

The wall in People's Heads

Unified Germany in Perspective



Outline

Political Culture in West Germany before 1990

Political Culture in the GDR

Findings after 1990

A framework for analysis

Behaviour

Attitudes

Class questions



What?

- ▶ Surprisingly difficult to find English texts on Germany's split political culture
- ▶ Dalton/Weldon a recent addition to the literature
- ▶ Useful working paper by J. Maier: Political Culture in East and West Germany
 - ▶ Reviews much of the literature and has recent empirical findings
 - ▶ http://www.uni-bamberg.de/fileadmin/uni/fakultaeten/sowi_faecher/politik/BBPII/BBP-II-14.pdf

What happened after 1945?

- ▶ West-German political culture successfully 'remade' (Conradt 1980)
 - ▶ Support for former regimes gone
 - ▶ Democratic institutions and principles widely accepted
 - ▶ Support stable even if system performs less well
- ▶ Changes due to ...
 - ▶ Generational replacement
 - ▶ Mobility
 - ▶ Loss of eastern provinces
 - ▶ Performance and other circumstances...

What happened between 75-89?

- ▶ Further consolidation
- ▶ Post-materialism & New Social Movements
 - ▶ Minority rights
 - ▶ Environmentalism
 - ▶ Participation
 - ▶ Anti-Nuclear movement
- ▶ Rise and incorporation of the Green party
- ▶ West Germany in 1989 – a largely 'normal', West European State
- ▶ *But what happened in East Germany 1949-89?*
- ▶ Three/four models of change

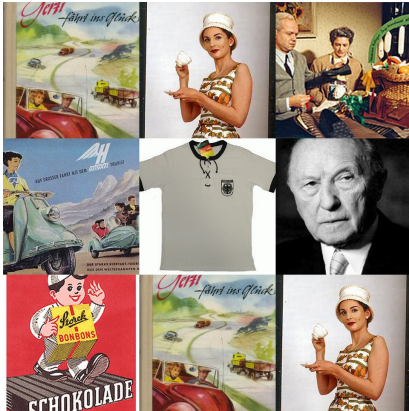
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2. 'Congruence'
3. 'Socialisation'

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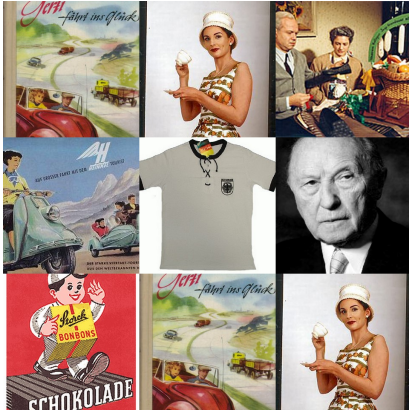
1. 'Conservation'
2. 'Congruence'
3. 'Socialisation'
4. ('Situation')

Conservation



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1933-1989
- ▶ Traditional mentalities
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- ▶ Swiftly falsified

Congruence



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- ▶ Falsified by mid-1990s

Socialisation/Situation



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- ▶ Long-lasting impact

Socialisation/Situation



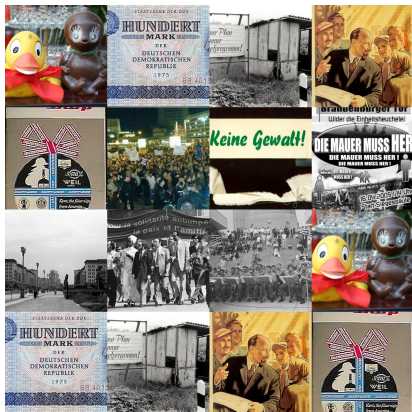
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- ▶ Living conditions in East Germany still very different
- ▶ Dominant approach/perspective

What relevant dimensions do exist?

1. Behaviour/behavioural intentions
 - 1.1 (Voting)
 - 1.2 Party/group membership
 - 1.3 Violence
 - 1.4 Other political behaviour
2. Attitudes/values orientations
 - 2.1 Gender roles
 - 2.2 Ideology/values
 - 2.3 Support for specific policies
 - 2.4 Party identification
 - 2.5 Identity/(self-) perception

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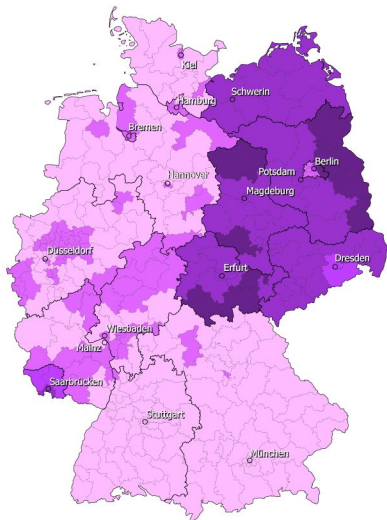
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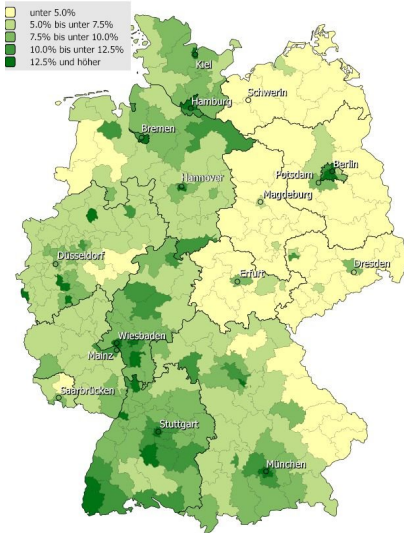
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- ▶ Disproportionate levels of extreme right violence: Between 2001 and 2005
 - ▶ At least 60 per cent of all instances of attempted manslaughter/murder with right-wing background
 - ▶ $\frac{1}{5}$ of the population
 - ▶ Less than 5 per cent of all foreigners

(Voting: Parties)



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Identification

- ▶ Low levels of pride
- ▶ National identification dominant in both parts, regional, local, supranational identity of lesser importance
 - ▶ But 24% of West Germans feel that their situation has worsened after unification (East: 14)
 - ▶ 37% of West Germans feel that too much money was transferred
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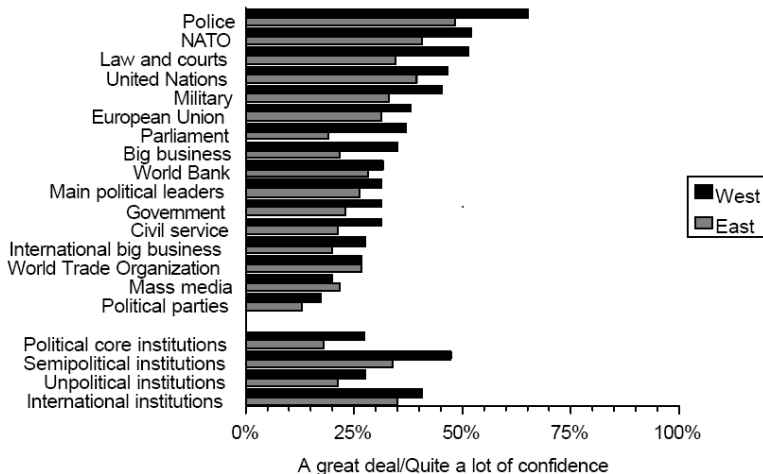
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- ▶ 12% of East Germans and 24% of West Germans feel it would be better if the wall still stood (Forsa poll, 2004)
- ▶ Ebb and flow of regional identities
- ▶ Regional identities and tensions quite common in Western countries

Trust in institutions

- ▶ Sharp decline in early 1990s – coincides with economical decline
- ▶ Trust in non-political institutions (army, police, courts) much higher than in political institutions
- ▶ Levels in the East even lower than in the West

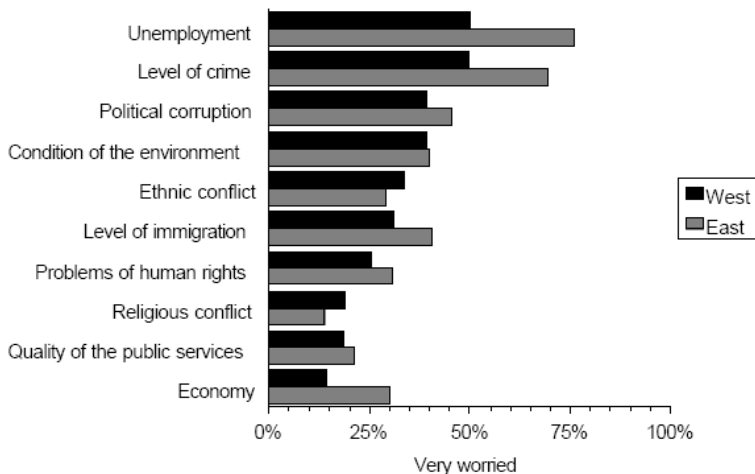
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Political (Dis-)satisfaction

- ▶ Only 21 per cent satisfied with politics in West Germany, 11 (!) per cent in East Germany
- ▶ Strong link between satisfaction with politics and satisfaction with life in East Germany
- ▶ Connected to worries about job situation in East Germany
- ▶ East Germans more worried about unemployment, crime, and the economy than West Germans

Political Worries



Political Order

- ▶ High level of support for democracy as an *idea*
- ▶ Considerable disaffection with the way democracy works *in practice*
 - ▶ East Germans still fond of socialism as an idea
 - ▶ A considerable minority still in favour of socialism as it existed in the GDR!
 - ▶ Less support for pluralism in the East
 - ▶ Scepticism about quality of democracy in unified Germany
- ▶ Different normative expectations: State should get more involved in economy & society
- ▶ Different ideas about gender roles

Socialism & Economy

	1994		1998		2002	
	West	Ost	West	Ost	West	Ost
„Gruppeninteressen sollten sich dem Gemeinwohl bedingungslos unterordnen“	38	56 (1.5)	38	54 (1.4)	34	52 (1.5)
„Sozialismus ist eine gute Idee, die nur schlecht ausgeführt wurde“	25	61 (2.4)	26	60 (2.3)	23	56 (2.4)
„Wichtige Unternehmen sollten verstaatlicht werden“	16	40 (2.5)	11	36 (3.3)	10	31 (3.1)

Gender Roles

	West	East
„A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work“	69	83
„Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay“	47	29
„Both the husband and wife should contribute to household income“	76	94

Political Order II

- ▶ The big picture (Fuchs)
 - ▶ Both Germanies democratic
 - ▶ West Germans rather in favour of liberal democracy
 - ▶ East Germans rather in favour of democratic socialism

Socialisation or Situation?

- ▶ No marked difference in support for state intervention & socialism between employed and unemployed East Germans
- ▶ Attitudes quite stable in panel studies
- ▶ Present attitudes most probably shaped by life in former GDR
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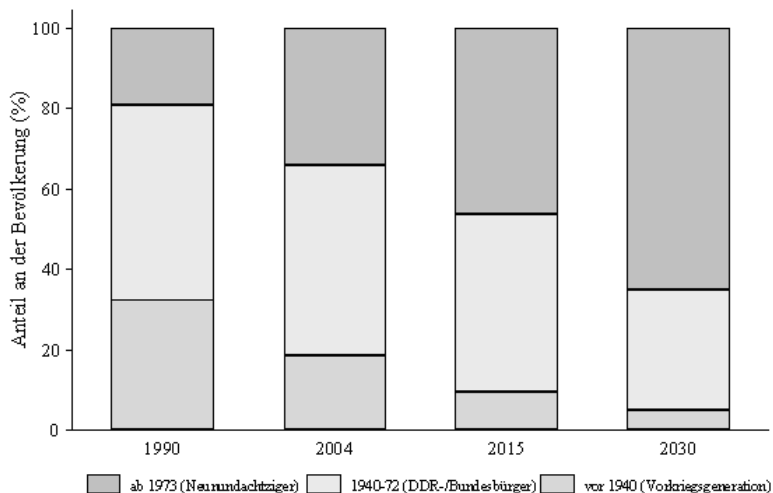
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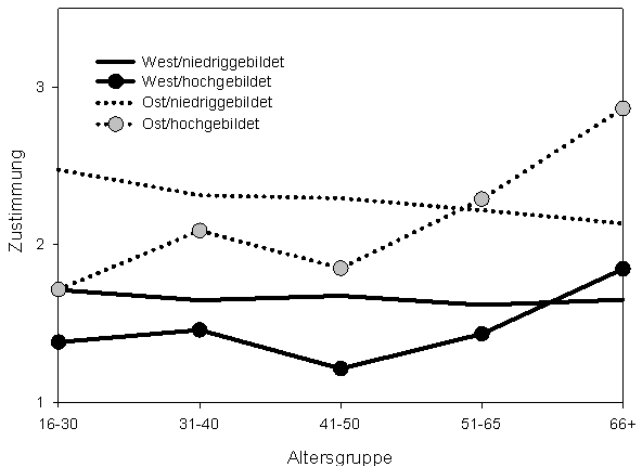
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- ▶ *Some convergence amongst those who are young & have high level of educational attainment*
- ▶ Differences between East and West will probably persist for some time
 - ▶ Not necessarily a bad thing
 - ▶ Political consequences?

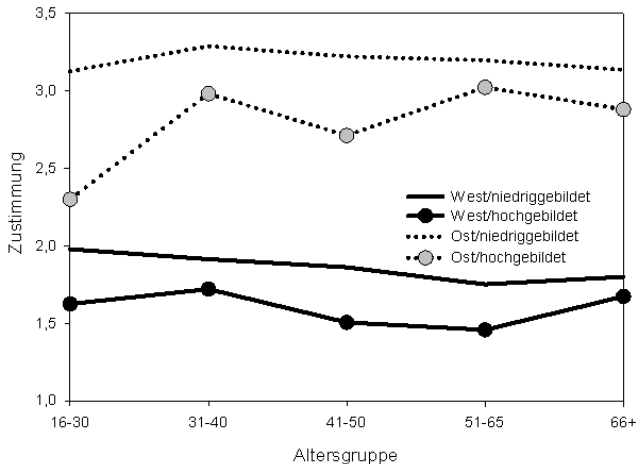
Generational replacement (projection)



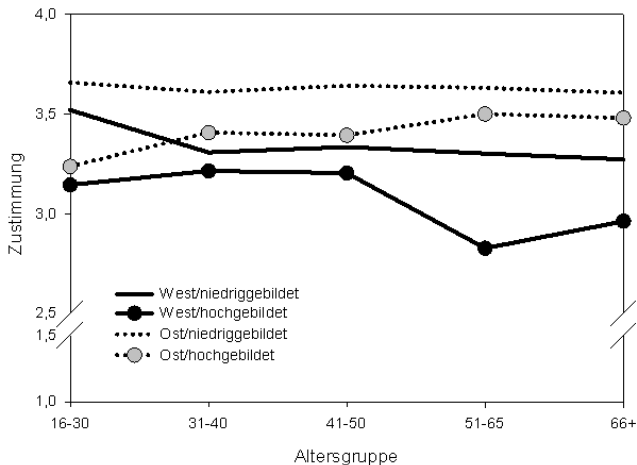
Dictatorship acceptable?



GDR: more good than bad things?



State responsible for full employment?



Class questions

1. How does the 'Wall in People's Head' affect politics in Germany? What are the consequences?
2. Is it such a bad thing after all?
3. Is it likely to disappear in the near (say 8-10 years) future?