics)

Observe, too, how Neubert, like Bortfeldt, struggles with the SED legacy: on the one hand a pragmatic and realistic Neubert catalogues the reprehensible features left by the SED in its wake as part of the *kommunistische* (not, of course, *sozialistische*! - MD) *Bewegung* ("Diffamierungen, Parteiausschlüssen, ja sogar ... physische(r) Vernichtung"; p. 4) and points to the fact that:

> Führung wurde von den regierenden kommunistischen Parteien im wesentlichen kraft Macht und politischer Überlegenheit ausgeübt (p. 12);

on the other exoneration is offered through a transfer of blame onto the *Führung* in the familiar manner:

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[154]"Seit März 1990 war sich die PDS der Notwendigkeit bewußt, sich innerhalb von kürzester Zeit zu einer 'gesamtdeutschen' Partei entwickeln zu müssen". Moreau: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., p. 147

[155]"Es war zu einer verhängnisvollen Praxis geworden, daß viele Parteien in der kommunistischen und Arbeiterbewegung, darunter auch die SED, lange Zeit lediglich die Traditionslinie von Marx,

> Da die Stabilität der Gesellschaft im "realen Sozialismus" (leaving, a "pure" Sozialismus intact - MD; inverted commas in original) allein auf der Macht im engeren Sinne des Wortes, das heißt auf der Staatsgewalt beruhte, *die wiederum ein Instrument der Parteiführung (nicht die Partei schlechthin war)* ... (p. 16; my italics)

Observe how Neubert, too, simplistically foregrounds an extra-system dynamic as grounds for the failure of communism (a "ständigen sozial-ökonomsichen Rückstand gegenüber den kapitalistischen Ländern" (p. 9)).

Given the very nature of Gramsci's vision - the move away from fixed world-views, the championing of plurality and the move away from dogma - Neubert is on the one hand keen to stress à la Gramsci the fluidity of the model, that it is not the answer to all the PDS's problems, (p.19) thereby pre-empting the charge of falling into the typical 'socialist' trap of seeking to articulate a monist vision whilst simultaneously taking on board the problematic factionalisation which PDS ideologues have consistently sought to play down. On the other it would appear that Neubert cannot resist the allure of the vision's unifying categories and simultaneously offers it quite precisely as a means of locating a level on which vaguely defined *socialist* actors can participate in an equally vague *socialist* schema. Here, the Gramscian schema whose relevance - Neubert elsewhere states - is not to be *over*estimated is now of "außerordentlichen Bedeutung ... für ein modernes Geschichts- und Politikverständnis" (p. 4) and nothing short of a:

> notwendiger Schlüssel (sic!) zum Verständnis der modernen Gesellschaften ... ihrer Strukturen und Funktionen ... (p. 19)

> Gramscis Erbe ist für alle demokratischen und progressiven, vor allem *für die auf Sozialismus orientierten Kräfte* (whoever the members of this catch-all group may be - MD) auch heute hilfreich, um nach neuen gangbaren Wegen heraus aus den ökonomsichen, sozialen und Menschheitsproblemen ... zu suchen. (p. 19; my italics)

Into this schema fits Gramsci's "positives und zugleich kritisches Verhältnis zur Oktoberrevolution". (p. 4)

Whilst Moreau's assertion that a year after the publication of Neubert's work the PDS "ihren Wandel zu einer Gesellschaft im Gramscischen Sinne vollendet (hatte)" represents a convenient and sensationalist oversimplification which Moreau has

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Engels, Lenin und zunächst auch Stalin anerkannten ... mit dem absoluten Anspruch auf Unfehlbarkeit und Wahrheit." Neubert: *Von Sozialismus und Demokratie* ... op. cit., p. 3

regularly fed his readers, it would indeed appear that the influence of Gramscian ideology - as presented by Neubert - upon (in particular the 'unificatory' strand of) PDS discourse has indeed been not insignificant[156]. Good has identified a breadth in the PDS's 'unificatory' discourse which is strongly reminiscent of the vague and abstract categories we encounter in Gramsci:

> Die augenscheinlichste Eigenschaft der Ausdrücke, die die orthodoxe Sprache ersetzen, ist ihre Vagheit und "Breite" in der Bedeutung. Dies ist vielleicht gar nicht mal so überraschend im Licht des neuen Pragmatismus, der zum Status eines Leitmotivs erhoben wurde.[157]

The broad categories Good identifies are indeed ones which we encounter regularly in PDS discourse: it champions *sozial Schwache, sozial Ausgegrenzte*[158] and *Betroffene* against a vaguely drawn 'establishment' cast as *die Herrschenden* or the *herrschende Klasse* (which, as we remember, formed the negatively charged antithesis of *Hegemonie* in Gramsci's polarised conceptual schema); thus, Good argues:

> Die Variabilität und Vagheit der Terminologie ermöglicht es, damit alles mögliche zu meinen ...[159]

The greater the extension and the more minimal the intension, the greater the scope for by-passing problematic societal antagonisms and diversity.

Whilst these categories are by no means exclusive to a Gramscian vision (wide concepts such as *Betroffene* and *Herrschende*, for example, have, as we shall see below, been central to the discourse of the Greens, thus allowing room for the argument that the PDS has sought in its invocation of these lexemes to usurp something of the former party's *Bewegung* mantle), the "abstrakte(s) Konzept von ungleichen Machtverhältnissen zwischen Gesellschaftsgruppen"[160] at the heart of the PDS's new political sociology in particular draws very heavily, Good rightly observes, on Gramscian theory. Observe how, in the following a PDS-inclusive

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[156]Moreau does provide a very useful survey of the wide inner-PDS attention accorded to Gramsci, including the sponsoring of an international Gramsci colloquium in Berlin in 1991; see, in particular, Moreau: *PDS. Anatomie* ... op. cit., pp. 147, 154

[157]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 277

[158]"Der Osten Deutschlands hat in Bonn keine tatsächliche Lobby oder gar Vertretung, ebenso wie die sozial Schwachen in Bonn kein Gehör finden"; Lothar Bisky, cited from: *Mitteilung Nr. 1: Beiträge und Dokumente vom 1. Ostdeutschen Bundeskongreß der Verbände am 2. Oktober 1993 in Berlin, Kino 'International'*. Berlin 1993

[159]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 278

[160]ibid., p. 277

"unser" (facilitating the suggestion of the *Party* of Democratic Socialism's non-party status!) - i.e. civil society? - is pitted against the political and bureaucratic 'powers that be':

> Die Parteien und Bürokratien entscheiden zu oft *unser* Schicksal. Der einzige Weg, der dann *Betroffenen* bleibt, ist der Gerichtsweg. Das ist eine Waffe der Schwachen, aber oft auch eine schwache Waffe ... [161] (my italics)

The broad categories form the basis of a polarised model which, in setting broadly 'progressive' against broadly 'reactionary' forces, might be said, as Good points out, to recreate a class-style model adaptable to the new political setting. This "Klassenkampf ersetzendes Vokabular"[162] brings together unquantifiable, unspecifiable and unidentifiable opposites: *unten* versus *oben*, *arm* versus *reich*, *Schwache* versus *Starke*:

> Die Formulierung von Oben und Unten läßt ... auf eine doppelpolige Teilung der Gesellschaft in zwei große, neue historisch relevante Gruppen schließen, eine "progressive" und eine "reaktionäre"[163]

Witness the following telling extract from a *Taz* interview with Lothar Bisky:

> Taz: Ist der Klassenkampf noch eine Kategorie, um die gesellschaftliche Realität in Deutschland zu erklären?
>
> Bisky: Der Klassenkampf in seiner alten theoretischen Fassung, den akzeptiere ich nicht. *Aber es gibt arm und reich, es gibt Differenzen.*[164] (my italics)

The invocation of broad (often erroneously deemed 'unideological') categories widely perceived as relevant in the competing 'capitalist' discourses of a *united* Germany can in turn be tapped in the (strategic?) attempt to overcome the abiding problem faced by the PDS:

> Die PDS wird zwar vor allem als Ostpartei wahrgenommen, wollte aber nie nur eine Ostpartei sein. Ihr erklärtes Ziel ist und bleibt die Westausdehnung, die mit einem antiwestlichen Nationalismus nun schon gar nicht erreichbar wären ...

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[161]Gysi: *Ingolstädter Manifest* ... op. cit., p. 8

[162]Good:"Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 277

[163]ibid., p. 277

[164]"1995 muß es zur Entscheidung kommen." op. cit.

> Die PDS (ordnet) nach ihrem Selbstverständnis als linke und sozialistische Partei in ihrer politischen Programmatik Ost-West Gegensätze in eine umfassende Konfliktstruktur - in Konflikte zwischen oben und unten, arm und reich, zwischen Kapital und Arbeit, Nord und Süd usw. (ein).[165]

The PDS's very limited successes in Western Germany offer evidence of their large inability to describe a relevant *Konfliktlinie* à la Neugebauer and Stöss. (see below)

On this level of abstraction, then, the PDS can offer 'something for everyone'; the unifying dimension is simply any cause for complaint with the here and now. It is on this level, too, that the PDS offers *Solidarität* ("ein zentraler Begriff in der neuen "Begrifflichkeit" der PDS"[166]) to anyone and everyone vaguely *betroffen.* The lexeme is strongly reminiscent of the Gramsican notion of the party making itself "Fürsprecher aller Interessen". (Note, in *Solidarität,* too, the inherently unifying semantic.) In the tactical attempt to conflate past and present, *Solidarität* (like *Revolution*) - as a key term in communist orthodoxy - forms as ideological bridge with the past and is equally given a "neuer Anstrich"[167] inasmuch as:

> Gleichzeitig wird die eng verwandte Bedeutung von "Sympathie"[168] ausgenutzt, wenn der Begriff auf die heutige Situation bezogen wird: "Die PDS tritt ein für *Solidarität* mit allen in Not Lebenden".[169]

This extends to the PDS's problematic 'traditionalists':

> es stimmt schon, daß Menschen in der PDS ein *solidarisches* Zusammenleben erfahren - allerdings bei heftigstem Streit über Biographien, über Geschichte, über Politik (observe again: unity in disunity - on a verbal level at least - MD). Was man aber in der Partei nicht erlebt ist, daß das Leben vor allem von Älteren so heruntergespielt und kriminalisiert wird wie sonst in der Gesellschaft.[170] (my italics)

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[165]Koch: "Die PDS im Vereinigungsprozeß." op. cit., p. 192

[166]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 279

[167]ibid., p. 279

[168]cf. *Duden. Deutsches Universal Wörterbuch A-Z.* Mannheim, Wien etc.: Duden Verlag 1989:

Sympathie: auf Grund gewisser Übereinstimmung, Affinität positive gefühlsmäßige Einstellung zu jdm., einer Sache

[169]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 279

[170]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen op. cit., p. 315 (see footnote 85)

The presupposition underlying the PDS's broadly drawn discourse is similar to the textual presupposition[171], i.e. the "nicht hinterfragte ideologische Prämisse"[172], of Neubert's work: that all those 'affected' would indeed wish to be championed by the PDS:

> *Solidarität* verbindet die Armen, die Unterdrückten, Ostdeutsche, die Unterpriviligierten, Frauen und jede andere Gruppe, *von der die PDS annimmt, daß sie mit dem Programm der neuen Partei sympathisieren.*[173] (my italics)

Key ideologemes in this discourse of lowest common denominators are quasi-mythical, overarching, catch-all "traditionelle Werte der DDR"[174] such as *Frieden* and *Antifaschismus* (which finds its practical embodiment in the work of the AG Rechtsextremismus/ Antifaschismus[175]) whose sentiments it would be hard for any rational thinking person to challenge:

> Mögen andere Gemeinsamkeiten fehlen, der Begriff *Antifaschismus* schafft gleichsam einen alles überspannenden, vereinenden Faktor, den ein Kommentator sehr passend als "Metaideologie" beschrieben hat.[176] (italics in original)

Widely instrumentalised in the discourse of the SED, the term's function was primarily to mobilise support for the regime, inasmuch as it was a key symbol in the GDR's self-assessment as the embodiment of a break with the National Socialist past:

> SED und DDR waren nach dem Vorbild ihrer kommunistischen Führungsgruppen *geschichtsnotorisch antifaschistisch - was immer dies auch im einzelnen bedeutete* - daran war nicht zu zweifeln, durfte auch nicht gezweifelt werden.[177] (my italics)

Its function was more connotative than denotative:

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[171]The term is Burkhardt's; see Burkhardt: "Vergangenheitsüberwältigung." op. cit., p. 137

[172]Burkhardt, ibid.

[173]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 279

[174]Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 34

[175]ibid., pp. 51-2

[176]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 270

[177]Schulz, Wilfried: "Die PDS und der SED/DDR-Antifaschismus. Historischer Klärungsbedarf oder nur Nostalgie und neue Feindbilder?" In: *Deutschland Archiv*. 4/94, p. 408

> (*Antifaschismus* - MD) wurde allmählich weniger zur Bezeichnung bestimmter politischer Maßnahmen, sondern eher als *Fahnenbegriff* gebraucht, der vereinen und mobilisieren sollte.[178] (italics in original)

Gerner has shown how the term continues to perform a similar function for the PDS; describing the vandalisation of the monument in Treptow (East Berlin) to Soviet soldiers who fell in the fight against the Third Reich, he writes:

> Am 3. Januar (1990 - MD) kam es vor diesem Ehrenmal zu einer Demonstration, an der nach ADN-Angaben etwa 200,000 Menschen teilnahmen. Initiiert wurde dieser Aufmarsch von der SED-PDS. Einer der Hauptredner, Gregor Gysi, forderte "eine gemeinsame Front gegen Neonazismus, Neofaschismus, Rassenhaß und Ausländerfeindlichkeit". Die Intention war eindeutig: Die SED-PDS *versuchte die verlorengegangene politische Initiative mit der verbindenden Klammer des Antifaschismus wiederzuerlangen* und konnte in selbem Atemzug die Notwendigkeit einer intakten Sicherheitsbehörde einklagen. Die SED spielte aus diesem Kalkül heraus die angeblich von "rechts" drohende Gefahr hoch.[179] (my emphases)

Good has identified the use of the term as a basis on which to unify world-views which are potentially fundamentally at odds with one another: on the one hand liberal and Christian values, for example, on the other a marxist-leninist schema which essentially precludes them:

> Ein linkes Zusammengehen, das bedeuten würde, *christliche oder liberale Antifaschistinnen und Antifaschisten* sowie Linke aus der sozialdemokratischen, grünen oder feministischen Tradition auszuschließen ist nur eine andere Form von linker Ausgrenzung und von Sektendenken.[180] (my italics)

At the same time, the ideologeme *Antifaschismus* is a key motivating symbol and 'ideologische Brücke' in the PDS's hybrid, unificatory discourse which seeks to marry a pragmatist recognition of the requirements of the present with a political world-view in keeping with the categories of GDR-style marxist-leninist orthodoxy; in the narrower frame of reference of the latter, *Antifaschismus* is all but synonymous with *Antikapitalismus*. Schlosser has shown that the wide instrumentalisation of *Antifaschismus* by Soviets and Germans in the Soviet zone of

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[178]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 270

[179]Gerner, op. cit., p. 35

[180]Gregor Gysi, cited in Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." ibid.

occupation "ist Kennzeichen einer keineswegs zufälligen, sondern durchaus bewußten ideologischen Deutung der Gegenwart und Zukunft"[181]. Inasmuch, Schlosser observes, as National Socialism was in the orthodox theory of Marxism-Leninism subsumed under the overarching category of *Faschismus* (a highly contentious issue - as Schlosser points out - among politologists and historians) and *Faschismus* was deemed to be an inherent feature of *Spätkapitalismus,* any:

> antifaschistisch deklarierte Politik mußte darum im Munde von Kommunisten von Anbeginn an zugleich eine antikapitalistische und antiimperialistische Zielrichtung haben.[182]

Into this schema of broad, unifying categories fits, too, the notion of *Gerechtigkeit*:

> Falkner: Herr Bisky ... können Sie uns erklären, was das ... ist, die PDS?
>
> Bisky: Das kann ich ziemlich kurz sagen: In meinen Augen ist das eine Partei, die mehr soziale *Gerechtigkeit* will - und deswegen im Parteienspektrum auch links anzusiedeln ist.[183] (my italics)

The notion is enframed in the PDS-led *Gerechtigkeitskomitees*[184] of mid-1992, which we touched upon in chapter 1, where again the lowest common denominator is a call for "justice" wherever there is any instance of disaffection with the here and now; crucially, too, the notion of *Gerechtigkeit,* as a broad, positively charged concept transcending any capitalist/socialist or East/West ideological divide, could be used by the PDS in the attempt to locate a discourse with which to make capital out of the German-German divide while at the same time gain a foothold in a united Germany (notwithstanding the fact that the *Gerechtigkeitskomitees* were, of course, designed largely to articulate the interests of dissatisfied East Germans)[185].

> Deren Struktur schien sich für die Etablierung eines breiten Organisationsbündnisses wie auch einer gesamtdeutschen Sympathisantenszene zu eignen.[186]

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[181]Schlosser, op. cit., p. 31

[182]ibid.

[183]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen." op. cit., p. 313 (see footnote 85)

[184]For a good account of their genesis and general domination by the PDS, see: Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., pp. 42-4

[185]see footnotes 262, 263, chapter 1)

[186]Neugebauer, Gero: "Hat die PDS bundesweit im Parteiensystem eine Chance?" In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS. Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., p. 43

> Diestel und Gysi betonten die "Überparteilichkeit und Unabhängigkeit der Gerechtigkeitskomitees und *hatten mit der Wahl des Namens erreicht, daß viele Bürger spontan Sympathie für das Projekt empfunden* (*wer ist schon gegen Gerechtigkeit?*).[187] (my emphases)

DEALING WITH *SPRACHLOSIGKEIT*: ESTABLISHING "OTHERNESS"

An 'offensive' tactic of seeking *discursively* to strip the established parties of any individuality has been one way in which the PDS has sought to deal with its abiding difficulty in being 'other', i.e. in proffering a discourse which presents any profound and viable alternative to what is already on offer in the political arena:

> Presenting itself as the "real" opposition in a situation where there is already an established opposition already indicates one task facing the PDS.[188]

The attempt has had two main dimensions: firstly, the other parties are, discursively lumped together and presented as a monolithic mass. Making virtue from necessity, the PDS has made capital from its very position as a newcomer on the political scene in presenting itself as *the* alternative to a faceless, sluggish and uniform establishment. In this the PDS, Good has shown, has had wide recourse to the concept of the *Etablierten.*[189] In other words, the established parties are lumped together on the basis of the lowest common denominator of their having existed prior to the unification process:

> Die etablierten Parteien halten an ihrem alten Dogma fest: Sozialistinnen und Sozialisten haben in Staat und Parlamenten nichts zu suchen.[190]

> ... Die PDS, so Gysi, habe immer gesagt, daß Bonn mit der Einheit auch eine *wirkliche* linke Partei ins gesamtdeutsche Parlament bekommen werde.[191] (my italics)

Observe, in this last example, the *expressis verbis* invocation of 'difference' (via the presupposition trigger[192] "wirkliche"), which we will discuss in more detail below.

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[187]Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 43.

[188]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien*? op. cit.

[189]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 268

[190]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 19

[191]*Neues Deutschland.* 3 December 1990; cited in: Marten-Finnis, op. cit., p. 144

[192]The term is Simpson's, op. cit., pp. 125-6; as a part of the linguistic canon, a presupposition is understood to refer to "propositions whose truth is taken for granted in the utterance of a linguistic

We will see later, too, how the 'established parties' are indeed differentiated for quite different discursive purposes, i.e. when the prospect of the PDS's incorporation into political alliances becomes a very tangible one in the wake of the Sachsen-Anhalt regional elections of June 1994 and the PDS casts around for 'allies' with whom to form strategic alliances (see chapter 4). Good has show how part and parcel of the PDS's 'alle in einen Topf' message has been to capitalise upon a widely acknowledged *Rechtsruck* in German politics by discursively linking the established parties as common catalysts in the process and, indeed, linking these with the extreme right wing parties so "that they form one category".[193] (Of course, this is no different from what the right has sought to do in consistently presenting the PDS as the alter ego of the extreme right on the basis of a highly reductive totalitarianism model - see chapter 4). The abiding image is that the shift to the right has left a slot on the left of the political spectrum which the PDS has made its mission to fill as a *Korrektiv.*[194] Interestingly, the PDS' status as a *Korrektiv* here is quite firmly predicated upon the GDR biography which the PDS has elsewhere - for the immediate discursive purpose of establishing its political 'freshness' - sought to play down in its 'geläuterte Sozialisten' mode (we remember: "Kind der Wende"). Its mission, it argues, is to introduce the (mythical?) antifascist legacy of the GDR where:

> Das geeinte Deutschland läuft Gefahr rechtslastig zu werden und zum Abbau von demokratischen und sozialen Rechten zu tendieren, das hängt unter anderem auch damit zusammen, daß das Korrektiv "DDR" nicht mehr existiert.[195]

A key notion in the PDS's 'synergist' discourse is that the party is in a position to create a qualitatively better society by virtue of its having experience of *two* systems, having learned - the hard way - from the mistakes made under the GDR system; at

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expression, propositions without which the utterance cannot be evaluated". Cited from Green, op. cit., p. 71. A frequently cited example is "John regrets killing X" which contains the presupposed proposition that John has (indeed) killed X.

[193]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit., Good (ibid.) cites the following examples: "ausländische Propaganda der Regierungsparteien und der extremen Rechten (Gysi)"; "die extreme Rechte und die Regierungsparteien" (Gysi).

[194]Disaffected ex-Green member Verena Krieger would agree with the PDS that there has been a move to the right in German politics since the heyday of the Greens and that there is little room for any alternatives in the established political forum as it stands; she disagrees, however, that the PDS has the potential to fill the void on the left of the spectrum: "Die PDS hat eine nur theoretische Chance diese Lücke (on the far left of the spectrum - MD) zu füllen, weil sie über die dafür erforderlichen kulturellen und politischen Voraussetzungen nicht nur wegen ihrer SED-Vergangenheit nicht verfügt und nicht verfügen kann". Krieger, op. cit., p. 158

[195]Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 20
This notion, of course, that the existence of the GDR helped 'balance out' all the egregious excesses of capitalism is not, of course, exclusive to the PDS; see, for example, Gaus, Townson, op. cit.

the same time that system's better features are to be taken on board and fused with the better elements of bourgeois democracy to yield a "neues Deutschland[196], besser als DDR und BRD"[197]; the message is presented by an ostalgic PDS in a slightly modified form to an East German audience which is told of the superiority of its collective biography by virtue of its having spanned *two* social systems[198].

The 'neo-Marxist' notion that the political establishment as it stands works within very narrow parameters and offers little in the way of political alternatives per se requires the complicity of the established left[199]; the right, the PDS has consistently claimed, is:

> in vielen entscheidenden Fragen leider assistiert durch die SPD, und einflußreiche Teile der Unternehmer.[200]

Elsewhere the PDS deals with its difficulty to successfully articulate the ways in which it might be 'other' by invoking difference on an expressis verbis level - i.e. it literally *states* its difference, which extends to the invocation of the category itself. Key expressions, here, are "bei allem Unterschied" and "bei aller Konkurrenz" which are frequently and (self-consciously?) invoked where the PDS articulates a position

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[196]We might well ask if there is not a concomitant sub-textual attempt here to promote 'ostalgia' in the invocation of a noun phrase whose surface form is identical to a potent symbol of the GDR: the SED's press organ *Neues Deutschland.*

[197]Modrow, Hans: "Wir wollen ein Deutschland, besser als DDR und BRD." op. cit.

[198]"was uns am meisten stört ist die Tatsache, daß die Erfahrungen der Menschen aus den neuen Bundesländern so gering geschätzt werden, dabei haben wir ja schon zwei Gesellschaftsordnungen erlebt, wir wissen schon was alles nicht funktioniert und deshalb schauen wir in die Zukunft. Übrigens, auch negative Erfahrungen sind ja ausgesprochen lehrreich." Gregor Gysi: extract from speech given on 20 October 1995 at an electoral rally held on Alexanderplatz preceding the elections to the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus.* Taped by the author.

[199]The SPD is accused of working within a framework such as is outlined by contemporary British Marxist, Chris Harman (*How Marxism Works.* London: Bookmarks 1986) in relation to the labour party in Great Britain: "every attempt to introduce socialism through parliament has ended up in failure ... there have been three majority labour governments in Britain since the war ... yet we are no nearer socialism than in 1945." (p. 50) Socialist measures, Harman argues, are always blocked by the economic elite in society, for example through the transfer of money abroad to create a balance of payments of crisis and the subsequent launching of a press campaign to blame all this on the government. Harman quotes Harold Wilson: «We had now reached the situation where a newly elected government was being told by international speculators that the policy on which we had fought the election could not be implemented. The Queen's first minister was being asked to bring down the curtain on parliamentary democracy by accepting the doctrine that an election in Britain was a farce, that the British people could not make a choice between policies» (p. 51). So, Harman concludes, "In practice the particular 'constitution' we have in Britain means that those who control the state machine would be able to thwart the will of an elected left-wing government far short of physically overthrowing it. If such a government were elected, it would be faced with massive economic sabotage by the employing class. If the government attempted to deal with such sabotage using 'constitutional means' - by passing laws - it would find its hands tied behind its back ... parliamentary 'democracy' contains in-built mechanisms for preventing any revolutionary movement finding expression through it." (p. 53)

[200]Gysi, Gregor: "Zur politischen Situation und zum Programm der PDS." In: *DISPUT.* no. 3-4. 1993, p. 17

which might be seen to overlap with that of one of the established parties or feels uncomfortable with the boundary between rapprochement and *Anbiederung*:

> Die PDS weiß (note the factive[201] presupposition trigger here! -MD), daß sich ein gesellschaftlicher Umbruch schon jetzt auf eine Vielzahl übereinstimmender Vorschläge stützen kann. Deshalb ist sie *bei aller Konkurrenz zur SPD* und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen bereit, mit Ihnen gemeinsam für Reformen ... zu wirken.[202] (my italics)

Talking about being different is, of course, not the same as *being* different; the (insistent!) assertion that:

> Was wir allerdings sichern müssen - *und das ist uns auch gelungen* (how? note, again, the unverifiability! MD) - ist ein *anderes* Profil als das der SPD. *Wir sind und bleiben eine Partei links von der SPD.*[203] (my italics)

or:

> Für die Zukunft der PDS als eine Partei *links von der SPD* ...[204] (my italics)

is no more than an illocutionary act of *stating* that the party lies to the left of the SPD. The point might seem blatantly obvious, but the fact that simple - and often unverifiable[205] - illocutionary *declarative acts*[206] of this type overlap with and can be

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[201]Factive verbs are "a collection of verbs, like *regret, realise* and *discover* (and *know* - MD) which presuppose their grammatical complements thereby representing them as 'facts'". (Simpson, op. cit., p. 124.) An excellent survey of factive presuppositionality is provided by Green, op. cit., p. 71 ff.

[202]Parteivorstand der PDS, "10 Thesen ..." In: *PID*. no. 48. 1994, p. 24

[203]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen." op. cit., p. 320 (see footnote 85)

[204]Gregor Gysi, in: "Es geht um Macht und nicht um Moral." In: *Lift. Stuttgart.* 5/94 (interview)

[205]The programme of the SED (op. cit.) offers a very graphic catalogue of abstract assertions whose unverifiability (i.e. our inability to in any way pin down where fulfilment of the proposition contained in the assertion starts and ends!) makes them extremely hard to challenge (especially in terms of any truth/lie schema). Schäffner/Porsch (op. cit., p. 46) call them "over-generalisations (which) appeared necessarily true, in the sense that they could not be disproved". The following represent but a small selection of examples: "Das Leistungsprinzip ist Grundprinzip der Verteilung im Sozialismus, es wird konsequent durchgesetzt" (p. 32); "Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei tritt für den Schutz der natürlichen Umwelt und ihre Gestaltung im Interesse der ständigen Verbesserung der Arbeits- und Lebensbedingungen der Werktätigen und einer effektiven Volkswirtschaft ein." (p. 35) "Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands betrachtet die Erhöhung der Leistungsfähigkeit und Effektivität des Bauwesens auf dem Weg der konsequenten Industrialisierung als eine Aufgabe von hohem gesellschaftlichen Rang." (p. 39) "Die Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands fördert die Bereitschaft der Werktätigen, sich für die Lösung der staatlichen und gesellschaftlichen Aufgaben einzusetzen und Verantwortung zu übernehmen." (p. 57) We re-iterate, of course, that while the discourse of the SED offers a particularly graphic illustration of unverifiable assertions (reliant as the party was upon them, given the stark disparity between party theory and political practice), they are standard to political discourse in the service of *any* ideology. Witness, for example: "Labour has returned to its values and is now seeking the clearest and most effective ways of putting them into practice. This is a historic shift, liberating us from the terrible tyranny of confusing means and ends ... The election will present a clear choice - between more of the same under the Tories, and a new direction from Labour." Blair, Tony: *New Britain - My Vision of a Young Country.* London: Fourth Estate 1996, p. xii.

- and often are - confused with the *achievement* (materialisation or realisation) of the stated proposition (i.e. are accepted unproblematically not only as illocutionary acts offering a *statement* of being or achieving but also as the actual realisation of what is proposed in the illocutionary statement) shows their ideological potential. By way of an example, observe how the original *illocutionary* act of formally *declaring* a breach with *Staatssozialismus/Stalinismus* such as was enframed in the resolution passed at the party's extraordinary conference of 8/9 December 1989 is unproblematically re-cast as the *realisation* of that breach in the following historiographic account of the PDS, where the highly complex question of where a breach starts and ends (i.e. what constitutes it) is simply circumvented:

> Die Abgesandten von über 2 Millionen SED-Mitgliedern *vollziehen* einen radikalen Bruch mit dem Stalinismus und bekennen sich zu den Prinzipien eines demokratischen Sozialismus (in December 1989 - MD).[207] (my italics)

which is in turn accepted and reproduced by Koch as follows:

> ... so hielt die PDS in ihrer Entstehungsphase zwar weiter an der Eigenstaatlichkeit der DDR fest, *brach aber mit der staatssozialistischen Konzeption.*[208]

and - unproblematically - presents what started out as more of a *statement* of what is as what *actually* is - and what is ultimately, too, unverifiable. (Alone the existence of the KPF, some of whose members have by no means been unequivocal in accepting a commitment to a multi-party system![209], is enough to call into question the absoluteness of Koch's assertion!). Likewise, the PDS has - formally - passed a document *entitled* "Beschluß zur konsequenten, offenen und öffentlichen Auseinandersetzung der PDS mit der Problematik 'Staatssicherheit'"[210] which allows Bisky to state "Wir haben einen Beschluß ... nach dem Leute ihre politische Biographie offenbaren müssen, und dazu zählen Kontakte zum MfS"[211] Again, however, there is no perfect overlap between the *statement* of what is resolved and what *actually* is; it not hard to see how the above could all too easily be recast as,

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[206]see Green, op. cit., p. 66 ff.

[207]Otfrid et al. (eds.): *Von den Anfängen* ... op. cit., p. 11

[208]Koch, op. cit., p. 187

[209]See, for example, footnote 148, chapter 1 above.

[210]"Beschluß zur konsequenten, offenen und öffentlichen Auseinandersetzung der PDS mit der Problematik «Staatssicherheit»." In: *2. Parteitag. 2. Tagung. 21-23 June 1991. Dokumente.* Berlin: Parteivorstand der PDS 1991, p. 167

[211]"Koalitionsbereit?" op. cit.

say, "Die PDS-Mitglieder offenbaren ihre Stasi-Kontake" which clearly blurs the boundary between what *is* and what is *resolved.* If we look more closely at the document concerned we see there is much to relativise the initial impression given that *all* members have to - and do - reveal their Stasi-contacts:

> 1. Mitglieder der PDS, die als offizielle oder inoffizielle Mitarbeiter für das ehemalige Ministerium für Staatssicherheit gearbeitet haben sind keine Mitglieder "zweiter Klasse" ...
>
> 2. *Eine allgemeine Pflicht zur Offenlegung einer früheren Tätigkeit für das MfS gibt es für die Mitglieder innerhalb der PDS nicht*...- Nur für GenossInnen, die sich anschicken, für die Partei in *exponierter Stellung* öffentlich zu wirken, ist die persönliche Biographie in dieser Frage keine reine Privatsache mehr ...[212] (my italics)

Observe, however, how Bisky's words above were in fact chosen carefully: the indeterminate *Leute* allows a reading whereby not *all* members were meant. With regard to the question of revealing Stasi contacts Falkner and Huber have very shown graphically the extent of the disparity between what is enacted in terms of a formal illocutionary resolution and what *actually* is over and above the mere *statement* thereof.[213]

Another way in which the PDS has dealt with the problem of being 'other' has been quite simply to displace the problems of defining a vision of its own (and of unifying theory and practice) by referring to solutions found outside the immediate textual context; in other words, in a kind of 'inter-textual self-referentiality' the PDS can - and frequently does - make reference to thorough-going definitions made and solutions found *elsewhere* in its discourse, thus making it hard for political opponents to offer any immediate challenge to them. In the following, the category of *solutions* is invoked, but there is no attempt in the immediate textual context to elucidate what these are:

> Die PDS ist eine pluralistische Partei, die an keine Weltanschauung gebunden ist. Sie hat nicht nur *eine* Theorie, sondern schöpft aus *den* Theorien der Moderne - natürlich aber auch aus klassischen Texten. Das führte und führt auch zu unendlichen Debatten, zu nächtelangen,

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[212]"Beschluß zur ... Problematik «Staatssicherheit»." op. cit., p. 168

[213]See Falkner/Huber, op. cit., pp. 177-81. The later shed very revealing light upon the party's discomfort and lack of resolve in the question of revealing *Stasi*-involvement, including André Brie's conscious violation of the *Offenbarungsbeschluß* and Gregor Gysi's knowledge thereof, and the view of the "Orthodoxen" (Falkner/Huber's terminology - see p. 180) that the *Offenbarungsbeschluß* represented a «Lust an der eigenen Demontage». (p. 180; cited by Falkner/Huber)

nervenzereibenden Auseinandersetzungen - über den Stalinismus, über die Stasi und viele andere Dinge -, aber auch zu *vorwärtsgewandten Lösungen.*[214] (my italics) (Observe, here, incidentally, the intrusion of the inherently positive *vorwärts,* a central ideologeme of official GDR discourse - cf. SED slogans such as *Vorwärts zu neuen Erfolgen*; *Vorwärts zur Erfüllung des neuen 5-Jahr-Planes*; the magazine *Vorwärts* - as a motivating factor in the acceptance of 'solutions' which many in the party's old guard have sceptically regarded as more *retro-* than *pro*-gressive!)

Where accused, then, of presenting a "Warenhauskatalog" (Langguth) of different ideologies and of failing to offer anything more than an abstract vision far removed from reality, the PDS can - and has - frequently countered the charge with the assertion that the elements of its vision *have* been set out *elsewhere* - in particular in its programme - and that it is merely the case that its political opponents have failed to take the trouble to look closely enough at its political messages (this recognition in itself, of course, not without some justification!). (This doubtless taps in, too, to the PDS's instrumentalisation of the German-German psycho-social divide, hinting as it does, at an indifference towards the PDS which the party has consistently coupled with what it perceives as the general indifference of the West towards the collective East German biography). If we look at the 'unifying discourse' of its second programme, however, we do, of course, find a 'vision', a 'definition', but one whose level of abstraction (high level of superordinacy, causal inexplicitness etc.) might well be challenged in terms of its viability.

We must stress, however, that there we are not attempting here to equate abstraction with *simplicity*; Neubert's study furnishes a graphic example of the sheer complexity of a vision located on a very high level of abstract theorisation. Numerous detailed, serious and in-depth studies in a whole range of thematic areas have, on an isolated textual level, emanated from the enormously diverse range of intellectual and intellectual streams which make up the PDS; we do, of course, find in PDS discourse in-depth studies which seek to grasp the essence of, and offer a sound definition of - say- *democracy* which go beyond well beyond the symbolic (connotative) minimalism referred to above; Gysi sets out his understanding of "direkte Demokratie"[215] (part and parcel of which has been the PDS's frequent call for referenda on a whole range of issues), for example, in his *Ingolstädter Manifest*, an

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[214]Lothar Bisky, in: "Die Erneuerung wird aus dem Osten kommen." op. cit., p. 313 (see footnote 85)

[215]"Angesichts des Irrsinns von gegenwärtiger Politik macht der Vorwurf, das Volk sei zu dumm, sich selbst direkt zu regieren, erst recht keinen Sinn." Gysi: *Ingolstädter Manifest* ... op. cit.; p. 8. Observe, here, how Gysi makes rhetorical capital from the invocation of the charge of arrogance towards the ordinary populace frequently levelled against proponents of an avant-gardist leading role (such as that adopted by the PDS's political predecessor).

understanding which, in offering a complex array of (unrealisable?) suggestions, can clearly be said to be more concrete than the largely connotative *democracy* offered above. In an nutshell, this (Gramsci-inspired?) conceptualisation of democracy calls for a "dritte Stimme", for "nichtstaatliche Organisationen"[216] (observe the breadth!) which will be granted funds from the state budget on a pro rata basis in accordance with the level of popular backing secured. It calls, too, for a second parliamentary chamber:

> Neben dem Bundestag der Parteien sollte es eine Bundeskammer der *sozialen Bewegungen* geben in die hinein Interessenverbände gewählt werden ... Sie sollten das Recht auf die Vorbereitung und das Einbringen eigener Gesetze, auf die Diskussion von Gesetzten des Bundestages und deren zeitweilige Zurückweisung haben, die tief in das Leben von Betroffenen eingreifen.[217] (my italics) (Observe, again, the broad groupings, the nominalisation and causally inexplicit relationals.)

Gysi offers a vision which *can* be presented as offering *concrete* suggestions (to counter the frequently levelled charge that the PDS has little to offer in the way of concrete proposals), yes, but yet again we observe a high degree of causal inexplicitness even though the proposals themselves do not sound unreasonable when divorced from a complex background of causal considerations; the problem for the PDS has been one of incorporating (often very reasonable sounding) isolated, localised, proposals into an overall, uniform and viable schema which would allow these proposals to work beyond the parameters of a narrow and causally inexplicit (i.e. highly abstract!) context, i.e. represent a basis for their realisation in practice; of Gysi's "direkte Demokratie" Falkner and Huber rightly observe that:

> Das ganze liest sich einfacher, als es zu machen wäre ... Wie aber diese drei-Kammer-System funktionieren soll, zu dem nach PDS-Vorstellungen für eine Übergangszeit noch eine ostdeutsche als vierte Kammer hinzutreten würde, ist völlig unklar. Zum anderen bleibt unbeantwortet, wie verhindert werden kann, daß die zwangsläufig eintretende Verkomplizierung politischer Entscheidungsprozesse nicht in eine völlige Paralyse und in Entscheidungsblockaden mündet. Zudem ist nicht vorstellbar, wie sich diese Ziele mit dem angestrebten Abbau der Bürokratie und der politischen Apparate vereinbaren lassen.[218]

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[216]Gysi: *Ingolstädter Manifest* ... op. cit., p. 7

[217]ibid., p. 8

[218]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 194

While Gysi can rightly say, then, to a noisome journalist who challenges the PDS on its discursive vagueness that the PDS *has* offered a *detailed* conceptualisation of *democracy* as presented in the *Ingolstädter Manifest*, this must be set against the observation that the denotative core of *democracy* as it is presented in this textual context is in itself causally vague (though we cannot pin down the level of that abstraction on our sliding scale) and difficult to relate to any practical schema within whose context it might be fulfilled. This speaks for so much in the PDS's vision; well disposed as they generally are to the PDS, Falkner and Huber observe that:

> Regierungsverantwortung auf Landes- oder gar Bundesebene zu übernehmen, sei die PDS noch nicht (! - observe the relativisation here: this will be a crucial element in our discussion in the next chapter - MD) reif, wird vor allem der Bundesvorsitzende Lothar Bisky zu betonen nicht müde. *Eine Analyse des konzeptionellen Rüstzeuges der Partei gibt ihm Recht. Vision und Realität stehen zu oft in einem nicht überbrückbaren Widerspruch,*[219]

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[219]Falkner/Huber (op. cit., chapter 8) offer a very graphic catalogue of the difficulties the PDS has had in unifying theory and practice in a whole range of key areas, of the ways in which "die PDS verstrickt sich in hausgemachte Widersprüche und erweckt den Eindruck, manches sei einfach nicht zu Ende gedacht". (p. 193) Some of the policy areas they touch upon are as follows (all page numbers in brackets refer to Falkner/Huber):

German nationality and nationalism (see esp. pp. 187-91): the candidacy on the PDS's *offene Listen* of Bismarck's great-grandson, Graf von Einsiedel, in his own words an avowed «Deutschnationalen» (Falkner/Huber, p. 188) (and doubtless, inter alia, a useful symbol for the PDS in its attempt to transcend the problem of relying on the German-German divide while at the same time wishing to be relevant in a *united* Germany) yielded a major inner-party polemic as Einsiedel had "das West-Linke Gebot des nationalen Selbsthasses und das ostdeutsche Dogma von der Einheit allein als "Ko(h)lonialisierung der DDR gleichermaßen gebrochen - und die im Umgang mit ihrer nationalen Identität völlig überforderte deutschen Linke in die Schützengräben getrieben" (p. 188). The "*Reform*flügel (note the categorisation - MD!; my italics) an der Parteispitze - Gysi, Bisky, Brie -" had "offenbar mittlerweile gespürt, daß der mehr oder wenige anti-deutsche Ansatz politisch hemmt." (pp. 188-9). Falkner/Huber observe that the PDS's programme makes no mention of the question of nationality (one way, of course, of backgrounding a problematic but fundamental component of a societal vision, but questionable with regard to its long-term viability -MD). The PDS, Falkner/Huber argue, has yet to articulate a clear position on the question of Germany nationality/nationalism.

The Asylum Question (see esp. pp. 192-3)

Falkner/Huber observe that part and parcel of the PDS's attempt to be 'other' is a not infrequent visceral and unconsidered practice of automatically articulating the opposite extreme of governmental policy, of which its position on political asylum offers a graphic example: "Ohne Zweifel brachte die von der Großen Asyl-Koalition aus Union, Freidemokraten und SPD bewerkstelligte Grundgesetzänderung einen dramatischen Abbau im Bereich der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte. Die stramme Forderung der PDS nach generell offenen Grenzen, wie sie die PDS dagegenhält, ist jedoch ebenfalls keine realisierbare Alternative." (p. 192)

Crime - (see esp. pp. 194-5): The PDS calls for a reduction in the number of police and surveillance and monitoring systems, puts tackling economic and environmental crimes at the top of its agenda and calls for the legalisation of drugs as a solution to drugs-related crimes; "deswegen aber die wachsende Alltags- und organisierte Kriminalität nicht zu bedenken, ist nichts weiter, als in das andere Extrem zu verfallen". (p. 195)

The question of (direct) democracy - discussed above

The economy: (see esp. pp. 200-6) Falkner/Huber point to the abiding and absolutely fundamental programmatic differences residing in the party over the crucial question of ownership; "Neugebauer faßt den wirtschaftspolitischen Ansatz der PDS so zusammen: «Die PDS will eine starke Rolle des Staates über eine interventionistische Politik», wobei sie über ihre Demokratisierungsvorstellungen auf eine «Vergesellschaftung der Entscheidungsstrukturen» und damit am Ende auf eine faktische Verstaatlichung des Privatkapitals zielt. «Das liegt in der Logik der PDS-Forderungen»" (p. 205). The

konkrete Vorschläge sind miteinander nicht vereinbar und zu wenig auf ihre Handhabbarkeit überprüft. Und vor allem krankt die PDS an zwei Grundübeln nicht nur linker Politik:

- an der notorischen Abneigung aller Parteipolitik, klar und uneitel zu sagen, welche Probleme in der komplizierten, komplexen Welt von heute derzeit einfach nicht lösbar sind,

- und an einem Zuviel an "Dagegen" und an einem Zuwenig an konstruktivem "Dafür", wie fast alle Linken.[220] (my emphases)

On the other hand, where a more pragmatic PDS has sought to offer proposals which seem reasonable and workable with the framework of the existing polity, this has entailed the difficulty that they are widely perceived as either unoriginal or tactical.

While PDS documents have struggled, then, to make sense of the 'socialist' legacy and define the way forward, it is hard to get beyond the high level of discreteness and find a viable and uniform vision which operates beyond the - necessarily - abstract vision we find enframed in highly superordinate language. Of course, in any party there are differences in approach and opinion which party ideologues will seek to smooth over linguistically with formulations allowing awkward facts to be

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PDS's only way of dealing with the irreconcileability has been, they point out, an expressis verbis programmatic recognition thereof, i.e. of the "'unterschiedliche Auffassungen ... hinsichtlich der Frage, ob reale Vergesellschaftung der Verfügung über das Eigentum erreichbar ist oder der Umwandlung in Gemeineigentum, insbesondere in gesamtgesellschaftliches Eigentum die bestimmende Rolle zukommen muß'". (pp. 205-6; citation from PDS programme 1993) (Observe the lexical choice here: what amounts to a discrepancy so wide as to underpin the existence of two broadly distinct ideological systems is cast in the attenuative mould of "unterschiedliche Auffassungen" - MD.) "Dieser Streit wird dennoch heftig geführt", Falkner/Huber observe, "schon deswegen, weil die Anhänger der reinen Lehre die totale Enteignung des Privatkapitals wollen und sich nicht mit einer faktischen Verstaatlichung von Entscheidungsstrukturen abfinden werden". (p. 206) Crucially, they argue: "*Der heftige Dissens in der Eigentumsfrage weist zudem darauf hin, daß die Probleme der PDS weniger in nostalgischer und/oder ideologisch bestimmter Rückschau auf den Realsozialismus als in dem Unvermögen liegen, einen komplexen Zugang zu den strategischen Zukunftsfragen zu bekommen.*" (p. 207; my emphases). It is doubtful whether the PDS's programmatic championing of a "Vielfalt der Eigentumsformen" (yet again a 'pick and mix' synergy) represents anything more than an 'on-paper' solution to the question of the economic way forward. (MD)

Foreign Policy

The essential feature of PDS foreign policy is anti-militarism: a ban on nuclear weapons and weapons systems, the abolition of military service, NATO/the WEU and German forces abroad, and drastic defence cuts. The money so saved could in turn, the PDS argues, be used to pay for greater development aid and a scheme whereby the (rich) North would pay the (poor) South compensation payments for environmental damage caused. (Observe, again, the polarised schema - MD.) While, as Falkner/Huber argue, these sentiments are in themselves very laudable and it is "edel und perspektivisch richtig" (p. 197) for a party to promote anti-militarism in its own country, what, for example, if this is not accepted in other countries? This is not touched upon by the PDS in its programme. So, conclude Falkner/Huber: "Ein PDS-Außenminister freilich hätte mit diesen Grundsätzen nur eine höchst lückenhafte Orientierung für seine Politik zur Hand. Denn auch hier fehlen praktikable Aussagen gerade zu den Problemen, die die Welt von heute so schwierig machen." (pp. 196-7)

[220]Falkner/Huber, ibid., p. 206

"denied, suppressed or re-interpreted"[221]; one way of perceiving a party's vision is to see it as the - never in any way empirically quantifiable - aggregate of inner-party world-views. In the PDS's case the inner-party differences are, however, *so* fundamental as to make it questionable whether, when stripped of the veneer of discursive abstraction, these could be overcome to any enduring degree without fundamental incisions into the party physiognomy. As we shall see in chapter 5, the removal of the KPF's Sahra Wagenknecht from the party executive in 1995 offers evidence that the process is underway.

SOCIALISM - A RELEVANT BASIS FOR A NEW SOCIETY?

Like Wolf above, leading PDS ideologue Michael Brie similarly offers a *socialism* based more upon viscerality than any formal(ised) content:

> Das Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts ist durch eine seit dreihundert Jahren nicht gekannte Alternativlosigkeit gekennzeichnet ...
>
> ... Die geistige Alternativlosigkeit kontrastiert aber mit dem verbreiteten Gefühl, daß neue Probleme entstanden sind, für die es keine Formen einer dauerhaften Bearbeitung gibt bzw., alte Probleme - wie die soziale Integration, die Gewährleistung von Vollbeschäftigung und eines Minimums sozialer Gleichheit - nicht mehr auf bisherige Weise reguliert werden können.
>
> Vor diesem Hintergrund scheint das Wort Sozialismus *als der Alternativbegriff schlechthin zum Status quo* der fortgeschrittenen Industriegesellschaften wieder eine bestimmte Karriere zu machen. Durch den Zusammenbruch des Staatssozialismus (observe, again the rescuing of a "pure" socialism - MD) hat dieses Wort seine institutionelle Konkretion als Herrschaft einer einzelnen Partei und als Zentralverwaltungswirtschaft verloren und wird ganz offensichtlich von breiten Schichten der Bevölkerung wieder mit positiven Erwartungen gefüllt; (note again legitimisation through the invocation of an unquantifiable reference group ["breite Schichten"] of the type described by Murray Edelman; many East Germans see socialism as a good idea but, as we shall see below, it is doubtful whether they see it as a valid basis for a social system - MD). Anders lassen sich die Ergebnisse von soziologischen Befragungen nicht erklären, nach denen zwischen fünfzig und sechzig Prozent der Ostdeutschen den Sozialismus für eine gute, aber bisher schlecht verwirklichte Idee halten ... Fast durchgängig tun dies die PDS-

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[221]Trew: "Theory and Ideology at Work." op. cit., p. 97

> Wähler. Es besteht offensichtlich ein verbreitetes, *wenngleich sehr vages Gefühl,* (observe, here again, the dialectical approach as Brie pre-empts the very real and contradictory counter-proposition!) daß es an grundlegenden Alternativen zu den gegenwärtigen gesellschaftlichen Strukturen und Tendenzen mangelt.[222] (my italics)

Numerous statistical studies have revealed that Brie is indeed not wrong to identify a widely positive general response among (in particular East) Germans to the *notion* of socialism. The PDS's 'socialist' cause - by which we mean here the quest for harmony and uniformity (if not in practice then at least on the level of language) is doubtless boosted by regularly occurring politological observations to the effect that "*sozialistische* Einstellungen" are a prime "Bestimmungsfaktor der PDS-Wahl"[223], in which little distinction is drawn between sign and denotation. In other words, a hugely reductive observation such as "rund 90% der PDS-Wähler (gegenüber 60% der übrigen Befragten) (halten) *den* (! - MD; my italics) Sozialismus für eine gute, wenn auch bisher schlecht verwirklichte Idee"[224] presents socialism (a determinate "*den* Sozialismus") as though it were not fluid, as though it were fixed and immutable, as though it were something - a concrete vision, say - which 90% of those who vote for the PDS *uniformly* share (and indeed 60% [!!] of the East German electorate outside of the PDS). What emerges from Falter and Klein's study, of course, is that their (perforce) reductive conception of socialism merely beings together a fairly random collection of 'principles' or 'convictions'[225] (all of which were concurred with by 65% of PDS voters) which can in some way be connected with the potent *socialism* category but will in no way carry equal weight in the minds of all the individuals polled, nor will they be held with a uniform degree of intensity, nor will they be tied together in identical chains of causal interrelationships. As such, the acute problem of 'reading' these individuals' mind is

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[222]Brie, Michael: "Das politische Projekt PDS ...", op. cit., pp. 18-9

[223]Falter; Jürgen/Markus Klein, "Die Wähler der PDS bei der Bundestagswahl 1994." In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte.* B 51-52. 1994, p. 31

[224]ibid.

[225]ibid., pp. 30-1; those polled were asked to deny or affirm the following:

- the US represents an imperialist threat
- the GDR had more positive than negative sides
- the economy should be nationalised
- socialism is a good idea
- the workers are exploited
- the third world is exploited

Observe, here, how it is quite possible for to hold one or all of these views without considering oneself 'socialist'!

a psycholinguistic one, of the type described above. No language can empirically enframe the complex web of motivations which make up the human psyche. Many will indeed share some or all of these convictions without necessarily regarding themselves as "socialist". Observe, too, how a model like this telescopes perspectives: 'socialist' features locatable in a distinct tradition of GDR-style communism are thrown together with features more readily ascribable to a wider, 'traditional' socialism; what this makes clear, too, is the enormous *temporal* telescoping which takes place behind one signifier). It is not hard to see how, by way of the conflationary potential in language to which we drew attention above, a schema such as Falter and Klein's can - through increasing de-contextualisation - be ever more reduced and ultimately reproduced as follows:

> The PDS is the Party of Democratic <Socialism>
>
> 90% of PDS voters support <socialism> (reduction of "think socialism is a good idea")
>
> 60% of other voters support <socialism> (reduction of "thinks socialism is a good idea")
>
> > PDS enjoys a broad base of *uniform* <socialist> support

- thus allowing Brie to make the above assertion that "zwischen fünfzig und sechzig Prozent der Ostdeutschen (halten) *den* (observe the common ground between Falter and Klein here in presenting *Socialism* as though it were a fixed and concrete target - MD, my emphases) Sozialismus für eine gute, aber bisher schlecht verwirklichte Idee... Fast durchgängig tun dies die PDS-Wähler," whereas commitment is in fact primarily to a potent sign on the connotative level, rather than to any broad and formalised *denotative* socialism as *system*. In other words, the 'socialist' features are not uniformly linked in any formalised manner as part of a uniform system or way of seeing the world which might be broad enough to form the basis upon which the PDS could locate an entire systemic 'vision'. The point might seem an obvious one, but it is frequently overlooked in reductive politiological and other! observations and studies which fail to problematise and draw attention to the (often very high) level of 'manageable' abstraction. Like all our attempts to make sense of the complex processes which form the world around us world they are fraught with reduction. As we have said, as soon as we categorise we - necessarily - simplify. Opinion polls of the type cited above offer particulary graphic examples of this 'manageable reductiveness'. The above rating are based upon a fixed group of interviewees designed to represent society in microcosm but - in being merely representative - can never recreate that totality 100%. What is not problematised either, is the fact that not infrequently we respond in opinion polls in the way we think we ought to (for

reasons of political correctness, for example) rather than according to how we 'really' feel. As an indicator of the caution with which we should approach opinion poll findings, it is worth observing that the *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e.V.* in Mannheim records the followings statistics: "Außerdem halten immerhin 80% der PDS-Wähler viel oder gar sehr viel von der Idee des Sozialismus, in der Gesamtheit der ostdeutschen Wähler sind es nicht mehr als 29%"[226], displaying a considerable disparity with the statistics recorded above!

All our arguments here are presented with this *strong* reservation in mind as to the reductiveness of all attempts to frame human motivation in language. Certainly, the statistical evidence suggests that socialism as a positively charged *symbol* still enjoys an affirmative response from a significant number of - in particular East - Germans. For PDS members and voters it forms - on a symbolic level - an integral part of the edifice for their *politische Heimat*:; as Raschke puts it:

> Als Symbol für Egalisierungs- und Solidarisierungspolitik hat Sozialismus keineswegs ausgespielt. Gerade in der defensiven Funktion als Schutzmacht des Milieus und der kleinen Leute, sicherlich auch als kognitives Muß für die postsozialistische Intelligenz.[227]

Raschke observes, too, that this symbolic socialism is vast in its extension and minimal in intension, that its sustainability is predicated quite precisely upon its breadth:

> Wenn man übereinkommt, Sozialismus nicht, oder jedenfalls nicht sehr hart zu *operationalisieren* kann er so alt werden wie das Christentum. Das wäre auch sehr schnell am Ende, wenn man die Bergpredigt zur verbindlichen Richtschnur von Alltagsverhalten machte[228] (my italics)

But while the general population may feel the potency of, and respond positively to, socialism on a largely connotative level, may respond positively to certain ideas, convictions or features generally subsumed under the *socialism* category, it does not appear to be enough - as we shall see - to motivate most into *voting* for the PDS as bearers of the "socialist" standard. Doubtless, they feel - whether rationally or

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[226]cited in: Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 232

[227]Raschke, op. cit., p. 796

[228]ibid.
cf., for example: "(Der Sozialismus - MD) wird aber als Idee ebenso unsterblich sein wie das Christentum, dessen Vision - gleichermaßen unerreicht - in den Jahrhunderten tausendfach von sich Christen nennenden Menschen beschmutzt wurde. Die Kirche, die dem Christentum verpflichtet ist, hat sich nicht aufgelöst, weder nach Hexenverbrennungen noch nach größtem Versagen wie während des Nationalsozialismus." Cited from: Gysi: "Was will die PDS in Deutschland?" op. cit., p. 9

viscerally - the truth of what Raschke has said of the general response to *socialism* in the West:

> Die Öffentlichkeit wartet kaum auf eine Neudefinition des Sozialismus ... Ein wie auch immer modifizierter *Sozialismus als System (nicht nur als Wertesymbol)*, der in Deutschland vom Boden der alten DDR ausgeht, wird selbst bei den aufrichtigsten und idealistischsten Vertretern an seinen Voraussetzungen scheitern. Sozialismus als System wird in Deutschland auf Jahrzehnte mit dem Bankrott eines Wirtschaftssystems, mit ökologischem Raubbau, mit der Krake Staatsbürokratie und einem perfektionierten Repressionssystem verbunden bleiben. Mögen andere den Sozialismus neu erfinden, doch noch die Verbindung von Sozialismus mit Markt und Demokratie entdecken, in Deutschland hat er seine Chance gehabt.[229] (my italics)

Brie's assertion, then, that PDS voters and sympathisers and indeed large sections of the populace in general respond positively to socialism is thus not unfounded; the question, though, is at what level of abstraction and whether this can translate into a uniformly accepted basis upon which to locate a new systemic vision. Quite apart from the fact that it is highly questionable whether the party's *Kommunistische Plattform* would accept, as we witnessed above, Brie's commitment to a socialism predicated upon partypluralism, Brie's conceptualisation of socialism "entbehrt ... einer klaren Konfliktposition[230], die Existenzgrundlage der Partei sein könnte".

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[229]Raschke, op. cit., p. 796

[230]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 264; the latter argue that any party system mirrors the "Konfliktstruktur" (p. 263) of a particular society; see, in particular their introduction (pp. 11-33) and pp. 263-75. The existence of a party is inextricably linked, they argue, with this structure: "Die Existenzgrundlage von Parteien bilden mithin Konflikte über Werte und/oder politische Sachfragen, die in allen Gesellschaften vorhanden sind. Parteien übersetzen gesellschaftliche Konflikte in Politik. (p. 19) A party "muß ihre Existenzberechtigung auf dem Wählermarkt unter Beweis stellen (können)". (pp. 19-20) The question is, of course, which line of conflict the PDS represents. Neugebauer/Stöss argue that Brie's attempt to cast the PDS as a *Weltanschauungspartei* ("long standing doctrinal party"; p. 24) taking on board a (traditionally socio-economically grounded) socialism/capitalism cleavage ("Michael Brie vertritt eine klare These: Die PDS sei ein Ausdruck des Ost-West Gegensatzes und des Gegensatzes zwischen Sozialismus und Kapitalismus." p. 22) is an anachronism and something of an irrelevance in a post-industrial society in which socio-economic issues - unlike in the nineteenth century in the case of the SPD and the CDU - "immer weniger parteibildend (wirken)". (p. 266) Brie is adhering, they argue, to a "Freezing-These" (p. 22) still widely expounded in the sixties but ignoring the fact that "In der Parteienforschung neigt man vielmehr zu der Ansicht, daß sich die Konfliktstruktur der westlichen Parteiensysteme in den siebziger und achtziger Jahre fundamental gewandelt hat". (p. 22) Neugebauer and Stöss proffer a very detailed account (see esp. pp. 263-75) of the complex interplay of what they perceive as the four main dynamics - *Libertarismus, Autoritarismus, Marktfreiheit, soziale Gerechtigkeit* (themselves of course perforce reductive! - MD) informing this conflict structure. (p. 270) Their model is in turn based up on a model devised by Kitschelt whose theories, they point out, presuppose that "die klassische Konfliktline westlicher Industriegesellschaften (socialist vs. capitalist politics) durch die ... Konfliktlinie *libertarian vs. authoritarian politics* ergänzt bzw. überlagert wird. Libertäre Politik meint hier z.B. Ökologie. Feminismus, Abrüstung. Dezentralisierung, Pluralisierung. Selbstbestimmung und Spontaneität. (p. 267-8; italics in original) (Neugebauer/Stöss cite Kitschelt's understanding of the term *libertarian*: "My use of the concept 'libertarian' is rooted in the European linguistic convention that associates the term with anarchist and syndicalist theories of direct

Parties, Neugebauer and Stöss argue, are mortal organisations with a cycle of existence (birth, life and death). A party with a relevant *Weltanschauung* and flexible enough to take on board the changes arising in society and adapt to these, can expect to secure its existence in the long term; such a party can be compared with an *Interessenpartei* which, as a representative of transient, largely socio-economically grounded interest, have an existence which is only "mittelfristig gesichert". Brie's is an attempt to harness the PDS's existence to a *Weltanschauung* based upon a socialism-capitalism cleavage. And while Neugebauer and Stöss's observation that "Brie füllt den Begriff Sozialismus nicht inhaltlich" is - like Topitsch's *Leerformel* metaphor - perhaps misleading/unhelpful inasmuch as even a vastly extended term has some intension (*socialism*'s "content" here, though difficult to grasp tangibly, is, at the very least, that it is a foil for the system obtaining: still a content, though one at a high degree of generality), they percipiently recgnise that:

> er (Brie) faßt ihn (den Begriff Sozialismus) abstrakt als Alternative zum Status quo. Das kann vieles bedeuten ... *die Alternative zum Status quo (muß)*

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democracy, sympathetic to the self-organisation of autonomous individuals and voluntary associations in collective decision-making processes." (p. 268)) "Autoritäre Politik bedeutet nach Kitschelt u.a. Hierarchie, Paternalismus, Gemeinschaft, wirtschaftliche Größe und vor allem Fremdenfeindlichkeit. Diese neue Konfliktlinie sei eine Begleiterscheinung des sozialen Wandels und erzeuge in Wechselwirkung mit der klassischen Konfliktline, daß sich die Hauptachse der Parteienkonkurrenz verschiebt." (pp. 268-9) Thus, Neugebauer/Stöss conclude, "Das Kitschelt-Modell kombiniert also die klassische, eher ökonomisch-sozial geprägte Konfliktlinie mit der zwischen libertären und autoritären Wertorientierungen". (p. 269) Neugebauer/Stöss argue convincingly that (traditional) socialist/capitalist conceptions are encapsulated in modern industrial society in the tension between the need for maximum modernisation/profit/ rationalisation (i.e. market freedom [also: liberalism]) on the one hand and the need to bear in mind social considerations on the other ("soziale Gerechtigkeit"; p. 270); "Die Extrempositionen (Marktwirtschaft vs. Planwirtschaft) werden in den heutigen Demokratien kaum noch vertreten. Der Königsweg liegt irgendwo zwischen beiden Polen." (p. 269) In a nutshell, then, the main area of party conflict according to Neugebauer/Stöss's model runs along two axes, the first having libertarianism and authoritarianism as its polls, the second social justice and market freedom:

> Ähnlich wie Kitschelt gehen wir davon aus, daß sich die Parteienkonkurrenz hauptsächlich zwischen einer eher sozial und libertär orientierten und einer eher neoliberal und autoritär orientierten Politik (bzw. Modernisierungskonzeption) vollzieht. Entlang dieser Hauptachse der Parteienkonkurrenz gruppieren sich die Wertorientierungen der Wählerschaft. Am sozial-libertären Pol sind die Bündnisgrünen angesiedelt, am neoliberal-autoritären Pol die Republikaner. Die übrigen Parteien liegen dazwischen, die SPD näher am sozial-libertären Pol, die CDU/CSU näher am neoliberal-autoritären Pol. (p. 271)

Crucially, however, Neugebauer/Stöss do draw attention to *the fluidity and reductiveness of their model* (an inevitable by-product of any attempt to frame and categorise linguistically the complex interplay of values and motives pervading the human mind [MD]; for an excellent account of this 'inadequacy' of language, see: Fowler, Roger: "Linguistic Criticism." op. cit.); the two value pairs are neither rigid nor mutually exclusive but rather inter-related in a highly complex manner:

> Wir gehen ... nicht davon aus, daß ein Mensch entweder libertär oder autoritär eingestellt ist, entweder für soziale Gerechtigkeit oder für Marktfreiheit eintritt. *Vielmehr dürften wir es ja mit sehr differenzierten Positionen zu tun haben.* Beispielsweise kann eine Person in Sachen Umweltschutz sehr libertär denken, bei der inneren Sicherheit aber autoritären Lösungen den Vorzug geben. Und sie mag sich gleichermaßen für soziale Gerechtigkeit und für Marktfreiheit aussprechen. Das Achsenkreuz bildet daher ein Ensemble von vier Vektoren, *wobei jeder Mensch auf jedem Vektor mit seinem persönlichen Durchschnittswert vertreten ist. Dies entspricht der bekannten Komplexität von Denkmustern und Wertorientierungen in fortgeschrittenen Industriegesellschaften, die sich der Zuordnung zu geschlossenen Weltanschauungen weithin entziehen.* (pp. 271-2; my emphases)

> *erst noch formuliert werden. Fest steht lediglich, daß sie die Bezeichnung Sozialismus tragen soll* ... Die Konfliktlinie, die die PDS im Parteiensystem repräsentieren möchte, besteht noch gar nicht (oder nur latent). Sie muß erst geschaffen, also zunächst konzeptualisiert und dann der Bevölkerung bewußt gemacht werden. Die PDS steht also, was ihre zukunftsgestaltenden Konzeptionen angeht, mit leeren Taschen da.[231] (my italics)

For Neugebauer and Stöss a bipolar, 'socialist/capitalist' schema of conceptualising the world - especially where the poles are based upon traditional socio-economic considerations - are misnomers in complex, post-modern economies. For them this traditional line of conflict, increasingly superseded, has at best been transmuted into a non-systemic polarity ranging between "Soziale Gerechtigkeit" at the one extreme and "Marktfreiheit" at the other (though, they stress, it is a simplification to see these as in any way mutually exclusive):

> Wir gehen davon aus, daß die ökonomisch-soziale Konfliktlinie (Sozialismus-Kapitalismus), die die Parteienkonkurrenz lange Zeit maßgeblich bestimmt hat, zwar nach wie vor Bestandteil der Konfliktstruktur der deutschen Gesellschaft ist, aber auf die Alternative "Soziale Gerechtigkeit - Marktfreiheit" verkürzt und zunehmend um eine neue Konfliktlinie ergänzt wird: um den Gegensatz von libertären und autoritären Werten.[232]

Indeed, can it even be said that the PDS's voter base fits neatly into a (traditional) capitalist-socialist schema in which it votes 'socialist' on account of its socio-economic situation? In other words, can the PDS's 'socialism' be said to incorporate a unifying component of socio-economic motivation? The findings of Falter and Klein reveal convincingly that the PDS is anything but the natural choice of 'the workers' or the economically 'downtrodden'. In their detailed study of the 20% of the East German electorate who voted PDS in 1994, Falter and Klein show that the PDS faired best among *Angestellte* and *Beamte* in densely populated areas with strong service industry sectors (every fourth *Angestellte* and every third *Beamte* voting for the PDS):

> man kann mit einiger Berechtigung vermuten, daß es sich bei diesen Berufsgruppen, die ja in der Hauptsache dem öffentlichen Dienst angehören um die Privilegienträger des alten Systems handelt.[233]

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[231]ibid., pp. 264-5

[232]ibid., p. 274

[233]Falter/Klein, op. cit., p. 26

Crucially and significantly in terms of any capitalist-socialist schema which might be predicated upon socio-economic status:

> Bei *Arbeitern,* Selbständigen und Rentnern, sowie bei Landbewohnern dagegen war die Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus im Osten mit lediglich 15 Prozent bis 17 Prozent der abgegebenen Stimmen weit weniger erfolgreich als beim Durchschnitt aller Wähler ...
>
> Als Fazit der sozialgeographischen Analyse können wir festhalten, daß sowohl in den alten als auch in den neuen Bundesländern die PDS Wahlergebnisse in den urbanen Dienstleistungszentren 1994 sehr viel höher ausgefallen sind als in anders strukturierten Gebieten und daß sie sich in den klassischen Arbeitergebieten Ostdeutschlands nach wie vor sehr schwer tat.[234]

Falter and Klein identify, too, a direct correlation between the level of education and the likelihood of a vote for the PDS: "Je höher die formale Bildung, desto wahrscheinlicher eine Wahl der PDS".[235] Perhaps most crucial of all, the PDS - despite, as we witnessed in the preceding chapter, the 'economic scaremongering' which is a not infrequent feature of its discourse - is not the party given any particular preference by those with a low income:

> Weit unterdurchschnittliche Erfolge erzielte die PDS auch bei Personen mit sehr niedrigem Haushaltseinkommen, während Personen mit einem monatlichen Haushaltsnettoeinkommen von mehr als 3500 DM überdurchschnittlich häufig die Absicht äußerten, PDS zu wählen.[236]

So, conclude Falter and Klein, it would be erroneous to see the PDS's voters as a group of poor and underprivileged 'Einheitsverlierer': the PDS was voted for largely by individuals earning reasonable to good salaries, holding down steady jobs or receiving reasonable pensions[237]. True, the evidence suggests that the PDS has had

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[234]ibid., pp. 26, 24

[235]ibid., p. 28

[236]ibid., p. 28

[237]Wittich's statistics show 63% of the PDS's voters in 1994 as having a net monthly income in excess of DM 2,500 (cf. 72% in the case of CDU and SDP respectively); see: Wittich, op. cit., p. 78
Wittich (ibid., pp. 69-70) observes a not dissimilar situation in the case of the PDS's *membership*: "Es ist bei weitem keine Mehrheit, die in sozialer Hinsicht zu den Verlierern der Einheit zu rechnen ist" (p. 69) but offers the relativisation, however, that "Aber immerhin etwa ein Viertel der Mitgliedschaft gehört zu den unteren Einkommensgruppen: Dazu zählen vor allem Arbeitslose, Vorruheständler und ein Teil der Berufstätigen in unteren Qualifikationsgruppen" (p. 69); on the other hand, he observes, "rund 30% der PDS-Mitglieder (haben) ein monatliches Nettoeinkommen zwischen 2,500 DM und 3,500 DM und gehören damit für Ostdeutschland in die Gruppe der relativ gut situierten. Weitere 20% verfügen über monatliche Nettoeinkommen von über 3,500 DM und sind damit in die oberen Einkommensgruppen in Osten zu rechnen". (pp. 69-70)

slightly above average success in mobilising certain groups on (as would seem likely) primarily socio-economic grounds, in particular the unemployed[238], but in terms of the overall picture, this success seems of limited significance. Wittich provides a graphic picture of how the PDS, in fact, "ihren Wiedereinzug in den Bundestag den Angehörigen vieler sozialer Gruppen zu verdanken hat".[239]

Falter and Klein's picture of the PDS is echoed by Neugebauer and Stöss as follows:

> Die PDS repräsentiert ein abgegrenztes und mittlerweile wohl stabiles Milieu, das sich mental nicht in die Ordnung der Bundesrepublik integrieren lassen will. Dieses Milieu besteht *nicht* (italics in original - MD) aus Einheitsverlierern im materiellen Sinn, nicht aus relativ oder sogar absolut deprivierten Personen, die durch die Einheit benachteiligt oder schlechter gestellt worden sind und daher (noch) nicht integriert werden konnten. Folglich geht es diesem Milieu auch nicht um die Vertretung von kruden Ostinteressen. Zwar ist der Anteil der Arbeitslosen und der Bezieher niedriger Einkommen an den PDS-Anhängern etwas größer als bei den anderen Parteien. *Zumeist sind sie aber ökonomisch-sozial voll integriert und weithin auch gut situiert.*[240] (my italics)

André Brie, by the end of 1996 still frustrated with a PDS for his liking still far too unpragmatic, still 'pussyfooting' around its problematic history in pandering to the *reservatio mentalis* of the *Ost-Milieu* which forms its voter base, reveals of the PDS voters who meet in the pub at his Mecklenburg retreat that:

> Es sind *Einheitsgewinnler*, die sich da treffen. Aber sie reden davon, daß früher alles besser war.[241] (my italics)

Where, then can we begin to look for a *unifying* 'motivating factor' among PDS members and voters for supporting the PDS? For Neugebauer and Stöss et al. unity is only to be found on a very high level of generality: that of a broad "Abwehrhaltung", a *reservatio mentalis* vis-à-vis the new system, incorporating a complex interplay of psychological motives. (We remember Koch's observations above - see footnotes 55 and 56). An abstract 'disaffection' (prompted by a veritable plethora of differing reasons and considerations) with the Federal Republic can hardly be said to form the nucleus for developing a systemic vision; herein lies the essential (and

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[238]see: Falter/Klein, op. cit., p. 26; Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 232

[239]see: Wittich, op. cit., p. 79

[240]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 285

[241]André Brie, cited in: Hartung, Klaus: "Der artige Rebell." In: *Die Zeit.* no. 33. 1996

irreconcilable?) tension facing party ideologues, who must deal with the task of articulating the essence of a future-orientated, systemic 'democratic socialism' incorporating a relevant line of conflict in society (such as would sustain the PDS as an electable party) and marrying this 'vision' with the essentially anachronistic position of its voters who have given the party its mandate as 'democratic socialists' and for whom *democratic socialism* is anything but a formalised, homogenous and clearly defined *Weltanschauung*:

> Strategisch befindet sich die Partei in einer schwierigen Lage. *Das betrifft zunächst die Diskrepanz zwischen ihrem Anspruch als Weltanschauungspartei und der Mentalität hrer Anhänger.* Ihrem offiziellen programmatischen Selbstverständnis nach ist die PDS eine *sozialistische* Partei, die mit dem Staatssozialismus gebrochen hat. Sie will ... durch demokratische Reformen eine ökologische, solidarische, emanzipatorische, gerechte, freie und zivile Gesellschaft schaffen ... Ihre Anhänger (im Osten) eint dagegen keineswegs *der demokratische Sozialismus als Konzept zur Gestaltung moderner Industriegesellschaften*, sondern zuallererst die Zugehörigkeit zu einem regional (und sozial) klar abgegrenzten Milieu, die Teilnostalgie bezüglich der DDR, die Wahrung von Interessen der DDR-Eliten in der neuen Gesellschaftsordnung und schließlich die antiwestliche und modernisierungsfeindliche Grundhaltung".[242] (my italics)

And while the unificatory discourse of the PDS has sought to overcome this discrepancy with a rather clumsy *expressis verbis* representation of the pandering to the interests of its *Ostmilieu* as an integral part of its democratic-socialist "vision" for a *united* Germany:

> Sie (Die PDS - MD) ist die Partei, die ostdeutsche Interessen als integralen Bestandteil einer alternativen Reformpolitik für ganz Deutschland begreift.[243]

Neugebauer and Stöss argue that:

> In Wirklichkeit handelt es sich dabei um eine Ausrede, um die Flucht vor der - tendenziell unausweichlichen - Entscheidung zwischen einer modernen, reformsozialistischen Perspektive und den traditionellen Orientierungen und

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[242]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 304

[243]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 19

> bornierten Interessen eines besonderen Milieus in Ostdeutschland, dem die PDS allerdings ihre parlamentarische Repräsentanz verdankt.[244]

How has the PDS been able to survive in the short term? Neugebauer and Stöss argue that it has sustained its existence by capitalising on an "Ost-West-Konflikt"[245]. It is the only party which lives from that conflict. The problem for the PDS, they argue, is that this line of conflict, which the other parties incorporate as *Nebenkonflikte*, is simply that: a secondary conflict which is potentially transitory. We must, however, be very clear on the nature of this '*Konflikt*': the compelling evidence they and numerous other commentators[246] offer (which we touched upon above) is that the PDS is not the party which represents East German socio-*economic* interests, despite its attempts to make itself the *Anwalt* of, and have itself identified with, *Einheitsverlierer* in a socio-*economic* sense. In other words the PDS is not the party representing what Neugebauer and Stöss call '*krude Ostinteressen*'. (see footnote 240) The PDS is not the party which the "Schwache" or the "Betroffene" in any socio-economic sense have voted for any more than for any other party. If it can be deemed an interest party, then it is so for a specific *milieu*, the nature and characteristics of which we have discussed above. The evidence presented here is that the PDS functions as an interest party on a more prominent socio-psychological level[247], as the party which provides its members with a *Seelenmassage*. Put another way, the findings discussed above make patently clear the complex, conflationary and reductive nature of statements, frequently encountered in the German press, such as "the PDS is the party of *Ost-Interessen*" and the enormous problem of in any way grasping or determining empirically what being a party representing East-German interests "really" means. We can only invoke categories - in themselves reductive and simplistic - such as *socio-economic*, *krude Ostinteressen*, *reservatio mentalis* which again fail to address the fact that these categories are themselves very difficult to specify semantically and can be understood from different perspectives; what is even more problematic is that a given individual might have voted for the PDS out of a complex amalgam of - often not rationally explicable - motives ascribable to more than one category. On a broad level we can say that the term fails to problematise the distinction between interests which are largely socio-economically grounded and interests which are socio-psychological (where the PDS is a vehicle for personal

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[244]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 305

[245]ibid., p. 302

[246]such as Falter/Klein, Wittich

[247]We must guard, for example, as Neugebauer/Stöss point out, against equating the PDS with an interest party such as the *Block der Heimatvertriebenen* who represented a distinct set of primarily socio-economic demands which, when largely met, rendered the latter obsolete. (see Neugebauer/Stöss, pp. 238-9)

vindication, for providing a psychological prop for those who, while they may not be any worse off in *pecuniary* terms, suffer, say, on an *emotional* level from the loss of their *societal status*). These categories are not, however, mutually exclusive, nor are they in any way fixed or pre-defined. The reductive notion *Ost-Interessen* is suggestive of a (mythical) *uniformity* of East German interests pitted against West German interests; to say (as is frequently done in the media) that the PDS is the party of *Ost-Interessen* implies a much wider voter-base for the PDS than it has in reality, that the PDS is the representative of all and any East German aspiration(s), is the party upon which all East German hopes and aspirations in the new system are pinned, irrespective of their nature; Neugebauer and Stöss's statistics reveal that of 25,000 East Germans (again a necessarily reductive picture!) asked what they deemed the three most acute current problems to be, only 15% (! -MD) named problems which the two sociologists felt could be in some way linked to an East-West disparity (yet another reduction, of course: the perspective bears their subjective interpretation!); and indeed, only 11% of this sub-group declared themselves to be PDS voters. Thus some 90% of those who mentioned problems in connection (as far and Neugebauer and Stöss were concerned) with an East-West disparity took their vote *elsewhere*. Neugebauer and Stöss conclude that:

> Es gibt keine Partei, die massiv von Wählern bevorzugt wird, die sich besonders für Ost-Interessen einsetzen.[248]

Similarly, we must be very cautious in using the term *Protestpartei* to characterise the PDS. Within a wider, general frame of reference, the PDS is doubtless the party through which a specific *milieu* registers its mental *protest* against the new polity on the level of an esoteric reservatio mentalis; from within the *narrower context* of the term's received definition within the discipline of party and electoral research, however, it is highly doubtful whether the PDS could be labelled so: Neugebauer and Stöss point out that while "der Begriff 'Protest' ... in der Wahlforschung nicht klar definiert (ist)", a general feature of any attempts to furnish a formalised definition has been the recognition - in this academic discipline - that what characterises protest parties is a high level of voter mobility, these voters having as their general aim:

> den etablierten Parteien einen Denkzettel (zu - MD) verpassen ... Protestwahl meinte den Wechsel von einer etablierten Partei zu einer Randpartei, wechselndes Wahlverhalten also"[249]

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[248]ibid., p. 262

[249]ibid., p. 247

in other words, their electoral behaviour is very much bound up with short term frustrations.[250] The extensive studies on electoral behaviour/loyalties and voter mobility which Neugebauer and Stöss have carried out[251] (the necessary "Komplexitätsreduktion" of which they themselves stress)[252] reveal, however, that:

> Zwei Drittel der PDS-Anhänger im Osten sind ... Wiederwähler, was - jedenfalls im Osten - keineswegs von geringen Parteibindungen und großer Wählerfluktuation zeugt. Die PDS unterscheidet sich diesbezüglich kaum von der SPD und der FDP in den neuen Ländern.[253]

The PDS is compared with the Republikaner who, with 60% fluctuation, represent a typical protest party (*within terms of the academic discipline concerned*! - MD). (The PDS in the West, on the other hand, is characterised by a high level of voter fluctuation but because of the "minoritären Bedeutung der West-Anhänger am PDS-Elektorat verbietet es sich allerdings, der Partei in toto das Label Protestpartei anzuheften".[254]) Clearly, then, the signifier *Protestpartei* fails to show the importance of this wider, contextual background for the purposes of assessing its denotative core; it could thus easily - in failing to show any mixing of frames of reference - provide a conflationary level on which to (simplistically) lump the PDS together with - say - the *Republikaner*; the ideological potential of this for certain political actors of, for example, the CDU/CSU (who have by no means always invoked and handled terms like *Protestpartei* with the rigour we might expect of *scholarly*, as opposed to *political*[*ly motivated*], debate[255] and who - as we shall see below - have consistently relied heavily on the invocation of a reductive 'extreme left = extreme right' schema) is, of course, not inconsiderable!

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[250]Neugebauer/Stöss observe that the term has been used with particular frequency in respect of the Republikaner "und sollte verdeutlichen, daß nicht alle REP-Wähler notwendigerweise überzeugte Rechtsextremisten sind". ibid., p. 246

[251]see ibid., pp. 244-53

[252]ibid., pp. 242-3

[253]ibid., p. 246

[254]ibid., p. 247-8

[255]The CDU's Gerd Langguth ("PDS - Partei mit Doppelgesicht." op. cit.) for example, offers an understanding of a 'protest vote' for the PDS which is very much in keeping with the 'extreme left (PDS) = extreme right (REPUBLIKANER)' schema which the right has consistently invoked; Neugebauer/Stöss's findings show Langguth's reductive attempt, as in the following, to link the PDS with *Protest* (which is in turn linked with "keine ideologische Bindung" [Langguth, ibid., p. 20]) to be in need of considerable relativisation: "Über ihre Stammwähler hinaus konnte die PDS in Ostdeutschland inzwischen auch ein nicht unbeträchtliches Protestpotential von unzufriedenen Wählern, die keine ideologische Bindung haben ansprechen. Indem sie den Ost-West-Gegensatz schürte, gelang es der PDS bei den letzten Wahlen, solche Protestwähler in größerem Umfang zusätzlich zu gewinnen." (p. 20)

What is crucial here, too, then, is that the PDS has a largely static reservoir of voters. Neugebauer and Stöss's statistics are backed up by the findings of the Dortmunder FORSA Institut[256] which reveal that 4 out of 5 of those who voted PDS in 1990 did so again in 1994; all in all 57% of the PDS's 1994 vote came from those who voted PDS in 1990; by the autumn of 1994 70% of PDS voters saw themselves as "längerfristige Anhänger ihrer Partei".[257] Falter and Klein conclude that:

> Diese Werte deuten auf die Existenz einer PDS-Stammklientel hin, was für eine nominell so junge, allerdings in einer langen, fast achtzigjährigen Tradition stehende Partei ungewöhnlich ist.[258]

While the PDS has had some limited successes in stealing 'protest' voters from other parties (some 80% of the "Parteiwechsler" who transferred to the PDS in 1994 came from the two large *Volksparteien*, SPD and CDU[259], the overall picture seems to be that the PDS has, on the whole, found it difficult to harness votes from outside of a fairly static voter reservoir.

Where, then, has the complex interplay of the PDS's 'discourse of causal circumvention' and its 'unificatory discourse' (the two being by no means mutually exclusive!) been most successful? Neugebauer and Stöss reveal that we may locate the answer in the PDS's having mobilised to a maximum a restricted pool of voters. The sudden surges in support for the PDS in the run-up to both the *Europawahl* and the *Bundestagswahl* can be seen to be almost exclusively based upon their ability to mobilise a set of vacillating voters who had in very large part voted PDS before[260]:

> Die Erfolge der PDS bei der Europa- und der Bundestagswahl beruhten nicht, wie etwa bei der CDU/CSU, auf längerfristigen Mobilisierungsleistungen sondern auf temporären Spitzenleistungen in Streßsituationen. Dies erzielte sie in West und Ost gleichermaßen ... bei den Wiederwählen, nicht aber bei den Wechselwählern. Es gelang ihr mithin, die treuen Anhänger zum Urnengang zu veranlassen.[261]

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[256]cited in Falter/Klein, op. cit., p. 24

[257]ibid.

[258]ibid., p. 24

[259]Neugebauer/Stöss, p. 247

[260]"In der 41. Woche verbuchte die PDS im Osten 3.7% Wiederwähler, 2.9% Wechselwähler. In der 42. Woche stiegen die Wiederwähler auf 10%, die Wechsler sanken dagegen auf 1.5%. Der Zuwachs anläßlich der Bundestagswahl verdankte sich mithin ausschließlich dem Anstieg der Wiederwähler." ibid., p. 252

[261]ibid., p. 249

Here we arrive at the crucial point:

> Die Wahlergebnisse beruhen also im Prinzip nicht darauf, daß es ihr gelingt, zusätzliche Wählerschichten (z.B. Protestwähler) zu gewinnen, sondern darauf, daß sie ihre Kernbelegschaft nahezu geschlossen an die Urnen bringt. Daraus schließen wir, daß die PDS - vergleichbare Rahmenbedingungen wie 1994 vorausgesetzt - bei ihren engeren Anhängern an die Grenze ihrer Mobilisierungsfähigkeit gestoßen ist. Bessere Resultate als bei der Bundestagswahl 1994 kann sie nur erreichen, wenn sie im Wechselwählersektor erfolgreicher ist ... (was) auch nicht sehr wahrscheinlich ist ...
>
> Fazit: Die PDS verdankt ihre Wahlerfolge in erster Linie ihren Daueranhängern und nicht, jedenfalls nicht in nennenswertem Umfang, verdrossenen oder protestierenden Wechslern ... Bezüglich ihrer sozialen Basis ist die PDS eine regionale Milieupartei (der politischen Klasse oder auch der "Dienstklasse" der DDR). Ihre Expansionsmöglichkeiten als regionale Milieupartei sind daher außerordentlich begrenzt....Schließlich war die Partei immer auf optimale externe Bedingungen angewiesen, um wenigstens ihr eigenes Milieu (das perspektivisch nicht wächst, sondern schrumpft) umfassend zu mobilisieren. Bessere Wahlergebnisse sind nur möglich, wenn sich die PDS völlig neue Wählerschichten aus den Lagern konkurrierender Parteien erschließt.[262]

Last but not least, the PDS has certainly been successful, too, in generating considerable acceptance and sympathy on the part of the voting public in East (and to a lesser extent)West Germany. Infas statistics (cited by Neugebauer and Stöss) based on a survey of 2,500 voters in October 1994 reveal that:

> Auch die Hälfte der Ost-Bevölkerung sah in der PDS die Nachfolgepartei der SED ... nur knapp 20% (and only 30% in the West! -MD) beurteilten sie als undemokratisch oder verfassungsfeindlich ... die Hälfte der Berfragten "Ossis" bescheinigte der PDS, daß sie eine Partei mit seriösen politischen Zielen sei. Ein Drittel der Ostdeutschen billigte der PDS sogar die Übernahme von Regierungsverantwortung zu. Die PDS wurde mithin von den 80% der Ostdeutschen, die sie bei der vergangenen Bundestagswahl nicht gewählt haben, weder rundweg abgelehnt noch gar ausgegrenzt wird. *Wenn ihr 42%* (and 28% of West Germans -MD) *bescheinigten, daß sie sich um die kleinen*

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[262]ibid., pp. 251-2

> *Leute und die Wendeverlierer kümmert, dann zeugt das von erheblicher Sympathie der Bevölkerung für die PDS.*[263] (my italics)

CONCLUSION

It seems fair to say, then, that the PDS has been successful in presenting itself as, and creating the myth of its being, the representative of a nebulous Edelmanian East German reference group of *Einheitsverlierer* and critics of the *Wende.* The problem with vague, reductive terms/categories like *Einheitsverlierer* and *Ostinteressen* is that they fail to distinguish between complex levels (in themselves reductive) of motivation - socio-economic, socio-psychological etc. From a socio-economic (i.e. material) point of view, for one, it seems very clear that those who have *most* reason not to be content with their lot have taken their vote elsewhere. The PDS might be widely *recognised* as being the receptacle for the problems and frustrations (socio-economic or otherwise) born of the *Wende*, but this recognition, while gaining the PDS considerable sympathy, seems not to have generally been enough to mobilise individuals outside of a restricted voter reservoir - which, as Neugebauer and Stöss' findings reveal very strongly, has already been tapped to capacity - into voting for the PDS.

The future looks somewhat bleak, therefore, for the PDS if, as the evidence suggests, it is largely reliant on a vague and diffuse socio-psychological divide for its continued existence:

> Wenn die PDS sich nicht ändert, bleibt ihr der Zugang zu neuen Wählerschichten versperrt. Sie wird mit dem Abebben des Ost-West-Konflikts und dem Abschmelzen ihres Milieus kontinuierlich an Bedeutung verlieren.[264]

The PDS must broadly embody a *Konfliktposition* tenable in the polity of the Federal Republic. The dominant positions (in terms of Neugebauer and Stöss's model described above; see footnote 230) are already occupied by the established parties. The evidence so far suggests that the PDS's ideological centre[265] has been hard

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[263]ibid., p. 232-3

[264]ibid., p. 306

[265]We draw attention, again, to the reductiveness of this notion: naturally Gysi and Bisky have not always seen eye to eye on every issue, but we include them under one category here on the grounds that their attempts to make the PDS *diskursfähig* and *politikfähig* have enjoyed a broad level of uniformity. As Raschke (op. cit.) has put it: "Es war die Gruppe um Gysi und Bisky, die meinte, die Partei längerfristig nur dadurch stabilisieren zu können, daß die Westausdehnung und der Übergang zu einem demokratischen Sozialismus gelänge." (p. 795)

pushed - other than on, as we have seen, a very high level of abstraction - to articulate any coherent, uniform 'vision' which takes in the disparate and contradictory discourses of the PDS's sub-groups and which might at one and the same time offer anything over and above the left-wing positions already occupied by the SPD and the Greens, positions which the PDS has been frequently accused of usurping[266] and which, if the PDS fails to articulate the ways in which it can offer anything outside of these positions, may well render it a (dispensable) appendage of the SPD and the Greens. Articulating difference on a mere expressis verbis level seems inadequate as a long-term prospect. Even if Gysi, Bisky, Brie et al. do manage to shrug off the regressive, apathetic and anti-Western stance of a significant number of voters, and the tenacious communist orthodoxy of its party hard-liners:

> Inhaltlich ist nicht erkennbar, daß und wie die PDS im Westen etwas zu bieten hätte ... Der Übergang von stalinistischen zu linkssozialistischen oder sozialdemokratischen Positionen ist für sich genommen auch kein sehr aufregender Vorgang (...)[267]

The PDS might have been able to use, and profit from, those features in language highlighted above which - in securing a high level of discursive abstraction and thereby putting at a remove complex and noisome questions of causality - for the time being allow it to background the highly problematic heterogeneity of both its membership and its voters, to blur the boundaries between *Weg* and *Ziel*, and to suggest that it is a bearer of a uniform vision (*demokratischer Sozialismus*) which has the broad backing of society (this having been particularly useful in presenting a united from in the pre-election - 1994 - period); the vision seems inadequate, however, where it exists more on the connotative level of sign/symbol, where it is not underpinned by a denotative core which sees it embodying a relevant conflict position (even if language is not in a position to adequately 'grasp' its complexity) in society, where behind the scenes the party is still 'all at sea' ideologically[268]. After all, if the best that the unifying discourse of the PDS can hope to achieve is to mobilise to a maximum - on the unsolid 'unifying' basis of an attitude of defiance - a restricted pool of voters which, rather than growing, seems more likely to dwindle with the gradual breakdown, over the years, of psycho-social barriers as memories of

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[266]The following observation is typical: "Bei politischen Forderungen der PDS handelte es sich zumeist um eine radikalisierte Version aus dem Katalog der SPD oder der Grünen." Cited from Lang, op. cit., p. 370

[267]Raschke, op. cit., p. 795

[268]It is precisely this disarray which, by all accounts, is increasingly frustrating leading PDS ideologues such as the Brie bothers who, more and more, are growing tired of taking on the gruelling task of attempting to locate and steer - through the medium of a broad, de-antagonising language - an inner-party middle ground and are increasingly questioning whether their future lies with the PDS (see, for example, Hartung: "Der artige Rebell." op. cit.)

the GDR fade, then it is not inappropriate to moot, at least, the question of the PDS's long-term political relevance.

Of the PDS's *socialism* we can say the following:

1. As used by the PDS in its unifying discourse it is vast in its extension, with minimal intension;

2. The sign is not representative of any defined, homogenous ideological system or world-view - though it doubtless embodies and incorporates a random set of features which are commonly associated with the socialist *signifiant* - despite offering the *suggestion* that it is so; the understanding of it among the party membership is vast and contradictory, though as a highly superordinate term whose semantic specification is difficult it obscures this; for PDS voters it seems emblematic not of an adherence to any formalised system, but of a vague reservatio mentalis vis-à-vis the new system; it is a comforter responded to largely on a symbolic level.

3. Any 'systemic' socialism has yet to be defined by the PDS - it can 'hide' this fact behind a potent sign like *socialism*, but to survive in the long term it will have to surmount the enormous task of articulating a raison d'être other than a vision which, below the surface form (be it *socialism* or *democratic socialism* or whatever) in which it is enframed amounts to little more than a visceral negation of the here and now and a random collection of (not necessarily insincerely held) views neatly packaged as socialist in order to suggest uniformity.

CHAPTER 4:
A NON-GOVERNING OPPOSITION?
THE PDS IN THE WAKE OF SACHSEN-ANHALT

ALLES SCHON GEWESEN? DEALING WITH POWER: THE NEW REALO/FUNDI DEBATE?

Suddenly, at the end of June 1994, the *Landtagswahl* in Sachsen-Anhalt afforded the PDS the prospect of a real opportunity to get its foot in the political door.[1] The possibility of the PDS 'propping up' a minority regional government became a major talking point across the German media spectrum; the "medialer Dammbruch"[2], whether positive or negative, cannot but have been advantageous to a party previously written off by many as a political irrelevance.[3]

Hitherto the PDS had, in a sense, made virtue from necessity by largely abjuring - as a strictly *oppositional* party whose essential role was as a *Korrektiv*, as a political watch-dog - any governmental role in the established political arena[4]; this is captured

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[1]Briefly the background to this, as described by Neugebauer and Stöss (op. cit., p. 211 ff.), is as follows: the CDU, while emerging as the strongest party, gained 5% fewer votes than in the previous elections and lost its coalition partner, the FDP, which failed to surmount the 5% hurdle. The CDU's lead over the SPD was only some 4,000 votes, the SPD having gained 8% with respect to 1990. Seeing itself as the real victor, the SPD, with 34% of the vote, chose to form a minority government (*Minderheitsregierung*) - headed by Reinhard Höppner - with the Greens, who had just managed to clear the 5% mark. The PDS's showing, too, was impressive: with 20% of the vote it emerged as the third strongest party. "Das Kabinett des SPD-Spitzenkandidaten Reinhard Höppner sah sich von Anfang an dem Verdacht ausgesetzt, von der Gunst der PDS abhängig zu sein, die zuvor (strategisch geschickt) eine Tolerierung der Minderheitsregierung angekündigt hatte. Dies war die Geburtsstunde der 'Rote Socken-Kampagne' (= the CDU/CSU-led anti-PDS, anti-left tirade - MD)." (Neugebauer/Stöss, ibid.)

[2]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 211

[3]"Bessere Publicity hätten sich die Wahlkampfplaner um den PDS-Strategen André Brie kaum wünschen können. Einen Tag nach der denkwürdigen Wahl in Sachsen-Anhalt, die das demokratische System der Bundesrepublik - je nach Standpunkt - um eine interessante Facette politischer Mehrheitsbildung bereicherte oder den Anfang vom Ende eines überkommenen demokratischen Konsenses markierte, war es mit der 'Medienblockade' (so die Klage jedes PDS-Politikers) vorbei. Die demokratischen Sozialisten waren plötzlich in aller Munde ..." ibid.

[4]After all, there simply had been no question of PDS governmental involvement at *Land* level: by the end of 1991 the PDS was in a desperate situation, plagued by party in-fighting, factionalisation and renewed calls for the party to disband; its popularity with the electorate had waned considerably after a hopeful start, caught up as the latter was in the euphoria of unification. The PDS's anti-unification, anti-West-German messages were not popular with an - as yet - optimistic electorate. By 1992, however, the desolate economic situation and the gradual realisation among large sections of the East German population that the Kohl government would be unable to deliver upon its electoral promises were key factors in prompting a gradual mood-swing among East Germans tired of their widely perceived status as *Deutsche zweiter Klasse*; a PDS which had always purported to champion East German interests in the face of what it presented as the West-German steam-roller could not but gain, Neugebauer and Stöss maintain, in prestige and popularity from the gradual rise in East German 'ostalgia', self-confidence, and defiance.

For an excellent account of the PDS's gradual rejuvenation, see Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., pp. 43-62

in its - by now notorious - slogan, (with the PDS in its characteristic 'modesty' mode) in which it declares that

Alle wollen regieren, wir nicht

In wishing to get beyond the surface form of this last utterance - de-contextualised as it is - and analyse it pragmatically, we are faced with the complex problem of the discrepancy - which we shall encounter time and again - between (what we might call) 'conviction' on the one hand, i.e. 'genuine' commitment to what is 'literally' expressed in the surface form of an utterance, and 'strategy', where commitment is less to the proposition contained in the surface form, but rather to the perlocutionary effect of that utterance against a complex of background considerations and assumptions.

If we bear in mind the temporal and situational context in which the slogan was uttered - one in which the PDS was only gradually beginning to find its feet and had little or no chance of getting involved in government (not, at least, at a level higher than that of local government) - there are ample grounds for arguing that the PDS (or, at least, certain ideologues within the PDS responsible for key statements of policy) felt that there was nothing to lose by articulating a position of non-involvement, banking, on the contrary, on the perlocutionary effect of the utterance, whose modesty and pathos might serve to elicit sympathy and possibly support for the fledgling party. If we take this view, then, an expressis verbis commitment to non-involvement in government might be said to be at the heart of a strategy aimed at bolstering support for the PDS; this will leave the party in an obvious quandary when that support has reached such proportions as to allow the party to assume - should it wish to do so - a governmental or quasi-governmental[5] role.

(As an aside, it is precisely this temporal dimension which would help to explain the overall difference in modality between the party's first and second programmes of 1990 and 1993 respectively; the former, unlike the latter offers a (surprising) conciliatory recognition that "Der Kapitalismus ist wirtschaftlich effizient (! - MD), und er hat die Weltzivilisation bereichert"[6] as the PDS struggles to find its feet in the new order, still at the height of support from the majority of enthusiastic East German citizens. By 1993 the tide had turned and a much more self-assured PDS could offer a much more outspoken and unmitigated recognition that "Die

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[5]By quasi-governmental is meant a role such as one of helping to prop up and thus exert influence upon a *Minderheitsregierung* and thus being what Jens Reich (op. cit.) has called (with reference to the role of the PDS) a "Zünglein an der Waage": "die PDS (ist) im Begriff, in der gesamten Bundesrepublik, wenn es um wichtige Entscheidungen geht, zum Zünglein an der Waage zu werden".

[6]"Programm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990. op. cit., p. 88

Hauptursachen für die globalen Probleme sind die kapitalistische Produktions-, Verteilungs- und Konsumtionsweise in den Herrschaftszentren der Weltwirtschaft sowie die Herrschaft des Patriarchats".[7])

At the same time, a message of non-involvement was undoubtedly designed, too, to bolster the party's 'otherness' as it struggled, as we witnessed in the preceding chapter, to articulate a political vision offering any real alternative to what was already on offer in the establishment. As such, a message of strict non-involvement in government doubtless appealed to the party's radical reformers (in such groups, for example, as the *Junge GenossInnen*[8]) keen to see the PDS avoid being - as they perceived it - swallowed up by the disempowering and equalising machinery of government.

On one level, then, such an utterance can readily be seen as tactical: it makes virtue from necessity and it panders to the party's - important - radical-reformist wing. On this same level we must ask ourselves whether some party ideologues did not, in fact, choose to champion it not because they 'really' wished to abjure any notion of gaining power in the established polity, but rather because they saw it as a possible means of strengthening the party image, both internally and externally, thus quite precisely increasing the party's chances of gaining support and - later - exerting influence/exercising power *within* the contemporary arena. As we shall see below, this (cynical?) viewpoint is in part borne out by the fact that, after a gradual process of political revival which began in 1992 and when afforded the opportunity of 'coming in from the cold' and 'taking part'[9] in the wake of Sachsen-Anhalt, we see the PDS only too eager to make political overtures to the other parties and articulate messages of rapprochement, the language of which we will examine below.[10]

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[7]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus.* 1993. op. cit., p. 6

[8]Lang perceives the position of the *Junge GenossInnen* as follows: "... die AG 'Junge GenossInnen' der PDS [ist] das Bindeglied der Partei zu 'Autonomen' und linksalternativer Jugendkultur. Die AG ist zwar für die parlamentarische Präsenz der PDS, fordert aber die strikte (inhaltliche) Abgrenzung zu anderen Parteien dort. Daneben solle sich die PDS der Interessen einer 'von unten' ausgehenden breiten oppositionellen Bewegung in der Gesellschaft annehmen, ohne als '*Avantgarde*' aufzutreten." Lang, op. cit., p. 371 (italics in original)

[9]As *Der Spiegel* puts it in its characteristically emotive style: "Die PDS schmeißt sich überall rann, wo sie die Chance vermutet, sich als Mehrheitsbeschaffer wichtig zu machen." See: "*Regieren mit der PDS.*" op. cit., p. 26

[10]Compare, too, how Gysi hints at the fact that the long term aim is governmental involvement in the following extract from an interview with the cultural magazine *Lift* (Stuttgart): "Für die Zeit nach '94 kann ich mir nicht vorstellen, daß wir uns an einer Regierung beteiligen, auch auf Landesebene nicht. *Das mag 1998 ganz anders aussehen.* Ich finde es auch okay, daß eine ehemalige Staatspartei, wie wir sie waren, sich als Oppositionspartei profiliert." Gysi, cited from: "Es geht um Macht und nicht um Moral." op. cit., p. 23 (interview)

But what happens when commitment to the surface proposition - "we do not want to govern" - is indeed 'genuine', when it is indeed taken at face value?[11] In chapter 5 we will examine the varying degrees of commitment among the PDS's members and voters to this surface proposition, and the fierce ideological debate prompted by what has been seen by a significant number of party members and sympathisers as a betrayal by an increasingly opportunistic and pragmatically (some have said *social-democratically*) orientated PDS of the party cause. In other words, the problem for PDS ideologues wishing to see the PDS becoming involved in governmental alliances at *Land-* level and beyond has been to deal with those in the party who have taken to heart the 'literal'[12] propostion entailed by the slogan: that the PDS will not become involved in the established governmental apparatus. (We shall see in the next chapter how the PDS has sought to deal with this by attempting to offer its own peculiar PDS-specific re-definition of *Opposition* in widening the category to *include* a governmental role!).

The problem faced by the PDS in coming to terms with the question of its own increasing influence and of how this might translate into the assumption of 'power' is not dissimilar to that faced by the Greens[13] in the Realo/Fundi polemic of the eighties. Certain obvious surface parallels can be drawn between the PDS and the Greens. PDS discourse leans heavily on the 'anti-establishment' rhetoric we observed in the discourse of the Greens. We observed above how the PDS has consistently styled itself a *Bewegung* like the Greens before it:

> Die Partei betont, sowohl eine *Partei* als auch eine *Bewegung* ... zu sein. Der Gedanke der *Bewegung* schafft eine Verbindung mit der Geschichte der Arbeiter«bewegung», hat aber gleichzeitig eine Uminterpretation im Sinne eines notwendigen taktischen Pragmatismus erfahren.[14] (my italics; other markings in original. Observe how this author too recognises the potential residing in the conflationability of verbal forms [*Bewegung*])

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[11]cf. Michail Nelken's "Änderungsantrag IV. 1. 4. 95 zum Initiativantrag Bisky, Gysi, Modrow *zu den fünf wichtigsten Diskussionspunkten der gegenwärtigen Debatte in der PDS.*" In: *4. Parteitag der PDS. 1. Tagung, Berlin, 27. bis 29. Januar 1995. Arbeitsmaterial für Delegierte.* Berlin 1995 (Nelken's motion for amendment was submitted for scrutiny at the PDS's January 1995 Parteitag, with a view to replacing point two of Bisky et al.'s "5 Punkte"; for more details, see chapter 5 below.)

[12]We use the term here with the reservations expressed in the introduction as to the notion of meaning in the "zero context".

[13]Despite the parallels between the PDS and the Greens to which attention is drawn here in respect of the issue of handling political influence and power, there is no attempt, it must be emphasised, to equate the two. One obvious and fundamental difference is that the *Greens* arose from a complex 'evolutionary' background while the PDS, as the legal successor to the SED (and thus bearing - unlike the Greens - the '*Altlast*' of a politically compromised tradition!) was much more of a 'conceived' political vehicle.

[14]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 268

Witness:

> ich mag auch nicht mehr Parteien, zumal ich aus einer solchen komme, die schon wieder alles und für alle Zeiten weiß.[15]

(Observe here again, incidentally, how the PDS invokes its own discredited past to justify its current stance.)

Closely linked to this is the notion of the *Etablierten*, against which the *Bewegung* sets itself off. Like the Greens, the PDS has used the term widely in its discourse in suggesting that the establishment is an amorphous mass against which it is its mission to work. As with the Greens, too, the PDS is composed of a complex and often uncomfortable amalgam of diverse *Strömungen.* Structurally, the PDS's *Arbeitsgemeinschaften*[16] are - superficially at least - strongly reminiscent of the Greens' manifold single-issue BI's ("Bundesinitiativen"). As with the Greens, the PDS's has strong support from among intellectuals. Both the PDS and the Greens have incorporated remnants of the "K-groups". Both have championed *Basisdemokratie,* ecology, feminism, and anti-militarism. What former Green-party spokesperson Verena Krieger has said of the Greens might equally be said of the PDS:

> Einen regelrechten Kult haben die Grünen um ihre basisdemokratischen Prinzipien veranstaltet. Der Anspruch *"anders"* Politik zu machen schwebte stets über allem ...[17] (my italics)

PDS discourse invokes, as we observed above, broad, vaguely defined and uneasily identified groupings (*Betroffene, Herrschende* etc.) of the type central to Green ideology, where the lowest common denominator for their co-existence is a conceptual framework which pits the aggregate of all forms of discontent with the status quo against a vaguely defined 'establishment'. Observe, again, how Krieger's terminology might well have issued from the pen of - say - André Brie:

> Dies war eine Reaktion auf die ernüchternden Erfahrungen mit den *herrschenden bürgerlichen Politikstrukturen,* deren Abschottung gegenüber *Betroffeneninteressen.*[18] (my italics)

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[15]Gregor Gysi, cited in: Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 249

[16]For a full list, see Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 23

[17]Krieger, op. cit., p. 13

[18]ibid.

The Greens, like the PDS in 1990, caused outrage when they entered the Bundestag in 1982. Green party unity, like PDS unity, was easier to maintain when the party was an embattled minority, out of power and with no choice but to 'take it to the streets'. The Greens in a sense became victims of their own success: their increasing popularity and support forced them to deal with their status as an, and the essential oxymoron of, (as Petra Kelly put it) the 'anti-party party'[19]. The Realo/Fundi split was predicated upon fundamental differences as to what the party should do with its new found popularity and influence.[20] The *Realos,* whose commitment to Green politics was perceived by more radical party members to be of a more 'careerist'/opportunist bent, came to favour a gradual - and what they saw as *realistic* - process of (revisionistically) changing the system from within by occupying positions of power. The *Fundis* refused to become absorbed into the machinery of government, arguing that they were in fact the ones who were being *realistic,* for to bring about *real* change required a steadfast refusal - they maintained - to be tempted by the mere trappings of power. By late 1984 the poles had been formed when *Fundis* Bahro and Trampert presented their famous *Antrag* for submission to the Green's Federal Conference. Large passages of Point 3, "Bündnisse und Regierbarkeit", are striking in their similarity to the kind of arguments we are currently seeing from radical fundamentalists in the PDS (keen to see the PDS avoid being sucked into the - in their view - corruptive machinery of government). Witness, for example:

> Gerade die konsequente Alternative zu allen anderen Parteien hat zu unseren beachtlichen Wahlerfolgen geführt. Gemeinsam mit den oppositionellen Basisinitiativen sind wir zu einer ernstzunehmenden Herausforderung für das etablierte politische System geworden ... Der gesellschaftspolitische Druck der Grünen zwingt also die anderen Parteien zu Reformen ... Die Bündnisvereinbarungen (mit der SPD - MD) bewiesen, daß wir die SPD nicht ändern, sondern sie sich unserer Stimmen für ihre Politik bedient ... Dahinter

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[19]see: Radice, Giles: *The New Germans*. London: Michael Joseph 1995, p. 112

[20]Krieger offers a graphic account of what she perceives as the prevailing system's mechanism of self-perpetuation - i.e. its power to 'suck in' and 'normalise' opponents who question the sanctity of its structures; the Greens, she argues, lost their radical edge by falling prey to the vanity which comes of bearing the mere trappings of authority and power: "Unglaubliche Blüten trieb grüne Doppelmoral erst so richtig nach dem Einzug in die Parlamente. Schnell zeigte sich das wirklich Gesicht all der 'neuen Menschen', die die Grünen hervorzubringen geglaubt hatten. Es ist unfaßbar, welche Veränderungen ein Mandat mit sich bringen kann. Bescheidene, unauffällige Menschen fangen an, nach Öffentlichkeit, Anerkennung und Macht zu gieren. Zugleich werden sie zu peinlichen Gestalten, denn die Diskrepanz zwischen der sich selbst zugeschriebenen Wichtigkeit und der schnöden Realität ihrer Kompetenzen, ihres Einflusses und ihrer Unersetzbarkeit ist gewaltig ... Diese Eitelkeit ist nicht einfach nur ein unerfreulicher, aber unvermeidlicher Zug Politik machender Menschen. Sie wird strukturell erzeugt. Mir ist kaum ein Ort in der bundesrepublikanischen Gesellschaft bekannt, wo die Diskrepanz zwischen dem ideologischen Stellenwert einzelner und ihren realen Einflußmöglichkeiten so riesig ist wie im Bundestag. Krieger, op. cit., p. 18

> (strategic alliances with other parties - MD) steckt offensichtlich auch eine völlig idealistische Vorstellungen von den wirklichen Kräfteverhältnissen im Land, die eine zunehmende Parlaments- oder Staatsfixiertheit unserer Politik begründet. Die wirkliche Entwicklung wird immer noch von Industrie, Banken und NATO-Militär-Atomlobby bestimmt. Das verlangt auch von uns größere Anstrengungen, soziale Bewegungen zu stärken, die dieses Kräfteverhältnis im Fundament der Gesellschaft verändern wollen. Wir ziehen den Schluß, daß es unser Auftrag ist, den Weg der grundsätzlichen Fundamentalopposition, zu dem wir mit unserer Gründung angetreten waren, fortzusetzen und auszubauen ...[21]

As we will see in the next chapter, the PDS's more pragmatically-orientated ideological leadership is currently parrying charges of opportunism and 'selling out' which are strongly reminiscent of similar charges levelled at the *Realos* in the eighties.

Like the Greens, then, the PDS is dealing with the essential paradox of wishing to exert its influence as a *party* (*Partei* des demokratischen Sozialismus) where:

> ... es liegt auch im Wesen ihrer Eigenschaft als politische Partei, daß sie (the PDS - MD) bestrebt ist, unmittelbar oder doch wenigstens mittelbar (Sachsen-Anhalt) auf die Bildung und Politik von Regierungen Einfluß zu nehmen.[22]

while at the same time articulating messages abjuring any power as a party in the established arena; too little success in that arena and the party becomes an irrelevance; too much success and factions will inevitably clamour for coalitions. On the one hand, André Brie points out:

> In der Wahlstrategie des PDS-Bundesvorstandes zu den Wahlen 1994 wird betont, "daß die PDS um den Einzug in die Landesparlamente, den Bundestag und das Europäische Parlament kämpfen und einen Wahlkampf nach außen, um Wählerstimmen, führen will". (Presse- und Informationsdienst der PDS 14/1993)[23]

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[21]Bahro, Rudolf/Rainer Trampert: "'Wir lehnen Regierungsbeteiligung ab': Antrag der Bundesvorstandsmitglieder Bahro und Trampert zum bevorstehenden Bundesparteitag der Grünen." In: *Die Tageszeitung*. 27 November 1984

[22]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 26

[23]André Brie, in Preface to: Pätzolt, Harald: *Das Wahlkampf-Regelbüchlein*. Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS 1994, p. 5

on the other, it must ask itself "warum die PDS gewählt werden soll"[24] if all the elements of advertising, commercial or political, are "but means to an end, the end being power and control".[25]

The PDS continues to agonise over this problem to date. We now turn to the ways in which pro-involvement[26] ideologues sought to resolve it and play it down in the period preceding the Federal elections of October 1994.

TO GOVERN OR NOT TO GOVERN - <VERANTWORTUNG> AS THE SPRINGBOARD?

In the run-up to the 1994 elections one of the PDS's prime slogans, displayed on a whole series of election posters, was that:

> Veränderung beginnt mit Opposition.[27]

On a superficial reading - with the emphasis being on *Opposition* - the latter seems very much in keeping with the proposition offered earlier (where the PDS set itself off against a *governmental* role): the PDS does not want to govern, its role is purely oppositional.

In an acutely perceptive article, ex Green-*Fundi* Thomas Ebermann observes, however, that:

> Am gleichen Tag, an dem "Spiegel"[28] erschien, war im "Neuen Deutschland"[29] schon verkündet worden, daß die alte PDS-Parole ("Alle

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[24]ibid.

[25]Townson, op. cit., p. 204
The following comments from Lower Saxony's *Ministerpräsident*, Gerhard Schröder, are barely a revelation: "Wer politisch arbeitet, muß ein solides Verhältnis zur Macht haben ... Man muß sie wollen, sei es in Hannover wie auch in Bonn, wenn es denn so weit kommt ... Ein Politiker muß nach ihr drängen, muß damit etwas bewirken wollen." See: "Mit Köpfchen und Charisma." In: *Stern.* no. 30. 1997, p. 19 (interview with Gerhard Schröder)

[26]see footnote 37 below

[27]cf., too, "**Wir sagen Danke** unseren tollen Kandidatinnen und Kandidaten zur Europawahl und zu den Kommunalwahlen, unseren Genossinnen und Genossen, Sympathisantinnen und Sympathisanten für ihr Engagement im Wahlkampf, unseren Wählerinnen und Wählern. Wir bleiben dabei: **Veränderung beginnt mit Opposition.**" Cited from: *PID.* no. 24. 1994, p. 16 (bold in original)

[28]The reference is to *Der Spiegel.* no. 27. 1994 in which the prospect of the PDS playing a key role in influential power configurations is deemed a distinct possibility, extending even as far as "Eine linke Mehrheit jenseits der Union ... auch bei der Bundeswahl". See: "Regieren mit der PDS?" op.cit., p. 24 ff.

[29]Is Ebermann right to equate *Neues Deutschland* (hereafter: *ND*) with the PDS? Despite the attempts of both the PDS and ND's editorial board to assert their independence from one another, Marten-Finnis (op. cit.; see esp. pp. 136-8) has uncovered fairly convincing evidence that the latter is in fact a *Sprachrohr* for the former; briefly, her arguments as follows (all quotations are from her work):

> wollen regieren - wir nicht) obsolet und die jüngere ("Veränderung beginnt mit Opposition") nun wortgetreu ("beginnt"!) zu interpretieren sei: "Beharren auf Opposition, so erfolgreich es in diesem Wahljahr ist, wird auf lange Sicht nicht ausreichen, um zu überzeugen ... Die Zeit des ausschließlichen Grundrechtsfundamentalismus und Protestes ist vorbei, schrieb Andre Brie dieser Tage. Die PDS, nunmehr in der Rolle des vollwertigen politischen Akteurs, müsse Opposition und regieren lernen. ("Neues Deutschland", 4 July 1994)[30]

And indeed, the question of PDS involvement in strategic (governmental) alliances - whether in the form of a *Tolerierung/Duldung* (see footnote 1) or a coalition - only a year before unthinkable[31] suddenly became a major talking point both inside and outside the party. In particular the SPD became embroiled in a long and complex inner-party polemic as how to deal with the PDS, with East German SPD politicians (of which *Ministerpräsidenten* Stolpe [Brandenburg] and Höppner [Sachsen-Anhalt] were at the forefront) and sympathisers generally arguing for a more indulgent approach to the PDS than their counterparts in the West[32] (although Schröder[33] and

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While Reinhard Götze, an *ND* editorial secretary declares in an interview with Marten-Finnis that *ND* "stehe wohl dieser Partei nahe, sei aber nicht ihr Organ" (p. 136), Marten-Finnis observes that since July 1990 the newspaper has been run as a GmbH with the PDS as one of its two main shareholders (! - MD) and that "bei der Lektüre des ND fällt auf, daß sein politischer Teil der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus in nicht geringem Maße als Mittel zur Selbstdarstellung dient". (p. 137) Götze owns in the interview that 75% of *ND* readers have been recruited from the ranks of PDS members and sympathisers. *ND*, Marten-Finnis argues, has consistently argued a pro-PDS line and failed to adopt an independent stance: "Um den Leser zu überzeugen, daß die politischen Wurzeln der PDS für das *ND* nicht mehr gelten, hätte es in der innenpolitischen Berichterstattung einer kritischeren Distanz zur PDS bedurft." (p. 141) As a case in point she identifies *ND*'s failure to question the PDS's motives in the party's notorious *Finanzskandal* of autumn 1990 (where the party sought to transfer abroad ex-SED funds which were in danger of being expropriated - MD). Much in this partisan journalism, she argues, has to do with the socialisation of its journalistic staff: all of the 120 *ND* journalists who remained (by November 1992) after its initial body of 520 was honed down in the wake of the *Wende* had been working with *ND* beforehand. There was no new recruitment. In other words, the newspaper's journalistic staff (mostly between the ages of 30 and 45) had emerged largely from a GDR journalistic tradition which could not but have left "ihre Spuren in den Köpfen der Textautoren ..." (p. 141)

[30]Ebermann, Thomas: "Von Sachen und Sachsen." In: *Konkret.* 8/94, p. 12 (The *Neues Deutschland* article referred to by Ebermann is entitled "Abschied von der Notwehr-Haltung.") Compare also André Brie's assertion that: "Die PDS muß, weil die Wähler es so wollen, Opponieren und Regieren lernen." See: *Neues Deutschland.* 23/24 July 1994.

[31]"Wenn wir zu so einem Thema 'Opponieren - Tolerieren - Koalieren' vor einem Jahr zur Diskussion eingeladen worden wären, wir hätten uns sicherlich an den Kopf gefaßt." Heinz Vietze, in: "Opposition oder Was? - Die PDS nach Sachsen-Anhalt - eine Podiumdiskussion." In: *DISPUT.* no. 14. 1994, p. 3. (The podium discussion in question is prefaced with the following observation: "Zu einer Podiumdiskussion hatten der PDS-Landesvorstand Berlin und die Redaktion von 'Disput' eingeladen. Das Thema hätte, salopp formuliert, lauten können - 'Sachsen-Anhalt - was lehrt uns das?' - aber offiziell hieß es dann 'Opponieren -Tolerieren - Koalieren?'.")

[32]See, for example, Schmidt, Golo: "Zwei Seelen in der Brust der Sozialdemokratie - Ost-Politiker gegen scharfe Abgrenzung von der PDS/Parteichef Scharping setzt sich durch." In: *Berliner Zeitung.* 6 December 1994.
The comments of Udo Knapp (*Übergangsdezernent (SPD) für Soziales, Familie, Jugend und Gesundheit in Anklam,* [*Landkreis Ostvorpommern*]) are not unrepresentative of prevailing attitudes among the eastern SPD to the question of involvement with the PDS: "Die PDS vertritt Positionen, die bei Jusos, vielen Gewerkschaften und vielen Grünen selbstverständlich und für die übrige

Lafontaine have been consistent exceptions). Heavily critical of the SPD executive's resolution (initiated by Party Chairman Rudolf Scharping) of December 1994 to the effect that "es dürfe Koalitionen und gemeinsame Bündnisstrategien mit der PDS nicht geben"[34], Höppner doubtless expressed a widely held resentment in the East of what was seen as Western 'interference', in declaring the question of regulating relations with the PDS to be a matter for the exclusive concern of the *East* German SPD-*Landesverbände*:

> ... nachdem uns der Westen den Staat, die Wirtschaft und alles sonst übergestülpt hat: Laßt uns das mit der PDS doch wenigstens allein machen.[35]

As a potent symbol, then, of the psycho-social divide between East and West, the inner-SPD polemic could not but have been beneficial to a PDS relying heavily in its discourse upon the invocation of a perceived Western 'juggernaut' and a concomitant reservatio mentalis among East Germans vis-à-vis West Germany.

The *Neues Deutschland* article cited by Ebermann (see footnote 30) is entitled, tellingly, "Abschied von der Notwehr-Haltung" which hints that there are indeed forces at work in the PDS for whom the question of non-involvement in government is more about strategy (i.e. initial self-defence and survival) than about conviction. There is something metalinguistic about the author's recognition that political capital has been made from the instrumentalisation of *Opposition*; the implication is that where a real opportunity for grasping at power presents itself, the PDS will wish to become involved.

Gesellschaft in jeder Hinsicht unakzeptabel sind. Was diese Positionen zu ihrer Realitätstaufe brauchen, ist nichts als die klare Luft des Wirkenmüssens in demokratisch kontrollierten Institutionen ... Wenn die SPD hier in den neuen Ländern mit der PDS eine lockere Zusammenarbeit eingeht, dann gefährdet das nicht den erfolgreichen Prozeß der Wiedervereinigung, im Gegenteil, es treibt die Integration des Ostens in die neue Republik voran." Knapp, Udo: "Partner PDS: Wenn die SPD mit der PDS eine lockere Zusammenarbeit eingeht, treibt sie die Integration des Ostens in die neue Republik voran." In: *Die Tageszeitung*. 5 July 1994.

[33]Schröder (*Ministerpräsident* of Lower Saxony) has consistently argued for a strategy of divesting the PDS of its mystique by actively incorporating it into positions of responsibility in which it will be forced to recognise, as he sees it, the impracticability of its demands. This position is neatly summed up by the PDS's Harald Wolf: "nachdem die Strategie der Ausgrenzung offensichtlich gescheitert ist, ... ist (jetzt) die Strategie der Einbindung angesagt, des Einbeziehens in - wie es immer so schön heißt - '*Verantwortung*' unter dem Stichwort der 'Entzauberung' der PDS". Cited from: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 4 (my italics; observe, here, the metalinguistic recognition of the centrality of the lexeme *Verantwortung* in the debate surrounding the PDS's incorporation into positions of responsibility; we will deal with it in detail below.)

[34]see: "In der SPD weiter Meinungsunterschiede über die PDS." In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. 7 December 1994

[35]Höppner, cited in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. ibid. (Höppner's remarks were originally made to the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* some days beforehand.)

Brie and other more pragmatically-orientated PDS leaders and ideologues pushing for PDS involvement in government face a complex of thorny and potentially contradictory tasks:

1) of selling involvement in governmental or quasi-governmental alliances both to their own party and (to a lesser extent?) their supporters[36], as well as to the political establishment as a whole, after having made *Opposition* (which, in the frame of reference of established politics would largely preclude the holding of positions of power - see below) the centrepiece of the PDS's political ideology: in so doing they must simultaneously counter the charge (from both within the party and without) of political opportunism. The problem is recognised by Petra Sitte[37] but demands much more than the mere expressis verbis denial she offers:

> Wir haben unser Angebot (of tolerating a minority government in Sachsen-Anhalt -MD) vor der Regierungsbildung unterbreitet, um auch politische Garantien für unsere Wahlaussagen zu erhalten. *Das war schwierig genug, weil das leicht so erscheinen kann, als ob man seine Oppositionshaltung aufgibt.*[38] (my italics)

2) of bridging the (linguistic?) gap created between the PDS and the other parties (as we saw in chapter 3), and of articulating messages of rapprochement towards them; of legitimising the PDS's credentials before the 'establishment' as a new player in governmental alliances

The attempt to surmount these tasks has yielded, we will now attempt to show, an elaborate discursive strategy of 'marrying' the two lexemes - *Opposition* and *Regieren* - through the medium of <*Verantwortung*>.

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[36]According to Bisky: "Die Wählerschaft (der PDS - MD) will mehrheitlich, daß wir mitregieren. Das ist ein Auftrag ... Mehrheitlich will die Partei in der Opposition bleiben." (Note the unverifiability of the propostion - MD.) Cited from: "Koalitionsbereit?" op. cit. (Observe here, incidentally, how in this frame of reference *regieren* is presented as the logical antonym of *Opposition*; this will be of significance in the ensuing discussion.)

[37]Petra Sitte, chairwoman of the PDS's parliamentary party in Sachsen-Anhalt, is a key figure in the very active, pragmatically-orientated reform group around Gysi, Bisky and Brie which, in the words of Michael Brie ("Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 9) "dominiert eine eher passive, den Traditionen monolithischer Einheit verpflichtete Mitgliedschaft und kann sich dabei auf Teile einer jüngeren und pragmatischen Funktionselite der Alt-Partei stützen. Zu solchen Kräften zählen in der PDS Christine Ostrowski, Vorsitzende der Stadtorganisation Dresden, oder Petra Sitte ... bzw. der ... Landesvorsitzende (von Sachsen-Anhalt - MD) Roland Claus (whom we shall encounter below - MD)". Because theirs is a position which gives, as we shall see below, centrality to increasing the PDS's influence through involvement in positions of influence in the established arena (especially on the level of the '*Sachfrage*') we shall call this group the "pro-involvement PDS", whilst mindful of the convenient oversimplification involved.

[38]see: "Geheimdiplomatie mit der SPD lehnen wir ab." In: *Neues Deutschland*. 5 July 1994, p. 5 (Interview with Petra Sitte).

In the narrower frame of reference of the established political fora, *Verantwortung* is broadly accepted as being synonymous with governmental involvement; it is implied, for example, in the following:

> Mit ihrer Formel von der Entzauberung der PDS meint Bündnis 90/Grüne nichts anderes als eine neue Art von Wandel durch Annäherung. Die PDS soll in Verantwortung genommen werden, zeigen, was sie wirklich leisten kann.[39]

Compare, too:

> Meine Auffassung ist, die PDS sollte Verantwortung übernehmen und sie sollte sich auf den verschiedenen Ebenen darauf vorbereiten. Aus der Hüfte heraus wird das alleine nicht machbar sein.[40]

and:

> Während Scharping schon jetzt erklärt, auf Politik, die in irgendeiner Weise auf Duldung der PDS angewiesen sein könnte, zu verzichten, denken Strategen wie SPD-Schröder ... darüber nach, wie sich die PDS in *(Regierungs-) Verantwortung* zwingen ließe, um sie zu "entzaubern".[41] (my emphases) (Observe the deontic modality here: part and parcel of the pro-involvement PDS's attempt to counter charges of opportunism and retain its 'otherness' has been to signal that any co-operation is at best grudging; in this, modality, as we will show below, is vital.)

Witness also the polarities in:

> Wahlen dienen der Legitimation demokratischer Eliten. ... Hier haben die *Regierungsparteien* einen Vorteil, ihren Amtsbonus. Alle Erfolge der vorherigen Legislaturperiode verbuchen sie als ihr Verdienst; Ungelöstes oder Mißlungenes wird jedoch weitgehend verschwiegen, dafür aber um so deutlicher von der *Opposition* benannt und kritisiert ...[42] (my italics)

In this frame of reference, this *Verantwortung*, then, (which we shall call *Verantwortung*$_1$) is generally linked with the conceptual domains of *Regieren,*

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[39]"Abschied von der Notwehr-Haltung." In: *Neues Deutschland.* 4 July 1994

[40]Harald Buttle, in: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 6

[41]Wolf, Udo: "Regierungspartei im Wartestand?" In: *West-Zone: 2. West-Berliner Wahlkampfzeitung der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS).* Berlin: Landevorstand der PDS. September/October 1994, p. 1.

[42]Geier, Ruth: "Die Welt der schönen Bilder; Wahlwerbung in Ostdeutschland - Wahlwerbung für Ostdeutsche?" In: Reiher/Läzer: *Von Buschzulage* ... op. cit., p. 229

Macht, although the term functions as something of a euphemism for (i.e. is more attenuative than) the latter two, inasmuch as it incorporates a 'moral' dimension from its use (as *responsibility*) in a wider frame of reference, where it is linked with such conceptual domains as *care, sensibleness, conscientiousness* etc. This 'wider' use we will call *Verantwortung*$_2$.

In the narrower frame of reference, *Verantwortung*$_1$ - as a synonym for *Regieren* - is generally coupled with *Opposition* as its antonym, where *Opposition* is taken (logically) to mean non-involvement in government; in other words, within the context of establishment political-speak *Verantwortung*$_1$ and *Opposition* will generally be seen by political actors and observers to be mutually exclusive.

A conceptual model in which government (*Regieren/Verantwortung*$_1$) and *Opposition* are mutually exclusive is a major problem for the PDS pro-involvement camp wishing, in a sense, to marry the two. What we find, then, is PDS ideologues favouring governmental involvement at pains to show that they are indeed not mutually exclusive, but in fact can co-exist happily; more and more we find *Opposition* and *Verantwortung* juxtaposed, with the wider *Verantwortung*$_2$ - in being identical in ist verbal form to its subset (*Verantwortung*$_1$: *regieren*) - allowing a reading which links *Opposition* and *regieren*:

Witness the carefully crafted title of a - crucially revealing - article by André Brie:

> Mit neuer *Verantwortung Opposition* sein (my italics),

in which Brie goes on to observe that the juxtaposition of the two lexemes is by no means incidental:

> Durch die Wählerinnen und Wähler sind wir am 12. Juni und am 26. Juni (Sachsen-Anhalt -MD!) in eine Situation gewählt worden, auf die wir nicht vorbereitet waren - weder inhaltlich noch hinsichtlich der Diskussion innerhalb der PDS. Aber wir sollten zu dieser Diskussion kommen. *Politisch-inhaltlich heißt es meiner Meinung nach, die PDS wird mit neuer Verantwortung Opposition sein. Von ihr wird als Opposition mehr als Kontrolle und Alternative erwartet.* Sie wird in der Lage sein, *aus der Opposition heraus* Politik zu beeinflussen, zu bewegen, zu verändern und durchzusetzen was in den letzten vier Jahren nur in geringem Maße der Fall war.[43] (my italics)

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[43]Brie, André: "Mit neuer Verantwortung Opposition sein." In: *DISPUT*. no. 15-16. 1994, p. 1

(observe, too, how the reluctance to relinquish *Opposition* is captured in the carefully chosen formulation "aus der Opposition heraus" which links the 'old' and 'new' stances by allowing a suggestion that *Opposition* forms the very basis for a move to governmental involvement; the construction links the two ideas (*Opposition* and political power) linguistically and makes their co-existence *look* a comfortable one; closer scrutiny reveals, however, the potential illogicality of relinquishing a non-governmental role on the very basis of a non-governmental role (!), an illogicality which, unsurprisingly, remains unaddressed). Witness, too,

> Mit der Stärkung der PDS in den ostdeutschen Landtagen, hieß es in einem maßgeblich von André Brie verfaßten Vorstands-Papier, *"wächst die Verantwortung der PDS, ihre Oppositionsrolle mit einem Gestaltungsanspruch zu verbinden".*[44] (italics in original; other emphases mine)

What we find then, is Brie et al, mixing and confusing frames of reference. Theirs is an attempt to break beyond the (narrower) political frame of reference in which *Verantwortung* will not allow *Opposition,* and to invoke a wider, more general *Verantwortung* - greater in its extension - alongside which their self-styled *Opposition* (in this frame of reference no longer the antonym of *regieren*) can exist more comfortably. Here the proposition is something like

> Wir haben uns als Opposition (d.h. als außerparlamentarische/bzw. nicht-regierende Kraft) als sehr *verantwortlich* gezeigt.

The crucial, point, however, is that the signs <*Opposition*> and <*Verantwortung*> have been linked; on the basis of the conflation which the identical signifiants for *Verantwortung*$_1$ and *Verantwortung*$_2$ will allow, an *Opposition-Verantwortung*$_2$ relationship might in turn, in *looking* and *sounding* identical to an *Opposition-Verantwortung*$_1$ (*regieren*!) relationship, be harnessed to facilitate the articulation of a move from *Opposition* into *Verantwortung* as government (*Verantwortung*$_1$: *regieren*) and to counter the suggestion that there is something illogical or 'opportunistic' about being oppositional and yet governing.

Put simply, the argument is that in fact there is nothing new or illogical about the PDS showing *Verantwortung* (where that *Verantwortung* is *Verantwortung*$_1$ (i.e. *regieren*!)) because in its oppositional role it is showing - and has shown all along - *Verantwortung* (primarily *Verantwortung*$_2$) in conscientiously carrying out its parliamentary and extra-parliamentary work. The construct turns on the

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[44]Lang, op. cit., p. 370

conflationability of two quite distinct denotational references behind a surface form <*Verantwortung*> which is variously extendable. It is of little surprise that <*Verantwortung*> is preferred by Brie et al. to 'narrower' terms such as *Macht* and *regieren* which cannot be 'moulded' in the same way. (Unsurprisingly, we generally see *Oppostion* coupled with such terms in PDS discourse at this time only within the framework of explicit arguments *against* any involvement on the part of the PDS in the perceived "corruptive" machinery of government). Of course, the 'theory' (the attempt to resolve the essential contradiction) is one thing, and the practice another; as we shall see below, by no means everyone in the party or its supporter-base will accept the validity of this conflation!

What we find at this time, then, is the frequent and telling juxtaposition of <*Opposition*> and <*Verantwortung*> in the discourse of PDS 'pro-involvement' ideologues and politicians such as Claus[45]:

> Die PDS-Wahlergebnisse vom 26. Juni 1994 in Sachsen-Anhalt sprechen für sich. Der Zuwachs nach den Kommunal- und Europawahlen vom 12. Juni 1994 ist erneute Zustimmung zu *Oppositionsverantwortung* der PDS. Er ist eine Absage an die Unwählbarkeitskampagne von CDU und SPD gegen die PDS.[46] (my italics)

Leading PDS ideologue and 'moderate', Wofgang Gehrke[47], is keen to convince his colleagues in the course of the PDS *Podiumdiskussion* on the nature of PDS-Opposition in the wake of the Sachsen-Anhalt developments that:

> ich finde es außerordentlich wichtig, daß eine *verantwortliche linke Opposition* ihren Beitrag dazu leistet, daß diese Mehrheiten (i.e. "Mehrheiten jenseits der CDU" - MD; we will comment below upon this polarised world

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[45]see footnote 37

[46]"Presseerklärung des PDS-Landesvorsitzenden Sachsen-Anhalt, Roland Claus, und des Landes-Pressesprechers, Thomas Drzisga, vom 27. Juni 1994." In: *PID.* no. 26. 1994, p. 1

[47]Lang's interpretation of Gehrke's position is that it represents the opposite extreme to that of the *Junge GenossInnen* in the "Opponieren, Tolerieren, Koalieren" debate: "Er (Gehrcke - MD) verficht ein stark auf die *parlamentarische* Ebene ausgerichtetes, rein strategisch motiviertes Konzept. Ziel sei es, eine Mehrheit links von der Union zustande zu bekommen, wozu die PDS ihren Beitrag leisten müsse. Unabhängig davon und parallel dazu solle die PDS *"über bestimmte Themen"* außerparlamentarische Bewegungen inszenieren, denn die vorhandenen seien zu schwach für die PDS, um als ihr parlamentarischer Arm fungieren zu können. Gehrkes Idee einer prinzipiellen Bündnisorientierung stieß vor allem in den PDS-Fraktionen der Landtage in Sachsen-Anhalt und Mecklenburg-Vorpommern auf Zuspruch. Schließlich ist gerade in diesen beiden Ländern die 'Macht' der PDS wegen ihrer relativen Stärke gegenüber den anderen Parteien spürbar - die Versuchung sich für die strategische Option eines 'Reformbündnisses' zu entscheiden, somit am größten." Lang, op. cit., p. 371 (italics in original)

> of a generic *Linke* pitted against the right and upon the invocation of Brandt's famous dictum) dann in der Praxis auch stattfinden können.[48] (my italics)

His words are echoed by his colleague Thomas Drzisga:

> man kann die Rolle der *Opposition* nicht auf das Geleise drängen, nur Widerstand zu leisten, sondern hier ist auch die *Verantwortung zur Gestaltung* gleichermaßen drin. Und interessanterweise finden wir im Wählerverhalten zwei Strömungen: Die eine will *ausgesprochen Opposition* haben, aber die PDS hat auch viele Stimmen von denen gekriegt, die den Wunsch haben, PDS-Leute zumindest im kommunalen Bereich in die *Verantwortung* zu bringen[49]. (Observe, here, the move from a wider *Verantwortung*$_2$ to a narrower *Verantwortung*$_1$; my italics.)

It is doubtless no coincidence that the two lexemes are juxtaposed in a PDS electoral pamphlet which is headed

> Die PDS trägt auch als *Opposition Verantwortung.*[50] (my italics)

and, in which again, whilst the authors are keen to hold on to the PDS's 'extra-system oppositionality', we encounter the ambiguites, identified by Ebermann, residing in *beginnt*:

> Gesellschaftliche Verantwortung *beginnt* nicht mit Regierung sondern mit der Kontrolle der Regierenden.[51] (my italics)

The attempt to step outside of the narrower (political) frame of reference in which *Opposition* and *Verantwortung* are antonyms does not, however, go unchallenged by many of the party faithful, for whom PDS discourse on the question of governmental involvement is simply inconsistent and contradictory. For the following *Neues Deutschland* reader the polarities are clear:

> **Opposition oder Koalition!**
>
> Sachsen-Anhalt braucht keine Minderheitsregierung! Schon gar nicht eine handlungsfähige "rot-grüne Allianz" und erst recht keine Tolerierung durch

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[48]"Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 2

[49]ibid.

[50]PDS Electoral pamphlet on the candidature of Bismarck's great grandson, Heinrich Graf von Einsiedel, 1994

[51]ibid.

> die PDS. *Entweder Radikalopposition der PDS oder eine Koalition mit der SPD - d.h. Regierungsverantwortung* ...[52] (my emphases; bold in original)

Radical reformer and *Gallionsfigur* of the party's *Junge GenossInnen*, Angela Marquardt, will have none of it and, interestingly, turns the argumentation of Brie et al on its head by deploying the same linguistic conflation for quite the reverse: as an argument for *non-* involvement (!) in government. She argues that the PDS has exercised *Verantwortung* (*Verantwortung*$_2$ - MD) all along in its extra-parliamentary role and questions why the pro-involvement camp are now hell-bent upon achieving something which the PDS has always had anyway:

> Wenn ich jetzt höre, wir müssen in Verantwortung ($_1$ - MD) gehen, wir wollen jetzt endlich Verantwortung übernehmen, wir müssen unseren Wählerinnen und Wählern gerecht werden, dann frage ich: Wo war diese PDS seit vier Jahren? Was hat sie seit vier Jahren gemacht? Hat sie keine Verantwortung ($_2$ -MD) gehabt? War sie nicht in den Parlamenten? *War sie nicht außerhalb der Parlamente auch in Verantwortung* ($_2$ - MD). *Für mich ist Verantwortung* ($_2$ -MD) *auch außerhalb der Parlamente sozusagen irgendeiner Opposition gerecht zu werden.*[53] (my italics)

And though there has been little love lost between Angela Marquardt and Sahra Wagenknecht, the spokesperson for the party's hard-line, orthodox Marxist *Kommunistische Plattform*, in this respect they share common ground:

> Viele unserer Basisgruppen und Kreisvorstände wollen sich nicht in das politische System der BRD einpassen, sondern es vielmehr perspektivisch abschaffen.[54]

> Die Oppositionsrolle ist daher keine bloß taktische Frage oder gar eine, die davon abhinge, daß die anderen politischen Kräfte sich bisher eben noch nicht bereit finden, Koalitionen mit uns einzugehen. Es ist vielmehr eine Frage die den Gesamtcharakter unserer Partei aufs engste berührt.[55]

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[52]"Opposition oder Koalition!" In: *Neues Deutschland.* 2/3 July 1994 ('Leserbrief')

[53]"Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 6

[54]Sahra Wagenknecht, in: Reinke, Klaus: "Ist die PDS cool?" In: *Tempo.* (Hamburg) 8/94, p. 55

[55]Wagenknecht: "Anforderungen an die PDS." op. cit., p. 3

One party activist in an article entitled "Regierungspartei im Wartestand?" offers an (at this time rare) unequivocal expressis verbis commitment to an oppositional role which precludes involvement in government:

> Dennoch bleiben wir dabei: Wir werden auch künftig die Oppositionsrolle annehmen, weil Opposition, *parlamentarisch* und außerparlamentarisch, nichts Defensives und nichts Verliererhaftes haben muß ... *Auch wenn wir nicht selbst auf die Regierungsbank wollen, ist es uns nicht egal, wer regiert* ...[56] (my italics)

This assertion is set against the notion that the PDS is a "Regierungspartei im Wartestand". He champions the 'traditional' PDS concept of oppositionality, seeing the thrust of the PDS's political mission as being located in its extra-parliamentary role in civil society. In this conception of opposition, any parliamentary presence on the part of the PDS serves as (no more than) a link between a broad and vague body of affected individuals outside of parliament whose interests are to be the prime focus of the PDS's political activity, and who are pitted against an equally vague body of *Herrschende*:

> Vielmehr steigen die Durchsetzungschancen für Gesellschaftsveränderung mit entschlossener Oppositionspolitik, sofern sie Mobilisierung und Selbstorganisation außerhalb des Parlamentes befördert, in die Parlamente trägt und damit den Druck auf die Regierung erhöht ... Wirkliche Veränderungen und Reformprojekte hin zu einer offenen, sozial gerechten Gesellschaft müssen in der Gesellschaft und gegen die Herrschenden durchgesetzt werden.[57]

This is a highly reduced, abstract world which again turns upon the broad, bipolar conceptual opposites (*Herrschende* vs others) which we have identified as a central feature of PDS discourse; the problematic lack of homogeneity and identity (i.e. the mythicality?) of the groups encompassed by the movement for change is smoothed over by recourse to a high level of (reductive) nominalisation in which inanimates become actors and in which there are no animate agents. An inherent causality[58] is

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[56]Wolf,: "Regierungspartei im Wartestand?" op. cit., p. 1

[57]ibid.

[58]We remember: "Sätze mit nur einem inhärenten Teilnehmer - wie *sterben* oder *sich ergeben* - sind interessant, weil das 'Wirklichkeitsmodell', das sie zum Ausdruck bringen, eine Version von Kausalität ausdrückt, die ... 'eine implizite oder inhärente Kausalität ist, spontan und selbst verursacht'" Good: *Presse und soziale Wirklichkeit*. op. cit., p. 22

implied through the use of the non-transactive[59] "steigen" with only one inherent participant.

How does Wolf attempt to handle the ambivalence (be this 'inner-personal' or between different PDS factions), i.e. the problematic situation that on one level the party has - through the notion of *Opposition* - struck an 'extra-system' keynote in stressing its unwillingness to become involved in the corruptive machinery of government, while simultaneously asserting and relishing[60] its potential influence as a lever[61] in strategic political configurations which, in the view of many political commentators, might allow it to become at the very least de facto players in governmental alliances?[62] Firstly, by a (rather weak) expressis verbis re-assertion of the PDS's commitment to a non-governmental role and, secondly, through the invocation of an abstract picture which allows the (secondary) quest for parliamentary influence (which would stop short of actual governmental involvement) and a primary role located in civil society to co-exist happily and unproblematically *on paper*. Given the evidence outlined above (for example, that leading PDS ideologues are toying with the imposition of a definite time-limit upon Wolf's "künftig die Oppositionsrolle annehmen" [cf. Gysi, footnote 10]), we are left wondering whether this is not more of a personal attempt to reconcile for himself fundamental and problematic contradictions than any statement of uniform PDS policy. (It makes abundantly clear the pitfalls of drawing generalised conclusions on the basis of individual texts, whose prima facie propositions can look quite different

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[59]A transactive clause is one in which a causal process word can combine with two "inherent participants" (to use Halliday's terminology; [see Good: *Presse und soziale Wirklichkeit.* op. cit., p. 21]), a syntactic agent and an affected participant; this will be given full treatment below.

[60]"Seit den Wahlen in Sachsen-Anhalt und der Bildung einer rot-grünen Minderheitsregierung in Magdeburg ist die PDS in aller Munde ... die PDS (ist) nun nicht mehr gänzlich unwichtig für die Frage ... Wer soll regieren?" Wolf, Udo: "Regierungspartei im Wartestand?" op. cit., p. 1

[61]cf. Gysi, on the PDS's role in tolerating a minority government: "Wir müssen den Ministerpräsidenten mitwählen, und wir müssen, sicherlich nach zähen Verhandlungen, den Haushalt bestätigen, damit die Regierung regieren kann. Das ist aber auch schon alles (! - MD) ... die Regierung [wäre] in der Zwickmühle, weil sie sich überlegen muß, ob sie den Kompromiß nach rechts oder links sucht, und das ist eine Zwickmühle, die ich einer solchen SPD-Regierung auch wünsche." See: Reinke: "Ist die PDS cool?" op. cit., p. 55.

Observe how Gysi is keen here to present the 'reality' of PDS involvement with the SPD not as a problem for the PDS but as a problem for the SPD; his portrayal of the situation contrasts sharply with that of his PDS colleague, Heinz Vietze, (*parlamentarischer Geschäftsführer der PDS-Fraktion von Brandenburg*): "ich finde ganz einfach, erst muß der Inhalt klar sein und danach kann ich mich entscheiden, ob ich hier etwas toleriere, mit jemandem kooperiere oder wie ich in dieser Weise vorgehe. Ich hatte nach der Sache in Sachsen-Anhalt ein kurzes Telefongespräch mit Gregor Gysi und habe ihm gesagt, daß war das Letzte, was er machen konnte, also die Zustimmung zu einem Haushalt in Sachsen-Anhalt sozusagen vorab anzukündigen. Ich kann überhaupt nichts tolerieren, wenn ich nicht weiß, was Inhalt dessen ist, was eine sozialdemokratisch geführte Regierung vorhat ... Man macht es sich zu einfach mit der Vorstellung, daß wir mit der Tolerierung der SPD oder der Wahl der SPD eine Wende haben." See: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 3

[62]Golo Schmidt doubtless expresses the view of many observers in remarking that "In Sachsen-Anhalt sitzt sie (die PDS - MD) beim Ministerpräsidenten Höppner de facto mit am Regierungstisch." See: Schmidt, Golo:"Der Sprengstoff heißt 'Pluralismus'." In: *Das Parlament.* no. 3-4. 1994

when set against a wider contextual background). The PDS's essential vehicle towards exerting influence after Sachsen-Anhalt is the SPD. If they are to co-operate on the basis of the lowest common denominator of a generic *Linke* (a point with which we will deal in more detail below), this now calls for a problematic relativisation of the very SPD which the PDS has consistently - as we saw in chapter 3 - lumped together rhetorically with the CDU as part of an egregious and immutable 'establishment'; this might entail charges of opportunism and Wolf seems keen to deflect these by re-asserting that the SPD is seen, at most, as the 'best of a bad lot'; to deal with the problematic question of how and *why* co-operating with the SPD can be better than with the CDU, especially when, as Wolf himself points out, "wir wissen, daß Scharping nur ein anderes Wort für Kohl ist" (! MD) Wolf, in relativising, yet again has recourse to a highly abstract, causally vague body of language with inanimate actors (*Spielraum*) and non-transactives with one inherent participant (*sich erweitert*):

> Obwohl wir wissen, daß ... die SPD ebenso wie die CDU für die Abschaffung des Asylrechts gestimmt hat, sie der Rechtsentwicklung in der Gesellschaft nicht entgegentritt, sondern ihr entweder hinterherläuft oder sie gar befördert, ziehen wir eine SPD-geführte Regierung einer CDU-geführten vor. Nicht weil wir glauben, daß sich damit etwas wesentlich zum Besseren ändert, sondern *weil sich damit der Spielraum für linke Politik erweitert.*[63] (my italics)

The ensuing justification for this assertion is:

> Eine SPD- oder gar rot-grüne Regierung ist dem Druck anderer Interessengruppen und Bewegungen in der Gesellschaft ausgesetzt als die CDU-Administration.[64]

Observe how the above is enframed in a construction which straddles the boundary between a relational[65] - "it is of the nature of this model (the relational - MD) that it allows only a limited realisation of transparent causal processes"[66] - and a passive (of state) indicating no agency: the process noun *Druck* and its adjunct, *anderer*

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[63]Wolf: "Regierungspartei im Wartestand?" op. cit., p. 1

[64]ibid.

[65]Relational processes express "processes of *being*. Quite often, they signal that a relationship exists between two participants but without suggesting that one participant affects the other in any way. Relational processes may be (a) *intensive*, expressing an '*X is a*' relationship; (b) *possessive*, expressing an '*X has a*' relationship; or (c) *circumstantial*, expressing an '*X is at/on a*' relationship." Simpson, op. cit., p. 91 (italics in original).

[66]Kress/Hodge: *Language as Ideology*. op. cit., p. 28

Gruppen, are not - despite possibly appearing as such - the strict grammatical agents of the construct: if we represent the construction as X is exposed to Z (*by* Y), then Y has been left unidentified. In other words, the question of *the medium* by which the government is to be exposed to the pressure of these groups (i.e. how?/by whom?/in what way?) is left unaddressed. At the same time the construction yet again incorporates the vague and broad groupings (*Interessengruppen, Bewegungen*) whose identity it is difficult to specify and which, as we have stated, have been a characteristic feature of PDS discourse thus far.

Wolf leaves his 'justification' at this level of generality; important causal questions as to identity and medium are left unaddressed; we cannot say that his justification is 'wrong' or 'untrue' but we can question the level of abstraction. Yet again, however, acceptance of the abstraction will be a matter of subjective opinion: his arguments will doubtless be accepted by some at this level of generality although, as we shall see below, the significant body of inner-party criticism of what was perceived as the leadership's growing "Anpasserei"[67] expressed during the heated debates surrounding the 4th party conference offers evidence that by no means all party members and voters are comfortable with it.

EXCURSUS - TRANSITIVITY IN LANGUAGE

The final page (4) of the *West-Zone* text (see footnote 41) into which Wolf's "Regierungspartei im Wartestand? " text is incorporated contains a short biography of Gregor Gysi followed by a personal declaration from the latter that:

> "Wir machen nur zwei Wahlversprechen, die wir auf jeden Fall halten werden: 1. Wenn es die Mehrheitsverhältnisse hergeben, wird die Abwahl von Kohl auf keinen Fall an uns scheitern und 2. wir bleiben Opposition."[68] (inverted commas in original)

The "transitivity configuration"[69] of both these promises is highly elucidating; before proceeding to a detailed examination thereof, we shall make a few brief remarks upon transitivity[70] in language. This system, Good points out:

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[67]cf. "Was soll diese ewige Anpasserei? ... Wirkt nicht derjenige unglaubwürdig, der mit vollgefressenem Bauch vom Hunger spricht?" Schreier, Bernd (PDS member of Saxony *Landtag*, 1990-4): "Heiligt Erfolg die Mittel?" In: *Junge Welt*. 9 January 1995

[68]Gysi, in: *West-Zone*: 2. *West-Berliner Wahlkampfzeitung der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (*PDS*). op. cit., p. 4

[69]Simpson, op. cit., p. 109

[70]A very readable introduction is provided by Simpson, op. cit., pp. 86-118

> bezieht sich auf die Weise, in der in einer beliebigen Sprache Ereignisse oder Zustände der Wirklichkeit eine sprachliche Struktur bekommen[71]

and as such it performs what Halliday has called the "ideational function" of language.[72]

As Simpson puts it:

> It (the system of transitivity) shows how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them ... the transitivity model provides one means of investigation how a reader's or listener's perception is pushed in a particular direction or how the linguistic structure of a text effectively encodes a particular "world-view".[73]

The structural way in which ideas are related is thus not incidental, but rather:

> Ideology involves a systematically organised representation of reality.[74]

The critical linguist studying the structural ways in which ideas are enframed in language will "seek to *interpret*, rather than simply *describe* the linguistic structure of texts".[75] (italics in original). At the heart of this system is the notion that language enframes systematically connected "categories of process and participant"[76] and that there are maximally explicit ways of representing the same 'reality'; put another way, this 'reality' can be represented with varying degrees of generality or abstraction "while retained within some - to re-invoke Simpson's phraseology - notional parameter of 'truth'".[77] If we are concerned "with clearly establishing causes and

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[71]Good: *Presse und soziale Wirklichkeit*. op. cit., p. 21

[72]"Language serves for the expression of 'content': that is the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of his own consciousness. We may call this the ideational function ... In serving this function, language also gives structure to experience, and helps to determine our ways of looking at things, so that it requires some intellectual effort to see them in any other way than which our language suggests to us"; Halliday, Michael: "Language Structure and Language Function." In: Lyons, J (ed.): *New Horizons in Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin 1970, p. 143

[73]Simpson, op. cit., pp. 88, 104

[74]Kress /Hodge, *Language as Ideology*. op. cit. p. 15

[75]Simpson, op. cit., p. 105

[76]Trew: "'What the Papers Say' ..." op. cit., p. 123

[77]Simpson, op. cit., p. 106

causal relations, then the transactive is the best model for the job".[78] The transactive clause is one where:

> transactive process words can combine with two linguistic items (2 inherent participants in Halliday's terminology - MD), syntactic agent and affected participant (and a sentence with a transactive verb represents a causal process in which one thing - or group of things - affects another).[79]

An example would be X did Y. This can in turn be reconstituted - through passivisation, - as Y was done by X, with a resulting shift of focus from actor/agent to affected; what began as an actual *active* process now looks more like a finished process - a state - through the introduction of the verb "to be". Through the insertion of "by" the causal connection between agent and process is weakened. The agent can at this juncture be dropped (with all the ideological implication this may entail!) with some ease to yield Y was done.

The non-transactive models links one entity to a process. "As there is only the one entity it is difficult to know whether it is actor or affected"[80]. An example would be "X does" (as in, say, "prices rise."). While the transactive and the non-transactive are about action, are, as Kress and Hodge put it, "actional"[81], we touched above on a further model, the relational (e.g. "X is/has Y"), which links participants in a clause without necessarily suggesting that one is in any way affected by the other (see footnote 65).

PROMISE 1: A TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS

Let us now return to a detailed examination of the transitivity configuration of Gysi's "Die Abwahl von Kohl wird an uns nicht scheitern". The construction is not a 'natural choice': there is something stilted about the PDS appearing as indirect participants in the process. In fact, we will argue, the configuration is entirely in keeping with the duality of the (pro-involvement) PDS's position: on the one hand it wishes - if the increasing number of statements from leading party figures to the effect that long-term governmental involvement is not to be ruled out is anything to

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[78]Kress/Hodge: *Language as Ideology*. op. cit., p. 19; "In understanding any process, causality is of crucial importance. If the causal steps are clearly indicated - those who started an action are specified, the effects are shown, and those affected are mentioned - then our judgements can be made on reasonably secure grounds (unless we have been told outright lies, but no linguistic analysis can guard against that anyway)." ibid., p. 18

[79]Trew: "Theory and Ideology at Work." op. cit., p. 110

[80]Kress/Hodge: *Language as Ideology*. op. cit., p. 8

[81]ibid.

go by - to increase its influence in 'the system' through the assumption of roles of 'responsibility'; on the other hand, however, it has (to be seen, at least) to hold on to the dimension of 'extra-system oppositionality'. This is, for the PDS, an example of what Trew, we remember, would call an "awkward fact":

> in the case of political and social ideologies, the challenge posed by anomalies has a particular urgency ... the gap between reality and theory is so great that there is a continual stream of "awkward facts" which opponents will exploit if they are not successfully denied, suppressed or reinterpreted".[82]

How does the PDS seek to deal with the 'awkward fact' of justifying a 'a one foot in, one foot out' position? The essential reluctance - for the time being? - to present itself as becoming actively involved in establishment politics is mirrored in a syntactic construction clearly crafted to express the essential passivity of the PDS's role (but, crucially, its involvement nevertheless). In other words the *structural* way in which the idea is mediated is designed to redress the problematic ideational import. The construction suggests that the PDS's involvement in established politics is not active, but indirect; working backwards, we might posit that the most explicit - of course, *notional*[83] - articulation of a position of 'joining in' in removing Kohl might have been something like:

Auch wir werden Kohl abwählen,

which has gone through (at least) the following transformational stages:

(through passivisation) > Kohl wird auch von uns abgewählt (link between process and actor attenuated through introduction of preposition; active involvement is played down; the PDS as agents are now in what Trew calls "a less focal position"[84])

(through nominalisation and inversion) > Die Abwahl von Kohl erfolgt auch durch uns (an inanimate process has now become a participant in the process; the nominalisation paves the way for relexicalisation of the 'active' *abwählen*)

(through relexicalisation) > Die Abwahl von Kohl wird an uns nicht scheitern (the negative puts active involvement at an even greater remove and the resultant construction is of a quasi-relational nature)

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[82]Trew: "Theory and Ideology at Work." op. cit., p. 97

[83]"Es ist in jeder Wissenschaft erlaubt, Hypothesen aufzustellen. In diesem Fall würden Hypothesen in der Annahme bestehen, daß es bestimmte sprachliche Formulierungen in der 'Wirklichkeit' gibt, die bezüglich Kausalität, Agens, Zeit, Ort usw. maximal explizit sind - oder vielleicht einfach weniger mehrdeutig als andere Formulierungen." Good: *Presse und soziale Wirklichkeit.* op. cit., p. 24.

[84]Trew: "Theory and Ideology at Work." op. cit., p. 98

The essential passivity of the resultant configuration also taps in, of course, to the 'modesty mode' which has been so consistent a feature of the PDS's attempt at self-legitimisation.

It might of course be argued here that we are falling into the trap here of what Simpson has called "interpretative positivism", in other words of invoking "linguistic description as a way of confirming the decisions ... already taken about a text's meaning"[85]. We can counter such a criticism in two ways: firstly, on the basis of the wide evidence outlined in this chapter to the effect that the PDS is indeed grappling with the fundamental contradictions of its position; secondly, even though we would reasonably expect not to find the construction again on account of its 'stilted' quality, its consistent re-invocation offers compelling evidence that it has been consciously crafted: we encounter it widely (sometimes with minimal variations), a point picked up in the article from *Neues Deutschland* cited above (and offering evidence, incidentally, of PDS ideologues' success in generating recognition [and acceptance?] of the formulation!):

> So vollzieht sich allmählich eine Umwertung der Werte. Gysi und Bisky sagen schon seit einiger Zeit, daß an der PDS die Abwahl Kohls nicht scheitern werde.[86]

Compare also:

> An uns wird die Bildung einer Regierung aus SPD und Bündnis 90/die Grünen nicht scheitern.[87]

And:

> Wesentlich ist Bisky aber die Botschaft, "an der PDS wird rot-grün in Berlin nicht scheitern".[88]

It is this fact of its wide instrumentalisation which points to its ideological function in helping - a pro-involvement PDS would hope - to smooth over the fundamental contradictions of a 'one foot in, one foot out' position.

In a very real sense this 'one foot in, one foot out' position is mirrored in the PDS's *offene Listen* strategy[89] which, too, can be seen as part and parcel of the attempt to

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[85]Simpson, op. cit., p. 111

[86]"Abschied von der Notwehr-Haltung." op. cit.

[87]Gregor Gysi, cited in: Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 248

[88]Leo, Erich: "Wieder klar zur Opposition." In: *Junge Welt*. 9 January 1995

marry otherness with '*Anpassung*'. These lists included Stephan Heym, the writer once ostracised by the GDR regime (whose candidature on the PDS's lists was a great symbolic coup for the PDS, as 'tangible' evidence of its having exorcised the ghost of the past and thus of its ongoing *Erneuerung*) and Heinrich Graf von Einsiedel, Bismarck's colourful great-grandson.[90] On the one hand the PDS is keen, in oppositionality mode, to strike the anti-establishment *Bewegung* keynote by calling for a departure from traditional party structures. Citing from the party's self-history, *Von den Anfängen*, Neugebauer and Stöss - for whom the *offene Listen* are primarily a matter of "Strategie"[91] - reveal that:

> Lothar Bisky erklärte bei der Kandidatenvorstellung:
>
> "die PDS wolle mit ihrer offenen Listen ein Bündnis linker, demokratischer Kräfte anstreben. Man sei an selbständig denkenden und handelnden Persönlichkeiten interessiert, *wolle starre Parteigrenzen öffnen* und so auch Parteilosen die Möglichkeit geben, im Deutschen Bundestag zu wirken."[92] (my italics)

(Observe yet again how the candidates in question, a wide array of colourful and very different personalities, are unified on the level of the lowest common denominator of *links* and *demokratisch*, however these epithets are to be understood). On the other hand, there is a definite oxymoron in the notion of 'partyless' candidates standing on the lists of a *party* of democratic socialism, especially where, as in the case of Heym, the candidate in question is instrumental in securing the *party*'s return to the *Bundestag*[93]; it is hard to see how a candidate operating "parteilos *für* die PDS" - to use the frequently encountered collocation[94] - could fail to be indentified as being a candidate for that party itself. As such, the candidature of the members of the *offenen*

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[89]"Die PDS bemühte sich auch im Superwahljahr 1994 ihr nahestehende Personen zur Mitarbeit zu gewinnen. Bereits Mitte 1993 hatte ein Parteitag beschlossen, wiederum mit 'offenen Listen' auf denen auch Nicht-Mitglieder kandidieren sollten, bei den bevorstehenden Wahlen anzutreten. Auf einer Pressekonferenz am 6. Februar 1994 im Berliner Karl-Liebknecht-Haus der PDS erklärten sich prominente Personen aus Ost und West dazu bereit." Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 222.

[90]For a full list of open-list candidates for the 1994 Federal elections, see Neugebauer/Stöss, ibid., p. 223

[91]ibid., p. 224

[92]ibid., p. 223

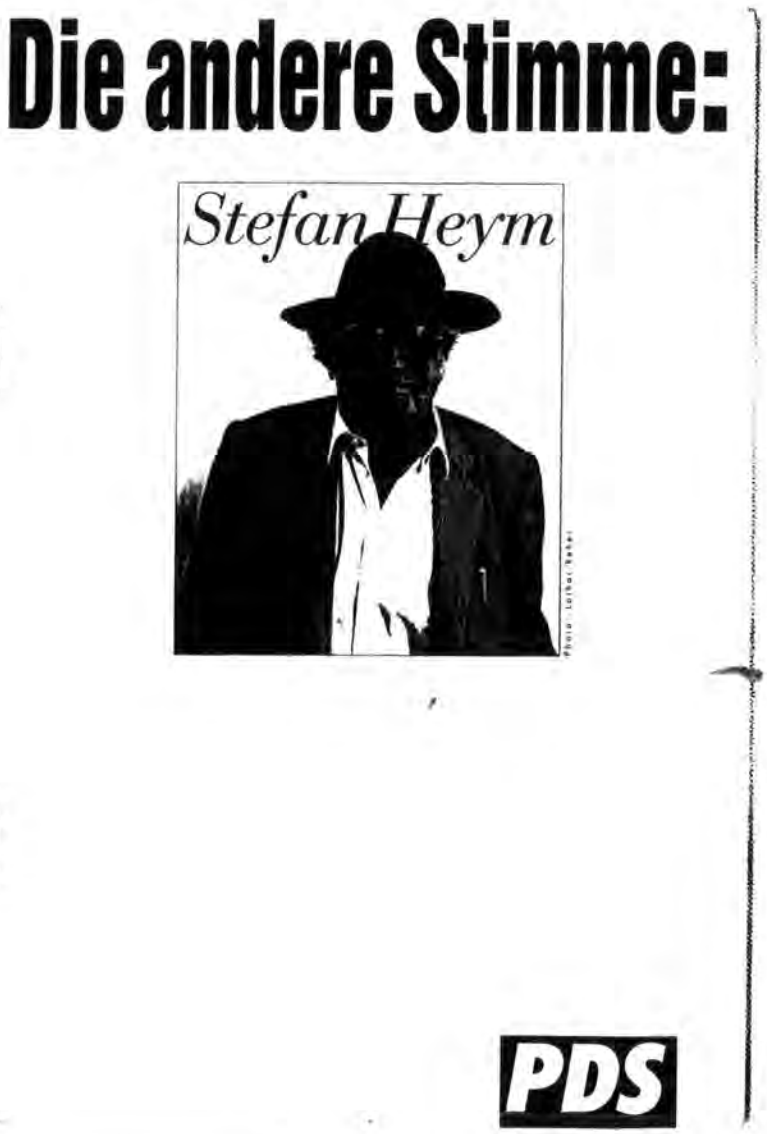
[93]Heym was one of four *Direktmandate* won by the PDS/LL in East Berlin in the 1994 Federal elections; under the German Constitution, a party may be returned to the Federal Parliament despite failing to meet the mandatory 5% of the vote if it wins the mandate in a minimum of three electoral districts.

[94]Witness, for example, "beantragt der Bezirk Mitte auf Initiative von Karin Baumert (*parteilos für PDS*) ..." (my italics). Cited from: Burkhardt: "Palast versus Schloß oder: Wem gehören die Symbole." op. cit., p. 162

Listen, while symbolically different, can simultaneously be seen - functionally - in conventional terms. Trew has said that:

> Words alone cannot capture all that is put over with words, pictures layout and type all together[95]

and the following cover for a PDS electoral pamphlet (issued not by Stephan Heym but by the Wahlbüro der PDS[96], 1994) on Stephan Heym, bearing the PDS's familiar logo, clearly shows the level of identity between Heym and the PDS[97]:



[95]Trew: "'What the Papers Say' ..." op. cit., p. 120.

[96]*Die andere Stimme: Stephan Heym*. op. cit.

[97]Ruth Geier identifies something of a similar situation in showing how the SPD appended the photographs and signatures of popular East German SPD politicians Regine Hildebrandt, Manfred Stolpe and Reinhard Höppner to an electoral advertisement aimed at encouraging potential SPD voters in Saxony to vote for Rudolf Scharping. The semiotic effect was to put Scharping "in zwei Bezugslinien ... zum einen in die allgemeine SPD-Tradition, zum anderen in eine Linie, die das Ostdeutsche betont. Das unter Ostdeutschen nach wie vor positive Image dieser Politiker soll auf Scharping transformiert werden". Geier: "Die Welt der schönen Bilder ..." op. cit., p. 239

there is nothing in this crucial first impression to overtly suggest that - formally - there is any distinction between the *parteiloser* Heym[98] and any other (member) candidate for the PDS.

Modality, too, is central to this abiding ambivalence. In the following, what can be read as an attempt (by a pro-involvement ideologue) to motivate the PDS and its sympathisers to recognise the necessity of participation in the machinery of power is simultaneously 'mitigated' (to counter charges of betrayal and opportunism?) by being enframed in a deontic modality which suggests that it is all but forced upon the PDS, that if the PDS is 'getting its hands dirty' it does so only under duress, against its will and as a martyr to some abstract cause; observe, too, how the relational "Wir werden mit ..." allows a nominalised, lexical choice (*Umarmung*) which - in deleting agency - (conveniently?) blurs the boundary between active and passive action (is the PDS embracing or being embraced here?):

> Wir werden mit der Umarmung *leben müssen*. Vielleicht ist die Umarmung für eine Partei, die sozialistisch ist und bleiben will, die sich nicht der schleichenden Korrumpierung von Parlamenten oder auch von Regierungsverantwortung unterwerfen will sogar die gefährlichere und wahrscheinlich längst noch nicht bestandene Herausforderung.[99] (my italics)

Notice, too, the (calculated?) causal unclarity of the relational "Korrumpierung von Regierungsverantwortung", which allows a dual reading; is Brie arguing against the institution of government itself (which necessarily *promotes* corruption, i.e. which forms the very basis of corruption) or is he not, indeed, merely arguing against PDS involvement in any *corruption* which *might* emanate from the (otherwise sound?) institution. Put simply, what looks, prima facie, like an argument against involvement in government per se can, on closer scrutiny, stand up to a reading in which merely the *abuses* of a role in government is challenged, not involvement in the institution itself.

In a very real sense, too, the whole construct of *Tolerierung* (*Duldung*) of a *Minderheitsregierung* is per se not unuseful to a pro-involvement PDS seeking to

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[98]The complex oxymoron encapsulated in the PDS's position - whether motivated primarily on strategic grounds or born out of genuine ideological commitment to 'looser' electoral structures - certainly paid off for the PDS: "Bei der Bundestagswahl am 16. Oktober 1994 scheiterte sie zwar mit einem Gesamtergebnis von 4.4% der Zweitstimmen knapp an der Sperrklausel. In vier Berliner Wahlkreisen eroberte sie freilich das Direktmandat und konnte so mit insgesamt 30 Abgeordneten in den deutschen Bundestag einziehen. Von den vier Direktmandaten wurden zwei von Nicht-Parteimitgliedern gewonnen (Heym und Müller), in den beiden anderen obsiegten der Motor der Reformaktion Gysi und die eher traditionalistisch orientierte Christa Luft. Ohne die parteilosen 'Vorzeigekandidaten' hätte die PDS wohl auf eine Präsenz im Bundesparlament verzichten müssen." Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 224

[99]Brie, André: "Mit neuer Verantwortung Opposition sein." op. cit., p. 3

marry that involvement with the retention of 'otherness'; on the one it might be said to provide a crucial medium for introducing the PDS as a factor into the complex equation of power relationships, while on the other it has a strong semantic component of mere grudging acceptance[100] which, again, might bolster the (politically less compromising?) suggestion that the PDS stands apart from the establishment and is merely helping to 'make the best of a bad job' in furnishing the SPD and the Greens with the support necessary to bring about the right's removal from government.

PROMISE 2: ("Wir bleiben Opposition")

From the point of view of textual cohesion it seems more than likely that a casual observer unfamiliar with the ongoing extra-textual polemic within the PDS as to the nature of its oppositional role will (simplistically) understand Gysi's commitment to *Opposition* as a commitment to a non-governmental role (*Opposition*$_1$). After all, the *textual* function strongly promotes this *impression*, given that Gysi's utterance (on page 4) comes after the expressis verbis commitment by Wolf to a non-governing political role foregrounded on page 1. But while the respective commitments of Gysi and Wolf to *Opposition* might *look* the same, there is, of course, a world of difference. Gysi's ambivalent utterance - a (causally inexplicit) relational; we remember, "Ich bin Opposition") - is as abstract as the PDS's position is nebulous. The nominalised form suspends tense and can stand more comfortably on its own that a verbal form such as "Wir opponieren weiterhin" which seems more truncated and more readily draws problematic questions such as "against whom?", "in what way?", "for how long?". Kress and Hodge have shown how nominalised forms can be harnessed to shroud complex questions of causality. They operate in something of a 'linguistic limbo' inasmuch as they are "not marked for tense"[101]; their enormous ideological potential lies in the fact that they are thus "outside indications of time or modality"[102]: the boundaries between present and future, between what is and what should be are thus blurred, and the merely 'hypothetical' nature of what is in fact a complex - and perhaps ultimately unachievable - *process* can thus be neatly side-stepped. A verbal form, by contrast, would be subject to "classificatory acts"[103], i.e. it

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[100]*Tolerieren* is defined in the *Duden. Deutsches Universal Wörterbuch A-Z* (op. cit.) as: "... (bildungsspr.) *dulden, zulassen,* ***gelten lassen*** **(obwohl es nicht den eigenen Vorstellungen o. ä. entspricht)**: jmdn. t.; der Staat toleriert diese Aktivitäten." (italics in original; other emphases mine)

[101]Kress/Hodge: *Language as Ideology*. op. cit., p. 27

[102]ibid.

[103]ibid.

would have to indicate "when, how likely"[104], a noisome task if complex causal questions are best left backgrounded. Nominalisation plays a key part in processes where "a series of complex actions are collapsed into surface forms which make them seem extremely simple"[105]; in other words in collapsing processes into easily-manageable single units, it is a key feature in any move to veil causality through abstraction:

> Reducing the complexity of an argument and limiting the terms which it can contain is a drastic intervention. Showing less means someone else seeing less. And seeing less means thinking less.[106]

The relational construction allows the ideologeme *Opposition* to stand comfortably on its own without qualification, meaning that the sheer breadth of the term[107] offers (at least) the potential for the different 'camps' to understand it in different ways according to their own predilections[108], i.e. in (vastly simplified!) terms of the inner-PDS polemic as either fundamental, 'radical' opposition to the very basis of the system on the one hand or as a (Gramscian) 'revisionist' opposition on the other; inner-party discord can thus, on this level, remain shelved and backgrounded in the vital run-up to the elections in which the PDS, like any *party*(!), is keen to present a united front[109]:

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[104]ibid.

[105]ibid., p. 24

[106]ibid., p. 22

[107]cf. Reich (op. cit.): "Allenfalls läßt die heterogene Zusammensetzung gewisse Milieus zu, die *unter dem gemeinsamen Dach von Opposition* und Osttrotz locker zusammengehören." (my italics)

[108]"Die Verwendung von Leerformeln in politischen Texten, von Ideologemen und affirmativen Nennungen läßt zwei Hauptfunktionen erkennen: Die politischen Anhänger sollen fühlen, daß einer der ihren spricht oder schreibt. Die Gegner sollen fühlen, daß sie die Grundmeinung des Sprechenden teilen, daß einer der ihren spricht oder schreibt." Eroms, Hans-Werner: "Zur Analyse politischer Sprache." In: *Linguistik und Didaktik*. Sonderdruck aus Heft 17. 5. Jg. 1974, p. 5.

[109]In a highly revealing and acutely perceptive semiotic study Rudolf Woderich ("Ex oriente Lux? - Zur symbolischen Politik der PDS im Superwahljahr." In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., pp. 146-61) argues strongly that the PDS has sought to convey the impression of being a united, homogenous party through the bold uniformity of its electoral design (be it of posters, flysheets, leaflets, pamphlets, stickers, badges or advertisements, all "konsequent in das visuelle Gesamtkonzept eingebunden" (p. 151; all subsequent page numbers in brackets refer to Woderich's study). The discourse of symbolism, Worderich rightly argues, is an integral part in the complex web of competing discourses which underlie the construction of reality; symbols "repräsentieren einen eigenständigen Diskurs bei der Erschließung und Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit." (p. 148) He argues that to be successful in setting itself apart from the other parties as a "'moderne linke Oppositionspartei'" (p. 148), the PDS had, in its design, to do much more than rely on the "mehr oder minder deutliche Wiedererkennbarkeit von Signaturen, worauf sich die Wahlsymbolik der etablierten Parteien letztlich reduzierte" (p. 149) and on the "gängige Topoi der Waren- und Produktwerbung, an 'Waschmittelparolen' ... die Bilderarrangements für das traute Heim im Grünen ..." (p. 149). At the same time the design had to be careful to avoid being overtly reminiscent of a communist past with its "staatssozialistische Einheitssemantik im Rahmen politischer Inszenierungen ..." (p. 149). In dispensing with the elements of modern product advertising, "auf harmonisierende Arrangements und schöne Bilder" (p. 149) the PDS showed sensitivity to the affinity of a significant number of East Germans for certain 'purist' conventions, he argues, with "Keine ... Durchmischung der Sphären,

> Seitens der Vorstände und Wahlbüros muß im Wahlkampf Geschlossenheit und Zuversicht ausgestrahlt werden, ohne damit Selbstzufriedenheit zu erzeugen oder gar das Gefühl, das Wahlkampfziel der PDS sei ohne außergewöhnliche Anstrengungen sehr vieler Mitglieder erreichbar.[110]

However, the media-pervasiveness of the contemporary political world makes the task of playing down inner-party discord an ever more problematic undertaking. Elsewhere Gysi has - where challenged on its refusal to deal with 'problem' factions - made virtue from necessity and rhetorical capital from its ambivalence through a very public assertion that the desire to present a united front is what characterises the *other* parties not, in fact, the PDS;

> [...] bei den Grünen, wenn ein Streit ausbricht, [sagt] Joschka Fischer: "Kein Streit vor der Wahl!" Das ist nämlich die unterschiedliche Demokratieentwicklung. Sowas können wir uns in der PDS gar nich (sic) mehr leisten [...][111] (square brackets in original)

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keine schwebende Leichtigkeit und Ironie ... Nicht zuletzt dieses lebensweltliche Credo der puristischen Trennung und Unverwechselbarkeit der Sphären, der unbezweifelbaren Eindeutigkeit, eben auf *politische* Themen und Problemfelder bei der Begegnung mit PDS-Wahlsymbolen zu treffen, hat wohl in Ostdeutschland einen Nerv berührt und den Erwartungen interessierter Wähler entsprochen." (p. 149). The features of the "elaborierte Strategie der 'corporate identity'" (p. 159) Worderich identifies are a uniform, strict and resolute graphic, logocentric design (punctuated with an 'affirmatory' colon; on this point see: Geier: *Die Welt der schönen Bilder.* op. cit.; pp. 240-1 - MD) underpinned by stark, dominant black and white contrasts and a very restricted use of other (softer) colours; the visual 'ensemble' is complemented by the addition of the PDS's logo (white on a red background or vice versa) which picks up, but plays down, the red which dominated the design of the orthodox communist line of tradition; by contrast with that tradition, Woderich points out, the PDS's design contains little or nothing in the way of sketched elements or martialist and titanic symbolism and is completely lacking in shading and blending of its dominant colours (black, white, and, to a lesser degree, red). The logocentricity of the design, he argues, is innovative in terms of both prevailing political design and the party's own history. The PDS's election posters in many cases achieve an expressive urgency through the largeness of the captions' letters, designed to be effective both from close up and from afar; the 'sense' of the caption in large letters is only to be determined by approaching the poster and reading the (smaller) lower caption. Woderich traces the roots of this design to the communicative graphic culture which emerged in the GDR, particularly from the 70s onwards, with its emphasis - given the power structure obtaining - upon a cognitive credo of (primarily) "'philosphierender' Bildideen" (p. 153) and a concomitant 'neglect' of written forms. As such, he argues, the logocentricity of PDS electoral design can be seen as a reaction to that 'neglect'. Crucially, he points out, the key members of the PDS's ideological "Machtzentrum" (Bisky [as Rector of the Potsdam *Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen*], Brie [as a former cabaret artist] and Gysi) are products of precisely this communicative generation. Despite his enthusiasm for the originality of the PDS's design, for a "visuelle[s] Erscheinungsbild einer symbolischen Politik, die den Imperativen der Warenwerbung nicht folgt, aber dennoch eine moderne Anmutungsqualität zu Wege bringt" (p. 152), Woderich concludes - crucially - that:

> *Die Partei ist natürlich nicht identisch mit dem, was sie in ihrem prägnanten und kreativen Wahl-Design zu sein scheint: Homogen und monolithisch*, selbstbewußt und jederzeit kritisch, ausgestattet mit allseits zielklaren Konzepten und Methoden. ... Gerade der 4. Parteitag im Januar 1995 hat gezeigt, wie dünn die Decke des Konsenses ist, welche Konflikte darunter auch weiterhin schwelen, die jederzeit neu aufbrechen und die Handlungsfähigkeit der Partei jäh begrenzen, aber auch erweitern können. (p. 160; my italics)

[110]André Brie, in: Pätzolt: *Das Wahlkampf-Regelbüchlein.* op. cit., p. 5

[111]cited in: Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 259

(This is consistent, of course, with the PDS's presentation of its problematic factionalism as a healthy pluralism).

A "POPULIST" OPPOSITION?

> (Joschka) Fischer: ... Sag mal, stimmt es eigentlich, daß du in Bremen mit dem Privatflugzeug warst?
> Gysi: ... Du spekulierst auf einen billigen populistischen Effekt.
> Fischer: Na gut, das habe ich von der PDS gelernt.[112]

Staying with the subject of political inconsistency, Gysi's promise-making is all the more interesting when set against the PDS's 1994 summer election slogan in Leipzig that:

> Wir versprechen nichts

which is clearly designed to "tap the rhetorical potential that politics is about truth"[113]. In its 'modesty' it is similar to the assertion "Alle wollen regieren, wir nicht" and bolsters the '*Bürgernähe*'-Leitmotiv in PDS discourse. In exploring the interrelationship between politics, language and morality, Colin Good has demonstrated that there is something of a tacit agreement in established politics that the failure to keep promises or political inconsistency are part and parcel of its workings. What is important is the maintenance of the *facade*, the semblance of truth-telling, otherwise politics would

> cease to be a viable activity ... Although by no means everyone believes them, politicians invest a good deal of time in maintaining the appearance of not telling lies. This mythical value is central to the political cultures of Germany and England, and I would have thought of most polities. We can find evidence for the status this mythical idea enjoys, for instance, in the way that it is mobilised and instrumentalised in the language game of politics, by all sides. Particularly at election time parties tend to define themselves in relation to this fundamental value.[114]

There are grounds for the argument, however, that we can respond to the PDS's "wir versprechen nichts" in another way which perceives it as part of a whole 'tradition'

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[112]Cited from: Köhler/Harnisch: *Gregor Gysi: Freche Sprüche*. op. cit., p. 107

[113]Good, Colin: "Politics, Language and Morality." In: Smith, Christopher (ed.): *Essays in Memory of Michael Parkinson and Jane Dakyns.* (Norwich Papers. no. 4) Norwich: University of East Anglia School of Modern Languages and European Studies 1996, p. 368

[114]ibid., p. 368

of PDS electoral advertising[115] in which it has sought to usurp, "parody" and take ad absurdam certain established features - "topoi"[116] - of electoral advertising.[117] On

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[115]The ensuing discussion will proceed on the basis that electoral language (which, like Gruner, op. cit., pp. 23-37) we understand broadly as "sämtliche wahlkampfsprachlichen Texte aus Regionalplakatierungen, aus Werbebroschüren, aus Zeitungsanzeigen der Parteien ... [und] alle weiteren wahlkampfspezifischen Ausführungen wahlkämpfender Politiker in Reden und Interviews" which are "zweifelsfrei schriftlich belegt"; p. 23) encapsulates, in a 'concentrated' form, the essential features of cross-textual political *legitimisation*, i.e. the ways in which political actors use the medium of language to legitimise themselves and their parties in their fundamental attempt to martial support. As such, Gruner argues: "Wahlkampfsprache ist die rhetorische Spitze der politischen Sprache überhaupt. Ein polarisierender, ein konkurrenzbedachter und profilhektischer Extremausschnitt politischer Sprache an sich ... Wahlkampfsprache ist als Ausschnitt besonders kämpferischer Selbstdarstellung Teil der ganz üblichen Selbstdarstellung der politisch Verantwortlichen in Talk-Show, Magazin-Interview, Pressekonferenz usw." (ibid., p. 24)

[116]Woderich, op. cit., p. 147

[117]A detailed and graphic account of these "topoi" is provided by Gruner ("Inszenierte Polarisierung ..." op. cit.; all page numbers in brackets below refer to Gruner's work). In a diachronic comparison of electoral language between 1957 and 1987, he observes a striking continuum: an essentially conservative *Zeitgeist*, a «psychischen Immobilismus» (p. 26; Gruner citing Mitscherlich) underpinned, he argues, by an "erneuerungsträge[s] Alltagsbewußtsein" (p. 25) and a "sozial-qualitativer Experimentierunwilligkeit" (p. 25) in "den verschiedenen Denk- und Handlungsfeldern des Politischen und Privaten" (p. 25); this is crystallised in "Prolongierungsslogans"(p. 26) such as «*Weiter so, Deutschland*» and «*Keine Experimente*» (CDU) (p. 26), and «*Sicherheit für alle*» (SPD) (p. 26), which are "Ausfluß einer Weltanschauung ..., die Zustände in ihrer historisch begründeten oder zufälligen Konkretheit als vorwiegend unproblematisch, 'natürlich' und richtig erachtet". (p. 27) "Beide Slogans (i.e. those of the CDU - MD) können als herausragende Manifestation des herrschenden politischen Klimas gelten." (p. 26.) (This, Toman-Banke has concluded, is where electoral slogans are "besser als ihr Ruf", i.e. in enframing a particular *Zeitgeist*; see: Toman-Banke: "Die Wahlslogans von 1949 bis 1994." op. cit., pp. 47-55; here p. 55 - MD). At the heart of this "Konservatitve Hegemonie" (p. 25), is a polarised conceptual structure which pits change (which is linked with conceptual domains such as risk and irresponsibility) against continuity (linked with concepts such as security and reliability); further development is presented as an unproblematic, logical, linear process linking the immediate past, the present and the future. This interpretation of reality is bolstered by a set of stock, highly superordinate, intentionally minimal but connotatively positive key-words such as "'Zukunft', 'Aufschwung', 'Soziale Marktwirtschaft', 'Wohlstand'" (p. 27) which withstand a diachronic time-test and which the CDU has been very successful in 'usurping' and associating with its own party acronym. The SPD, in turn, has consistently battled to 'reclaim' them for itself, (largely unsuccessfully? - MD) and indeed has faced "Teilenteignungen" (p. 28) of its traditional lexical base by the CDU (e.g. «*Sozial immer - sozialistisch niemals*», p. 28; my underlining). Gruner identifies a highly reductive, black and white polarised world with "nicht-rationalen, monologischen, aufklärungs- und integrationsfeindlichen Muster(n), die in gnadenlos unreflektiertem Entweder-Oder (e.g. «*Freiheit oder Sozialismus*» - MD) die Suggestion einer 'einfachen' Wahl aufbauen" (p. 29), a world where synthetic contrasts, personalisation and tactics of discrediting political opponents stand in place of very little actual political alternative, where 'left' and 'right' are practically synonymous (except perhaps, Gruner argues, where enframing the more marginal positions occupied by the "REPUBLIKANER" and the Greens). What is crucial here, Gruner argues, is to recognise that the reduction is not - as is often perceived to be the case - a departure from making *political* statements, but is rather fundamentally *political* in marshalling support for a prevailing ideology: "alle Strategien der Entsachlichung substanzieller Gegensätze (witness the discursive attempts of the PDS - MD!), der fehlenden Problematisierung brisanter Weichenstellungen und elementarer Zukunftsentscheidungen, der Verschleierung gesellschaftlicher Strukturen, der Verlagerung politischer Alternativen auf Personen, fetischisierte Begriffe oder die Ebene des Politik-Surrogats sind *eminent politisch* (p. 30; italics in original). The relegation of the competition for votes to the level of a contest of self-portrayal is, he argues, a logical consequence of the market strategy at the heart of the prevailing order; Gruner sees little qualitative difference between the Marlboro cigarette slogan «Der Geschmack von Freiheit and Abenteuer» (pp. 30-1) and the SPD's 1989 Euro-election slogan, «Auch die Flüsse würden SPD Wählen» (p. 31); on this level what counts are not the policies themselves but their *image*: "Für Verkauf und Absatz der Ware ist nicht der *Qualitätsnachweis des Produktes* vonnöten, sondern der Aufbau eines unwiderstehlichen *Produktcharismas*" (p. 31; italics in original). Hence the parties' increasing reliance upon the services of advertising agencies. On this level, too, party slogans, in particular, are devoid of any substantive content: what counts is their optical presence, their capacity for communicating "nur noch Nettes" (p. 32), such as the CDU's 1986 *Landtagswahlkampf* slogan, «*Sommer, Sonne, Bayern*» (p. 32), to the voting public. So, Gruner observes, "Parteien sichern nicht allein den Frieden, nein, sie verkörpern ihn sogar; die jeweils gegnerischen Parteien weisen den Weg ins 'Chaos', liefern 'ein Rezeptbuch, wie man ein blühendes Land ruinieren kann' ...; andere ... 'garantieren' ein 'Leben in

such a reading, the PDS slogan kills, in a sense, two birds with one stone: it taps the rhetorical potential described by Good above, yes, but at the same time it can be read as an ironic and conscious mimicry, the absurd logical culmination of the way politicians, in particular at election times, ritually make (hollow?) meta-promises such as "keine falschen Versprechungen, sondern tatsächliches Handeln für die Menschen"[118]. As such, the slogan might be said to encapsulate the PDS's sensitivity to the fact that whilst "natürlich alle Wahlkampfwerbung mit Versprechen arbeitet"[119], politicians are keen to make rhetorical capital from distancing themselves from the concept of promise-making on an expressis verbis level (in an attempt, of course, to bolster their image of political integrity). Geier presents us with the following examples in 1994:

"Wir versprechen keine Wunder, aber wir halten Wort" (SPD)

"Wir versprechen gar nichts, aber das halten wir!" (SPD)

"Sie kann nicht alles versprechen, aber alles versuchen" (PDS)

"Mit erfüllbaren Wahlversprechen die Heimat gestalten" (CDU)[120]

In other words, the PDS's "Wir versprechen nichts" can potentially make rhetorical capital on two levels: in the way described by Good above in the case of the less politically sensitive, on the level of a recognition of the parodic intentions in the case of those who are more so. This seems all the more significant in the case of a party which, as numerous commentators have consistently pointed out, is marked by a very high level of political awareness.[121]

If such an interpretation is thought, in this instance, to be tenuous, there can be little doubt of the parodic intentions of the design of the PDS's large, quasi-dadaistic "ja, ja, nein, nein" poster for the *Europawahl* 1994. The large, staggered "deklamatorische Kurzformeln"[122] - whose significance is only to be decoded by a

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Frieden und Freiheit', erschaffen und bewahren den 'Wohlstand für alle' und sorgen für ein 'Alter ohne Sorgen'." (p. 33) Crucially, language in this mode is - of course - not exclusive to elections: "Wahlkampfsprache ist nicht *Ausnahme*, sondern *Krone* der Ausformung der sog. 'battle of duelling sound-bites'." (p. 35; italics in original)

[118]This assertion stems from an SPD electoral advertisement cited by Geier, op. cit., p. 238

[119]Geier, op. cit., p. 240

[120]see Geier, op. cit., p. 240

[121]The tenor of the following assertion from Michael Brie ("Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 9) has been echoed by many: "Die Mitglieder und Wähler der PDS unterscheiden sich von denen anderer Parteien u.a. durch ein signifikant höheres Interesse an Politik sowie ein starkes Engagement in den Vereinen Ostdeutschlands."

[122]Woderich, op. cit., p. 151

scrutiny of the much smaller sub-caption ("für aktive Beschäftigungspolitik"; "gegen Sozialabbau") - doubtless represent an ironic attempt to pick up the prevailing tendency (and react to the wide criticism of) a "Neigung zur formelhaften, extremen Reduktion der Botschaften und Appelle"[123] in electoral advertising and its tendency to function primarily on the symbolic, connotative level; as such they are emblematic of what many perceive as its empty banality and extreme simplification. The poster thus works on a number of different levels: its ironic wittiness is appealing to those sensitive to its parodic intentions, yet still engaging and alluring, however, even to those who are not aware of them[124] and whose repsonse - upon being drawn into a closer scrutiny of the sub-text - is informed primarily by a reaction to the propositions offered in the sub-caption.

Indeed, the PDS has parodied the 'Waschmittel' quality of electoral advertising by 'usurping' and adapting the prominent slogan ("Aus Erfahrung gut") of AEG, a major washing-machine manufacturer; Geier identifies and cites the following rich mix of irony, biblical allusion, pun ("Fall"), and parody in a PDS electoral advertisement:

> Hochmut kommt vor dem Fall. Wir kennen den Hochmut der Macht - und haben sie fallen sehen [...] Hochmut kommt vor dem Fall - ein Fall für eine starke linke Opposition. PDS. Aus Erfahrung klug[125] (Doubtless, too, there is an allusion to the popular detective series, "Ein Fall für Zwei".)

It is precisely this rich mix which has been at the centre of PDS bold, fresh and witty[126] electoral advertising (and indeed of PDS party advertising in general); in her study of 1994 electoral advertising texts, Geier concludes that:

> Auf den ersten Blick zeichnen sich Werbetexte der PDS zum einen durch Argumentation, zum anderen durch Witz und Esprit aus.[127]

The complex multi-dimensionality of the PDS's electoral advertising has led Woderich to conclude that:

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[123]ibid.

[124]There will be few, one would imagine, who will recognise the slogan's allusion to the Matthew 5:37: "Eure Rede soll sein: Ja, ja, nein, nein; was darüber hinausgeht, ist vom Bösen." Cited from: Tillmann, Fritz (Translator): *Die Heilige Schrift des neuen Testaments.* Leipzig: St. Benno-Verlag GmbH 1952, p. 13

[125]Geier, op. cit. p. 243

[126]"Ihr Wahlkampf (the PDS's -MD) ist witzig, was man von dem der anderen Parteien nicht sagen kann." Augstein, Rudolf: "Vom 'Mitgestalten'." In: *Der Spiegel.* no. 27. 1994, p. 26

[127]Geier, op. cit., p. 242

> der Populismus-Vorwurf insoweit verfehlt ist, als ein derartiges Konzept sich zweifelsfrei an den denkenden, politisch aufgeschlossenen Interessenten wandte, nicht um den Beifall des großen Elektorats buhlte, vielmehr das *kognitive*, rationale Moment politischer Welterschließung favorisierte.[128]

We can agree with Woderich that, unquestionably the features we have identified will have appeal to an 'intellectual' target readership. Geier rightly observes that "Vorwiegend Intellektuelle und junge Menschen wählen PDS".[129] If the function of election advertising seems to be primarily one of mobilising existing supporters to vote for their party rather than in fact influencing electoral choice[130] - which, as Toman-Banke concludes certainly seems to be so in the particular case of electoral slogans[131] - then this is crucial to a PDS which is dependent upon (and has been very successful in) mobilising to a maximum a restricted voter base (cf. the studies of Neugebauer and Stöss discussed in chapter 3). If Woderich's observation is suggestive of the fact that the 'cognitive' dimension of the features we have outlined *alone* constitute grounds for the invalidity of the wide application of the *populist* epithet to PDS discourse *in general*, then this is much more problematic; problematic for 3 essential reasons: 1) because of the difficulty of semantic specification of the highly superordinate populist epithet itself; the problem is a good deal more complex than Gysi's attempt to brush off accusations of populism through the invocation of, as Good identifies, a rhetorical "populär ist nicht populisitisch" device[132]; 2) because, as we have argued, the advertising (slogans in particular) functions on different levels, not necessarily requiring *intellectual/cognitive* recognition of any intended parody 3) because electoral advertising - though it displays all the features we encounter in politicians' use of language across the whole spectrum of political texts - is but one discursive element in the whole complex body of a party's discourse, and is in itself multi-faceted with many different text types appealing to different target audiences. Januschek has drawn attention to the nebulous nature of the *populist* epithet:

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[128]Woderich, op. cit., p. 151

[129]Geier, op. cit., p. 242
Wittich's statistics show that: "Während die CDU und die SPD in Ostdeutschland in den Gruppen mit relativ niedrigen Bildungsabschlüssen hohe Akzeptanz finden, hat die PDS ihre stärksten Bastionen bei den Höhergebildeten. Vor allem bei Hochschulabsolventen ist sie deutlich überrepräsentiert." Wittich, op. cit., pp. 76-7

[130]cf. Geier (op. cit., p. 244): "Es zeigt sich aber auch, daß die Art der Werbung nicht ausschlaggebend für den Wahlerfolg ist. Die Macht des Wortes ist also auch im Wahlkampf beschränkt. Ihre Grenzen sollte sie aber ausschreiten. Dies könnte sie tun, indem sie den Rezipienten mit seinen Erwartungen und Problemen ernst nimmt."

[131]"Allerdings ist es fraglich, in welchem Maße der Wahlslogan die tatsächliche Wahlentscheidung beeinflußt. Vielmehr kommen ihm Funktionen zu, die generell zu einer politischen Mobilisierung der Wähler beitragen sollen." Toman-Banke: "Die Wahlslogans von 1949 bis 1994." op. cit., p. 47.

> Was ist *Populismus*? ... Niemand bezeichnet sich selbst so - also handelt es sich offenbar um einen abwertenden Begriff ...[133] Wer dem Volk nach dem Munde redet, um Wählerstimmen zu erschleichen, und dabei seine Prinzipien der Irrationalität des "Mannes" auf der Straße opfert, wird gern als Populist beschimpft. Aber einer solchen Beschimpfung liegt ein unscharfer Begriff von *Populismus* zugrunde, denn es ist für alle Politiker unabdingbar notwendig, sich auch durch Zugeständnisse an ihnen eher fernstehende Wähler und Wählerinnen Stimmen zu erkämpfen - und so gesehen wären alle demokratischen Politiker *Populisten.*[134]

This 'popular' definition is picked up by a leading dictionary of political key-words:

> Mit **Populismus** charakterisiert man Einstellungen, Denk- und Handlungsweisen, vorwiegend von Politikern und Persönlichkeiten des öffentlichen Lebens, die an der Meinung und dem Geschmack einer breiten Masse orientiert sind.[135] (bold in original)

Doubtless, on this level, the PDS can indeed be said to offer a catalogue of 'populist' demands. A vociferous proponent of this notion is Gerd Langguth, *Geschäftsführender Vositzende* of the CDU-affiliated *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung* who argues (not without some substantive justification) that the PDS:

> einen Linkspopulismus (präsentiert), der in wohlkalkulierter Weise den Bedingungsrahmen politischen und wirtschaftlichen Handelns und die Frage der Realisierbarkeit politischer Forderungen ausblendet.
> Die von der PDS vorgetragenen Forderungskataloge umfassen Maßnahmen wie die sofortige Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen, die Instandsetzung von Wohnhäusern, das Einfrieren von Mieten, den Erhalt aller Kindergärten und

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[132]Good: *PDS - Partei der Diskursiven Strategien?* op. cit.

[133]Franz Januschek (see: "Haiders Sprache." In: Tributsch, G.(ed.): *Schlagwort Haider - ein politisches Lexikon seiner Aussprüche von 1986 bis heute.* Wien: Falter Verlag 1994, p. 296) et al. have drawn attention to the term's frequent invocation to describe leading figures of the extreme right, such as Haider and Le Pen. Doubtless, the CDU, sensitive to this trend, has sought, in consistently invoking the term to describe the political agenda of the PDS, to reinforce a simplistic, reductive and propagandist rhetorical schema of a (putative) extreme left equalling an extreme right. This issue is given full treatment by Volmert in "Die 'Altparteien' ..." (op. cit.): "Ausgangspunkt des Kampfes gegen linke Parteien und Bewegungen ist fast immer die Gleichsetzung von 'Rechts' und 'Links' (-Extremismus). Mit einer Geste großer moralischer Entrüstung eröffnet Bayerns Regierungschef Stoiber (wieder einmal) die öffentliche Aburteilung der «Extremisten von links wie von rechts»: «Nach einem Hitler, nach einem Ulbricht kann ich nur sagen: Republikaner und PDS sind eine Schande für Deutschland» (Wams [= *Welt am Sonntag* - MD] 3 July 1994)". (Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 171)

[134]Januschek, Franz: "Haiders Sprache." op. cit., p. 296

[135]Strauß, Gerhard/Ulrike Haß/Gisela Harras et al.: *Brisante Wörter von Agitation bis Zeitgeist.* Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter 1989, p. 686

> Sportanlagen, die Eröffnung von Jugendzentren und sofortige Infrastrukturmaßnahmen. Da die Gemeinden angesichts ihrer schwierigen Finanzlage solche Projekte häufig nicht finanzieren können, kann sich die PDS als Verteidigerin der Interessen der "kleinen Leute" ausgeben, deren Konzepte durch die "herrschende" Klasse durchkreuzt würden ...[136]

Unsurprisingly, his words are echoed by CDU-sponsored Moreau:

> Um das Wesen der PDS zu verstehen ist einer kurze Darstellung des Begriffs *Populismus* unausweichlich. Unter Linkspopulismus wird die Strategie der PDS verstanden, diffuse und unterschwellig vorhandene sozialen Ängste und Nöte politisch zu instrumentalisieren. Die PDS sieht sich diesem Konzept zufolge sozusagen als "Partei des sozialen Gewissens". Dem PDS-Populismus liegt nicht nur - dies zeigt eine Analyse der Programme der Partei - ein wohlkalkulierter Verzicht auf eine realistische Bestandsaufnahme der Handlungsspielräume von Politik zugrunde.[137]

While we can doubtless agree with Moreau and Langguth that a lack of causal clarity (how are these demands to be realised?) has been an abiding feature of PDS discourse, it is hard to see how, on this level, the PDS's behaviour represents anything more than - at worst - a particularly graphic illustration of the way in which all politicians ritually behave. If populism is about playing upon social fears to martial support or about making 'cheap' promises and/or pressing complex multi-causal problems into simplified, black and white, either/or conceptual structures, then it is hard to see how, for example, how a Theo Waigel who offers the eletorate a choice between jobs or a vote for the PDS[138] is behaving in a qualitatively different way to a PDS which offers the electorate a choice between jobs or a vote for the right. Kohl might have packaged his promise of "blühende Landschaften" in a readily defeasible metaphor[139], but he, too, gave 'the people' precisely what they wanted to hear.

Januschek provides a more refined and rigorous definition of *populism*, offering something of a composite model incorporating prevailing theories as to its essential nature. He argues that at the heart of populism lies the exploitation of irrational

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[136]Langguth, op. cit., p. 24

[137]Moreau/Neu: *Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus* ... op. cit., p. 13

[138](as a "Gefahr für die Arbeitsplätze und Kapitalmärkte"; see: Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 173)

[139]Good: *Language, Politics and Ideology*. op. cit.

Ressentiments, feelings of deep dissatisfaction with the prevailing political situation, underpinned by a feeling of being excluded by the 'powers that be'[140]; populism

> gibt vor, das allgemeine Interesse "des Volkes" gegen die partikularen Interessen herrschender Gruppen zu vertreten ...

and offers:

> eine einfache Lösung der komplexen Probleme moderner Gesellschaften als möglich ... Gerade weil der Populismus aber kein Interesse an der Beseitigung der eigentlichen Ursachen gesellschaftlicher Ohnmacht und Unterpriviligierung hat, greift er gern auf populäre Vorurteile gegenüber Gruppen zurück, die den Unterpriviligierten als Ursache ihrer Misere und/oder als Bedrohung ihres immerhin erreichten Lebensstandards erscheinen. Denn dies sind in der Regel die noch Schwächeren - Türken, Asylsuchende, Flüchtlinge, Dunkelhäutige -, denen gegenüber man sich selbst wenigstens noch als etwas Besseres empfinden kann.[141]

One PDS poster proclaims the word "wir" in bold letters[142]; yet again we can see it as a complex multi-dimensional construct, one dimension of which is a parody of the way in which political slogans and key-words function on the symbolic, connotative level. Clearly, however, it is designed to function, on another - doubtless more prominent - level, in exactly the way in which, from another perspective it can be seen to parody; de-contextualised as it is, it straddles the boundary between being a *wir* which is exclusive of, and a *wir* which is inclusive[143] of East Germans in general, with whom the party has consistently sought to couple its fate; in other words, not only does it boost the impression of party unity and resoluteness, it also - crucially - conveys a feeling of solidarity to unsettled and disorientated members of an East German electorate. It picks up (and plays upon?) its feelings of defiance and its insecurities and sends it comforting signals - clearly much more than a *cognitive* function. We can only, of course, guess that this might be intention on the basis of the evidence discussed in chapter 1; connotative impression is - like metaphor -

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[140]Januschek, op. cit., p. 296

[141]ibid., pp. 296-7

[142]The latter is accompanied by two much smaller captions, one at the top left reading "Gegen Massenarbeitslosigkeit und Sozialabbau. Für bezahlbare Mieten. Für die Gleichstellung der Frau", the other, underneath, being the familiar "Veränderung beginnt mit Opposition".

[143]For an excellent account of the pragmatic implications of the extendibility of pronominal forms, see: Wilson: *Politically Speaking*. op. cit.; esp. pp. 45-92: "When one looks at language use, the pronouns of English do not form neat categorical divisions; 'we' can be used to designate a range of individuals moving out from the speaker him/herself to the speaker plus hearer and the whole of humanity." Wilson, p. 76

defeasible and can easily be denied. Is this dimension, then, *populist* in terms of Januschek's model? After all, there is room for the argument, on the one hand, that in playing upon insecurities it bolsters (as does another well-known PDS slogan, "Den Kopf hoch nicht die Hände"), a reservatio mentalis vis-à-vis a unified Germany, and is thus anti-integrative. On the other hand, how *irrational* are the fears it picks up on? The 'juggernaut' dimension of unification we touched upon in the previous chapters leaves at least some room for the argument that the PDS has filled a very definite vacuum when it comes to the articulation of certain very justifiable - and anything but irrational - East German concerns. Can the instrumentalisation of these fears really be equated with the starkly irrational fears, predicated upon visceral hatred and distrust of foreigners, gays etc., ritually stirred up by the extreme right? Furthermore, sociologist Thomas Koch - like Neugebauer and Stöss - argues that the PDS has played a structurally important role in picking up and articulating the dissatisfaction of a large segment of the East German population; despite the fact that on a *subjective* level certain party factions might express their out-and-out hostility towards a united Germany (for a complex amalgam or reasons involving both conviction *and* strategy), the *objective* function of the PDS's continued (and often highly successful) campaigns on behalf of East Germans has been to promote the course of social integration in the Federal Republic in forcing the political establishment to re-address the sanctity of existing social, institutional and political structures:

> Als politischer Akteur folgt die PDS einer dreifachen Handlungslogik: wenn schon Vereinigung, dann a) auf gleichberechtigter Basis und b) unter Anerkennung von historisch gewachsener Differenz. Eine solche Vereinigung schließt c) auch Wandel im Westen ein. Diese mehr oder weniger deutlich von der PDS verfolgten Intentionen verweisen die Partei auf die demokratischen Institutionen der Bundesrepublik, auf gesetztes Recht, darunter nicht zuletzt auf den Einigungsvertrag. Indem die PDS die Institutionen, die demokratischen Verfahren und Freiheiten der Bundesrepublik - Wahlen, Parlamente, Gerichte, Demonstrations-, Versammlungs-, Meinungsfreiheit usw. in Anspruch nimmt ..., wirkt sie objektiv als integrierende Kraft. *Die demokratische Artikulation von Ost-West Konflikten ist zudem eine der wichtigsten Formen und Voraussetzungen ihrer Beachtung innerhalb der Institutionenordnung der Bundesrepublik. Sie leitet die Energien, die sich aus der Ost-West-Konfliktlinie ergeben in die politisch-rechtliche Ordnung der Bundesrepublik.*[144] (my italics)

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[144]Koch, op. cit., p. 190

In other words, while the PDS's electoral discourse clearly functions on a (much more than only cognitive) level which might be said to pick up and give voice to East German fears and resentment, we must set this against the observation that there is also room for the argument that the perlocutionary effect of the defiant anti-establishment/anti West-German strand of PDS rhetoric has been a stabilising factor in the German-German integration process. And while we have identified in PDS discourse the consistent invocation of broad and nebulous conceptual pairs (*Oben/Unten*, *Herrschende/Betroffene* etc.) which in a sense pick up the Januschekian criterion of purporting "das allgemeine Interesse des 'Volkes' gegen die partikularen Interessen herrschender Gruppen zu vertreten", it is hard to see how the PDS fulfils the criterion of predicating its popularity on prejudices towards *weaker* groups who are made scapegoats for the problems obtaining. Indeed, the PDS's commitment - on a formal level, at least[145] - is to championing the interests of society's general scapegoats (witness its consistent calls for "offene Grenzen" and its championing of gay rights).[146] What is more, if, as Koch suggests, the conflict between asylum-seekers and Germans is currently perceived to be the most pronounced of all conflicts in the subjective perception of East Germans, then the (formal programmatic) position of the PDS on this issue, at least, can be said to do anything but pander to *popular* opinion:

> Vor allem die objektiv nicht gerechtfertigte Wahrnehmung von Konflikten zwischen Ayslbewerbern und Deutschen auf Rang 1 zeugt von einer gewissen Ohnmacht der "demokratischen Sozialisten". Die von der PDS-Gruppe im Bundestag verfochtene Position in der Asyldebatte (Nein zum Asylkompromiß und für das Konzept der offenen Grenzen) ist in der Partei selbst umstritten.[147]

If, then, we are to apply the term "populist" to the PDS it is hard to see how this can be done on any level other than one on which the term is understood widely as "von Opportunismus geprägte, volksnahe, oft demagogische Politik mit dem Ziel, durch

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[145]The 'reality' of a party's programmatic commitment is never clear cut: "[Es] finden sich in der Partei (PDS -MD) Aktivisten einer Dritte-Welt-Gruppe, die für Menschenrechte und Völkerverständigung eintritt, ebenso wieder wie verdrossene Rentner, die im Park gegen die vielen Ausländer in den öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln wettern und Polizeischutz verlangen." Reich, op. cit.

[146]cf. "wir wollen: * offene Grenzen für Menschen in Not, daß die rechtliche Stellung von Flüchtlingen verbessert wird. In der Gesetzgebung müssen politische, ethnische, religiöse und sexistische Verfolgung sowie Verfolgung aufgrund einer HIV-Infektion/AIDS-Erkrankung als Grund für Asylgewährung anerkannt werden. Kriegs- und Bürgerkriegsflüchtlinge sollen ein Bleiberecht erhalten; ... * daß Staat und Gesellschaft jegliche juristische und gesellschaftliche Diskriminierung von Menschen auf Grund ihrer sexuellen Identität beenden und Bedingungen für die volle und gleichberechtigte Akzeptanz lesbischer Frauen, schwuler Männer und Transsexueller sowie ihrer Lebensformen in der Gesellschaft geschaffen werden." Cited from: *Konkrete Oppostion: ... Wahlprogramm der PDS.* 1994. op. cit., p. 22

[147]Koch, op. cit., p. 192

Dramatisierung der politischen Lage die Gunst der Massen (in Hinblick auf die Wahlen) zu gewinnen"[148]; a level, on other words, whose features characterise the discourse of *all* political parties, where *populism* is about 'cheap' and often emotive monocausal reduction, polarisation and - ultimately - obfuscation. After all, "political ways of talking about the world - necessarily - involve a radical simplification of the complexity of human motivation and social interaction"[149] PDS discourse - wide and diverse as it is - does, of course - necessarily take in these elements and as such we must guard against equally reductive assertions that the PDS's 'intellectual' discourse aims solely to motivate a *rational* response. The 'rational' strand of PDS discourse is only a part of the overall discursive picture. Geier identifies the following PDS advertisement which makes this entirely clear:

> Wir sind wieder zur Wahl gerufen.
>
> Was brauchen wir jetzt?
>
> Sichere Arbeitsplätze, denn nur durch qualifizierte Arbeit kann das Land entwickelt werden.
>
> Gesicherten, also bezahlbaren Wohnraum, denn Heimat fängt im Zuhaus an.
>
> [...] Sicherheit für Alte und Schwache, denn keiner ist ewig jung und stark [...]
>
> Haben wir noch eine Wahl? Ja: Liste 3 PDS[150]

This, Geier observes, is a typical of PDS self-advertising: "Mängel (werden) benannt, aber keine Lösungsvorschläge gegeben ... Die Argumentation im Text begründet lediglich warum was nötig ist (and implies, of course, that the PDS is the panacea to all ills! - MD), aber nicht, was die PDS dafür konkret unternehmen will."[151] The text on another PDS poster reads "Wohnen ist Menschenrecht", which is sub-captioned "Es fehlen über 2.5 Millionen Wohnungen. Obdachlosigkeit nimmt drastisch zu. *Wir wollen das Recht auf Wohnen und auf eine eigene bezahlbare Wohnung als*

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[148]*Duden. Deutsches Universal Wörterbuch A-Z.* op. cit.

[149]Good, "Politics, Language and Morality." op. cit., p. 367

[150]Cited by Geier, op. cit., p. 243

[151]ibid.
Good ("Politics, Language and Morality." op. cit.) has offered some graphic illustrations of how politicians across the board make all sorts of emotive and causally unsound promises; they can then later "leave the language of morality quite intact" (p. 369) in various ways, in particular through statements of good *intention*, i.e. by arguing that they *meant* well, but were forced to back-track upon these good intentions through factors which, they argue, were beyond their control, through force of circumstance: we will comment below on the intrusion of the notion of the '*Sachzwang*' into the discourse of the PDS.

einklagbares Menschenrecht im Grundgesetz. Wir wollen Mietspreisbindung und Förderung des sozialen Wohnungsbaus. Veränderung beginnt mit Opposition."[152] (my italics) How this is to be achieved without addressing the fundamentals of the economic system and the problematic notion that a high level of state subsidy of the type which obtained in the GDR - went hand glove with a high level of state profligacy and debt is left unstated; observe, again, how the high level of abstraction underpinned by nominalisation and (causally inexplicit) relationals.

On the other hand, Volmert offers us a very graphic linguistic illustration of the fact that politically-motivated emotive and causally unsound reduction is in no way exclusive to the PDS. In examining the emotive rhetorical strategies ("Agitationsmittel"[153]) used by the right in the post Sachsen-Anhalt "Schlammschlacht"[154] against the PDS (and SPD) - in reaction, of course, to the PDS's huge electoral successes - Volmert paints a graphic picture of the rhetorical devices used; emotive metaphors of war, crime and sex abound. Volmert draws attention in particular to the invocation of the term *Machtergreifung* (and a whole range of related metaphors) to describe the role of both the SPD and the PDS in the *Duldung /Tolerieren* scenario. We touched upon *Machtergreifung* in chapter 1: the latter term has consistently been used to describe Hitler's accession to power[155] and is doubtless mobilised to link both SPD and PDS with National Socialism and support the CDU's recurring polarised model of an extreme left (of which the PDS is presented as the living embodiment) equalling, via the notion of totalitarianism, an extreme right; into this schema fits Kohl's now notorious dismissal of the PDS as a party of "rotlackierte Faschisten". Volmert cites Geißler:

> Nach Stasi-Folter, Mauer und Stacheldraht ... locken jetzt die alten SED-Kommunisten mit flotten Protestsprüchen

and observes that:

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[152]Reproduced as a postcard and sold in a booklet entitled: *Plakate der PDS; Ein Gruß von links - wo das Herz schlägt.* Berlin: Wahlbüro der PDS 1994

[153]Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 170

[154]ibid., p. 163

[155]Ironically, the term has, of course, been instrumentalised by the very right which now invokes it to obscure the complex causality behind Hitler's accession to power; we remember Townson's observation that: "*Machtergreifung* has overtones of an illegitimate seizure of power, a putsch or a coup; it suggests the imposition of a minority will, circumventing the legitimate procedures of the state for the transfer of power ... we need to remind ourselves that Hitler did not stand alone, that he was at least tolerated, if not actively supported, across a broad band of the political spectrum: as Schieder put it, the conservative and liberal parties were prepared to enter into a coalition with a partner that could counter the Socialists and the Communists." Townson, op. cit., p. 173

> So bringt der CDU-Generalsekretär den ... Wahlerfolg auf handliche Formeln für seine BILD-Leser.[156]

Through a string of emotive nominals the complex SED past and its problematic relationship with the present is pressed into a reductive, simplified conceptual model which backgrounds complex causality. Volmert shows how in this mythical bipolar world marked by the return of cold war rhetoric the political actors of the right make frequent reference to a (notional) "Gemeinsamkeit der Demokraten"/"Solidarität der Demokraten" pitted against a 'subversive' PDS courting, and being courted by, the SPD; The moralistic outbursts of the right are underpinned, Volmert shows us, by the presupposition that their democratic credentials are fixed and immutable; all these rhetorical means lead Volmert to conclude that:

> Die Vorstellungskomplexe mobilisieren ... tiefliegende schon vergessen geglaubte Einstellungen und Obsessionen, die Symptome eines konservativen Weltbildes aus Vorvätertagen sind.
>
> Die abstruse Mischung aus borniertem Wahrheitsanspruch und infantilen Vorstellungen der Politik ... kann aber nur Lesern zugemutet werden, in deren Köpfen liebgewonnene politische Klischees fest verankert sind ... und die wenig Bedarf an rational-argumentativer Auseinandesetzung mit einem politischen Gegner haben.[157]

Effecting a highly revealing pragmatic analysis of the right's consistently invoked "unsere Demokratie" /"unser demokratisches Gemeinwesen" formula, Volmert points to its potential divisiveness and psychological harmfulness: the "unser" is GDR-exclusive, an "implizite, den meisten (westlichen) Politikern und Leitartiklern offenbar nicht bewußte Grenzziehung", is a "besitanzeigendes Fürwort für etwas ... das sie (inhabitants of the new states -MD) als politische Subjekte ausschließt"[158] in being strongly suggestive of a blanket dismissiveness towards the collective forty-year biography of the GDR. But then again, Volmert concludes:

> den Strategiekommissionen waren die wahltaktischen Vorteile dieser Kampagne offensichtlich wichtiger als der mögliche politische und

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[156]Volmert, "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 169

[157]ibid., pp. 164, 171

[158]ibid., p. 178

psychologische Schaden, den sie damit (nicht nur in den neuen Ländern) anrichteten.[159]

Indeed, in this process, the PDS is in essence incidental. The *real* target, numerous commentators have pointed out, is the SPD, who are the butt of a political defamation strategy - on the part of the right - of associating that party with the PDS (we remember the remarks of Von Weizsäcker discussed in chapter 1). Thomas Koch argues that it is in fact the CDU's policy of *Ausgrenzung*[160] which "verkörpert ...

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[159]ibid., p. 179

[160]Koch, op. cit., identifies three essential approaches towards integrating the two halves of Germany; the right's strategy has generally, he argues, been one of integration through marginalisation and exclusion, in a tradition of thought which owes much to the work of Carl Schmitt for whom "Politik ... darin (besteht), den Feind zu definieren, Grenzen zwischen den Dazugehörigen und den jeweils anderen zu ziehen und so die Nation zusammenzuschmieden." (p. 182; all subsequent page numbers refer to Koch's study.) It is a position based on a presupposed sanctity and immutability of existing structures. (There is little room here for the PDS along the (Hegelian) line of continuum which, as Gruner argues, [see above] is at the centre of the *psychischer Immobilismus* which characterises the contemporary *Zeitgeist* - MD.) This world-view requires a *Feindbild* of the type, Koch argues, consistently invoked by Moreau: "Daher empfiehlt er (Moreau - MD) den Demokraten, ihren 'antitotalitären Konsens' zu erneuern, mithin einer Strategie der Ausgrenzung zu betreiben. Auf diese Position griff die CDU/CSU im Bundestagswahlkampf 1994 zurück, als sie mit einer Neuauflage antikommunistischer Feindbilder das eigene Lager mobilisierte und das gegnerische spaltete." (p. 182) Koch argues that the onslaught to which the PDS has been subjected on all sides has hindered the inner-party *Klärungsprozeß* in forcing the party to defiantly close ranks in parrying the attack from without.

Koch identifies a second approach to integration, such as is espoused by Noelle-Neumann; in this view, too, «die Demokratie, die wir in der Bundesrepublik haben» (Noelle-Neumann, cited by Koch, p. 196; observe here the 'exclusive *we*' identified by Volmert - MD) is taken as, a priori, «die beste Staatsform» (Noelle-Neumann; ibid.). Here integration is to be achieved not through ostracisation but through a gradual process of educating East Germans to accept the supremacy of established (West German) values. In this view, what is necessary are "geistige(n) Anstrengungen im Sinne langfristig angelegter Aufklärungs- und Überzeugungsarbeit". (Koch, p. 181). But, argues Koch, the situation demands much more than a mere expectation of East Germans that they effect a simple osmosis with the existing system (and acknowledge it unquestioningly as the best of all state forms): not commitment on the part of East Germans to abstract values and ideals such as 'freedom' ("erwartet wird zum Beispiel, daß Freiheit der Vorrang vor Gleichheit gegeben wird"; p. 183) and 'democracy' will promote integration, he argues, but rather an equality of interests and institutions: «die gleichen Teilhabechancen, die Vermischung von Interessenlagen, die zunehmende kommunikative Vernetzung, die Geltung der gleichen Institutionen» (Lepsius, cited by Koch, p. 184). Koch thus favours a third approach to integration which is predicated upon a recognition of the necessity for *structural* change, given that "das importierte Institutionensystem in Ostdeutschland «an Leistungsdefiziten leidet und daß es für die Probleme der Transitionsgesellschaft in Osten Deutschlands nicht anschlußfähig ist»." (Koch citing Glaeßner, p. 197) "Die übernommene Rechts- und Institutionenordnung erwies sich gegenüber DDR-Spezifika in Sozialstrukturen und Verhaltensprägungen als «blind». Sie verlangt den Ostdeutschen Einordnung ab, oft gar Unterordnung und zwar dort, «wo die Westdeutschen aufgrund der in diesem System erworbenen Rechte die besseren Karten hatten»." (Koch citing Misselwitz, p. 189) "Schließlich gingen die Schlüsselpositionen in fast allen Bereichen Ostdeutschlands an Manager, Beamte, Wissenschaftler usw. aus den alten Bundesländern über." (p. 189). He argues that the task of effecting a *collective integration* of East Germans with an established biography transcends traditional sociological concepts of the notion - i.e. of integrating a society by inculcating *individuals* in emerging generations (or immigrants) with its values. It is a task which will not be surmounted without a fundamental reappraisal of the status quo. And though, prima facie, it would be easy to see the PDS as the party of anti-integration (given that it was essentially opposed to unification, only setting out its plan for a longer process towards unification after it became clear that the latter had become an inevitability) and that "worauf im einzelnen auch immer die Abwehr beruht, die PDS kann als politischer Akteur zur Bundesrepublik, so wie sie ist, kein affirmatives Verhältnis ausbilden" (p. 186), there is another side to the coin: though the "Mitglieder und Wähler der PDS gehörten zum großen Teil jenem Drittel der ostdeutschen Bevölkerung an, das 1989/90 die Eigenstaatlichkeit der DDR erhalten wollte" (p. 188), there were also very rational, practical economic considerations underlying this stance (not *only* a mere defiant refusal to relinquish a GDR identity); in addition, the PDS primarily represents

'altes Denken', verbleibt im Banne 'alter Politik' und verschärft Ost-West-Gegensätze"[161]; he points, too, to the discrepancy which we have consistently highlighted between the propositions contained in the surface form of an utterance (here, in the case of the CDU/CSU, something like "We are the party of unity") and the perlocutionary effect of these forms:

> Subjektiv gemeinter Sinn politischen Handelns und dessen objektive Funktion müssen nicht übereinstimmen ... die Wahlkampfstrategie jener Partei, die sich selbst als "Partei der Einheit" sieht, der CDU, (verschärfte) Ost-West Gegensätze.
>
> ... Eine Partei der alten und neuen Spaltung, wie die PDS in Anspielung auf ihre Herkunft aus der SED und ihr dezidiertes Engagement für Ostinteressen zuweilen bezeichnet wird, avanciert in mancher Hinsicht zu einer Partei der Binnenintegration, während sich auf der anderen Seite politische Akteure (CDU/CSU/FDP and some in SPD -MD), für die nach eigenem Selbstverständnis das Gewinnen der inneren Einheit höchste Priorität hat, von einem tiefen Mißtrauen gegenüber der ostdeutschen Gesellschaft, als deren konzentrierter Ausdruck ihnen die PDS erscheint, leiten lassen und so ihrerseits die innere Einheit erschweren.[162]

As with the invocation of *demokratisch/antidemokratisch*, which we discussed in chapter 1, we must be extremely sensitive as to just who, in fact, is using the term *populist* i.e. whether the interest lies more in political gain that any genuine attempt to enlighten. Observe how in Langguth's argument the *Populismus* argument forms a natural textual springboard for the 'subversion' argument, which is invoked - unsurprisingly - in the very next paragraph. The conceptual link is as follows:

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and articulates the interests of that part of the East German population which to a large extent formed the «politisch bewußter (sic) DDR-Bürger» (Koch citing Lepsius, p. 188), a group of people to a large extent ostracised in the post-unification development process. As a highly educated, politically aware and articulate mouthpiece for these interests and as a general «Indikator des Protestes und der Opposition gegen eine verfehlte Einigungspolitik» (Koch citing Falkner/Huber, p. 193), the PDS has been a motor for structural change in providing a proper channel for disaffection and in forcing the other parties to re-address the sanctity of existing structures: "inzwischen haben die anderen Parteien ihre Anstrengungen, nicht zuletzt wegen der jüngsten PDS-Erfolge verstärkt. Insbesondere zu Landesvätern avancierte Persönlichkeiten wie Stolpe und Biedenkopf bieten der PDS eine ernsthafte und wirksame Konkurrenz bei der Definition und Vertretung ostdeutscher Interessen." (p. 191) No party, argues Koch, has been more active in invoking the *Grundgesetz* than the PDS and in raising GDR citizens' awareness of all the democratic possibilities available to them in a united Germany; as such the PDS, "leistet ... objektiv einen zweifachen Beitrag zur demokratischen ... Ordnung (der Bundesrepublik -MD). Sie stellt zum einen Formen und Strukturen infrage, die Auseinandersetzungen um eine gerechtere Verteilung von Lasten oder um Anerkennung von Leistungen, Ansprüchen im Rahmen des bestehenden nur in begrenztem Maße möglich machen. Zum anderen bringt sie Eigentümlichkeiten, Erfahrungen und Probleme einer postkommunistischen Gesellschaft in die Institutionenordnung ein, so daß sie nicht länger ignoriert werden können." (p. 198)

[161]ibid. p. 183

[162]ibid., pp. 182-3, 199

PDS makes demands which the system can't provide

> PDS must be subversive

For Langguth and Moreau the sanctity of the existing is presupposed: *only* the PDS's critique may be challenged, not the defects inherent in the existing democratic order.

So it is that Langguth proceeds to trot out, as the right has ritually done, the PDS's programmatic assertion that it incorporates, among others, those who fundamentally reject the conditions obtaining in society and who "der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft Widerstand entgegensetzen wollen" (see footnote 201 below) as evidence of the fact that

> die PDS (stellt sich) klar gegen die parlamentarische Demokratie obwohl sie deren Institutionen nutzt (! - MD). Politische Reformen, die sie in den demokratischen politischen Institutionen fordert, *interessieren die PDS nicht wirklich.* (! - MD) Diese sind für sie vielmehr Bestandteil einer Politik der kleinen Schritte, die auf sehr viel weitergehende, letztlich revolutionäre Veränderungen zielt.[163] (my italics)

There is no attempt to invoke (as we will below) the pertinent if highly problematic questions of where changing a system begins and ends and of why a system might not be changed if the support of the majority can be marshalled using means which *in practice* do not entail an infringement of individual civil and human rights. Unsurprisingly, Langguth proceeds to invoke the right's standard conceptual schema of "extreme right = extreme left", whose features we discussed above. The PDS are:

Feinde der Demokratie

> Direkte oder indirekte Aktionsbündnisse mit der PDS schwächen zudem die *Gemeinsamkeit der Demokraten*, die sich in der gemeinsamen Ablehnung der rechtsradikalen Republikaner bewährt hat. *Feinde der Demokratie gibt es bekanntlich rechtsaußen wie linksaußen.*[164] (observe how the strong implicature here stops short of an actual *expressis verbis* equation of PDS and CDU; is Langguth, one wonders, wary of finding himself embroiled in a civil libel suit?)

Volmert would challenge the position of Langguth, Moreau et al. as an:

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[163]Langguth, op. cit., p. 25

[164]ibid., p. 25

> autorativ-patriarchalische Verständnis von Staat und Gesellschaft. das jede kritische Initiative, jede nichtkonforme außerparlamentarische Aktivität als Bedrohung wahrnimmt.[165]

Neugebauer and Stöss have shown that newcomers in the political arena who challenge the status quo are ritually branded extremist:

> gerade kleinere oder nicht-etablierte Parteien in der Bundesprepublik (werden) zumeist als störend und unerwünscht empfunden ... jedenfalls wenn sie grundsätzliche Alternativen zu den etablierten Parteien einbringen. Alle Kleinparteien sahen sich nach Roemhold in der Bundesrepublik einer Politik der "Minorisierung" ausgesetzt, die sich immer auch des Extremismusarguments bedient(e). Davon können die Grünen ein Lied singen, und darauf dürfte auch ein Gutteil der Kritik an der PDS beruhen.[166]

And while we might well ask whether the PDS has as yet been able to offer anything substantially 'alternative' such as might realistically be put *into practice*, certainly the articulation alone of any surface proposition which calls into question the inviolability of the prevailing order has been enough to incense the CDU/CSU which sees itself as that system's backbone and custodian.

It is hard to find a more graphic illustrative catalogue of the linguistic features informing Grunert's recognition of a "Verengung multikausaler Wahrheit auf die Ebene monokausaler Interpretation" and that "Die Option emanzipatorisch-aufklärerischer Instrumentierung der Sprache fällt der eingefahrenen Praxis des Gegenteils zum Opfer"[167] than we encounter in the right's[168] election tirade against the PDS. If, as Januschek argues, *populism* is about the way it "mit Irrationalität umgeht" (we remember Waigel's 'threat' to East Germans that a vote for the PDS represents a "Gefahr für die Arbeitsplätze und Kapitalmärkte", doubtless picking up on *West* Germans' insecurity at the burgeoning unification bill) there is ample room for mooting the question, at least, who is more *populist* - the PDS or the CDU?

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[165]Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 178

[166]Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 23

[167]Gruner, op. cit., pp. 29, 33

[168]We realise, and stress, of course that the use of the broad term *right* to facilitate our argument is in itself a convenient oversimplification; there have of course been many in the CDU and CSU who have questioned the sanity of the prevailing anti-PDS ideology; on this point see Volmert: "Die 'Altparteien' ..." op. cit., p. 179.

The right's attempt to win broad acceptance of its presupposition that *populist* and *antidemokratisch* are terms which characterise 'them but not us' is reminiscent of a comparable situation described by Chomsky in respect of the ideologeme *terrorism*:

> In the same years in which Libya killed fourteen, maybe 20 people, mostly Libyans, the government of El Salvador slaughtered about 50,000 people. Now that's not just terrorism, because it was done by us. We instituted the government as much as the Russians instituted the government in Afghanistan ... The U.S. Air Force participated directly in co-ordinating bombing strikes - the terror was not ordinary killing. Libyan terror is bad enough; they kill people. But our terrorists first mutilate, torture, rape ... That's not called terrorism ... Libya is a very, very minor terrorist state - but we see it the other way round. "Terrorism" is used for them, not us. In the case of El Salvador it's plainly being done by a major state against its own citizens - in fact a state that we established, a client state of the United States. Therefore it can't be terrorism, by definition ... This is true in case after case.[169]

Where the PDS offers simple solutions to complex problems to win support, this is, in the eyes of the right, populism. Where the 'democratic' right does so it - as Chomsky would put it - can't be populism, by definition. Clearly, if the right can win wide acceptance of this ideological thought pattern, if it can win over crucial key-words such as *Demokratie* for its exclusive preserve, it will have won the battle to maintain its own hegemony.

Words and symbols have no hard and fast "Abbildfunktion", Grunert has pointed out, they are subject to occupation[170]. The PDS has consistently furnished graphic examples of the strategy of 'undermining' and trivialising through usurpation, in actively invoking key terms and symbols - such as *Rote, Rote Socken* - of the right's anti-PDS tirade and in using them in self-description. Carsten Schatz (of the PDS's AG Lesben- und Schwulenpolitik) drew a parallel here with the way there has been an attempt in the gay movement to de-negativise the term "queer" by its use in self-description.[171] One PDS election slogan reads, for example:

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[169]Chomsky, Noam: *Chronicles of Dissent*. Vancouver: New Star Books 1992, p. 39 (interviewed by David Barsamian)

[170]Gruner, op. cit., p. 34

[171]Interview with the writer, November 1995

> Wenn die Roten weiterhin an allem Schuld sein sollen, dann muß man sie auch wählen.[172]

The background to the CDU's "Rote Socken" symbolism is described in some detail by Woderich:

> Den ersten Stein hatte die CDU geworfen mit ihrem Slogan "Auf in die Zukunft ... aber nicht auf roten Socken". Der entsprechende Plakatentwurf zeigt ein Paar rote Strümpfe, zum Trocknen auf die Leine gehängt ... Natürlich frohlockte man im Liebknecht-Haus, der Zentrale der PDS, über den Einfall der CDU, hatte er doch der eigenen Partei unverhofft Schlagzeilen eingetragen ... Folgerichtig avancierte die Fußbekleidung zu einem Markenzeichen der PDS im Selbstbehauptungskampf.[173]

Indeed, pairs of red socks were soon to be found on sale at the PDS's documentation centre at its Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz headquarters. A PDS election newspaper (entitled simply "**94**:" [inverted commas mine] - notice again the 'authoritative' colon) shows, on the front page, a picture of Bisky seated on a flight of steps with his socks clearly visible. The accompanying caption reads "Das Gerede von den 'roten Socken' erweist sich bei näherer Betrachtung als offensichtliche Hochstapelei ... Festgestellt werden konnte hingegen, was der Ober-PDSler Bisky am Knöchel trägt: profane Ringelsocken, wie weiland Elvis Presley, Fats Domino und die Soul Sisters. Unser Reporter Eric Richard lieferte den optischen Beweis".

The widely publicised *Rote Socken* farce not only raised public awareness of the PDS, it could be woven as a potent symbol of banality into that strand of PDS rhetoric in which is has attempted to offer itself as the serious political alternative to what it sees as the emptiness and triteness of the goings-on in the political arena (which, like its attempts to present itself as an extra-system opposition) it has linked closely with the politically worn key-words *Partei-* and *Politikverdrossenheit*[174]. As Woderich puts it:

> [Es] sollte jedoch nicht vergessen werden, daß die von der CDU in den Wahlkampf eingeführte Signatur nichts anderes war als eine zur Höchstform aufgeblasene Banalität, die vor allem anderen Essentielles offenbarte über das

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[172]cited by Woderich, op. cit., p. 151

[173]ibid., p. 156; see esp. pp. 156-8

[174]see Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 268

> derzeitige geistige Niveau in den politischen Arenen. Eine Strumpf-Infantilität triumphierte, die kaum noch zu überbieten scheint.[175]

"COMING IN" - ON THE LEVEL OF LANGUAGE AT LEAST

We have witnessed time and again above how the PDS has sought to deal with its complex plethora of internal contradictions by introducing to its discourse a high level of abstraction underpinned by 'vague' categories, broad in their extension, which by-pass and leave unaddressed important causal questions. 'Harmony', if not achieved in practice, is sought in language. In the wake of Sachsen-Anhalt we see the PDS particularly keen to invoke the wide category of *Linke* which serves as a potential lowest common denominator on the basis of which it can bring itself into the fold and suggest its common ground with the established German left. Gysi is keen to stress that:

> Gerade als *Linke* stehen wir vor der Frage: Motze ich am Rande der Gesellschaft herum, in dem Wissen natürlich gar nichts zu *bewegen*, oder will ich die Gesellschaft wirklich verändern? Dann muß ich in sie hinein, und wenn ich in sie hineingehe dann besteht immer die Gefahr der Anpassung.[176]

(Notice here how, in the attempt to overcome the "Problem der politischen Abgrenzung bei gleichzeitig zu vermittelnder Nähe"[177] the very language of extra-system oppositionality ("bewegen") is invoked as a motivating factor in what might potentially be construed as a forfeiture of precisely that oppositionality).

Doubtless the PDS's "Ein Gruß von *Links*, wo das Herz schlägt"[178] (my italics), a modified version of the SPD's 1953 electoral slogan, "Wähle links, wo das Herz schlägt! Wähle Sozialdemokraten"[179], represents an attempt to locate common ground with the SPD. Ebermann acutely observes that:

> Für die Zwecke der PDS müssen Grüne und Sozialdemokraten als *Linke* erscheinen, deren Bekämpfung eine sektiererische Torheit wäre[180]

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[175]Woderich, op. cit., p. 157

[176]Gregor Gysi, in: Reinke: "Ist die PDS cool?" op. cit., p. 55

[177]Good: "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 268

[178]see footnote 152

[179]See Toman-Banke, op. cit., p. 49

[180]Ebermann: "Von Sachen und Sachsen." op. cit., p. 13

and cites the following telling observation of André Brie, which he (Ebermann) perceives as "Lügereien über die Wählerwünsche in Großdeutschland":

> Es gibt in Ostdeutschland, etwas schwächer übrigens auch in den alten Bundesländern, ein beträchtliches und stabiles linksoppositionelles Potential (mit positiver Bewertung der Idee Sozialismus, sozial geprägten Wertorientierungen, linksorientierten politischen Einschätzungen und Forderungen). In Ostdeutschland gehören dazu mehr als 50%, in Westdeutschland etwa 30% der Wählerinnen und Wähler (Wahlauswertung von André Brie).[181]

(We would equally take issue here with Ebermann, of course, with respect to the form in which he packages his criticism: it is on the level of the extent of abstraction involved in Brie's presentation of 'reality' that he might be challenged and not in terms of a reductive truth/lie schema which fails to take account of the problematic circumstance that Brie's account may well be retained within a notional parameter of 'truth'.) Ebermann hits the nail on the head in recognising that the terms *Linke* is part and parcel of an "Abstraktion von der realen Politik der Parteien"; while it is a level of abstraction upon which the PDS can present itself as having common ground with the established left, its sheer breadth means that complex causal questions as to their very real differences are simply put at a remove[182]; in other words what is complex and contradictory is *made to look* harmonious and unproblematic - not unimportant to a pro-involvement PDS wishing to legitimise its credentials as a player in the new political environment and circumvent its problematic ostracisation by the other parties.

Observe, too, how, as a legitimising tactic, the same idea emerges in Wolfgang Gehrcke's invocation of Willy Brandt's famous 1982 dictum on the possibility - then with the Greens - of achieving a majority "diesseits der Union":

> Ich glaube, daß ... nach den Landtagswahlen in Sachsen-Anhalt, daß *Mehrheiten*, wie es mal Willy Brandt formuliert hat, *diesseits oder jenseits - das ist mir recht egal - der Union vorhanden sind.* Nicht nur Mehrheiten, die

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[181]ibid.

[182]Ironically, of course, it is precisely the same breadth of the term *links* which the right has utilised to lump the SPD and PDS together for its own political purposes: "Die Chefin des Instituts für Demoskopie in Allensbach, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, ging damals noch einen Schritt weiter ... Die SPD, so die CDU-nahe Autorin, strebe ein Linksbündnis an und weigere sich, ähnlich geschlossen gegen die PDS zu stehen, wie die CDU/CSU gegenüber den Republikanern." Neugebauer/Stöss, op. cit., p. 220

> von den Wählerinnen und Wählern geschaffen werden, sondern auch *Mehrheiten, die sich parlamentarisch realisieren können.*[183] (my italics)

Using features inherent in language to 'play down' problems requires, however, that target audiences will either accept or else fail to recognise the abstraction. In the next chapter, we will, as we have said, attempt to show that by no means all PDS members and voters, let alone the political establishment are insensitive to it either, just as the Fundis refused to accept what they saw as the Realos' gradual abstraction and rapprochement a decade before:

> Es besteht vielmehr die Gefahr, daß die Grünen mit einer Politik "*Gemeinsam gegen rechts*" die geringfügigen Angebote der SPD, die an ihrem Grundzug nichts ändern, hochjubeln und so zur Pflege eines in 16 Jahren arg lädierten Images beitragen.[184] (my italics)

THE 'SACHZWANG'

Ebermann shows how, as part of its 'anti-antagonism', the pro-involvement PDS has wide recourse at this time to the notion of the *Sachzwang/Sachfrage* (political force of circumstance): the idea that the need to find *practical* solutions to immediate *practical* problems can entail the imposition of necessary constraints upon 'higher' policy considerations or a departure from a promised course of action) -, a notion which is closely linked to a wide acceptance in the political establishment that politics at local level functions differently from politics at a higher level, inasmuch as it gives primacy to solving immediate local, smaller-scale problems and generally leaves the problems of formulating overall policy, of dealing with inter-party antagonisms to the higher levels.[185] As one PDS pro-involvement politician puts it:

> Denn auf der kommunalen Ebene hat es zwischen Abgeordneten der PDS Zusammenarbeit sowohl mit Abgeordneten der SPD als auch mit denen der CDU und der von Wählergemeinschaften gegeben, weil es auf der

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[183]Gehrcke, in: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 2; interestingly, Gehrcke's picture displays a rare convergence with that of *Der Spiegel* (no. 27. 1994, op.cit., p. 25): "Der Niedergang der FDP und der Aufstieg der PDS (after Sachsen-Anhalt - MD) haben Willy Brandts Vision von 1982, es könne eine Mehrheit 'diesseits der Union' geben, real werden lassen - wenigstens rechnerisch und ganz anders, als Brandt es sich damals dachte."

[184]Trampert/Bahro, op. cit.

[185]cf., for example: "Nach Angaben Scharpings wird mit dem Beschluß jede Form von Koalitionen zwischen SPD im Bundestag und in den Landtagen ausgeschlossen. Es werde auch keine gemeinsamen parlamentarischen Initiativen geben. Auf kommunaler Ebene sei die Situation allerdings durch die Kommunalverfassung anders. Hier gebe es Zwänge, denen man nicht ausweichen könne." Cited from: "SPD schließt jede Form von Koalition mit der PDS aus." In: *Die Tageszeitung*. 6 December 1994

> kommunalen Ebene oft sehr vorrangig um die Lösung von *Sachfragen* gegangen ist und politisches Parteigerangel in den Hintergrund gedrängt wurde. Ich sehe das auch so, wie es hier gesagt worden ist, man kann die Rolle der Opposition nicht auf das Geleise abdrängen, nur Widerstand zu leisten ... [186] (my italics)

Another leading member of the pro-involvement camp, Brandenburg's *Landesvorsitzende,* Helmut Markov, is keen to stress the degree of common ground occupied by the parties when it comes to finding practical solutions: the PDS he argues has introduced motions at communal and *Land*-level, "die ebenfalls von FDP oder CDU stammen könnten"[187]. Witness also:

> Alle Sachfragen können Gegenstand von Verhandlungen sein, *starre Grenzen zwischen Koalition und Opposition gehören wohl ohnehin zum alten Denken* (! -MD)[188] (my italics)

and

> ... die SPD (sollte) endlich den Schluß ziehen, daß soziale und demokratische Politik für Sachsen-Anhalt nicht an der PDS vorbei zu machen ist ... Wir brauchen in Sachsen-Anhalt ein faires Ringen der politischen Parteien *um die besten Lösungen für schwierige Probleme.*[189]

In the wake of Sachsen-Anhalt a pro-involvement PDS seems at pains to play down the inter-party differences it was keen to play up by tapping this generally acknowledged feature of local politics to suggest a broad, inter-party harmony and legitimise its credentials as a fellow player in the game of established party politics (not *only*, as we shall show below, at local level, but potentially at a higher level too); witness the following telling way in which it categorises the world of local politics:

> In den Kreistagen, Stadt- und Gemeinderäten, wo die PDS starke Fraktionen stellen wird, sind wir bereit, auch in den Rathäusern und Landratsämtern in Koalitionen mitzuwirken. *Schließlich ist alle Kommunalpolitik gestaltende Opposition. Der wirkliche* (!-MD) *Unterschied verläuft zwischen unten und oben, nicht zwischen verschiedenen Vertreterinnen in einem Gemeinderat.*

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[186]Scheringer, in: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 2

[187]Helmut Markov, cited in: Falkner/Huber: *Aufschwung PDS* ... op. cit., p. 206

[188]"Presseerklärung des PDS-Landesvorsitzenden Sachsen-Anhalt ..." In: *PID.* no. 26. 1994, op. cit., p. 3

[189]"'Protestwahl ist nötig in diesem Land!' - Presseerklärung von Roland Claus, Landesvorsitzender, und Thomas Drzisga, Pressesprecher der PDS Sachsen-Anhalt, vom 13.6.1994." In: *PID.* no. 24. 1994, p. 5

> Die anderen Parteien sollten deshalb auf die VolksvertreterInnen in der PDS zugehen ...[190] (my emphases)

Again an "Abstraktion von der realen Politik der Parteien" is achieved through the invocation of a sweeping, *oben*-vs.-*unten* model, very much in keeping with the broad conceptual pairs we identified in chapter 3, in which the antagonisms of the political world are re-cast in a polarised model, in which they exist not between the parties (!) but between the *Gemeinde* (as a metaphor for the ordinary citizen? - MD) and the overweening polity against which it is pitted. Notice how the central ideologeme of PDS discourse - *Opposition* - is retained, through re-definition, as a motivating factor in the 'new' stance, as the pro-involvement faction attempts yet again to overcome the contradiction between its 'extra-system' stance on the one hand and its overtures to that system on the other, and to deflect the charge (from inside the party and from without) that it is forfeiting its *oppositional* role. For this discursive purpose *Opposition* is presented as all but synonymous with inter-party harmony at a lower level; harmony not only between the PDS and other parties on the left, but indeed between the PDS and the CDU too; the important point for the pro-involvement camp is to hold on to - at the very least - the potent sign (albeit with modified denotation), in bolstering up the suggestion that the PDS has not abandoned its 'anti-establishment' stance. (What is not dealt with, however, is the internal contradiction of this line of argumentation: if this is an argument for moving into strategic alliances, what happens when the PDS becomes involved at a higher level and - in becoming part of that nebulous, mythical and unverifiable '*oben*' - is pitted, so to speak against *itself*?). This construct earns from Ebermann the ironic observation that:

> Da also der "Deutsche Städtetag" (d.h. unten) Widersprüche zur Bundesregierung (d.h. oben) hat, würde es die Opposition nur schwächen wenn im Stadtrat Streit ausbräche.[191]

And while there is room for agreeing with the pro-involvement PDS that there is indeed a 'structural' difference between the workings of politics at a local level and a higher level, we might well question the level of abstraction: whether local politics is such as to allow such a blanket circumvention of inter-party antagonisms, and whether it can be seen - so unproblematically - independently of the complex dialectical interrelationship with party workings at higher levels. The crucial point, however, is that pro-government voices, while all the while predicating their picture

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[190]ibid.

[191]Ebermann, op. cit., p. 12

of a competent, constructive and co-operative PDS upon the *difference* between politics at a local level and politics higher up, have consistently used the connotative elements of this picture - harmony, co-operation, constructiveness - as a microcosmic model for suggesting that *the same* as has been achieved at this level can indeed be achieved at the next level up; Claus is in no doubt that:

> Das Ergebnis vom 12. Juni 1994 ist *ein Signal für die Landtagswahl*[192]

and the following observation from the party's press spokesman, Hanno Harnisch, when questioned about the PDS's offer of tolerating a minority government, represents a mental leap from communal politics to *Landtag* politics which we typically see in pro-involvement discourse at this time:

> In 2,500 Gemeinden ist die PDS vertreten und mir ist kein Fall bekannt, in dem es nicht schon eine gemeinsame Abstimmung gegeben hätte. *Worüber sich die anderen Parteien aufregen* (and the question of a *Tolerierung* by, or coalition with, the PDS relates here to the *Bundesebene*! - MD), *ist doch sowieso schon lange Tatsache.*[193]

For Ebermann, and doubtless for the Fundi movement of which he was a product, the problem with a picture in which a political party champions immediate practical problems on the basis of 'force of circumstance' is that it thus fails to address the very ideological roots of the system which causes these problems - the 'symptoms' - to arise in the first place; he identifies Petra Sitte's[194] attempt to deflect charges of opportunism through the rhetorical fusion of realism *and* sacrifice/martyrdom (to suggest a necessary but mere 'grudging involvement', of the type we identified above):

> Wir wollten der SPD realistische Positionen antragen, damit sie nicht wieder das Argument in die Hand bekommt, die PDS gehe mit völligen Illusionen in die Gespräche und will von vornherein, daß sie scheitern. *Unter den gegebenen tagespolitischen Anforderungen hätten wir auch unseren grundsätzlichen, visionären Ansatz zurückgestellt.*[195] (my italics)

Hence his ironic observation that:

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[192]Claus, in: "'Protestwahl ist nötig in diesem Land!' ..." op. cit., p. 5

[193]Hanno Harnisch (PDS-*Pressesprecher*), in: Reinke: "Ist die PDS cool?" op. cit., p. 56

[194]see footnote 37

[195]Petra Sitte, in: "Geheimdiplomatie ..." op. cit. (cited, in part, in: Ebermann: "Von Sachen und Sachsen." op. cit., p. 13)

> Die Sachfrage, fern von Ideologie, unbeeinflußt von der Weltanschauung, nicht tangiert von Kritik oder Zustimmung zur marktwirtschaftlichen Grundordnung, das Spezialgebiet des in jeder Ordnung funktionierenden Experten, des Meisters der "intelligenten Lösung" - sie wird auch von der PDS beherrscht, bescheinigen selbst parteipolitische Gegner ... Fürs erste ist es schließlich visionär genug, nicht ausgegrenzt zu sein.[196]

Grunert has argued that political parties often present themselves "im multifaktoriellen Geflecht sog. Sachzwänge" as "ohnmächtigen 'Entscheidungsträgern' ohne Entscheidungspotenz und -kompetenz". On this level, he argues:

> Sprache wird ... zum Medium der Derealisierung herrschender gesellschaftlicher Machtverhältnisse und Ordnungsfaktoren, wie sie etwa Industrie und Handel bereithalten.[197]

In other words, the instrumentalisation of the notion presupposes the structural immutability of, and inherent causality residing in the system, i.e. things inevitably happen which are necessarily outside the control of, and cannot be changed by, those who govern, thereby providing them with a 'get-out clause' when events do not turn out as planned or promised. It is precisely this presupposition which is rejected by the PDS's anti-involvement camp, for whom the involvement in solving *Sachfragen* is seen as complicity in perpetuating 'the system':

> Es hört sich, finde ich, unheimlich gut an, wenn man sagt: Die PDS toleriert oder stimmt einem Haushalt so einer sozialdemokratisch geführten Regierung nicht zu, die PDS hat einen Preis. Und ich finde, in dieser Formulierung, die PDS hat einen Preis, da steckt ein fürchterlich wahrer Kern drin, nämlich in der Marktwirtschaft wird über einen Preis auf dem Markt gehandelt. Und dieses Handeln über den Preis der PDS findet statt in Tolerierungs- oder Koalitionsverhandlungen. Und der Mechanismus derartiger Verhandlungen besteht darin, daß versucht wird, Paketlösungen anzustreben und am Schluß wird ein Vertrag geschlossen. Und in diesem Vertrag werden dann ein paar Elemente von Reformpolitik drin sein, eine Unmenge von Prüfaufträgen und eine ganze Reihe von Schweinereien, Kröten und sonst noch was, *die*

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[196]Ebermann: "Von Sachen und Sachsen." op. cit., p. 12

[197]Gruner, op. cit., p. 33

> *zusammenhängen mit den Sachzwängen, die existieren, daß die Bundespolitik nichts anderes erlaube etc. etc.*[198] (my italics)

For Ebermann, too, this is opportunism, given that on one level the PDS has insisted that the whole point of its oppositionality was to bypass the established system and root its politics in civil society as the very *basis* for change; after all:

> Im allgemeinen wird sie (the PDS - MD) als eine Partei angesehen, die für eine Überholung oder eine völlige Ablehnung des traditionellen Parteiensystems steht.[199]

For others, PDS messages of rapprochement represent a sensible pragmatism and evidence of its growing moderateness and increasing democratisation. The following observation from Bisky is revealing of the stage reached by the 'anti-antagonism' by January 1995, where the parties and the prevailing situation are two neatly separable poles:

> Wir sind eine Oppositionspartei. *Wir definieren uns nicht in erster Linie als Opposition zu anderen Parteien* (! - MD), sondern als *konstruktive Opposition gegenüber den herrschenden Verhältnissen. Einen Regierungsbeteiligung für ewig auszuschließen halte ich für nicht richtig.* Das macht den Sinn einer Partei überflüssig. Eine Partei, die auf ewig sagt, sie will nur Opposition sein, wird es schwer haben, glaubhaft zu machen, daß sie die Vision einer verbesserten Gesellschaft hat.[200] (my italics)

which offers the unmistakable recognition that a governmental role in the established arena can serve as a basis for 'changing society'.

On the whole, the picture emerging of the PDS at the time of the highly complex, inner-party *Tolerierung* debate is enough to cast considerable doubt upon Moreau's simplistic portrait of the PDS waiting in the wings to undermine and thwart the system. There is considerable room for the very real - if problematic - possibility that (for leading lights in the PDS's ideological centre at least) the articulation of oppositionality - the very superordinacy of the term *Opposition* and its minimal contextualisation allowing it to be variously understood and interpreted as 'revisionism' or 'fundamentalist reformism' (though the two do not, of course, enframe neatly separable poles) - was not so much aimed at ultimately subverting the

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[198]Harald Wolf, in: "Opposition oder Was? ... eine Podiumdiskussion." op. cit., p. 4

[199]Good, "Über die 'Neuen Linken' ..." op. cit., p. 267

[200]Lothar Bisky, in: "1995 muß es zur Entscheidung kommen." op. cit. (interview)

system, as making virtue from necessity: the vague - and variously interpretable - notion of otherness connoted by the term was harnessed in the attempt to set the PDS apart from the other parties as the fledgling party struggled to establish itself; the notion of the PDS being an *Opposition* was a lowest common denominator for holding the party together, a level on which "interne Differenzen durch den Begriff ... verkleistert werden"[201], a catch-all term which allowed the party to at least background if not reconcile the fundamental inner-party differences as to what form the party's relationship to the new system should take. As one astute observer put it:

> Nach wie vor ist in dieser Partei vieles möglich, teils aus originärer Unfertigkeit, teils aber auch aus kalkulierter Unklarheit.[202]

It can be strongly argued that for the pragmatic reformers around Gysi, Bisky and Brie who seemingly have the upper hand in the party[203] oppositional messages which hinted at, inter alia, a rejection of the democratic framework of the Federal Republic (i.e. bore 'subversive trappings') were allowed to go unqualified or unchecked in the attempt to - paradoxically perhaps - gain electoral support and strengthen the party *within the system*, by allowing the wideness of the term to appeal to as broad a target audience as possible. Hence the vacillation and contradiction which is a central feature of PDS discourse. As soon as the opportunity for 'coming in' presented itself, the party's ideological leadership - supported (passively, if not actively) by the 'pragmatic' majority we identified in chapter 3 - began, as we have seen in this chapter, to make overtures to the establishment; from its position of strength following the 1994 *Bundestagswahlen* the pro-involvement PDS could begin to tackle the issue of divesting itself (see chapter 5) of elements (such as the party's orthodox *Kommunistische Plattform*) whose understanding of *Opposition* was not coupled with a realistic acceptance of the contemporary political arena as a basis for change, and who might actually threaten the successful course of the PDS's ultimate integration into establishment politics.

It is against this contextual background that we must assess the PDS continuing vacillation on the question of its political role in the new system - 'revisionism' or out-and-out rejection; we remember:

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[201]Ludger Volmer (of Bündnis 90/die Grünen), cited in: Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 245

[202]Speicher, Stephan: "Klein, aber scheckig." In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. 20 February 1995

[203]see chapter 5; we use the term *pragmatic* here - somewhat differently than at the beginning of chapter - to include all those forces in the PDS whose aim is essentially one of making the PDS a viable political force within the parameters of the present system.

> In der PDS haben sowohl Menschen einen Platz, die *der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft Widerstand entgegensetzen wollen*, als auch jene die ihren Widerstand damit verbinden, die gegebenen Verhältnisse positiv zu verändern und schrittweise zu verhindern.[204] (my italics)

The right, as we saw above, have been eager to seize upon the notion of the PDS offering "Widerstand" to the system as evidence of its underlying subversiveness. Again, however, we encounter the problematic disparity between 'real' commitment to the surface proposition contained in an utterance and commitment which - when seen against a broader situational background - may well be prompted more by strategic concerns. In practice, there is ample evidence - as we have seen above - to suggest that those in control of the PDS are seeking to make the PDS an *accepted* force within the conventional political arena; the problem they are now encountering is one of dealing with the problematic sign - *Opposition* - which has been at the centre of the PDS's political credo, and of trying to mould its (strategic?) 'anti-establishment' component to a role which is geared to involvement in precisely that establishment!

One of the SPD's more perceptive theoreticians, Erhard Eppler, picks up on precisely this desire for acceptance. His explanation for the psychological motivation behind the genesis of the PDS is utterly convincing:

> Ursprünglich war die PDS vor allem entstanden, weil verwirrte und gedemütigte Kommunisten sich in der neuen, demokratischen Gesellschaft ihrer Haut wehren wollten. Sie wollten sich nicht einfach ins politische Nichts verflüchtigen und suchten eine politische Heimat, wohl auch so etwas wie Schutz, vor allem für die SED-Mitglieder, denen das Wort Sozialismus mehr bedeutet hatte als ein Knüppel gegen alle Kritiker.[205]

Here, then, in the PDS, was a place where disorientated and disaffected former communists would be accepted in the new system. How, then, Eppler would ask *could* the PDS be programmatically committed to subverting the establishment when in fact a programme as such was very much subordinate to the PDS's *symbolic* importance to its members:

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[204]*Programm der Partei des demokratischen Sozialismus*. 1993. op. cit., p. 34

[205]Eppler, op. cit., p. 31

> Das Programm der Partei war weniger wichtig. Viele hätten aus alter Anhänglichkeit und Disziplin auch dann zur Stange und zur Fahne gehalten, wenn ein ganz anderes Programm beschlossen worden wäre.[206]

It is not at all inconceivable that this desire for acceptance - to maintain at least some semblance of authority given the forfeiture of the status enjoyed by the PDS's political predecessor - should translate into a desire for acceptance in the new system through acceptance into political alliances in which the PDS can exert its influence. In any case, argues Eppler:

> Eine Gefahr für den Staat des Grundgesetzes ist die PDS nicht. Sogar wenn sie in Bonn die absolute Mehrheit bekäme - nicht eben wahrscheinlich -, würde jeder Versuch, das gescheiterte System wiederherzustellen, die PDS in ihre Bestandteile zerbersten lassen ... Nicht zielbewußte Totalitaristen sind hier beisammen, sondern ein buntes Gemisch aus Leuten, die auf sehr unterschiedliche Weise mit dem endgültigen Scheitern des Marxismus-Leninismus fertig werden wollen. Dabei mag es Biographien geben, die Achtung benötigen.[207]

Eppler, perhaps unwittingly, touches upon another crucial point here:

> *Wer so lange Opposition kriminalisiert hat* (the SED, as precursor to the PDS -MD), soll sie erst einmal lernen.[208] (my italics)

There are doubtless grounds for the argument that in championing *Opposition* the PDS is - ironically - attempting, inter alia, to harvest the very positive connotative resonance it will have for a significant number of East Germans, for whom *Opposition* meant resistance to the darker side of the SED regime; in other words the lexeme's positive connotative value stems quite precisely from its criminalisation by the PDS's political predecessor! This in turn allows some obfuscation of the respective territories occupied by the SED (PDS) and the *Bürgerbewegungen*, a situation similar to that which we have already witnessed in the PDS's 'usurpation' of the notion of the *dritter Weg*. As such, Eppler argues, the PDS "der Not gehorchend" (Eppler) champions, in its oppositionality, values which it has yet, he maintains, to *learn*:

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[206]ibid.

[207]ibid.

[208]ibid., p. 32

> Erstaunlicher war, daß man (the PDS - MD) nun, der Not gehorchend, das eigene Feindbild zum Programm erhob. Denn wer 1989 in der DDR darauf bestand, daß Grundrechte, Menschenrechte, Bürgerrechte wichtiger seien als Eigentumsformen, wer die These verfocht, daß politische Macht sich nur auf freie Zustimmung von Menschen, nicht auf das Wahrheitsmonopol des Marxismus-Leninismus stützen dürfe, mußte das Verbrechen des Sozialdemokratismus hinter Gittern büßen.[209]

Not yet having *learned* these values, however, is, of course, not the same as opposing them outright.

And indeed a PDS in the modesty mode we have identified has frequently - and pathetically - expressed messages which suggest its desire to undergo the arduous process of *learning* - via a cathartic process - to become a governmental player in the 'democratic' establishment, enframed in such messages as:

> Ich halte es für gut, daß wir die harten Bänke der Opposition noch ein paar Jahre drücken, um Erfahrungen zu sammeln, um kompetenter zu werden.[210]

Doubtless the rhetorical potential of the modesty and pathos in Brie's recurring "regieren lernen" formulation above is part and parcel of the attempt to legitimise the PDS as a party willing to work constructively with, and 'within the rules' of, the establishment; for legitimising purposes elsewhere the party presents a very different perspective of itself: where it is 'unencumbered' by the immediate discursive task of having to legitimise its involvement in *government* (i.e. as a player in a political game in which it will only be accepted if it signals its willingness to acknowledge and learn from the mistakes of the past), it's 'democratic' credentials are taken as a given. This is enframed in recurring presuppositionally loaded constructions such as "mit anderen demokratischen Parteien"/"mit anderen demokratischen Kräften" which, via the presupposition trigger "andere" carries the presupposed proposition (and assumption) that the PDS *is* a democratic party, is at least as democratic as the other parties[211]:

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[209]ibid., p. 31

[210]Lothar Bisky, in: "1995 muß es zur Entscheidung kommen." op. cit.

[211]cf., too: "In diesem Sinne ist die PDS antikapitalistisch - nicht mit dem Ziel der Beseitigung des Privateigentums, sondern mit dem Ziel, *gemeinsam mit anderen linken, demokratischen, sozialistischen Kräften* (observe the breadth of the nominal category - MD) **die Vorherrschaft der Kapitalinteressen in der Gesellschaft zu überwinden.**" Cited from: *Wer ist das, die PDS*? op. cit., p. 22 (my emphases; bold in original)

> Die Partei strebt Übereinstimmung und gemeinsames Handeln mit anderen Parteien und demokratischen Bewegungen an.[212]

We can make sense of the differing signals if we bear in mind the legitimacy strands discussed in chapters 1 and 2.

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[212]"Programm der Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus." 1990. op. cit., p. 90
Gysi's very public message in a television debate is: "Was sich in der PDS durchsetzt ... das sind ganz klar demokratische Strukturen nach innen, demokratische Forderungen nach außen, und ein Politikstil und ein Politikinhalt, der das deutlich unterstreicht." Gregor Gysi, cited in: Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 258

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION: PDS OPPOSTION BY 1995 - IDEOLOGICAL DEBATES SURROUNDING THE FOURTH *PARTEITAG*

> Wer eine Gesellschaft wirklich verändern will, weil er zu den herrschenden Verhältnissen in Opposition steht, muß sich in die Gesellschaft hineinbegeben. Für die PDS bedeutet dies, an allen fortschrittlichen außerparlamentarischen Bewegungen teilzunehmen und zugleich um breite parlamentarische Möglichkeiten zu ringen. *Die Frage, ob eine Parlamentsfraktion der PDS sich innerhalb des Parlaments in eine Oppositionsrolle, in eine Situation der Tolerierung einer Regierung oder in eine Koalitionsrolle begibt, berührt nicht das prinzipielle Oppositionsverständnis der PDS* ... Selbst dann also, wenn die PDS sich auf irgendeiner Ebene in eine Regierungspolitik begeben sollte, weil sie davon ausgeht, in einer solchen Konstellation das zu dem gegebenen Zeitpunkt höchste Maß an Veränderung durchsetzen zu können, würde dies *bei richtiger Politik* (!? - MD) ihren Oppositionscharakter in bezug auf die herrschenden Verhältnisse nicht beeinträchtigen (my emphases)[1]

OPPOSITION - A COMPOSITE MODEL

The above is extracted from the "5 Punkte" - drafted with the avowed aim of achieving an inner-PDS "Minimalkonsens"[2] - presented by Bisky, Gysi and Modrow at the 4th PDS *Parteitag* and from which we have already cited heavily above.[3] Here then, is the level of 'integration' reached by 1995 upon the pro-/anti-involvement polemic discussed above. In this PDS-specific (more accurately, pro-involvement-PDS -specific) model - which M. Brie calls a "salomonische Formel[4]" - 'radical' and

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[1]Bisky, L. et al.: "Sozialismus ist Weg ..." op cit., p. 27

[2]Bisky, cited in: Lang, op. cit., p. 374

[3]The "5 Punkte" were drafted as a 'Mindestforderung' in place of an earlier position paper drafted by the Party-*Vorstand*, the *10 Thesen*, which the leadership had originally wished to offer the *Parteitag* for scrutiny. Many members had been unhappy about their emergence only a few weeks before the *Parteitag*, leaving little or no time for an informed discussion upon them. Despite the short notice, numerous motions for amendment of these *Thesen* had been submitted for discussion at the *Parteitag*. Due to their less than rapturous reception, however, it was decided to defer discussion thereof until a later date.

[4]Brie, Michael: "Das politische Projekt PDS - eine unmögliche Möglichkeit." In: Brie et al. (eds.): *Die PDS - Empirische Befunde* ... op. cit., p. 33

'pragmatic' positions are brought together quite simply by eschewing what (judging by the vociferous objections of political observers) is widely received in the political arena as a logical conflation in which a wider 'radical' opposition (*Opposition*$_2$) implies a narrower parliamentary opposition (*Opposition*$_1$). In the "5-Punkte" world-view any problematic inter-relationship is denied on an (awkward?) expressis verbis level: the two roles, the construct has it, can stand separately, and by setting up the former as an unchallengeable category to which the second role is subordinated, any activity in the latter, so the construct runs, will not affect the former. This paves the way for an extensional broadening of the received understanding of *Opposition* in the established arena to *include* a governmental role (in a way which would generally be perceived as odd, counter-intuitive, illogical and contradictory in that arena where the category of *Opposition* has a fairly fixed semantic component of 'non-government'). (Observe, too, how the key - but uncomfortable! - issue of governmental involvement is 'played down' by being subordinated (as item three) to other options in a list.)

If there is any bridging of the gap between the two positions it comes in the form of the highly vague 'throwaway' notion, of "bei richtiger Politik"; what many would regard as the pivotal issue - what the (crucial!) nature of that "*richtige* Politik" is - occupies a syntactically subordinate position, allowing a highly uncomfortable question not to be dwelled upon (but failing, in its nebulousness, to offer a uniformly accepted 'bridge', as our citation from Nelken's *Änderungsantrag* below shows).

Whatever the PDS decides to do in parliament is, then, in the "5 Punkte" world-view, *Opposition.* Put unkindly, *Opposition* might be perceived to be everything and nothing. Commentators were not slow to brand this attempt to overcome the fundamental "Widerspruch zwischen fundamental-oppositionellem Selbstverständnis und dem Willen nach größtmöglicher parlamentarischen Präsenz"[5] a tactical one:

> Somit hat die PDS ihre gesellschaftliche oppositionelle Strategie gedanklich von ihrer Position in den Parlamenten entkoppelt und dadurch ihre strategischen Motive ein Stück weit verraten.[6]

This commentator is clearly not convinced by a concept of oppositionality incorporating what he sees as an awkward juxtaposition of positions and a (mere?) expressis verbis denial of what is widely perceived as a logical interrelationship, as indeed were many political observers at this time, questioning how governmental

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[5]Lang, op. cit., p. 373

[6]ibid., p. 374

involvement in the institutions born of the *herrschende Verhältnisse* might be married with a position which a priori smacks of a rejection of those very *herrschende Verhältnisse.* One journalist captured what he and many others perceive as the essential oxymoron of the PDS's position with the headline:

> PRINZIPIELL[7] KRITISCH - PDS-Spitzenpolitiker um Lothar Bisky legen zum Parteitag Fünf-Punkte-Programm vor:
>
> PDS ist *oppositionell, regiert aber auch mit,* ist pluralistisch aber antistalinistisch.[8] (my italics) (There is room for arguing that the notion of "prinzipiell" here describes a *Spagat* between "as a matter of principle" [i.e. "aus festem Prinzip"] and the less absolute "in principle" [i.e. "im Prinzip", "on the whole"] -MD.)[9]

And indeed, as the furious inner-party on this issue and on a whole range of others both in the months preceding, and at, the 4th *Parteitag* showed, many sections of the party, too, were unconvinced by the "5 Punkte" oppositionality. The crucially revealing 7-page *Änderungs- antrag*[10] of Berlin-delegate Michail Nelken (never discussed because a motion to the effect that the *Parteitag* dispense with considering any *Anträge auf Änderungen* was carried - leading to angry responses from delegates as to the legitimacy of the procedure[11]), speaks for the view of many, especially, in the radical wing around the *JG* (for whom, too, the conflation referred to above [i.e. between $Opposition_1$ and $Opposition_2$] is not a natural one[12]) and picks up on the vagueness of the (for him any many others pivotal!) notion of "*richtiger* Politik"

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[7]The reference here is to the statement in *Punkt* 2 that "Daraus ergibt sich, daß die PDS in prinzipieller Opposition zu den herrschenden gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen in der Bundesrepublik steht". (p. 27)

[8]Tolmein, Oliver: "*Prinzipiell kritisch.*" In: *Junge Welt.* 14 January 1995

[9]Compare the entry in the *Collins German Dictionary* (Glasgow: Harper Collins 1992) under *prinzipiell*: "... (im Prinzip) in principle; (aus Prinzip) on principle. ~ **bin ich einverstanden** I agree in principle; **das tue ich ~ nicht** I won't do that on principle."

[10]Nelken, Michail: "Änderungsantrag IV. 1. 4. 95. zum Initiativantrag Bisky, Gysi ..." op. cit.

[11]Delegates did, however, subsequently force an amendment upon the issue of the PDS's position in respect of *Antikommunismus* - see below.

This mode of procedure was deemed by Sabine Hartwig in the interview cited above to be a "*Sauerei*". It re-affirmed many commentators' view of the leadership's increasingly authoritarian, in the view of some - dictatorial, style of leadership. We will have more to say on this subject below.

[12]cf. "Die Diskussion in den letzten Monaten hat uns gezeigt, daß aber auch in der PDS der Wunsch besteht, im Konzert der staatstragenden Parteien mitzuspielen und als 'Regierungspartei im Wartestand' zu fungieren. Dies deckt sich aber nicht mit dem Anspruch der 'konsequenten' Opposition, den die PDS im Wahlkampf über die Medien verbreiten ließ, und womit sie ein neues, freches Profil gewonnen hat. Die PDS sollte auch nach den Wahlen dazu stehen ..." Cited from: "Positionen zur zukünftigen Politik der PDS. Beschluß der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Junger GenossInnen in und bei der PDS." op. cit.

> Wir denken, es ist falsch zu behaupten, daß unsere grundsätzliche gesellschaftliche Opposition "unabhängig" von unserer praktischen Politik sei, resp. umgekehrt. Die Aussage, daß unsere jeweilige Rolle im Parlament (Regierung, Tolerieren, oder Opponieren) nicht unser prinzipielles Oppositionsverständnis berühre, ist ebenso falsch oder irreführend, wie die, daß auch eine Regierungsmitwirkung - "bei richtiger Politk" - unseren Oppositionscharakter in bezug auf die herrschenden Verhältnisse nicht beeinträchtigen könne. Hier fallen Politik und Theorie, politische Praxis und Parteiideologie in klassischer Weise auseinander.[13]

It is interesting that where the *zweite Tagung* of the Third Party Conference in 1993 offered the central conference slogan "Linke Opposition gegen rechte Experimente" (my underlining), thereby picking up any parodying, in the familiar manner (see chapter 4), the right's notorious "Keine sozialistischen Experimente" slogan, the January 1995 conference - where the crucial question of what kind of opposition the PDS should offer was at the forefront of deliberations - foregrounds the slogan "PDS '95: solidarisch, alternativ, bundesweit." (my underlining) This offers some evidence that, increasingly, the term *Opposition* is being supplanted by other lexemes which invoke the notion of oppositionality, of Green-style '*Andersartigkeit*', but which bypass the highly problematic *Opposition* lexeme itself[14], a lexeme which was hitherto the centrepiece of PDS ideology, yet in the post-election period so focal an element in the potentially divisive pro-/anti-involvement-in-government polemic. (Certainly, the lexeme *alternativ* is one we find favoured across the very broad range of inner-PDS discourses.[15])

Weimar-delegate Sabine Hartwig observed how she had left the *Parteitag* with the impression that many delegates were highly dissatisfied with the *oppositionelles*

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[13]Nelken, Michail: "Änderungsantrag IV. 1. 4. 95. zum Initiativantrag Bisky, Gysi ..." op. cit., p. 4

[14]Compare, the PDS programme for the 1995 Berlin elections which is entitled: *PDS '95: Ein anderes Berlin, eine andere Politik.* (my underlining)

[15]Witness how *Opposition* and *alternativ* inform each other in the discourse of the *JG:* "So postulierte die AG (*JG* - MD) bei der faktischen Wiedergründung im Januar 1994, solange unter anderem 'Autonome' ... auch von PDS-Mitgliedern als 'Chaoten' angesehen und beschimpft werden, sei der 'Weg zu einer *alternativen* sozialistischen Partei oder Bewegung mit klarem *Oppositions*profil ... verstellt'." (cited from Falkner/Huber; op. cit. p. 168) In the discourse of the KPF the lexeme is bound up with traditional 'communist' notions of revolutionary change: Falkner and Huber describe in some detail the contents of a *Grundsatzaussprache* between the KPF and the *PDS-Bundesvorstand* on 30 May 1994: "Eingangs hatte Thomas Heckmann eine im Bundeskoordinierungsrat beschlossene Stellungnahme der KPF verlesen. Wieder beharrte man auf der 'wissenschaftlichen Weltanschauung' ... und orakelte über eine 'verantwortbare revolutionäre *Alternative* zur sozialreformistischen Vorstellung von der Veränderung des kapitalistischen Systems' ..." (ibid., pp. 161-2; my italics)

Selbstverständnis contained in the "5 Punkte"[16]. The ratification of the "5 Punkte" belies the fact that, as Michael Brie, observes:

> Der Parteitag im Januar 1995 hat deutlich gemacht, daß die Grenzen einer Politik erreicht sind, bei der die PDS durch ein unkoordiniertes Nebeneinander ... (ihrer - MD) Positionen bei nach außen gesicherter Hegemonie der SED-Reformer erfolgreich sein konnte.[17]

The wide displeasure among delegates was evident from delegates' rejection of André Brie, leading party ideologue and close ally of Gysi and Bisky, as proposed *Bundesgeschäftsführer.*

Brie's study - aptly bearing the oxymoronic title "Die PDS - eine unmögliche Möglichkeit" - gives a graphic account of the sheer level of ambivalence and contradiction (hitherto suppressed, he observes, for the purposes of presenting a united electoral front) with which the party was fraught by the time of its *Parteitag*, of the:

> extrem heterogenen Anforderungen, die die PDS integrieren müßte, wenn sie ihrem Anspruch gerecht werden sollte, sich weiterhin als politische Kraft in Deutschland zu behaupten. Bis hin zu den Bundestagswahlen 1994 konnte dieses Problem im Interesse der Bestandssicherung und des Wahlzieles durch eine weithin inkonsistentes Nebeneinander verschiedener Positionen und Strategien bei gleichzeitiger Bündelung der Hauptaktivitäten und Dominanz der SED-Reformer nach außen relativ erfolgreich gelöst werden.[18]

On all sides the leadership was accused of 'selling out' on its 'true' socialist principles in order to curry favour with the establishment; what is noticeable here is that the denotative nature of that socialism is perceived in a vast array of different ways in accordance with personal ideological predilections. For the fundamentalists a gradual betrayal of 'true' socialism was evident in the increasing signs of a pragmatist 'pro-involvementalism'. For the traditionalists, the betrayal came in the form of a rejection of the class model (see below). Some of the areas of discord Brie touches upon are:

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[16]interview with the writer, op. cit.

[17]Brie: "Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 30

[18]ibid., p. 27

- the East/West question: "Die PDS steht in der Spannung zwischen Großpartei und Kleinpartei oder - anders ausgedrückt - zwischen politische Oligopolist und Kleinhändler."

- "der Gegensatz von prinzipieller Opposition und parlamentarischer Partei ... Sie könnte zu einer ernsten Zerreißprobe werden, da an diesem Punkte zwei gegensätzliche Auffassungen - die einer sog. Volks- oder Mehrheitspartei und die einer Weltanschauungspartei ... ist erstere pragmatisch mehrheitsorientiert ... und geht intern vor allem den Weg des Kompromisses, so ist letztere primär ideologisch orientiert... und strebt intern eine weltanschauliche Kohärenz an." This is closely linked to:

- "der Gegensatz von Partei und Bewegung"

- the differences between the pragmatist "Moderne Sozialisten" whose "Spezifik vor allem in einer klaren Abgrenzung zum Staatssozialismus als einem prinzipiell verfehlten Gesellschaft ... (liegt)" and the traditionalist wing which perceives the "Grundstrukturen des früheren Staatssozialismus als 'eigentlichem Sozialismus'".[19]

The months leading up to the *Parteitag* had revealed the traditionalists' deep dissatisfaction with what they perceived as an increasing Bad Godesberg-style move away from the (as they saw it) 'true' socialism enshrined in the model of class warfare and/or Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. Schreier speaks for many in the traditionalist camp in observing:

> Vom Kommunisten zum demokratischen Sozialisten zum demokratischen *Sozialdemokraten* ... Man hat auch mal Leute Wendehälse genannt ... Das Wort *Sozialismus* scheint nicht mehr hoffähig zu sein ... Wann ändert man den Parteinamen?[20] (my emphases)

The traditionalist camp had been aghast at *10 Thesen*'s unequivocal eschewal of the *Klassenkampfmodell*:

> Da es um das Überleben der Menschheit geht, lassen sich die Probleme der Gegenwart nicht mit einem *vereinfachten und reduzierten Denken in den Kategorien von Klassenkampf oder Sozialpartnerschaft erfassen.*[21] (my italics; observe the synergy - MD)

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[19]ibid., pp. 32, 32-3, 34, 28-9

[20]Schreier, Bernd: "Heiligt Erfolg die Mittel?" op. cit.

[21]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 21

The pain inflicted by this formulation is evident from the fact that it does not re-emerge in the "Minimalkonsens" of the "5 Punkte". Evidently, Schreier's observation that socialism is no longer "hoffähig" is predicated upon an understanding of Socialism as embodying a fixed (*Klassenkampf*/Marxist Leninist) denotation; any perceived mitigation of that model is thus per se a challenge on the category. Clearly Schreier's is an expression not so much of the absence of the category in PDS discourse at this time (after all, we encounter *Socialism* as sign widely) but rather of what he and others perceive as the increasing absence of an (in their world-view) fixed denotative core; in other words they perceive evidence of a gradual substitution of the category's (in their view a priori) orthodox marxist-leninist dimension with an increasingly 'social-democratic' dimension à la SPD. The category *socialism* is 'hammered home' in the *10 Thesen*[22], and enjoys pride of place as point 1 (drafted, tellingly, by Hans Modrow, "die Integrationsfigur der DDR- und Sozialismusnostalgiker")[23] - of the "5 Punkte":

> **1. Zum sozialistischen Charakter der PDS.** Der sozialistische Charakter der PDS ist in ihrer Geschichte begründet, von ihren Mitgliedern gewollt, von ihren Wählerinnen und Wählern akzeptiert, in ihrem Programm und Statut festgeschrieben und in ihrem Namen hervorgehoben. (my underlining; bold in original)

We discussed above the evidence of the use of the *socialism* sign as a positive symbol at the heart of an attempt to create a unifying 'super-discourse', as a lowest common denominator which backgrounds the fundamentally different denotative conceptions highlighted above. As such, numerous commentators have observed that the insistent invocation of an (intensionally minimal) socialism in the*10 Thesen* and "5 Punkte" is at the heart of an attempt to push through the eschewal - as recognised by Schreier - of orthodox/traditionalist positions via the medium of (comforting) 'trappings' - such as the unifying banner of a vague, maximally extended *socialism*. The following commentaries are typical:

> Mit ihrer Berufung auf den "sozialistischen Charakter" der PDS können die drei Programmatiker nicht übertünchen, daß sie ihren Frieden mit der BRD zu machen bereit sind.[24]

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[22]"**Die PDS ist eine sozialistische Partei ...** *Sozialismus* bleibt für die PDS ein unverzichtbares Ziel ... *Sozialismus* ist für uns eine Bewegung gegen die Ausbeutung des Menschen durch den Menschen ... *Sozialismus* ist für uns ein Wertesystem." ibid. p. 24 (*These* 10; bold in original)

[23]Lang, op. cit., p. 374

[24]Ripplinger, Stefan: "Den teuren Toten." In: *Junge Welt*. 16 January 1995

> ... in den "Fünf Standpunkten" (taucht) die Forderung nach "*sozialistischer Kritik*" der Vergangenheit auf. Diesem Zuckerbrot für die Mitglieder voraus ging die Peitsche: *Es gibt Grenzen, die durch kein Mitglied der PDS überschritten werden dürfen. Nationalistische, chauvinistische, rassistische, antisemitische Auffassungen sind mit der Mitgliedschaft in der PDS unvereinbar. Das gilt ebenso für stalinistische Auffassungen.*[25] (my emphases; italics in original)

Semantic specification of the notion of "sozialistische Kritik" (which tellingly comes close to a formulation favoured by Sahra Wagenknecht!)[26] is indeed difficult, offering evidence of the strategic invocation of the *socialism* sign, i.e. of an attempt to counter the '*Anbiederung*' charge of 'selling out' by qualifying the willingness to effect a criticism of the past (for which the political establishment has so clamoured and which the party must [be seen at least to] offer it if it is to be accepted as an equal, 'democratic' player) with the intensionally vague, but - for the party membership - connotatively positive *socialist* symbol. The evidence clearly suggests, however, that while PDS members such as Gysi and Bisky on the one hand and Wagenknecht on the other champion a "sozialistische Kritik" of the past, their respective understanding of what lies behind the signifier is fundamentally different. Clearly, Schreier et al. are unconvinced of the leadership's 'socialist' *Spagat* . The perception of a 'tactical' use of the *socialism* category as opposed to any commitment to the category as embodying a uniform underlying denotation is strengthened by some evidence which suggests that *Sozialimus*, while as yet insistently invoked, is simultaneously, as Schreier intimates, losing something of its 'sacro-saint' quality, which would indeed beg the question of whether it might not be supplanted if and when it is no longer required tactically. Witness, for example, the surprising failure to relativise *Sozialismus* in *These* 8:

> Die kritische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Scheitern des sozialistischen Versuches und der eigenen Geschichte bleibt ein unverzichtbarer Bestandteil des politischen Profils der PDS.

From our experience of PDS historiography as discussed in chapters 1 and 2, we might well have expected the *sozialistisch* to be entered in inverted commas, to suggest that what failed was not socialism per se but 'socialism gone wrong'. Might the failure to rescue the category here not be proffered as tentative evidence of

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[25]Lang, op. cit., p. 375

[26]See: Wagenknecht: "Anforderungen an die PDS." op. cit., p. 5: "Wir müssen den vergangenen Sozialismus in seinen verschiedenen Entwicklungsetappen und die Ursachen seines letztlichen Unterganges gründlich analysieren ... Die Kritik an der DDR muß eine Kritik nach Maßgabe unserer sozialistischen Ansprüche ... sein."

Schreier's claims? Likewise, commitment to an ontologically stable socialism looks in some doubt in recurring formulations to the effect that the SPD is 'not social-democratic enough' or *Die Grünen* 'not green enough', carrying something of an implication that the PDS's aim (or, more strictly, that of its pragmatist wing) is to to usurp positions which, in its view, were formerly held, but have been abandoned, by the established left, or positions which these parties *should* adopt as social democratic or green parties. The following is typical:

> Ich bestreite gar nich (sic), daß wir zu Beispiel bestimmte Felder besetzen, die ursprünglich mal Grüne waren ...[27]

As such, the implication is that the PDS's mission is to show the established left 'how it's done', and thus to be the 'true' social democratic or green party. In that case, if 'true' social democracy/'greenness' is essencially socialism, then *socialism* as a sign expressing a difference between differing ideologies would indeed be something of an irrelevance, and the PDS's "socialist" vision would enframe positions which already *have* a name on the established left. For Michael Brie, the basis for the PDS's long-term prospects lies in generating a qualitatively different denotative socialism: as we saw in chapter 3, this has yet to be articulated by the PDS.

THE 'STALINISMUS-DEBATTE'

"Allerdings besteht die Schwierigkeit zu definieren, was Stalinismus ist"[28]

> Die Existenz einer "kommunistischen" Plattform in der PDS war bisher ein Hindernis für eine ungeschminkte Bündnispolitik der Linken unter Einschluß der SED-Erben. Sie bremste immerhin den linken Drang des linken SPD-Flügels in diese Richtung, weil sie Schamgrenzen in Erinnerung rief. Und sie minderte erheblich die Attraktivität der PDS in den alten Bundesländern. Bisky, Gysi und Modrow wollen das Hindernis jetzt aus dem Weg räumen. Das ist der politische Gehalt ihres Verstoßes, was ihr persönliches Interesse an klaren Verhältnissen nicht ausschließt und zeigt, daß sie mit kommunistischen Dogmatikern nichts am Hut haben.[29]

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[27]Gregor Gysi, cited in Volmert: "Wahlkampf-Rhetorik ..." op. cit., p. 245

[28]Uwe-Jens Heuer, cited from: "Der Klassenkampf ist real." In: *Die Tageszeitung*. 21/22 January 1995 (interview)

[29]"PDS Light." In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. 14 January 1995

Before the 1994 elections the PDS had generally (tactically?) played down its fundamental problems with the KPF. We might call this a 'discourse of silence': a crucially revealing account of the very real tensions existing 'below the surface' is provided by Falkner and Huber; the latter point to a telling 'behind the scenes' *Grundsatzaussprache* between the PDS Vorstand and the KPF, which makes clear, yet again, the importance of bolting a 'parteiintern/-extern' context onto our complex overall model of PDS discourse. Lothar Bisky's widely cited messages of solidarity with the KPF[30], which the right naturally proffered as evidence of the commitment of the party as a whole to a 'traditionalist' past (and, in the Moreau-led world-view to 'subversion') looks quite different when set against the contextual background invoked by Falkner/Huber. It points to evidence that party leaders had for some years 'tolerated' the KPF and its uncomfortable orthodox views, doubtless for the sake of party unity, rather than being actively committed to them. After all:

> Zu groß ist offenbar der Respekt vor dieser Partei (the KPF - MD) in der Partei, von der niemand genau weiß, wie stark sie in der PDS vertreten ist.[31]

The vital 'stabilising' function of the *Communist* category has been identified by Falkner and Huber:

> Lothar Herzfeldt, der die Plattform mitbegründete, wollte 1989 als engagierter Reformpolitiker, jenen SED-Mitgliedern den Verbleib in der Partei ermöglichen die sich weiter als Kommunisten fühlen ... Jene Kräfte an die Reform heranzuführen hatte unter anderem deswegen große Bedeutung, weil *die Selbstdefinition der SED-Mitglieder als Kommunisten noch bis in die Wende hinein zur Pateiräson zählte, der Begriff einen gewissen inneren Halt gab.*[32] (my italics)

This tension - the need to (be seen at least?) to rid the party of traditionalist ideological positions (we can leave open the question of whether this was out of 'true' conviction or as a way of giving the establishment what it wanted - or a complex amalgam of both) while at the same time 'keeping on board' the Communists and 'rescuing' the *communist* category (with its important symbolic function) for the benefit of the party members and sympathisers for whom it was so much a prop - is at the heart, we will argue, of the pragmatic leadership's discursive

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[30]cf., for example: "Ich bin froh, daß es die Kommunistische Plattform gibt ... Ich habe überhaupt keine Lust, mich von der kommunistischen Plattform in der PDS in irgendeiner Weise abzugrenzen." Bisky, cited in: Moreau/Neu: "Die PDS zwischen Linksextremismus ..." p. 49

[31]Preusker, Ingo: "Alles nur Theaterdonner." In: *Wochenpost.* no. 4. 19 January 1995

[32]Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 153

Spagat: in the post-election period. We will argue with Lang[33] that those journalists who saw the PDS as seeking, at this time, to eject its problematic traditionalists is something of a misleading (or misled??) perspective, and that the attempt was, in fact, to effect a (tactical?) fusion between on the one hand (being seen to be?) challenging traditionalism and quelling its voices, while on the other holding on to its proponents themselves and rescuing central symbols of their discourses. In a nutshell, we will argue, the attempt was to remove Sahra Wagenknecht - as the *Kommunistische Plattform* 's most potent symbol - from the executive, but removing her as a Stalinist, not a Communist.

What we will attempt to show is that the leadership's *Spagat* functions largely on a symbolic as opposed to denotative level. The centrepiece for that *Spagat* is the category of *Stalinismus*, whose invocation to exonerate the party membership by creating a category of 'mythical others' we touched upon above. Where we see traditionalism taken on by the leadership its is via that category; this allows the leadership to play down any condemnation on its part of *Communism*, while relying at the same time upon a tacit conflation - via the person of Sahra Wagenknecht (a well-known Stalin admirer[34] [resulting in her being widely termed in the press a "Stalinist" and/or the very epitome of *Stalinism*[35]] while at the same time the mouthpiece for the *Kommunistische Plattform)* - of *Stalinism* and *Communism*; put mathematically:

SW = Stalinist = Communist (Platform)

Thus SW = Communist

ergo PDS minus SW (Stalinism) = [i.e. suggests] PDS minus communism (i.e. suggests that PDS has divested itself of communist positions, but avoiding the need to invoke the category of *communism* itself)

(The mathematical formula makes clear, of course, that the hugely simplistic symbolic nature of the construct!)

In other words, by ridding the *Vorstand* of Sahra Wagenknecht as a *Stalinist*, the PDS can symbolically suggest to the outside world that it has dealt with its

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[33]Lang, op. cit., see p. 376 ff.

[34]An excellent account of Sahra Wagenknecht's "offene Stalin-Verherrlichung" (Falkner/Huber, op. cit., p. 156) is provided by Falkner/Huber, op. cit.; see pp. 156-9

[35]The following is typical: "Auslöser für das innerparteiliche Rumoren ist ein Buch der ebenso jungen wie unverbesserlichen *Stalinistin* Sahra Wagenknecht ..." (my italics) Stiege, Rudolf: "Stalins Schatten fällt auf die PDS." In: *Morgenpost.* 17 January 1995.

Communists without, for its part, invoking and issuing what for many of its members would be a painful challenge upon this problematic category.

What emerges is that Bisky, Gysi et al in fact continue to deploy a modified version of the discourse of silence: a survey of press articles at this time[36] reveals they rarely invoke a challenge upon the category of *communism* at this time, indeed where *communism* is invoked it is to defend it via a polarised model which pits *Stalinism* (as "illiberal socialism") against the nebulous notion a 'pure' *Reformcommunism* (which suggests, however, that Communism, in the eyes of the leadership stands uncomfortably on its own!) and suggests that the crimes committed under the 'communist' regime from the time of Stalin onwards can be seen independently of the systemic theory and practice that gave rise to them:

> ... daß Reformkommunisten in dieser PDS einen Platz haben müssen ist eine ganz andere Frage[37]

to which one commentator responds:

> immerhin könnte er sich (Bisky - MD) eine *reform*kommunistische Plattform vorstellen. Man sollte taktvoll genug sein, einen Tag nach dem Gedenken an Luxemburg und Liebknecht (the reference is to a memorial service attended by Bisky -MD) nicht nachzufragen was "reformkommunistisch" bedeutet ...[38]

Likewise, the *Communists* are rescued through individualisation:

> Die Kommunistische Plattform ist nicht mit einzelnen ihrer Mitglieder zu verwechseln. Die Mehrheit der Plattform ist mit den grundsätzlichen Positionen der PDS einverstanden.[39]
>
> Ich kenne eine Menge Mitglieder der Kommunistischen Plattform auf die ich um Gottes willen nicht verzichten möchte.[40]
>
> Und die stalinistischen Angriffe auf seine (Bisky's - MD) Person beschäftigen ihn noch immer. "Ich will nicht länger die Rolle des Integrationsopas spielen" sagt er verägert. Wenn sich auf dem Bundesparteitag Ende Januar nicht eine

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[36]Conducted by the writer throughout January 1995 using a wide range of newspapers, in particular: *FAZ, Junge Welt, Die Zeit, Berliner Zeitung, Die Tageszeitung, Morgenpost* (Berlin), *Wochenpost.*

[37]"Integrationskraft ausgereizt?" In: *Junge Welt.* 14 January 1995 (interview with Lothar Bisky)

[38]Ripplinger, op. cit.

[39]Bisky, in: "1995 muß es zur Entscheidung kommen." op. cit.

[40]"Integrationskraft ausgereizt?" op. cit.

> Mehrheit ein für allemal gegen das stalinistische Sozialismusmodell ausspricht, müsse er eine erneute Kandidatur für den Parteivorsitz überdenken. Im nächsten Augenblick relativiert er aber schon wieder. Nein, nein, gegen die kommunistische Plattform insgesamt habe er nichts. Nur gegen einzelne."[41]

Nowhere is the category of Communism invoked - and thus taken on directly - in the *10 Thesen*. The leadership can rely, in generating a picture of having taken on orthodox positions, upon the press to do the 'dirty work' for it, i.e. that of associating the 'attack' upon a '*Stalinist*' Sahra Wagenknecht with an attack upon the <Kommunist>ische Plattform (and thus with an attack upon traditionalist (<Kommunist>ische) positions; in the following the link is made:

> Der PDS-Bundesvorsitzende, Lothar Bisky, stellt die linken Hardliner in seiner Partei vor die Alternative: Entweder sie distanzieren sich auf dem Parteitag von neostalinistischen Ideen und bekennen sich zur Demokratie, oder er kandidiert nicht mehr für den Parteivorsitz ... Die Thesen (meaning 5 Punkte - MD) zielen vor allem auf die Anhänger der Kommunistischen Plattform und deren führende Vertreterin Sahra Wagenknecht ab ...[42] (my underlining)

In other words, the reductive model is (neo-)Stalinism = Communism (= SW). The extract above stems from an article entitled "Bisky zwingt seine Partei zur Entscheidung. Entweder Kommunistische Plattform oder er". If we look more closely at the packaging of the 'choice' 'actually' or 'originally' given to the party by Bisky, we see that it looks quite different: i.e. Bisky or neostalinist ideas and NOT Bisky or Kommunistische Plattform. The distinction is a crucial one. Nowhere has Bisky himself invoked the KPF and thus the uncomfortable category of *Kommunismus.*

Tolmein, perhaps unwittingly, sums it up:

> Klar ist dagegen die sich *stillschweigend* daraus ergebende scharfe Kritik an der Kommunistischen Plattform.[43] (my italics)

The following extract from an article in *Die Zeit* describing a meeting between Bisky and journalists in Potsdam some days before the party conference is revealing:

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[41]Preusker, op. cit.

[42]Lang, Christoph: "Bisky zwingt seine Partei zur Entscheidung. Entweder Kommunistische Plattform oder er." In: *Morgenpost.* 14 January 1995.

[43]Tolmein: "Prinzipiell kritisch." op. cit.

> Bisky (schwenkte) mit der Linken eine Broschüre seiner Vorstandskollegin Sahra Wagenknecht mit dem Titel "Antisozialistische Strategien im Zeitalter der Systemauseinandersetzung" Da sei es ihm kalt den Rücken hinuntergelaufen, als er das gelesen habe, das seien "politisch gegnerische Auffassungen" Sahra Wagenknecht ist die Wortführerin der "Kommunistischen Plattform" ... Eine der Kernthesen dieses Büchleins, ist die Behauptung, der Niedergang des Sozialismus habe mit dem XX. Parteitag der KPdSU 1956 begonnen, auf dem Nikita Chruschtschow sich mit den Verbrechen Stalins auseinandergesetzt hat. *Diese poststalinistische Attitüde der kommunistischen Plattform ... will die PDS-Spitze nicht mehr hinnehmen.*[44] (my emphases)

Bisky invoked Sahra Wagenknecht; the link between stalinism and communism is made by the journalist! Witness, too:

> Sie scheint unerschütterlich. Sahra Wagenknecht, 25 Jahre jung, Studentin der Philosophie und Vorzeigefrau der Altkommunisten in der PDS. Seit Monaten schon bemüht sich der Reformflügel um den Parteivorsitzenden Lothar Bisky und Gregor Gysi, die überzeugte *Kommunistin mit Hang zum Stalinismus* aus dem Fokus des öffentlichen Interesses zu verdrängen.[45] (my italics)

In this pre-conference period the leadership came under fire by many within the party and without who, for a plethora of different reasons, saw the use of *Stalinismus* as a tactical one. '*West-Linke*' Joachim Bischoff is in little doubt that the invocation of *Stalinismus* is a means for the leadership to take on traditionalist positions without actually saying so:

> Wenn die Leute von der Kommunistischen Plattform den Klassenkampf negierende Positionen kritisieren, werden sie relativ schnell in die Stalinismus-Schublade geschoben.[46]

This idea, that the leadership's 'real' desire is to in fact rid the party of ideas traditionally bound up with the *communist* category, but to do so under the 'scapegoat' category of *Stalinism* - gains strength from the observations of Falkner and Huber; if we look at the catalogue of features of KPF policy challenged by a

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[44]Nawrocki, Joachim: "Bisky und die Roten." In: *Die Zeit.* no. 4. 20 January 1995

[45]Fehrle, Brigitte: "S. Wagenknecht, eine Ketzerin in der PDS." In: *Berliner Zeitung.* 19 January 1995

[46]Joachim Bischoff, in: "Ist Sahra Wagenknecht eine Stalinistin?" *Junge Welt.* 20 January 1995 (interview with Joachim Bischoff)

pragmatist PDS 'behind the scenes' in the *Grundsatzaussprache* referred to above[47], we find that there is in fact nothing particularly 'stalinist' (however we understand the term) about, for example, championing, as the KPF does, the avant-garde role of the party. The *Partei neuen Typus* is, after all, a decidedly *Leninist* construct, as Falkner and Huber rightly observe.[48]

In many respects the leadership's instrumentalisation of *Stalinismus* can be said to mirror the use of *Opposition* cited above. A problematic inter-relationship is side-stepped: how, for example, is Stalinism different from Marxism-Leninism, from Communism? What many commentators (both inside and outside the party) note as missing at this time is any attempt, on the party of Bisky, Gysi et al., to offer a more rigorous definition of the term *Stalinism*. The "5 Punkte" definition relies upon a reductive, polarised construct of the type described above, where features of a system are seen as hermetically divorceable from an unsullied system itself:

> Damit verbunden ist die unumkehrbare Absage an ein stalinistisches oder poststalinistisches Sozialismusmodell, das heißt an Sozialismusvorstellungen mit diktatorischem, antiemanzipatorischem, antidemokratischem, illiberalem und zentralistischem Charakter.[49]

It is a construct which came under fire by what we might call the party's 'Stalin in jedem' proponents, who for their part invoked a much wider understanding of Stalinism as a phenomenon which pervaded every aspect of GDR life, party and social structures, as involving - not eschewing - the notion of personal complicity:

> Wie soll es in einer Partei, die sich aus einer stalinistischen/poststalinistischen Partei herausgebildet hat, unter ihren Mitgliedern keine stalinistischen Auffassungen geben? Sind sie alle mit der Wende von 1989 gelöscht? Die Quelle dieser **Verdrehtheit** in der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Stalinismus liegt in der ***Mythologisierung des Begriffs "Stalinismus"***. *Wer Stalinismus zur Ungeheuerlichkeit schlechthin macht, mit Verbrechen identifiziert oder*

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[47]Falkner/Huber, p. 162 ff. The features described are, inter alia, the KPF'S insistence upon a:

- "wissenschaftlichen Grundlage für die Überwindung der Klassengesellschaft"
- "'revolutionärer Überwindung des Kapitalismus', indem der herrschenden Klasse die Macht entrissen und die Eigentumsverhältnisse grundlegend umgestaltet werden"
- marxist-leninist "Klassenkampf" rhetoric
- the avant-garde role of the party
-existence of a revolutionary subject
-glorification of "Realsozialismus" as the attainment of 'true' socialism

[48]ibid., p. 155

[49]"5 Punkte" op. cit., p. 27 (*Punkt* no. 1)

> *auf politische Prozesse, Unterdrückung, Massen- und Völkermord reduziert, der läßt nur noch Raum für die demonstrative ... Distanzierung.*[50] (my italics; bold in original)

Soemthing of the same perspective is offered by Karin Dörre in her *Austrittserklärung*:

> Die Mehrheit der PDS-Mitglieder kommt aus einer reaktionären Partei, aus der SED. Deshalb wird die Auseinandersetzung mit diesem konkreten Auswuchs stalinistischer Politik nicht zu Ende sein, sollte Sahra Wagenknecht oder die Kommunistische Plattform die PDS verlassen oder per Erklärung dem Sozialismus abschwören. Dann stünde die PDS lediglich vor der Öffentlichkeit geläutert da ... *Denn ein bißchen Wagenknecht sitzt in jedem Kopf.*[51]

Dörre perceives, as we have done, a tactical attempt to create the veneer of a *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* by neatly compressing all past reprehensibility into the 'throwaway' category of *stalinism*; and even though her politics could not be further removed from those of Wagenknecht, Dörre sees the KPF as a mere instrument in this process:

> In diesem neuen Papier wird die Abkehr von jeglicher Form des Stalinismus formuliert. Wieder einmal ... die KPF (soll) jetzt der Brautpreis für die Zusammenarbeit mit der SPD sein. Statt ehrlich und vorbehaltlos einen Beitrag zur Aufdeckung der SED Herrschaftsstruktur zu leisten, hoffen Gysi und Bisky auf eine Koalition der Vertuscher mit Stolpe und Co.[52]

In other words she too perceives an attempt to suggest that by ridding the decision-making *Vorstand* of the KPF - widely enframed as the epitome of a vaguely-defined and negatively charged *Stalinism* - the party has purged itself of the "illiberal socialism" referred to in the "5 Punkte".

The evidence suggests that Dörre's view of a tactically motivated articulation of a break with Stalinism is not without grounds: there is indeed, as we touched upon above, little or no attempt at this time on the part of the pragmatic leadership to initiate - or dwell upon - the ultimately problematic question of how Stalinism is to

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[50]Nelken, Michail, "Änderungsantrag IV. 1. 4. 96. zum Initiativantrag Bisky, Gysi, Modrow *zu den fünf wichtigsten Diskussionspunkten der gegenwärtigen Debatte in der PDS*". In: *4. Parteitag der PDS ... Arbeitsmaterial für Delegierte.* op. cit. p. 3

[51]Dörre, op. cit.

[52]ibid.

be understood (witness the move to have the "5 Punkte" passed without a discussion of motions for amendment; a four-page *Änderungsantrag* [cited above] on the Stalinism issue submitted by Michail Nelken was never discussed). The evidence suggests that a problematic debate upon a problematic category would not suit the leadership's discursive purposes:

> Was Stalinismus war oder ist, warum die KPF, warum die KPF, oder doch zumindest ihre bekannteste Vertreterin, als stalinistisch bezeichnet werden können, sagen Gysi und seine Mitstreiterinnen und Mitstreiter nicht. Das ist auch nicht so wichtig, denn es geht nicht darum, sich mit der Geschichte der Sowjetunion und damit der kommunistischen Bewegung im 20. Jahrhundert auseinanderzusetzen. Der Begriff Stalinismus funktioniert als Reizwort für das Böse schlechthin, er ist eine Beschwörung: Wer damit belegt wird, ist aus der Gesellschaft der Demokraten und Demokratinnen ausgeschlossen.[53]

For Tolmein, Stalinism is strongly bound up with nationalism and an avoidance of a head-on discussion of the category is a means of circumventing, inter alia, the problematic 'pro-German' dimension introduced into PDS discourse with the candidature of von Einsiedel:

> Die Linien würden in diesem Streit wahrscheinlich anders verlaufen, als es sich Teile des Partievorstands aus Gründen der eher wahltatksich motivierten Parteiräson erhoffen - nationalistische Positionen haben gerade in dem eher sozialdemokratisch orientierten Flügel der Partei, wie z.B der Streit um die Kandidatur von Graf Einsiedel gezeigt hat, ihren Platz.[54]

For Tolmein, the evidence of a 'tactical' use of *Stalinismus* is compounded by what he perceives as a lack of anything particularly 'new' about the positions articulated by Wagenkencht at this time. The leadership, he argues, had been familar with much the same sentiments from KPF quarters for some years. Commenting on Bisky's in the meantime 'notorious' remark about how Sahra Wagenknecht's recent writings had made him (Bisky) shudder, Tolmein argues that:

> es (wird) deutlich, daß sich ein aktueller Anlaß für die Kritik nicht finden läßt; er ist allenfalls in den Texten des Jahres 1992 zu suchen. Diese waren

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[53]Dreyer, Klaus: "Gespenster." In: *Junge Welt.* 23 January 1995

[54]Tolmein, Oliver: "Verkehrt." In: *Junge Welt.* 20 January 1995

> schon beim letzten PDS-Parteitag im Januar 1993 bekannt, als Sahra Wagenknecht in den Parteivorstand gewählt wurde.[55]

Tolmein thus identifies a crucial temporal dimension. Indeed, if we look at the essential thesis of Sahra Wagenknecht's book[56] - that the demise of Socialism begun not in 1985 or 1989, but with Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin at the XXth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956[57] - we can see that the Stalin glorification espoused is little different from that of her 1992 writings described by Falkner and Huber.[58] In a nutshell, Tolmein asks why the PDS should consider delimiting its much vaunted pluralism only now, doubtless hinting at the fact that the essential 'difference' was that the leadership was now stepping up its pro-involvement drive following the Sachsen-Anhalt watershed and in the aftermath of the elections in which differences had to be played down in order to present a united front.

Precisely this *Pluralismus* is invoked in the debate by members of what might be called the 'KPF-friendly' camp, who challenge what they recognise as an attempt to divest the *Vorstand* of the KPF as a violation of the PDS's overarching, ideological cornerstone. They turn the leadership's argumentation on its head by suggesting that if Stalinism is about illiberalism then the leadership is Stalinist in terms of its own definition. In the following, Heuer, *Sprecher des Parteirates*, alludes to the notion of '*Einheit und Reinheit*' and to a continuation of SED-style practice in the PDS:

> Den Hauptfeind in den eigenen Reihen auszumachen ist auch eine stalinistische Tradition. Wenn man sagt, Stalinismus sei illiberal, dann muß ich offen sagen: es gibt illiberale Menschen in der PDS und es gibt illiberales Auftreten in der PDS. Es wird gesagt, wer einer bestimmten Ansicht ist, mit dem könne man nicht mehr.[59]

For Lang, there is no little irony in the invocation of pluralism on behalf of - and indeed, he points out, *by* - the KPF, a faction which elsewhere has consistently been on record as questioning the efficacy and desirability of a plurality of world-views:

> Wie ein Treppenwitz mutet es an, daß sich ausgerechnet die "Kommunistische Plattform", die heute noch offen einem autoritären

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[55]ibid.

[56]Wagenknecht, Sahra: *Antisozialistische Strategien im Zeitalter der Systemauseinandersetzung.* Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein 1995

[57]Winters, Peter Jochen: "Der PDS-Vorsitzende denkt an Rücktritt." In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. 14 January 1995

[58]Falkner/Huber, esp. pp. 156-9

[59]cited from: "Der Klassenkampf ist real." op. cit.

> Staatssozialismus anhängt, ausgegrenzt fühlte und vehement den innerparteilichen Pluralismus einforderte.[60]

The 'KPF-friendly' camp, for its part, also proffered a neatly reductive, polarised schema of its own, suggesting that a Stalinist is one who espouses the virtues of the *crimes* committed under Stalin's regime as opposed to the virtues of the regime itself. Witness the response of '*West-Linke*' Bischoff when probed by a journalist as to whether journalist whether Sahra Wagenknecht is a Stalinist:

> Nein ich teile diese Position nicht, sie hat auch auf der Vorstandssitzung deutlich gesagt, daß sie die unter Stalin begangenen Verbrechen und später die negativen Seiten in keiner Weise schönreden will.[61]

This line of argumentation was enframed in the *Alternativvorschlag* to the 'Stalinism' clause proffered by Heuer, who proposed an "Unvereinbarkeitsbeschluß" in respect of "Auffassungen, bei denen Verbrechen, die unter dem Regime Stalins begangen wurden, gerechtfertigt oder verherrlicht wurden", in respect of which one bemused journalist wonders how he can "das Regime Stalins unabhängig von dessen Verbrechen betrachten?"[62] For Heuer, then, this leaves intact an unsullied 'traditional' communism, and the class model is perceived as an essential factor in party life:

> Der Klassenkampf ist ein Faktor, den es real gibt. Eine Kategorie, die immer ein Schlüssel war, um viele Dinge zu verstehen, die wirft man nicht einfach über Bord.[63]

By contrast, the leadership is taking on - he feels - that very necessary orthodoxy 'by the back door' - by packaging it as, and throwing it away as, *Stalinism*. Precisely this was expressed in Heuer's move at the *Parteitag*, in conjunction with the KPF, to have "*anti*kommunistisch" introduced into the list (in *These* 1) cited above of positions incompatible with PDS membership. Initially his motion was carried, although Gysi would subsequently manage to persuade delegates to accept an alternative formulation, which - in linking the *Kommunismus* category with a highly superordinate, but connotatively and inherently positive key-word (*demokratisch*) - amounts to little more than a repackaging of Bisky's "*Reform*kommunisten", and is no less difficult to specify semantically:

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[60]Lang, op. cit., p. 376

[61]cited from: "Ist Sahra Wagenknecht eine Stalinistin?" op. cit.

[62]cited from: "Der Klassenkampf ist real." op. cit.

[63]ibid.

> Als sozialistische Partei kann und darf die PDS nicht antikommunistisch sein. Sie ist nicht bereit auf *demokratisch-kommunistische Positionen* in ihren Reihen zu verzichten.[64] (my emphases).

It is hoped that this brief survey of some of the main arguments in the *Stalinismus-Debatte* will have given a flavour of the sheer level of argumentation generated - both within the party and without. It is solid evidence that the leadership, whose seeming unwillingness to enter into anything more than a very shallow debate upon the nature of the substantive core of its 'Stalinism' construct was widely criticised for a wealth of differing reasons, was unable to generate anything approaching uniform acceptance for its abstract model. Ultimately, the leadership had its way. Sahra Wagenknecht was removed from the *Vorstand*, but it is worth remembering that more than 30% of delegates voted in her favour[65]; she failed by a mere one place to get on the list of those elected to the *Vorstand*. Sabine Hartwig[66], delegate for Weimar, maintained that she had left the conference with the feeling that there was a profound sense of dissatisfaction in large sections of the party at Gysi and Bisky's having 'pandered' to the establishment by offering the KPF as a 'sacrifice' and at their having used forceful means (the threat of resignation from their party posts) to push through the "5 Punkte" and make the PDS, in the diction of *These* 1, *politikfähig*. Dörre's observation that:

> Die neue Partei kehrt zur alten Praxis ... Hinter den Kulissen hat Andre Brie die Führung der Partei fest in der Hand ... mit ihm hat der damalige Parteivorsitzende Gysi sein Schicksal eng verknüpft ... Parteivorsitzende Bisky fördert Brie jetzt genauso wie Gysi.[67]

is one of many picked up on by the right in support of its Moreau-led view of a dictatorial PDS leadership (see chapter 2 above). It is worth pointing here, however, to the context of Dörre's observation. Her frustration with the party leadership is predicated not upon a realisation that it is any *less* 'democratic' than that of the other parties, but rather on the fact that a 'pragmatic' PDS has failed, in her view, to offer the 'true' alternative it could have (and as such has itself become guilty of the charge it has consistently levelled at the establishment):

> Damit verabschiedet sich die Partei von Nachdenken über wirkliche Alternativen zum Bestehenden und Vergangenen, über Utopien, darüber, wie

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[64]cited in: Lang, op. cit., p. 375

[65]Brie, Michael, "Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 11

[66]interview with the writer, op. cit.

[67]Dörre, op. cit.

eine wahrhaft alternative Kultur im Unterschied zu parteiüblicher Kungelei, Machtfixiertheit und parteipolitischer Unterordnung entwickelt werden könnte.[68]

OVERALL CONCLUSION

The essential characteristic of an overall 'PDS discourse' could be said to be its breadth. Not only do we mean the breadth of the positions we find in that discourse (in which, for example, a starkly anti-authoritarian libertarianism (cf. the *Junge GenossInnen*) co-exists uncomfortably with a hard-line authoritarianism (cf. some of the factions inside the *KPF*), thus yielding a very wide array of different and contradictory discourses; the unifying, very public 'super-discourse', too, is predicated upon broad, highly superordinate, intensionally minimal terms (of which *Opposition* is a key element), upon broad categories which background natural antagonisms and complex causal issues. Where it is a lowest common denominator in the attempt to circumvent the problematic intra-party opposition, the notion of *demokratischer Sozialismus* seems to enframe little more than a vaguely - and differently perceived - 'unifying' opposition to the new polity, to the here and now. It is highly questionable, however, whether that opposition can be neatly and unproblematically cast in the mould of *subversion* widely and persistently proffered by Moreau and the right. The process which make up the complex tapestry of life can rarely be pressed into absolute models. We have observed that many of the features of PDS discourse identified in support of the theory that the party is "antidemocratic" and "extremist" (especially its 'tactical' dimension [and here most notably the leadership's 'hedging' over its deeply uncomfortable past]) are equally evident in the discourse of the 'democrats' of Germany's political establishment.

The debates at the 4th *Parteitag* offer clear evidence that by 1995 the PDS is still far from having reached a degree of unity beyond a very high level of abstraction; the PDS has made virtue from necessity by championing the very plurality which is its problem. The 'stalinism debate' at the 4th *Parteitag* revealed too that, increasingly, this plurality looks in trouble. The sheer breadth of the (unifying) term *Opposition*, obscures, to some extent, the evidence that the party is deeply divided upon the fundamental issue of which of the many permutations of opposition to champion within a united Germany.

It is hard, as yet, to find a uniform and viable 'vision' in PDS discourse. The party seems far too taken up with brokering compromise, with seeking discursive means to

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[68]ibid.

deal with its problematic factionalism, with presenting different images of itself to suit the needs of widely differing target audiences in both East and West. We have attempted above to identify some of the discursive formulae which the PDS has offered in the attempt to appeal to different target audiences at one and the same time. Inter-textually, the evidence is that the party has sought to expedite the task of legitimising the party with differing target audiences by a process of 'selective filtration', of foregrounding different messages to suit differing immediate aims. This filtration can be said to work in two ways: firstly, by giving prominence to particular issues and circumventing/backgrounding others relative to the target audience concerned:

> Die Politiker von Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Ludger Volmer und Christiane Ziller, stellen ebenfalls eine Zwiespältigkeit fest: "Die Programmatik der PDS ist ein Gemisch aus sozialistischer Rhetorik, sozialdemokratischen Ordnungsvorstellungen, linkspopulistischen Forderungen und deutsch-nationalen Einsprengseln ohne konzeptionelle Verbindung und Realisierungsstrategie ... *Im Osten will die PDS als Anwältin der Ostinteressen gelten, im Westen dagegen als konsequente Oppositionskraft. Beide Ansprüche sind absolut unvereinbar ... Die PDS ist der mißlungene Versuch, durch Protestphraseologie zwei antagonistisch widerstreitende Interesse zum Zwecke der Selbsterhaltung der Organisation unter einem Dach zusammenzubringen*" (Volmer/Ziller 1994).[69] (my italics)

It comes as little surprise that the *West-Zone* election magazine targeted towards the *West* Berlin *Bezirke* discussed in chapter 4 above makes no mention of an East-West division, of 'ostalgic' issues, and deals instead with 'pan-German' social issues (unemployment etc.) in the way described above. A comparable election newspaper catering to an *East* German electorate in Thüringen, on the other hand, entitled "94: Thüringen wählt" features the prominent - and emotive - headline "*Ossis* zeigt Haltung" (my italics) on the front page; the ensuing article cites a *Neues Deutschland* interview with Austrian actor Klaus Löwitsch who is purportedly appalled at West German demands upon East Germans.[70] Page 5 features an article bearing the prominent headline "Sollen etwa *Wessis* die Wismut sanieren?" (my italics), which proceeds to enframe an East -West conflict in emotive language:

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[69]cited in Brie, Michael: "Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 27

[70]"Ich finde entsetzlich, wie viele Ostdeutsche nach neuer Identität stochern. Das haben sie nicht nötig, denn hinter der neuen Identität verbirgt sich Anpassung an westdeutsche Spießigkeit." Klaus Löwitsch, in: *94: Thüringen wählt.* Landeswahlkampfbüro der PDS Thüringen 1994

> Trotz entsprechender sozialer Abforderung für viele der Kumpel begann ... die Frage nach der Zukunft der Wismut (a uranium mine in Thuringia closed down at the beginning of January -MD) laut zu werden. Zumal es durch die *Plattmache* des DDR-*Anschlußes* in der gesamten Region keine nennenswerte Industrue mehr gibt ... der Verdacht (wird) immer offenbarer, daß die 4,500 Wismuter ins Aus geführt werden sollen, um dann einem renommierten Westkonzern Platz zu machen für das *fette Sanierungsgeschäft.*[71] (my italics)

Secondly, the filtration process involves the adapting of the message conveyed to suit the needs of the target environment concerned, resulting in permutations ranging from a subtle re-working of different messages to out-and-out contradiction. Numerous commentators have challenged this selective filtration, offering clear evidence of a less-than-universal success:

> Im Westen sagen Sie (Gysi - MD), frank und frei, die DDR sei "zu Recht" untergegangen, im Osten erklären Sie Ihren Wählern, die DDR sei untergegangen, weil sie "nicht sozialistisch genug" war, die Bemerkung "zu Recht" verkneifen Sie sich.[72]

On the one hand we find the PDS, as above, in 'Anschluß' mode:

> Die großen Chancen der Vereinigung der beiden deutschen Staaten wurden durch Beitritt und Anschluß bewußt zerstört. ... Die bislang letzte große Stunde der Politik in der Bundesrepublik war 1989/90. Es war die blinde Politik des Anschlusses um jeden Preis ... Es war Nichtpolitik. Sie hat eine Großteil jener Chancen zerstört, die wieder einmal durch und für Menschen in Deutschland entstanden waren ...[73]

> Statt gleichberechtigter Einigung erfolgte der Beitritt der DDR zur Bundesrepublik Deutschland, aus dem ein bloßer Anschluß wurde. *Emanzipatorische Möglichkeiten der Vereinigung wurden verspielt.*[74] (my emphases)

While the PDS-led *Gerechtigkeitskomitees* had told East Germans that the unification process was the root of all evil, we compare this message with the seemingly

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[71]ibid., p. 5

[72]Broder, Hendryk: "Der begabteste Schwindler." In: *Die Woche.* 13 January 1995

[73]Gysi: *Ingolstädter Manifest.* op. cit., pp. 2, 7

[74]Parteivorstand der PDS: "10 Thesen ..." op. cit., p. 23

contradictory message conveyed by a pragmatic leadership to a fairly closed circle of party members and sympathisers[75] in *Neues Deutschland* only a few months earlier:

> Mit dem Ende der DDR ist Sozialismus in Deutschland erst möglich geworden ... Wer sich heute gegen die Einheit stellt verhält sich reaktionär. Die Linke muß endlich die deutsche Einheit als *emanzipatorischen Impuls* (! - MD) aufnehmen ... Mit "Deutschland halt's Maul" aber ist kein demokratischer Staat zu machen ...'[76] (my emphases)

The accusation of contradictoriness might, of course, be challenged by pointing to the indeterminate nature of "emanzipatorische Möglichkeiten wurden verspielt", which will bear a reading whereby not *all* emancipatory possibilities were called into question. The PDS might argue, too, that the "emancipatory impulse" message is a logical extension of its consistent 'synergist' message. We observe, here however, a crucial transfer of emphasis: unification is now re-cast as the positive basis *per se* for developing what the PDS wishes to achieve, not as a (rather unsolid) means for gradually moving towards it. These tenuous counter-claims apart, it is interesting that the decision to re-cast unification as an emancipatory process comes within the context of the Einsiedel debate touched upon above; here the immediate discursive aim seems to have been to justify to the party faithful the incorporation into the party of the proudly and avowedly pro-German, *West* (!) German von Einsiedel at a time, in the crucial pre-election period, in which party pragmatists had to consider ways - as we saw above- of potentially appealing to a *pan*-German audience. To many on the left[77] this has been viewed as an inexcusably opportunist means of pandering - via a potent symbol of German aristocracy - to nationalist sentiment in the attempt to draw a vaguely defined 'protest' vote from factions further to the right of the political spectrum.

> Im "Stern" hat Gysi gesagt "die Klügeren unter unseren Gegnern werden irgendwann anerkennen, daß die PDS die bessere Art ist, den Protest einzufangen", weil die Leute dann nicht Republikaner wählten.[78]

The notional common category of "protest" is invoked, too, by André Brie:

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[75]"Ihre (the PDS's -MD) interne Kommunikationsstuktur ist relativ gut ausgebaut. Mit der Zeitschrift DISPUT, dem Pressedienst und vor allem der Tageszeitung Neues Deutschland, *die primär von PDS-Mitgliedern bzw. Sympathisanten gelesen wird*, ist sie in der Lage parteiweite Diskussionen zu führen." Brie M.: "Das politische Projekt PDS ..." op. cit., p. 34. (my italics)

[76]Bisky/Brie/Gohde/Gysi/Lederer: "Borniertheit erneut als politische Kategorie?" op. cit.

[77]see for example, the comments of Ebermann et al. In: "Dem deutschen Volke dienen." In: *Konkret.* no. 8. July 1994 (interview with André Brie, Thomas Ebermann et al.)

[78]Hermann L. Gremliza in: *Konkret.* ibid.

> Wir wollen Protestwähler, ... nicht nur diejenigen ... die bewußt links wählen, sondern auch die, die einfach die Schnauze voll haben, bei denen die Gefahr besteht, daß sie Republikaner wählen. *Wir wollen keine rechten Wähler. Aber die Protestwähler wollen wir schon. Das tun wir nicht indem wir uns nationalistisch anbiedern.*[79] (my italics)

The furious inner-party polemic upon the Einsiedel question and the wealth of accusations of opportunism levelled at the leadership show many in the party to be in some disagreement with Brie. Challenged by Ebermann et al. upon the 'new' position, Brie invokes a necessary fatalism:

> Mann mußte diese Einheit annehmen und von ihr ausgehend emanzipatorische Politik machen.[80]

in which Ebermann perceives clear evidence of a - to use his words - "taktisches Geschleime"[81]:

> Da steht "als emanzipatorischen Impuls annehmen", nicht: als Scheiße die man nicht ändern kann[82]

The ideological centre's 'new' pragmatism over German unification makes clear two important dimensions which, as we have sought to highlight throughout, must be grafted on to any model of PDS discourse:

1) the *parteiinterner/parteiexterner* context. Observe how the (tactical?) encouragement of a more positive pro-German stance is presented with the narrower ranks of the party faithful and clashes with the sentiments, widely propagated in the *public* arena (particularly in the East), as to the 'juggernaut' nature of unification. Likewise, as we observed above, the leadership's public display of solidarity with its *KPF* takes on a very different perspective when we read of the behind-the-scenes differences described by Falkner and Huber.

2) the temporal perspective: the re-casting of unification in this crucial pre-election period came at a time which for many offers evidence a telling tactical motivation. Interestingly, we observe that the leadership's return to a view of unification as *anti-*emnacipatory in the *post*-election *10 Thesen* came at a time when electoral successes

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[79]André Brie, ibid.

[80]André Brie, ibid.

[81]Ebermann, ibid.

[82]Ebermann, ibid.

had already been secured. The latter speak insistently of an overweening *Großdeutschland* and *Großmannssucht*.

An inextricable element in the overall picture is the discursive environment in which utterances are made: in other words, is the environment in which a text is proffered one which requires the text to maintain, for example, a form preserving (at least the veneer of) a 'sober', rational and objective treatment of a particular issue or set of issues (as in the case of an article in a serious academic journal), or is it one such as, say, an electoral rally, whose attendant circumstances more readily allow emotive and/or crude oratory. (There is, of course, all manner of complex gradations in-between.)

The emotive *Anschluß* and related concepts can be seen to be particularly in evidence in emotionally charged environments such as the following extract from a Bundestag-speech given by an embattled Gysi facing a barrage of hostile interjections:

> Deutschland hatte gerade im letzten Jahr große Chancen, die sämtlich vertan wurden: statt Vereinigung mit der DDR ihr *Anschluß* mit einer sich in allen Bereichen verbreitenden *Besatzermentalität*.[83] (my italics)

The 'Anschluß' sentiments are equally in evidence in the emotive Thuringian electoral newspaper article cited above. On the other hand in a serious, politological contribution[84] to the (West-Berlin) *Kursbuch*, requiring a 'balanced' treatment of thesis and antithesis à la Bortfelt, Gysi offers an unemotive picture of how "Die *Vereinigung* Deutschlands"[85] (my italics) could have been achieved in away which was "chancenreicher" for East Germans. This article foregrounds the GDR's lack of social and economic achievement, offers an acknowledgement of a "diktatorisch (! - MD) geführten Gemeinwesen(s) DDR", a "Defizit an Demokratie", the fact that "1961 mußte dieser Staat seine Bürger einmauern, weil sie ihm wegliefen", a "Manko an Lebensqualität" and the observation that "Eine Gesundung der Volkswirtschaft der DDR wäre ein äußerst langwieriger Prozeß gewesen mit gravierenden Einschnitten im sozialen Bereich".[86] (Compare Gysi's earlier observation, cited above that "selbst ein so scharfer Kritiker der Verhältnisse in der DDR wie Robert

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[83]"Rede des PDS-Vorsitzenden im Deutschen Bundestag am 17.01.1991." In: *Die Waffen nieder.* Berlin: Parteivorstand der PDS 1991

[84]Gysi: "Letzte Ausfahrt Sozialismus." op. cit.

[85]ibid., p. 155

[86]ibid., p. 151

Havemann erklärte, im besseren Deutschland zu leben"[87].); contrast this with, on the other hand, the following extract from an emotive speech given by Gysi on East Berlin's Alexanderplatz shortly before the elections to the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus* in 1995, which foregrounds the GDR's social achievements:

> Im Herbst 1989 haben viele von uns gehofft, daß wir den entsetzlichen Fahnenappellen in den Kinderferienlagern loswerden, aber viele von uns haben nicht gewußt, daß sie das Kinderferienlager gleich mit loswerden; so war das auch nicht gedacht, denn das war eine vernünftige soziale Einrichtung und da können wir viele andere Beispiele nennen.[88] (Note again the polarised picture: no attempt is made to dwell on the problematic interdependence of *Fahnenappell* and Ferien*lager* [with its decidedly military connotations!] - MD.)

PDS discourse is a highly complex quasi-cubist model of differing perspectives, as the party strives to legitimise itself broadly. For many it offers evidence of a high degree of tactical opportunism. Given that PDS utterances offer 'something for everyone' it is easy for the right, with Moreau leading the vanguard, to select only those perspectives which can be pressed into its simplistic extremism-model. It is hoped that the present work has gone some way towards alerting the reader to the pitfalls of such an approach.

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[87]see chapter 1, footnote 254

[88]Extract from speech given by Gysi on 20 October 1995 at an electoral rally preceding the elections to the *Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus*. Taped by the author.

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