

**Contested geographies of German reunification:
neighbourhood action in Leipzig, 1989-1993**

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Abstract

German reunification is too easily regarded as a legal and administrative process, simply involving the application of Federal German experiences to eastern Germany. By concentrating on the processes and experiences of neighbourhood and city development in the city of Leipzig over the period from 1989 to 1993, this study illustrates the diversity of the processes underway and the highly contested nature of the restructuring of the urban environment at this time. Not only was the city being reshaped physically, but the definitions and meanings of the 'political' and of geographical categories (public space, private space, neighbourhood, local, state, nation) were also open to renegotiation, often in highly contested ways.

Documentary sources, interviews, group discussions, observations and questionnaires were used to explore forms of action and resistance developed by local residents. This concentrated on five case-study areas and on the responses to the uneven and unequal interest of formal planning and of capital in Leipzig's degraded urban landscape. In this the utility of post-colonial and post-structuralist strategies of identity and resistance was illustrated and questions were raised about western theoretical understandings of community action, democracy, citizenship, public and private spheres and eastern European 'transitions'.

Geographies of local action arose from, and reshaped the legacy of, both normative geographies of citizenship defined by state and Party in the GDR and experiences of the GDR revolution when, alongside demands for political reform, problems of urban decay and extreme pollution were raised in public forums and marches. This (re)politicised public space and transgressed the boundaries of appropriate forms of and sites for action. GDR planners and activists developed plans for local change around discourses of "careful renewal" and "citizen involvement", stressing the importance of neighbourhoods, local citizens' knowledge and avoidance of political dogma in favour of rational planning.

Tensions emerged after reunification among those involved in planning for the city and the neighbourhoods. While Leipzig attracted intense investment in the built environment, regulations for the transferral of

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property and public spending limits served to block many local changes. Alliances and tensions developed between residents, local politicians and planners from East and West around different understandings of the significance of local action, the status of local knowledge and about suitable forms of planning. Competing forms of scale politics developed around the scales of the citizen, neighbourhood, city, nation. These were associated with particular understandings of the nature of reunification and of the appropriate relation between urban planning and civic action. Essentially these crystallised around two geographical imaginings which viewed reunification either as a developmental process in time, removed from power relations, or as a negotiation across space which allowed spaces for action, for alternative developments, and for alliances across the markers of East and West.

Reunification was, and continues to be, shaped by uneven power relations between East and West, between residents and capital interests, between past experiences and western norms. However, the thesis illustrates that viewing the categories of East and West as internally homogeneous is misleading and denies the multiple ways in which actions are contested, and meanings constructed.

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To my parents
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To Fill a Gap -
Insert the Thing that caused it -
Block it up
With Other - and 'twill yawn the more -
You cannot solder an Abyss
With Air.

Emily Dickinson

Chapter 1

Introduction

1 Civic politics, city change and reunification

Leipzig, spring 1991

I arrived in Leipzig for the first time in April 1991, when German reunification was just six months old. And yet already the problems of restructuring which reunification had brought were such that in Leipzig and other cities people had once again taken to the streets on Monday evenings, following the same course as the demonstrations which rocked the GDR to its foundations in the autumn of 1989. The 1991 protests were about previously unprecedented levels of unemployment, the politics of economic, social and political restructuring, and the lack of understanding shown by the government in Bonn for the problems of the East. The demonstrations, like so much else in the period when I was working in Leipzig, were about the paradox of too much change and too little happening.

At the same time a series of articles appeared in local newspapers reporting on several neighbourhood action groups and a city-wide organisation which wanted to influence the development of the city. By mid 1993 when the fieldwork for this research finished there were 28 neighbourhood groups registered in the city and many others which shared similar agendas. I was intrigued to understand how these examples of protest and activism on national issues and the problems of local development related to the GDR revolution, or to the experiences of GDR political culture and what effects they might have in the future on Leipzig's development within German reunification.

The third aspect of significance for Leipzig was the condition of the environment, both built and natural. The city had been subjected to very high levels of air-borne pollution and the surrounding region was heavily scarred by open-cast mining and carbo-chemical production. The

task of building renovation was immense. Leipzig faced what was 'probably the largest renewal area in Europe' (Hocquél, 1992) and the tasks were 'unique both on a national and on a European scale,' involving 169,000 of the city's 257,000 flats. 104,000 were suffering from severe damage and 14,000 were uninhabitable (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e). There were some signs of change in early 1991 but it was largely concentrated in city centre locations.

These three aspects raise issues which form the substantive content of the thesis, namely the relations between urban change, civic action, the condition of the built environment and the nature of the transformation of the city after reunification. In trying to address these issues, during this visit to the city, several things became obvious. The first was that my western learning about life in the GDR was thoroughly inadequate to deal with what I saw in Leipzig and was more indicative of the partial visions on which the Cold War had been based. The second was that my learning about geographical and other social concepts, processes and developments was fundamentally challenged by what was going on here. The speed and complexity of change was so great that it seemed incomprehensible. And yet most of the processes of deindustrialisation, unemployment, social spending cuts, tertiarisation of the economy, and debates about urban restructuring were rather familiar. None of these processes or the ways in which the city was being changed and the lives of the people living there were being altered seemed to match up to national celebrations of reunified statehood, or to the demands which had been articulated in the mass demonstrations of the autumn of 1989.

Ossi-Wessi, February 1995

In February 1995, the national weekly news magazine 'Der Spiegel' carried a full-page advert (figure 1.1), part of an 'initiative for Germany' by the publishers. It shows seven babies, all born since reunification and each is 'stamped' with the colloquial terms for those from East Germany 'Ossi' (Easty) and West Germany 'Wessi' (Westy). The by-line suggests that the four million children born in Germany 'since the fall of the Wall' share many of the same favourite names. 'None', it argued, 'had been given the name Ossi or Wessi'.



**Figure 1.1: Children stamped 'East' and 'West':
an 'initiative for Germany'**

Source: Der Spiegel, February 1995

The advert raises some interesting issues for the study of German reunification. Firstly, that such a campaign was even necessary four and a half years after German reunification clearly shows that the processes have been difficult and, secondly, that the divisions between 'Ossi' and 'Wessi' remain, at least for the adult population. The elision between the GDR event of the 'fall of the Wall' and German reunification shows the integral link between them. Yet, as Leipzig in the spring of 1991 and, hopefully, this thesis will illustrate, the equation of the one with the other and the argument that children are not named either easterners or westerners is not a sufficient reaction to understanding the processes of German reunification and the effect which they have had, particularly in the eastern part of Germany.

Fundamentally, German reunification is not an administrative or legal process. Instead it is about transforming the lives of the residents of the former GDR and simultaneously transforming places which constituted it. These processes are differential across space and time. In order to counteract the number of publications and studies which have addressed this transformation in terms of statecraft, diplomacy, technical assistance and catching up with the West, I propose to examine what these years of transformation involved for people in their local, home areas, for the meaning of local areas, for the ways in which local areas are governed, for the political processes and discourses which have been involved. In doing so the thesis offers new insights into the ways in which these processes existed in the GDR and challenges established ways of thinking about local urban processes in the West, both in common sense assumptions and in theoretical approaches. This thesis should therefore offer understanding of the processes of reunification and transformation of the former GDR through an exploration of the contested nature of local change, specifically through the transformations over the period of 1989 to 1993 in the urban environment of Leipzig, and in particular in five selected neighbourhoods in the city.

Section 1.1 deals briefly with some terminological issues before sections 1.2 and 1.3 outline the place of this research in relation to the nature of transformation processes and section 1.4 explains the aims of the study. Section 2 shows the problem of finding pre-existing theoretical frameworks before section 3 considers the nature of place, politics and the urban in relation to the study. Section 4 then explains the choice of

Leipzig as the focus for the study and section 5 gives the outline of the thesis content.

1.1 Terminology

East Germany

Throughout the work 'East Germany' is used to refer to the geographical area which constituted the former GDR and which joined the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) on 3rd October 1990. The term 'GDR' or 'former GDR' refers to the state which existed from 1949 to 1990. Similarly West Germany refers to the area which was the FRG before reunification. The new state is referred to as 'Germany', or the new FRG. I use these terms rather than the official terms of the 'Old Federal States' (*die alten Bundesländer*, ABL) and the 'Five New States' (*die fünf neuen Länder*, FNL) partly for simplicity and partly because the construction of the West as old-established and the East as 'new' confuses many of the issues of past legacies and new processes which the thesis addresses. Similarly the old/new division blurs the status of Berlin, since it is not included in the 'five'. 'The East' (*der Osten*) is more commonly used than the official designation.

Reunification

Rather than unification, here I generally use the term 'reunification' since the logic of joining the FRG and GDR makes specific reference to them as two parts of a previous entity. The appeal to a previous union makes the process different to other forms of union where parts did not belong together before.¹

Revolution and Transformation

In referring to the events of autumn 1989 in the GDR I have tended to use either the term 'revolution', indicating the sudden and extensive nature of change, or the German term 'Wende', literally 'the turning point'. The choice is partly dictated by the terms used in original texts but the uncertainty of terminology also reflects the ambivalence which many felt about the events of that period. More generally, I prefer to use the term 'transformation(s)' rather than 'transition' in describing the processes underway since 1989. Transition implies the passage of a country, nation or city, for example, from one state of being to another ('transition to democracy') across time and/or space. However, the thesis

explores ways in which the processes of change transform the very entity undergoing change. 'East Germany' does not simply move from one condition to another. Processes act on specific places and on the population to change them. Conversely, 'transformation' goes some way to rejecting the passive subject of 'transition' and focuses on power relations of change, allowing that change might also originate internally or in the interaction of external and internal processes.

1.2 Nature of transformation

This section discusses three key questions of significance in the study of change in East Germany. Firstly, how might understandings of post-socialist areas help to form a basis for the study? Secondly, does the particular position of East Germany in relation to German reunification produce particular conditions? Thirdly, what is the nature, speed and extent of change? Section 1.3 then considers the issue of identity in relation to the post-Cold War position of Germany.

The processes affecting East Germany since 1989 can be viewed as a series of transformations in politics, economy, geographic identity, civil society and other areas. These involve transformations from centrally-controlled communism to a western model of democracy, from a state-socialist command economy to a market-based economy, and from division across two world systems to a reunited German state (Wollmann and Jaedicke, 1993). Some of these economic, political and nationality changes are common to other former eastern block countries, although in a series of different forms. However, such wholesale transformation from centrally-planned state-socialism to western-style capitalism had no precedent before the late 1980s. Changes in eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union have therefore been largely without tried and tested formulae and procedures. Post-socialist areas are still defined most by their past than by understandings of what might evolve.

There was initially an absence of theories of post-socialist transformation, partly because the change itself was largely without precedent. Other studies, notably those on the transition from authoritarian rule, are of less direct relevance as they did not cover countries closed to international capitalism, nor were these countries 'totalitarian' rather than 'authoritarian'.² In some it was not revolution

but 'democratisation from above', a will to join the 'corporatist, postliberal age' which ushered in change (Giner, 1986, 39-41). These studies are also of less relevance here as they were more concerned with the role of major institutions and government organisations in change than in the effect of these changes in urban landscapes (Schmitter, 1986). There have been a series of publications on the nature of transitions or transformations in post-socialist areas since 1989 and where relevant, these have been cited in the thesis. However, while bearing in mind the extent of common experiences among eastern European countries, East German experiences are marked off from others such as Czechoslovakia or Hungary, by the power relations of reunification, of East with West.

Reunification of two or more states is rare. The reunification of Yemen (now *de facto* re-partitioned) and Vietnam involved states separated by superpower divides but their position in the world economy is very different to that of the new Germany. The situation in East Germany and the challenge confronting the new German state (which notably retains the name and constitution of what was West Germany almost unchanged) is to transform one part to match the patterns of the other part and yet to create a united whole. This occurs in the face of political dominance by one partner, which practically and ideologically privileges the *status quo* of the West German model over that of the GDR or any compromise form.

These relations of dominance and power affect the whole restructuring process. Discussing the effects of reunification in academia and extending it to broader processes, an East German researcher writes:

'It is not two equal partners that have been united; instead the former GDR has joined the FRG. As a consequence, the process of unification was not understood as one in which different structures with all their variety were merged to form a new whole. Rather, GDR structures [...] had to be made acceptable to FRG structures.' (Gebhardt, 1993, 222)

This relation of power between East and West was echoed in the ways in which many local people and other commentators described the process of reunification, in particular through the metaphor of colonisation. 'Colonisation' was generally used to express a social, political and economic take-over of East by West:

'Big brother also looks like a colonial master race of Wessis who profess to educate the boorish Ossis but do so in their own

economic interest, bringing in values intrinsically no better than the old.' (Walter Schwarz, Guardian, 27/11/91)

'What's happening here is more like colonialism.' (Ex-border guard, quoted in Guardian, 27/11/91)

Comments about reunification as a form of colonisation or subjugation of the East were commonplace in the media - 'second class citizens' (Leipziger Volkszeitung (LVZ), 10/1/91; LVZ, 30/9/92), 'conquered and occupied' (LVZ, 10/1/91), 'colonised' (LVZ, 7/2/92) and in April 1991 a survey showed that 70% of East Germans felt the West Germans had a false view of them (LVZ, 3/4/91). This language related to the power relations between East and West and to the assumed positions of the two populations, shaped by the relations between GDR and FRG for forty years. The extent to which the analogy of colonisation applies is taken up in chapter 2. I mention three important caveats here. Firstly, any 'take-over' of the GDR by the FRG was not based on force or carried out against the will of the majority of the GDR population.³ Secondly, while the West may be dominant, the East is and was not passive in these processes, whether in toppling the Honecker government, in migrating to the West, or in the processes of reunification. Thirdly, using the term colonisation to discuss East Germany tends to minimise processes to which countries beyond the self-proclaimed European core were subjected. Caution is necessary in transferring terms.

Turning to the third issue of the nature and extent of change, it is clear that while the transformations affecting East Germany have fundamental implications for the ways in which most areas of life are structured, they are not unique or restricted to the former GDR alone. As Polish geographer Mazurkiewicz argues, the chief characteristics of the changes after 1989 in eastern Europe are their ubiquity and their rapidity:

'The second half of 1989 will go down in history as the beginning of probably the largest social revolution of this century. [...] The fundamental attribute of these changes has been their ubiquity. They have concerned literally every sphere of life. The stream of events has been all-embracing, complicated in its course, full of changes, differing tendencies, contradictory phenomena and paradoxical solutions.' (Mazurkiewicz, 1992, 126)

In the eastern part of Germany, change to a market economy has legal, economic, industrial, employment and social welfare aspects. Reunification under West German predominance entails in the East adoption of new legal, social, administrative, educational, and cultural norms. The extent of change involved becoming part of the time-space compression of global capitalism and people have had to become what a local pastor called 'adaptation acrobats' (LVZ, 20/11/90). Under the circumstances of a double 'revolution', in autumn 1989 and in October 1990, many people saw a wholesale adoption of West German practices and discourses as the only way forwards. However, even this approach involved immense practical difficulties:

'although institutional change has been effected in a generally smooth, uncomplicated manner, the unavoidable human consequences have meant that the eastern *Länder* are not yet, or may ever be, simple political extensions of the former FRG.'
(Derbyshire, 1991, 191)

The formal process of reunification involved several stages. New local governments were elected in May 1990. The federal states (*Länder*) were re-established in East Germany on 1st October 1990. Before this German Economic, Monetary and Social Union introduced the deutschmark to East Germany on 1st July 1990. Partly as a move to reduce the continued high rate of East-West migration, but primarily as the precondition for full reunification, the basis for economic union was:

'The social market economy [...] characterised by private property, competition, free pricing and fundamentally free movement of employment, capital, goods and services.' Article 1, §3 of 'Treaty to Create Currency, Economic and Social Union' (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1990, 8).

In essence 'East Germany was to be radically overhauled along West German lines' (Jones, 1994, 74). The key points of reunification were privatisation of state property (both businesses and real estate) mainly by returning property to its former owners or their heirs, removal of subsidies and introduction of market pricing, and opening the economy to market competition (Pilz and Ortwein, 1992). East Germany adopted West German legislative, administrative, economic and social systems with some transitional arrangements (the 'Treuhand' Holding Company to oversee privatisation and arrangements for intermediate employment measures).

When the GDR market was exposed to close examination, it was clearly much worse than any 'cold warriors in the West had imagined' (Krumrey, 1992, 14). Production costs were high, productivity low, plant was obsolete. Environmental protection was almost totally absent and regular supply of goods and services was limited to basics. With the new measures, markets in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were lost because of the introduction of a hard currency economy, and domestic markets were lost to consumer demand for western goods. Overall the effect was enormous:

'within the opening year [of reunification] east German GDP per capita fell by nearly one third, with a loss of over 3 million jobs. During the same year, however, west Germany enjoyed a healthy 4 % rise in economic output and a 1 million increase in employment. Moreover, at the latest reckoning east German per capita GDP has fallen to around 40% of the western level, whilst the unemployment rate has soared to 16.5%, more than twice the west German figure.' (Wild, 1992, 256)

The reclamation of a common national identity was the basis for the re-establishment of a united Germany. Other 'unavoidable' human aspects of the transformation in the experiences and memories of a divided past and in the social, economic and political consequences of the present changes made it as impossible for this Germany to start from a clean slate as it was for any of the previous German states. Reunification must instead engage with the legacies of the former GDR, social, political, economic, ideological, spatial, cultural. Continuities are found in the experiences of people, of social, political and economic relations, of relations to places, of actions in space, of their grounding in time and space, and of the ways in which time and space are constructed. These legacies and the ways they are re-shaped make the term 'transformation' more appropriate than 'transition'. These changes take place within a web of understandings of individual, collective and national identity, which has been shaped by the period 1945-1989, to which the next section turns.

1.3 Narratives of identity

Clearly legal and administrative dimensions do not sufficiently cover the issues of reunification. Nationally the establishment of a new state involves negotiation and construction of identity, but the division of Germany was also based on issues of identity. The existence of the GDR and the FRG from 1949 to 1989 was an integral part of the Cold War scenario. As such both states took their fundamental basis for existence and

identity from their insistence on being 'not the other state'. Borneman (1992) explores this in relation to the narratives of East and West Berlin residents of various generations and, relating them to national policies, illustrates how each state drew upon the complex binary opposition of us/them where the self is defined as being not the other and yet the other is a mirror image of the self. Identity is drawn from the existence of an other. At the global geopolitical level Cold War division was based on post-Stalinism and Atlanticism as particular forms of communism and capitalism which, while systemically mutually exclusive, were paradoxically dependent each on the existence of the other for their legitimacy and form (G. Smith, 1993).

With the removal of Cold War oppositions the assumption was that the two parts of Germany could come together and recover a not-quite-lost common identity. However, one element of the self/ mirror image opposition is that the removal of the mirror image requires a re-evaluation of the self:

'Perhaps one reason why unity is so difficult, from the West German perspective, lay in resentment at the disintegration of their mirror-image, and the collapse of a moral order that always ascribed to them superiority - at least over the *Ossis*. And perhaps, from the East German perspective, the difficulty lay in their ignorance of and inability to decipher and manipulate a sign system whose construction, in part, was predicated on this very ignorance and inability; in other words, on the very inferiority they bring with them into every interaction with West Germans. *Given these initial terms of unity, it appears that durable forms of division have now been built into the East-West distinction.*' (Borneman, 1992, 334, emphasis added)

The colloquial identification of the East Germans as '*Ossis*' (Easterners) and in return West Germans as '*Wessis*' is predominantly a journalistic term but is used in everyday speech. Both can be used in a derogatory fashion but '*Ossi*' has been subverted to an extent as a term of positive self-identification. This division continues post-reunification as identification of self or others as '*Ossi*' or '*Wessi*' is fundamentally in opposition to the perceived qualities of the opposite. In fact, Ignatieff reports that a West German businessman in Leipzig who was having to retrain his staff 'talked about his fellow Germans with the same affectionate condescension British colonial administrators used to adopt when discussing Tanganyikans.' (Ignatieff, 1993, 49) This, Ignatieff argued, was because now the GDR state was gone, the negative mirror

image of the West had become the East Germans themselves. They had moved from being oppressed fellow-Germans, 'victims' of the GDR communist state, to being the 'problem'. The 'Other' had moved from GDR communism to the people who failed to accept the ways in which their lives and the material environment which they inhabited and shaped had to fit into the new/existing order.

Borneman illustrates for East and West Berlin that, in practice, people and institutions appropriated and 'misinterpreted' such narratives. He argues that the state's exclusive influence over a territory has been undermined so that legitimization via an agenda set by 'master narrative(s)' is the way in which the state must try to operate, seeking to 'fix' the values of the state and delimit the 'status quo', creating values against which the state's actions are to be measured. This narrative is not to be confused with official policy which may vary between governments. The narrative continues over time. According to Borneman, it involves 'nationness' (as distinguished from 'nationality' which defines legal citizenship) and relates to belonging to a state with a *raison d'être*. The end of the division of Germany brings a period when a new concept of 'nationness', of identity will be contested:

'The collapse of the GDR and its political annexation by West Germany (with its residents overwhelmingly approving), does not end history but displaces it in a new narrative plot involving a renewed struggle over legitimization of narrative standpoint. Names, categories, and periods are now being recontested with added fervour.' (Borneman, 1992, 312, emphasis added)

1.4 Urban change in Leipzig: a study of German reunification

This study takes up the story where Borneman's account ends. It seeks to explore the ways in which a new narrative plot is worked out, contested and articulated and how the constructions of the oppositions of East and West are renegotiated. Examining these processes grounded in the specific experiences of place ties down the general rhetoric of transformation and explores its working out in all its contradictions and limitations. In dealing with the cases of Leipzig and five of its neighbourhoods the work aims to address ways in which such change is resisted, contested or promoted by varied constellations of interests and

identities. This study has a specific focus on issues of space, place and politics, relations of power, identity and resistance.

If one questions reunification as either the return to a previous ideal state or as a transition in the East to the norms of the West which merely requires the implementation of technocratic, administrative or organisational forms, then the question in Leipzig, and elsewhere, becomes not how best this should proceed but the extent to which such norms are adopted, whether the processes and politics of change become institutionalised, what discourses and material relations are involved, how participants in these transformations are positioned in their relative geographies of power, control, action, influence. In other words, one moves to a position of looking for processes, negotiations and alternatives and to looking to how these are adopted, altered or excluded.

The aim of this study is to explore this social revolution as a contested process, or series of processes in a specific place both experienced by and shaped through the actions of the resident population. It covers the processes of German reunification as experienced in the period 1989 to 1993 in the city and neighbourhoods of Leipzig, East Germany. The thesis is concerned with the clash of worlds, of East and West, of local, national and international. In examining how this is worked out at the local level it challenges western assumptions in theory and practice. The theoretical perspectives which seem to offer some scope for understanding processes underway come from post-colonial studies of hybridity, identity and resistance, from post-structuralist views on discourse and, within geography specifically, literature on spatiality and the contesting of space (discussed in section 3). However, it is necessary first to explore why there was little suitable pre-existing research specifically on the GDR and its situation.

2 Research in and about the GDR

Establishing a basis for this study of East Germany is problematic because of its position, caught between historical experience in the 'eastern block' and current experiences of transformation in the 'West'. This section shows how the partiality of geographical research in the GDR and the radical transformation of academia in the eastern part of Germany as well as the limitations of western approaches influenced the exploratory

nature of the research project. It deals with the place of geographical research, and particularly political geography in the GDR and the eastern bloc and then turns to the inability in much of the current literature to deal with the position of East Germany.

2.1 Geographical research in the GDR

Academic research in the GDR was based on the standard two-stream model of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union of university departments and the institutes of the Academy of Sciences, whether in geography⁴ or other subjects (Mazurkiewicz, 1992). Research funding was centrally controlled and publication censored. Research topics were constrained by the state's Marxist-Leninist principles. For obvious reasons this was more the case in social sciences and humanities than in science.

Geographical research came under the same constraints and was linked closely to developments in the USSR (Lichtenberger, 1984). As a result certain projects were encouraged while others were discouraged or prohibited so that there appear to be distinct limits to the range of geographical enquiry pursued in the GDR, when viewed from a western stance. In particular, in the field of urban geography, social concerns were subordinate to economic concerns for national economic planning and the development of central place ideas of equal urban planning. Most studies were in the spatial science mould (Martin and James, 1993). The main purposes of geography were defined by the state research commission:

'to participate in: (1) the formation of an effective territorial structure of the reproduction process of society; and (2) the upkeep and improvement of natural resources for both human life and production.' (quoted in Lichtenberger, 1984, 158)

Only in the late 1980s were studies in urban social geography or urban sociology allowed. The consequence is a dearth of theoretical and empirical material on anything but national or regional scales. Research often had an 'applied' character aimed at refining policy or making decisions more acceptable or appropriate. Many research findings were kept secret and were only published after 1989 (see Institut für Geographie und Geoökologie, 1990a). Whatever the benefits or shortcomings of academic research in the GDR, few ideas formulated within these conditions are appropriate for exploring restructuring.

They do though give insights into the GDR, an understanding of which is essential if the transformations are to be interpreted, and the deficiencies of eastern theories do not imply western theoretical approaches are more helpful.

2.2 Western literature on the GDR

Few western studies of the GDR were based on empirical, primary data, since access to the GDR was strictly controlled. Several studies, often by West German academics, were undertaken using published survey data (Lemke, 1991; Schweigler, 1975). More general texts stressed the political system, foreign relations, formal features of societalisation and the economy (Childs, 1988; Krisch, 1985; Dennis, 1988), and many texts examined the 'political culture' of the GDR (Krisch, 1988, 1989; Hanke, 1987; Lemke, 1986). Virtually all indicated the endurance of the GDR, while pointing out its continuing lack of self-identity and the self-undermining effects of many policies. GDR studies may have over-emphasised the system-reinforcing elements and under-examined oppositional forces to the dominant structures of the state: 'since [autumn 1989] one has been painfully aware how one-sidedly research emphasis was placed on the official GDR and how few questions were asked about oppositional forces' (Baumeister, 1990, 214). Given that access to any such forces was restricted and given the retreat to the private sphere from state penetration of the public sphere (Borneman, 1992), the findings were not surprising. Another difficulty for research in the GDR was that much of the data published was unreliable and remains suspect even now (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992).

2.3 'Political geography' of transformation

If many studies were partial in their treatment of the GDR, political geography had and has even less to say about East Germany. Political geography was not a sub-discipline much in evidence in the GDR or elsewhere in the eastern block up to 1989 although there was more in the former Soviet Union than in the GDR (Mazurkiewicz, 1992). Since then it has been limited mostly to studies of electoral geography (Martis *et al.*, 1992) and nationalisms (Kolosov, 1993; G. Smith, 1995). The exception is Poland, where the changes have had a longer time to develop (Regulski and Wawrzynski, 1989, on planning; and a survey in Mazurkiewicz, 1992).

To an extent Russian political geography has also been developing, influenced by western methods and research foci (O'Loughlin, 1990).

Western interest has, however, also been scant. In West Germany, political geography was always more limited to geopolitical and international relations studies (Brill, 1992). Turns to urban political geography have been very little in evidence. However, Anglo-American scholarship has also given only limited consideration to the political geographies of change in eastern Europe. Changes in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union only rate cursory mentions in recent political geography texts (Taylor, 1993). Only two articles on eastern Europe appeared in the periodical Political Geography between 1989 and mid-1993, i.e. the time covered by the research. Again it deals with electoral geography (Hungarian national elections of 1990). Presumably no editorial policy excludes articles on eastern Europe. The absence reflects both limited development of the sub-discipline in eastern Europe, and more significantly the inability of western (political) geography to account for eastern Europe.

Graham Smith (1993) argues that for geography in general the socialist world was for too long 'ignored [...] or treated as tangential, important only in so far as it had a bearing upon capitalism' (77). The 'second world' was never particularly well examined in political geography as 'political geographers have neglected the states of 1945-1989 eastern Europe' (Taylor and Johnston, 1993, 301) and since its demise geography has been 'embarrassingly silent' (G. Smith, 1993, 77). In a debate on the response of western (or rather English-language) political geography to eastern Europe, Michalak and Gibb (1992, 1993) condemn the lack of consideration of these changes and criticise the inability of political geography generally to deal with the Second World (and its demise). In response Taylor and Johnston (1993) cite much activity by political geographers since 1989 (Johnston, 1993; O'Loughlin and Van Der Wusten, 1993; *Professional Geographer*, 1992; G. Smith, 1993; Taylor, 1991). They argue for a consideration of current changes in eastern Europe in a broader analysis of world systems theory. However, much of that published is prognosis and general-level theorising (with the exception of the papers in the volume edited by O'Loughlin and Van Der Wusten, 1993), concentrating on geopolitical shifts, the global scale and the state (*Professional Geographer*, 1992). This has its place but contributes little to

enhanced understanding of city and neighbourhood level experiences and the outcomes of these changes.

These studies suggest some interesting avenues but also reveal deficits in established theories. Taylor (1991) saw the decline of the Second World as indicative of the crisis of anti-systemic movements of feminism, socialism, nationalism and anarchism which he equates in a gross simplification to the social institutions of the capitalist world-economy - household, classes, 'peoples' and states (215) and he advocates the de-reification of the state as a focus for political geography. Yet if there is one element which the changes in eastern Europe show, it is that nationalisms are by no means running out of steam. World systems theory has been criticised as a basis for considering changes in eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union for its failure to recognise fundamental differences in the organisation of the economy and in aspects of political, social and cultural life between the state-socialist countries and those of the rest of the world. The 'Second World' cannot be seen simply as the semi-periphery in a simple capitalist world (G. Smith, 1993). However, the call for the de-reification of the state and for the exploration of other spheres and institutions echoes the finding that there is a 'growing interest of geographers in the rules and regulations that govern political relations, a topic summarised as the "interpretative turn in the social sciences"' (O'Loughlin, 1990, 427; also Painter, 1995). This sentiment is taken up by Dodds (1993) who suggests a fruitful avenue would be to engage with post-colonial and feminist literatures (although he too is particularly concerned with critical geopolitics). These suggestions are developed in chapters 2 and 3.

2.4 Absence of East German experiences post-1989

The twin characteristics of generalisation and absence of East Germany are not only features of political geographical writing. They are continued in much of the literature written about the GDR, or East Germany after 1989 whether in German studies or in studies from other countries. Practical and theoretical reasons may be found for this situation.

2.4.1 Practical reasons

Practically, the time-span for new research and for publishing means that research on post-reunification East Germany simply did not have time to reach the presses before late 1992 (Mazurkiewicz, 1992, finds the same for countries other than Poland). Papers written before 1989 were still being published. A second and more fundamental reason was the upheaval of East German academia. Most social science and many humanities staff were relieved of their posts because of their intellectual and ideological 'contamination' (*Belastung*) and because of reductions in staffing levels as institutes were closed (often, it is said, by West German academic competitors⁵). They were replaced by West German academics bringing western theories but lacking knowledge or experience of East Germany. A gap in the capacity for local research was therefore created precisely at the time at which it was most required.

For people experiencing major transformations and professional uncertainty, the present is often too immediate and too pressing to allow for reflection. Many books on the 'revolution' of the autumn of 1989 have been published (Reich, 1990; Thaysen, 1990; Schneider, 1990; Neues Forum, 1989) but most are chronological accounts or diaries of events rather than analyses.⁶ A collection of essays on urban development in the USA, Germany and Britain includes one on urban changes in Leipzig where the authors, planners in the GDR, write 'the portrayal of sensual experiences and the results of our work is at the present moment the only possible form for us of a rational working out of the changes since the autumn of 1989 in Leipzig' (Doehler *et al.*, 1992). However, I would suggest that the cursory treatment of the experience of the GDR in much of the literature (English or German language) has a more fundamental basis in the position of the GDR and the inadequacy of structural reasoning.

2.4.2 The 'betweenness' of East Germany and the inadequacy of structural reasoning

Essentially the GDR has largely disappeared from literature dealing with eastern Europe while accounts of Germany, the EU or more general texts often fail to address the specific situation in East Germany. This results from what I would call the 'in-between' location of East Germany. The ex-

GDR has become detached from its background in eastern Europe and is now part of the 'First World'.

If research on eastern Europe lacks conceptual bases: 'we do not possess appropriate alternative theories or models to understand half the world's transition from state socialism to an as yet uncharted post-socialist order' (G. Smith, 1993, 77), then the fate of East Germany is equally unmapped. Yet the former GDR is patently different in its experience after 1989 from the other countries of eastern Europe. A ready-made system is extended to absorb or transform it. East Germany, though, has the legacies of the GDR period which makes it problematic to apply the long-term accumulations of western academic studies and often makes it the case which does not fit. It is established as theoretically problematic.

In order to explore events and processes it is necessary to study past legacies and the context of the transition from one system to another and yet it is precisely this kind of transition with which the structural explanations of theoretical constructs (the very term implies stability) are least able to deal. There are of course theories dealing with change. In Western literature there is a plethora of ideas dealing with change (shifts to post-Fordist production, shifts to a postmodern culture, changes in geopolitical certainties, urban renewal, voter dealignment, and so on). However, they generally deal with change within certain parameters (for example, the maintenance of capitalist relations of production) and are established to show differences between two positions - before and after - rather than actual transformatory processes. The aim of the study is to add to the understanding of an 'in-between' situation, particularly through the study of urban change and the politics of these processes.

3 'Politics of place and place of politics'⁷

Rather than approaching changes in East Germany with any fixed understandings of urban change, the aim here is to understand processes underway, their origins and the ways these are worked out in the 'new narrative plot'. In this I take up arguments by several geographers (Keith and Pile, 1993; Rose, 1994) that the 'politics of place' and the 'place of politics' provide a fruitful way of exploring how political, social, economic and cultural processes intersect in grounded experiences of

places and struggles for control, meaning and significance of place and identity.

As used here the 'politics of place' refers firstly to the governance of place. In the shift from GDR to FRG local government is transformed in its logic and *raison d'être*. There are also broader discussions of the politics or power relations of the ways in which the city as place or a series of places is transformed - in priorities for urban development, in deciding the relative importance of local or regional concerns, capital or local residents, of new identities of place or local identities. The second aspect, the 'place of politics', is intrinsically related and deals with how issues are established as important or legitimate within or outside political discourses and processes. Key markers are the repositioning of public and private, of state and citizen, of local and city.

3.1 The urban as place(s)

Although the research is grounded in the experiences of specific urban places it does not presuppose the 'urban' has qualities distinguishing it theoretically from rural areas. Leipzig's political/ administrative boundary coincides reasonably closely to the metropolitan area. The definition of Leipzig is therefore purely administrative. The urban is a forum for examining the interaction of processes. For example, the East German revolution was essentially an urban process and involved Leipzig in particular as one of its key sites. Does this have any significance for the city's politics? Capital restructuring post-reunification is uneven and is strongly focused in urban areas. At the same time processes are uneven across the city in relation to place and to individuals and groups involved, structured by intersecting relations of gender, class, ethnicity, sexuality, age, and other factors. Places are reciprocally constructed by and construct these processes. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 outline issues of urban restructuring while section 3.4 addresses more specifically issues arising in relation to politics and place in the study.

3.2 Mixed spaces and contested places

Conceptions of the urban vary over time and space and are fundamentally influenced by the political economy of which they are part. GDR and other eastern European cities were part of differing

normative conceptions and different political, economic, social and cultural forces. In these places there are legacies of central European experience both prior to and during the state-socialist period (1945-1989). Now they face transformations in wider regional, national and international political economic space(s) and of urban space itself. These 'mixed spaces' were affected by non-capitalist development and are now subject to capitalist restructuring. In this transformation, the urban space of Leipzig is not only a site for the contested places of politics, of political issues and of local and national identities but, in the ways it is shaped through a contested process, it is part of the very process of what constitutes reunification.

From this it should be clear that for this study urban space and spatial patterning are not ends in themselves nor is urban space reducible to a post-modern mosaic (N. Smith, 1992). Urban physical form is an expression of and a constraint on development (Harvey, 1989).⁸ It shows contradictions between the trend toward flexible international capital and the necessity of fixing capital in space in the immobile⁹ forms of the (urban) environment (Harvey, 1985). However, the significance of the urban is not only in terms of capital. Cities are also places with significance and meaning in cultural, political and social terms, which both shape and are shaped by institutions and individuals contesting values, meanings, actions and policies affecting people and places.

Far from being a self-contained locality, any city is, to a greater or lesser extent, part of world, continental, national or regional political and economic systems. The special situation for East German cities is the sudden confrontation of places with radically different and uneven processes. In this encounter, however, places also have something which makes them specific places rather than abstract space (although not 'unique' in the idiographic sense). Legacies from past forms in the built environment, identities, organisational habits and narrative forms or forms of practice react with new processes, in turn transforming each other. Fundamentally a city is a place of individual and collective histories and geographies inscribed in physical, social, political and economic processes and forms. It is this continuity which makes East German transformation complex and contested.

Leipzig and its neighbourhoods are constructed in the study as contested places but this involves not only internal resistance versus external pressures. Dominance, interests, and identities intersect in multiple ways along and across relations of production and reproduction, social relations (of gender, class and ethnicity), historical legacies, significations of place and identity, and political and administrative structures and expectations. The city is, however, also constituted by a series of places, or neighbourhoods which are equally subject to transformation. Established patterns of attention and neglect, of the significance of the neighbourhood for the population, of the political significance of the local area - all of these too are open to new forces which impact unequally on them and the people who live there.

3.3 The urban in the GDR

In order to identify continuities and changes it is necessary to explore the position of the urban in the GDR (see chapter 5). Here it is sufficient to note that GDR urban policy focused on issues of production and reproduction and, at least in the 1950s and 1960s a central concern was with the equal distribution of regional urban (production) centres across the territory of the GDR (after Christaller) (Ostwald, 1990). Later the concern with spatial equality of development, especially between the industrial south and rural north, was reversed to favour intensified use of existing production resources. This produced an industrial policy with serious consequences for environmental damage and increased regional disparities (Johnston, 1989; Ostwald, 1990). The policy of intensification and industrialisation was also applied to housing construction and implemented to solve the housing shortage by 1990 and to create cities structured according to socialist principles. The absence of a market value for land and property created different patterns of urban land-use and residential segregation (related to the strata of GDR society) from those of a western city. Policies and practices which favoured industrial housing development and selected inner cities contributed to widespread urban decay, a particular legacy of the GDR for current urban politics. For Leipzig this apparently contributed to the autumn demonstrations in 1989.

Changes to the political, economic and administrative frameworks in East Germany alter the 'location' of Leipzig and the nature of urban space. East

Germany is now open to increasingly international forces of capital and to competition between the places of the united German republic. Within cities, the re-introduction of market values for land and property has profound effects on the political, economic, social and cultural relationships which structure places.

3.4 Dimensions of politics and place

As section 1 showed, it is impossible to view the transformations of East Germany without the wider view of global geopolitical shifts. However, the change to a West German-based system of local government has also had major effects on the ways in which localities are governed. There have been substantial renegotiations of the nature of the political, of dominant and subversive discourses of appropriate city development, of new alignments of public and private, of local and regional, of the proper positions of citizen, official politics and the 'civil' sphere. All affect in some way the future of, and balances of power in, the city. The negotiations are influenced by past experiences of the GDR, and of the 'in-between' time between the revolution of 1989 and reunification in October 1990. These can be addressed in terms of 'politics of place' and the 'place of politics'.

3.4.1 Government of place(s)

In the GDR local government was essentially an element of the central state system organised on principles of 'democratic centralism' (Scharf, 1984) and involved in executing the resource allocation of central planning authorities and subject to decisions at regional (*Bezirk*) level (Zimmermann, 1985). It was local administration with little autonomy in its affairs. Many local resource and service provisions depended on the plans of local branches of companies and combines. Local government was strictly referred to as 'local peoples' representation' (*örtliche Volksvertretung*) and had more of a representative than a policy-making function. The system was highly centralised and access by the population to decision-making was highly limited. Since key decisions were made in Berlin by state central organisations (*die Zentrale*) or by key party (SED¹⁰) functionaries (the party was similarly centralised in its decision structure), for most people there was a spatial dimension to the remoteness of the decision-makers. Added to this, elections did not offer

choices between policies since the dominance of the SED was enshrined in the constitution. However, people were supposed to be involved in the state in many other ways through large-scale organised participatory structures.

Government, state and economic system were intrinsically intertwined, as government controlled directly plans and resources for each sector of the GDR economy.¹¹ Despite attempts to legitimate the state through increased material benefits for the population and the penetration of most aspects of life by the organisation of the state in the shape of official organisation and, fundamentally, by use of the secret service (*Stasi*), during the 1980s the state increasingly failed to fulfil its own conditions for improvements in output and economic performance (roughly equated to the Habermasian rationality crises of western states) and for the legitimisation of the system by provision of services and consumer goods for the population. Claims about the economy were undermined by analysis by Soviet experts of the emergent crisis (Dennis, 1993). Surveys of young people revealed a 'crisis of mentalities' as acceptance of socialist ideas fell from the mid-1980s onwards (*ibid.*). The ideological legitimisation of the state system was put under increasing strain and, when the challenge to the state system came, the state and government form were so closely bound up with the very existence of the state itself that the removal of the GDR system swept away the very state with it: 'unless the GDR preserved its socialist character - as defined by the SED - it would lose its *raison d'être* as a separate state' (Dennis, 1993, 5).

Under the conditions of massive upheaval, local government was one of the first areas of (often unofficial) reform in the former GDR. Major changes took place before unification. There was a desire to make local government representative of the population and more independent of the centre. A transitional period existed in many cities when the local council resigned leaving towns effectively ungoverned. Often local Round Tables (*Runde Tische*) took over, including one in Leipzig. Interestingly, local councils are the only territorial units which remained unchanged in their geographical boundaries. GDR regions were abolished, new *Länder* established and national borders erased, at least from the map if not in practice, but local government provided a constant territorial unit, at least until reorganisation in 1993.

East German local government is now subject to the contexts of international capital and national capital regulation. It is no longer subject to clear lines of economic development and yearly plan targets from the centre. Local government is now part of an open system with porous boundaries where one place competes with other places to increase and maintain its attractiveness for capital while supplying the needs of its population which gives it its legal legitimation (Harvey, 1985). The period of transformation is therefore a period for the renegotiation of the priorities and strategies for the city with an expanded but fledgling civil society and altered state structures and a transformed political economy. The formal structuring of local political developments is fundamental to the transformations of Leipzig but it does not sufficiently address questions of how developments are articulated and affect particular places. Nor does it explore the importance of the local population(s) in an active role in defining debates and policies. These issues in Leipzig and other parts of East Germany relate to the renegotiation of the nature of the political and of the place of the population, both literally and figuratively, in these processes.

3.4.2 Restructuring the political

This section indicates some aspects of the restructuring of the place of politics: public/private, political/civil, citizen/politics. In the relation between public and private realms and the delimitation of them, the aim of the state in the GDR was to develop 'socialist personalities' and to promote the 'collective'. However, Woods (1993) presents a typology of four different forms of *Gemeinschaft* (community) which existed beyond the Marxist-Leninist form (which are not mutually exclusive): one formed from the slower pace of life, social stability and the development of meaningful and varied personal relationships, one was based on the solidarity of small groups within society, one on the solidarity and identity which emerges from a desperate situation of shortage, and one emerging as a reaction to the official drive to diminish the political sphere. The GDR was therefore 'not adequately described by its repressive characteristics' (*ibid.*, 62). However, the state sought involvement in virtually all aspects of life. These could be presented either as 'participation' or as 'control' mechanisms. In practice there were both characteristics. Participation existed at the workplace (in party and in workers' groups and the trades union), in tenants' groups

(*Hausgemeinschaften*), and at neighbourhood levels (Chamberlayne, 1990), in mass organisations and in lay courts. A hierarchy of participation remained which privileged participation in the SED over other forms (Scharf, 1984).

Another dimension of the public/ private was the effective control of public space by the state/ party. Demonstrations were only sanctioned when under the controlling auspices of the state. Public space became an effectively de-politicised realm. When this boundary was transgressed the state acted with repression (e.g. 1953 Berlin uprising, 1989 Rosa Luxemburg demonstrations).

All of this meant that the state did not consider there to be a 'civil' society between home and state. In fact even home life was infiltrated (or just as effectively was felt to be infiltrated) by the secret service. Only the churches enjoyed a privileged position of public meetings outside direct state control. However, as became clear in 1989, the emergence of groupings in a 'civil society' which were not those which the state intended was one of the factors which led finally to the demise of the GDR. The 're-emergence' of civil society was the expression of a non-state realm not restricted to the private sphere of the family but existing between state and home, in a public-private sphere (Rau, 1991). It is part of the renegotiation of the position of the state, individuals and groups. However, the very term 'civil society' is contested and contains certain assumptions, explored in chapter 2.

A third important aspect is the normative position of the citizen. The East German revolution involved citizens in a series of acts where they transgressed the state/Party view of the boundaries of citizen action, whether it meant crossing state borders, moving onto the streets, engaging in uncensored public political debate, or demanding a part in the political process.¹² In the case of Leipzig, these transgressions were strongly rooted in the nature of Leipzig as a place. Assertions in demonstrations that the city mattered as a place for those living there challenged the dominant spatial logic of the GDR. The demonstrations 'relocated' political issues and the effect was to increase the significance of local areas, local neighbourhoods, while creating the conditions under which they would be restructured.¹³

The study does not aim to look only at city-level reordering of political, economic and social structures. The processes and discourses of urban change and political action in Leipzig are a case study of German reunification. I assume that such changes are neither wholly western nor wholly eastern, that they operate at a variety of scales and involve processes of action and reaction, of negotiations, resistances, false mirrorings and contestations of the processes and meanings around urban space and the identities and actions of those who are part of these changes. This involves new and contested definitions and articulations of the public and the private, the state, economy and civil society with particular reference to the emergence of non-governmental groups at city and neighbourhood levels in Leipzig since 1989.

4 Leipzig: past and current transformations

The original choice of Leipzig essentially emerged from a visit in 1991, when the issues mentioned in section 1 became apparent. However, the choice of Leipzig as a site in which to study the processes of transformation which reunification entails is valid on several other counts. Firstly, as the second city of the GDR with a population of around half a million, the city offers a large enough focus to provide a range of experiences within one city. Secondly, the work in Leipzig aims not to duplicate the large number of studies on the restructuring which Berlin as a whole has faced since 1989. Berlin is a more often studied site of the processes of reunification. There the unification of the country is directly mirrored in the reunification of the city. However, processes in Berlin are compounded by its status as a world city and the vast difficulties of metropolitanisation of the whole region (Helms, 1992). The choice of Leipzig aims to illustrate how processes of reunification developed beyond Berlin, in spaces which did not have the advantage (or disadvantage) of being adjacent to the western parts of the country and where there was no ready-made senate to 'take over' the running of the territory. It avoids complications from Berlin's status as capital city.

Leipzig, though, is not simply a location. Rather it is a place constituted by its own development up to 1989, its place in the revolution of 1989, as well as the processes which form the basis of this study. Leipzig, like the rest of East Germany, is not a blank territory on which the processes of reunification act without always-already-existing geographies of place

and people. Leipzig is constituted by past transformations as well as the transformations of national identity, economics and politics. In terms of its significance for national identity, Leipzig's greatest impact had perhaps been as a cultural centre in past centuries. A centre of learning, culture and literature, it was home to many key figures of German arts, music and culture over the centuries.

Leipzig's economic significance within the GDR was large, but its great importance lay in the past. Leipzig had a long history as an independent city and centre of trade, education and culture, developing into a major industrial centre only in the late nineteenth century. The city received its charter in 1165 when the Leipzig trade fair (the *Messe*) was established. The population first passed 100,000 only in 1870 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991b). That it then rose to over 500,000 in 1905 reflects the vast industrial expansion of the *Gründerzeit* period, the period after the establishment of the German Reich and before the First World War (1870 to 1914). It also reflects the incorporation of surrounding areas into the city jurisdiction.¹⁴ Leipzig's industrial growth was based on the exploitation of extensive lignite resources in the region to fuel the manufacture of plant, machine tools, heavy engineering, textiles, food processing, and printing. The city maintained a diverse economic base and its position was always enhanced by its spring and autumn trade fairs which took their modern form in 1895. This expansionary period was accompanied and facilitated by a period of civic and infrastructural development, which encompassed many features which are still part of urban local government responsibility, and by inter-regional transport improvements, in particular the railway at the beginning of the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, the city fabric and city structure is still largely characterised by developments of that period.

Despite the First World War, Leipzig's population continued to grow to the high-point in 1933 when the city had 713,470 inhabitants (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991b). After that the city population declined, despite territorial expansion. By 1988 the city had 545,307 residents. The pattern for Leipzig as an old-industrial centre could be found in many centres across Germany and beyond. However, its industrial profile was largely maintained until 1989 when 39.7% of the city's workforce were still employed in industry. The city, as a trade and transport centre, employed

many in these and related sectors, while education and administration also employed a larger proportion than in many other GDR towns.

Before the 1989 Monday demonstrations, Leipzig's main contribution to political issues had been as a centre of the German workers' movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Later in the GDR it was simply a regional administrative centre. The autumn of 1989 changed that. The first Monday evening demonstration in Leipzig on 25th September 1989 brought six or eight thousand demonstrators to the Karl-Marx-Platz after the Peace Prayers in the city centre *Nikolaikirche* (St. Nicholas' church). In the following week there were over 10,000. Over the following week demonstrations in various cities of the GDR ended in violent clashes. On the 9th October, despite serious threats by the security forces to resort to violence, the demonstration of 100,000 people marching around the city centre ring road passed peacefully, largely due to efforts by the various reform groups and the churches (Neues Forum, 1989). The first major demonstration in the GDR earned Leipzig the title 'City of Heroes' (*Heldenstadt*) from GDR author Stefan Heym.¹⁵

The autumn revolution is a major factor in the local experiences of the relationships between the population and the state. October 9th remains an annual local day of commemoration services and of the celebration of the emergence of 'civil society'. Ideals of the power of the masses and experience of the force of protest and direct action affect political development in Leipzig and are factors crucial to understanding the nature of local political relations (Goma, 1990).

The importance of studying Leipzig is not solely because of its position in the GDR revolution. Instead it is because of the contested nature of urban change both prior to, during and after reunification. Even in 1991 while the Monday demonstrations were underway, some city officials were talking of Leipzig as the boom town of the East as restructuring for capital began in earnest. The social, economic and political issues of such divergences are significant. At the same time, however, the population of Leipzig were and are not passive recipients of change. The themes of contested urban change and local activism make Leipzig an ideal site in which to study the processes of reunification in respect of the power relations of control over space, over place and change which it involves. Looking at the different scales of such change and including the actions

of the individuals and groups affected gives the opportunity to explore how far reunification involves processes of adopting and adapting to western norms and whether there are spaces of resistance, mixed spaces, whether these are possible and desirable.

5 Thesis structure

This chapter has given an introduction to the issues of reunification and transformation in East Germany. It also covers some of the problems of academic writing on these processes and their silences and has introduced the city of Leipzig which is to form the core of the observations for this study. The rest of the thesis is structured as follows:

- Chapter two explores western theoretical perspectives in relation to this study. These include studies of civic action in West Germany, theories of public/private and civil spheres, and post-colonialist studies and their use in cultural, social and political geography.
- Chapter three sets out specifically the choice of the areas in the city of Leipzig which were studied intensively and the methods used. Issues of translation and research ethics are also addressed and the chapter examines analytical issues of discourse which are utilised throughout.
- Chapter four uses documentary materials to examine the nature of local government and the citizen-state relationship in the GDR. It explores how this relationship was expressed in the geographies of public and private, citizen and state. It goes on to show how these were altered in the demonstrations of autumn 1989 and in changes up to and after reunification in October 1990 and how they became established in sometimes conflicting discourses of democratisation, participation and reunification.
- Chapter five examines the power relations of the built environment in the GDR, the manifestation of these relations in the geographies of decay and decline in Leipzig. It shows how this was challenged in the period between autumn 1989 and summer 1990 in discourses of careful urban renewal. These intersect with the discourses of chapter four and are articulated in neighbourhood and city actions.

- Chapters six to nine explore related dimensions of the new geographies of Leipzig in the process of reunification and restructuring. Chapter six analyses the development of neighbourhood politics in the city, concentrating on the field work in five neighbourhoods in Leipzig from 1991 to 1993. This chapter shows the actions and significance of citizen political action in Leipzig and gives some comparison between Leipzig and other towns and cities in the former GDR.
- Chapters seven and eight explore the forms of contested transformations at city and neighbourhood levels respectively. They examine the discourses, material changes and politics of the new geographies of change.
- Chapter nine adopts an alternative perspective on the relationships between citizen activism and the city's new political geographies by analysing the relationships between the five areas studied and locally-elected city councillors, based on interviews with twelve councillors.
- Chapter ten draws conclusions about the geographies of reunification and addresses the theoretical issues of conceptual frameworks in this light.

1 For an exploration of the German debate on the issue, see F.M. Smith, 1994.

2 The terms are of course not undisputed in their application to the GDR either (Mallinckrodt, 1983/84).

3 There was no referendum. Opinion polls from the time indicate a greater approval for reunification from East Germans than from West Germans.

4 After the university reform of 1969 which closed some geography departments (Leipzig, Jena and Rostock) research was dominated by the Academy of Sciences (Martin and James, 1993). The geography departments of the GDR remained in Berlin, Greifswald, Halle, Dresden, and the Teacher Training College in Potsdam while the Institute of Geography and Geoecology of the Academy of Sciences was based in Leipzig.

5 Birgit Gebhardt (1993) gives a clear account of the process of *Abwicklung* (winding up) of East German research capabilities and the evaluation of GDR research by FRG norms.

6 One exception is Thaysen (1990), a West German political scientist who conducted participant observation of the central Round Table in Berlin.

7 This heading is taken from Keith and Pile (1993) but is used here in a somewhat different way to their meanings.

8 This does not imply that only urban forms have these properties. Rural forms are also contested but the focus here is on the urban as concentrated examples of the general processes.

9 In German the term for real estate is '*Immobilien*', literally 'that which is immobile'.

10 The Sozialistische Einheitspartei (SED) was East Germany's communist party whose 'leading role' was enshrined in the GDR constitution until January 1990.

11 There were of course linkages to the other Comecon countries and increasingly during the 1980s via debt repayment to western countries. There were always trade links to the FRG.

12 See chapter 4.

13 See chapter 5.

14 It is not clear exactly how much of Leipzig's population growth is attributable to the expanding area of the city, but those areas which were incorporated were largely semi-rural and were incorporated in order to provide housing and industrial land for the expanding city population.

15 The title of Heldenstadt is one which was previously reserved for cities such as Leningrad which had resisted the fascist armies of the Second World War.

Chapter 2

New maps for new trenches?

"The trenches we have conceptual maps for have been bulldozed, and the new ones require new maps." Paul Bagguley (1992)

"Yet how well did we, whose business it was to do so, pick out these critical processes at the time of their happening, or link them with the changes derived from them? And why did we miss them, if not because we were unaccustomed to thinking in terms of processes?" Carl Sauer, quoted in Derek Gregory (1994)

1 Introduction

As chapter 1 has shown, the most important limitation to using ready-established theories in this research is that change in East Germany was very rapid and far-reaching, resulting in what was fundamentally a new situation. When I began to think about the research in early 1990 it was not even clear that the GDR and the FRG would reunite, at least not so quickly as they did. Bagguley's somewhat militaristic metaphor is relevant: the question remains how to understand these processes and find 'new maps'. The thesis is therefore not aimed at hypothesis testing. It explores processes, interrogates meanings and asks about their consequences for Leipzig, reunification and theoretical understanding of rapid change.

This chapter departs from the standard 'literature review' in that it attempts to follow the reflexive process by which different theoretical approaches were considered as the project developed, assessing their usefulness and suitability. It discusses the problems of theorising change in relation to urban change and reunification (section 1.1) and to set out the difficulties of applying western theories to these processes (section 1.2). I then want to suggest in section 2, despite these limitations, that an understanding of the processes of urban politics and the sites of contestation which have emerged in some western countries in recent years is of relevance. Particularly in the case of West Germany, this can present a comparative element against which the similarities and

differences of eastern German changes can be understood. However, a key issue of the GDR revolution was clearly a series of challenges to the very definition of the 'political', of the position of the citizen(s) and of the geographies of political action. This was articulated in the contested territory of urban space and in new definitions of what the urban should be (see chapters four and five). Section 3 therefore discusses concepts of 'public', 'private' and 'civil' spheres from a range of viewpoints, exploring both western and state-socialist approaches and discussing their relevance and limitations.¹ Finally, section 4 asks how one might incorporate the notion of power relations and the agency of east Germans into this study and suggests that work by post-colonial and post-structural writers might help to conceptualise the processes through which both local change and the nature of reunification are being negotiated and contested in particular places and times.

1.1 Theorising change and process

For people and places in East Germany, revolution and reunification has involved radical disruption in most aspects of life. These changes are uneven as social and spatial practices are differentially devalued, revalued, destroyed or created. There is tension as physical places remain and people maintain personal and collective histories. This provides conditions for the politics of change, negotiated and experienced in place and in the geographies of individual and collective actions. Changes may be general but they, like the revolution of 1989, are rooted in specific places and social relations.

By focussing on an East German city and its neighbourhoods I attempted to study reunification from the side which has changed most radically. From East and West reunification involves differing power relations. Given the strong normative force of western practices in both East and West the outcomes of change may seem clear but the assumption that western experience can be transferred to East Germany or other eastern European countries, something disputed in relation to transferring practices between West and South (Corbridge, 1993), is fundamentally challenged by the nature of German reunification. As the collision of East and West challenges assumptions about applying both western theories and practices, it is important to explore the processes and not to abandon them as atypical or unknowable. As the Carl Sauer quotation above points

out one needs to think in terms of processes rather than structural accounts of existing practices, or the dualisms of before-and-after scenarios. This study was designed to cover changes over the four years from 1989 to 1993 (an arbitrary end to fieldwork determined by funding).

Visiting Leipzig in spring 1991 many processes seemed familiar to my western eyes, if rather more extreme,² but they intersected with unfamiliar processes of transition from GDR to FRG. The rapidity and scale of change, even changes apparently familiar from western experiences, were hard for an outsider to grasp. Those living through these changes were also having difficulties in coping with the speed of change. An early analysis of reunification (Maaz, 1990) provided a 'psychogram' of individual and collective psychologies of living with the GDR regime and the moves to reunification, but it offered little understanding of what the changes were and how they came about through political, economic, cultural and social processes. It presented an essentially disabling view of those in the East who could only react to processes.

The research was therefore designed to examine the interaction of processes through place, space and community, the restructuring of city and neighbourhoods, the negotiation of political and identity issues, and the protests and processes articulated in the specificities of locales where people live their lives as individuals and as social beings. I explore the ways in which such processes are uneven in material, political and metaphorical spaces, through studying urban and political change in Leipzig and five of its neighbourhoods.

By viewing reunification as a negotiated process (although the power to negotiate may vary tremendously), I attempt to question assumptions about the techno-administrative nature of reunification evident in many practices and in 'standard' geographical works on the new Germany (Jones, 1994), and the dominant assumptions that West German practices need to be applied to the East and that problems lie solely in the time-lag until such practices are properly installed. That reunification is still problematic after several years illustrates that this approach fails to understand key issues of power, control, continuity, disjuncture and identity which arise as those involved are active in a variety of ways to shape the processes.

1.2 Applying western research to the East

Part of the nature of transformation after reunification has been the incorporation (albeit unevenly) of the former GDR into the spaces of capital processes. There is therefore some merit in examining this context. Just as in the 1970s the post-war settlement in the West was collapsing (Harvey, 1985; Painter, 1991), the GDR's post-war settlement also failed. The reasons included lost legitimacy, conflicts within the ruling blocs and foreign pressures from the Soviet Union and the opening of the Iron Curtain in Hungary (von Beyme, 1990, 172). There was dissatisfaction with the GDR 'settlement', the contradictions between material and rhetorical conditions (Grésillon, 1991), between rhetoric and socialisation (Lemke, 1991), and between East and West. This finally undermined state legitimisation. Yet while there may be similarities in the crises of East and West, blindly applying western ideas to the East does not capture the economic, political, social and cultural processes underway. As Gregory (1994) points out of his own and others' work, the dangers of 'travelling theory' are substantial. This is true when applying research on urban change in various western countries to the situation in East Germany.

It is important also to note the extent to which processes vary even within the 'West'. Theoretical pronouncements about the nature of social and economic change are too readily generalised. Deutsche (1991), Gregory (1994) and Morris (1992) among others argue that Harvey (1989), for example, presents a totalising account of post-modernity, ignoring and removing other sources of difference and change. In particular, theories of 'epoch change' (such as Fordist/post-Fordist or regulation theories³ or those of modernism/post-modernism⁴) are more partial than they are willing to admit. Regulation theorists, for example, largely neglected the 'second world', although Boyer (1990) did suggest a study of eastern European economies (such as of car production in Poland and Czechoslovakia) and some studies have been undertaken in this vein since (A. Smith, 1995).

The direction of such change is similarly unclear. In the West changes might be 'a transitional phase which may lead to some new stabilisation [or] might drag on from crisis to crisis' (Painter, 1991, 38). Processes in eastern Europe are even less clear. They are different to those which take

place within a capitalist system. East Germany cannot be described as moving simply from a Fordist to a post-Fordist system, although some of the moves may be similar since the East German system was highly modernist (Doehler *et al.*, 1992). Despite such caveats, it is likely that many established western practices will affect the East, albeit in different ways, but since neither Fordist nor post-Fordist modes of production are exclusive across space and time, viewing them as epochs into which East Germany must fit is not entirely helpful. Instead it is useful for this study to understand the varied and often contradictory processes underway and the ways restructuring by capital intersects, reinforces or contradicts other developments which may have no relation to the processes of western capitalism.

The forces of such changes are uneven, and the establishment of market relations in East Germany was often still incomplete during the research period. The places of East Germany are subject to similar forces of valorisation, abandonment, appropriation by sectors of capital as elsewhere,⁵ but urban environments, social conditions and experiences of the city are very different and as chapter one showed, the power relations between East and West structure change in particular ways. The study therefore addresses how processes are articulated in place and whether western processes come to dominate or other forms are adopted.

2 Contested urban change: changing urban political geographies

While many approaches to the politics of urban restructuring have located such change within the supposedly global processes of flexibilisation, deregulation and the increasing mobilisation of capital which in turn selectively devalue and revalue space and particular places, there is little consensus on the response of the local level to such changes. Even the position of city governments is contradictory (Mayer, 1990). Some argue local politics are displaced by entrepreneurial approaches (Esser and Hirsch, 1989; Häußermann and Siebel, 1990). Others argue that the local level becomes more important as a site for attracting capital in post-Fordism. Attempting to capture the benefits of restructuring local governments develop alliances for regional boosterism, public-private partnerships (Harvey, 1985, 1989) or growth coalitions (Mayer, 1991). These regularly involve creating 'symbolic

capital' and altering city structures and infrastructures (Harvey, 1989, 50-53) as the city becomes a site of spectacle and theatre, as even local 'culture' and alternative or oppositional local cultures can be used in image creation (Mayer, 1990) and the 'foreign policy' of cities becomes a major focus of local politics (Perchinig and Steiner, 1990, 23).

The argument continues that local government then confronts both the need to engage in local economic development and to deal with a growing marginalised percentage of the population excluded from the core labour force, just as it experiences a reduction in its capacity for action as capital is more mobile (Krätke and Schmoll, 1991). West German academics argued this was particular marked in the FRG. Effectively Krätke (1991) argues German local politics are depoliticised since the centre takes strategic decisions and others are removed to a non-political realm in the quasi-markets and privatised forms as increasingly local governments adopt quasi-markets, deregulation and restructuring. At the same time, in order to 'cope', local governments have adopted strategies of informalisation as they opt for a 'new subsidiarity' of neighbourhood development companies, incorporating voluntary groups or decentralising services to non-state organisations (Mayer, 1991). Some argue that this is simply the 'self regulation of marginality' (Esser and Hirsch, 1987, quoted in Krätke and Schmoll, 1991, 546). However, others have argued that such spaces actually offer scope for political action by the population. The following sections explore responses to such change.

2.1 Local level action in western countries

Whether viewed as reactions to global/local restructuring or as developments not determined by economic forces, what seems evident is that the last decades in the West have seen a rise in the involvement of local, community or non-state sectors in urban politics in the advanced industrial countries and in Third World countries (Buck, 1991; Corbridge, 1993; Hill, 1994; Jacobs, 1992; Midgley, 1986; G. Smith *et al.*, 1992). In the USA Boyte (1980) argues a shift in social and economic processes led to more local non-established politics at the same time as there was a shift to the Right in official politics. In the UK similar processes seem to be at work. Arguably the fragmentation of interests disrupted traditional political alignments, leading instead to specialisation in different interests and new social movements (Harvey, 1989, 302).

While there is extensive evidence of various shifts to local action whether by local government or individuals and groups of residents, there are contrasting reactions to such developments. Some approve of the 'liberatory' aspects of local actions and participatory opportunities, thriving on diversity and difference. Others argue this detracts attention from the 'real' base of political struggle in class and work-based strategies. One critic, David Harvey, argues that by confining them to place (not space), struggles are effectively neutralised by the power of capital over space (Harvey, 1989, 235-239) and he sees three reactions to the shifts: silence and nihilism; depthless images and a denial of complexity; or an intermediate approach, 'the progressive angle of postmodernism', not aiming at grand narrative but accepting the possibility of limited action. At best the last offers images of possible other worlds or possible change now. At worst it degenerates into parochialism (Harvey, 1989, 350-351). Progressive change is possible as are dangers of fragmentation and reification (Harvey 1990, 57). Several argue that the turn to the local simply legitimises neo-conservative arguments of private, entrepreneurial actions (Harvey, 1990, 50-53; Krätke and Schmoll, 1991, 549).

Others are more positive. Ley (1989) evokes a progressive 'postmodernism of resistance' through the arts rather than a 'conservative postmodernism of reaction' (52-53). However, he also notes the fundamental 'ambivalence of postmodern culture and its sponsors, the cultural new class' (58) where the 'consequences of neighbourhood preservation in the inner city have displayed an unintended elitism' (57). Nowhere in Perchinig and Steiner's (1990) account, for example, is there room for marginalised groups without the material and social resources for new lifestyles. This certainly does not coincide with Ley's 'postmodernism of resistance' and tends to support the thesis of 'self-administration of marginality'.

The problematic of the 'local' therefore remains as does the question of how such ideas about the local apply to Leipzig. In relation to methodological considerations, chapter three discusses this point further. However, here it is necessary to outline research on urban action in several western countries and then to discuss the particular nature of such action in West Germany (section 2.2). Two points are important in

dealing with the wide range of developments encompassed by a localisation of political action and the shifts to non-traditional citizen-state relations. Firstly, a shift to the local is not inherently positive or negative. Such politics may challenge existing structures, provide a way to adjust without challenging structures, or provide a way to control the state bureaucracy (New Right ideas) (Cochrane, 1986). Secondly, surveys of literature on particularly the US, UK and West Germany show analytical differences between 'citizen participation', i.e. procedures for involvement implemented by (local) government, and 'citizen action' based on direct political mobilisation (Susskind and Elliot, 1984, 180), even if the division in practice is not always clear cut.

2.1.1 Participation in planning and government

Participation strategies by national or local government were introduced in many western countries against the background of a rising tide of citizen action and protest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Debates and struggles over planning texts in the United States indicate origins in the twin liberal discourses of individual pursuit of profit and the common good (Kenny, 1992). Meincke (1983) identifies similar liberal traditions in (West) German legislation and practice. In Britain too participation was offered on grounds of increased democracy and efficiency:

'the principle of public participation can improve the quality of decisions by public authorities and give personal satisfaction to those affected by the decisions' (Department of the Environment, 1969, 1)

Similar findings are relevant to experience in West Germany where in the early 1970s regional planning and urban renewal legislation was developed, promoting involvement in planning processes (Mayer, 1987; Buck, 1991). This was advocated by the Social Democratic Party under the slogan 'Mehr Demokratie wagen!' (Dare more democracy!). The major justification was more efficient decision-making and shortened planning processes because of reduced protest. Subsequently several reports and studies indicate the large majority of local councils (responsible for local planning) do provide for citizen input (Bundesministerium, 1982). However, much is formalistic and has no more impact in reducing planning difficulties than on increased popular involvement (Thomaßen, 1988). Even advocates of participation on the grounds of supposed increases in civic involvement often argue on the basis of improved

planning and reduced conflict or friction levels. Türke (1981) advocates participation because it will reduce feelings of powerlessness in favour of 'understanding, readiness to compromise and to get involved' (5). Perhaps not surprisingly Meincke's (1983) evaluation of the effects of the West German planning process is that mechanisms have had little impact and citizens remain the 'outsiders of politics' (220). An added constraint to participation is that there are restrictions on who has a right to be involved in planning, i.e. only those directly affected rather than those who may object on principle (Roth, 1991a).

A more successful arrangement in Kreuzberg district in (West) Berlin did not simply seek to legitimate local government. Instead, in responding to local stimuli and incorporating these in imaginative strategies, they actively helped to form a 'neighbourhood lobby' (Bundesministerium, 1980, 7), though here too a tendency towards bureaucratisation was observed (63). In nearly all cases, the level of citizen participation is reduced to being re-active rather than pro-active.

2.1.2 Decentralisation

The second dimension of citizen participation initiated from above is decentralised representation, decision-making or administration to districts within the city. In Germany there is no national legislation equivalent to that for Parish or Community Councils in Britain. Individual *Länder* are responsible for local government. Some states or cities have developed sub-urban representations. Schäfer (1982) gives a comprehensive survey of the variations in responsibilities and rights of these bodies in West German cities, identifying five basic functions: articulation of local interests, control of city-wide institutions, relieving city institutions by carrying out decentralised service and administration duties, recruitment of political personnel and an integration function. The latter provides identification of the citizen with the local area, a channel for articulating protest, and increased acceptance of the legitimacy of local government (119). The first three basic functions have, according to Schäfer, been successful (although essentially evaluated from the standpoint of local government). Integration functions are differently assessed. The expectation that local level organisations could channel or absorb local spontaneous actions or initiatives proved wrong partly, as Susskind and Elliot (1984) pointed out,

because many groups are not particularly keen to become co-opted by the system, as they fear losing their independence or radical edge.

2.1.3 Grass roots challenges

In contrast to top-down actions which generally seek to legitimate established agendas, grass roots actions can be seen as either challenging such agendas or adopting alternative modes and actions outside official practices. I follow Clarke and Mayer (1986) and use 'grass roots' rather than community organisations since in German the term 'community' does not exist in the sense of 'community action' and is certainly less of a focus of attention (see section 2.2).⁶ In Britain and the USA a whole series of 'neighbourhood' or 'community' organisations exist. They range widely in their focus and mode of action. 'Grass-roots' here includes non-political organising or voluntary service provision and self-help strategies (Jacobs, 1992), campaigns aimed at gaining access to decision-making or at changing the established order either for specific groups, places or issues. Locally-focused actions range from local demands and exclusionary politics of turf (Cox and Mair, 1989) to campaigns aimed at wresting autonomy and control of facilities, particularly local social facilities or housing, from official organisations (Heskin, 1991). It includes clearly established organisations and loose alliances or wider movements which may work outside official channels, challenge the established order or aim for incorporation (or be incorporated inadvertently) (Wolch, 1989). Further variations are apparent in studies of internal resources, political positions of groups and localities, levels of contacts and political efficacy (Crenson, 1983). Giving a survey of all such developments including new social movements (environmental, human rights, civil rights or feminist movements) is beyond the scope of this review. Noting their range and variety must suffice. It is more pertinent to understand the particular form of (West) German developments.

2.2 West German experiences of citizen action

Several studies show that as well as similarities with other western countries, West German experiences of localised politics also differ from Anglo-American forms which inform much English-language work. The importance of West German experiences for the study is that the political system of West Germany is now extended to the East. The extent to which

forms of action develop in the East during reunification which do not match West German patterns may hint at something which is a function of the reunification processes and similar outcomes to differing processes also challenge understandings of how these processes are articulated.

Much work on grassroots action comes from academics of the West German regulationist 'school'. They concentrate on the regulation of accumulation as a whole 'through specific modes of mass integration' (Jessop, 1990b, 158) which aim to establish system integration and social cohesion. System integration requires a minimal congruence between different structures and forms a historic bloc, after Gramsci, which is a 'historically constituted and socially reproduced structural correspondence between the economic base and the political-ideological superstructures of a social formation' (Jessop, 1990b, 179). Also following Gramsci, social cohesion is an unstable equilibrium of compromise among social forces which can lead to a hegemonic bloc. Relations between the hegemonic and historic bloc are mediated in and through the state and non-state subjects.

Some key West German writers are Stephan Krätke, Margit Mayer and Roland Roth. They produce a history of grass-roots action and its relations to the state (Mayer 1987; Clarke and Mayer 1986; Roth, 1991a). The development model of the 1960s and 1970s in West Germany and the involvement of the 'social partners' (parties, trade unions, employers organisations, local government etc.) in this consensus effectively allowed only certain dimensions into the political sphere - a 'corporatist regulation cartel' based on a model of welfare and growth (Mayer, 1987, 350). This official model of affluence, economic stability and security was pursued through statist intrusion in restructuring taking paternalistic forms. However, the model could not sustain cohesion and created new divisions which 'created not only a need for more state intervention and social regulation, [but] also created its own opposition' (*ibid.*, 343). Changed urban policies also affected the problem-solving capacity of local government (a crisis in Habermasian terms). The 'internal periphery' mobilised to create 'new social movements'. Opposition therefore became particularly associated with anti-statist forms advocating 'participation, solidarity and conservation of cultural and natural resources' (349-350). The development is interpreted as a shift from object position to subject (active) position for citizens and groups

(Rucht, 1982, 13). The development of varied and often radical social movements was in turn reinforced by the repressive reactions of the state (Mayer, 1987, 349; Esser and Hirsch, 1989). Actions included violent suppression, dissolution of local institutions, centralisation of responsibilities and financial siege (Krätke and Schmoll, 1991, 549). The diversity of the movements also makes any moves to mass protest and alliances more difficult (Mayer, 1987, 352-353; also Roth, 1990).

Clarke and Mayer (1986) argue that 'community' and 'neighbourhood' are less dominant in West Germany as 'potent symbols of mobilisation' than in the US (401). Whereas the US approach may be described as pragmatic (Rucht, 1982), non-ideological, resource-gathering, focused in particular localities and based on community and self-interest, West German approaches are characterised by system challenge, critical economic and political thought and a largely sectoral-based approach (Clarke and Mayer, 1986, 402-406). This relates to the long US tradition of voluntary organisation with a pluralist approach which worked alongside political parties. In West Germany greater centralisation meant political parties and other 'social partners' exercised exclusive rights to political action. Local government was relatively weak in its position and presented less access to power or to challenging established practices (*ibid.*). Instead of operating outside the political parties, West German protest groups and initiatives typically operate through the parties, by lobbying them rather than the state directly (*ibid.*, 412). A further difference, it is argued, is that despite urban problems, West German action does not occur at the same low economic level as in many US neighbourhoods and is not as ghettoised as US forms (Mayer, 1987, 351).

More recently, West German campaigns have increasingly shifted to needs orientation, not because of utopian demands but because of worsening social and economic conditions (Mayer, 1987, 352). Movements and particular groups were then faced with the choice of involvement with the state or continued protest outside the state. Ironically, although many campaigns aimed to be allowed to organise and take responsibility for youth clubs, kindergartens or housing and the like outside the state sectors, progress in this respect largely depended on seeking state/ local government funding. One approach has been for campaign groups to form alliances to demand funding collectively. Such developments include self-help groups incorporated as part of local welfare policy, and

local involvement in alternative and community politics. Mayer (1987, 359) suggests this represents a 'decentralised corporatism', and possibly a new politics and new definitions of the welfare state. To be accepted by the state, organisations are therefore constrained within forms acceptable to funders. Their self-image often conflicts with such criteria.

There is an ambivalence to such developments (Roth, 1991b), with support for professionalisation and involvement, but fear of losing the radical edge. Local (neighbourhood) groups are recognised by the state as useful for long term unemployed and marginal groups (Mayer, 1991, 49). Unease comes as the moves to service provision and local involvement by such groups and initiatives coincides with a shift in the state to decentralisation, forms of 'participation' and voluntary provision of services in what are called 'intermediary organisations'. These include public-private coalitions, local self-help groups, decentralised administration, planning organisation or socially-oriented renewal organisation (Mayer, 1987, 354). She argues:

'The question of the possible restructuring of the welfare state through corporatist forms of self-help, voluntarism and co-production may have less to do with expanding democracy than with streamlining conservative strategies of privatisation.'
(Mayer, 1987, 360)

This mirrors concern that this simply amounts to a 'self-regulation of marginality' among already marginalised groups (Wupper *et al.*, 1986). And yet citizen initiatives are also an attack on the voluntarism and subsidiarity of the conservative right in Germany as they may adopt a similar logic but demand very different outcomes (Mayer, 1987, 353). Mayer's (1991) later approach is to argue that it is no longer possible to continue in the old modes of the Left and that intermediary organisations must be appreciated not as 'useful idiots' incorporated by the (local) state into taking from it the burdens of coping with marginalised groups or economic decline (46-49). Instead both top-down and grass-roots changes from the 'homogenising tendencies of Fordism' to the 'current situation of heterogenisation and particularisation' require differentiated appreciation of the benefits and draw-backs of these different developments.

Perhaps surprisingly, there has been a notable relative neglect of a spatial or urban dimension in studies of grass roots organisations in West

Germany and of the forms which urban and particularly neighbourhood groups take. This perhaps reflects the limited use which has been made of international academic debates (Roth, 1990). However, many movements and groups do have an urban focus. Green politics for example began with and has largely retained a local focus (Roth, 1991a) and there is a need to examine the spatial elements of these movements (*ibid.*). In a regulationist account, Painter argues place and space are of considerable importance generally:

'The spatially uneven working out of [change] is not [...] accidental, but reflects the fact that the reproduction and transformation of social relations and institutions inevitably occurs concretely in particular places. Urban change is thus constituted geographically, and an adequate theory of the processes which make it up must recognise that fact [and] must account for social struggle, not as an added extra, but as a set of processes central to the transition [*sic*] from one regime to another.' (Painter, 1991, 224)

A subsidiary reason for the lack of urban focus may be the use of other labels for groups. The common term for initiatives in German is '*Bürgerinitiative*', directly translated as citizen initiative. The alternative to unofficial organisation in this form is to form an officially registered association (*Verein*) which is recognised by law. Organisations which expect government funding or wish to attract job-creation funding generally must conform to this type. One specific form of association is a hybrid type between registered association and neighbourhood initiative, the *Bürgerverein* or 'citizen association'. (This includes some of those studied in Leipzig.) Although not all groups which conform to this typology employ this term, some still preferring the title Citizen Initiative for various reasons, these associations are singled out by their focus on being a forum for action and issue formulation (agenda-setting) in specifically bounded neighbourhoods.

The next section turns to questions of how one might conceive of local action in relation to such normative constructs as 'politics', 'public action', the 'private' or 'citizenship' in a situation where these definitions are themselves subject to contest and renegotiation.

3 Challenging the political

The revolution in East Germany in autumn 1989 challenged the very limits, boundaries and forms of the political. For individuals, collectives and institutions it meant a re-evaluation of the fundamental political relations in society. This included the delimitation of the public and private spheres, the nature of 'civil society', the relationships between work, leisure, participation, neighbourhood, city and state. The whole range of ways in which political relations were experienced in space and time were disrupted and open, at least for a limited period, for renegotiation. The public demonstrations disputed the control of the state and party over public space and claimed at least certain sites as arenas for a 'nascent civil society' (Tismaneanu, 1989), a public sphere beyond the state but with obviously political intentions.

The 'civil sphere' is seen as a key feature in the 'Transitions from Authoritarian Rule' literature (O'Donnell, 1986). It is also posited by Keane (1988) as essential in the transition from real existing socialism: 'an independent civil society is indispensable for democracy' (51). Definitions of 'civil society' vary from ones which stress the establishment of a sphere of competitive individualism to those which view it more generally as a form of 'society', the public sphere beyond the state (Johnston, 1989).

In East Germany, the period of new challenges and a possible 'third way' of a post-communist GDR was ended by the reunification of the two German states. There seemed at least to be approval for the West German forms of parliamentary democracy though electoral support,⁷ but importing West German standards does not mean they are interpreted in similar ways in the East, particularly at the local and everyday level where few West Germans are involved and where past experiences of the local and the political are often very different. This is further complicated by the fact that many key concepts of politics are open to continual challenge and renegotiation even within the West:

'the meaning of the keywords that signify the things that really matter - such as culture, community, justice, equality, or democracy - are never fixed in closed dictionary definitions, but constantly subject to antagonistic efforts of articulation as different subjects seek to hegemonise discourses which support their versions of each signified over alternative versions

proposed by their adversaries and opponents.' (Mercer, 1992, 426)

When faced with the developments in eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union, and in this particular case with eastern Germany, assumptions about keywords, about the acceptable forms and range of actions are subject to normative and empirical challenges both from within and without. To argue that one will examine the development of local political processes in Leipzig may seem straight-forward enough, but the very definition of the political realm is part of the process of change.

3.1 Boundaries and definitions

Looking at issues of the boundaries of and relations between public and private, state and civil society, public and domestic, politics and non-politics, the great difficulty is that they are value-laden concepts with a variety of definitions. Writers 'talk past each other' because of their various definitions. These include 'the association of the private with the domestic and the public with the 'worldly' or non-domestic which is based in classical social contract theory and the contrasting liberal formulation in which the private sector is the formal economy or the "market" and the public sector is the state and its activities' (Moore Milroy and Wismer, 1994, 77). In the first the domestic is split from the public, in the second it is altogether absent. This problem of definition relates to key issues of citizenship and to discussions of the public, private and political, and of civil society.

Citizenship reveals itself to be a very 'slippery' concept. Beyond legal definitions of state membership the term covers the membership, rights and duties in reciprocity between citizen and state, and participation of the individual in their particular society (Hall and Held, 1989, 175). However, none of these are clear-cut and all are subject to appropriation and re-interpretation. Citizenship is neither an innately progressive nor regressive idea, neither a concept of the Left or of the Right. Different constructions of citizenship are always challenged and renegotiated. American regulation theorists stress that the 'democratic state is a site of conflict between the logic of capital and the logic of citizenship' (in

Jessop, 1990a, 198) while Bagguley argues the dichotomy of the Gramscian state/civil society divide is 'dissolving' :

'the very form of the state, the form of civil society and the forms of relationship between them involve radically new political technologies.' (Bagguley, 1992, 3)

Yet there is a need to examine more closely the definitions of these spheres in order to discuss the place of the citizen. The Gramscian version of civil society defines it as the 'one sphere in capitalist society where the bourgeoisie did not enjoy a monopoly of cultural, moral, and ideological leadership' (Dennis, 1993, 1). Accordingly counter-hegemony must be established in civil society (and not in either of the other two realms of economic and political society). The application of Gramsci's ideas directly to real existing socialism by those who wished to create an independent public sphere in the GDR provoked SED and state resistance (*ibid.*, 8). Gramscian ideas were often taken up in eastern Europe as a challenge to real existing socialism but up to the mid 1980s in the GDR the SED domination over political and economic spheres was largely intact and there was no 'network' of civil action. What elements of a civil society there were were largely isolated (8). There are further difficulties with Gramsci's ideas for the revolution in the GDR. According to Gramsci a long struggle would be expected between the new political and civil organisations and the existing order. Instead, there was a rapid collapse when:

'in a period of social avalanche and political landslide it became imperative to extend the boundaries of political society as well as of civil society. A concentration on civil society issues would have been an inadequate response to the crumbling of the SED edifice.' (Dennis, 1993, 11)

A related but distinctive version of 'civil society' arose from the reaction to Arendt's work on totalitarianism. This argued civil society was a non-state, non-family sphere which in totalitarian societies was infiltrated by the secret service and incorporated into the state. In other words it was made formally political (Fraser, 1992). 'Dissidents', although to a lesser extent in the GDR, organised by aiming to create a non-state civil society around other groupings, often within the institutional shelter of the churches, the only officially non-state public realm in the GDR or by opting for alternative lifestyles. This might help to understand how the public and private were defined for the GDR. However, most theories were

developed in relation to western capitalist societies. Liberal theories of contract defined the public sphere as the arena in which the legitimacy of the state was established by public discussion. The public sphere ironically was 'private economy' without interference from state. These approaches all seek to define the public and private, political and non-political as normative or empirical structures rather than asking how they might be constructed or contested in processes of, often revolutionary, change.

Another approach, Habermas' theory of the 'public sphere', defines the 'public sphere' (*die Öffentlichkeit*) as one built on communication. This appears to come closer to an idea which might be of help. His 1962 work 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere' (Habermas, 1992b) dealt with the 'rise and decline of a historically specific and limited form of the public sphere, which Habermas calls the "liberal model of the bourgeois public sphere." The aim is to identify the conditions that made possible this type of public sphere and to chart their devolution' (Fraser, 1992, 111). To explain more clearly, Habermas was looking at the

'sphere *between civil society and the state*, in which critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed.' (in Habermas, 1992b, xi, my emphasis)

Habermas argued the prime distinctions which developed historically were between the sphere of public authority (the state) and the domestic sphere. In the seventeenth century absolutism was challenged and developments brought economic relations more out of the domestic sphere. Habermas uses the distinction between the sphere of public authority of the state and court, and the private (or less confusingly non-state) realm which encompasses both the civil society of commodity exchange and social labour, and the public sphere developing in the world of letters, association and press and as a political realm (Habermas, 1992b, 56). Habermas later uses this concept of the:

"political public sphere" [...] as the quintessential concept denoting all those conditions of communication under which there can come into being a discursive formulation and will on the part of the public composed of the citizens of a state. This is [...] the fundamental concept of a theory of democracy whose intent is normative.' (*ibid.*, 1992a, 446)

Habermas argues that in contrast to his use of the term civil society to refer to a historical period, there is little clarity about the nature of civil society, as it is currently used, but that it does involve a whole series of 'voluntary unions outside the realm of the state and the economy' (1992a, 453). He argues along with others that it was in reaction to the totalitarian regimes of the East that the new civil society emerged as the basis for the social revolutions in the GDR and elsewhere 'as if a large-scale experiment in social science had been set up' (*ibid.*, 455) but he argues that in western societies dominated by the mass media the situation is very different, that there seems to be less scope for civil society to influence changes in opinion as public discussion becomes degraded to publicity and public relations.⁸

3.2 Further critiques of the public/private debate

Criticism of models of the public/private, whether structural or discursive, focus on the ways the public (although perhaps non-state) and private become conflated with the political and the non-political/given/ natural/ domestic. Among liberal theorists the public/ political is an already fixed realm where common assumptions are already shared and in which 'disagreements are confined to the private/domestic' (Benhabib, 1992). The problem is, however, that change in the GDR or elsewhere comes from challenging the given political sphere, by making public and political that which was otherwise suppressed and excluded. Benhabib sees in Habermas' ideas a more useful approach because of the radical openness of the public sphere (at least in its ideal) to reasoned debate and individuals acting, in that sphere at least, as equals. However, later Habermas recognises limitations in response to revisionist historiography and feminist and post-structural analyses. Concerns excluded from the bourgeois public sphere could define it in other ways and the bourgeois public sphere was fundamentally predicated on the tension between increasing public equality for those whom it included (white, men, property-owners) and domestic and political subordination of those it excluded. As Pateman (1988) argues, the original contract was based on both 'freedom' (the social contract) and 'domination' (the sexual contract).

This questioning of assumptions of the limits of the political are found in other feminist critiques of urban political theory. Bondi and Peake (1988)

questioned the assumptions of Castells' theories of urban politics which they argued inadequately conceptualised the relationship between production and reproduction, limiting reproduction to the officially public sphere of state consumption politics. Here too the divisions between public and private/ domestic map the former as male and the latter as female and place the latter two outside the political realm, ignoring the fundamentally gendered nature of political practices. Rose (1993, 34-38) explores how challenging the public/private divide which lies behind assumptions of western political theory and practice also challenges the gendered nature of space. The body politic is in practice masculine although in rhetoric it is universal. Simultaneously this same division is reflected in the masculinity of public spaces, the restriction of women to private and domestic roles and the threat of violence which polices male dominance over the otherwise female domestic sphere. Resistance and subversion of these divisions are part of the female and non-masculinist challenge to the existing order.

However, when dealing with eastern Europe, western notions of private/public, state/domestic become disrupted. For women their equality meant that in the GDR 95% of women worked. The state made 'public' many domestic tasks, such as childcare or work-place canteens (Einhorn, 1992) but in common with other eastern European countries, the burden for domestic tasks still fell firmly on women and the state system was structured to continue these pressures, for example in giving only women one 'cleaning and housework day' per month. Thus while many dissidents of eastern Europe (particularly in USSR, Czech, Hungary etc.), and less so in the GDR, advocated an emerging civil society where the limits of the state would be drawn more tightly to open a non-state sphere, women were differently implicated in the structures (Funk and Mueller, 1993; Kolinsky, 1993; Corrin, 1992). The experiences of eastern Germany and other states in the east challenge us to think clearly about the relationships between state, citizen, society, public and private spheres, and in particular about the ways in which they are constituted. Feminist criticisms of the concepts challenge assumptions in East and West about these boundaries.

How might this relate to a study of local political changes? Moore Milroy and Wismer (1994) utilise Pateman's challenges to the public/private dichotomy to inform their study of community and work by women in a

Canadian town. They argue that the public/private divide is insufficient and that a third sphere of 'voluntary' or social labour should be added. This ranges from maintenance of kinship ties to administering voluntary organisations. This third sphere overlaps with the public and the private and has been largely ignored because it is considered a female domain. Moore Milroy and Wismer argue the term 'voluntary' is probably misleading because although participation in these activities is voluntary, the functions they perform are necessary. They revalue the voluntary sphere as necessary and valuable in its functions.

A second approach, particularly to community-based action, is that following the Gramscian assertion that civil society is the sphere where the bourgeois does not dominate and hegemonic structures can be challenged, the renegotiation of the boundaries of public/private/community may seem to become some of the sites of new challenges to the existing order (Dennis, 1993). If the existing order is in flux then the question remains about the position of 'unofficial' action.

This whole discussion about the public, private and political relates back to the ambivalence about the local level. The local is the level of everyday life but unarticulated assumptions about the local in many theories have been that it is a reproductive sphere and is associated with consumption rather than production cleavages. The 'local' is what is 'left over' for those excluded from the productive sphere,⁹ part of the conspicuous consumption of the new urbanite, a reactive community based on defence of territory and property values. Yet others (see section 4) see it as the emancipatory basis for participation, a refuge, a base for resistance and organising. The local in itself, scale in itself, is neither emancipatory nor reactionary. It is the manifestation in each case which can have either one or the other consequence, or even differing consequences at the same time for the same people or for different individuals or groups. The question is then what importance the local level may have in the East with its different experiences of places.

What remains is to question how these might relate to the issues of identity and power which are fundamental parts of the reunification processes. Corbridge (1993) notes that in the context of 'Third World' political changes, there is a rise in identity politics and in the presence of NGOs. These groups seek to create new political forms, 'to challenge the

formal political grammars of the state' (200). It might indeed be interesting to use such observations to help look at East Germany.

4 Post-colonial insights: hybridity and third space

As discussed in chapter one, Borneman (1992) argued that a key to West and East German identities was the 'false mirroring' whereby each identified itself as the opposite of the assumed characteristics of the other German state. After reunification the processes would involve struggles to create a new narrative (or narratives) of identity now that the 'other' had been removed. Subsequent events indicate that this requires a long process of renegotiation. In East Germany, reunification has meant introducing western norms of economic, political, social, cultural and other practices. Yet existing spatial and physical forms, social practices embedded in these forms, personal and collective experiences in particular places all affect the ways in which reunification is experienced and contested. Questions of identity, power and control are therefore significant for reshaping urban living.

4.1 Identity and spatial practices

The complexity of questions of identity is shown in the shift from GDR to FRG. While the slogan 'We are the people' (*Wir sind das Volk*) was a politically strategic moment which undermined the GDR state, the successor slogan 'We are one people' (*Wir sind ein Volk*) established a common identity as Germans, articulated despite other differences. After reunification, however, there were clearly other forms of difference and identity which separated East and West. These were also overlain with conflicts around issues of production, consumption, local economic and cultural development, and so on. Identity became linked to a wide range of questions and to the restructuring of places and the use of space.

Identity formation, so Laclau argues, draws on the historical moment in which it is enunciated and on that which it is not, as discussed in Keith and Pile (1993):

'Identity emerges through difference, just as all object formation is always partial because always relational. This negativity is the source of what Laclau draws on extensively in a concept of the constitutive outside. This is the source of [Laclau's] diagnosis that society can never be wholly constituted

as an object of scrutiny, in the case of the social; "the social never manages to fully constitute itself as an objective order" (Laclau, 1990, 18) because of the presence of the constitutive outside.' (27-28)

This means that 'propagation of an identity is a presentation of self, designed in accordance with one's expectations of how others will react and respond' (Gray 1993). We could argue that much of German reunification is based on misconceptions or contested visions of 'reality' both between East and West and at the local level, reflecting Borneman's thesis of false mirroring. Restructuring is as much based on conceptions of the East from outside as on perceptions of their reality by those who live there. Similarly, one could argue that within the city, restructuring is based on contrasting or contested interpretations of the realities of different places. The contest over the meaning of place is therefore a key base for local political action. An example might well be the 'proper' location of political action and the delimitation of a 'civil' sphere as discussed in section 3.

Yet there are also multiple, though not infinite identities which are as much a process as an outcome of particular relations and situations. In representing identity, a necessary but arbitrary closure occurs. Laclau argues that in representing identity as fixed ('an artefact') a 'contestable closure' becomes a 'reified boundary' (Keith and Pile, 1993, 30). This is nevertheless justifiable in terms of the necessity of adopting strategic positions (*ibid.*, 28).

Not all people and places have equal access to influence over identity formation and dominant narratives about self or other people or places. Nor do they have equal control over the frameworks which set boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable practices to which identities relate. To ignore the fundamental power relations in such processes is to make them appear benign or given. Kenny (1993) illustrates how interpretations of local planning legislation may involve conflict between local residents in different groupings (strategic or otherwise), developers, different levels of government and so on. While some claim the right to create dominant narratives and to control their interrelations others challenge such notions. Conflict 'denaturalises' the 'taken-for-granted' relations between landscapes, ideology and social practice which tend to run in everyday life (177). In planning therefore

'defining the public good becomes a matter of power' (191) rather than something which requires only rational administration.

In applying such issues to the questions of spatial processes there are two key points. Firstly, struggles to reconstitute power relations are simultaneously struggles to reorganise the spatial bases of these power relations (Harvey 1989). Changes in East Germany affect normative issues of urban policy and urban practices, ways social practices are 'normalised' in spatial forms, and political understandings of the relationship between people, and between people and places. They represent differential revaluing of physical forms and social practices which find their expression in the city in patterns of land-use and control over places, in land and housing ownership, and so on. In the processes of reunification these dimensions are fundamentally challenged by the adoption of 'The West' as the normative basis for change.

Secondly:

'Politics is necessarily territorial, but these territories are simultaneously real, imaginary and symbolic' (Keith and Pile, 1993, 224).

Gray (1993) adopts a reading of the works of Lefebvre to explore how different place identities have practical impacts in the actions of communities and individuals (in this case in a study of counter-urbanisation in Scotland). He argues Lefebvre points to three types of spatial practice: material spatial practice which deals with physical and material flows for production and reproduction; representations of space which relate to the way space is perceived; and spaces of representation which are about imagined rather than perceived space, in utopian and imaginary landscapes, for example. Drawing on a post-modern approach he argues that while the 'signifier' may be the same to different people, the 'signified' which is within that sign may depend on the viewer as much as the intentions of the person creating a sign, or social construction of ways of seeing (see chapter three on discourse).

For those conditioned within the sign these ways of seeing become reality. Gray shows how images of Scottish rural areas in media and marketing draw on certain assumptions which create these images as

'real' while local residents may well contest such 'realities'. In East Germany then material practices are changed but perceptions of the situation from East and West also affect outcomes of change as do the ideals of 'the West' to be achieved and the 'nightmare' imaginary geography of the East which is common in the West. However, there must also be a note of caution about this typology of spatial practices since in practice it is often not clear if practices are real, imaginary or metaphorical since there are multiple and flexible relations of domination (Keith and Pile, 1993, 1). The great interest of the processes of reunification for such a study is that the very process breaks open established processes in the East and confronts them with western practices. However, it also leads to questions about the West as given since people and places in the East have experienced not just one dominant reality but two fundamentally conflicting realities.

Space is not the sole significant outcome of such change. Rather space, politics, meaning and social practices are interrelated:

'We must be constantly aware of how space can be made to hide consequences from us, how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology.' (Soja, 1989, quoted in Keith and Pile, 1993, 4)

The politics of place therefore involves locations of struggle about meanings and practices in space, such as the 'spatialities of urban regeneration', and about a spatialised politics of identity, such as, 'communities of resistance' (Keith and Pile, 1993, 22). In a more political account, Keith and Pile argue that practices not only affect and are affected by their spatial bases but that they are 'inextricably realised one in the other [... and] society and space are simultaneously realised by thinking, feeling, doing individuals' and are differently experienced by such individuals (6). This they term 'spatiality'. While they argue that there are fundamentally differing experiences of spatiality (or contested spatialities) which make such terms as 'community' problematic, communities or identities may also be based on bonds of the different experiences of spatiality (18). They may be multiple, flexible and shifting, but they can also be strategic concepts which use common experiences of displacement, alienation and the like for political purposes while not obscuring differences which exist within them.

4.2 Post-colonial insights and reunification - relevance and limitations

Key questions for this thesis are therefore how processes of transformation and reunification are implicated in local change. Any theoretical understandings from western theories are open to challenge because of the relations of power between East and West Germany. The GDR situation was particularly complex: two opposing systems divided Germany for almost two generations. To move from this to reunification within a western mode is a substantial shift. While some argue that the GDR was part of a Soviet 'empire', others also regard the current processes where West Germany is dominant as a colonial process. While not arguing that either is necessarily true, the clash of two world systems in the experiences of reunification in East Germany indicate that in this, as in colonial situations, the ideological dominance of 'The West' is clearly apparent. As Keith and Pile (1993) argue, 'The West' 'is a linguistic condensation of the globally powerful' (22).

Some writers adopt the approach that reunification is fundamentally a process of the appropriation of a new space by western capital (Christ and Neubauer, 1991). Indeed I would agree that this is one of the fundamental processes taking place to structure space, place, time and social relations (see chapters five and seven). However, there are questions and limitations in utilising a colonial conceptualisation in the case of East Germany. These come from post-colonial critiques of colonial discourses and from the particular position of East Germany. To restrict investigations of the transformations in East Germany to the economic alone is to fall into the trap of accepting a new, yet very much old-established developmental discourse of modernisation and colonisation. This is the discourse which leads to an evaluation of investment prospects in eastern Europe such as that by Hudson (1993) who argues that while domestic building investment is desperately needed, financial returns are too low to make it interesting when compared to very high rents on commercial and retail property to be had in such cities as Prague, Moscow or Budapest.

Much of the stress of postcolonial writings has been to problematise views of the colonial process from the side of the colonisers. Constructions of the 'Orient' in visual and discursive terms served to

appropriate these spaces for the 'West' and were more concerned with constructions of the self (Pratt, 1992). By creating the 'other' as distant and 'naturally' subject, the 'self' was justified in its dominant position (Gregory, 1994). This thesis explicitly does not set out to explore the way in which the East is constructed in the West. (This would be the subject of a whole other thesis.) Rather *the thesis sets out to explore from the East how the transformations are conceptualised, implemented and articulated in spaces of conflict, of resistance and of acquiescence.* (The irony of trying to do this as a western academic is apparent, see chapter three.) To a large extent, although the conceptual framework comes from experiences other than those of East Germany, it is used in an exploratory rather than a normative way. It seems that many of the insights may be of use in understanding processes there.

Processes of orientalism created the 'other' as empty space upon which the history of the metropolis was to be mapped (Gregory, 1994, 171), yet while the other is constructed as irrational and unknowable it is also a source of knowledge (*ibid.*). However, processes of 'othering' are not co-terminous with nineteenth century European colonialism (*ibid.*, 169). In fact, it seems West Germany tends to view East Germany not as an area which can contribute to learning in the West, as was asserted in the colonial projects which Edward Said addressed (*ibid.*, 329-330). Rather the East is assumed to be always already known. It simply has to follow West German experience and catch up. This is a similar process to that of orientalism where 'beyond Europe was in a sense before Europe' and therefore positioned as 'other' in both time and space (*ibid.*, 347). As such the East is fundamentally seen as uninteresting and apparently has nothing to teach the West, except in supplying Germany's non-violent revolution and restoring nationhood.

Several caveats remain in positioning East Germany as a colonised space. East Germany, as part of pre-1945 Germany, shares the historical legacy of being part of the imperial core and is not politically innocent in colonial processes. Unlike situations described by Corbridge (1993) in several African countries, there was political penetration of most areas of life in the GDR and is still in the FRG, and a substantial welfare state also exists. Therefore I do not equate processes in East Germany today with the violent and uninvited carving up of the 'Orient' by the powers of the

metropole in this and previous centuries. That would be to minimise the experiences of these countries and the still-present power relations.

Nevertheless, theoretical insights do offer a way of viewing East German change. Many argued initially that the East could offer a challenge to the West (see chapter four), while others seemed to view the East as a hopeless case which needed to be completely replaced both physically and politically. I found myself adopting both positions. In my account of Leipzig I found myself swinging between portraying what could be described as 'landscapes of resistance' and 'landscapes of despair' and tending to ignore the extent to which many adopt a position of acquiescence, shelter or flight (Pratt, 1992). The first carried on from the positions of the revolution and the grass roots organisations of that period. Yet there was clearly a drive among the majority of the population for the material and political benefits which reunification could bring. In doubting this as an appropriate goal and seeking alternative ways I fell foul of the temptation to adopt a sentimentalist longing for a mythical geography of utopia. The second approach, 'landscapes of despair', is typically one adopted in western media presentations of the East. While this addresses some of the serious difficulties of social upheaval and loss of employment which reunification has produced in the East, and as such cannot be rejected, it also produces the typical western response of the 'moaning easterners' who are simply a tax burden on the West. This poses the eastern population as passive recipients of change and also tends to shift the root of the problems to the apparent lack of ability of the population in the East to cope with the necessary attitudes of hard work and self-reliance which the western system requires.

Pratt (1992, 10) identified a similar 'grumpy metropolitan discourse' in the 1960s and 1970s which viewed the problems of the Third World as so problematic as to be hopeless. She called this a 'Third World blues'. This approach developed, according to Pratt, in the 1980s to a point where the incomprehensibility and terror of the Third World meant the only response was acquiescence. I hope to avoid a 'Second World blues' which sees the East as a site of unresolvable problems.

In fact, I want to avoid slipping into these approaches since both deny the actions and positions of the people in the East and deny the

complexity and shifting nature of the situation. In producing the 'East' as an undifferentiated subject without regard for the differences and conflicts within the East, I follow 'orientalist' moves which speak for the other positions. To use the East/ West divide as primary and unchanging is to elide differences and similarities within the East and to ignore the political and social processes which operate at a range of scales and locations. Instead one has to think in terms of differences of identities, shifting and multiple which affect transformation and are of political, social and cultural significance.

4.3 Identities, contested spatialities, hybridity and third space

The rejection of the simple dualism of coloniser and colonised stems from many post-colonial theorists who argue along with Lata Mani (1992) that 'to accept something as hegemonic is to accept the dominant discourse on its own terms' (394). In other words dominance does not necessarily imply hegemony. When this stance is adopted it becomes clear that there are many more positions which can be considered. As Homi Bhabha argues:

'it is one of the salutary features of postmodern theory to suggest that it is the disjunctive, fragmented, displaced agency of those who have suffered the sentence of history - subjugation, domination, Diaspora, displacement - that forces one to think outside the certainty of the sententious.' (Bhabha, 1992, 56)

Rose (1994) gives an account of cultural politics in London's Docklands. She argues that in utilising a dual framework of hegemony and counter-hegemony many accounts in cultural and geographical studies make the (albeit unstated) assumption that dominance is co-terminous with hegemony. In addition, in their over-concern not to appropriate counter-hegemonic accounts many ignore them completely. She argues this reduces the positions of either hegemony or counter-hegemony to the very dualism which dominant discourses and practices assert as true.

Post-colonial and feminist accounts argue, however, that this dualism does not offer the only possibilities for truth claims (see also Keith and Pile, 1993, 222-223). From post-colonial studies comes the concept of hybridity. Contact between the coloniser and colonised may well produce forms of 'hybridisation' which result in uprooting, disjuncture and

metamorphosis (*ibid.*, 31). Similar processes of distancing and estrangement are found in a quotation from three East German planners and one West German about the transformation and the contradictory understandings of Leipzig in reunification:

'If for us from the old GDR the decaying city in its everyday appearance and normality was the familiar, it was curiosity, even shock which moved the visitor from the Ruhr in his encounter with Leipzig.

But it was the same city which we saw and in which we could observe the vehement process of market economic appropriation of extensive desolate urban areas in their faded charm of originality. The old city landscape began slowly to cover itself with a new, colourful skin.' (Doehler et al, 1992, 344)

Drawing in particular on Bhabha, Rose (1994) argues that there may be alternative discourses, meanings, logics, identities or practices which are not hegemonic or counter-hegemonic but hybrid forms (49). This comes from the experiences of colonisation and post-colonialism which find hybrid cultural forms which are neither those of the colonising power nor those of the supposed 'other' but which in 'processes of cultural hybridity give rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (Bhabha, 1990, 211, quoted in Rose, 1994, 50). This hybridity of contact between dominant and 'other' produces 'in-between' or 'liminal' forms which exist between the different and yet simultaneously present forms of cultural understanding and cultural practice (Bhabha, 1992, 60). In this gap (which Bhabha formulates as a 'time-lag' but which Keith and Pile (1993, 223) argue has dimensions in both time and space) there is a place for 'a productive hybrid "betweenness", relocation and reinscription' (Bhabha, 1992, 60).

Rose then examines how one might conceptualise resistance if the cultural arena is hybrid rather than hegemonic, where resistance comes from counter-hegemonic moves. She argues that hybridity allows connection between realms and allows for complexity and multiple identities but that it also allows for 'fleeting moments of escape from the logic of othering in dominant discursive structures' (Rose, 1994, 50). It offers moments where meanings and logic can adopt an excessive position outwith and beyond the logic of the dominant dualism of powerful and powerless (see *ibid.*, 58). Hybridity therefore offers a 'strategy of critique which desires transgressive cultural politics,

practices at specific moments of politicised struggle' (50). In this 'the hybrid logic of opposition is not, and never can be, pure' (55). That is, it always includes or is even constituted by aspects of other discourses. It is the move to excessive positions which evades and challenges the dominant structures in their very assumptions of dominance and subordination, which refuse to accept the same logic, which Bhabha then calls a 'third space'. This does not 'simply revise or invert the dualities, but revalues the ideological bases of division and difference' (Bhabha, 1992, 58).

These hybrid spaces and hybrid identities are not infinite. They may however be multiple at any one time (Keith and Pile, 1993, 25). Rather than accepting the criticism of Harvey and others that such a development is a gaze from nowhere, Keith and Pile (1993) argue that what is necessary is a radical contextualisation of such cultural politics. This becomes then positioned as a gaze from somewhere (31).

One example of how such arguments might apply to East Germany relates to a form of apparent acquiescence described in section 4.2. As one form of such hybrid cultural practice, Bhabha argues, this may be 'a symbolic space of cultural survival' which he calls a 'melancholia in revolt' (1992, 65). Adopting a position of 'wearing one's wounds on one's skin as an eyesore to the coloniser' rather than making what seems like attempts at resistance offers a position with an excessive logic which refuses positions of dominance and subordination by creating a different logic. This logic says:

'All these bits and pieces in which my history is fragmented, my culture piecemeal, my identifications fantasmic and displaced; these splittings of wounds of my body are also a form of revolt. [...] They dismantle your authority [...] My revolt is to face the life of literature and history with the scraps and fragments that constitute its double, which is living as surviving, meaning as melancholia.' (Bhabha, 1992, 66)

Kleßmann's characterisation certainly seems to indicate great processes of disruption in East Germany:

'the thorough loss of social cohesion and [...] the psychological humiliation and intimidation in the wake of the meteoric (and desired) process of unification, which appears to many as a take-over and absorption.' (Kleßmann, 1993, 207)

My tendency to ignore acquiescence is therefore understandable as it adopts a different logic to that of the dominant West. Acquiescence in the East could be interpreted as such a 'melancholia in revolt', though the issue is far from certain.

A second example might be the ways in which issues of planning and control implied in the spatial and social organisation of the city are differently understood by those whose experiences are within the planned system of the GDR or within the liberal assumptions of West German planning.¹⁰ Just how these affect the changes in Leipzig during the period covered by the thesis is explored in chapters five to eight.

Questions remain about how such hybridity might exist and what the effects might be. Might there be scope for 'surfaces of articulation between regimes of power' which attempt to 'subsume contradiction and confusion' but in failing to do so 'open up spaces of political resistance and progressive politics' (Keith and Pile, 1993, 224)? Or indeed could such openness also be an openness to vulnerability and attack (*ibid.*, 33)? Since identity politics of place are also potentially reactionary, based on origins, exclusion, boundaries, it may in fact be that new sources of exclusion are created. What is important for such a study is to address what Bhabha calls the 'performativity' of a 'history of the present' (Bhabha, 1992, 57), as it comes together in space and time. This seems to offer a fruitful way to address the questions in the thesis about the process, contestation and power relations of reunification.

5 Conclusion

My aim is therefore to explore the negotiations and struggles over space and place in local changes in Leipzig after 1989. What makes this different from changes in a western city, for example, is the disjunction between the historical and physical places which remain, and the whole range of new relationships between the population, institutions, government, capital, and so on which have been altered over this period. In the study I seek to identify ways in which these changes are similar to or different from processes in western cities. However, the key points are not simply to note similarities and differences. Instead what is clear from this discussion is that the study should be open to the processes and power relations which shape changes in a variety of ways, questioning western

assumptions. It is at the same time crucial that the division between East and West is not fore-grounded to the exclusion of other divisions, since this would be to accept the logic of the Cold War too readily. Instead the thesis seeks to identify ways in which the East too is divided, contested and negotiated. In other words, the East is equally a site of differing views and actions, sometimes in alliance with similar views in western areas and sometimes seeking to create specifically eastern viewpoints. By focussing specifically on processes of urban and neighbourhood change in Leipzig and the ways in which the urban and the political are (re)structured, I explore the new geographies of civic and state action contested through the GDR revolution (chapters 4 and 5) and the subsequent period (chapters 6 to 9), as well as the uneven processes of capital appropriation of the built environment under the norms of western administrative and legal structures (chapters 7 and 8). The linkages are explored between the political and the urban, between discourses and practices of transformation. Utilising insights from post-colonial writings, I ask whether such changes can be influenced by experiences in the GDR, of the GDR revolution and of reunification and how this may indicate the ways in which resistance or alternative urban and political spaces are shaped. Such processes will in turn illustrate how the whole process of reunification is contested and open to challenge and redefinition. This in turn necessitates questions about how particular discourses and practices surrounding reunification, such as the use of colonisation metaphors, structure the processes of change.

The following chapter deals with the methodological issues of the research, conceptualisation of discourse and the issues of conducting research in another country and in a foreign language.

¹ See chapter 1 for an introduction of these issues and chapter 4 for an exploration of how these were implicated in the GDR revolution.

² See chapter 3 on the position of the researcher as insider and outsider.

³ Regulation theories in particular, based on work by Aglietta, 1979, have been influential in studies of economic change (Leborgne and Lipietz, 1990), land-markets (Krätke, 1991) and 'modes of regulation' such as local government (Painter, 1991) and welfare regimes (Jessop, 1992), as well as in political theory (Jessop, 1990b). Jessop (1990a) provides a comprehensive survey of the different 'schools' of regulationist work while Tickell and Peck (1992) survey the utilisation of regulation theory in geography.

⁴ Patterns of production, it is argued have changed and fragmented as more lifestyle-based patterns of consumption emerge requiring short runs and flexible production (Krätke, 1990). Some argue that such cultural changes (postmodernism)

are the 'cultural logic of late capitalism' (from Jameson, 1984, in Harvey 1989). Some therefore argue that cities experience a 'new urbanity' related to the 'cultural behaviour of the urban educated classes' (Perchinig and Steiner, 1990). The city becomes a stage where people play out multiple identities in a series of village-like areas and spectacular sites in roles adopted at will in a celebration of fragmentation, avoiding levelling forces of Fordist state intervention (Roth, 1991b; Möhrte, 1990). Such approaches have come under fire from those excluded and from feminists arguing that identities are not boundless but are fundamentally embodied and limited (see Nicholson, 1990).

⁵ Spatial dimensions of change are uneven: Byrne (1992) identifies non-Fordist production in north-east England in heavy industry, Tickell and Peck (1992) survey shifts between core regions of Fordism and post-Fordism, Esser and Hirsch (1989), Krätke (1991) and Bremm and Ache (1993) identify shifting regional hierarchies in Germany with increasing emphasis on the metropolises of Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich (Helms, 1992). A.D. King (1990) and Smith and Feagin (1987) discuss the internationalisation and metropolitanisation of 'global cities', while Marcuse (1989) stresses sectoral and spatial fragmentation in cities. This presents seemingly paradoxical processes of agglomeration, fragmentation, shifting cores and peripheries, globalisation and localisation.

⁶ Section 5 in chapter 3 discusses the implications of such linguistic limitations to translating theoretical approaches.

⁷ This was certainly true after the Volkskammer elections in February 1990.

⁸ There is irony in Habermas' doubts about the power of the mass media to aid progressive change given the importance of television in transmitting the revolutions of 1989/90 across Europe.

⁹ See chapter 4.

¹⁰ Of course liberal planning has also been challenged within West Germany, see section 2 and Marcuse, 1987. Similar logic is also found in the experiences of South Africa where under Apartheid planning was fundamentally a system of social control of the Black population (Turok, 1994).

Chapter 3

Implementation and Analysis of the Study

1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is not to rehearse well-worn methodological discussions of the relative merits of quantitative and qualitative research, particularly since this study makes some use of both. Instead it aims to address three specific methodological issues arising in this particular study, namely the choice of a local focus for the study (section 3), the relationship between the researcher and the study (section 4) and the question of field work in a foreign language (section 5). The design of the study and the analysis proceed from an understanding of the uses and limitations of discourse analysis in exploring the processes and events covered by the fieldwork period (section 6). The chapter begins with an overview of the fieldwork and the analysis.

2 Fieldwork and implementation of the study

Fieldwork and the research process were developed in tandem and aimed to cover local and city levels over a period of two years (April 1991 to May 1993). This marked the time-span for fieldwork in Leipzig, where I spent a total of ten months. Analysis of local newspapers and local political developments from secondary sources covered the period from October 1989 to September 1993. This relatively long period was chosen partly for pragmatic reasons (funding, commencing and completing the research) and partly for methodological reasons: to explore and reflect the developments in the practices and discourses of transformation.

The work is based on city-wide processes and on changes in five¹ city neighbourhoods (see figure 3.1 and table 3.1). These were chosen to illustrate some of the variety of experiences in the city of historical development prior to and during the GDR, and of the processes of capital-led restructuring during reunification. The areas cover a range of inner city and suburban; residential, commercial and industrial; traditionally

Figure 3.1: Five study areas in Leipzig

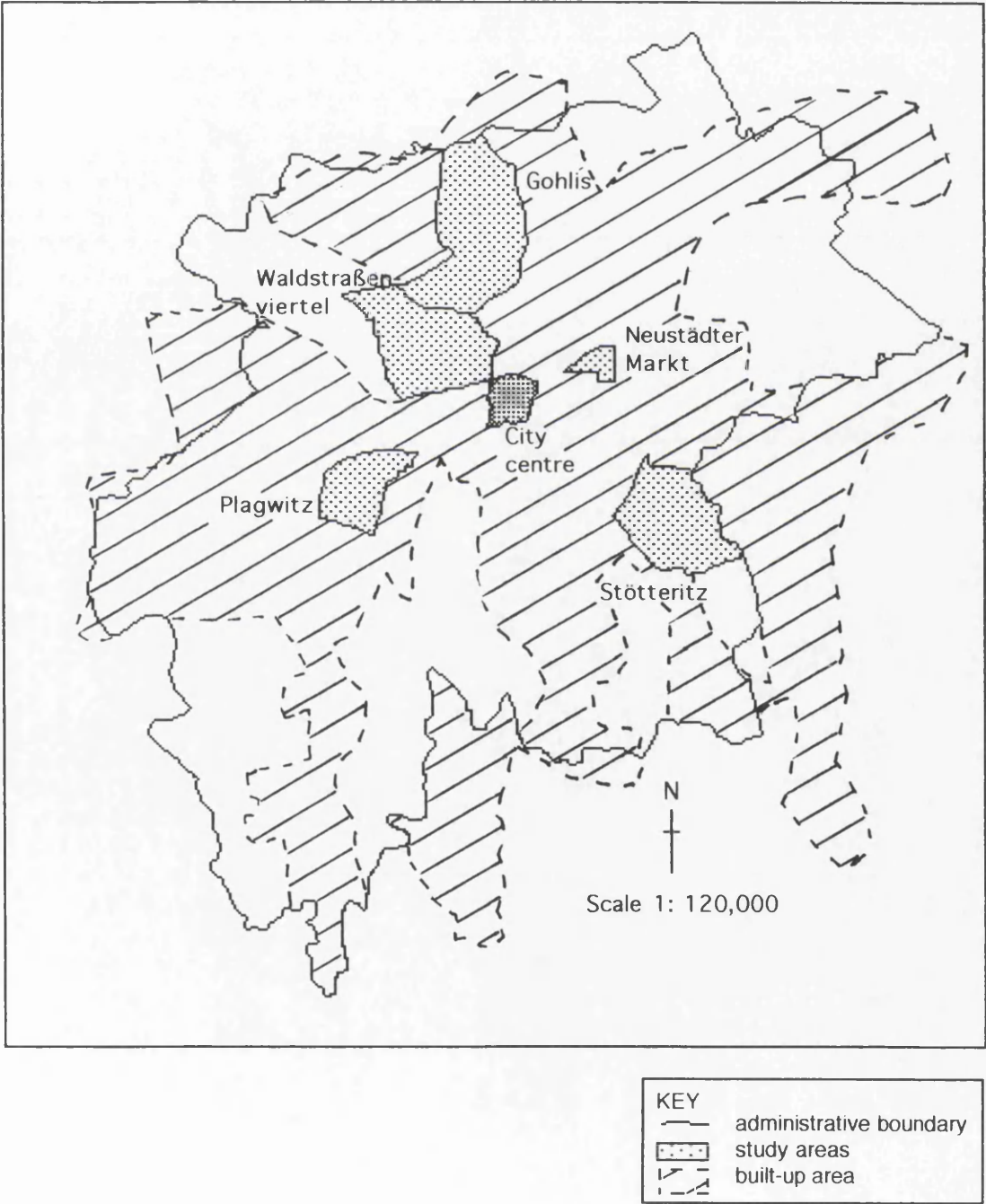


Table 3.1: Characteristics of five study areas

Area	Type of area	Characteristics of area	Specific features	Population size (1991)
Gohlis	Mixed residential, industrial (lesser extent) and commercial usage.	Housing ranges from nineteenth century upper class villas and poor working class housing to twentieth century buildings. Population mixed.	Gohlis Palace, Army barracks, Russian officer quarters, Schiller's Cottage ⁶	42762
Neustädter Markt	Inner city residential and some industry.	Poor nineteenth century working class housing, very decayed. Population shows mix.	Local church.	4669
Plagwitz	Industrial core of Leipzig mixed with workers' housing and some better properties.	Nineteenth century building and industrial stock. Population ageing but still some mix.	Planned industrial area established by Karl Heine in late nineteenth century, includes Karl-Heine Canal.	10323
Stötteritz	Suburban location, former village core and twentieth century extensions. Mixed residential and industrial.	Population ranges from working class to students and professionals in more 'suburban' parts.	Local woods, Memorial erected in 1913 to the Battle of the Nations in 1813, Adjacent to current Trade Fair site, Baroque Maria Church in old village area.	14596
Waldstraßen-viertel	Inner city residential area.	Former upper middle class residential area. Population now mixed including artists, professionals, academics.	Under conservation order as an area of Founder Period housing, Rosental park, Sportforum central stadium in Leipzig, Weekly outdoor market.	9080

Notes:

Population figures are for 1991 from Rat der Stadt Leipzig (1992a), except figures for Neustädter Markt where the area is too small to appear as a separate entity in that publication. Figures for Neustädter Markt come from the urban renewal initial report on the area (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992b) and are for 1989. They are liable to have declined further since then.

working-class, middle class or elite areas. These characteristics intersect and cross-cut to allow a basis for comparison and contrast between areas.

Table 3.2 summarises the fieldwork undertaken. As chapter 1 shows, my visit to Leipzig in April 1991 established the main themes for the study. The first main period of research in autumn 1991 was spent exploring the local political scene in Leipzig and choosing the five areas for study. By September 1991 three of the areas already had established local 'citizen associations' (Neustädter Markt, Plagwitz and Waldstraßenviertel) which were concerned with local representation and urban change. Gohlis' association was established in January 1992 and by summer 1992 Stötteritz too had established an association. I used these associations as a focus for neighbourhood research. Although the time-scale varied between areas for practical reasons, the broad approach was to monitor the area by reading the local press and by visiting events in the areas concerned. I also lived in Gohlis in autumn 1991 and spring 1992. I attended any public meetings being held, initially anonymously and then as a declared researcher, especially if the number of people present was small. I then carried out a series of interviews, surveys, observations and group discussions over the period up to the end of May 1993.

2.1 Reflexivity and the development of the study

The whole research process was developed as a 'reflexive' process in an attempt to mitigate the one-way process of knowledge construction (see section 5). The term 'reflexivity' comes from ethnomethodology and in particular from Garfinkel. I use it in the sense of reciprocity between research practice in generating and selecting texts, the people involved in these texts and other practices which influence me in the study, and the development of areas of concern throughout the research process. This is interrelated with the on-going processes of analysis and conceptualisation. Involvement in the research and residence in the city over a longer period provided me with personal experiences and social contexts within which texts produced by others for other audiences could be explored while they in turn influenced my understandings and meanings taken from the encounters. This is not to claim any superior knowledge for myself. Rather it is an attempt to locate the study in my experiences and to acknowledge the situated nature of any claims to knowledge. The research process cannot be divorced from the processes

Table 3.2: Summary of field work

	Autumn 1991	Spring 1992	June 1992	Autumn 1992	Spring 1993
Neighbourhoods					
Gohlis	Meetings attended	First interview and meetings	Membership survey	Meetings and planning forums	Group discussion
Neustädter Markt	First interview	Meetings, planning forums	Membership survey	Meetings and planning forums	Meeting and group discussion
Plagwitz	Initial interview	Meetings, planning forums	Membership survey	Meetings and planning forums	Second interview, meeting and group discussion
Stötteritz	Monitoring	First meetings	Monitoring	Planning issues	Interview, membership survey and group discussion
Waldstraßen-viertel	First interview and meetings	Planning issues	Membership survey	Planning issues	Second interview, meetings and group discussion
City (Elected)	-	Interviews	-	-	-
City (Administration)	Public meetings	Public meetings	Public meetings	Interviews begun	Interviews completed
City (non-official)	Interviews and Exhibition	Contacts to Pro Leipzig	-	General survey of Citizen Associations in city, exhibition and meetings	-
General	-	-	-	Conference on community initiatives in East Germany (Berlin)	-

of analysis and writing, nor can the experiences and processes of fieldwork and their inter-relatedness with processes of analysis be reduced to lists of recorded 'events'.

These texts and my reactions to them were created through an embodied research presence. My own experience of the families who gave me accommodation in Leipzig is one factor which affects how I view the city and the processes at work there. The families had all been disrupted by these processes. One man had been dismissed from his position as an academic economist. One family had been forcibly ejected from their flat by developers wanting to build offices. Their jobs had changed (from production to training of apprentices and in the school system). Another family had financial difficulties because their large flat which they had been allocated according to family need in the GDR was now becoming very expensive. The children in these families had experienced changes in the school system. In everyday life there was uncertainty about future employment, new systems in banking, family law, payment and eligibility for state benefits, insurance, rent levels and housing ownership. This personal context of uncertainty and great change inevitably affected my understandings of the local situation in Leipzig.

The research employed a variety of techniques (Francis, 1988). Denzin argues that methodological 'triangulation' involves competing research methodologies with different epistemologies (quoted in Berg, 1989, 5). However, I view these different forms of knowledge not so much as an attempt to use different methods to produce a 'more correct' result (Walker, 1985, for example, states that in the end one still has to choose which findings to accept and which to reject). Rather they are used to explore issues from different viewpoints and to access different types of knowledge.

The overall design of the field research aimed to be explorative and open to the reflexive influences of the research process (Cornwell, 1988) so initial questions and directions of questioning in interviews were not fixed and standardised between respondents. In dealing with an entirely new situation, setting a rigid agenda in advance would have closed the research as a whole and the individual interviews to the influences of the people involved.² Interviews were not unstructured since conversations, interviews or day-to-day communications are structured in multiple ways

by those taking part (Berg 1989; Walker, 1985), but they were not rigidly standardised, although there was some comparative element. As the interviews proceeded and I gained information from other sources the interview issues were re-focused. In addition to these sources I used social texts generated independently of my research activity such as official documents, the local press, or public meetings and debates. Collection of such materials and attendance at public meetings and events was ongoing for the period of the research and was largely defined by the availability of the materials or by the timing of events which I observed and recorded. When I could not be present, I paid a local student to attend in my place. This accounted for six of the meetings, interviews and discussions which form the core of the fieldwork, all of which are listed in appendix 1.

Having chosen the areas and groups to be studied, the first interviews with group leaders aimed to explore relationships within groups and between them and other bodies (appendix 2). In particular I was interested in narratives of how and why groups came about, of their functions and aims and of their position in city politics. These interviews, observations at group public meetings and city-wide meetings, and the development of issues in the press were combined to produce the basis for a survey of the membership of the groups in summer 1992 (appendix 3; MEMSURVEY).³ Questionnaires were distributed to all members of the five groups via the leadership of the groups and returned in a stamped-addressed envelope to me in Glasgow. The response rate is hard to judge since the precise number of members is not known. However, I estimate the notional response rate at around 65%. I considered such a survey necessary because of the lack of basic knowledge about the make-up of the groups in relation to the population in general and because some ideas about the functions of the groups and the relations within the groups between the leadership and the membership could be accessed in this way. Non-responses possibly cover members with less time or more on the fringes of groups. However, the results are used as descriptive rather than analytical tools (see chapter 6) and there are several other ways for members' views to be incorporated.

A smaller second survey in October 1992 was posted to the leadership of the twenty-six neighbourhood action groups known to the city-wide voluntary organisation, Pro Leipzig (appendix 4; BVSURVEY). I received

responses from sixteen and this seemed to cover a broad range of the types of groups involved. This survey was used to seek general information from the other groups which defined themselves as belonging to the category of neighbourhood groups in order to compare their chronology, aims, and methods.

To establish the relationships between the 'informal' sector of political action and elected councillors I interviewed 10 local councillors from the four main parties (CDU, SPD, Bündnis 90, PDS) along with one PDS city organiser and one FDP local group member in spring 1992 (appendix 5).⁴ I was concerned to explore the constructions and meanings which councillors gave to their positions and the way they viewed the development of neighbourhood politics in the city.

Exploring the relationships between the city administration and the local areas involved interviews with planners responsible for three areas (Waldstraßenviertel, Neustädter Markt and Stötteritz) in spring 1993 which I taped and transcribed. I also consulted local planning documentation for Gohlis.⁵ In addition many planners and other city department officials attended and spoke at public meetings and forums in the city. These were analysed either through public records, press reports or my own notes or transcripts. Over the whole period I also attended public meetings of city-wide interest (traffic planning, women in planning, city centre redevelopment) and other neighbourhood-specific group events outside the five study areas. I was interested in how discourses about the city, its future and current development, the functions of local politics and the discourses and practices of involvement were articulated at different levels and for different audiences in the city.⁶

In the final fieldwork period in spring 1993 I held group discussions with members of the five local groups. These were open events and the participants were self-selected, giving groups of between four and twelve discussants. As an incentive, members received copies of a short summary I had written (in German) of the findings of the membership survey and were invited to comment on them and to expand on what was missed by the questionnaires, such as personal reasons for joining, how meanings were constructed for the group's actions and how they related this involvement to the city, the neighbourhood and their lives personally.

Members were also asked their opinions of the work of their group and of other levels of city and regional politics. Group interviews gave a 'comprehensive exchange of views' which were inevitably influenced by group dynamics but also generated other insights for me and, I believe, new insights for some of those taking part (Walker, 1985, 5). The 'limitations' of the technique may lie in the limitations of the 'subject matter', that is the 'mess of thought' and 'tangle of behaviour' (Hedges, 1985, 85) which constitutes lived experience as well as the specific technicalities of the event. However, instead of seeing the influences between participants as distorting or introducing bias, the 'staging' of the group discussion (see section 5) points to aspects of the internal dynamics of the organisations. The discussions generally lasted around one to two hours. At the same time, I held discussions with the group leaders. Neither had a specific range of questions. Instead I sought to establish how those involved evaluated the experiences of the intervening period and how they saw the future of local and neighbourhood politics.

The research process was developed so that different people would be involved successively in the interviews, meetings and group discussions. As the study progressed there were overlaps, so that for example most participants in the group discussions had already had contact with me either in interviews, meetings or from completing the membership survey. The different forms of interaction with research participants were designed to explore differing meanings and actions in different contexts. For example, the group interviews were designed to create a supportive situation where people are generally among those they know, and to give an opportunity for differing views to be expressed on the subjects in question. In terms of its utility for the people involved, in two cases (Gohlis and Waldstraßenviertel) it provided a forum for interaction which would not otherwise have been present, and in the other three it involved utilising a regular meeting for my purposes.

By the end of May 1993 I had recorded (either taped or with extensive field notes) over seventy meetings, interviews, discussion or public events at city and neighbourhood level. These are listed in appendix 1. The identification codes assigned to each text are also given there. Those beginning with an 'A' were taped and transcribed in full. Those marked with a 'B' were recorded using extensive field notes which are distinct

from self-critical/reflective notes which I made at the time about the research process.

To provide a chronology of events and public discourses and place the research in context, I analysed local sources including the main regional daily newspaper, the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* for the period covered by the research. Notes were made on issues of relevance to the study from every issue from 1 October 1989 to September 1993. These were then coded chronologically to focus attention on change over time, and were categorised manually using a photocopier and scissors (a favoured technique for the research as a whole) in order to develop some of the main themes and sub-categories of importance in the development of the city over the period of concern. The *Leipziger Volkszeitung* (hereafter referred to as the LVZ) had been the regional SED newspaper in the GDR but in late 1989 it began to develop an independent editorial style and following privatisation after unification it continued as the leading regional paper. As such it provides an interesting and full account of many of the processes in this transitional period, particularly as it has a reasonably comprehensive local section dealing with city politics, local events, neighbourhood problems, and local social and cultural issues.⁷ The analysis of this newspaper provides a key to public interest in local events and gives insight into the ways local parties and groups seek to create a particular discourse or develop their publicity (in the sense of constructing a specific public realm).

The whole process was not designed in a fixed way to follow this pattern from the outset. Decisions were taken during the research and were affected by both practical and theoretical considerations. The research plans which I had before I visited Leipzig in April 1991 were largely scrapped in favour of the issues found there. I dropped early plans for a comparative West German element to the study in 1992 when it became clear there was already more than enough material in Leipzig alone. This decision also meant I could concentrate on the processes of reunification in the East, rather than assuming that they could only have validity in relation to the experiences of the West. Finally, I had also planned interviews with local non-activists in the five study areas in autumn 1992, but after a stratified mail-shot (hand-delivered) of five hundred letters to homes in the five areas only produced five responses, I dropped this in favour of concentrating on the forms of action which were going

on. This was also partly decided for me because I fell ill and had to return home early.

2.2 Text, context and analysis

Writing about the analysis process is an aspect which is often omitted from studies and textbooks. Typically most refer to categorisation, creation of conceptual categories and some forms of interpretation (Social and Community Planning Research, 1972; Walker, 1985; Hedges, 1985; Berg, 1989). Arguments in the preceding section stress the need for reflexive and situated knowledge. Berg argues for a 'contextual approach' to avoid the danger of 'exemplifying' (Berg, 1989, 124) or of simply using lists of quotations which support the argument pursued (Silverman, 1993). The study of newspapers and other texts generated independently of my presence gives a chronology of local events, shows the development of public debates on specific subjects, explores how these construct particular discourses (contradictory or otherwise). This is particularly the case for chapters four and five which discuss developments prior to the fieldwork period. The period was studied in retrospect with reference to issues of interest to the study, mainly by using records of primary texts generated contemporaneously (speeches, interviews, photographs, newspaper reactions, and so on). In these chapters, the excerpts from these texts are used to illustrate as fully as possible the range of positions and the nature of arguments, and were chosen particularly through repeated phrases and modes of speaking about events, people and places. They are analysed in the extent to which they come together to form particular discourses with their contexts and contradictions. This then informs the later study of the texts collected or generated during the fieldwork period.

The texts generated in interviews, from observation notes of meetings and in group discussions, most of which lasted between 45 minutes and two hours, were taped and transcribed by hand by me in full in the original German with notes on tone, dialect, emphasis or other contextual information.⁸ Transcription took around ten hours per hour of tape, varying with the quality of the recording. The transcripts and field notes were then annotated as complete texts, noting the structure of the argument and any tensions within the discussion. Various researchers have suggested forms of interpretation of speech texts. Since normal

everyday speech is marked by 'redundancy, repetitiveness and incompleteness' (Opie, 1992, 61) any 'non-redundant speech act' or 'contradictory moment' in mid-sentence can indicate a moment of importance to the speaker. Such issues informed the analysis which sought to reflect the importance which the research participants attached to their utterances.

Transcripts were then annotated to note recurrent issues, language used, silences, narrative constructions and arguments in relation to the other texts. Appendix 6(i) shows a page from the annotated transcripts. One of the most useful issues was to note whether the discussion was based on a standard 'repertoire' formulation of issues, or whether individual or 'dynamic' accounts were used. Cornwell (1988) describes in her analysis of lay health beliefs this distinction between 'repertoire' (routine and predictable) and 'dynamic' accounts (fresh quality of thinking) (227), between 'public' (the account expected) and 'private' accounts (based on personal experience) (228). Similarly, the use of nostalgia, for example, can indicate a desire for things to be different (Radstone, 1992, 86) given an understanding of memory as a discursive matter which goes beyond the individual and is also socially constituted (the 'slippery nature of memory'; *ibid.*, 85).

In analysing the material I was concerned to identify discourses, how they were constituted and the tensions within them. However, as the on-going process of reunification was/is one of contest, negotiation and change, I was also concerned to identify differences in interpretations, conflicts and disjunctures in references to past and present. This influenced the analysis since the issue was not only to generate categories of knowledge but to find the differences, exceptions and disagreements through which transformations were being constructed, interpreted and challenged. In chapters six to eight, the choice of quotations to illustrate the discussion was based on, firstly, the apparent importance of issues in the materials (representative quotations) and, secondly, on their power to illustrate contradictions, tensions and ruptures in the transformations. In some cases, however, a whole discussion or event was used to show the context of the debates and the positions taken by different individuals, groupings or institutions.

Quotations were only translated into English in the final thesis text, although my own analysis was inevitably, and often usefully, affected by the kinds of hybridity of meaning which are discussed later in section 5. Emphases noted in the quotations are from the original texts, while other conventions are shown in appendix 6(ii).

In some cases, notably in the analysis of interviews with city councillors in chapter 9, it was useful to employ an adaptation of the 'cognitive mapping' developed by Jones (1985b) and others. This is a 'method of modelling a person's beliefs in diagrammatic form' (59) which can reflect the broader framework and interconnection of the multiple ideas a person expresses. Appendix 6(iii) shows how such a diagram was generated, linking the argument used, noting their connections and contradictions. These diagrams distinguish between the interview text (small letters), key issues and phrases which came from the text (boxed) suggesting concepts which the person or persons utilised, and 'second order' concepts which I generated from the research (block capitals). These diagrams can also be summarised to illustrate the structure of particular arguments and form a useful method of comparison between texts (see chapter 9). A variation of this process was also used for some written documents which were otherwise subjected to 'analytical reading' (Hakim, 1987, 44). Occasionally numerical methods of comparing the use of terms and concepts were helpful as guides to their relative importance in simple 'content analyses' (*ibid.*).

In the analysis process I generated categories or concepts in close relation to the texts which form the basis of the study. I sought to contextualise arguments and debates as products of particular moments in space and time and sought to set such categories in theoretical and political debates. This process confronted my conceptualisations with those of the texts (although, of course, I generated the analysis in the first instance) so that the concepts emerged from a reflexivity between the texts and my understanding of them as the researcher. The concepts and arguments are therefore not 'naturally occurring' and are grounded in the texts and in the research process, in which I am fully implicated as the researcher. Before exploring the position of the researcher more generally, in the next section I turn to the conceptualisation of the local in the study.

3 The local level as research focus

In this section I aim to situate the study of the local neighbourhood processes in a framework considering the local as scale and process, exploring the constructions of 'community' which relate to the German situation and to English-language academic theories.

3.1 The local as scale or process

One could conceive of the 'local' as an issue of scale, a smaller version of larger processes in a society or of the 'local' as a face-to-face sphere where relationships are qualitatively different to those at other scales (see section 3.2), a 'community'. One could also conceive of the 'local' as process, as a social construction with contradictory and conflicting meanings for different audiences, one where social relations are constructed and where meanings are articulated.

In his writing about local studies, Francis (1988) argues:

'local studies have a distinctive role to play in research into both the general and the specific problems of social, economic and political development. They enable us to study the nature of international, national and regional processes in the context of localities and communities, the impact of higher-level on lower-level processes. They are the principal means through which we can assess the influence that wider forces have on the structuring of the lives of individuals and small groups, while at the same time studying the way in which local actions, groups and processes modify and contribute to the patterns of change and development at regional and national levels.' (501)

Here the local exists in relation to 'wider forces'. Concentrating on vertical relationships between local and other scales where there may be feedback, the local is still dominated by the higher levels. This omits horizontal connections between local levels and within local spaces and ignores local constructions of social meaning. In addition it views the 'local' (and other scales) as unproblematic and given rather than the question of scale itself being a social and political construction.

Francis also argues that local studies can be more flexible and open-ended than large scale studies and that:

'in some respects local studies have much more in common with ethnographic research: they can be used to explore new topics

and fields of research about which little is known, to support the findings of research conducted in other ways, and to counter the excessively deterministic influence of work conducted with more highly structured designs based on particular theoretical preconceptions.' (500, emphasis in original)

In this study a local focus was chosen to explore a new topic, but I would reject the suggestion either that local studies need to support (or contradict) other studies in order to have theoretical validity, as Francis implies, or that this research is any less theoretically informed than more strict research designs. Indeed a looser research design demands more stringent theoretical and methodological considerations if it is not to descend to description and idiographic particularities (Berg, 1989; Silverman, 1993). A strong theoretical and philosophical basis is used here to understand the position of the researcher in the research process (section 4) and constructions of meaning (sections 5 and 6).

Various discourses and geographical paradigms have viewed the 'local' in differing ways. While early French approaches looked for the *genre de vie* in the 'genuine' countryside and rural areas, later positivist approaches, particularly those based on larger scale surveys, rejected studies of specific local areas as inadequate and 'unrepresentative' or 'untypical'. Local areas were acceptable as case study areas for specific issues raised in broader surveys. The move, at least metaphorically, to the local in the post-modernist turn of recent years, culminated in assertions of the local as end-point, going 'the route of Baudrillard and others and [treating] life as simulation and [living] out the local in abstraction' (Probyn, 1990, 185-86). Probyn rejects this abstraction where the representation of places becomes impossible and places become simulacra (*ibid.*). Views of difference as eclecticism and of space as a series of mosaics (N. Smith, 1992, 67) reduce the impact of space to one dimension and offer nothing but a static view of places. Instead I am interested in the multi-faceted and dynamic differentiation of space (*ibid.*, 71) and the social world which at once inhabits it, creates it and is created by it, exploring the local as the basis for research and viewing the local as a starting point for an exploration of the differences and similarities in experience and practice, in discourse and materialisms which emerge or as a nodal point whose meanings and movements can be deconstructed (Probyn, 1990). In this respect Lefebvre (discussed in N. Smith 1992) talks about social space and abstract space - social is the space 'constituted by

the activity of everyday life', and abstract space is 'laid down by the actions of the state and the economic institutions of capital' (there are others who form abstract space). The 'reproduction of the social relations of capitalism are accomplished as a constant struggle between these different modes of reproducing space' (72). From this the local study in Leipzig aims to examine this production and reproduction. What constitutes the scale of local, regional and so on must follow these struggles too. As Smith argues, societies also produce scale and there is nothing given about traditional divisions in scale.

3.2 Local and community - differences and links

Ironically, having defined the understanding of the 'local' in the study, it is tempting to describe one of the focuses of the project not as local politics, which indicates the city level (which is of course also included) but as 'community politics' to indicate neighbourhood level practices. This raises the question of how the 'local' and 'community' are related and how they are conceived in the study. In the English language literature there is a great range and some confusion of the meanings of 'local' and 'community', particularly when related to political processes. In this study I aim to address only community in the sense of 'place community' (Davies and Herbert, 1993), dealing with districts within a city. I reject their use of the term 'residential mosaic' which continues the characteristic dichotomy of public/private which has typically favoured the former and consigned the latter to the realms beyond ideology (and therefore 'natural' and 'given', not open to discussion). It also reduces 'community' to the aspect of residence only rather than examining other factors which impact on the forms and processes of the city: economic, bureaucratic, political, institutional, cultural and so on. 'Community' in this study is used as a scale and construction rather than a given. Where it is used, it is constructed for a reason. As Young (1990) has shown the ideal of community cannot be seen as alternative to the existing political order, since as well as being inclusive it is also exclusionary and always constructed on the premise of there being an excluded other. She argues instead for a conceptualisation of politics not as face-to-face but as 'a relationship of strangers who do not understand one another in a subjective and immediate sense, relating across time and distance' (317). However, it is clear that politics also takes place in the groups of

individuals with face-to-face contacts who seek to establish and influence courses of action in discourses and meanings accepted by the 'strangers'.

This research began therefore not from an assumption that 'community' existed or that it should exist in neighbourhoods in Leipzig. The initial impulse which suggested a focus on the five local areas was that various organisations and groups involved in what others might call community politics were emerging or had emerged in the months after September 1989 (and from roots prior to that time). I took this as the starting place for an exploration of local action, conditions and constraints operating, issues under discussion, and so on. All of this could not be divorced from the nature of urban restructuring and the processes involved when East meets (or is colonised by) West. The importance of the local is as a site of the reciprocal constitution of social relations, social meanings and practices. The study seeks to establish the functions or significance of the evocation of the local area and local or neighbourhood bases for political and social action. How do issues of identity and identification become established and for what functions? What meanings do different people or different groups attach to these processes and what are their functions in terms of the establishment of power relations in the changing urban sphere? If the ideal of the local community emerges then why is it evoked and for whose benefit?

4 The relationship between researcher and research

Following the definition of qualitative research as 'the contextual interpretation of subjectively meaningful social action' (Smith and Jackson, 1984, 9) this research is based on an interpretation of cultural, political, gendered, economic and other contexts. In this the researcher cannot be abstracted from the process of research:

'We can investigate the world only from a perspective of the contingencies of our self, which includes our physical, social and historical experiences. To explore the world, both figuratively and literally, involves the active participation of the subject as observer.' (Domosh, 1991, 96)

The researcher is therefore fully implicated in the interpretation of the world. Indeed Pile (1991) stresses the intersubjective nature of the research process involving the subjectivities of the researcher and the researched rather than an 'objective researcher'. Rejecting the division

between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies (*ibid.*), he argues that such a division essentially accepts the objective/ subjective approach of masculine knowledge and fails to pursue intersubjectivity, clinging instead to the researcher as detached from the process of research (*ibid.*).

The rejection of the objective, detached researcher is a fundamental critique of many feminist writers. Many argue that even the turn to more interpretative methodologies has seen a continuing silent assumption that the researcher knows best how to interpret the actions of the subjects. Some have argued, in response to claims that interpretative or feminist methodologies could be more emancipatory (Oakley, 1981), that the research process implicates all researchers in power relationships, whether they pursue interpretative or other research strategies (Opie, 1992).

This position of privilege is revealed particularly in authorial control of the report text and in the ways that this becomes constituted as knowledge (Madge, 1993). Shotter (1989) explores one element of this in the 'addressivity' of the text. Since the 'I' (agency) is not pre-existent but is rather socially constructed in particular settings by certain people (148), as is the 'you' of the text, 'our ways of talking [...] are not neutral in how we represent our world and its problems to ourselves' (149). Language is not 'merely' referential, it is a means through which to act. Texts (typically social science texts) written in the third person, in the passive voice, exclude the self and a particular ethical and political relation between the self and the audience, allowing the 'facts' 'to speak for themselves' (149). This constructs the relationship between researcher and researched as objective and authoritative as well as establishing the researcher/ author as knowledgeable in relation to the audience.

In this situation 'the notion of non-exploitative research relations is a utopian ideal that is receding from our grasp' (McDowell, 1992, 408) since knowledge is always positioned. In all forms of research the researcher has to 'recognise and take account of [their] own position and write this into [the] research practice' (*ibid.*, 409). No matter what situation is researched it involves interpretation between 'cultural sets'. Opie (1992) suggests some textual and research strategies which may make clear these relationships of interpretation, advocating more reflexive

approaches, allowing difference (53), not imbuing research subjects with 'false consciousness', but rather accepting that they may have multiple, or even contradictory readings of their own situations (55), and the use of multiple voices (57). However, she too argues finally that 'textual appropriation of the other is an inevitable consequence of research' (67). The act of research in itself puts the researcher in a position of power in representing others and in the interpretation of the meanings other people give to their lives.

4.1 Researcher as outsider?

'Living abroad facilitates treating life as a spectacle - it is one of the reasons that people of means move abroad. Where those stunned by the horror of the famine and the brutality and incompetence of the government's response saw unending inertia, lethargy, a hardened lava of ignorance, the Cavaliere saw a flow. The expatriate's dancing city is often the local reformer's or revolutionary's immobilised one, ill-governed, committed to injustice. Different distance, different cities.' (Susan Sontag, 1993, *The Volcano Lover*)

One of the most obvious and more problematic features of research in another country and another culture is the position of the researcher as outsider. Geographers in particular have been adept at ignoring the question of how their interpretations of a setting are validated and the effects they may have. Sontag's Cavaliere ascribes to the outsider a 'different distance' to the place concerned and sees the spectacle of the strange city as a commodity to be consumed, producing a 'different city'. Meaning is therefore dependent on the viewpoint of the person interpreting the city. How can a view such as this be reconciled with claims to knowledge which all research makes, in interpretative research, the claims to explore local meanings and to interact with people 'in their own language, on their own terms' (Kirk and Miller, 1986, 9)?

The ethics of overseas fieldwork and the position of the researcher have received some attention recently, particularly in relation to 'First World' researchers in the 'Third World'. Sidaway (1992), quoting Levi-Strauss, talks of the need to recognise that 'a journey occurs simultaneously in space, in time and in the social hierarchy' (403) and adds shifts in cultural, racial and gender contexts (404; also Madge, 1993). Consideration in geographical texts of the need for anthropological approaches in representation and writing (Barnes and Duncan, 1992) has concentrated

on issues such as problems of writing about overseas fieldwork. Social context, conditions and the consequences of overseas fieldwork are neglected (Sidaway, 1992). Research often mirrors the colonial and post-colonial experiences of exploitation in that even knowledge in the shape of the thesis or report is removed from the country concerned (*ibid.*). On the other hand assuming that the 'insider, or local academics automatically have a more sophisticated and appropriate approach to understanding social reality in 'their' society' (*ibid.*, 406) is decried as 'reactionary relativism'. There is a need for awareness of the unequal relationships implicated in overseas research (which go beyond those already discussed) since 'research is part of the social world that it studies [... and] that social world is profoundly uneven and contradictory.' (*ibid.*, 404) Doing research in that situation at best 'offers a counter to universalistic and ethnocentric views' (406-407, also Sidaway, 1990).

My own research in Leipzig is not confronted with the same relations of power and exploitation, but similar issues emerge of control over the research, the extraction of my research from the environment which generated it, and the cementing of knowledge (others' and mine) as authoritative. I too travelled in cultural, ethnic and gendered contexts, and significantly to the spatial and temporal junction between two world paradigms. In a period of over two years I spent almost ten months living in the city, mostly lodging with families. I was in the position of 'insider-outsider': a westerner who was not a West German (a *Besser Wessi*)⁹, at home in a social market economy but a stranger to the history and experiences of the population before 1989, an academic researcher with ideas unfamiliar to many academics in the region who was not sure if her ideas would relate (and many did not) to the transformations of the period.

In such a situation one way of representing myself as authoritative would have been to be attached to a local institution. However, there are ambiguities associated with this procedure (DARG session at IBG 1994). While reassuring participants of the genuine nature of the research and hopefully making access to local sources easier, it may also restrict access. In Leipzig, I began seeking contacts in the University of Leipzig and the Institute for Geography and Geoecology (formerly of the Academy of Sciences). However, the upheaval of East German academia¹⁰ meant that there was little motivation for lecturers to accept the added

burden of an overseas research student. Contacts which I had were helpful in establishing the research framework and pointing the way to new literature and other studies.¹¹ However, there were difficulties in the great variations in normative understandings of the form and purpose of the research (perhaps reflecting problems in understanding between East and West generally), such as the responses of 'is that geography?' or 'you won't be recording landuse, then?' to my explanations of what the project involved. For this reason and because the population's relationship to its own social scientists was somewhat ambiguous, combining a general respect for scholarship with suspicion of the strong links between GDR social science and the theories of Marxism-Leninism, it was simpler for me to remain an academic outsider. Slightly more explanation of my situation was necessary when people were asked to participate in the research, but this positioned me in the role of 'exotic researcher' whose presence, particularly in smaller informal groups, was regarded as somewhat puzzling and out of the ordinary. Practical difficulties were limited to access to telephone and word-processing facilities. The former was solved where my accommodation had a telephone. Private contacts helped with the latter. Telephone access was limited in its importance since many offices and individuals did not have one. Letters and personal communications became more significant.

A second way the researcher could control the research process is to conceal the true purpose of their presence. Aside from methodological and ethical considerations, attempting to undertake covert research (such as the more concealed forms of participant observation) in a country where years of surveillance, or even the threat of secret service surveillance were still fresh in individual and collective memories would have closed more doors than it opened and caused unnecessary suspicion. I chose from an early stage to make clear to groups or people involved in the research who I was and what was my purpose. Except in public meetings or larger forums where the 'general public' was invited and announcing my presence would have been intrusive or unnecessary, I explained my reasons for being present and asked permission to record the proceedings.

In the research setting the very person and presence of the researcher is significant. One cannot divorce the research report from the ways in

which the research is generated. The assertion that qualitative research 'fundamentally depends on watching people in their own territory and interacting with them in their own language, on their own terms' (Kirk and Miller, 1986, 9) cannot be sustained since any involvement of the researcher changes the situation which is being researched. One cannot aspire to distance, objectivity and neutrality (so the distant gaze of the Cavaliere is disrupted). My presence and action in interviews and some smaller meetings influenced responses and, in the case of the interviews and group discussions, was specifically aimed at creating social texts which otherwise would not have existed. Indeed the process of the interviews or meetings had other effects as an extract from my field notebook shows:

'I think no matter what you do to try not to influence events, the very fact that you are interested enough to want to study this area means that people's opinions of their own work may be altered. For example, it has happened a few times that people have answered my questions saying, "I don't know, but that reminds me, I must find out myself".' (notebook, 6/4/92)

Thus the process of research itself is not neutral. The role(s) of the researcher are constitutive in the shifting research relationship because of the roles which the researcher takes in the interview situation and because of the embodied nature of the processes in the persons of the researcher and the research. Reflecting role-playing in fieldwork (McDowell, 1992; Berg, 1989) I took conscious decisions about the way I should present myself to the people and institutions with whom I was involved. From experience of the more informal unwritten clothing rules which are the norm, particularly in academic circles, and not wishing to present myself as something which I am not, I generally attended meetings or interviews in casual clothing. However, the interview involves more than presenting a physical appearance (Berg, 1989, 29). Stressing that the interview is not a 'natural communication exchange' (27) since the normal rules of turn-taking and yielding which structure conversation do not apply, Berg argues that rather than role-playing being a negative or 'biasing' practice, this is both unavoidable and necessary in order to structure the interview (conversely the interviewee also adopts roles and strategies such as avoidance) in the repertory or dramaturgy of the interview situation (28). The performance of certain roles and strategies is not a case of 'tricking' the

respondent, rather it is utilised to relax the respondent and build rapport (37) by the 'self-conscious performer' (32).

In my case, I used several strategies consciously (and probably many more unconsciously). In some cases I wanted to establish how much a particular person knew, or was willing to tell me about a subject or event. In this case I felt it necessary not to expose how much I knew myself. My apparent ignorance led to situations where, particularly in interviews or discussions with academics, or former academics, I was given advice on how they thought I should proceed. Ironically, instead of appreciating this as academic interest, I found myself resisting these suggestions and reverting to the typical defensive hubris of the researcher. Other strategies were to adopt the position of the sympathising outsider, appreciative of the difficulties of the East in relation to the West, or to reveal particular personal preferences, experiences or contacts in order to encourage the interviewee to talk about a specific subject.

However, the research process is not a question of choosing freely from an infinite range of roles. The embodied nature of the self is ever-present and is constitutive of the research relationships as much as the chosen roles (Domosh, 1991; McDowell, 1992; Madge, 1993). The (multiple) and shifting self of the researcher 'in terms of race, nationality, age, gender, social and economic status, sexuality may influence the "data" collected and thus the information that becomes encoded as "knowledge"' (Madge, 1993, 295). Dealing with the multiple self offers a way of acknowledging directly the issues of power and politics, of a 'non-innocent' version of reflexivity (*ibid.*).

Relative positions of power between myself and those with whom I interacted depended on several factors. For younger female respondents where I was broadly sympathetic to their ideas and political views my position was as the 'sister in solidarity', attempting to create a more 'equal' or reciprocal relationship. Others I related to as fellow researcher or academic, adopting a more overtly analytical approach to problems and issues. With others, particularly middle-aged councillors from parties for which I had less sympathy I found myself struggling to keep an open mind. In many such cases I found my preconceptions challenged, particularly where my western ideas and concepts did not recognise the complexity of East German experiences. In other situations, I was not

purely in a dominant position in the research. If I needed the information or opinions which only a particular individual could give me, particularly in 'elite interviewing' I could be in a weak position (Jones, 1985a). This was reinforced since my travels in space had also placed me in a situation where I was seen as very young to be undertaking doctoral research. Often questions asking 'Are you not quite young?' needed to be answered with explanations of why I was 'so young' (aged 23 to 25 during the fieldwork period). In contrast the average age for completion of a Ph.D. in Germany is 31.8 years (Gardner, 1994). This either placed me as young and inconsequential (and in some cases therefore I was harmless enough to reveal more personal information to or to enlighten on certain issues), or I emerged as a '*Wunderkind*' and was again positioned as an 'exotic'.

5 Problematising language: possibilities and limitations in 'foreign language' research

An interesting omission from many discussions of the nature of texts as research subject and research 'output' (Barnes and Duncan, 1992; Cosgrove and Domosh, 1993) constructed in the power relations of the research situation and academia, is that rather less attention has been paid to research as a process related to language *per se*. The omission is all the more serious since increasing use of interpretative strategies makes issues of meaning and interpretation fundamental, especially those revolving around wordplay, associating meanings, multiple and shifting references. There is generally an unstated assumption that research is in a language which the researcher or reader of the final text assumes they can understand.

However, researching in a foreign language has implications for the research/writing process, particularly where the writing is done in the researcher's 'home' language (Radcliffe, 1994). When analysing interview texts it is too easy to analyse the translation and not the 'original'. Writing 'with' others (Robinson, 1994) becomes mediated through language differences which compound power relations between researcher and researched. Processes of writing/ representation become apparently more problematic. Is it possible to engage in strategies of polyphony (Crang, 1992; McDowell, 1994) when the research is written in a different language? Can participants' intentions be represented (Opie,

1992)? What issues arise in interpretation and analysis when the researcher is working in what is to them a 'foreign' language? This section attempts to engage with some of the issues of the 'politics of translation' which arise when language is regarded as a process of meaning construction (Spivak, 1993).

I aim to address some of these issues using examples from the research. Substantively, I explore briefly how language shows the contested nature of German reunification. In terms of research methods, the example illustrates how the nuances of language can be lost in translation and how the position of the researcher is problematic. These points are explored in three sections. Section 5.1 assumes strategically that 'foreign' language research differs qualitatively from research in the 'home' language. Section 5.2 asks if this is tenable and seeks to question such divisions. Section 5.3 then addresses possibilities of working through the tensions and incommensurabilities of foreign language research in relation to hybrid cultural production. The difficulties of foreign language research can be turned to a positive engagement between languages, between researcher and researched and challenge the researcher's definitions and understandings of concepts.

5.1 'Losing something in the translation'

Researching in the former GDR I could not escape questions of language, meaning and interpretation. Here I want to illustrate the limitations of translation which arise when working between languages, when producing a text in English about research in German. The example of the German term for the neighbourhood action groups which I studied, '*Bürgervereine*', serves to illustrate the point.

Everyday language can have simple correspondence between languages: chair, *Stuhl*. Translation should 'in principle transport [...] meaning' (Derrida, 1991, 251). However, as Derrida discusses, translation is both necessity and impossibility. Translation often does not quite convey 'original' meanings and associations. In this way, finding a suitable English term for '*Bürgervereine*' is simple: citizen associations, neighbourhood action groups, community groups, or local civic associations would be suitable. Indeed if no equivalent exists a German term could be used with a definition, such as '*Angst*' referring to a

particular Freudian concept. The problem remains of how to convey the significances of the term '*Bürgerverein*'. This involves multiple meanings and associations that language may have in one cultural and linguistic context and will not automatically have in another, however well translated. That the translation process inevitably loses many of these meanings is due to the 'inadequation of one tongue to another' (Derrida, 1991, 244).

To continue with the example, '*Bürgerverein*' is not commonly used in West Germany. It has particular associations with emerging civil or bourgeois ('*bürgerlich*') society in Germany after the 1848 revolution, with actions characterised by 'participation by the citizens in the process of local informed opinion' and by 'the reawakening of bourgeois (self)-consciousness' (Faust, 1981). '*Bürgerverein*' is a compound of '*Bürger*' (citizen) and '*Verein*' (association, club). '*Bürger*' is the grammatical masculine form (the feminine would be '*Bürgerin*'). Singular and plural forms are identical so '*Bürger*' is both citizen (male) and citizens.

In the context of German reunification, the usage of terms received heightened significance. For example, '*Bürger*' (citizen) had distinctive positions in the East and West German constitutions and references after reunification have a variety of implications for the relation of neighbourhood actions to the past and present. While the GDR constitution exhorted the citizens to 'work, plan and govern' and listed a series of rights and duties, the FRG constitution emphasises individual human rights. '*Bürger*' in the context of these groups therefore implies individual (and masculine) rights unlike the English term 'community group' which might describe similar groups but emphasises communal action and assumes existence of some commonality. While references to the civic movement, '*Bürgerbewegung*' connect the groups to the GDR civic uprisings and to wider movements across eastern Europe, another term used locally to describe Leipzig was a '*Bürgerstadt*', a 'city of burghers', of free citizens. '*Bürgervereine*' are therefore connected to a local tradition of independent action. This echoes associations made by readers of an English translation, since '*Bürger-*' means civic in its adjectival force, which in English has resonances of civic duty and civil society.

'Verein' (association) also has various resonances. The right to association is enshrined in the FRG constitution and 'Vereine' can have legal status with financial privileges. 'Verein' also refers to a range of non-political organisations (sports, hobbies, local culture). Associations were permitted in the GDR only within state and party structures. That residents adopt '*Bürgerverein*' to describe their groups post-reunification in eastern Germany has resonances which cannot be translated in one term. The question is therefore not merely that research proceeds in another language but that the understandings of the other language are multiple and complex. Translation can omit the 'original' multiplicity of meaning and understanding so it is not only necessity and impossibility, but 'necessity as impossibility' (Derrida, 1991, 250).

5.2 Disrupting 'home' and 'foreign' language categories

The discussion so far suggests that work in the 'home' language and in the 'foreign' language (or translating from one to the other) presents qualitatively rather different processes. Now I wish to adopt another stance, namely that far from differing qualitatively from research in the home language, writings on the relation of the researcher to research in the home language reveal similar processes of interpretation and de/re/construction, of the implication of the researcher in creating knowledge and controlling the report text, all of which initially seem specific to foreign language research.

Since language and meaning is not transparent, 'not a direct representation of a separate reality [...] but instead reflecting the particular way of seeing that world' (Domosh, 1991, 96), with research in the home language 'we cannot be sure we understand even the same language' (Berg, 1989, 23). All interpretative research involves the representation and appropriation of Others' experiences as well as the researcher's. It requires interpretation across cultures of socially constructed meanings. The Kuhnian proposition that these links of power and control are conditioned by paradigmatic conditions in the academy (and other ideological, political, cultural and personal characteristics) is one which demands scrutiny of positions of power and privileged voices in any study (Domosh, 1991).

However, the position of the researcher between foreign and home language and the relations between researcher and research demands further consideration. In foreign language research the control of the researcher over the final (translated) text appears more obvious and more difficult to address. If the final report is in the 'home' language, how can the researcher allow 'different voices' to 'speak for themselves'? Any translation seems always to be a reduced and distorted representation of other social texts and practices. It involves interpretations of meanings which relate to social contexts and situations, to the people who produce them and to the political, economic and social positions of those involved. The researcher plays a large part in the mediation between foreign language and final text.

Yet, is this not in essence the same problem as home language research? As section 4 showed, the very act of research places the researcher in a position of power in representing others through language and in the interpretation of the meanings other people give to their lives. If the research is in a foreign language or a foreign culture it becomes a more complex but perhaps more overt operation to involve oneself in the perilous task of representing other people's worlds in one's own reconstructions or texts, no matter what the efforts at empowering research methodologies. In this reading, then, the problematisation of language and meanings applies to research in 'home' and 'foreign' languages since both involve interpretation and appropriation.

5.3 Hybrid engagements with language

This position, however, seems unsatisfactory because it leaves representation as one-sided, inevitably distorting and therefore disempowering. The question remains whether *within* the confines of research it is possible to find a more reflexive form, even with or perhaps precisely because of the problems of foreign language research. I want to ask whether there is an alternative approach to foreign language research, and thus another way of addressing, though never removing, questions of representation and interpretation. 'Original' contexts and meanings are important but language also continually escapes these intentions with unintended or unrecognised resonance and meaning. This may involve new dimensions of meaning which do not come to the

fore in one or other language, or may involve a clash between fundamental concepts which cannot be made commensurable.

To continue with the resonances of '*Bürger*', local government officers whom I interviewed prided themselves on a 'populist' style of government, in German '*bürgerlich*', literally 'citizen-close', 'close to the citizen'. One must literally 'come to terms' with the foreign language. This is particularly so for such words as 'home' or 'community' which Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994) call 'god' words and which they argue are concepts which cannot be adequately transferred in their import from one language or culture to another. Perhaps what is possible in such research is not that the 'truth' of the 'other' is 'revealed' in the home language, but that between the two languages, two cultures, researcher and researched an in-between space, a space of hybrids is created. Hybrid spaces of research between 'home' language and the 'foreign' language can open new spaces of insight, of meaning which dis-place, de-centre the researcher's assumption that their own language is clear in its meaning. Looking for meaning 'out there' which has to be 'brought home' like so much of the Linnean collection and cataloguing of the 'Rest of the World' which constituted the processes of colonisation and imperialism (Pratt, 1992) is disrupted as the 'home' language becomes denaturalised. The 'home' language becomes literally '*unheimlich*', strange, 'un-homely'. '*Heimlich*' means 'at home' but also 'hidden'. By disrupting meanings in the home language they become 'unhidden' in the same process by which the home language becomes '*fremd*', foreign, strange.

An example of this is the concept of 'community' (figure 3.2). Here we can see the potential benefits of 'travelling theory' (Said, 1983). Generally 'community' is '*Gemeinschaft*' (excluding ethnically-based 'communities' - '*Bevölkerungsgruppen*', population groups). Community as 'the public', as in 'care in the community', is '*die Allgemeinheit*' (general public) or '*die Gesellschaft*' (society). This does not allow for the assumption of a community-like public sphere as the English term does. Related terms also concern the 'public': '*gemeinnützig*' is 'for the public good', '*Gemeinsinn*' is 'public spirit', '*Gemeinwohl*' is public welfare. From the same root comes '*Gemeinde*', parish (church and civil), community, or local authority/ municipality. Local authority is alternatively '*Kommune*'. '*Kommunalpolitik*' is thus local politics, but this tends to refer to

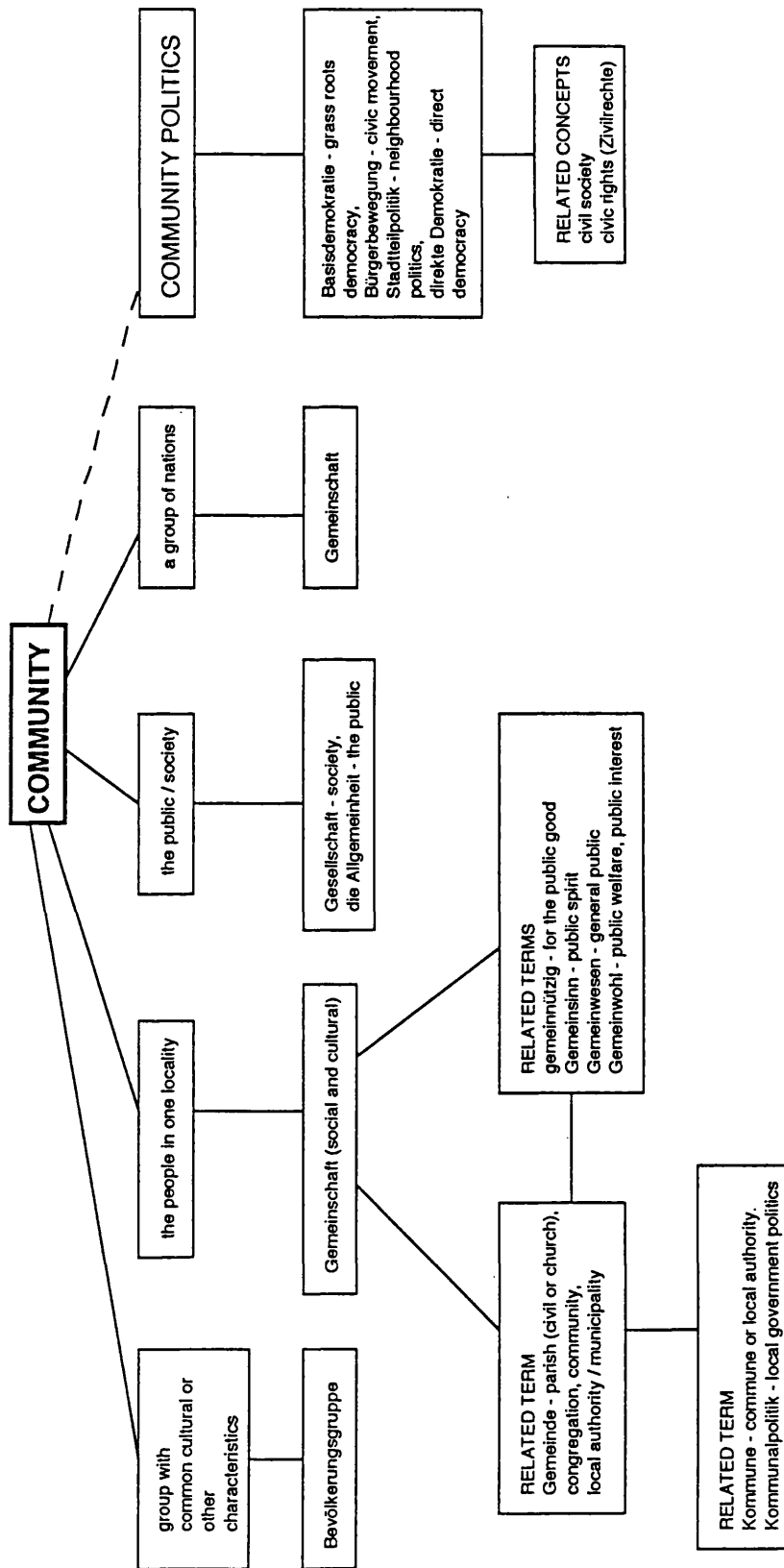


Figure 3.2: 'Community' and Translation

institutional and state spheres. Citizen activism, such as that by the citizen associations, which could be termed 'community politics' in English, is on the other hand covered by the terms of '*Stadtteilpolitik*' (city neighbourhood politics), '*Bürgerpolitik*' (citizen politics), '*Basisdemokratie*' (grass roots democracy) or '*direkte Demokratie*' (direct democracy), although the latter two can also refer to official referenda or rights of petition.

'Community politics' were often referred to by the neighbourhood groups in eastern Germany as '*außerparlamentarisch*' (extra-parliamentary). This has echoes of the 'Extra-parliamentary Opposition' to the Grand Coalition of SPD and CDU in West Germany in the late 1960s, as well as asserting that they have a certain oppositional stance to formal politics. '*Bürgerbewegung*' (citizens' movement) asserts direct links to the revolution of autumn 1989 as it names the popular movements and new civic organisations emerging then. Each term has implications for understanding political processes and for the place of the individual and collective. All challenge English language assumptions about the nature of 'community politics'. The slippages and overlaps in meaning which are apparent when the foreign language de-naturalises key concepts can produce new understandings of the research. In my case, it is not sufficient to assume that neighbourhood groups in eastern Germany are similar to those in western Germany or to other western forms. Instead it is necessary to engage critically with their different genesis, the variety of meanings which the groups have for their members and how they become incorporated into and in fact can help to shape post-reunification restructuring of local political geographies.

Having made references here to hybrid positions and understandings, it is important to recognise the origins of such concepts in post-colonial writings and studies which have addressed how metropolitan areas are changed by the colonial encounter and how native writing is used in and against the language of the coloniser. Clearly such references are of limited direct relevance to the German example, but I would argue in the case of German reunification, that in the space between east and west the assumption of the language being the same is problematic. There is an element of 'native writing' in the '*Besser Wessi*' jokes (setting up the dichotomy of the arrogant know-all West German and the honest East German who feels lost in the new system). The language may be the same,

but there is a hybrid space of cultural production. Furthermore, as a western researcher approaching the issues in eastern Germany both as insider to the western system and outsider to the former GDR and the power structures of reunification, translation helped me explore relative positions.

Rather than view issues simply as problems of translation an approach informed by post-colonial studies and post-colonial writings can employ the concept of hybridity. Strategies of hybridity have been used by other geographers. Sharp (1994), exploring the writings of Salman Rushdie, argues that in relation to understandings of the nation-state 'a celebration of the hybrid position [...] presents one possibility for subverting the divisive and exclusionary national Self created in modernity' (74). Likewise Robinson (1994) proposes a reflexive, hybrid stance in moving from antiapartheid to postcolonial research in South Africa. Rose (1994) moves away from the relations of post-colonialism as historical process to use the approach as method in studies of Docklands. In adopting such a method, one cannot assume that even one's 'own' language is transparent (Keith and Pile, 1993). Such a strategy demands an engagement not only with foreign language from 'elsewhere' but also from 'home'. In the engagement *between* languages new, incommensurable, contrasting, fluid meanings de-naturalise the researcher's concepts. Issues of power and control are not removed. As a writing strategy it demands that differences, tensions and conflicts are explored, not as problems, but as spaces of conceptual and indeed political opportunities and negotiations.

6 Textual interpretation and analysis: discourses and limitations

In this final section, I address the broader issues of textual interpretation in the study. Berg (1989) defines qualitative research as applying to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things (*ibid.*, 2) which show social processes at work and which are themselves social products. Eyles says such research has:

'to uncover the nature of the social world through an understanding of how people act in and give meaning to their own lives [...] it reconstructs reality by revealing the taken-for-granted assumptions of individuals and groups in space' (Eyles, 1988, 1-2).

This view, while expressing something of the focus on meaning, assumes that the meanings are 'there' (Pile, 1991). Others argue that everyday human activities do not just 'appear vague and indefinite because we are still as yet ignorant of their true underlying nature, but that they are *really* vague' (Shotter quoted in Parker, 1990, 230; emphasis in original).

A prominent form of analysis of social meanings and social texts (in their broadest sense) is discourse analysis. In keeping with the argument that meanings are contested (Parker, 1992), several, often competing, definitions of discourse and discourse analysis emerge as several traditions utilise the terms (Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Potter *et al.*, 1990). These include speech theory in social psychology, social and cultural theory, and studies of the sociology of science. Gregory combines the second and third forms which concern this study most, defining social theory as discourse:

'[Discourse] is not just another word for 'conversation,' or if it is then it is conversation in a greatly enlarged sense. For discourse refers to all the ways in which we communicate with one another, to that vast network of signs, symbols, and practices through which we make our world(s) meaningful to ourselves and to others.' (Gregory, 1994, 11)

Discourse can also be manifested in particular and competing discourses (Parker, 1990; 1992). These are 'systems of statements which construct an object' and 'provide frameworks for debating the value of one way of talking about reality over other ways' (Parker, 1992, 4). Not all knowledge, language and meanings exist in specific discourses, nor is the meaning of any one concept fixed or limited to any particular discourse (which in itself is continually created and recreated, enforcing and reinforcing 'everyday interaction in relations of submission and domination', to employ concepts from Foucault; Parker, 1989, 63). As such 'discourses do not simply describe the social world, but categorise it, they bring phenomena into sight.' (Parker, 1992, 4). 'Discourses allow us to see things that are not "really" there, and [...] once an object has been elaborated in a discourse it is difficult not to refer to it as if it were real.' (*ibid.*, 5). Particular discourses become allied with specific relations of power and ideology affecting what 'can be seen'. As a way of exploring the constructions of power, ideology and meanings associated with and constructed in differing practices and objects in different contexts

discourse is important for an understanding of the processes of transformation in Leipzig.

While Potter *et al.* (1990) criticise this 'reification' of discourse (or discourses), Parker (1990) argues that there are three realms where 'things' have an ontological status, an epistemological status, and a moral/ political status (ideological location). However, there is 'no simple correspondence between things with ontological status (objects) and the things we¹² have given meaning to, talk about, know about' (*ibid.*, 228). In the 'third realm' things have a moral/ political status. When 'objects' or concepts are called into this third realm they can be treated 'as if' they were there (c.f. Potter and Wetherell, 1987, 3-6). Discourses, having come from this realm, therefore have epistemological status (Parker, 1990, 228). The epistemological realm is contested between the ontological realm (where it is largely translated by science) and the moral/ political realm (*ibid.*, 229). Many things therefore claim to represent the real when they actually represent 'items constructed in a political rhetoric' (*ibid.*). I will call these two types of epistemology 'materialisms' and 'discourse(s)'. If such things are social or political constructions and not 'real' then they are advanced for particular reasons or they are used unconsciously 'reflecting and reproducing dominant cultural forms of thought' (*ibid.*).

In a situation where 'paradigmatic change' is experienced, issues of power, ideology and control are fundamental. However, it is not enough to attempt to establish dominant discourses in this situation. In a time and place of changes, competing paradigms and ideologies the concept of trans-culturation is useful and necessary. It comes from post-colonial studies of literature (Pratt, 1992) and describes 'how subordinated and marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture' (*ibid.*, 6). In East Germany, with the exception of the area around Dresden, access to West German norms via West German television was long-standing and common, but it is very different to being part of that culture and society and experiencing first hand the massive changes in the organisation of society. One facet of the analysis is therefore to study what elements from the East and from the West are adopted or altered for a local or regional audience/ culture, and how and why this manifests itself specifically in relationships between the individual, the local area and the city in the political sphere and in the articulation of the public and the private.

At the same time, it is not sufficient to view current processes only as cultural or political discourse. There are patently great material, political, social and economic changes generated by the mixing of East and West. This is the limitation of an extreme post-structuralist approach which disconnects discourse from a form of materialism (Parker, 1992, 142). The lack of the situatedness of discourse in material events and practices is one which leads to issues of how to judge the relevance of research¹³ and the absence of this situatedness denies the evaluation of any progressive tendencies (see the volume edited by Linda Nicholson (1990) on this issue in the debate between post-modernism and feminism). Rather than constructing those participating in such discourses as 'always-already positioned', as limited always by the discourse, feminist critiques have argued that other factors, contexts and relations of power and ideology make the situation rather more fluid and changeable. One cannot therefore assume that a discourse will 'mean' the same in all places and to all people since its meaning is contextual and articulated: one cannot take discourses at face value (Probyn, 1990). That is why it is possible for the researcher (or others) to conceive of something as a 'discourse':

'To identify a discourse is to take a position, and the ability to step outside a discourse and to label it in a particular way is a function of both the accessing of dominant cultural meanings *and* the marginal (critical) position which the researcher takes (within or alongside another discourse or sub-culture or common sense).'
(Parker, 1990, 231)¹⁴

7 Conclusion

This research is based on principles of meaning construction, triangulation of research forms, reflexivity and the embodied presence and action of the researcher. It aims to assess the interconnected relationship between material changes during the GDR revolution and German reunification at a range of scales (nation, city, neighbourhood, group, individual) across time and space. In turn it seeks to understand how these intersect with meanings, concepts and ideas which may combine in different, often competing discourses around the proper development of the city and neighbourhoods, the position of the residents and the models of government and citizenship which are constructed as appropriate. Chapters four and five show how discourses from the revolution period were constructed not only through social texts but also

through embodied experiences (of state surveillance, housing conditions, environmental pollution, reclaiming public space, and so on). Such discourses and embodied experiences, as well as the physical and social forms of the city and neighbourhood were part of the legacy of the GDR in the processes of German reunification.

Chapters six to nine explore how the city and neighbourhoods were affected by reunification, how these processes became articulated differentially in place and the ways in which local action altered these processes. They explore the extent to which action in Leipzig, use of particular discourses or languages constituted, subverted or found alternative positions to the dominant western norms which form an overarching framework for any study of reunification. They also show how any attempt to see the East/West divide as the primary one is disrupted by experience, and how the very discourses and practices established can also act to constrain other changes.

1 Initially I included a sixth area, the huge edge-of-town estate built of state housing in the last 20 years, Grünau. This area contains approximately one fifth of Leipzig's population and was subsequently dropped from the list as its problems and issues were so different from the rest of the city and a team of social scientists from Leipzig University were engaged in an on-going project into the development of the area. In addition the size of the district put it beyond the scope of the study as a whole.

2 One cannot have completely presuppositionless research (Jones, 1985a) as discussed in section 4.

3 Although the text given here is in English the survey, as all other parts of the fieldwork, was conducted in German.

4 See chapter 9 for an explanation of the development of the party system from the GDR to FRG. In the local electoral system there are large multi-seat constituencies so that one area may have councillors from several different parties. Smaller areas may have no councillor from any party who considers that area their responsibility (such as the Neustädter Markt area).

5 Planners for Gohlis and Plagwitz were not available for interview. In the case of Gohlis this was countered with consultation of planning documents for the area. This was not possible for Plagwitz and remains as one of the limitations of the study.

6 These events and interviews are listed in sections A(a), B and C(a) in appendix 1.

7 The Leipziger Volkszeitung is not the only local newspaper. Other papers, such as *Wir in Leipzig* and the *Leipziger Tagesblatt* emerged after the Wende but subsequently folded. The Leipzig edition of the *Bild* newspaper, again owned by Springer still thrives in the area. However, the *LVZ* is the paper with the largest readership and with the most extensive local coverage of the city and the region. On average the paper, a medium-format broad-sheet, devoted between two and four full pages to local events and reports. As a random example, on 24/2/92 these pages reported on crime in the city, the fashion trade-fair in Leipzig, one thousand jobs to be created on a new industrial estate, a contact centre for mental health, the fur auctions [Leipzig was a long-established fur-trading centre], the local natural history museum, a festival at the women's cultural centre, anti-stress training

available, the visit of Greenpeace to the city market square, an antiques fair, the plans from the city environmental pressure group, Ökolöwe, for a change in the way the city is designed for work and traffic, Leipzig peace centre set up, a model train exhibition, a Red Cross collection, a new Singles Club in Leipzig, a ski holiday organised by the city youth department, readers' letters, and a full pages on the technicalities of housing renewal, tenants rights and rents levels, as well as a list of events and opening hours.

⁸ I chose to do this by hand because after unsuccessful attempts I discovered typing German involved too many capital letters and my typing was not equal to it.

⁹ *Besser Wessi....*the arrogant and all-knowing westerner.

¹⁰ See chapter 1.

¹¹ Here I would like to thank Professor Otto Stumpf, formerly of the Trade Academy, Dr. Stefen Wilsdorf of the University of Leipzig, Department of Sociology, and staff members at the Institute for Geography and Geoecology (now the Institute for Regional Studies), in particular Professor Grimm and Dr. Grundmann, for their time, information and patience.

¹² It is not clear from this statement who the 'we' is, the author, academics or people in general. What is clear from sections 3 and 4 is that there is no universal epistemological realm since meanings are contextual.

¹³ I would like to thank Mark Boyle for this point.

¹⁴ The question addressed in the earlier sections of the chapter is how the researcher sustains this position inside and outside a context.

Chapter 4

Constructions of citizenship and state in the GDR and the 1989 revolution

1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the models of government, participation and citizenship of the GDR. It shows the ways they varied between different scales and looks at divergent constructions of the relation between state and population prior to and during the 1989 revolution. The chapter asks about the involvement of the population in various official and unofficial forms of participation and the ways in which these formed the basis of the local political geography of the revolution as articulated in Leipzig. It also looks at the limitations against which the revolution reacted to create a non-state public sphere of local action. The effects of these developments in Leipzig are explored through an account of the *Wende* and the period up to reunification while later chapters explore the ways in which these experiences affect attempts to define an 'East German' form of local citizenship in response to the processes of reunification. The chapter therefore shows how citizenship in the GDR was not uncontested, despite the apparently monolithic power of the GDR state/party/government, exploring some of the ways in which discontent with official views was expressed, either in written form or in the performance of everyday life. It establishes a basis for understanding the extent of disruption and discontinuity in the normative expectations of citizenship which occurred in and through the revolution and reunification processes, and similarly allows for a later appreciation of the extent of continuity across time.

Any retrospective account of the GDR faces the problem of finding appropriate sources. In the GDR even official documents involved often much rhetoric and false reporting of events. Publications were strictly controlled in the GDR so the scope for finding contemporary critical reflections is limited. The chapter therefore relies on the few academic studies published in East and West on city and neighbourhood participation and on collections of primary source material from the *Wende* period (speeches, photographs, newspaper articles, and so on).

2 Power relations in the GDR

The main concern of this section is to utilise the tensions between the 'official', 'dominant' and 'oppositional' forms of citizen-state relations in order to explore the contested interpretations of citizenship and participation in the GDR, up to, and including the revolution in autumn 1989 and following developments up to reunification in October 1990. In other words, the section is not concerned with necessarily finding the correct interpretation of such relations in the GDR but with the different ways in which they were constructed and the effect of these constructions on subsequent developments.

2.1 Official forms of GDR action

The 'leading role' of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) was established in the GDR constitution¹ and, although other parties and social organisations such as the Free German Youth (FDJ), trade unions (FDGB) or women's organisation (DFD) had representatives in assemblies at all levels, it was the SED whose structures effectively shadowed the state structures, providing a control and rendering the state and SED effectively inseparable. Within this close relation, official views constructed the GDR state (including the whole state and SED party organisation) as the 'guardian state' (Heinrich, in Neues Forum, 1989, 15) taking care of the needs of the whole population 'from the cradle to the grave'. Typically this was not described as the 'nanny state', but as 'Vaterstaat', 'father state' (Böhm, 1993, 152). This is partly linguistic (the grammatical gender of 'state' is masculine) but it also indicates the paternalistic and authoritarian relationship between state/ Party and citizens. Yet for many, involvement was based on convictions. As one SED member wrote with hindsight in late 1989: 'Did we not join [the Party] in order to build a society where, free from exploitation, no one need be another's enemy, where togetherness, solidarity, friendliness count, where people could feel at ease?' (Neues Forum, 1989, 88).

Similar ideals of involvement and participation were found in the way the structures of the GDR's socio-political order were constitutionally bound into the National Front, which included all political parties and mass organisations, 'united in communal action for the development of

socialist society' (article 3, §2, GDR constitution: DDR, 1990b). Not only was the right to co-determination (*Mitbestimmung*) of the 'political, economic, social and cultural life of the socialist community and the socialist state' guaranteed (article 21, §1), it was also a 'socialist moral duty' (article 19, §3).

The main form of 'participation' in the GDR (as in other communist countries) was participation in economic production within the planned economy, as expressed in the constitutional phrase of the GDR 'Work with us, plan with us, govern with us'. Production was organised around work teams and brigades and the main organisation of the SED was in workplace organisations. The aims of this participation were primarily to increase production through socialist competition and to create communist attitudes to work (Höhmnn and Seidenstreicher, 1980). Other forms of societal participation were subsidiary to participation at work.

However, involvement in parties and social organisations was strongly encouraged. Such involvement in what were by definition parts of the state was seen as a crucial legitimisation and particular achievement of the GDR. As one GDR academic wrote:

'the exercise of political power in socialism implies a historically unprecedented right: the right to involve the vast majority of the population in political events as active citizens who are aware of their own interests. This right, although it also has a moral basis, primarily reflects an existential condition of socialist society. [...] Socialist democracy is indeed always the expression of governmental political power, but it is also closely linked to the socialist way of life in general: the socialist mode of life is marked by an active involvement in the management of public affairs.' (Richter, 1989, 243)

'Participation' therefore included both representative functions and any form of involvement in social actions. Statistics showing high levels of party membership, participation in mass organisations, voter turnout and single list support at near 100%, participation in law commissions, as lay judges (*Schöffen*), in elected or delegated office, and so on, were therefore used by the state to indicate the 'legitimising responses from ever-larger numbers of people' (Krisch, 1982, 113). Western commentators, although sceptical of the quality of such participation (Dennis, 1988), noted the significance of the participation as a 'potential

for social integration and identification and their possible use as genuine instruments of citizen influence' (Baylis, 1976, 43).

Interestingly, being a representative at an assembly of some level (from urban sub-district to Volkskammer) was also seen as a form of participation which 'influenced the relationship between citizen and state and the citizen's willingness to participate actively in dealing with public affairs at both national and local levels' (Richter, 1989, 244). As such the official textbook on 'Scientific Socialism' for universities listed the numbers of local representatives,² while Richter stressed that around 40,000 people in Rostock (one quarter of those of working age) were involved in some way in local administration (in honorary positions, for example) (1989, 246). A much wider range of involvement was considered participatory in the GDR and therefore was seen as confirming the positive relation between state and society. The western academic, Thomas Baylis, argued that such forms meant 'participation opportunities [were] indeed more equitably distributed and widely utilised than in any capitalist society' (Baylis, 1976, 31), particularly if one avoided using western categories of analysis. The primary functions of such participation were essentially 'political socialisation and moral education, and building close patterns of identification between the citizen and the regime and ruling ideology' (*ibid.*, 33). In these terms frequent reference was made to:

"consultation" and "advice", to the reception of obligatory reports (*Rechenschaftsberichte*) from officials, to popular vigilance in assuring the correct implementation of the Party's will, to deputies maintaining "close contact" with their constituents, to enlisting "engaged political commitment for the socialist present and future", and so on.' (*ibid.*)

However, there were few references to decision-making:

'although citizens' participation is repeatedly referred to as constituting the "exercise of power", power is not linked to direct influence over decisions.' (*ibid.*, 33)

Few studies were able to address what such participation meant to those involved. However, one study by Chamberlayne (1990) gives an account of the political meaning of participation in the GDR. Using the two main theoretical approaches of pluralism and totalitarianism, she explored the meanings which local government officials in the towns of Riesa and Treptow attached to participation in neighbourhood organisations. She

found that their main purpose was integration, usually convincing the population of the good intentions, achievements and difficulties of the state, particularly through a personalised approach and using petitions. They showed no fear or resentment of participation. The main approach was 'paternalistic, placatory' but there were conflicting views of participation here too. Local officials showed some signs of frustration with the official rhetoric of participation. Interestingly participation was most difficult in run-down areas (although Kahl, 1983, found reduced willingness to participate in new large housing estates). Councillors were also frustrated with their restricted role, especially as the 'official' rhetoric and action seemed to be gaining ground with the appointment of new cadres from industrial backgrounds rather than from academia, for example, where Chamberlayne found more evidence of questioning and demands for spontaneity. The study therefore showed variations in political meaning and practices of participation in the GDR. Chamberlayne also showed that the western perspectives of totalitarianism and pluralism were as much outcomes of the Cold War and détente as they were reflections of what was happening in the GDR. Both perspectives were over-simplifications and aspects of both could be found among different groups in the GDR.

Among the range of participation available, SED membership was seen to offer most privileges. Some 2 million citizens were members (Dennis, 1988). Those outside the party saw these as privileged positions, particularly helping career prospects. However, by the time of the 1989 revolution participatory forms could not hide the tensions between official discourses and experience of actual implementation. Even within the SED critical voices decried the 'rosy glow' of ignorance and false reporting which characterised much of the state and Party official view of the country:

'Veiled as "Party Discipline", the administration, personal dependencies and an electoral system which has in fact led to the non-removability of higher leadership prevent the will of the basis of the party from having the appropriate influence. The levels of hierarchy act like a filter on the flows of information, ideas and problems within the party. From the bottom to the top the 'practice of painting things in rosy colours' [*Schönfärberei*] pervades, and from the top to the bottom an obsession with secrecy. "At the top" one sits in a rosy glow, "at the bottom" they sit in the dark - that is no way to illuminate united revolutionary deeds. We must therefore create new democratic structures from the bottom up. Now. [...] The well-known revelatory-theoretical circle "That

which is true is that which adheres to the party line" is harmful for the future, and just as politically damaging is the Stalinist type of viewpoint which pervades our fractions, platform discussions and public controversial debates.' (quoted in Neues Forum, 1989, 188-189, from a public discussion in Leipzig of the renewal of the SED on 3/11/89)

2.2 Official and dominant discourses: tensions and opposition

Writings and experiences from the time of the *Wende* explode the myth of the GDR as 'the most stable socialist state in eastern Europe' (Brown, J.H., 1988, 262). This is not to say that the GDR population suddenly emerged as a highly motivated and politicised nation. Jens Reich, one of the founders of New Forum talks of the obsession the GDR regime had with maintaining 'uniformity of opinion' (Reich, 1990, 66) and the way the state took care of the citizen's every need. He argued this produced the ironic situation that 'together they had created a population so dependent and reliant on the authority of the State that finally no hand was raised to save the old order when it came into crisis' (*ibid.*, 79). There was, it seems, a tension between the 'official' political culture which the previous section describes and what others have called the 'dominant' or 'mass' political culture, by which they mean the 'privately held values' and actions of the majority of the population (Volkmer, 1984, 18). This was summarised by Günter Gaus' phrase '*Nischengesellschaft*', or 'niche society'. He argued the predominant political culture was marked by a retreat from public action to private spheres, family and friends (Gaus, 1983). Studies of school pupils, for example, show that even from an early age children were aware of the division between what was said and done publicly (membership of the Pioneer and FDJ youth organisations, giving the necessary answers in political education classes at school) and what views were held privately (see Smith, F.M., forthcoming; Lemke, 1991). Others criticised this dominant position as one of resignation and an unwillingness to take responsibility, since the state/party were always to blame (Bohley, 1992). A third type of political culture in the GDR was identified as 'oppositional' and involved individuals and groups who were actively engaged in challenging the status quo of the state. This developed especially after the late 1970s, often through the peace movement, green movements, human rights and women's groups, and, perhaps with a less obviously political content, in a series of youth subcultures (Büscher and Wensierski, 1984; Gransow, 1987; Lemke, 1986). The interaction of official, dominant and oppositional cultures, and in

particular the strong tensions between the official state discourses and the practices and views dominant in everyday life in the GDR, and the often repressive reactions of the state to any forms of oppositional action together form a basis from which the GDR revolution developed.

The language of the GDR revolution period expresses particularly the tensions between official and experienced 'reality'. Linguistically the German term '*vormundschaftliche Staat*' (guardian state) has connotations implying the 'adult' state and party sought to be the guardian to a 'juvenile' citizenry, creating the citizens as child-like subjects to a regime which denied its citizens the right to form its own opinions. The repeated phrase used is '*Entmündigung*' (literally taking away someone's mouth), a legal term translated as 'legal incapacitation'³ or 'to declare someone incapable of managing their own affairs', particularly in relation to mental illness when a person is certified and the right to vote is removed. It has the force of removing the right to be treated as an adult and responsible member of society. The related term '*bevormunden*' means to 'treat like a child' and more generally 'to make up someone's mind for them'.

Table 4.1 illustrates responses from the revolution of 1989 to this situation. Whether in the overall control of information and decision-making by state or Party (New Forum) or in the workplace (local resident), citizens were excluded from exercising 'mature' and 'adult' decision-making. The typical response was one of resignation, 'Why bother? It's not worth it.' The metaphor of the whole country as a 'boring Sunday afternoon'⁴ where nothing happens and there is nothing to do expresses the alienation in a situation where getting annoyed (anonymous) or even making jokes about the government is pointless (New Forum representatives). The loss of population to the West and the state's response that 'one should not weep any tears for their loss' (Neues Forum, 1989, 61) finally provided the catalyst for change. The state, remote from its people, unwavering in its goals and ignoring the population 'endangers its future' and its population through the risk of violent reaction (Leipzig Theatre employees). Instead of violence, however, the population rescued themselves. The revolution therefore was constructed as showing a 'spirit of maturity' (Heinrich, in Neues Forum, 1989, 9). In the revolution, the population demanded its political and civic adulthood in having its say: 'The first civic duty is *Mündigkeit*

[maturity and having a voice]' (Public debate report, 6/11/89, Neues Forum, 1989).⁵

Table 4.1: State - population relationship

New Forum 25/10/89	"The ruling structures build on the fact that a ruling elite has access to all information, data, research results, because: Knowledge is power! At the same time this ruling elite controls all the ways that this educational privilege can be institutionalised, via the policies of cadre creation, censorship and creating laws. The whole population was thereby denied the right to make its own decisions [<i>entmündigt</i>] and damned to speechlessness and half-knowledge ..."
Local resident 25/9/89	"In the trade union [...] there was a party group which was always called together before decisions. The rest of us then were just supposed to agree to what the party members had already decided. "
Anonymous, September 1989	" 'Why are you getting worked up about it? It is pointless anyway,' was our favourite sentence."
New Forum representatives 17/12/89	"In the end the whole country was nothing but one single boring Sunday afternoon. [...] We were too tired to make jokes about the government. Everything had been said."
Declaration by employees at the Leipzig Theatre, 11/10/89	"A country which cannot hold its young people any more endangers its future. A state leadership which no longer speaks with its people is not believable. A party leadership which does not continue to question its principles as to their utility is sentenced to decline. A people forced into silence will begin to be violent."

Source: Neues Forum (1989).

In the revolution the population was in one way constructed as the object of the subordinating actions of the state and Party (writer, table 4.2). This removed from the population any blame or responsibility for the situation in the GDR. The population was cast as victim and the state/Party as joint perpetrators. However, Bärbel Bohley described this situation in the GDR as one of 'organised irresponsibility' (Bohley, 1992, 78). Emphasis was still placed on the state/Party as organiser but the 'irresponsibility' of the citizens came to subvert their ascribed role as victim (student). This contrasted with the proclaimed state aim of the active socialist citizen (Academy of Arts). The function of the internal secret services (the *Stasi* and others) in controlling through fear the disparities between experience and rhetoric was such that the population

was made complicit with the acceptance of these tensions (Sächsisches Tageblatt).

Table 4.2: Responsibility in the GDR

Writer, 4/11/89	[The state is characterised] by "corruption, abuse of office, theft of the People's property, [...] bureaucracy, spying, misuse of power, removal of the voice [<i>Entmündigung</i>] and even crimes. A structure developed to which many good, clever and honest people had to submit if they did not want to leave the country."
Student, 11/9/89	"A system which functioned so well and managed not only to divide the people from other countries but from themselves within the country - it really was supported by the majority. The people should understand that when they demand 'revenge' today. It was not 15 people who were afraid but 15 million who allowed themselves to be tricked."
Declaration by the Academy of Arts of the GDR, 4/10/89	"[Reality] stands in direct opposition to the picture promoted of the responsible citizen."
Sächsisches Tageblatt newspaper, 15/11/89	"This 'apparatus' [<i>Stasi</i>] is above all directed inwardly and has spied on the people for forty years and held them in check and thus has become the most hated part of the old power ."

Source: Neues Forum (1989).

GDR sociologists, Mühler and Wilsdorf (1991, 37) define the dominant culture as: 'not being allowed to take care of one's own affairs [...], self-sacrifice, [...] belief in authority, lack of criticism, obedience, lack of responsibility, striving for consumption.' These were not the features which the official political culture of the GDR envisaged in its rhetoric, but they were a direct effect of it. While western observers typically described the GDR as a society where in contrast to official rhetorics of involvement the retreat to the private, familial and non-ideological sphere had become dominant (Gaus, 1983), others argue this was also true in West Germany (Volkmer, 1984, 18). However, what was significant in the GDR was the contradiction between this apparent retreat and official policy encouraging active participation as a right and duty of the socialist citizen and as a legitimating feature of the established order (although given the numbers of people involved in a whole variety of

organisations there was clearly a wide-spread participation in some form or other).

Survey data analysed by GDR social scientists Förster and Roski (1990) show that levels of conviction towards the SED, the system of government and the principal tenets of state policy declined dramatically in the mid to late 1980s. The contradictions between official proclamations and day-to-day experience grew more and more obvious. Lemke (1991) sees in these the 'origins of the *Wende*' (1). Her study explores the hypothesis of a growing disparity in the GDR between the 'official legitimization of rules, which constituted the official political culture of the GDR leadership, and the dominant political culture which actually existed and structured the micromilieu of day-to-day life and created a peculiar double political culture' (*ibid.*, 13). The system-typical form of political socialisation was characterised by a 'deep contradiction' (*ibid.*) since while the official political culture called on the creation of active socialist citizens working together towards the creation of a more socialist society, they were only encouraged if forms were appropriate to the goals of party and state, and were rewarded or punished accordingly. The experience from school onwards was that what was required was not to change society but to conform. 'Therefore the double culture manifested itself especially in the socialisation of the younger generations where there were crass differences between official goals, language and programmatic, and practical experience and independent decision-making.' (*ibid.*). These disparities between 'official reality' and 'experienced reality' were expressed in many quotations from the period of the *Wende* (table 4.3) and were formulated as forms of 'self-delusion' or mental illness.

Table 4.3: Disparities in official and dominant cultures

Artist, 23/10/89	"they pretended all was well "
Leader of the Liberal Party in the GDR, 30/9/89	"Self-representation of our country and its reality are miles apart"
New Forum information sheet, 18/10/89	"A false, even schizophrenic consciousness was created of and in this society. Politics and official proclamations got into an ever more crass contradiction of the actual developments in GDR-society."

Source: Neues Forum (1989).

The state's final delusion was to carry on with the GDR's fortieth anniversary celebrations in the face of the crisis of the state. That it took Gorbachev's comments ('Those who come late will be punished by history'; Reich, 1990, 85) to make the delusion clear is perhaps a particular irony. Within this framework, then, the events of autumn 1989 constituted a realisation that the relationships between state, party and citizen, and between citizens could be altered, creating a new identity.

In a re-evaluation of the relation to the state, the adult (father)/ State position was questioned by many people who described the incompetence, inabilities and extreme old age of the country's rulers. The country was 'ruled by ancients' (Neues Forum, 1989, 263) and the 'gerontocrats in the Politbüro of the SED were unable to learn and incompetent in reacting to the crisis of the state' (*ibid.*, 9). At most the 'Big Brother' function of the secret services had held together the State's failing authority. This new questioning of the state marked a change in the relative positions between subject and object. Now the state and political structures of the GDR were to 'match the will of the people' (*ibid.*) rather than the state socialising the population to be good socialist citizens matching state requirements. An important feature of this period (mid-October 1989) was the way in which reforms were viewed as creating a truly socialist form of democracy, in other words the state had failed on its own terms (Journalist, 16/10/89: 'the permanent way of addressing the citizen simply as the person "carrying out" policy does not match socialist democracy as it should be and must be'; Neues Forum, 1989, 108). By late December a long series of revelations had emerged showing party and state corruption, secret service influence, bankruptcy in the national economy and huge debt. Even for those who supported the principles of socialism, this meant coming to terms with the main political justifications for the existence of the state and the necessity for the division between East and West, as manifested in the Berlin Wall:

'One can not longer use the word "socialism" without being reminded of what happened in its name. In the name of this word a people was betrayed - all who once understood it to be a communal life, a communal desire and who had the hope the goal was worth the effort it would cost.' (Conductor of Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, 29/12/89; Neues Forum, 1989, 275)

3 Local political institutions in the GDR

Local government in the GDR was referred to as the '*örtliche Volksvertretung*' or 'local representation of the People' (Petzold and von der Heide, 1991, 18). These were part of the local level of state administration with the duties, rights and tasks of the local levels determined centrally (*ibid.*, 19). Councillors made up the local assembly in towns and districts and, in the largest towns such as Leipzig, in urban sub-districts. This 'elected' a local executive council (*Rat*) which reported to the assembly and to the higher levels of the state as the 'executive and responsible organs of the people's representations' (*ibid.*, 17). The local executive councils (*Räte*) were formally elected by the local assemblies but they were recruited, trained and assigned by the appropriate ministries and party bodies in Berlin operating through the cadre system (*Kaderpolitik*). Local administrators were therefore responsible to both the assemblies and the central ministry. It is clear that conflicts could arise and that the control of the executive by the assembly was not assured.

Each council had a series of permanent commissions on aspects of local concern and these were forums for qualified citizens to influence the councils. While budgets were allocated from the Centre there was some scope for deciding priorities for spending. The fundamental principles of GDR government and policy were, however, not open to debate:

'Local governments have no independent right of policy initiative; all local policy must be derived from explicit authorising legislation or a ministerial order at the national level.' (Scharf, 1984, 34)

City urban sub-districts were run along similar lines but were subordinate to the city council. In common with all other levels of the state, however, the local councils were also in practice subject to approval of actions and decisions by the SED at the appropriate levels. In addition to higher levels of administration they were highly dependent on the decisions of economic and industrial ministries and combines in relation to the scope for local action.⁶

3.1 The neighbourhood in the GDR as site of official and dominant political culture

The lowest scale of state organisation in the GDR outside the workplace was in neighbourhoods and building collectives. Work was officially privileged as the main arena for collective organisation and action, with many welfare arrangements, social events and political activities being focussed at work rather than in the residential area. Local neighbourhoods, in contrast, were seen as a site of the contradictions between official and dominant political cultures in the GDR. 'Lifestyle Researchers' in the GDR attempted to define the neighbourhood's importance as a basis for having a 'happy life' (Kahl, Wilsdorf and Herbert, 1984, 136). They found two-thirds of the day was spent there and that the majority of free time was spent in the home. The most important features for a happy life were found to be a harmonious family life, an interesting job, and a good home (Niederländer, 1984; Autorenkollektiv, 1987). Only SED members excluded from work through age or illness, for example, were organised at the neighbourhood level. The non-work sphere was therefore regarded as an inferior space since the major basis for identification was with the work collective and not the 'petit bourgeois' or 'capitalist' relations with residential areas or housing property. However, all parties together formed the National Front which organised in local neighbourhood committees (*Wohnbezirksausschüsse*, WBA), as did the FDJ youth organisation and the DFD women's movement (Zimmermann, 1985). While some undertook a range of actions, other WBAs only became active at elections, when they had to hold candidates' meetings and ensure the population went to vote (Scharf, 1984).

Through these and other formal institutions (house collectives, local arbitration commissions to settle disputes or discipline parents or children or the like, older people's welfare clubs) the state and parties tried to develop a 'socialist way of living'. The party leadership thought 'citizens should be active in their neighbourhoods, which meant participating in various political and social organisations at the residential area level', which would in turn strengthen socialist democracy (Lemke, 1991, 211). However, although a survey in the early 1980s showed 55% of the population were socially active, this included all areas of involvement from Kindergarten to social activities and house collectives rather than specifically political involvement, and the most

active were those already involved in party politics in some way (*ibid.*, 215). Centralised administrative structures were neither flexible enough nor responsive enough to facilitate action from higher levels on problems raised by such groupings. Only where official and dominant political cultures coincided, namely in the official desire for local participation and improvement of housing and residential areas and the dominant desire for a good housing environment and better housing, was participation higher (*ibid.*, 217). Otherwise projects for the 'mobilisation for co-determination and participation' of the citizens in town and regional planning in response to state citizen rights and duties were poor, espousing 'democratic' values in rhetoric but not facilitating independent activities or local decision-making (*ibid.*, 215).

Frustration with the lack of change or progress resulted in withdrawal and cynicism. Withdrawal to the private sphere often involved allotment clubs⁷ or weekend houses and gardens (Lemke, 1991). Both were essentially private, or at most associational forms. Kahl *et al.* (1984, 139) characterise this as 'protection against the demands of formal, political participation which are too great'. The party demand for democratic structures to encourage mobilisation and participation at the neighbourhood level could not match the central-administrative structures nor the political self-understanding of the centre and in the light of unchanged housing and construction policies, dominant values stressed the value of the home as private sphere beyond the state, as a means of achieving a certain material standard of living and as a focus for traditional local attachments.

In general, therefore, there were extensive modes of formal involvement while many retreated to private material values and social connections. The question then arises of how such dichotomies became expressed in the public spheres, sites, forms and nature of protest in the public realm, rooted in particular places and times, in this case Leipzig in autumn 1989.

4 Creating a public sphere and utilising public space

In 1989 both main public forms of protest against the existing system in the GDR, the waves of GDR citizens leaving for the West via Czechoslovakia or Hungary and the mass public demonstrations, challenged and redefined the control of the public sphere and public

space by state and Party, even transgressing the boundaries of the state. They represented an emergence of at least some sectors of the population from the private sphere. Throughout the GDR's history the public sphere was highly circumscribed (Förster and Roski, 1990), as were the regulations for leaving and entering the state area of the GDR. Public demonstrations were allowed only when ordered by one of the parties. At the main annual demonstrations on 1st May and the anniversary of the founding of the GDR (7th October) banners were issued and slogans (*Parole*) determined by the SED/state at the centre. Any other protests or demonstrations were dealt with severely⁸ and other uses of public space, such as busking were deemed a threat and were banned. Opportunities for organising local clubs or associations were limited to those sanctioned by the state and all belonged to the *Kulturbund*, cultural association, or to other mass organisations.

Churches offered the only semi-public area for meeting not under state control (Simmons, 1989; Tismaneanu, 1989; Grabner et al., 1990; Dennis, 1993). During the 1980s churches were increasingly the focus for activities not sanctioned by the state, such as ecology, human rights and peace groups. Although some other small groups survived outside the churches, there was little national or regional networking.⁹ Therefore in Leipzig 'when in the GDR the societal questions became so urgent that one had to have a place to talk about them, the Monday meeting at 5 p.m. in the Nikolai church was the only place where there was a public space [*Öffentlichkeit*] for that.' (Leipzig Theologian, 14/12/89; Neues Forum, 1989, 288).

For those protesting against, or deemed to be opponents of the state, the ultimate sanction in the GDR was either imprisonment or exile, closure to the GDR internally or exclusion from the GDR. Applying to leave or attempting to flee the GDR 'represented for broad sections of the population the dominant form of political resistance' (Förster and Roski, 1990, 36). Exile became the aim of many, particularly young people disillusioned with the GDR. Some churches, including St. Nikolai in Leipzig, became meeting places for 'exile applicants' while waiting long periods for applications to be processed (Magirius, 1990). Protest up to September 1989 therefore often involved the removal of oneself from the territory and citizenship of the GDR and consequently from the system of socialism as practised there.

Huge increases in the numbers of people leaving the GDR in the summer and early autumn of 1989 became one of the catalysts for protesters who decided they wanted to stay. In late September 1989 the dominant chant at demonstrations changed from 'We want out [of the GDR]' (the chant of those seeking to leave) to 'We are staying here'. This too was deemed to challenge the state since one reason posited for the long existence of Stalinist structures in the GDR is that oppositional forces could always be exiled to the 'capitalist West' in the form of the FRG, whereas now the protest was directed at changing the GDR rather than distancing oneself from it. Demonstrations were criminalised in the language of the media and Party statements as an 'illegal mob' (LVZ, 9/10/89), counter-revolutionaries and '*staatsfeindlich*', enemies of the state (LVZ, 8/10/89) involved in a 'malicious campaign against the state' (LVZ, 30/9/89). Reinforcing the unsuitability of public protest as a legitimate form in the GDR, demonstrations were branded a capitalist form of protest with no place in the GDR (editorial, LVZ, 10/10/89).

Those involved in the demonstrations in the GDR spoke of them as a direct challenge to the status quo of relationships in the GDR. Schneider (1990) records the appearance of chants and banners demanding a reformed GDR: 'We are the people!' and 'Free elections' (9/10/89); 'We are grown up, Father State'; 'The leading role for the people' (16/10/89). The new politics of the demonstrations in Leipzig and elsewhere in the autumn of 1989 were seen, at the time, as objects of wonder (local resident, table 4.4), transforming the subject position of demonstrators from objects to subjects, 'walking tall' ('*den aufrechten Gang gehen*': radio interview):

'We learned that we were in the position to bring down a government [...] With no great effort we brought down the government. It was beautiful and very easy. It was easy because this government was morbid [dying] and wobbling to its bones.' (New Forum leaders, 17/12/89; New Forum, 1989, 26-27, emphasis in original)

The thrust of arguments at this time was generally towards new forms of openness. The creation of public discussion, public dialogue, the public sphere [*Öffentlichkeit*] and openness [*Offenheit*] was a key to the transformation of the old system which had been based on the reverse. The GDR's civic movement organisations adopted a political style of open-ended policy-making. The structures of government, the security

services, party politics and the media (New Forum, 9/9/89) were all to be subjected to an opening up to the problems of the country and to public scrutiny.¹⁰ The other openings which occurred, namely the physical opening of the borders to West Germany, also endangered reforms of the GDR. New Forum (14/11/89) expressed this by using the term '*ausbluten*', to lose blood, bleed to death to describe the drain of people heading West so that an important aim of public action was building an 'identity' with the country, a rootedness in place, creating a country where people wanted to stay (Speaker of New Forum; Conductor, Leipzig Gewandhaus).

Table 4.4: The new politics of openness and identity

Local resident, 6/11/89	"It is wonderful to experience such a thing. The people feel freer, they talk more openly with each other, no longer have so much fear of each other. They have now recognised their strength. Solidarity is the strength of the weak."
Radio interview, 27/10/89	"Here [in the demonstrations in Leipzig] the GDR-citizen is practising the upright walk. In the demonstrations with very very few exceptions it is not people looking for a rabble but rather it is about people finding their worth again. It is that which motivates the citizens and not some kind of material goods [...]. They are demanding civil and human rights. That shows the maturity of this movement."
New Forum's first declaration, 9/9/89	"We want to live in this country and it makes us ill to have to watch doing nothing as attempts to democratise and attempts at societal analysis are criminalised or ignored. We demand here and now public dialogue with all parties and groups. We demand the opening up of the media for these problems. We demand changes in these unbearable circumstances."
New Forum information sheet, 14/11/89	"The danger of the GDR bleeding dry [<i>Ausbluten</i>] is real, and of course we have an interest in working for the development of something like a GDR-identity which after forty years of orders from above now perhaps has the opportunity of growing from below."
Speaker for New Forum, 9/11/89	"The New Forum understands itself as a movement for political renewal within the GDR and is concerned to build up a new identity of the citizens with our country. Through political action every individual should be able to root themselves here and be encouraged to stay."
Conductor Leipzig Gewandhaus, 27/10/89	"One really wants to love the country where one lives, one wants to be proud of it."

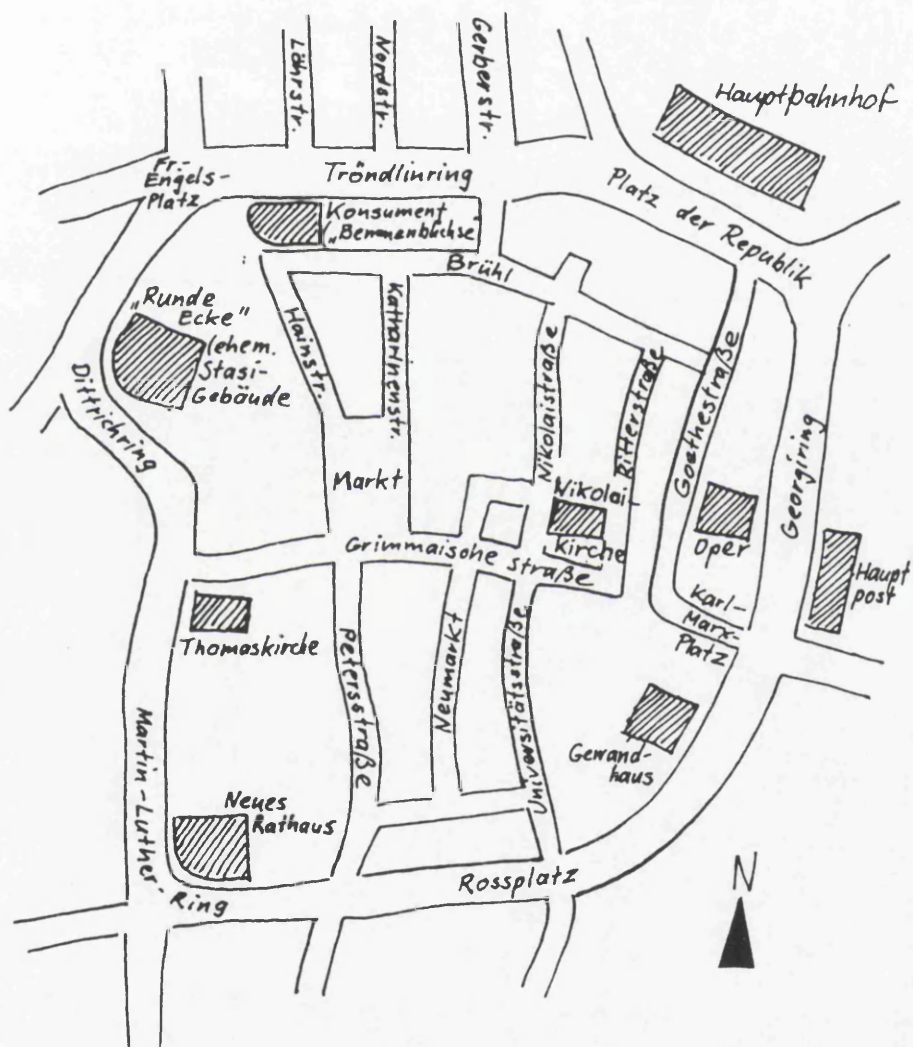
Source: Neues Forum (1989).

The emerging themes were constructed around discourses of openings and openness/ publicness and related to key issues of the relation between citizen and state, the relation of the population to the country as place and to physical forms of the new openness in the shape of the borders of the country, symbolised most strongly by the opening of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, in the appropriation of public space from state control, and in intermittent time-space geographies of new public spaces of debate and dialogue. All of these forms had the effect of transforming state institutions at all levels from the state to the neighbourhood.

The demonstrations in Leipzig followed a weekly pattern and marked the establishment of the legitimacy of public protest in public spaces in the city, creating a new link between the citizens and their urban environment. A sketch map (figure 4.1) included in *Neues Forum* (1989) identifies sites on the demonstration route in Leipzig which helped to dismantle the GDR system. Demonstrations began at the Nikolaikirche in the city centre where peace prayers had been taking place every Monday at 5pm since 1982. Then they moved out into the wide spaces of the Karl-Marx-Square,¹¹ one of the 'representative' spaces created by the GDR central government (see chapter 5) and flanked by the major sites of Leipzig's high culture - the Gewandhaus, the Opera and the University. The space was particularly significant as its name and its form stood, as Ignatieff (1993) later argued 'as the public desert at the heart of a vanished regime. It is a monument to the DDR's terror of public space and human spontaneity' (47). The demonstrators then moved down the Ring to the Main Station (*Hauptbahnhof*), then turning towards the corner where the Stasi headquarters for Leipzig were located, the 'Round Corner' (*Runde Ecke*) and past the New Town Hall (*Neues Rathaus*), the seat of local government in Leipzig. Therefore church, public space normally reserved for official party demonstrations, sites of culture and learning, commerce, transport, state security and local government were all involved in the establishment of new public spaces.

Photographs and films of the events (figure 4.2) show the highly symbolic appropriation of the city's streets by the population. It was not only that public spaces were being used without being organised by the

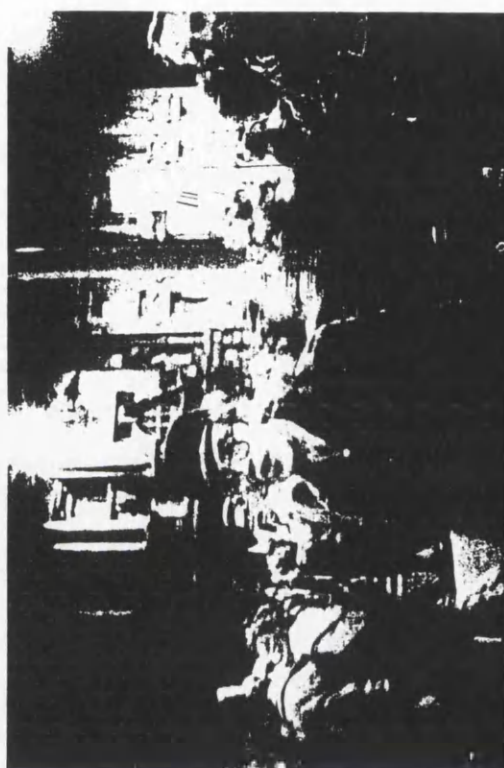
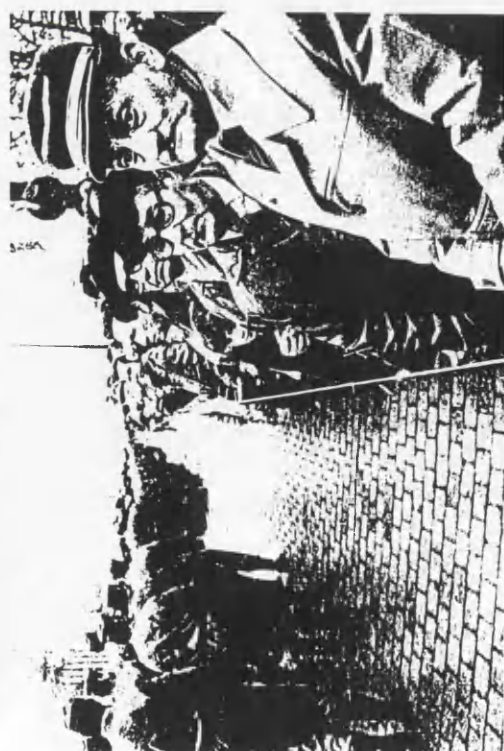
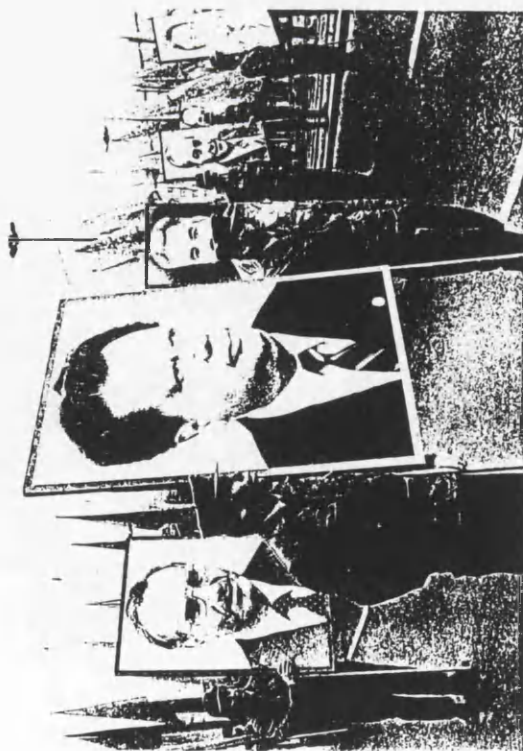
Figure 4.1: Sites of protest and resistance in Leipzig, autumn 1989



Source: Neues Forum Leipzig (1989), p30.

Figure 4.2: Formalised public space, 1st May 1989 (left)
Uncontrolled public spaces, autumn 1989 (right)

Source: Neues Forum Leipzig (1989), pp23, 148.



state. The marches had a qualitatively different form to the controlled GDR rallies:

'I felt very different from something like the 1st May. Because it is voluntary and has a purpose, going on the streets on a Monday. No-one ordered these people to be there, we march because we have demands.' (Local resident, Leipzig, in Neues Forum, 1989, 116)

4.1 Public debate and dialogue

As a challenge to the state, the public demonstrations were not the only forms of action. On 9th October 1989 various personalities in Leipzig and three local SED politicians called for dialogue and public debate (Schneider, 1990). The ensuing period of discussion and debates (October and November 1989) was not a simple victory for the street protests in forcing or convincing the authorities to talk with the population. By 11th October the Central Committee of the SED had declared that it too desired to have 'dialogue' as the core of the GDR's political culture (LVZ, 12/10/89), but suggestions which would change the constitutional basis of the GDR were rejected in advance. The SED therefore sought to preserve its constitutionally guaranteed right to lead. When he replaced Honecker, Egon Krenz adopted dialogue as his own approach (LVZ, 20/10/89).

The SED leadership viewed 'dialogue' [*Dialog*] as a way of removing people from the streets to a controllable public situation, arguing how 'most of those at the discussion make no bones about the fact that they consider the street to be the wrong place for a dialogue on questions which move the citizens or for the expression of differences of opinion either' (LVZ, 11/10/89) and 'nothing can be solved with demonstrations which have not been permitted. I am very much in favour of talking about all questions. But is the street the right place for it?' (letter to LVZ, 11/10/89). Newspaper articles stressed the need for calm and reasoned debate rather than the unorganised and unorganisable power of the streets: 'What we really want and need now is open dialogue with all citizens carried out with patience and convincing arguments' (editorial, LVZ, 11/10/89).

Differences in strategy between the SED-sponsored debates and others organised by people aligned with the demonstrations are clear. The main debates organised by the originators of the calls for dialogue in Leipzig took place on Sunday or Saturday mornings, among others, while the SED

discussions were timed to coincide with the Monday evening demonstrations. The contradiction emerged between the need for public political debate without fear of state and party reprisals and the desire by government and party to control the debate. Other attacks on street protests (which remained verbal rather than physical attacks, with a few exceptions) adopted the quietism of the GDR complaining about trampled flower beds and noise:

'If the mobs in the city centre escalate further and further implicate themselves criminally, if socialist state power is further abused, it will not end well. We want to go about our work in quiet and security, serving peaceful purposes. I am in favour of objective dialogue but that cannot be had on the streets under the pressures or such escalations.' (Publisher, LVZ, 9/10/89)

There were other criticisms of the demonstrations, somewhat unexpectedly from some of the original civic movements leaders who were unhappy at the unwillingness among many demonstrators to listen to SED politicians. In the circumstances this may have been understandable. A New Forum representative in a speech on 18/11/89 argued freedom of belief and opinion required two things:

'the effort and the courage for finding one's own opinion and holding it. How easily one cuddles up to the opinions of the majority or an elite group! [... We offend against our own demands for freedom of opinion if] we do not listen to other people and instead whistle or yell, as has happened to the SED people. Because then we are doing the same as the SED-Dictatorship did to us: silencing¹² the others. [... We should] have our own opinions and listen to reasoned arguments from other people.' (Neues Forum, 1989, 262)

Such arguments give a notion of the frustration by some original activists at the ways in which the demonstrations could just as easily escape their intentions as they could escape state control. This became more obvious as demands developed for unification with western Germany instead of a separate but reformed GDR. Surveys of the attitudes to unification and the reform of the GDR of the demonstrators in Leipzig are contradictory. On 11th December, 92% of all demonstrators surveyed indicated a desire to work for a renewed GDR, with very little difference between different age-groups and social-classes (Roski and Förster, 1990, 174). The high percentage is not surprising since the demonstrations were protests against conditions in the GDR. However, according to the same survey (Roski and Förster, 1990, 176), by December 1989¹³ about 66% of those questioned were in favour of some form of unification with the

FRG. Only students and/or supporters of the SED opposed it. This is reflected in the fact that on 11th December 1989 two thirds of demonstrators had not signed a call for support for a renewed independent GDR (the so-called Third Way) and why two thirds gave a positive evaluation of Chancellor Kohl's Ten Point Plan (*ibid.*). At this time commitment to a reformed GDR was not a clear rejection of unification or at least some form of close co-operation and confederation with the FRG. Nevertheless the effect of the demonstrations and dialogues was to reform the GDR, at least in the short term, although the long-term change was German reunification.

5 The transformation of local political institutions

The reform of the GDR affected (and was in part effected by) transformations in the local political institutions of the state. On 12th October 1989 Leipzig city council offered an 'open, frank and objective exchange of opinions with all citizens interested in the constructive further development of socialism. This necessary dialogue is to be held with all citizens at all levels of the city' (LVZ, 13/10/89). However, the dialogue did not have a stabilising effect and in November 1989 Leipzig's mayor, Seidel, resigned because of lack of confidence in his leadership. Before his resignation he and the city council had already had discussions with New Forum offering to plead for their registration as a legal organisation. They also offered New Forum two seats on the working groups which the council had formed to look for solutions to the problems of the city¹⁴ but there were few major organisational changes in city government at this time.

5.1 Reforms in urban sub-districts

In Leipzig changes in local government actually emerged sooner in the urban districts [*Stadtbezirke*], perhaps because they were smaller and had also been in a poorer position in relation to the state's hierarchical structures: 'Until today one could easily characterise the urban sub-district council as an incompetent administrator of a deplorable state of affairs which felt left in the lurch, particularly in the areas of housing and environmental policies' (representative of Leipzig South West sub-district, LVZ, 7/12/89). The mayor of the West sub-district said 'our work was made more difficult by higher organs. There was a system of

command which was organised as a one-way street' (LVZ, 4/5/11/89). As a result the local sub-district councils transformed the way they dealt with the citizens and were dealt with by higher levels of government. Urban district councils began to formulate their own priorities and sought to get 'closer to the citizens' (LVZ, 2/11/89). A range of different forms was developed by councils seeking to involve citizens. Council-led developments included establishing independent commissions or committees to discuss changes and address problems in the districts, and citizens were invited to join priority-setting discussions open to all residents:

'Urban Sub-district Council South calls on interested citizens to co-operate in order to come to decisions about life in the neighbourhoods through an exchange of views and explorations.'
(LVZ, 5/12/89)

5.2 Transformation of political structures from outside the state sphere

Despite such internally-motivated change, the major changes at the local level came from outside the state sphere (as they did at the national level). In particular, two forms of change are of relevance - the Round Tables (section 5.2.1), and the development of alternative neighbourhood forms of action (section 5.2.2).

5.2.1 The Leipzig Round Table

The Round Table was a specific form of representation where all parties, new groups or movements such as New Forum, Democracy Now, or the like sent a specific number of delegates, and the Round Table sought to address problems, reach decisions and make policy suggestions. Not formally legitimated by election, Round Tables were intended as transitional structures until new forms of government were established (LVZ, 8/2/90). In rejecting the right of the SED to lead and by including all parties, official or otherwise, they marked a distinct break with the practices of the GDR. Since existing forms of government were slow to change at national, regional or local level, the establishment of Round Tables was a means for sanctioning or controlling existing structures or for allowing new parties and groups access to forms of decision-making. As the local council lost its basis for legitimacy, particularly after

admissions of falsified local election results, a Round Table was established in Leipzig in December 1989. (In parallel with the development in Leipzig the Central Round Table was established in Berlin and worked in tandem with, and often in opposition to, the Volkskammer until the national elections on 18th March 1990: Thaysen, 1990.) Working with the civic committee responsible for securing the Stasi building in Leipzig, the city council thought it could supplant the city Round Table. This was not to be and the council finally resigned *en masse* on 26th January 1990, effectively leaving the Round Table as the sole organisation of city government until the new local elections in May 1990.

Table 4.5: Commissions of Leipzig's Round Table - the changing functions of local government

GDR functions with new emphases and altered priorities	Transitional and reformed functions	New concerns and functions
order, security and law health and social services trade and supply with goods and services budget, finance and pricing construction and urban development work education and training energy, traffic and communications children and youth policy environment, water supply and energy development sport and recreation housing supply and policy tourism Leipzig trade fair culture, art, science	administrative reform future uses of security and secret services' buildings investigation commission ownership questions and questions of rights to use buildings	integration of disabled and elderly citizens women economic promotion social minorities ethnic minorities and foreigners

Source: LVZ, 9/2/90

Leipzig's Round Table established twenty-four commissions comprising 'experienced, willing people from the former permanent commissions of the former city council and new and curious representatives of the parties and groups involved in the Round Table' (LVZ, 9/2/90). Table 4.5 shows tasks continued from local government in the GDR (such as pricing, provision of goods, health service), new concerns of the

transition and reformation of local government (administrative reform) and new areas of concern addressed by the New Forum and other groups (minorities policies). Other functions are continuations of previous policies but were modified because of concern at the manner of their execution in the GDR (law and order, schooling and policies for children).

In a caveat to these developments, although command structures had changed and some new functions or transformations of functions had been implemented, the administrative and everyday structures of local government were largely intact as were the urban sub-district administrations. They had, however, very significantly removed their connection to the SED party hierarchy at city, regional [*Bezirk*] and national level and as such were freer in their spheres of action. Some urban sub-district councils followed the city council and resigned to be replaced by sub-district Round Tables (in North East and North) but most remained and worked together with emerging civic committees and local initiatives, having public discussions and trying to develop a more open style. There may have been practical reasons for the limited use of Round Tables in urban sub-districts, in that the newer parties and movements did not have the membership to get involved in local district problems and were overwhelmed with the efforts of being involved in national and city problems. It may also have been because the urban sub-district councils had been at the bottom of a long chain of command in the GDR, and only after the collapse of that system did they feel they could set their own agendas.

5.2.2 Effect at neighbourhood level

One of the first changes in the reforms was the end of the right of the SED to organise in the workplace. For the SED, then, the neighbourhoods became a central focus, but the rapid fall in membership countered to an extent the increased importance of the neighbourhoods (B3, 31/3/92). At the same time, by November 1989 the future of the National Front and its neighbourhood committees (WBA) and their activities were under discussion. The function of the neighbourhood committees depended on the future of the National Front. In its search for a new role the tasks the WBAs performed were constructed as necessary for the continuation of local civic culture and as an ideal vehicle for new forms of citizen involvement in local decisions and activities. Employing the language of

grass-roots democracy the National Front sought to wrest the legitimacy of opposition from the New Forum local groups and encourage them to participate within the National Front:

'Together we can achieve much in the neighbourhoods. We see our WBAs also as a grass-roots democratic form. [...] It is about the creation of socialism as we want to form it ourselves. [...] Participation needs two things: for one thing the citizens must have a bit of power, be able to make decisions. And the other is that it must be worth it for the participants. [...] Instead of just opposing, the Basis groups [of New Forum etc.] should grasp the open hand of the WBA and face up to the responsibility of participation.' (LVZ, 4/5/11/89)

Here it is obvious that the National Front constructed itself as the 'proper' form of grassroots action ('in the best sense of the word' - LVZ, 16/17/12/89) and the 'Basis groups' [*Basisgruppen*] as purely 'oppositional'. The work of the WBAs was seen as necessary and valuable (presumably because it was 'worth it' for those involved). The term 'grassroots action' had become 'inflated' (*ibid.*) and should be brought down to the concrete levels of social services, housing or the upkeep of open spaces. The National Front therefore tried to colonise the new forms of political involvement and went on to describe itself as a Civic Movement [*Bürgerbewegung*]. At the national level it sought to promote a profile of a civic movement of active citizens, organised in its local committees which were described as 'citizen initiatives'. In some city sub-districts new Civic Committees [*Bürgerkomitees*] were formed in response to the call by the National Front to express citizens' views, and built on the principles of 'anti-fascism, working for peace, humanism and democracy' which were demanded of social organisations by the GDR constitution (LVZ, 29/12/89).

Somewhat confusingly, then, at this period one finds neighbourhood activism in several different guises, often utilising the same language but with fundamentally different backgrounds. Soon after that, however, the National Front was disbanded. Despite this, local neighbourhood actions and grassroots developments continued or emerged in new ways. Neighbourhood action groups also emerged independent of any party or national association. There were groups aiming to represent local residents' interests¹⁵ or undertake specific thematic initiatives.¹⁶ Such emergent forms of local governance did not always have an

unproblematic relation to the reformed official structures which were often still bound to bureaucracy and protocol. For example:

'for years all the councils of the city and the districts have been calling for voluntary housing commissions. Our Citizen Initiative does not quite fit the cliché of ideas about the rights and duties of such voluntary commissions which there were up until now. [...] We need fast information and subsequently fast action. The councils should not do without the energy of the citizens.' (LVZ, 19/12/89)

Despite such problems, in the period up to the new local government elections in May 1990 the legitimacy of non-conventional forms of action and government became firmly established in Leipzig. A group was 'measured by its activities' (committee dealing with the Stasi archives in the city: LVZ, 31/1/90). In particular, the development of Leipzig's Round Table showed a model of non-party, collaborative work for the good of the city and in the traditions of self-government, rather than implementation of central government decisions:

'The city must deal with its own problems itself. What looked like a democracy game at the beginning became serious work *for the good of the city*. [...] What every single person contributed, especially the representatives of the citizen movements is worthy of all honour [...] The idea of the Round Table does not belong [in a museum]. Rather the future councillors, some of whom possibly sat at this table, should maintain this approach: unselfish argument for the sake of the subject, distant from party tactical considerations, ending in decisions which help our plundered city back to its feet.' (LVZ, 3/5/90; original emphasis)

6 Transitions to reunification and conclusion

Clearly a particular local agenda was being set in Leipzig, based on the actions of the Round Table and the civic actions of neighbourhood and other organisations. Not only were the forms being set, but to an extent the themes of these agendas were also being developed, via demonstrations and debate and through the establishment of thematic groupings in the city (environmental, social and cultural, for example). The first major demonstration in Leipzig other than the Monday demonstrations was related to environmental issues. On 1st April 1990 'EcoLion' emerged as an organising agency in city ecological issues and organised a mass march of around 10,000 people to protest at the open cast mining eating into the southern edge of the city and destroying wooded wetlands (LVZ, 3/4/90). Other local environmental protests included

traffic protests by cyclists (LVZ, 9/4/90) and a vigil at a power station (LVZ, 23/4/90).

As reunification proceeded, protest in Leipzig therefore seemed to begin to follow issues which characterise the 'new social movements' (Roth and Rucht, 1991). Certainly there were also protests and demonstrations on women's issues (in particular about changed abortion legislation, LVZ, 26/6/90, 30/11/90). However, it would be wrong to argue that the public issues of the transformation displayed 'non-materialist' values (although the division between materialist and non-materialist becomes increasingly hard to define). Rather, as economic collapse and the conditions for monetary union emerged during 1990 a series of demonstrations took place on social and economic conditions (LVZ, 4/4/90, 2/5/90). The first industrial strikes began in May 1990 (LVZ, 11/5/90) followed by protests from miners losing their work to the closure of the mine to the south of Leipzig (LVZ, 14/15/6/90) and strikes in the transport sector (LVZ, 10/8/90). As reunification approached there was also a growing number of protests concerned with the ways East Germany should come to terms with its own past, and particularly with the Stasi. These included a hunger strike protesting at the lack of prosecutions against GDR government ministers and officials (LVZ, 17/9/90), and a demonstration demanding that each citizen be allowed free access to their secret service file (LVZ, 26/9/90).

One year on from the revolution there were still demonstrations on specific issues and in relation to state policies. At the same time, the revolution in Leipzig was being installed as part of the city's canon of folklore. Several books were published giving accounts of and visual portrayals of the events. The Monday demonstrations were celebrated as a significant part of the civic movement of the GDR in an exhibition in St Nicholas church in September 1990, and in a final demonstration on 1st October 1990, the last demonstration as GDR citizens (LVZ, 2/10/90), the strong symbolic nature remained.

However, reunification did not consign the sites of the Ring and Augustus Square or the symbol of a Monday demonstration to history. The economic situation in East Germany declined further and social problems increased

Figure 4.3: Final Monday demonstration of Spring 1991 on Karl-Marx Platz, Leipzig (renamed Augustus Platz), 22/4/91



Figure 4.4: Rally and march by IG Metall trades union, Leipzig Ring, May 1993
Augustus Platz in the middle distance on the right hand side.



so that in March 1991 a local initiative declared 'the people must return to the Ring' (LVZ, 8/3/91). When I first arrived in Leipzig the public sector and metal workers' trades unions (ÖTV and IG Metall) and New Forum (now part of the 'Federation 90', or Bündnis 90, of the civic movements) had called for the Monday demonstrations to resume because of the social and economic situation. Beginning on 11/3/91 with a crowd of around 20,000, the following Monday saw around 60,000 people in Leipzig as did the following one. These continued for seven weeks until 22/4/91 when there were only a few hundred at the rally (figure 4.3). As economic problems continued into 1992 and 1993 demonstrations were periodically called by trade unions, often involving Monday evenings or marching on the Ring (see figure 4.4) (LVZ 2/4/92; March 1993 with between 2000 and 7000 demonstrators, LVZ 15/3/93).

Public demonstration, it seems, had become established in East Germany, especially in relation to restructuring of either the economy (in the Monday demonstrations in 1991), the country's position in the New World Order post-Cold War¹⁷ or in the restructuring of education, for example.¹⁸ Other continuities were also found. The Round Table was still seen as a useful and particularly East German political institution. Round Tables on Peace and for Women remained as direct legacies from the committees of Leipzig's Round Table. The spring 1991 Monday demonstrations demanded a city Round Table on the economy and this was subsequently established (May 1991) for an exchange of ideas and co-operation rather than as an alternative way of running the city (LVZ, 2/5/91).

The question remains, however, whether these were part of the restructuring only in the immediate revolution/reunification period or whether they were carried forward into the 'normalisation' of political life in the East. Did they shape the nature of reunification as process in place and time? Or were they specifically part of the immediate restructuring? To what extent was it possible to deal with economic structural adjustment (c.f. Pickles, 1993 on the ways Bulgarian economic strictures prevented the establishment of a broad-based environmental movement after the reforms)? What were the specific forms which developed in Leipzig, their social bases, the effects of them on local change and readjustment? How did local action help to develop public spheres of action and what were the geographies of action? Did they become increasingly like western patterns or were there still GDR

patterns in 1993 when the fieldwork ended? In particular, local neighbourhood actions in 1989-90 have roots both in a development of the GDR system of the National Front, focusing on the neighbourhood level and advocating the active citizen, and in the rejection of the formal mechanisms and aims of the GDR system, advocating instead 'grass roots' involvement, independent of the state and for the good of the local area. How do the discourses of action and reaction, GDR official and dominant and oppositional forms affect and become involved in the post-reunification structures and processes of city change? Subsequent chapters show how substantial numbers of neighbourhood groups developed after reunification, but there should be no automatic assumption that such local action is merely a function of the *Wende*. What are the post-reunification forms and how do they relate to Leipzig's transformations? Linking back to the 'plundered city' (LVZ, 3/5/90) mentioned in the report about the Leipzig Round Table, the following chapter asks what the specific agendas were in Leipzig in relation to the issues of city planning and development.

1 The leading role was constitutionally reserved for the SED: article one of the GDR constitution of 1974 declared 'The German Democratic Republic is a socialist state of workers and farmers. It is the political organisation of the workers in town and country under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party.' The phrase 'under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party' was removed from the constitution on 1st December 1989. (DDR, 1990b (1974), 434)

2 The number of members of the assemblies were listed as:

Regional assemblies and Berlin City Council	1986	3,235
Rural districts and metropolitan districts	1986	27,783
Parishes and town councils	1984	171,059
Urban sub-districts	1984	4,175
Total local representatives (excluding Volkskammer)		205,929

(From *Wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus*, 1988, 323)

3 Collins German Dictionary (1980).

4 The metaphor of the end of a week forms part of a wider discourse on the old-age of the GDR.

5 This is also a pun on the lists of rights and duties of the socialist citizen in the GDR as laid out in the constitution.

6 See chapter 5 on the situation in construction.

7 The allotment garden has a long tradition in Leipzig, having been established there in the nineteenth century by a local doctor, Dr. Schreber, who was concerned with the access of the population to fresh produce and recreational space. He gives his name to the generic German term, '*Schrebergarten*'. The original *Schrebergarten* area is still under cultivation in Leipzig.

8 There were public demonstrations in the GDR before the *Wende* such as releasing balloons at the Leipzig Dokfilmwoche (festival of documentary films) in 1988 to protest at banned Soviet films, the demonstration on the anniversary of the deaths of

Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht for human rights, the local elections in spring 1989, the street music festival in Leipzig in June 1989 (Hattenhauer, Neues Forum, 1989, 297) or the environmental pilgrimages along the severely polluted Pleiße river in Leipzig (Magirus, 1990).

9 See Christiane Schenk (1993) for a discussion of the organisation of lesbian groupings in the GDR and Anne Hampele (1993) on the organisation of independent women's groups resulting in the establishment of the Independent Women's Movement.

10 'Openness' is the German term '*Offenheit*', 'opening' is '*Öffnung*', while 'the public' is from a term with the same root: '*Öffentlichkeit*'. Public and open therefore come from the same linguistic set and are part and parcel of the same process.

11 Historically the square was the 'Augustusplatz', named after a Saxonian king. It was the first place renamed in Leipzig after the revolution.

12 The actual wording is '*mundtot machen*', literally 'to make mouth dead', or to kill the mouth, which has a more violent force than the English translation.

13 Roski and Förster used questionnaires for 2000 participants on 4th and 11th December 1989, otherwise the information was gathered from general interviews with participants.

14 New Forum rejected this because of their continuing illegal status, because of the danger of being swallowed up by the council and from a desire to deal with their own concepts first (Neues Forum, 1989, 191).

15 The list includes the neighbourhood initiative in one of the five study areas, Neustädter Markt (LVZ, 17/18/2/90) and also independent groups in several areas - Citizen Initiatives in Thekla and Sellershausen (December 1989), the Left-wing Initiative of Reudnitz, the Citizen Initiative Portitz (February 1990) and the group which later became the Bach Quarter Civic Association (March 1990).

16 Such as a housing initiative in the Northern District (December 1989).

17 In early 1991 there were marches of 5000-7000 people on the ring road (LVZ, 14/1/91) and a peace camp was established on the Augustus Square (LVZ 19/1/91 until March 1991).

18 The reform of the universities introduced in late 1990 brought a wave of student protests (LVZ, 14/12/90), including storming the *Land* parliament, blockading the university, a hunger strike, a march from Berlin to Leipzig, rallies and a vigil. Protests continued into January 1991 (LVZ, 9/1/91).

Chapter 5

Power, meanings and control in urban development in the GDR and the revolution in Leipzig

1 Introduction

'The art of building is the most beautiful and the most difficult of all arts, but it is also the most social of all, the strongest expression of a communal life.' (Clara Zetkin, quoted in Leipziger Blätter, 1983, 1, 4)

Planning and architecture are expressions of the power relations of the production and consumption of housing and the built environment. They reflect state policies (including the local state), actions of firms, capital-labour relations, protests, and the actions of owners and tenants (Dickens *et al.* 1985, xii):

'Urban planning and architecture are always especially closely related to the ruling class at the time. This results from its specific way of manifesting in built form societal ideas, political demands and aesthetic-cultural ideas.' (Siegel, 1983, 2)

They are a 'material expression of the culture' involved (Rostock, 1991, 41) which both represent and help to inform relationships of power and control over priorities between the social, physical and economic environment.

This chapter seeks to outline broad elements of housing and planning policy in the GDR and in Leipzig (section 2) and the role which the urban environment played in the revolution of 1989. It explores links between the central state and the local area; and between economic, political and social goals. Power over meanings and significances of the urban sphere are manifested in the effects of these policies and practices on those using urban spaces (section 3). The particular effects of these policies in the urban environment and surroundings of Leipzig provided the impetus for extensive discussions about the need for changed urban development policies (section 4). How these discourses emerged and how they intersected with changing local political geographies is discussed in sections five and six. They are important for understanding subsequent developments in local planning and local political discourses as later chapters show.

2 GDR housing and urban policy

GDR housing policy was based ideologically on treating housing as a means of production (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). As such it was subject to state planning and control and its allocation was subject to principles of social equality resulting in policies removing market influences. Housing was to be 'a universal provision, not a market commodity; and its production and distribution should not be a means of unearned income' (Kennedy and Smith, 1989, 601). Land itself was removed from the market and could not be sold. The state allocated the use of land, and pre-existing landholding patterns were often ignored so that previous inscriptions of ownership on the land were delegitimised.

GDR housing was less nationalised than elsewhere in eastern Europe (Hegedüs and Tosics, 1992), maintaining a mixture of ownership and tenure types from 1949 to 1990. Figures for 1989 suggest that 'personal ownership' (individual owner-occupation excluding capitalist gains from ownership of property) covered 20.8% of housing, private rental covered 27.7%, state ownership, defined officially as 'People's Property' - *Volkseigentum*, covered 34.7% of flats, and co-operatives, owned indirectly by the state through state enterprises, covered 16.6% (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). Rented sectors therefore constituted 79.2% of housing units, showing a higher level than in West Germany (60%) which included a much smaller public rental sector (15%).

The right to housing was incorporated in the GDR constitution. In attempting to guarantee this right, national policies aimed at 'solving' the housing problem by 1990 (McCaulay, 1983). Aiming for a quantitative solution to the issue, large construction projects were implemented using standardised industrial building methods in the state sector and in work-place based co-operatives. However, despite the construction of 2,350,000 flats from 1956 to 1991, the housing situation was not 'solved' by 1990. Three elements contributed to this failure. Firstly, the low level of rents, at 2 to 5% of household income compared to around 20-30% in West Germany (Sillince, 1990) meant income had no allocative effect in housing. While this meant access was possible for all, it removed any incentive to match household size to housing size, leading to a mismatch, with elderly residents living alone in very large apartments, for example.

Secondly, in common with other industrialised countries, the GDR saw a demographic shift towards an increasing number of smaller households, despite a falling population. Thirdly, national policies directly and indirectly caused the neglect of the pre-1948 housing stock. Neglect of this property was the most serious factor in overall housing problems since even in 1990 it accounted for 52% of all GDR housing (Krummacher, 1992) and for substantially higher levels in many older urban centres such as Leipzig, where the pre-1948 housing stock covered 64.6% of city housing in 1990 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c). The extent to which new-build continued to dominate over repair and renewal even in the late 1980s, despite declared policy shifts to more repair, is shown in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Housing construction, reconstruction and renovation, 1985-1989 in the GDR

YEAR	Total	Newly Built (% of total)	Reconstruction (% of total)	Renovation and Repair (% of total)
1985	115734	99174 (85.7)	13163 (11.4)	3432 (3.0)
1985=100	100	100	100	100
1986	116545	100067 (85.9)	13111 (11.2)	3367 (2.9)
	100.7	100.9	99.6	98.1
1987	109754	91896 (83.7)	14556 (13.3)	3302 (3.0)
	94.8	92.7	110.6	96.2
1988	104666	93472 (89.3)	8447 (8.1)	2747 (2.6)
	90.4	94.2	64.2	80.0
1989	92347	83361 (90.3)	6612 (7.2)	2374 (2.6)
	79.8	84.0	50.2	69.2

Source: Statistisches Amt der DDR, 1990 and own calculations.

Much of the older housing was in the private rented sector. Private ownership per se did not remove state control. The state controlled transfers of land and property, the volume, design and construction of new buildings and repair of existing stock, and building resources (labour and materials) in national plans and construction combines. Rents in all sectors were maintained at very low levels and were highly subsidised by the state (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). Private rented housing was therefore state-controlled even if not state-owned (Hegedüs and Tosics, 1992). This control backfired as a housing policy:

'Private landlords have shown no interest [...] other than to collect the minimal rents; since [...] investment could not produce a profit, rents could not be raised, [and] buildings could not be profitably sold. Often landlords offered their buildings for no payment to [local authorities] and generally were turned down; the [local authorities] as well as the landlords saw

ownership only as a burden requiring investment but no financial return.' (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 90).

Concentration on large-scale projects and the neglect of older property affected socio-economic structures and land-use patterns in urban areas. New construction was predominantly in out-of-town areas, often creating large satellite cities such as Halle-Neustadt or Leipzig-Grünau with over 100,000 residents. Table 5.2 illustrates how such policies created discrepancies in housing conditions within urban areas and failed to improve older districts. Urban policies and priorities for investment in the GDR were therefore broadly similar to Szelenyi's (1983) eastern European model in which prestigious city centres and new housing estates were favoured. These became higher status areas along with the better areas of older housing (see also Prawelska-Skrzypek, 1988, on Poland and V. Schmidt, 1983, on Dresden). The results were to down-grade other older areas. Plans for inner city renewal merely caused an eastern European version of planning blight, as received wisdom decreed that only rebuilding the areas would remove the problems. While in several eastern European countries private self-help building was located on the edge of towns, in the GDR this was restricted to small towns and rural areas.

Table 5.2: Facilities in Leipzig's housing by urban district, 1989

AREA OF CITY	Flats with Bath/Shower (%)	Flats with Inside WC(%)
Whole city	77.7	72.8
Centre	73.0	67.8
*North	79.3	75.7
*North East	81.1	77.5
South	81.5	77.1
South East	64.4	57.6
South West	64.5	53.2
*West	87.2	84.7
In comparison		
West Germany ^(a)	99.0	98.0
Hanover ^(b)	96.5	97.4
East Germany ^(a)	80.0	73.0

Source: Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c, 100-103

except, (a) Pilz and Ortwein, 1992 and (b) Rat der Stadt Leipzig (1992d).

Note: * denotes districts with large-scale state housing development since 1970.

Disparities in housing conditions produced variations in social structures between areas despite nationally defined standards for housing allocation

which aimed to reduce social segregation. Contrary to western expectations, new peripheral estates attracted many of the most active or privileged from older areas, with large numbers of party members, 'middle management', skilled workers and families with children (Kahl, 1983). As Mandic (1994) observes, social sector housing in the eastern block was not a last resort. It was often the most sought after housing, because of better conditions and lower relative costs. Socio-economic differences did therefore exist, and Musil (1987) suggests the goal of 'homogenisation of urban space' was in fact differentiated in socialist cities to produce a 'heterogeneity in the macrostructures' of the city as housing in new areas was allocated to priority groups and those with the ingenuity and energy to deal with the necessary bureaucracy, leaving a homogenised socio-economic structure in the older areas. That despite this the absences of segregation and wide inequalities were seen as positive attributes of GDR cities (Marcuse, 1990) was a function of lower social differentiation in society as a whole. Also, many areas with larger flats in inner city locations were desirable to priority groups and large families with low incomes (since rents were largely irrelevant) because of their urban qualities which the new estates so often lacked. Social status of residents and housing conditions sometimes became 'mismatched' (Lichtenberger, 1991).

By 1989, therefore, eastern Germany still faced severe problems of a neglected and deteriorating housing stock (figure 5.1) and social division between the improved (figure 5.2) and neglected areas (figure 5.3). Policies steadfastly emphasised clearance and industrial series-construction (*Plattenbau*) as the only method of improvement even in inner city locations so that, in Leipzig, 50% of the pre-1919 housing stock was designated for replacement by the year 2000. The task facing post-reunification housing policies was enormous. In response, questions of ownership and control became paramount and subsequently have largely dominated post-reunification housing policy (see chapter 7).

Figure 5.1: Severely decayed nineteenth century housing, Neustädter Markt, autumn 1991.



Figure 5.2: Extensive edge of town developments, Leipzig-Grünau
built mid 1970s to mid 1980s to house 100,000 people.



Figure 5.3: Loss of quality in the neglected urban environment, Gohlis
building decay and increasing loss of facilities as shops close.



3 Power relations of planning and housing

The power relations of urban planning and housing policies in the GDR parallel the hierarchical state structure discussed in chapter 4 and are characterised by a dominance of political and economic factors over social factors (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). Planning in eastern Europe was generally based more on political decisions than on economic ones (Regulski and Wawrzynski, 1989). Central political decisions dominated over central economic decisions and social considerations.

3.1 Centre-local relations

Urban development and housing policies were decided centrally whereas social allocation and maintenance fell to the local authorities (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). The centre was dominant and ensured compliance by local areas and production sites with central decisions. Local authorities were constrained in the level and range of housing construction. The centre allocated new production from the national plan to regionally organised construction combines [*Baukombinate*] and local authorities could only demand a share of housing already allocated (*ibid.*). Reflecting the dominance of the centre and of economic sectors over the allocative and social needs of a local area, *Kombinate* built what the central plan demanded whether this was locally desired or not (*ibid.*). Local authorities remained largely as local executive bodies for national policies in this and other sectors (Krisch, 1985).

3.2 Control of design and architecture

Not only were allocative decisions dominated by the centre, but priorities for urban development and architecture were subject to state involvement. Architecture, urban design and urban planning were instrumentalised by the state in the GDR, assigned the tasks of providing a socialist way of life and creating a source of national identity by providing a style consciously not that of the FRG (in addition to providing for the physical needs of the population and of industry):

'The responsibility of the architect in the GDR is to provide for the spatial organisation of the socialist way of life, to stimulate its further development through this work, and to reflect the socialist picture of humanity through the particular means of

architecture.' (Korn, chief architect of Berlin, 1980, quoted in Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 122)

In 1950 all planning and architecture offices were incorporated into the national *Bauakademie der DDR* (Building Academy of the GDR) and thereafter architecture and planning existed only in the 'public' sector (local government, the combines or the *Bauakademie*) (Rostock, 1991). The state, through the *Bauakademie* and the control of construction projects through the Ministry of Construction [*Bauministerium*] dominated construction and architectural policy. Only one architecture journal was published in the GDR and planning and architectural concepts followed official lines. Even the language of planning was controlled:

'Even we [the GDR planners] have only been allowed to talk openly of "careful urban renewal"¹ since 1988. Up to then it was called "unity of new building and reconstruction" and was expressed in "guiding plans" for so-called "transformation areas"².' (Reuther, in Doehler et al., 1992, 354)

Official policies changed somewhat over time. Early work focused on Soviet Realism in grand city centre boulevards such as Stalinallee in Berlin or Leipzig's Ring. Later an emphasis on city centre reconstruction remained but concentrated less on housing construction and more on 'representative' (i.e. imposing, stylish) projects. In Leipzig this came in the late 1960s with the reconstruction of the Karl-Marx-Platz in a socialist style³ and in the early 1970s with the new Sachsenplatz, a large-scale design in a compact medieval city centre reflecting the dominance of the modernist paradigm (Topfstedt, 1992). Of course, such policies were by no means limited to the GDR, or indeed the eastern block. Kazemian (1991) identifies an international trend towards such 'civic surgery' at this period.

The second major focus was the solution of the housing problem after 1971, when housing construction became central to the social legitimisation of the GDR system following the policy declaration by Erich Honecker. With increasingly industrialised production and the adoption of the *Plattenbau* system, planning was more 'housing construction than urban design' (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 80). Despite reports arguing that the process of standardised construction and design produced a 'technological monoculture', political decisions favouring *Plattenbau* had

been taken and planners and architects had to implement the policy (Richter, 1991).

New edge-of-town housing estates were constructed to create '*geschlossene Wohnkomplexe*' (intact or complete residential complexes) (Gohl, 1986, 97) utilising '*komplexe Wohnungsbau*' (complex housing construction) including crèches, nursery schools, schools, services, clubs, shops, sports and recreation facilities and other facilities (Florstedt, 1983, 5). Some areas were completed while others remained dormitory settlements (Rostock, 1991). Achievements were substantial, and writing about Grünau in the biannual publication *Leipziger Blätter*⁴ in 1983 had a heroic quality as the collective achievements of the socialist system were praised:

'No land of capital has set itself the goal of solving the housing question as a special programme. No land of capital can set itself this goal!' (Siegel, 1983, 2)

However, as facilities failed to appear as planned, initial satisfaction with the estates fell and criticism grew of the alienation experienced through the lack of community and communicative contacts in these areas (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 109).

The 1980s saw a move to focus on reconstruction in inner city areas but this too used the standardised WBS70 model.⁵ The official policy of the 'unity of new building and reconstruction'⁶ denied any conflict between adapting WBS70 to inner city construction and modernising existing stock while retaining some of the characteristics of the older areas. There was little discussion of the logic of choosing WBS70 for this type and location of construction (Kahl, 1984, 50), although there was recognition that styles had to be adapted somewhat. What discussion there was usually justified the official policy (*ibid.*). The legacies of the capitalist system were blamed for the city's problems whether in the city as a whole (*Leipziger Blätter*, 1983, 3: 7) or in the city's working class inner city areas (Fischer, 1984).

By the late 1980s criticism was growing of this modernist phase of urban development, with its neglect of inner cities and historical centres, and in some cases their destruction in clearance policies. Heinz-Jürgen Böhme (1987), regional director of historical and architectural

monuments, attacked plans to replace ruined city centre buildings with WBS70. Although rejecting the premise of Böhme's argument, Dietmar Fischer (1987), Leipzig's chief architect, emphasised the need for renewal and maintenance of the older structures: 'every city is an individual whose individuality is to be protected during the process of renewal' (*ibid.*, 10). This he later justified with implicit criticism of the modernist construction policies of the 1960s accounting for the new approach with a change in the *Zeitgeist* from the 1960s to the 1980s (Fischer, 1989) but this still avoided direct condemnation of earlier policies.

Criticisms did not generally challenge the fundamental socialist bases of GDR urban policy (social equality and removal of capitalist relations). Attachment to the socialist order was intact, at least in print. Architects at a seminar held by Bauhaus argued that attachment to place through a specific local milieu and a feeling of belonging fulfilled a basic need of the 'socialist personality' in a socialist, collective society (Staufenbiel, 1989) and they doubted the ability of capitalism to provide a sense of place (Weber, 1989). While these were also implicit criticisms of the soulless characteristics of many new areas and of the loss of sense of place in the decaying and newly reconstructed inner city areas, they were criticised within the framework of GDR society, and even as late as 1988 an architectural competition for Leipzig's city centre specified '*komplexe Wohnungsbau*' must be included (*Leipziger Blätter*, 1988, 13: 6).

3.3 Position of the public and of neighbourhood areas

In urban development, whereas planners and architects were constrained in what they could say, local residents' voices and neighbourhood concerns were largely absent, mirroring situations encountered in western planning (Chanan and Vos, 1990). The dominance of the centre and the absence of alternative means of providing housing or affecting local environments exacerbated the silence of local voices. Central government was more remote than local councils, reducing opportunity for contacts. In addition, central government was suspicious of small-scale developments, fearing such policies would promote feelings of 'neighbourhood or regional autonomy and endanger central loyalty' (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 132).

As chapter 4 showed, residents were officially organised in housing blocks and housing areas. These structures sought to mobilise the energy and resources of residents and to develop socialist and collective relations locally. The basic level of the *Hausgemeinschaft* (house collective) involved all residents of a block or building in such activities as arranging repairs and cleaning. Some had maintenance contracts with the local council for communal gardens and many functioned as social organisers for the neighbours. Ironically, residents in the supposedly more socialist large estates were much less involved in house collectives than in older areas (Dennis, 1988), although the most run-down areas also experienced low involvement.⁷

The neighbourhood committees (WBAs⁸) were responsible for allocating the area's building materials and labour which had been allocated to them by the *Kommunale Wohnungsverwaltung* (KWV, local housing administration), responsible for local housing management, maintenance and repairs. In practice the arrangements were inefficient and unresponsive (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992). Permanent materials and labour shortages reduced maintenance levels and local priority setting was open to political or personal influence. Some WBAs were more active and organised neighbourhood clean-ups, heating rotas for nursery schools, painting the children's playground or organising local parties or barbecues (from various interviews conducted). Effects and activities varied tremendously within parts of the city and between them.

Essentially, WBAs and house collectives functioned as the lowest levels of national housing provision at the end of long chains of command emanating from political and economic priorities at the centre. By themselves they could effect only minor changes, usually requiring no great need for resources other than residents' involvement. As official structures to encourage active citizenship and collective responsibility in the local area they extended the state and the public realm into areas of social reproduction and consumption. However, constraints on information and material denied the structures any meaningful independence or effectiveness as neighbourhood or community organisations in housing. In addition, as Andrusz noted for the Soviet Union (1984), there are good theoretical reasons why neighbourhood attachment was not promoted in the GDR and why it did not form the main focus of collective action. The central focus for life was the place of work

rather than the place of residence. Many social services were primarily arranged around the workplace and the 'corporate structure' made the workplace the main focus of collective identity and support (Andrusz, 1984, 129). Neighbourhood activities were therefore restricted to the frameworks of the official organisations. Other groups did exist but more as informal networks and certainly with no access to resources or to policy making. The combined effects of these power relations are summarised by Marcuse and Schumann:

'The physical impact of shortages in maintenance is everywhere to be seen: peeling stucco, unpainted exteriors, broken roof tiles, missing gutters, crumbling steps, a general sense of shabbiness and decay. It is worse in the smaller cities, particularly bad in larger unprivileged cities like Leipzig, better in the privileged ones like Berlin or Rostock. With rents covering less than one-third of the cost of routine maintenance residents had no financial, but only a political claim to adequate levels of maintenance and repairs, and the lack of local democratic participation in public decision-making left them at the mercy of other priorities.' (Marcuse and Schumann, 1992, 120)

Going further, Grésillon (1991) argued that the semiotics of the built environment, its physical forms and significance expressed the relationships of power, control and ownership of the GDR up to 1989 and presented a denial of the 'urban' character of the city, which he defined in relation to the possibility of autonomous action by residents through property ownership or independent use of public space, thus removing opportunities for urban citizenship. This denial, he argued, was manifested in the urban-based revolutions of 1989. While one might dispute a direct causative link between urban semiotics and the GDR revolution, the condition of Leipzig's environment (natural and built) was a central concern. It also stimulated people to challenge existing conceptions of Leipzig and to set new agendas for the city, its neighbourhoods and its residents.

4 Leipzig's urban environment in 1989

'Basically Leipzig was the symbol for amorphous decay, decline.'
(Presenter, DT64 radio discussion, Leipzig, 22/4/92)

In 1989, as table 5.3 shows, despite the extensive reconstruction of some inner city areas and edge-of-town sites, Leipzig's housing stock had an older age profile than the GDR as a whole. Contrasts between Leipzig and its twin city, Hanover, are particularly stark. Because of the lack of repair

and maintenance, there were serious proposals to demolish 53,000 of the 104,000 pre-1919 buildings by the year 2000 in a widespread process of inner city clearance and renewal (Topfstedt: *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 27, confirmed by Fischer, LVZ, 25/26/11/89). Because of their poor condition (see also table 5.2) there were 30,000 empty flats in the city, while at the same time 26,000 people were looking for housing (Heldt: *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 11). These empty flats increased the likelihood of further decay in surrounding flats (LVZ, 1/11/89). Because three quarters of housing was owned either by the *Gebäudewirtschaft Leipzig* (GWL), the city's state-sector housing organisation, later the LWB (see chapter 7) or by housing co-operatives (table 5.4), blame for the conditions of buildings was laid on the state. Private ownership was lower than GDR levels as there were few terraced, semi-detached or detached houses which qualified for personal ownership and much original private-rented tenement stock had been signed over to the state

Table 5.3: Age of Leipzig's housing in comparison

	West Germany (a)	Hanover (b)	East Germany (a)	Leipzig (b)
% built pre 1919	19%	14.9%	37%	45.5%
% built 1919-1948	14%	16.0%	15%	19.1% (1919-1945)
% built 1949-1968	35%	48.3%	20%	17.6% (1946-1970)
% built 1969 to 1989	32%	20.8%	28%	17.8% (>1970)

Sources: (a) Pilz and Ortwein (1991).

(b) Rat der Stadt Leipzig (1992d).

Table 5.4 Housing ownership and tenure in comparison

Flats	East Germany (a)	Leipzig (b)
% housing in state sector	>40%	52%
% housing in co-operative ownership	17%	23.2%
% housing in private property	41%	24.8%

Source: (a) Pilz and Ortwein (1991).

(b) Rat der Stadt Leipzig (1991c).

Not only the housing had been neglected. Reproduction of the city's technical infrastructure had proved inadequate and gas, sewage and

water mains all required urgent replacement (Kolbe: *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 143). The effect of concentrating on new estates was the decay of social infrastructure in the older neighbourhoods:

'The neighbourhoods have neither areas for communication nor culture, cinema, restaurants, have no public meeting spaces, lack facilities, are disproportionately depopulated and have a poor age structure.⁹ The infrastructure is defective, there are dirty streets, holes in the roads, sunken pavements and dustbins.' (Grundmann: *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 110)

Infrastructural and social problems were exacerbated by the severe levels of pollution. GDR environmental data were classified top-secret but pollution levels were evident to all, the secrecy increasing alienation between population and government. Air and water pollution in and around Leipzig from industry and domestic heating using lignite produced smog, illness and a further reduction in quality of life. Data finally released in autumn 1989 (LVZ, 2/11/89) confirmed popular perceptions. In many city areas air pollution was consistently at levels up to eight or ten times the statutory limits (Usbeck: *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 52). Poor air circulation and the loss of surrounding countryside to open cast mining and extensive green-field housing developments further intensified environmental difficulties (*ibid.*). The condition of Leipzig and the region showed the effects of the power structures of urban development, economic, political and social processes in the GDR. As such 'the decay of our city is to be viewed as the exact symbol of the crisis of the whole society' (Hocquél, LVZ, 28/11/89).

5 The *Wende* and transformations of urban policy

Given these conditions, it is unsurprising that among demands for free elections and lifting of travel restrictions, the banners and slogans of the Leipzig Monday demonstrations addressed the environmental conditions of the country and the region, often contrasting conditions of relative luxury for Party and government officials with polluted regions in and around Leipzig:

'The government needs a holiday in Böhlen¹⁰' (6/11/89)

'Move Wandlitz [protected government residential area] to Mölbis [Europe's most polluted village, south of Leipzig¹¹].' (20/11/89)

'Stasi funds for a clean environment and healthy forests.' (6/11/89)

'Out of Wandlitz and to 'beautiful' Plagwitz.¹²' (27/11/89)

(Collected in Schneider, 1990)

All expressed the crisis either directly or with bitter irony:

'Espenhain¹³ must die because we want to live!' (27/11/89)
'Fight Eco-Death.' (6/11/89)
'Smog¹⁴, our death - how much longer?' (11/12/89)
'Don't forget (gas) Plagwitz! SO₂: 1,29/3,48 - Reichelt it's enough!'¹⁵ (27/11/89)
'Leipzig to become a fresh-air spa - Gas masks for all!' (11/12/89)
(*ibid.*)

As well as broader environmental policies, the revolution also developed in Leipzig to address specific issues of urban development and housing. Egon Krenz, head of government, was exhorted to '... knock the Wall down - we're short of bricks' (23/10/89, also 30/10/89). Leipzig's condition was so serious that the city must be 'saved' (30/10/89). This section explores the policies and discourses which developed.

In response to the demonstrations and local demands in Leipzig GDR central government announced more housing construction for Leipzig in 1990¹⁶ and the return of building workers from Berlin. A government commission was announced 'on the future development of the City of Leipzig, in particular in the areas of complex housing construction including maintenance and repair' (LVZ, 1/11/89), and Krenz visited Leipzig on 25th November 1989 to discuss worries with city residents. Reports of his visit were mixed. While stressing people were generally impressed with changes in the government, reports included pointed questions on why Krenz was 'surprised' about the state of Leipzig since he had been there regularly for the Trade Fair (LVZ, 27/11/89). Overall, such changes were insufficient, the commission was regarded as unrepresentative of Leipzig and thus illegitimate and was rejected by the city council within its new rhetoric of self-government (LVZ, 14/11/89; LVZ, 21/11/89).

While local government sought greater influence, professionals in construction and planning also tried to set new agendas and make their voices heard, asserting expert knowledge against demands from government and the combines. There were conferences with national organisations¹⁷ and independent organisations were set up outside the structures of the state-controlled sector.¹⁸ Specific initiatives began to

develop new national and local policies. In Leipzig the most influential event was the First People's Building Conference (*Volksbaukonferenz*)¹⁹ held in early January 1990 and begun by the Initiative for Saving Leipzig, '*die Initiative zur Rettung Leipzig*', formed on 15/11/89 by the Culture Federation (*Kulturbund*), the Association of Creative Artists (*Verband bildender Künstler*), the Federation of Architects (*Bund der Architekten*, *BdA*) and the Initiative of Leipzig Architects (*ILA*). Around one thousand people took part in the conference, bringing together professionals, politicians and others to discuss the way forward for Leipzig and GDR urban and construction policies. It led directly to the establishment of the Leipzig Round Table on Construction (*LVZ*, 18/1/90). The proceedings of the *Volksbaukonferenz* (hereafter *VBKf*) were published verbatim in *Initiativgruppe* (1990). Contributions from the conference are hereafter referred to with the name of the contributor, *VBKf* and page number.

As well as professional pressure there was continued pressure from the streets, from television documentaries identifying Leipzig's problems,²⁰ from the 'dialogue' in the city²¹ and from other sources creating demands for change on government, Party, local councils and combines. The following sections explore these demands and how they were formulated. They explore the ways urban policies were altered and criticised, which assumptions underlay new demands and how the city of Leipzig was at once constructed as a victim of GDR policies and as a site of change, of opportunity and necessity in a framework integrating historical, cultural, identificatory, 'democratic', expert and participatory ideals. Subsequent chapters explore how these ideas were developed, challenged, subverted and blocked by groups and individuals within the city and beyond and how the unified front in Leipzig came to compete with the needs and demands of specific neighbourhoods and with regional and national pressures.

This section shows that rather than the single development of a new discourse and a series of practices in urban planning and local politics moving away from GDR practices described earlier, there were actually several different strands which encompassed views from planning 'professionals' (architects, planners and academics), national (GDR) government, nationally organised and regionally based construction combines, and the view from the 'street' (although it is difficult to find

grassroots voices except retrospectively as they were not generally recorded). The fluid nature of the period also made it impossible to characterise individuals or organisations in their positions regarding the city, the government, citizens and the building industry. Not only did people change their minds (or speak them openly) or the personnel change in organisations, but there were struggles between people and groups within many organisations (planners, combines, parties and so on) and even local SED officials would criticise central state policies.

The period up to new local elections in May 1990 largely emerged as a more open period where a series of sometimes conflicting ideas and developments produced a public debate on the nature of the city, the identity and problems of Leipzig, and other towns, and the appropriate contributions of the residents, different levels of government, agencies, professionals and the construction industry. Leipzig and its region was discussed as a place showing the symptoms of the problems and indicating the necessity and opportunity for change, the development of new urban concepts and policies,²² and the related reforms of the political framework.

5.1 Identity and '*Behutsame Stadterneuerung*'

Important as numerical indicators of housing decay and pollution were, other descriptions of Leipzig in newly-public debates from October 1989 onwards were equally significant in establishing the need for new policies. These employed a series of organic, identity and illness metaphors to characterise Leipzig. The main descriptor for the city was '*Verfall*', decay, dilapidation or decline (table 5.5, column 1: Krenz, open letter, Thormann, Doehler and Grönwald). '*Verfall*' as 'decay' applies to buildings. It can also refer to the 'decline' of a patient (even a terminal decline) or an empire, or to 'moral decline'. Decay in Leipzig is seen as a process of organic decline or degeneration (Hocquél) caused by failed construction policies (LVZ, 8/1/90), creating 'disaster areas' (Grundmann) and threatening the future of the city (Sächsisches Tageblatt). Some attribute this to neglect (column 2: Krenz, Meyer) and 'abandonment' (Thormann). The complex appears to continue the illness/age/death metaphors from descriptions of the GDR/SED (see chapter 4). Although the decline of Leipzig and other towns may utilise similar language, blame for the decline of the GDR/SED lay with the

system which refused to, or could not, renew itself. Far from causing its own decline, Leipzig was constructed as the victim of serious attacks (column 3). Policies actively destroyed the city fabric (open letter), especially the historical fabric (Hocquél, ILA) and had 'barbaric effects' on the city (Wandelt). Environmental destruction from lignite extraction threatened on three sides (Heldt) and undermined the city (Benedict).²³ In addition new construction 'alien to the nature of the city' [*wesensfremd*], 'wrong buildings' [*Mißbauten*],²⁴ disruption and destruction from clearance and new buildings all attack and distort city structures (Heldt, Grundmann). Combined effects of decay, neglect, attack and threats produce an 'existential' threat to the city (column 4: Wandelt) - an 'emergency' (Kulturprojekt), 'hopelessness' (open letter), 'the edge of the abyss' (Altmann). Leipzig is 'dying' (Doehler) and needs 'resurrection' [*Auferstehung*] (Doehler and Grönwald). These are not the standard terms of urban decline or even crisis. Instead the choices were dramatic and fundamental: life or death.

The need to heal the city, to revive it or save it from death, to enable its resurrection or rebirth (Baumgärtel) draws on organic and religious references. The t.v. documentary asking 'Can Leipzig still be saved?' [*Ist Leipzig noch zu retten?*] came firmly within this repertoire. 'Retten' can be 'to save' or 'to rescue' but can also imply 'salvation' or 'deliverance'. Similarly the call for Leipzig's 'rebirth' [*Wiedergeburt*] could be translated as 'reincarnation' since both are contained in the German.

Table 5.5: Decay, death, organism and illness metaphors

1 Decay	2 Neglect	3 Attacks on the city	4 Existential threat
<p>'the decay of Leipzig' <i>Krenz, LVZ, 27/11/89</i></p> <p>'this decayed and dilapidated city' <i>open letter, LVZ 4/5/11/89</i></p> <p>'failed construction policies [...] led to the rapid decay of the building sub-stance' <i>LVZ, 8/1/90</i></p> <p>'most of the suburbs have sunk to being the worst disaster areas of this country' <i>Grundmann</i></p> <p>'[will] the international business world want to come to Leipzig in ten years if the decay [...] is not at least halted' <i>Sächsischer Tageblatt, 6/11/89</i></p> <p>'the decay of the Culture City' <i>Thormann, LVZ, 10/1/90</i></p> <p>'the progressively advancing degeneration processes of the natural and built environment' <i>Hocqué, LVZ, 28/11/89</i></p> <p>'the growing decay of the urban building substance' <i>Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ, 5/1/90</i></p>	<p>'how Leipzig has been neglected in recent years by the Centre' <i>Krenz, LVZ, 27/11/89</i></p> <p>'buildings [...] abandoned to dilapidation and demolition' <i>Thormann, LVZ 10/1/90</i></p> <p>'this city has been neglected for years' <i>Meyer, 15/12/89, New Forum book</i></p>	<p>'Area clearance and bad planning have had barbaric effects on the evolved city structure. Now destruction threatens with area clearance and new building' <i>Wandelt</i></p> <p>'the further destruction of Leipzig' <i>open letter, LVZ 4/5/11/89</i></p> <p>'with the construction policies of the last decades, through the neglect and demolition more architecture was destroyed in Leipzig than in the war', <i>LA, LVZ 10/11/2/90</i></p> <p>'the construction policy [...] is leading to the destruction of the city structure' <i>Hocqué, LVZ 28/11/89</i></p> <p>'Leipzig is plagued by environmental destruction, being dug up on three of four sides, characterised by the decay of its buildings, distorted by many new buildings alien to the city's nature which alienate people in their home town [...] We want to prevent 'wrong' buildings from destroying our city' <i>Heidt</i></p> <p>'cannot do much for the city if we do not do something about the threat of the lignite - the water table is falling and affecting buildings' <i>Benedict</i></p> <p>[The city is] 'being disrupted by newly developing gap sites' <i>Grundmann</i></p>	<p>'the situation in Leipzig has intensified to the point of hope-lessness' <i>Open letter to mayor, LVZ 4/5/11/89</i></p> <p>'Leipzig and its suburbs are so badly decayed that they endanger the living environment of the people existentially' <i>Wandelt</i></p> <p>'Leipzig is in an emergency' <i>Kulturprojekt</i></p> <p>'This has taken Leipzig, its buildings and the whole landscape of the city to the edge of the abyss' <i>Altmann, LVZ 9/1/90</i></p> <p>'By 1988 [...] we were dealing with the scenario of a dying city' <i>Doehler, et al., 1992, 353</i></p> <p>'Scientists and practitioners want to plan with citizens for the resurrection of Leipzig' <i>Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ, 5/1/90</i></p>

Continued over:

Table 5.5 continued

5 Illness	6 Organism	7 Losing Face
'a city whose illness symptoms cannot be concealed' <i>open letter to mayor, LVZ, 4/5/11/89</i>	'it is about saving a landscape grown in an 825 year history', <i>LVZ 8/1/90</i>	'Leipzig must no longer lose its face' <i>LVZ 7/11/89</i>
'The adaptation to something in no way means that the situation is healthy, that it protects vitality instead of harming it' <i>Hocqué, LVZ, 28/11/89</i>	'the life of the organism of the city' <i>Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ 5/1/90</i>	'The faces of towns like Stralsund, Görlitz, Bautzen and Altenburg have changed sometimes beyond all recognition' <i>BdA, LVZ 1/11/89</i>
'The saving of Leipzig - an operation which the patient must survive [...] Whoever knows the condition of Leipzig will agree that the city at least as an architectural form is ill, even very ill, having died in many parts or - rather having been killed off' <i>Schwarz</i>	'a sensible form created from the living city organism' <i>Sikora</i>	'bigger and bigger areas of the city are pulled down and stuffed full of cheap, faceless new buildings' <i>open letter to mayor, LVZ, 4/5/11/89</i>
'Reconstruction [inflicts] deep operations/ interventions into the life of the city areas' <i>Grundmann</i>	'When we talk about our city and about saving it, [...] we must know we are dealing with an organism' <i>Pasch</i>	
'Leipzig must no longer be blood donor to the country' <i>city council LVZ, 28/12/89</i>	'historically evolved structures. [...] Those who feel 'rooted' tend to stay' <i>Grundmann</i>	
'great wounds inflicted on many cities' <i>BdA, LVZ 1/11/89</i>	'concept for the re-birth of [...] Leipzig' <i>Baumgärtel</i>	
'there should no longer be a euthanasia programme for the architectural monuments which supposedly cannot be saved' <i>Historical Monuments group, LVZ 10/1/90</i>	'the whole economic organism [...] must be put on a new basis' <i>Lipfert, LVZ, 18/1/90</i>	
	'historically evolved residential areas' <i>Kulturprojekt</i>	
	'The organism of the city' <i>Fischer, Leipziger Blätter, 10, 1987</i>	
	'keeping the cities, their evolved structures and historical buildings', <i>Foreword, 3</i>	

Sources given, otherwise from VBKf.

The series of metaphors of death, decay, attack and distortion is supported by direct references to Leipzig as patient (column 5), describing a city seriously ill (Schwarz), its structures dying or with serious symptoms (open letter). GDR policies inflict 'wounds' (BdA), cause unwanted 'operations' (Grundmann), constitute 'euthanasia programmes' (Historic Monument Group), and harm the city's vitality (Hocqué), draining its 'blood'.²⁵ The 'patient' must survive the new 'operation' which is required for a healing process (Schwarz). This establishes Leipzig as the victim of attacks, illnesses or even infection by buildings 'alien to the city's nature' [*wesensfremd*] (Heldt, column 3). Leipzig is therefore a living organism (column 6: Doehler and Grönwald, Sikora, Fischer, Pasch) whose landscape has 'grown' (LVZ 8/1/90) or 'evolved' (Grundmann,

Kulturprojekt, Foreword), both coming from 'gewachsen', an explicitly ecological term. In combination with 'historically' I translate it as 'evolved'. Notably Lipfert also describes the economy as an 'organism', disrupting the exclusive application of the term to towns and cities. This does not discredit organic metaphors constructed around 'Leipzig', but it indicates an economic focus of change which becomes more dominant as the transition to a market economy develops.²⁶ Generally, however, the city was seen as fighting for its existence against outside forces which attack the organism. New-build areas, 'wrong buildings' and gap sites, are portrayed as unnatural, attacking what should be a healthy organism.

The effect of these organic metaphors was to establish the city's true nature as something evolved, 'rooted' (Grundmann) and 'natural', rather than the foreign or artificial presence of new construction. The city's decline affected its individuality and character, alienating residents from the city and neighbourhoods. The phrase used is 'losing its face' [*ihr/sein*²⁷ *Gesicht verlieren*]. It can also mean being dishonoured in other contexts but here it means literally 'losing ones face', or 'losing one's identity' (column 7: LVZ 7/11/89). A town's face is its 'true', historically evolved identity, creating the town as individual, organically related to and expressing its individuality in contrast to the 'faceless' new standardised buildings (open letter). Establishing a 'true' identity for Leipzig crucially influences the evaluation of its decline and the measures necessary to restore and develop this identity.

Leipzig's identity was not seen as straight-forward. A common descriptor was Leipzig the 'Trade-Fair City', or '*Messestadt*' (table 5.6, column 1: Baumgärtel, LVZ 14/11/89, 27/11/89, 24/25/3/90, Junker). There had been rumours in the GDR that Leipzig was to lose this 800 year old tradition, its international trade centre function relocated to a less decayed city (Schneider, 1990).²⁸ Another part of the city's history and *raison d'être* would be lost, adding to the sense of existential threat. Leipzig is, however, far from dependent on one identity. A series of common descriptors (Heldt, Leipzig Postulates) covered the whole range of industry, trade, learning and culture. These identities were also open to development and modernisation (Lindner). Curiously, perhaps, Leipzig drew on a range of almost bourgeois identities and functions and its importance in developing the social democratic movement or its other socialist qualifications were not invoked. Leipzig was never a royal or

Table 5.6 Identity and Identification

1 Identity of Leipzig	2 Identification of citizens with city
<p>'The City of Industry, of Trades and of World Trade - of Trade Fairs, of Science and of Academic Education, City of Culture, of Art, of Books and Literature, of Music, Theatre and Sport²⁹ [...] has a core unique in Europe for its urban [städtebauliche]³⁰ specificity. [...] Like no other city in Europe [it is affected by decay]', <i>Heldt</i></p> <p>'Life must be given back to the city so that it can justify its reputation as a centre of trade, of industry [...], of art and culture. With its city centre evolved over centuries (with the unusual feature of whole streets in the style of the Founders' Period) Leipzig is also an important part of European culture' <i>Leipzig Postulates, LVZ, 21/11/89</i></p> <p>'Leipzig - from the City of Books to the City of Modern Media', <i>Lindner</i></p> <p>'the endangerment of the cultural identity of the traditional residential areas', <i>Sikora</i></p> <p>'The world-renowned Trade-Fair Metropolis of Leipzig', <i>Baumgärtel</i></p> <p>'the Trade-Fair City' <i>LVZ 14/11/89</i></p> <p>'Leipzig [...] Trade-Fair City', <i>Junker, LVZ 4/5/11/89</i></p> <p>'GDR-metropolis' or 'GDR-Trade-Fair-Metropolis' <i>Krenz visit, LVZ 27/11/89</i></p> <p>'Trade-Fair city', <i>LVZ, 24/25/3/90</i></p> <p>'Our cultural identity is decisively carried or questioned by the condition of the historical towns', <i>BdA, LVZ, 1/11/89</i></p> <p>'our Trade-Fair city will be left standing and will be degraded to a provincial nest [Provinznest]', <i>academixer, LVZ 7/11/89</i></p> <p>'In that valuable Founders' Period substance and in the city centre are after all the identification opportunities for the city of Leipzig', <i>Fischer, 25/26/11/89</i></p>	<p>'The defects influence the quality of life in all areas of the built and natural environment and in all areas of their use. For this reason too the citizens took to the streets.' <i>Sikora</i></p> <p>'city planning maintains the urban fixing points of the existing spatial structure and thereby creates urban spaces rich in experiences and full of excitement and creates and further develops architecture which defines the city', <i>Szlegoleit</i></p> <p>'we want to prevent 'wrong' buildings from destroying our city and obliterating the identification of the citizens with it', <i>Heldt</i></p> <p>'satisfaction of needs for a flat, the quality and attractiveness of the natural and built environment of the neighbourhood occupy the highest place in the scale of values of the citizens. They are today one of the most important reasons for decisions on whether to stay in the city or to go', <i>Usbeck</i></p> <p>[A mixture of the old and the new] 'allows the identification of the citizen with his city especially in the social sphere where personal history and the history of his own people is reflected [...] The citizens must be able to speak of 'my' neighbourhood [Stadtteil]', <i>Haupt</i></p> <p>'those who feel 'rooted' stay', <i>Grundmann</i></p>

Continued over:

Table 5.6 contd.

1 Identity of Leipzig	2 Identification of citizens with city
<p>'decay of the Culture City [...] once so economically potent because of its trade-fair [...] is a European cultural disgrace. The city has suffered such a loss of [...] cultural identity, of specific flair, of witnesses to its historical identity that really no-one needs to be surprised when Leipzig citizens no longer accept the city as their own and continue to turn their backs on it.' <i>Thormann, LVZ 10/1/90</i></p> <p>[Need alternative to prefabs in city centre] 'which would suit the national and international architectural and cultural importance of Leipzig city centre' <i>Report on Round Table Construction, LVZ, 18/1/90</i></p> <p>[new buildings are] 'a disgrace in the centre of a city of the status of Leipzig with its [ihre] rich, important traditions' <i>open letter to mayor, LVZ 4/5/11/89</i></p>	<p>'An identification of the citizens with their town and with their home [<i>Heimat</i>] is certainly not possible this way.' <i>BdA, LVZ, 1/11/89</i></p> <p>Interviewed about Connewitz: 'Here it is not just a part of my home which has been torn away. One could at least have kept the character even if one had to modernise the inner life of the buildings. Here they have bulldozed away history.' <i>LVZ, 7/2/90</i></p> <p><i>See Thormann in first column</i></p> <p>'regaining our individual self-confidence and a new cultural identification with our city will above all depend on whether (and especially how quickly) the [...] process can be stopped.' <i>Hocqué, LVZ 28/11/89</i></p> <p>'Identification with one's home city [<i>Heimatstadt</i>] means action' <i>TGA combine, LVZ 17/1/90</i></p>

Sources given, otherwise from VBKf.

noble residency and various accounts draw on the 'rich, important traditions' of the city, 'helping to determine the *Zeitgeist* for centuries' with the 'mercantile egoism of its citizens', their industriousness and their openness to others³¹ (Biskupek, 1990). In its architecture, culture and other functions the city was seen as in many ways 'unique' nationally (Round Table), on the European level (Heldt) and internationally (Baumgärtel).

Its problems were also 'unique' in Europe (Heldt). Its great past and traditions manifested in the city's architecture were threatened. The cultural identity of the city was defined particularly by its historical (and therefore 'genuine') architecture in precisely the areas most threatened by GDR practices (Sikora, BdA, Fischer, Thormann, open letter, Leipzig Postulates). The effects are many: the Trade-Fair was endangered since business would no longer want to come to Leipzig (see table 5.5, *Sächsisches Tageblatt*); the city would be degraded to a 'provincial nest' (academixer); the population was alienated and leaving the city (Thormann). One banner at the Monday demonstrations summarised this situation calling Leipzig 'The Ruin City' (Schneider, 1990, 13/11/89).

The identification of citizens (table 5.6, column 2) with their city and their dismay at falling quality of life are postulated as reasons for demonstrations (confirmed by the banners on the subject) (Sikora, TGA). Decay also severely reduces the identification of citizens with their cities and neighbourhoods as history is 'bulldozed' away (LVZ, 7/2/90) and drives people from the city (BdA, Heldt). At this time Leipzig, in common with the whole of the GDR, experienced a substantial migration of population from East to West (F.M. Smith, 1994) in addition to its loss of population since 1984,³² constituting a further threat to the city. Reversing these processes of decline, loss of identity and identification, threat to the city and loss of population requires a major reversal of policy so that the population is 'rooted' (Grundmann) and their material needs are met (Usbeck). Haupt proposes a mixture of old and new building to allow identification (Hocqué) and Sziegoleit wants city planning to provide 'fixing points'. This demand for new urban policies is developed in the approaches summarised in the concept of 'careful urban renewal' or '*behutsame Stadterneuerung*'.

'Careful urban renewal' or '*behutsame Stadterneuerung*' is an approach incorporating ideas other than the quantitative satisfaction of housing needs in urban development (table 5.7). Long frowned upon by GDR authorities because of its opposition to official policies of 'complex urban reconstruction' (Doehler *et al.*, 1992, 354), signs of rehabilitation came when Hocqué announced the People's Building Conference with the call for '*behutsame Stadterneuerung*': 'we do not need the 'Grünau-isation' of the city³³ [...] rather a careful urban renewal from the centre to the outer districts' (LVZ, 28/11/89). The term does not appear very often in following months (Sziegoleit, ILA, LVZ, 10/1/90) but is more common in later periods and constitutes a useful shorthand for the complex of ideas which emerged to displace GDR practices and policies.

The new ideas cover themes which shift attention to the qualities of urban policies and their effects. Fundamentally, this involved the reversal of priorities from clearance and new building to maintenance and careful renewal (table 5.7: banner, TGA, Schilka, Fischer, Grundmann, Kulturprojekt) stressing the importance of historic buildings and structures (BdA, Fischer, Grundmann, Sikora, Leipzig Postulates). This echoes anti-modernist or even post-modernist

Table 5.7: 'Behutsame Stadterneuerung'

'The development of the city region is more than construction. It is economic renovation in first place' <i>Usbeck, LVZ, 8/1/90</i>
'Maintenance and reconstruction instead of demolition!' <i>Banner, 11/12/89</i>
Should be new priorities 'maintenance, repair, reconstruction, new construction' <i>VEB TGA, LVZ 17/1/90</i>
Aim to retain and renew, with an 'ecologically friendly', communal self-administration. <i>Reichelt</i>
'Construction policies can only be the result of complex and comprehensive urban planning for the continual, intensive reproduction of the existing constructed spatial structures including locations of all types of production and for the care for the identity of the typical urban scene' <i>Schilka</i>
'Considerate planning oriented to the well-being of the citizens is necessary, the technology must not determine the architecture. The protection of the historical building fabric and complete [geschlossene] residential quarters has special significance.' <i>Leipzig Postulates, LVZ, 21/11/89</i>
[Want an] 'urban ecological concept' for the waterways and river meadows, for the relationship between the city and the surrounding areas and for the removal of pollution and industry [...] Want too a 'social concept' for a stable social structure, varied housing forms, social development of the new housing areas, or work places and a 'resocialisation of living in the old city areas' <i>Sziegoleit</i>
'It is now necessary to have a special concept for the saving of our old towns, in which the essential values of history and culture are concentrated.' <i>BdA</i>
Need new building 'And this from the point of view that in the process of re-creation there is the chance to keep all that is valuable from the Founders' Period [...] Reduce new building on the edge of town to the advantage of maintenance [Werterhaltung]' <i>Fischer, LVZ, 25/26/11/89</i>
'In order not to be misunderstood, I would like to emphasise: We too [Kulturbund, Stadtgeschichte] are in favour of urban renewal, but of a more solid type [...] urban renewal means urban renovation and not clearance' <i>Grundmann</i>
[re. neighbourhoods] 'We need: green for health, construction suitable for disabled and elderly people, decent-sized flats, doctor's surgeries, cultural facilities, sports facilities, premises for small and medium businesses, shops and opportunities for communication in restaurants and cafes.' <i>Haupt</i>
Rather than a modern approach or a totally traditional approach 'we advocate a sensible form created from the living city organism and the dialogue between the existing stock and the future development of the city.' <i>Sikora</i>
The major focus of the Kulturprojekt Waldstraßenviertel should be 'the conservation of the buildings, the restoration of a functioning 'everyday culture' etc. <i>Kulturprojekt</i>

Sources given, otherwise from VBKf.

developments in western countries. Sikora (VBKf, 92) draws attention to these precedents, but rejects an exclusive reliance on historical forms, advocating a balance between historical and new forms. Links with post-modernist turns in urban development are not valid because of the lack of emphasis on culture and consumption in these demands (c.f. Harvey, 1989). Instead the complex goes beyond the elements of housing provision to include as integral elements concern for economic renewal (Usbeck), environmental renewal (Reichelt, Sziegoleit) and for recreating a functioning and intact social fabric in the city, especially in the neighbourhoods (Kulturprojekt, Haupt, Sziegoleit). To stress the importance of residential neighbourhoods, particularly old-established

ones, constituted a rejection of the priority given to city centre and edge-of-town developments in the GDR. It concentrated instead on the experiential, social and cultural importance of the neighbourhood or 'home' area for identity and well-being (Schilka). The emphasis on social, ecological and local factors, identity, culture and history characterised this developing discourse. The following section explores how such changed policies related to a changed local politics.

5.2 New politics for new policies

As chapter 4 shows the *Wende* period produced large shifts in local political institutions. As well as rejection of the SED/GDR government, there was a need to create a suitable political framework for new policies. Calls for transformed urban development strategies demanded changed political structures and practices, particularly at the local level, often directly reversing GDR practices. Demonstrators initially placed blame for the condition of Leipzig and other cities with the SED and other central organs:

'Risen from the ruins³⁴ which the SED has left behind!' (6/11/89)
'The SED reputation³⁵ is as bad as many Leipzig houses! No wonder with that man in charge of the roof and his handymen³⁶.' (20/11/89)
'Junker resign! We're short of construction workers in Leipzig!'
(All from Schneider, 1990)

However, local councils were also criticised. The city council ('servile and incompetent', Topfstedt, VBKf, 26) had accepted that 'Leipzig lose its face' (LVZ, 7/11/89), had showed 'speechlessness and a lack of action' and had failed to ratify listed building legislation (Hocquél,³⁷ LVZ, 28/11/89). Mayor Seidel was criticised for speaking of the 'continuing healthy development of our District and Trade-Fair City' (LVZ, 4/5/11/89). City and district construction offices were dominated by 'the exclusive plan fulfilment ideology of economists' (Hocquél, LVZ, 28/11/89) and were 'a rigid planning organ and an arbitrary instrument of misplaced construction policy' (Transport and Infrastructure Combine, VBKf, 133). Combines were also criticised for supporting central policies: 'it can no longer be acceptable that the largest district construction company (Building Combine Leipzig) forces on all of us a construction policy which destroys the city structure' (Hocquél, LVZ, 28/11/89).

The main concern was, however, not necessarily to apportion blame but to reject existing policies and develop new ones. Some proposals were firmly within a plan economy. The GDR Minister of Construction, Junker suggested local decision-making but 'everything must be secured materially and technically', that is, within the Plan (LVZ, 4/5/11/89). The director of the Technical Building Equipment Combine (TGA) argued 'the promotion of results-oriented communal politics must always include [...] the stable development of combine performance' (LVZ, 17/1/90), clearly assuming the continued existence of the combines. Others suggested greater change but their language was still part of GDR Plan jargon (Oschlies, 1990). Leipzig's chief city architect suggested altering the emphasis from new construction to maintenance but still talked of 'the necessary reproduction of Leipzig's flats', of the danger of having to dismantle the city 'according to the Plan' and of knowing what finances are in the Plan for 1990 (Fischer, LVZ, 25/26/11/89). This is not a radical change to market forces or to new construction forms,³⁸ although one should recognise the extent of the changes Junker and others proposed.

An engagement with the transition to a market economy or issues of ownership was not a central issue even among those talking of 'careful urban renewal'. At the First Leipzig Building Conference the Initiative of Leipzig Architects rejected the sale of land (Sziegoleit, VBKf, 62) and the re-established GDR-SPD was criticised for 'populistic'³⁹ demands for a social market economy' (LVZ, 18/1/90). Others did incorporate economic arguments: Rodewald formulated choices for rent policy - 'Citizens, do you want stable rents or do you want stable houses?' (VBKf, 1990, 71) and there was some shift to proposing the need for private investment (Klein, District Construction Office, VBKf, 17), private or co-operative construction companies (LVZ, 8/1/90) and external investment in the city (LVZ, 21/11/89). Most economic changes did not come into effect until after German Economic and Monetary Union (GEMU) in July 1990 and overall there was an innocence about the effects of a market economy on urban planning and development. East German planners, writing just over a year later, describe this time with nostalgia from the ironic vantage point of experience gathered during the transition period:

'Then no-one talked about rents but about the "endogenous potential" of the city - listed buildings, spatial structures, residents, visitors, economic foundations etc. - although we did not yet call it that then.

Some months later we were aware that it was not in the first place the brave demands of that time for an end to demolition which stopped the insensitive new construction machines in the city centre. Rather it was much more the refusal of private owners to sell their land.

And it took another few weeks until we understood that in some cases you could even call it speculation.' (Written May 1991; Doehler et al., 1992, 366-367)

What did shift radically at this period were demands for changed political strategies and organisations. This involved the 'democratisation' (Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ, 5/1/90) of housing policies and urban planning by decentralising decision-making to local councils and citizens, giving more influence to specialists rather than party functionaries. The first moves to decentralisation and abandoning centralised construction norms were introduced by Junker (LVZ, 4/5/11/89) and Baumgärtel, his successor (VBKf, 39). However, since communes had 'lost more and more of their decision-making powers' and 'the public and local officials, architects and planners increasingly lost their influence' (Topfstedt, VBKf, 26; also Grönwald, 1992), 'the main issue for the communes was their relationship to the economy and the development of self-administration' (Usbeck, LVZ, 8/1/90), aiming not for 'democratic centralism' but subsidiarity, a prime organising characteristic of West German local government.⁴⁰ It was argued that the local level rather than the combines and the SED should have more responsibility (Fischer, VBKf, 45; Eckert, VBKf, 69-70) 'through enabling and subject competence' (BdA, LVZ, 1/11/89). Ideally 'only communes should be responsible for construction' (Schilka, VBKf, 75).

Here the local was prioritised as a site of potentially democratic decision-making. However this became problematic when local councils resigned because of election scandals. Demand for decentralised decision-making therefore went beyond local government to calls for a complete reversal from top-down planning to bottom-up planning, promoting citizen involvement. Past attempts to involve citizens in active participation had been stifled by the centre:

'attempts to speak to the people [*Menschen*] about urban planning and architecture were destined to remain more or less fruitless up to now because the fundamental questions of construction policy were decided 'above', mostly in Berlin and Leipzig party buildings and not in the city councils and building departments and definitely not by citizens at the base.' (Altmann, LVZ, 9/1/90)

Identifying the exclusion of the population as a fundamental problem in GDR urban policy meant their inclusion was part of the solution:

'this way of citizen participation and citizen activities [is] the correct concept for the building re-birth of the world-renowned Trade-Fair metropolis of Leipzig [...] the true core of the problem [...] is that the non-participation and even exclusion of the citizens from the development of concepts was the real reason for the conceptionlessness and speechlessness of those responsible.'
(Baumgärtel, VBKf, 31)

Table 5.8: New 'grass-roots' politics

"The policies of state and commune should not determine how the citizens have to fit into the state and the commune, rather the state and the commune have to fit in with the citizens in an absolutely democratic way, because the quality of their lives is the starting point of politics." <i>Sikora, VBKf, 89.</i>
"At last the goal of construction must be the cultured satisfaction of the needs of the client - the People [Volk] - and not the fulfilment of quantitative reference numbers [targets for planning] by which the body carrying out the job - the construction company - is measured, not by the People, but by the people who take it - or took it - upon themselves to speak in the name of the People." <i>Fischer, VBKf, 45.</i>
Heldt wishes the "Interests of the citizens to define civic policy, that civic policy defines urban planning policy and that urban planning policy defines construction policies" <i>Heldt, VBKf, 11</i>
"The participation of the citizens in the city plans must be the defining element of urban planning law." <i>Reichelt, VBKf, 79.</i>

Sources: from VBKf.

Many of those engaged in the debate formulated a new ideal of partnership and bottom-up,⁴¹ citizen-led policy formation (table 5.8) which was constructed as more democratic, with the needs of the population as the prime measure of the goals of construction (Sikora, Fischer, Heldt) and the involvement of the population as the 'defining element' (Reichelt). There were hints of market-economic thinking from Fischer: it is 'The People' who are the client not the State's plan norms. The German '*Auftraggeber*', literally 'one who gives the contract', is a more active construction than the passive 'client' position. Fischer uses '*Volk*' (People), which tends to be used in ideal statements but has resonance in such typically GDR phrases as '*das ganze werktätige Volk*', the 'whole working people'. The plural English noun does not convey the unitary body, one People, which the singular German noun portrays. Descriptors of the population construct it as active or passive, pluralist or

unitary, an issue which recurs in subsequent chapters. For example others use the term 'Bürger' (citizens) when discussing the need for forms of involvement. As a plural noun this refers to a collection of individuals.⁴²

Table 5.9: New modes of citizen involvement

<p>"The residents of the neighbourhoods are also experts for building: Scientists and practitioners want to plan with the citizens for the Resurrection of Leipzig. [...] City planners - theorists and practitioners- must in our opinion understand today that in the process of democratisation of society we need not only expanded forms of information from the citizens to the city authorities. Rather we must create fundamentally new methods and instruments. [...] There will be open hours for discussions of various plans]. After all, the residents of a city area are the experts on what happens in the life of the organism of the city. [...]" <i>Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ, 5/1/90.</i></p>
<p>"people who believe that a changed power situation automatically leads to new thinking in planning and implementation are seriously mistaken." <i>Sikora, VBKf, 91.</i></p>
<p>"Leipzig is in an emergency. As well as the city centre, the historically evolved residential areas especially need activity by the residents and help from outside on the basis of reformed local politics. In it the interests of the citizens must be reflected democratically. Politics 'from above' has not proved itself to be believable; the citizens are disillusioned. Only changes which the residents of the city can experience directly can produce a positive feeling for life. Such changes are most effectively realised in the immediate living environment of the people, in the neighbourhood. [...] These tasks can only be solved [...] if the interests of the citizens, of democratic groups and of the city as a whole are brought together and co-ordinated. [...] We hope for the active participation [<i>Mitarbeit</i>] of the citizens of Leipzig, especially the residents of this area. Let us try together to give the political change in our country a sense through personal activities." <i>Kulturprojekt Waldstraßenviertel, VBKf, 96</i></p>

Source: from VBKf.

Alongside the goal of increased democracy, citizen involvement is pursued because residents are 'experts' on their areas whose skills and activities should be utilised to recreate the city (table 5.9: Doehler and Grönwald). In order to include the 'activity of the citizens' they should be represented 'democratically', the interests of city and citizens brought together and co-ordinated (Kulturprojekt). However changed political power would not result automatically in transformed urban planning (Sikora) and new modes of planning were needed, not only taking information from citizens but involving 'fundamentally new methods and instruments' (Doehler and Grönwald). Just what this or the 'reformed local politics' of the Kulturprojekt meant was not made clear,⁴³ but the perceived links between policies and politics were evident.

Table 5.10: Expertise rather than bureaucratic control

"I would also like it however if we could all carry the new creation of our city in subject competence [<i>Sachkompetenz</i>] in respect of building, culture and ecology and that we do not get a new concept forced on us [<i>überstülpt</i>] from Berlin." Haupt, LVZ, 7/11/89
"The new approach should be that we present various models for the formation of the city with pro and contra points so that the councillors can reach a competent [<i>sachkundige</i>] decision." Fischer, LVZ, 25/26/11/89
"Should be a declaration of intent from people competent in the subjects and specialities [<i>sach- und fachkundiger Leute</i>]." Heldt, LVZ, 4/1/90
"Our goal is overall to connect scientific knowledge [<i>wissenschaftliche Meinungsbildung</i>] with the process of knowledge building of the citizens. Precisely in this it is necessary to learn more from the mistakes of the past and no longer to regard building as a production task, but rather to grasp and to practise it as a cultural commitment to a city and its [<i>ihre</i>] people [<i>Menschen</i>]." Doehler and Grönwald, LVZ, 5/1/90
"we do not recognise that the intellectual potential of this city and the opinions of its citizens are being included. [...] Prime in urban planning must once again be the expertise of the urban planners, the architects and the historical monument conservators and the creative artists and not the exclusive plan fulfilment ideology of economists in the construction offices. Hocquél, LVZ, 28/11/89
"those in the building trade [including architects etc.] who only orient themselves on (often very dubious) economic and technical norms and who have worked to them up to now, [now] face an ever stronger phalanx of those for whom the art of building is more than just a phrase, who will no longer accept the decay of the Culture City [i.e. Leipzig] forced by disinterest, incompetence and unscrupulousness." Thormann, LVZ, 10/1/90
"We want to push architecture once again into the public consciousness as a cultural contribution." Initiative of Leipzig Architects, LVZ, 10/11/2/90
Federation of Architects (BdA) and Keepers of Listed Buildings (<i>Denkmalpfleger</i>) "strengthen the position of the local people's representations [<i>örtliche Volksvertretungen</i>] and their officers as the client ⁴⁴ [<i>Auftraggeber</i>] through enabling [<i>Befähigung</i>] and subject competence" and to use better the creative talents of architects and artists. Both associations assured they would contribute: "with their societal authority and subject competency to the realisation of these demands. [...] Also with active publicity work to sensitise the societal consciousness for the problems and new goals of inner city construction and to work to include [<i>einbeziehen</i>] the creative forces of the residents of the cities and districts [<i>Gemeinden</i>]. [...] We demand from all who carry responsibility to give a clear commitment to the conservation [<i>Bewahrung</i>] of our old towns. We demand that the citizens can speak too [<i>mitreden</i>] when their world of home and work is concerned." BdA, LVZ, 1/11/89

Source: from VBKf.

New planning forms also repositioned planners and other professionals (table 5.10). Citizens were to be involved because of their expertise in the neighbourhood, their importance as a planning resource and for making processes more democratic. Arguments for changing the position of professionals rejected bureaucratic decision-making on 'ideological' or 'political' lines and favoured sound subject knowledge (Thormann, Haupt, Fischer). Professional knowledge was based on 'subject competence' [*sachkundig, Sachkompetenz*] and 'scientific' decision-making as well as a cultural commitment of professional creativity to future city

developments (BdA, Hocqué). This required increased consciousness of the role of planning and architecture (ILA, Doehler and Grönwald, BdA) which professionals must work to instil while including the citizens, demanding responsibility from all professionals (Heldt).

Professionals therefore sought to re-establish their rightful place, competent in planning and urban policy. Their relationship to local councils and to citizens, whose ideas and interests they sought to incorporate [*einbeziehen*] and who were to be allowed and encouraged to speak too [*mitreden*], was complex (BdA). A second reading of statements (tables 5.8 to 5.10) reveals certain contradictions between ideals of citizen participation and professional policy formulation. Hocqué argues the 'intellectual potential of this city and the opinions of its citizens are being excluded' but proceeds to position planners' 'expertise' as the prime force. The Federation of Architects demands that citizens speak too 'when their world of home and work is concerned', the Kulturprojekt sees citizens as active participants 'in the city centre [and] the evolved residential areas [...] in the immediate living environment of the people, in the neighbourhood', and Doehler and Grönwald refer to citizens as residents of their neighbourhood [*Stadtteil*]. Citizens' expertise is therefore restricted to the arenas of work, home and the neighbourhood, and to a lesser extent to the city centre. By implication, therefore, there are areas where citizens are not competent, where planners are needed. Doehler and Grönwald construct a division between professional 'scientific knowledge' and citizens' 'knowledge building', but aim to connect them rather than divide. Citizens' expertise is also constructed as subordinate to the need for planners and other professionals to educate and actively to draw the population into planning procedures. This represents an early demarcation of the places of different groups in urban policy formation. The rhetoric favours active involvement but reveals the attempt by professionals to establish themselves as independent and professional. Citizens meanwhile are restricted to limited spheres, defined as 'not professional' and 'not elected'. '*Die Bürger*' therefore refers to the lay population and not to the whole population.

Equally important in this characterisation of the citizens and the relative positions of the different professional groups is the absence of any consideration of differing needs and wants of various sections of the citizen population. 'The citizens' are constructed as a unitary body, despite

the plural noun, whose ideas need to be 'co-ordinated' with the city (Kulturprojekt), whose needs and interests need to be taken into account by active and creative professionals. This appeal to a unified front at the local level may result from the strong counter-force of previous GDR policies and practices (unity in the face of adversity) but it also helped to create specific institutions. These more pluralist forms of participation and interest articulation are considered in subsequent chapters.

5.3 Summary of discourses

Debates in this period emphasised the existential nature of the threat to the city, its buildings and social structure. They established the necessity of new structures and policies on the basis of identity, democratisation, involvement, 'healthy' cities, the historical/cultural approach, the end of high GDR modernism. These discourses privileged the local area, 'professionals' and to an extent the 'citizens' over remote decisions, the party and administrators, and the combines. Responsibility for the situation was placed firmly on outside factors (the city as victim). The city needed ^{to be} saved. Leipzig's history, identity, evolutionary structures and local areas are part of what makes the city whole, natural and healthy, together with the attachment of the population and their activity in their city. This established a version of urban civic society, advocating involvement as an expression and constituent element of the healthy organism of the city. The desire to achieve this made the need for reformed politics and changed priorities in the GDR and Leipzig particularly urgent. The debate about restored cities, democratisation, participation, identity and identification was a circular one about the ideal relationship between residents, professionals and the city. This was set up as a model of participatory citizenship, local decision-making, functioning neighbourhoods and cities. It was a positive urban ideal but was one not affected by unification and the introduction of capitalist relations, nor was it based on understandings of class, income, race/ethnicity, gender, age or other divisions.

In urban planning and housing the dualisms which were generated in what were also newly public, if not new discourses showed a desire to break with past policies. With the first of each pairing privileged as the way forward in urban planning and local politics, they were constructed as: maintenance/neglect, saving the city/the dying city, city as

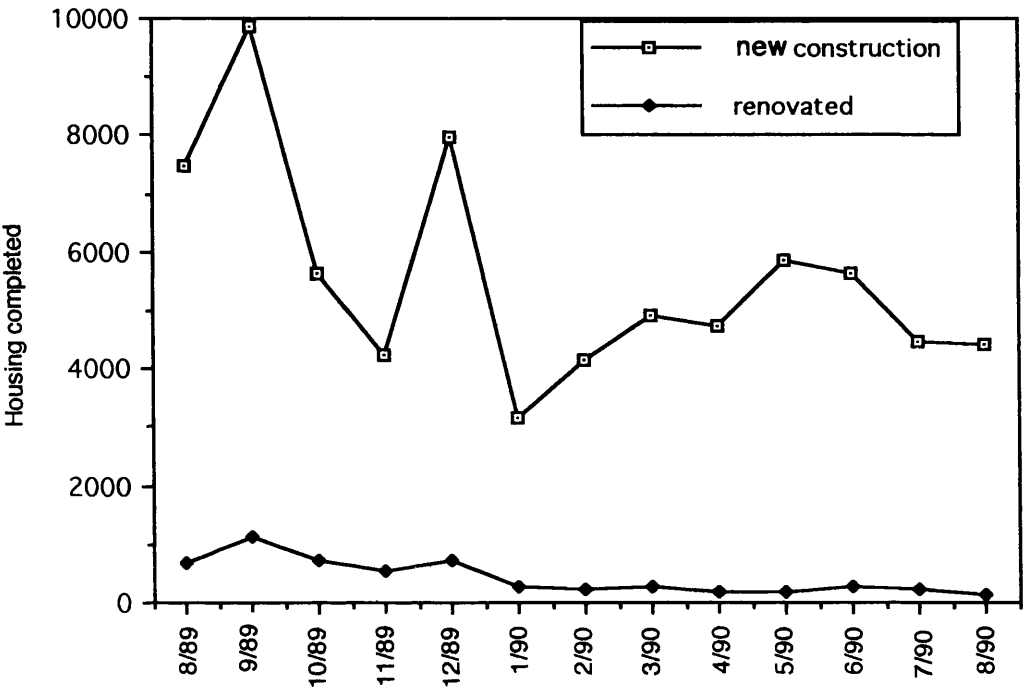
organism/city as machine, identity/losing face, identification/alienation, mixed structures/new building, ecology/ economy, history and culture/technology, democracy/Party command, local/central, involvement/exclusion, professionals/functionaries. Such dualisms are built on a series of oppositions, the main one being the opposition between state/ Party and population in the GDR (as constructed here). However, it remains to be seen whether such opposition is either necessary or possible after reunification. There may be fragmentation of the alliances which had developed, or a loss of interest in the issues. On the other hand new oppositions may emerge which substitute resistance to western forms of development or to class-based issues, for example, within the city.

6 Local planning and activism in Leipzig after the revolution: conclusion

The direct effects of the *Volksbaukonferenz* in Leipzig were that demolition was halted in one particularly controversial area and then in the rest of the city. There was to be no more prefabricated construction, in its traditional or 'post-modern' forms (Topfstedt, 1992, 333) in the city centre. Official city policy concentrated on reconstruction and renewal rather than new construction, and new institutions were established. However, one of the most immediate effects of the *Wende* on housing was that construction fell massively owing to shortage of finances in spring 1990 (figure 5.4). In Leipzig district all construction stopped in March 1990 except for the reconstruction of one neighbourhood because the city had no more money to pay for the construction (LVZ, 9/3/90).

Definite changes in policy were only really implemented after the election of a new, SPD-majority local council in May 1990 and after the slow reorganisation of local administration and local government finance began. In autumn 1990 the city designated 18 areas for preparation as urban renewal⁴⁵ areas. With the change of local, Land and federal governments in 1990 came the introduction of western planning legislation and practices. Saxony like most other *Länder* adopted western legislation almost unchanged (in this case from Baden-Württemberg; Reuther and Doehler, 1994). Within this framework the 18 areas would

Figure 5.4: New construction and renovation in Leipzig, August 1989 to August 1990



Source: Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c.

Figure 5.5: Urban renewal areas, Leipzig 1991



1 Nikischplatz	6 Connewitz	11 Kleinzschocher	16 Medien - Zentrum
2 Seeburgstraße	7 Waldstraßengebiet	12 Großzschocher	17 Stötteritz
3 Thonberg	8 Seb.-Bach-Str.-Gebiet	13 Lindenau	18 Neuschönefeld
4 Leninstraße	9 Innerer Süden	14 Gohlis	19 Plagwitz
5 Volkansdorf	10 Neustädter Markt	15 Eutritsch	

Sanierungsgebiete der Stadt Leipzig

Source: Information leaflet of Urban Renewal Office Leipzig, 1991.

qualify for legal protection and promotion via federal and *Land* grants and subsidies. (The two main sites of new construction, Gröna and Paunsdorf, were added later as they required substantial completion and upgrading). Plagwitz had special status as an area of industrial development. The 18 areas cover 56,000 flats, or one fifth of Leipzig's stock (figure 5.5) and lie predominantly within the pre-World War I core of Leipzig. The list incorporates all five study areas to some extent (see chapter 8).⁴⁶

At this period Leipzig city council established new parameters for the urban renewal areas which followed many of the concerns of the People's Building Conference: conservation and preservation of existing stock, new construction in gap sites, principles of ecological urban renewal, extensive citizen participation, and active co-operation with investors (Reuther and Doepler, 1994). Later statements reinforced these priorities:

'careful urban renewal [...] involved securing, restoring and modernising the valuable old building stock which to a large extent still shapes Leipzig's urban profile' (Gormsen, Head of Division of City Development and Planning,⁴⁷ 1992, 36)

However, reunification also introduced a new range of issues about who and what should and could influence the particular forms of development. There are new conflicts between administration, political parties, local population, and significantly the interests of capital. In a final addition to the equation, at the same time as restructuring in administration, politics and economy, the local population was also developing its own forms of action. Moves towards participation initiated by local citizens in neighbourhood-based citizen associations (*Bürgervereine*), demanding consultation and public discussions, were paralleled by a number of initiatives concerned with ecological and urban development in the Leipzig as a whole: Pro Leipzig, a general city development campaigning organisation; the Association for Ecological Building (*Verein für ökologisches Bauen, VöB*); and EcoLion⁴⁸ (*Ökolöwe*), a city-wide environmental pressure group). All are regularly mentioned by commentators as active and significant for the city long after reunification (Reuther and Doepler, 1994; Schmidt, 1991; Topfstedt, 1992).

In conclusion, then, GDR political and urban policies had given rise to both the forms of protest and the new agendas which were expressed in and created the new public sphere. The new geographies of protest developed agendas around the opening of governance to new outside pressures and more transparency, opening borders and opening other spaces to use as part of the public sphere. In particular, an agenda developed in Leipzig around the issues of urban renewal. These developments lead, of course, to questions about how these trends changed after reunification. Could existing West German mechanisms for urban planning cope with the quantitative and qualitative extent of the problem, the finances, the differing and confused property ownership questions in East Germany, and with the difficulty of establishing a framework of planning legislation, land use zoning, and so on? Which power relations and alliances were established within this period? Similarly, one must ask whether in this period citizen action developed in any ways from the *Wende* period or whether new factors were important and whether groups were related specifically to local planning in neighbourhoods or whether they were active either at the city level or on a range of wider issues? In this period where 'the old ways don't function any more and the new ones don't function yet' (Mayor Lehmann-Grube, LVZ, 8/9/12/90) was there an opportunity for an openness in public debates and actions, for new forms and possibilities which were neither those of the GDR or the old FRG but something new, or hybrid? Or are the pressures of reunification such that the processes involve full-scale adoption of western norms? How are the transformations constructed through local actions, the experiences of the East German population in the GDR and the experiences and symbolism of the GDR revolution, as articulated in Leipzig? The remainder of the thesis addresses these issues.

¹ See section 5.

² '*Umgestaltungsgebiete*' were inner city areas designated for full scale clearance and reconstruction.

³ Leipzig's largest city centre square was redesigned in the 1960s to create a socialist ceremonial square accommodating a new post office, opera, Leipzig's university and the new concert hall. In the process the largely undamaged university church, St Paul's, was blown up. This was considered architectural vandalism and after 1989 a civic initiative emerged campaigning for the reconstruction of the church.

- 4 Leipziger Blätter, a series begun in 1982, was published by the District Office for Culture in Leipzig to coincide with the spring and autumn trade fairs. They contained articles on the region's cultural history, urban changes and policies.
- 5 WBS70 stands for *Wohnbauserie 1970*, or housing construction series 1970.
- 6 *Die Einheit von Neubau und Rekonstruktion*.
- 7 See chapter 4.
- 8 See chapter 4, section 3.1.
- 9 This led to extremes of population characteristics with older people in the city centre and many teenagers in Grünau which leads to problems for service provision. (Usbeck, *Initiativgruppe*, 1990, 51).
- 10 Carbo-chemical complex to the south of Leipzig.
- 11 Reported from a European-wide survey in the LVZ, 18/4/90. In January 1990 77% of residents wanted to demolish the village and move away.
- 12 The mixed residential-industrial area which is one of the study areas. It was extremely polluted by the industry there.
- 13 A town south of Leipzig with a large carbo-chemical complex.
- 14 A smog warning system was only introduced as part of the public admission of pollution levels.
- 15 The original text read: 'Vergeßt (vergast) Plagwitz nicht! SO₂: 1,29/ 3,48 - Reichelt, es reicht!', employing a pun on 'vergessen' (to forget) and 'vergasen' (to gas), a reference to sulphur dioxide air pollution in Plagwitz. Reichelt was the government minister responsible.
- 16 National housing minister, Junker, initially announced Leipzig would be allocated 300-400 extra houses in the Plan for 1990 (LVZ, 23/10/89). Subsequently he announced an increase of 5000 newly constructed flats, 3000 'modernised' flats (see earlier in chapter) and the return of half of the 650 to 700 Leipzig district building workers from Berlin (LVZ, 4/5/11/89).
- 17 The Federation of Architects (BdA), Historical Monument specialists and others met in Rostock on 25th and 26th October to discuss new policies (LVZ, 1/11/89).
- 18 The Initiative of Leipzig Architects was founded in November 1989 independently of the Federation of Architects or the Building Academy (LVZ, 10/11/2/90).
- 19 There still has not been a Second Leipzig People's Building Conference. (Doehler *et al.*, 1992, 368). The original term is '*Leipziger Volksbaukonferenz*'. *Volksbau* can be translated in the sense of 'domestic economy' which is *Volkswirtschaft* or in the sense of People's Republic which is *Volksrepublik*. Thus it carries with it some of the import of the 'voice of the People' as well as a more general reference to building.
- 20 The television documentary 'Can Leipzig still be saved?' [*Ist Leipzig noch zu retten?*] was broadcast on GDR television on 6th November 1989. It had previously been broadcast on a West German station.
- 21 Discussions particularly related to construction and the situation in Leipzig included: discussion of construction in Leipzig, 26/10/89; discussion in the academixer cabaret, 7/11/89; publication of the Leipzig Postulates, a summary of discussions over the weeks up to 21/11/89. All were reported in local newspapers and were taken up in the demands of city districts and local committees (chapter 4).
- 22 Although these ideas are presented here as 'new', they are often new only to the public sphere in the GDR. Privately or professionally many views had been held by many for quite some time (Grönwald, 1992). The opportunity to create a public discourse was present at this time.
- 23 The cover of *Leipziger Blätter* 18, spring 1991, shows Leipzig opera house left in a lunar landscape of destruction, sliding into an open-cast mine pit.

24 This neologism refers to buildings which do not fit their setting and even damage city structures.

25 A city council debate argued the city must no longer be the 'blood donor for the country', that for long enough Leipzig had sent workers and products to the rest of the GDR without seeing results itself (LVZ, 9/10/12/89). Another formulation of the problem comes from a Monday demonstration banner: 'Berlin appears in new glory - in Saxony the cities completely fall apart' (Schneider, 1990, 27/11/89).

26 There are also a series of speakers at the conference who emphasise the nature of the city as primarily a site for production and economic activity (Lindner, VBKf, 167) and who emphasise the need for economic views of the problems (Baumgärtel, New Forum group, Wittig, all VBKf).

27 Interestingly the gender characterisation of Leipzig is ambivalent. Grammatically, when referring to 'Leipzig' the masculine pronoun is generally used [*sein*, *er*] while if it is 'the city', or the 'city of Leipzig', where '*die Stadt*' is grammatically feminine, the feminine pronoun [*ihre*, *sie*] is used.

28 Soon concerns for the future of the Trade-Fair came from the influence of unification and the competition with established sites in West Germany (LVZ, 16/2/90).

29 The orthography here reflects the German practice of capitalising all nouns. The term *Industriestadt* or *Stadt der Industrie* comes with capital letters in German. The translation follows this practice.

30 '*Städtebau*' is literally 'urban building' and is used to mean 'urban development', as in the Leipzig city Department for City Development and Planning. '*Städtebaulich*' therefore refers to urban development or construction, translated here as 'urban'.

31 Biskupek disrupts this picture of the ideal city population pointing out that those who did nothing about the city were also citizens and that the dominant attitude latterly was '*Gleichgültigkeit*', not caring (*ibid.*).

32 Leipzig was the only district capital to experience negative migration after 1984. It also had the greatest negative natural population increase (Usbeck, VBKf, 51). Leipzig has lost population consistently since 1933 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c).

33 Grünau is the largest edge-of-town housing development in Leipzig, designed for around 100,000 people. See figure 5.2.

34 An ironic reference to the GDR national anthem: '*Auferstanden aus Ruinen*', which originally referred to the ruins of the Third Reich.

35 The word used is '*Ansehen*' which is both figuratively 'reputation' or 'authority' and literally the 'appearance' of someone or something.

36 References to Honecker and the senior government and Party officials.

37 Former Leipzig district officer for the preservation of historic monuments. One of a group of Leipzig architects, planners and other professionals who are active throughout the study period.

38 The first meeting on 15/1/90 of Leipzig's Round Table on Construction with most of the agencies present concerned itself largely with the ways in which new pre-fabricated construction could be made to blend in with the city centre rather better (LVZ, 18/1/90).

39 The German term was '*populistische*'. This is not to be confused with '*bürger nah*', the positively evaluated attempt to bring decision-making close to the population and in that sense 'populist'. In contrast '*populistisch*' has negative associations of opportunist dramatisation of the political situation in order to gain electoral support.

40 See chapter 9.

41 Hocqué, LVZ, 28/11/89, talks of a People's Building Conference '*von unten*', 'from below'. This integrates with the entire thrust of the grass roots of the *Wende* period. See chapter 2 on issues of grass-roots/ community/*Basisdemokratie*, etc. Of course, the emphasis on the 'basis' is an element of Marxist philosophy which is lost in the translation of '*Basis*' or '*von unten*' as 'grassroots'.

42 See chapter 3.

43 For the development of neighbourhood action from the Kulturprojekt to the later Citizen Initiative in the Waldstraßenviertel see chapter 6.

44 Having the local commune as the client rather than the central State planning norms is the major shift in the demands here. See also the earlier section on '*Auftraggeber*' and 'client'.

45 The term 'renewal' is used here to translate the generic German term '*Sanierung*'. The terms '*Sanierung*' and '*Erneuerung*' are used largely interchangeably. The term 'renewal' does not imply here any particular form of urban policy which might be implied by different cultural readings in the UK, for example.

46 Neustädter Markt in its entirety was one of the first urban renewal areas. The older southern part of Gohlis is an urban renewal area, as is the historical core of Stötteritz. Plagwitz has been adopted as a model project for renewal of old industrial areas and for urban renewal. The Waldstraßenviertel is a preservation area, funded extensively from a federal programmes to protect its nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture.

47 See appendix 7 for an outline of the post-reunification administration Leipzig.

48 The group was formed in 1989 as a combination of the various semi-official and church-based environmental groupings in Leipzig in order to campaign for change in the city and the GDR. (Interview with Ralf Elsässer, EcoLion, A6, 19/11/91). The lion is Leipzig's symbol, hence the name 'EcoLion'.

Chapter 6

Neighbourhood action - developing local public spheres

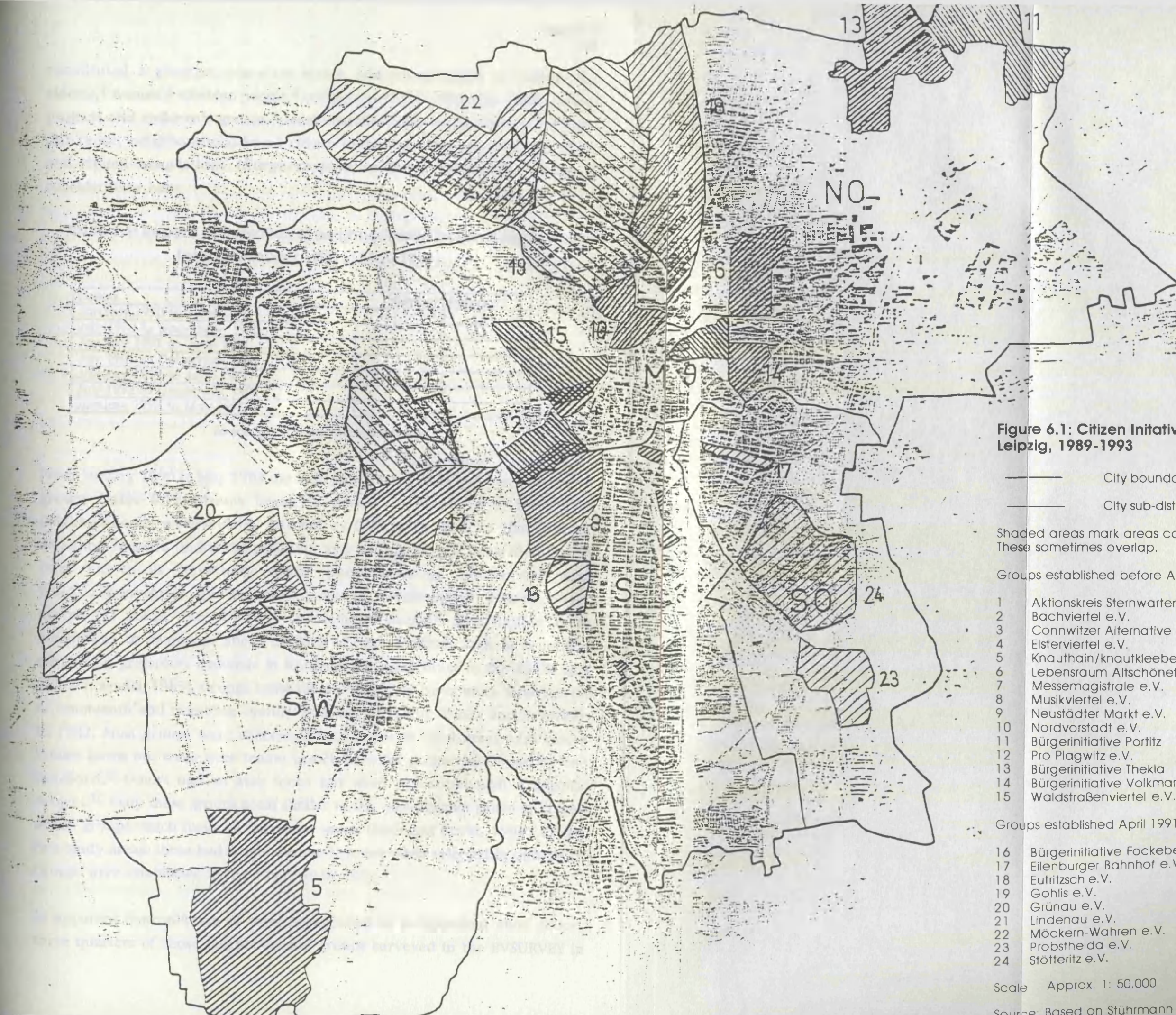
1 Introduction

Chapters four and five showed how the increasing free space which the *Wende* offered was created by the transgression of a series of boundaries (between spoken and unspoken, East and West, state boundaries and the other side of the Wall, public and private). In turn these transgressions were manifested in and gave rise to a variety of forms of action at the local level. Two particular and related public discourses were prevalent: democratisation, opening up government and citizen participation; and, particularly related to Leipzig, although not exclusive to it, the discourse of 'careful urban renewal' (*behutsame Stadterneuerung*).

In 1990, German reunification altered fundamentally the social order of the GDR territory, its geographies and social processes being restructured primarily on the basis of pre-existing west German patterns. Chapters six to nine explore the effects of these processes on the urban sphere as the spaces of the city, the relationships between tenants and their housing, between residents and their neighbourhoods are transformed. Questions of ownership, of control and of value are fundamentally altered as are the symbolic values of place. Issues of urban renewal and neighbourhood change provide a key site in which to understand more clearly the processes of German reunification as a social development of meanings and power relations (chapters seven and eight). Rather than positing a simple East-West divide, this view allows a more differentiated study of the processes and allows variations, resistances and alternatives to be discussed. Experiences of change in the five case study neighbourhoods are used as the bases of analysis of these key issues. This chapter begins by examining the establishment, forms and bases of local action.

2 Neighbourhood actions and local agendas

Neighbourhood action in Leipzig developed as part of a burgeoning of independent civic activity after 1989. While some organisations were (partly) reformed continuations from the GDR,¹ others were new. Together they



**Figure 6.1: Citizen Initiatives and Citizen Associations
Leipzig, 1989-1993**

- City boundary
 —— City sub-district boundary

Shaded areas mark areas covered by groups.
 These sometimes overlap.

Groups established before April 1991 (beginning of field work)

- 1 Aktionskreis Sternwartenstraße e.V.
- 2 Bachviertel e.V.
- 3 Connwitzer Alternative e.V.
- 4 Elsterviertel e.V.
- 5 Knauthain/knautkleeberg e.V.
- 6 Lebensraum Altschönefeld e.V.
- 7 Messemagistrale e.V.
- 8 Musikviertel e.V.
- 9 Neustädter Markt e.V.
- 10 Nordvorstadt e.V.
- 11 Bürgerinitiative Portitz
- 12 Pro Plagwitz e.V.
- 13 Bürgerinitiative Thekla
- 14 Bürgerinitiative Volkmarisdorf
- 15 Waldstraßenviertel e.V.

Groups established April 1991- May 1993

- 16 Bürgerinitiative Fockeberg
- 17 Eilenburger Bahnhof e.V.
- 18 Eutritzsch e.V.
- 19 Gohlis e.V.
- 20 Grünau e.V.
- 21 Lindenau e.V.
- 22 Möckern-Wahren e.V.
- 23 Probstheida e.V.
- 24 Stötteritz e.V.

Scale Approx. 1: 50,000

Source: Based on Stührmann (1991)

constituted a pluralist non-state sector addressing issues including the elderly,² women,³ disabled people,⁴ ecology, local arts (Girardet, 1992), youth projects and children's groups,⁵ local charities⁶ and social projects.⁷ Within this range, neighbourhood-based citizen initiatives (*Bürgerinitiativen*, or BI) and citizen associations (*Bürgervereine*, or BV) form the main focus of consideration here.

Table 6.1: Reports of formation of neighbourhood action groups, Leipzig. January 1990 to May 1993

Period	Number of groups
January 1990 to June 1990	5
July 1990 to December 1990	6
January 1991 to June 1991	6
July 1991 to December 1991	8
January 1992 to June 1992	7
July 1992 to December 1992	2
January 1993 to May 1993	1

Source: LVZ, January 1990 to May 1993.

From January 1990 to May 1993 the local paper listed 35 neighbourhood action groups (table 6.1). Groups began to develop particularly in inner city neighbourhoods most severely affected by GDR urban policies (figure 6.1), including Plagwitz (industrial pollution and poor housing), Neustädter Markt (also known as Neustadt) (very poor housing conditions) and Waldstraßenviertel (a neglected area of architectural value). Some peripheral areas, the so-called 'settlement areas'⁸ also formed local committees to campaign about the lack of basic facilities such as sewerage, paralleling grassroots demands in southern European cities in the 1970s and 1980s (Castells, 1983). Groups subsequently spread to cover more mixed areas of nineteenth and twentieth century housing, including Gohlis and Stötteritz in 1992. Most groups were concerned with issues in local areas with mixed tenure forms but some were tenant associations for properties owned by one landlord.⁹ Others had an area focus but were concerned with a specific project.¹⁰ Only these groups seem similar to the west German genre of citizen action groups which focus on particular issues (Roth and Rucht, 1991). Of the five study areas, three had neighbourhood groups when selected in mid-1991. Groups were established in the other two in 1992.

In apparent contradiction of their background in independent civic action, three quarters of those neighbourhood groups surveyed in the BVSURVEY in

1992¹¹ were formally registered associations (*eingetragene Vereine*, or e.V.). Having registered, groups could apply for charitable status (*Gemeinnützigkeit* - 'for the common good'). Formal registration perhaps signalled that groups planned to be established for a longer period than initiatives around a particular issue (Thaysen and Artner, 1980), and were seeking a broader political and social function. Legal status also provided security in the change from GDR to FRG. Especially those groups established prior to unification were aware that being able to form a group and register it was a political act in itself, since such action had been prohibited in the GDR. Importantly, charitable status also allowed groups to apply for Federal Employment Department funding of 'Job Creation Measures' (ABM) which provided many groups with staff and resources. However, before addressing the actions and effectiveness of groups, section 2.1 explores how groups were formed and section 2.2 examines their significance for their members.

2.1 Group formation - creation narratives

Chapter two discussed a variety of theories on the importance of local areas for citizen action. In the context of unequal time-space compression, Harvey (1989) argued that the local was the basis for action in social movements because they were more able to control place while capital increasingly controlled space. In a similar vein, discussing the environmental and civic movement, Ecoglasnost in Bulgaria, Pickles (1993) suggested that such locally-focused action might be a retreat or displacement from involvement with wider structural changes. Adopting a somewhat more positive view, Marcuse (1990) argued that the bases of resistance in the then-still GDR included the strength of local community 'in the sociological sense because of the lack of socio-economic segregation in the city; and the tradition of local interest representation (both from the broad Left tendency and from the new social movements)' (520). Is it possible that for those involved, neighbourhood action groups represented both a site of action and resistance and a site of retreat from the power structures of reunification (political and economic)?

With the caveat that retrospective accounts of events can always involve post hoc rationalisation, table 6.2 shows narrative accounts of their establishment by members of the five study groups. It shows all five emerged to some extent from other local activism, whether supported by the GDR state (WBA or local

Table 6.2: Creation narratives in neighbourhood action groups

Neustädter Markt (founded March 1990)

'There was in the past in the neighbourhood a Neighbourhood Committee of the Party, of the SED, and when everything collapsed at the end of '89 some people got together who thought that this work, or the content of it, should be carried on. So a sort of citizen initiative developed [...] Now hardly anyone from this Party is still here. [...]' (former activist and current member, A2, 19/11/91)

'[At the original meeting] the officials did not come and the anger of the people was at that time very great, and they [the organisers] called for everyone who was interested in being involved with the area, [or] with the people in the area to come to the office here. [...] And it was really a relatively big group which got involved here.' (woman, early member, A35, 11/5/93)

Plagwitz (begun early 1990, registered association in January 1991)

'It really came about through my professional activity. I am myself a cultural scientist and at the time I was concerned professionally with Plagwitz. [...] I met more and more people who had also been concerned with Plagwitz for years [...] I spoke to the people and we met and just thought about what one could do so that Plagwitz becomes, let's say, something important for the city here. Well, ... there was a group who had for some years concerned themselves with the industrial monuments here. [...] Then there was a group who had been very active on the renovation of the Karl-Heine-Kanal, even before the Wende, when at these meetings, really at these old citizens' meetings there were lots of *Stasi* people. Such things were criminalised. Anyone working for the environment really had to watch out that they didn't get caught in some trap. And then there was [...] this working group in the Culture Federation on city history [...] who had been engaged for Plagwitz for years and had published brochures on the history of Plagwitz. And so they all sat together and then we considered what we could do now so that we don't all just sit here and talk but that we can really change something. And we worked on an information campaign for a while and used the press, wrote something about Plagwitz, about the importance of Plagwitz. We appeared at conferences [...] and then when we noticed that such initiatives were perhaps not enough then at the beginning of this year we founded the association.' (man, founding member, A3, 11/11/91)

Waldstraßenviertel (founded February 1991)

'There was already in the GDR times an attempt to form an initiative Waldstraßenviertel as an association. But in the *Wende* times it really faded away. The people had other problems then and weren't so concerned about it. [I] moved here in 1990 and heard of this idea which there was, got hold of this draft of a constitution and with a few interested citizens who I got to know here I started the thing cooking again to revive the idea and to found this association. Then we had the founding meeting on 26 February [1991] [...]. Shortly after that we were registered. [...] The aims of the citizens who supported me were primarily a social component.' (man, founder member, A1, 4/11/91)

Gohlis (founded January 1992)

'It actually came a bit from a stimulus when it was in the newspaper that interested people were sought who were prepared to found a citizen association. It started with a call in some newspaper [Others -yes, yes!] to form an association, and at that time it was Dr Steer [local Culture Department worker] who did it, who [...] had a motive too, namely the upcoming 675th anniversary celebrations for Gohlis. And in the Culture Department there was already a policy of stimulating citizen associations. [...] [loud and fast] It just happened! They were shooting out of the ground like mushrooms because everyone thought "a citizen association - that isn't something political, is it?"

Anyone can go there. It's not a particular direction, it's not PDS, it's not SPD, not even Bündnis 90. Here [...] everyone is welcome, people from the church too regardless of which confession. And here I can do something for the area where I live directly." (woman, founding member, A34, 5/5/93)

Stötteritz (founded June 1992)

'In 1991 there was a [...] workshop in Stötteritz. [...] The conclusion of the group created for the workshop was that it was necessary to activate the co-operation of the residents of the area. [...] From that a few people who took part in the workshop, the Association for Reintegration of Psycho-socially Damaged People, the church and Kolumbus [local employment creation association] got together, put a really small notice in the paper "We would like to found a citizen association. Who is interested?" .. Then a group of 6, 8, 10 people got together, from completely different directions, differing opinions, differing backgrounds, who said, "well - If we sit and twiddle our thumbs then nothing will happen. So let's try to get involved as **citizens**. In other city district areas there had been similar things already. So, let's get started!" Then there was a lot of discussing back and forwards to try to draft a statute [...] and then we called for a founding meeting where there were 25 people [...] who were prepared to do something for their city district, or **neighbourhood**. From the point of view - a lot doesn't work here - cultural provision is kaput, the houses are kaput, the people are also more or less kaput - so we have to give them new **courage** [Muf]. [...] That was the beginning of the citizen association.' (man, founding member, A40, 3/5/93)

Source: Interviews and meetings (appendix 1)

history groups) or subject to considerable limitations by the GDR state (environmental and architectural lobbies). Actions were also based on very local concerns, at least in the case of the first three: protests in Neustädter Markt at the lack of housing improvement; concerns in Plagwitz with extreme pollution and industrial heritage; Waldstraßenviertel's architecture. The two later groups developed slightly differently. In Gohlis, the city's Culture Department had decided local action should be encouraged. Developing a local group was seen as an end in itself and a local anniversary was used as the catalyst. At the same time, the development of the group, as I was aware of it living in the area at the time, and as a Bündnis 90 councillor described (A8, 30/3/92), happened via local public meetings held by Bündnis 90 about housing in the area (B14, 26/11/91) where people were asked, if they were interested, to attend the first meeting of the citizen association. The Culture Department and Bündnis 90's corporate approaches, which advocated implementing the discourse of participation, converged to promote a form of local action which both supported. In Stötteritz the workshop mentioned was one on local urban development held by the city planning department. Official organisations, planners and others present argued that a citizen association could be a local focus for planning. These later developments therefore stressed local organisation as a value in itself and not as an offshoot of local conditions. In all five cases, however, there was a close correspondence between issues of civic action and local urban change.

Schützen Sie Leipzig-Neustadt – JETZT!

Alle bisherigen Pläne zur Sanierung, Neu- oder Umgestaltung unseres Wohngebietes wurden nicht verwirklicht. Niemand kann verbindlich sagen, was mit dem letzten Vorhaben der Neubebauung geschieht. Stadt und Stadtbezirk sind noch über die nächsten Kommunalwahlen am 6. Mai hinaus handlungsunfähig. Die am 18. März gewählte Volkskammer muß erst eine Regierung bilden. Diese braucht Zeit, bis sie neue gesetzliche Rahmenbedingungen schafft. In dieser Zeit ist unser Wohngebiet praktisch ohne Schutz. Was aber wird dann aus uns?

Was

wird

aus

Ihrer

Wohnung

???

Wir wollen nicht mit dieser Ungewißheit leben!

Deshalb erwarten wir den für Wohnungspolitik noch immer zuständigen Stadtrat Wiedemann, Stadtbezirksbürgermeister Setzepfand und den amtierenden Oberbürgermeister Hädrich auf einer

EINWOHNERVERSAMMLUNG

am Montag, dem 5. März 1990, 19.00 Uhr,
in der Aula der Wilhelm-Wander-Oberschule.

Jeder, dem an seiner Zukunft gelegen ist, sollte kommen und seine Fragen stellen. Wenn sich die Verantwortlichen vor öffentlicher Rechenschaft scheuen, müssen wir gemeinsam schnellstens alle möglichen (oder vielleicht sogar noch nicht möglichen) Schritte unternehmen, um uns und unser Recht auf erswingliche Wohnungen zu schützen.

Dabei sollten wir keine Maßnahme von vornherein ausschließen. In der auf uns zukommenden Marktwirtschaft ist auch nichts ausgeschlossen.

What will become of your flat?

Protect Leipzig-Neustadt - NOW!

All plans up to now for renovation, new construction or re-construction of our neighbourhood have not been realised. No-one can say for certain what will happen with the most recent plans for new construction. City and sub-district are unable to act until after the next local elections on 6th May. The Volkskammer elected on 18th March will have to form a government first. It will need time until they have formed new legal frameworks. In this time our neighbourhood is practically without protection. What will happen to us then?

We do not want to live with this uncertainty!

Therefore we expect the city administrator still responsible for housing, the city district mayor and the acting city mayor at a

RESIDENTS MEETING

on Monday, the 5th March 1990, 19.00
in the school hall of the Wilhelm-Wander Upper School.

Anyone interested in his future should come and put his questions. If those responsible are shy of public accountability, we must undertake all possible (or perhaps even not yet possible) steps together as quickly as possible, so as to protect ourselves and our right to affordable housing. For this we should not exclude any measures in advance. In the market economy which is coming towards us nothing is ruled out either.

Initiative group Neustädter Markt

Figure 6.2: Poster advertising public meeting
in Neustädter Markt, March 1990

Figure 6.3: Poster advertising public meeting to establish Citizen Initiative Waldstraßenviertel

Bürgerinnen und Bürger des Waldstraßenviertels

Wer will mehr machen, als in seiner Wohnung nur den Lauf der Dinge abzuwarten?
Wer will aktiv für die Belange des Waldstraßenviertels eintreten?
Wer will mitmachen?

Es hat im Waldstraßenviertel in der vergangenen Zeit mehrere Aktivitäten gegeben, die großen Zuspruch erhielten, bei denen sich bereits viele engagierten und für eine Mitarbeit aussprachen. Die bisher fehlende kommunale Unterstützung für eine breite BürgerInnenbewegung führte aber zu Stagnation. Da demokratische Mitsprache der BürgerInnen für eine funktionierende Stadt unverzichtbar ist, wollen wir einen Neubeginn wagen!

Neben städtebaulichen Belangen, wie Erhalt des architektonischen Charakters unseres Wohngebietes, Sanierungskonzeptionen u.ä., soll es uns auch um folgendes gehen:

- Erhalt der Kinder- und medizinischen Einrichtungen
- Mitsprache bei den Schulkonzeptionen
- Mietrecht und Mieterschutz

- Sicherung des sozialen Wohnrechts für kinderreiche Familien und für Rentner im Wohngebiet

- Schaffung einer neuen kulturellen Atmosphäre im Waldstraßenviertel
- Verbesserung der ökologischen Situation (u.a. Erhalt des Rosenthales)

sowie alle Fragen, die Sie bewegen und die wir gemeinsam mittragen können.

Wer sich dafür engagieren will, der ist richtig bei der BürgerInnenbewegung des Waldstraßenviertels!

Wer sich selbst einbringen will, ist herzlich eingeladen zu einer Zusammenkunft am

12.2.1991, 19.30 Uhr, im Café Senior, Waldstraße 76 (Pflegeheim).

Für diesen Aufruf zeichnen:

Kristina Ende - Feuerbachstraße
Brigitte Sannemüller - Gustav-Adolf-Straße
Frank Weser - Funkenburgstraße

Vertreter des Kulturprojektes Waldstraßenviertel

Citizens [female] and Citizens [male] of Waldstraßenviertel

Who wants to do more than just sit in their flat and wait for events to take their course?
Who wants to get involved actively in the concerns of the Waldstraßenviertel?
Who wants to join?

Recently in Waldstraßenviertel there have been several events which found a wide audience where many got involved already and spoke up in favour of active participation. The lack of support from the council up to now for a broad citizen movement has however led to stagnation. Because democratic participation is indispensable for a functioning city, we want to try a new start!

Alongside the planning issues such as keeping the architectural character of our neighbourhood, renewal plans, and so on, the following will also be important:

- Keeping the facilities for children and medical institutions
- Right to influence the plans for the schools
- Tenants' rights and protection

- Securing the socially-acceptable right to housing for large families and for pensioners in the neighbourhood

- Creating a new cultural atmosphere in the Waldstraßenviertel
- Improving the ecological situation (including keeping the Rosental park)

and all questions which move you and which we can address together.

Whoever wants to get involved is in the right place with the citizen movement of Waldstraßenviertel!

Whoever wants to get involved is very welcome at the meeting on

12.2.91, 19.30, in Café Senior, Waldstraßenviertel (Home for Elderly)

Signed:

Kristina Ende - Feuerbachstraße
Brigitte Sannemüller - Gustav-Adolf-Straße
Frank Weser - Funkenburgstraße

Representatives of the Culture Project Waldstraßenviertel

In a balance to these retrospective accounts related to me as an outside researcher, contemporary posters for inaugural meetings in Neustädter Markt and Waldstraßenviertel (figures 6.2 and 6.3) show that the language used at the time (up to early 1991) was strongly within the *Wende* discourses of active citizenship and democratisation, rejecting GDR forms but also ambivalent to the future in an FRG which presented both opportunities for action and the uncertainties of capitalist forms of change. For all those involved, the new forms of action were very unfamiliar and many accounts of the early period utilised narratives of innocence and learning:

'I got involved with the same innocence as when a virgin gets a child. I was simply *curious* [...] because I said to myself, "I have lived in the quarter for a very long time now and am interested in something happening to this quarter, so it doesn't decline. [... I joined] without knowing what awaited me and what would happen, you know? Just took things as they came.' (A43, woman, early member, 1/5/93)

'We did our first social study out of pure ignorance [...] not like you are supposed to do it. [...] It was real basis work, so that we could just [...] argue in some way [...] with the administration.' (A35, woman, early member, 11/5/93)

'We did not start this neighbourhood work with a definite aim. Rather we just let ourselves in for it.' (A39, man, leader, 28/4/93)

'I thought the aim was really good, that the people who are really affected could get involved in their own area. That is precisely what there never really was before. [...] But I never knew how it would develop, with applications for Job Creation people and so on, that it would get so *serious*. It was, at that point in time, just a totally spontaneous decision which came from the whole situation, from this disruption [*Umbruch*], "just to do something" .. Now there are great obstacles in our path, [...] which have caught up with us. [...] We had no idea.' (A35, woman, leader, 11/5/93)

Such spontaneity and innocence, the attitude of 'let's just do it!', was not permanent and by mid 1993 many were clear that engaging with the formal structures of legal recognition and of funding applications had affected the

action of the groups: 'The committee needed all its energy over seven months to get the statute past the Finance Department and the local court to get our charitable status' (A40, leader, 3/5/93). Most groups had a limited official membership. The five study groups ranged from twenty-five to eighty members. However, in keeping with their more flexible origins and their scepticism of exclusionary structures, formal membership was often not as important as the involvement of local residents and most groups were open to local involvement by non-members. Several formed 'working groups' on specific issues to encourage action.¹³

2.2 Importance of involvement for members

Table 6.3: Reasons for joining
(% of members in group)

	No-one else will do it	To do something for area	For a project	People should do something for selves	Citizens can represent selves	Have always been involved	For self	Other
Neustadt	20	80	10	90	90	10	20	20
Plagwitz	30	70	40	60	30	20	10	10
Waldstraße	17	83	41	100	83	22	24	28
Gohlis	28	75	22	83	78	22	19	25
Stötteritz	18	91	55	82	73	45	18	18
TOTAL	23	77	30	83	72	23	18	22

Source: MEMSURVEY

Note: Multiple responses possible.

While there were collective reasons for groups being established, individual members expressed a variety of reasons for joining the groups (table 6.3). In the survey of group members¹⁴ over 80% thought people should be able to take responsibility for local developments and should be involved in these processes. Between 70% and 80% wanted to 'do something for the local area' and thought citizens should represent their own interests. Such reasons reflect a model of local activism focused on working for the common good of the local area within discourses of active, mature citizenship. Only in Plagwitz was there less stress on representation and more on particular projects, reflecting the ABM posts related to such projects in that group. However, during later group discussions members named a wider range of reasons which suggests the survey categories, generated from interviews with group leaders, express the 'official' views and do not encompass the variety of experiences which table 6.4 illustrates.

Table 6.4: Reasons for getting involved**Personal reasons**

'We have both lived here for very many years and [the threat of removing the population was a stimulus]. I mean, one doesn't say for nothing that "you don't transplant an old tree."' (A43, older woman, 11/5/93)

'My aim was really that I should be part of the . development of the neighbourhood where I have lived for twenty years and it is because I have children and grandchildren [...], I am so interested in them being able to shape their lives as well as possible, and the second thing is really [...] to participate in creating "closeness to the citizens", so that not only the administration has its say, but that [...] we too are allowed to contribute.' (A34, woman, 5/5/93)

'I am a born Gohlser [parents from Gohlis, an old Leipzig family, family business taken by state but now returned.] It is automatic that if one grew up here, achieved something and even experienced the bad times with the seizure of the business [...] that one takes up such a connection [through the association].' (A34, elderly man, 5/5/93)

'I was thrown out of my job aged 59 as a result of the market economy because I carried out a job [importing foreign books] which was no longer needed [...] And that means that one loses one's whole surroundings and one's contacts and has to look for new contacts. One must compensate for this thing, this vacuum. [quieter at end] And the citizen association is the right place for them. Most people live here. We meet each other, know each other and can [...] exchange ideas and start some initiatives together, [...] try to contribute something.' (A34, man, 5/5/93)

'There are **real** fears for the future [...] We **must** help the older citizens especially to cope with the new plans and the new laws. [...] That's when I said to myself "this is where you must be active politically again".' (A40, older man, 11/5/93)

Area in general

Saw an exhibition of plans for the area and wanted to protest (B1, 23/3/92)

'It's my home [...] and I like living in Gohlis. [...] I have seen many neighbourhoods crumbling, like some wonderful parts [of Gohlis]. If it becomes a beautiful part of Gohlis again then it would be very nice.' (A34, woman, 5/5/93)

'I am not from Leipzig or Saxony but I have lived here for thirty-five years in this beautiful area of Gohlis. It's wonderful. [...] And I have had a twenty year battle with the administration to get the building that I live in seen to so that it is not just held together by the inhabitants' wallpaper but is at least improved structurally.' (A34, older man, 5/5/93)

'I have lived here for 37 years and [...] after the Wende there were rumours that the whole quarter would be populated in a completely different way, [...] that we might have to leave the area. And that was a nightmare for me.' (A43, older woman, 11/5/93)

Involvement/ citizenship

'Being involved is better than complaining later.' (B1, 23/3/92)

'A connection to people who I live beside. Not restricted to the local area but still a feeling of home. Everyone has the desire somewhere [to say] "Here is my home, I want to be active here."' (B1, 23/3/92)

'The market economy is now here [...] with its whole strength and ice-cold and the connection among the people has declined. Everyone is concerned with sorting out his own economic situation. [...] The people have to learn that the market economy is the one side but the other side is that the **citizens** in the market economy do not have to let the politicians tell them what to do but that in terms of the constitution and the laws that they have rights. A **citizen initiative** can motivate [*bewegen*] the people to do something in their local area.' (A34, older middle aged man, 5/5/93)

'because they are things which are the business of all of us and affect us all personally because they happen in front of our doors. And we because we don't have to repeat the mistakes of the old federal states, for example.' (A40, young man, 3/5/93)

'We came just at first to sign up and just to join the association here, and to be represented and then we were asked, "don't you want to get a bit more involved?" Then we considered it and then said to ourselves "Yes, sometimes you just have to do something. By itself **nothing** will happen."' (A35, woman, 11/5/93)

'In the citizen association one can also [...] perhaps **measure** one's own opinions against the opinions of others.' (A34, man, 5/5/93)

'I think I have a much better opportunity, here in a community [*Gemeinschaft*], to articulate myself and to have more influence than if I try to do something alone [and I think] that with this association one gets to one's goal much quicker than if one tries to realise one's ideas as an individual.' (A34, man, 5/5/93)

'I am, for example, someone who was never [smiling] active in the past, because I knew that I would always run up against brick walls, and so I just saved myself the trouble. [...] Only now, after the Wende, when I think that we should **use** the chances of a democracy, it's now that I found the courage to involve myself too and to protest [*mich zu engagieren und zu wehren*].' (A43, woman, 11/5/93)

'It is not my nature just to wait and be put out of my flat. One has to do something about it even if it is just something small. [...] And I'm certainly in favour of the citizen initiative trying to do something to let the people who have lived here for a long time stay here if it is at all possible.' (A43, older woman, 11/5/93)

'We have to give the people encouragement [...] strengthen people and say "You [*ihr*] have certain rights. Don't [...] just clear the field."' (A43, younger woman, 11/5/93)

'I am one of the people who welcomed the Wende but under the motto of "We are the people" - that means we want to be **involved** and not be ruled by others. Then when the other laws were forced on us it wasn't **my** Wende any more. But then one is even more responsible for attempting to influence things through the citizen association.' (A40, older man, 3/5/93)

Governance

want 'an accompanying, democratic organ', 'something from the citizens themselves.' (B1, 23/3/92)

'It is a democracy, isn't it? It has laws. And then one must just become so well acquainted with these laws that one can use them in the interests of the citizens. We can do that.' (A40, man, 3/5/93)

'Then I'd say that for me the citizen association is also a citizen initiative. Initiatives, activities so that the citizen increasingly [...] finds a relationship which was never promoted in GDR times [...] that **he**, directly in his area where he lives [...] and for the changes which happen there [...] that he very consciously has influence there, because [...] a city parliament [...] is of course the political instrument of the city, and will remain so, but the **citizen** is **affected** by the whole range of political measures. He therefore has [...] the right to correct certain decisions which have been set in motion and that is precisely the opportunity of a citizen association.' (A34, man, 5/5/93)

'After the Wende there was a certain .. vacuum in the feelings of the citizens in the connection to the city council. In the past there were the WBAs and [...] they were at least an attempt at a connection between the territories and the parliament. [...] And then some citizens asked themselves [...] "How will our concerns still manage to reach them?" If we want to be involved then we need some kind of institutions, voluntary, or associations where we can [...] discuss our territorial needs. And it would be important for the citizen associations to have a direct line to the city parliament via certain members.' (A34, older man, 5/5/93)

Source: Interviews and meetings (appendix 1).

Personal experiences of family, home, work and neighbourhood affected intentions to join, whether from professional interests, family concerns or the experiences of local change (threat of displacement or fear of unemployment, for example). Others tied their reasons for action more strongly to local conditions, either seeking to prevent changes or to have conditions improved within the new and often strange framework of capitalism and western law. Individual members did also relate their actions to the discourses of involvement and citizenship, though their reasoning ranged from pragmatism ('it is better to change decisions sooner rather than later') to a more ideal desire for local 'community' and for using what they saw as new democratic opportunities. Finally, members set their actions in the context of changing local governance. In local groups members found a structure in which to exercise these democratic rights to affect decision-making. Such influence includes solidarity in the face of the loss of employment and other social changes. It also includes a decision to force the structures of power to deal with the local people in the local areas and to guarantee the rhetoric of democratic change is implemented, partly through the desire to challenge the logic of capital-based urban change. The following sections examine how issues around the social and personal influenced the form of local action and how a new politics of place constituted local bases for action, setting both within the framework of transformation.

2.3 The social and geographical bases of action

2.3.1 Social bases - membership composition and issues for action

Experiences of the GDR (and of other systems) as well as processes of change influence the social characteristics of members and the salience of particular social issues in relation to local activism. In terms of social composition, in comparison with the Monday Demonstration participants, group members are

on average older (around 80% of demonstrators were under 50; Mühler and Wilsdorf, 1991), more balanced between men and women (two thirds of demonstrators were male: Roski and Förster, 1990), less working class and more likely to be attached to a political party. The 'ordinary workers' who formed the bulk of the demonstrators, particularly in the spring of 1990 (Förster and Roski, 1990) were absent from the citizen associations.

Table 6.5: Age and gender of membership by group (%)

	AGE			GENDER		Total respondents (counts)
	under 35	35-55	55+	female	male	
Neustädter Markt	50	50	0	50	50	12
Plagwitz	20	50	30	50	50	10
Waldstraße	39	28	33	44	56	18
Gohlis	12	44	44	42	58	36
Stötteritz	19	36	45	36	64	11
TOTAL	25	41	34	44	56	87

Source: MEMSURVEY

Such characteristics vary between groups. Neustädter Markt, for example, has a much younger age profile (table 6.5) while Gohlis and Stötteritz have a more middle-aged membership. This reflects partly the variation in housing as the latter two areas have more family accommodation. In terms of gender, Leipzig as a whole has 46.3% males and 53.7% females (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c), but in the groups, men seem to be over-represented by around ten percent with women correspondingly underrepresented. Neustädter Markt and Plagwitz have parity between male and female members, the two larger groups have a slight majority of male members and Stötteritz has almost two thirds male to one third female. This public space therefore maintains something of the masculine character of GDR participation, although there seems to be more of a gender balance in participation in these groups. In some groups the more male membership may reflect constructions of citizen association action as a substitute for the city sub-district councils (*Stadtbezirksversammlungen*). This was reflected in Stötteritz where especially the older male members who had more often been part of the GDR framework of participation at the local level¹⁵ were interested in relating the citizen association to party political action (A40, 3/5/93).

Table 6.6: Current employment by group (%)

	worker	clerical/ civil servant	self- employed	retired	unemployed	other	ABM
Neustadt	8	25	17	0	8	0	42
Plagwitz	0	30	10	10	0	0	50
Wald- straße	0	50	6	33	0	11	0
Gohlis	0	6	17	29	6	0	3
Stötteritz	0	9	9	36	27	18	0
TOTAL (%)	1	37	13	24	8	4	13

Source: MEMSURVEY

Only one member said she/he was a 'worker'. Given the term's ideological history in the GDR, there might be some unwillingness to use the term but other surveys in Leipzig showed much higher percentages of 'workers'. Table 6.6, in conjunction with the 58.6% of members completing higher education¹⁶ shows that neighbourhood association membership was generally part of what could be termed the middle class¹⁷ and was well-educated. Fewer are in manual jobs (48% of the city population are skilled workers but only 17% of the membership¹⁸). In some areas, levels of qualification are extremely high (81% with higher education in Waldstraße, 70% in Plagwitz). Lower levels were found in Neustadt, but even here 42% of members had completed higher education. This indicates perhaps the greater social mixing of the GDR residential population and suggests that even areas with poor social and physical conditions had some people with personal resources for action, a point seen by Marcuse (1990) as strengthening the possibility of area-based action in eastern Germany. However, even among this well educated group of the population the effects of economic restructuring are clearly visible. 30-33% of members are either unemployed, in early retirement, in retraining, or employed on job creation programmes (11 posts among the five groups). All of these measures were introduced after 1989. Higher status areas have higher proportions of employed people (Waldstraßenviertel and Gohlis have around two thirds) while in Plagwitz and Stötteritz most members are not employed. Group members therefore are no less affected by change than others. However, the non-employed members can also be a source of time and energy resources since, particularly those in early retirement, 'have time [and] can get involved in a different way' (A43, woman, 11/5/93).

Leipzig's local action groups are essentially educated, middle class and middle aged, confirming many of the suspicions of Thaysen and Artner (1980). One

must be clear, though, that these sections of the labour market are equally strongly affected by employment restructuring and also that, in contrast to many more middle class forms of local action in western countries, there is little evidence that groups are acting to defend middle class concerns of property values, since only 5.8% of members were owner-occupiers while 25.6% were private tenants, 46.5% were public sector tenants and 18.6% indicated the tenure was not certain.¹⁹ This does not seem to indicate a group of people easily characterised as the 'internal periphery' (Mayer, 1987, 349) except in a crass division between East and West.

Table 6.7 suggests group members were generally well integrated into local social networks. 90% of members lived in the local areas where the groups were active. The majority knew many of their neighbours, though this was less true in Waldstraße and Neustädter Markt, possibly a function of larger houses and fewer neighbours in Waldstraße and clearance and social disruption in Neustadt. Conversely, Plagwitz and Gohlis seem to be prototypical 'local communities'. Most members have no relatives locally, except again in Gohlis and Plagwitz.

Table 6.7: Extent of local connections among group members (%)

	Resident in local area	Know more than 10 neighbours	Have relatives in area	More than half of acquaintances in area	Work in area	Used to work in area
Neustadt	92	46	10	20	50	0
Plagwitz	60	83	40	10	78	0
Waldstraße	100	39	22	24	8	15
Gohlis	89	78	36	46	44	15
Stötteritz	100	64	18	18	33	11
TOTAL	90	63	28	10	41	12

Source: MEMSURVEY

One can argue the overall extent of neighbourhood contacts might increase people's willingness and ability to be active locally. However, members generally have much wider contacts. Except in Gohlis, less than a quarter of group members say that more than half of their friends and acquaintances live in the area, and many members work outside the neighbourhood, reflecting local structures of residential and commercial land use.

Social networks do not necessarily cause involvement in local action. A quarter of members indicated they 'had always been active' (A43, woman, 11/5/93) (see table 6.3), but more often there was a bifurcation between those

who were active because they had been local activists in the GDR and those who had only become involved later, largely because of the wish to change the local area and to develop particular initiatives around the local environment (A40, 3/5/93; A43, 11/5/93). However, by 1991/1992 members were active in a range of other organisations (table 6.8). While the most common forms of membership overall were in areas which in the GDR had been either apolitical or, in the case of the church, a sphere of action removed from and often oppositional to the state, 20% were also members of political parties (a disproportionately high level) and were therefore also part of formal processes of policy formation. Indeed, with the exception of Plagwitz, the dominant form of membership is in political parties, particularly in Waldstraße (44%) and Stötteritz (45%). In contrast, Neustadt members have only limited involvement in other organisations, while Waldstraßenviertel and Stötteritz members are particularly involved in other campaigns.

Table 6.8: Current membership of other organisations (%)

	campaign group	church	children/ youth group	political party	cultural group	charity	interest and sport	other
Neustadt	8	8	0	16	0	0	0	0
Plagwitz	10	30	10	10	30	60	0	10
Waldstraße	23	22	0	44	17	11	6	6
Gohlis	13	25	3	28	14	19	17	6
Stötteritz	27	18	0	45	0	36	9	9
TOTAL	16	22	2	20	13	22	9	3

Source: MEMSURVEY

There were therefore new or altered opportunities for involvement in a changing public sphere addressing collectively and individually issues of social concern resulting from the differential impacts of policies and actions in the GDR which had, for example, created severely polluted and run-down areas such as Plagwitz and Neustadt, declining communities, loss of local facilities and depopulation in all areas except the new estates:

'There are really a lot of social cases here, very many people who are very old and in terms of education and qualifications they aren't so high up. [...] That just relates to the area. Because it is so unattractive, no one else wants to live here.' (Leader of Pro Plagwitz, A3, 11/11/91)

However, the effects of reunification added new concerns and impacted

differentially across social and spatial divisions, often complicating pre-existing problems. For example, the elderly and 'remnant' population in Plagwitz felt 'totally overwhelmed' by the changes (A3, 11/11/91). In Waldstraßenviertel the previously insignificant mismatch between household size and flat size became crucially important as rent levels increased rapidly. Reunification brought rapid growth in unemployment, introduced market values in housing, disrupted tenure with the return of property to previous owners, and changed access to services, as state and local business involvement altered.

For many people the transformation of the economy and the state after 1989 brought huge and rapid changes in employment, income and the ability to afford housing. A Pro Plagwitz (1992) study showed that in the year 1991-1992, 34% of the local population had changed employment, 31% had begun training, 23% had lost their jobs and 19% were seeking employment. Even those in employment were not deemed secure (A39, 28/4/93). Wage differentials between East and West and higher relative living costs were further exacerbated by the concentrations of less well off families in particular areas.²⁰

The transformations had differential impacts across dimensions of age, gender and space, creating agendas for action and affecting the ability to act. Young people were seen to be a group particularly affected by the loss of a guaranteed apprenticeship, by the attractions of the West, and by loss of employment and local facilities which together apparently increased involvement in crime and right wing radicalism. The elderly were also strongly affected as reunification disrupted their life cycle expectations of care in old age and of remaining in their home areas (A43, 11/5/93). Furthermore, the increasing polarisation of income levels between those in full-time work and the remainder of the population exacerbated problems for elderly people, and particularly for single elderly women:

'We are actively involved in the area above all because [...] there are very many elderly people here, pensioners, very many people living alone who cannot keep their flats nowadays.' (A35, woman, 11/5/93)

Gender issues in social restructuring were not generally made explicit. A city-wide meeting was held by the SPD and the city's Equal Opportunities

Officer (B31, 22/10/92) on issues of women and planning²¹ but in local groups there was little mention of specifically gendered issues.²² Notably, only where no men were present did women discuss issues in gendered terms, particularly in relation to childcare, employment and fear of crime:²³

- Woman 1: 'I am worried about the high levels of crime. As a woman going out alone you can hardly take part in the cultural life of the city any more. No-one trusts themselves going out. [...] The distance isn't far but the fear is always there. [...]'
- Woman 2: 'It's depressing. [...]'
- Woman 3: 'And in the past you could go out in the middle of the night. Now you can't.' (A43, 11/5/93)

At the same time, the extent to which restructuring in employment particularly affected women was well known, if not specifically addressed by the groups. A survey by Pro Plagwitz (table 6.9) found that, while it was in secondary sectors that most jobs were lost (therefore affecting more men), when men had to change their employment they more often found a new job or underwent retraining. Women, in contrast, were more likely to lose their jobs and leave the labour force, as were those over 45 and less qualified people.

Table 6.9: Differential disruption of employment by gender (%)

	TOTAL		MALE		FEMALE	
	Trained In:	Working In 1992	Trained In:	Working In 1992	Trained In:	Working In 1992
Primary	4	4	6	5	3	2
Secondary	27	13	49	26	9	2
Tertiary	61	76	35	66	82	87
Training	n.a.	2	n.a.	3	n.a.	2
Housewife	n.a.	2	n.a.	0	n.a.	4

Source: Pro Plagwitz, 1992

While such change created the need for local action, ironically insecurity decreased people's willingness or ability to be active locally: 'Those who have work at the moment are too busy .. and have no time to be involved in any way [...] and those who have no work cannot be bothered' (A38, man, 7/5/93). Likewise, a survey in Neustädter Markt found it was precisely the elderly,

women and the unemployed who were less willing to be active locally (Bürgerverein Neustädter Markt, 1992). This might appear to be the 'self-regulation of marginality' found in western German groups (Krätke and Schmoll, 1991, 546) which simply tinkers around the edges of problems and corresponds to the potentially conservative form of local action which Harvey identified (1989). On the other hand, in the framework of the absorption of the GDR into west German state structures and the global economy and the resultant socio-economic disruption, local groups involved for many an alternative to the altered sphere of work which 'in the past [was] the main identity ... the main field of communication. [...] That has collapsed because of competitive thinking, because everyone is afraid of losing their job' (A1, leader, 4/11/91). Groups offered a new sphere allowing local people to exercise individual and collective action in a situation which otherwise seemed to offer little scope for influence, and a forum for discussion and education (in its broadest sense) on the nature of change. Unlike most other spheres of life, groups were where 'the Osis are among their own people' and where western incomers did not have any position of control (A1, leader, 4/11/91). Local action therefore also seems to create spaces for action to deal with or alter the nature of local change.

2.3.2 The politics of place(s)

While addressing social issues, the citizen associations in Leipzig and elsewhere in the former GDR were generally concerned with specific local areas. The groups aimed to 'awaken the willingness of the residents to help in the development of "their" neighbourhood, to promote the need to take ownership of the city again, to raise the level of identification with their home area and to contribute to the stability of the population and the social milieu' (Schröder, 1990, 42). Desire for local attachment stood in contrast to the sense of alienation caused by urban decay and destruction:

'People live in flats with no bath, or no inside toilet. And the Plagwitzers know that the air here is the worst in all of Leipzig, that the children get ill if they play on the street because the dust from the factories causes eczema.' (A3, leader, 11/11/91)

Greater local attachment was assumed to keep people in the area who might otherwise leave and to encourage action to improve the area, thereby further reducing alienation, repeating assumptions at the city scale from the

Volksbaukonferenz. Often such attachment involved feelings that an area was not as it should be. While 'the Plagwitzers already have a very conscious Plagwitz way of thinking [... they] would never say if they live in Lindenau that they are Plagwitzers' (A3, man, 11/11/91), a local survey showed, among those who wanted to leave, 56% would move to improve their housing while 70% would move to improve their surroundings (Pro Plagwitz e.V., 1992). Dissatisfaction among group members related to specific local material conditions. Table 6.10 illustrates that satisfaction with accessibility by public transport was high, but in all other measures less than half were satisfied and indeed less than ten percent were satisfied with the poorest seven measures. It shows Neustadt and Plagwitz had the poorest ratings.

Table 6.10: Satisfaction with material aspects of local areas
(index of satisfaction, 3 = neutral)

	Neustadt	Plagwitz	Wald- straße	Gohlis	Stötteritz	% 'totally satisfied' and 'satisfied'	% 'totally unsatisfied' and 'unsatisfied'	ALL
transport	1.34	1.80	1.33	1.61	1.73	92	0	1.56
shopping	2.75	3.10	2.88	2.89	3.00	32	28	2.91
housing	3.92	3.50	2.67	3.14	2.64	25	39	3.13
parks	4.30	3.90	3.11	2.97	2.70	29	44	3.27
air quality	4.18	4.10	3.78	3.56	2.91	8	60	3.66
dirty streets	4.00	4.30	3.94	3.72	2.91	5	59	3.77
public safety	3.64	3.80	3.61	3.94	3.73	7	63	3.79
entertainment	4.50	4.10	3.56	3.74	3.56	10	67	3.83
jobs	4.18	4.20	3.75	3.94	3.89	1	70	3.97
children's facilities	4.20	4.60	3.25	4.30	3.54	2	72	4.01
youth facilities	4.30	4.50	4.40	4.50	4.18	0	88	4.42

Source: MEMSURVEY

Note: Index is a weighted average score on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is 'very satisfied' and 5 is 'very unsatisfied'.

Comparisons with other neighbourhoods give less extreme values, suggesting members saw their problems as common to much of the city (table 6.11). The similar rankings suggest an overall level of concern with pollution, crime, housing and local facilities, as well as unemployment. Such concerns may encourage common actions. However, Gohlis and Waldstraßenviertel members see their areas as slightly better than others while Neustadt and Plagwitz see theirs as worse.

**Table 6.11: Aspects of local areas in comparison with others in Leipzig
(index numbers, 3= same)**

	Neustadt	Plagwitz	Waldstraße	Gohlis	Stötteritz	% much better/ better	% much worse/ worse	ALL
transport	2.30	3.00	2.00	2.33	2.78	51	2	2.38
parks	3.91	3.60	2.67	2.50	2.44	42	25	2.81
housing	3.70	3.70	2.47	2.48	2.78	36	22	2.85
public safety	3.27	3.20	3.17	2.97	2.78	11	14	3.06
air quality	3.73	3.70	3.11	2.83	3.12	11	18	3.15
shopping	3.00	3.70	3.00	3.08	3.33	23	37	3.16
street dirt	3.54	3.40	3.18	3.03	3.00	5	20	3.17
children's facilities	3.60	4.40	2.81	3.33	3.00	9	37	3.36
jobs	3.82	3.78	3.20	3.50	3.33	3	46	3.50
entertainment	3.70	4.00	3.11	3.47	3.78	9	51	3.52
youth facilities	3.89	4.40	3.80	3.39	3.56	1	51	3.69

Source: MEMSURVEY

Note: Index is a weighted average on a five point scale where 1 is 'much better' and 5 is 'much worse'.

This difference in material conditions was reflected in evaluations of area status:

'Gohlisers have always felt they belonged to a particular place. They are generally **proud** to live in Gohlis, in contrast to, for example, those who live in the 'Near East' [area which includes Neustadt].' (A34, Gohlis member, 5/5/93)

'historically the Gohlisers were always .. more bourgeois and better.' (A38, Plagwitz member, 3/5/93)

It was not only material conditions which influenced decisions to become active. Reunification had altered perceptions of the local area. For some, the contrasts with western areas showed all the more strongly the poor local conditions while for others potential threats from capitalist restructuring meant the importance of preserving and protecting local areas was more obvious. As one commentator said 'one now walks through Leipzig with completely different eyes. One sees things really that one didn't ever see a few years ago. [...] Probably we were indifferent [to what was worth keeping from the past].' (A33, 22/4/92)

Generally the relation to local areas was an ambivalent one, embracing both

attachment and dissatisfaction. Asked to choose from a list of adjectives, members described their areas with 43.1% positive responses and 56.9% negative responses (table 6.12). Most felt local people were sceptical and tired, particularly with the speed and extent of change, but felt areas were friendly. Many were still optimistic.

Table 6.12: Choose the three words which you would use to finish this sentence: 'I would describe my local area at the moment as ...' by group (% members)

	friendly	anonymous	optimistic	sceptical	satisfied	tired	lively	overwhelmed
Neustadt	10	20	50	70	10	80	10	0
Plagwitz	20	20	20	50	0	90	20	30
Waldstraße	44	22	12.5	89	0	50	11	11
Gohlis	40	17	37	43	11	43	34	6
Stötteritz	55	9	27	36	27	18	18	0
TOTAL	36	16	30	54	9	49	22	8

Source: MEMSURVEY

Despite local problems and ambivalent reactions to local areas, many groups argued that local identity was strong enough to have kept people in their areas, although this varied with age:

'that people somehow were attached to their home [*Heimat*] held many of the old people in the GDR. They hung on to Leipzig or to Gohlis and some to Saxony.' (A21, woman, 30/4/93)

'young people are more focused towards the outside.' (A34, man, 5/5/93)

Many groups sought to maintain and increase levels of personal connections, arguing 'many have known each other for years'. These signs of 'home' [*Heimat*], a feeling of community [*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*] in a 'trusted' [*vertraut*] area, meant neighbourhoods were 'where one feels well and is known' (leaflet for BV Stötteritz, 1992). Local identity was seen as part of a '*Gemeinschaft*'-like local social order, in contrast to the '*Gesellschaft*' which the market threatened to create. In such forms, it was argued, resistance to the order of the GDR had been possible, at least in some limited ways, such as pursuing non-state forms of interaction. In a continuation, neighbourhoods became a focus for resisting the disruption of westernisation. In the context of reunification, the local/state divide, and community/market dichotomy

stressed that 'authentic' local connections and attachments which had developed historically were preferable to the clean and non-place-specific forms which market forces created: 'I find [Plagwitz] at least nicer than these totally renewed, dressed-up buildings that one often sees in West Germany where one doesn't know "Am I here or there or where am I really?"' (A3, woman, 11/11/91). Furthermore, the disruption of local connections became conflated with westernisation while the structures of 'The East' were viewed with more ambivalence, particularly in relation to the state. Rather than condemning local areas as a reactionary site of retreat from the developments of progress, members largely constructed them and their groups as a site (or sites) for resistance and contestation of the nature of the restructuring processes of reunification, rejecting the negative features of the past but adopting a critical stance on the restructuring of reunification.

2.4 Agendas - a framework for action

How then did the citizen associations define their agendas? As table 6.13 shows, the aims of neighbourhood groups across Leipzig related closely to discourses of local political participation and careful urban renewal with calls for neighbourhood activism, partnership with the city administration, and for social, cultural, historical, ecological and neighbourhood values to be part of official renewal plans. In contrast there was still little direct response to unemployment or economic restructuring in late 1992. These officially formulated aims might merely conform to these discourses because of the legal restrictions of charitable status but a city-wide survey showed Leipzig residents' main concerns for the city were, in rank order, the environment, ecological urban development, infrastructure, traffic, security and public order, improved city administration (including transparency of decisions and openness to citizens), and housing and rent levels (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992c). Groups therefore reflected widely held views.

For all five areas, housing renewal and environmental improvements were fundamental (A3, 11/11/91). Several key words and ideas recurred in group statements. 'Careful renewal' covered two approaches - 'keeping' that which still existed, and 'improving' areas in an acceptable way. The former typically involved:

- 'retaining' architecture and historical monuments (Pro Plagwitz, Plagwitzer Leben, December 1992), and environmental resources (BI Waldstraßenviertel,

Table 6. 13: Agendas of local groups

Aims
Neighbourhood politics
(I) representation and association
-awaken interest of citizens
-represent interests of residents
(II) activate and inform citizens
-knowledgeable participation of citizens in planning and shaping neighbourhood
-be partner in planning decisions
-improvement of quality of life
-citizen/tenant advice
(IV) contact to city and other organisations
-communication to communal offices and institutions
-state or social organisations
-to other associations, institutions and economy
Careful urban renewal
(I) ecological renewal
-improving ecological, social, cultural, health, construction and traffic conditions in the interests of the citizens
-to improve quality of life.
-reduction of noise, air pollution and the uncertainty of traffic participants on the roads
(II) keeping character and buildings
-for the care and careful, socially-acceptable renewal of all parts worth preserving
-keeping character of area
-revitalisation of area
-specific demands on rent levels, communal facilities
(III) history, culture and social issues
-local history
-the restoration of a functioning infrastructure
-socio-cultural activities
-promotion of youth work, help for the elderly and support for communal facilities; care for the local area and local knowledge
Order, safety
-traffic calming

Source: Written responses to BVSURVEY

Statute);

- 'preserving' the urban and social character of areas: 'preserve and restore the original character of the Bach Quarter, ranging from keeping the corner shops, artists' studios to local businesses' (BV Bachviertel, LVZ, 20/3/90);
- 'protecting' the identity of an area: the 'unmistakable historical face' of Plagwitz (Pro Plagwitz, Statute);
- 'preventing' the wrong type of development: 'on no account is it admissible that the city planners change Probstheida's function under pressure from investors' (BV Probstheida, LVZ, 24/12/91).

'Improving' local areas included:

- 'restoring' areas to their rightful condition: 'the citizens are concerned to wake the former flair of their quarter' (BV Musikviertel, LVZ, 1/2/9/90);
- 'revitalising' areas physically, socially and culturally: we want to 'wake the area to new life' (BI Neustädter Markt, Statute); 'sustainable urban renewal' (Pro Plagwitz, Statute);
- 'improving the living conditions and infrastructure' (BV Altschönefeld, B37, 5/2/92);
- 'removing' the wrong types of development: 'the 1970s buildings are foreign bodies in the neighbourhood' (BV Musikviertel, A26, 28/9/92).

The language of life, death and saving areas is linked to the *Wende* period but it was increasingly capital and ownership and not GDR-induced decay which were seen as the main threats.

The discourse of democratisation and local involvement was established around four main elements:

- 'involvement in decision-making and legitimated [democratic] representation of citizen interests' (BI Neustädter Markt, Journal, 1991, 1); 'We view ourselves as the representative of a certain territory.' (BI Waldstraßenviertel, A1, 4/11/91);
- 'advice for citizens': 'help for the youth, elderly, disabled and others in need' (BI Neustädter Markt, Statute);
- 'the development of local community': 'co-ordination and development of social and cultural activities by citizens, associations and institutions' (BV Stötteritz, Statute), 'co-operation on social issues with the local church' and 'local events to promote life in the neighbourhood' (BI Neustädter Markt, Statute);
- 'a mediator role' [*Mittlerrolle*] between citizens and official organisations: 'co-operation with the city' (BV Stötteritz, B16, 25/5/92), 'communication between citizens and city' (BV Gohlis, Statute).

Representation of citizen concerns was to cover all residents and official bodies were to be persuaded to recognise the right of citizens to be 'involved' and of local groups to represent them (Pro Plagwitz and BV Gohlis statutes). To be effective, groups needed 'many involved, self-confident citizens prepared

to act' (BV Gohlis, in LVA, 1992, 2/1), but they also aimed to encourage action through education, thus enabling a virtuous cycle of active citizenship, community and belonging:

'we must help the citizens who live here who have no experience at all with this legal system [...] because they bring with them all their understanding of the law which has no validity in this new social system.' (A1, leader, 4/11/91)

Each group sought to define these broad principles in relation to a specific area. Pro Plagwitz defined 'careful renewal' as involving the population, renovating the local canal, keeping the old industrial buildings which gave the area character, and cutting pollution. 'Involving the population' meant using their local office and giving advice on rents and other issues (in Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992, 40). In Waldstraßenviertel the main issues were building conservation and keeping the resident population despite upgrading (A1, 4/11/91). This reflected the variation between areas in the main problems perceived by members (table 6.14), although housing,

Table 6.14: Local problems named by group members and groups' abilities to act on them
(free answers subsequently coded: %)

	Housing, renewal, ownership	Traffic	Local facilities	Environment	Crime levels	Employment	Social issues	Need to organise locally
TOTAL PROBLEMS	39	13	12	12	7	7	6	3
TOTAL ABILITY TO ACT	17	13	12	11	4	1	12	31
LOCAL PROBLEMS								
Neustadt	43	13	10	10	0	7	7	0
Plagwitz	32	3	7	21	3	18	14	3
Waldstraße	45	23	8	11	9	0	2	2
Gohlis	36	13	18	11	8	7	5	2
Stötteritz	22	4	18	15	15	7	11	7
POTENTIAL TO ACT								
Neustadt	18	14	4	18	0	4	11	32
Plagwitz	19	12	8	12	4	0	8	38
Waldstraße	6	18	6	9	0	0	27	33
Gohlis	13	11	19	8	8	0	13	28
Stötteritz	13	13	10	17	0	0	7	40

Source: MEMSURVEY

renewal and ownership were most important in all areas and traffic issues, the environment, local facilities and employment were all significant.

Coded in the same categories are responses to the question of what categories offered groups most potential to act effectively in the local area. Housing, traffic and urban renewal issues were seen as more amenable to local action, unlike crime and unemployment. Most commonly, however, members stressed local organisation which would create forums in which action could be undertaken. Both group officials and group members expressed their agendas for local action in the discourses of careful renewal and local democratic involvement but articulated them in the changes of reunification, and in specific social and spatial contexts. Members clearly distinguished between issues of local importance and the extent and manner in which such local groups could develop or utilise new political geographies to affect these local developments. This involved the negotiation of the place of politics as a fundamental element of the politics of local places (Keith and Pile, 1993).

3 The place(s) of politics: establishing, challenging and utilising the spaces of civic action

As chapter 4 showed, the whole period of the revolution and the run-up to reunification saw a spread of public protest and a re-definition of the proper forms of citizen involvement and of issues demanding attention. This section begins to address how neighbourhood action groups were able to establish local areas and their residents as a focus of political attention, to develop a legitimate mode of action and to influence city agendas for local change.

Table 6.15 summarises actions by 16 Leipzig neighbourhood groups who responded to the BVSURVEY (appendix 5), showing the variety and extent of their actions. Firstly, groups had contacts to the city administration, both responding to official developments and lobbying to create awareness for local issues. They often developed their own proposals for changes. Secondly, groups organised local structures for action: advice sessions, public meetings, festivals, news sheets, and local contacts. Some provided facilities directly in projects with children and the elderly, and in cultural and ecological projects. The following sections examine how the structures for and legitimacy of a local public sphere of action were established (section 3.1), how the content of local actions developed (section 3.2), how this was related to particular politics around place (section 3.3), how this related to the formal

elements of city politics (section 3.4) and how alliances developed between non-state political actors (section 3.5).

Table 6.15: Group activities

Rank	Activity which group undertook at some point	Groups (N=16)
1	Protest/ Demands to City Administration	15
2=	Information given to city offices	14
2=	Responses to Land Use Plan, Traffic General Plan or Local Plans	14
	Letters or reports to the newspapers	14
5=	Citizen advice	12
	Public meetings	12
7	Local history	11
8	Developing their own concepts for development of the area	10
9=	Contacts to local businesses	9
	Local festivals	9
11=	Surveys in the local area	8
	Petitions	8
13	Contact to property owners	7
14=	Contact to investors	6
	Work with elderly people	6
16	Work with children	5
17=	Local area newspapers	4
	Cultural projects	4
19=	Ecological projects	3
	Direct actions (e.g. area clean-ups)	3
21	Collecting information on contract for the local council	2
	Average per group	11

Source: BVSURVEY

3.1 Creating local public spheres

As used here, 'public sphere' refers to the German term '*Öffentlichkeit*'.²³ It includes access to information and knowledge by the 'general public' but also levels of 'publicity' or even 'public relations' (in the sense of *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*). This raises the questions of how issues became part of the public realm and what forms of action made this possible. A public sphere is therefore something which can be created, generally understood to be (relatively) independent of the state. Although many groups were influenced by the state in whether and how they developed, they were essentially run by and controlled by people whose involvement was determined by their own choices rather than by their formal relation to the state.

Most groups were originally established after a series of posters and newspaper announcements and of public meetings. Groups arose from a

public process as well as private decisions. That groups were established and managed to legitimate themselves as local representatives, as channels through which local voices could be heard was a product of the new spaces for action which were now permissible and of the way they created 'publicness', in turn developing awareness of their existence, their claims to affect the agenda-setting processes and to the right to be active as 'citizens'. A range of measures in all five areas contributed to a local public sphere of discussion and contact. Most of these forms (festivals, meetings, discussions) provided transient spaces where local issues could be addressed in a locally accessible space, often in schools, church halls, streets or parks (figure 6.4), creating public space which could 'place' the local public sphere. These events often ran without the presence of west Germans (although of course I was present at many). When city officials came to local areas they were provided with a forum in which to explain policies to local residents but were simultaneously confronted with local demands and local material problems. Planning documents in particular were displayed by the city departments to inform residents and feedback was then invited (figure 6.5). Most groups were seeking a form of organisation 'appropriate to the conditions [...] We always keep ourselves open and anyone can work in the group' (A39, leader, 28/4/93).

These local spheres were seen as having an educational function, providing information and advice, often on fundamental issues of tenancy rights or the potential problems of capital-based renewal in local areas. Some groups sought a pro-active role in 'educating' local property owners about the architectural and cultural values of their buildings (A40, 3/5/93). These public spheres therefore created 'publicity' for issues and could be used by groups to establish the significance of particular issues locally. Openness and information transfer served to legitimate group claims to be more than interest groups serving their membership and to have representative and lobbying functions which were legitimate in the eyes of the local population and the city council (B1, 28/4/92). At the same time groups actively sought to encourage others to be active and to exercise a form of local citizenship, particularly by promoting new or renewed senses of belonging, based on residence or interest and with no political or confessional limitations. By establishing themselves strategically as a focus for local contact and as a legitimate representative organisation, groups made it more difficult for either the city authorities or others with local interests to proceed without at least a gesture towards recognising their importance in local consultation.

Figure 6.4: Creating public space: Bürgerverein Gohlis information stand



Figure 6.5: Public display and discussion of planning documents

Gohlis 675th Anniversary Festival held by BV Gohlis and Culture Department,
August 1992



Citizens argued they had effectively proved their citizenship by becoming active and could therefore demand that their views be sought on plans for the area in a reasonably public fashion instead of the opinions of local city councillors, for example, being taken as representative of local opinion.

As well as groups' own efforts, public awareness of group actions and support for their overall aims was helped by a broadly supportive approach from the local newspapers. An LVZ local editorial argued:

'They are shooting out of the ground at the moment like mushrooms, the citizen associations, expressions of self-confident Leipzig people, but also of the growing feeling of responsibility by the citizens. Whoever does not want decisions to be made over the heads of the public [*Allgemeinheit*], as in pre-Wende times, must get involved, cannot refuse working in citizen initiatives in their neighbourhoods. Only then can they influence decisions if the word "involvement" is not to remain an empty shell.' (LVZ, 13/1/92)

Groups were largely portrayed as a positive, democratic development in Leipzig's tradition of a self-confident citizenry undertaking independent action. This support meant groups could successfully use newspapers to publicise events to local residents, an important factor given that the press was the main source of local information for residents.²⁵ Table 6.16 shows how the five areas featured in the LVZ, noting the salience of local groups.

Table 6.16: Categories of mentions of study areas in local newspaper (LVZ, September 1989 to May 1993)

	Plagwitz	Gohlis	Stötteritz	Waldstraßen- viertel	Neustädter Markt
Citizen association	24	18	5	14	11
Renewal/ Housing	13	13	14	24	21
Social	6	2	12	3	1
History	15	0	0	0	0
Industry/ business	21	16	1	0	1
Ecology	0	0	3	1	1
Community events	8	3	6	1	3
Traffic	1	0	1	1	2
Illegal activities	1	14	0	1	0
TOTAL	64	61	32	36	26

Source: LVZ, September 1989 to May 1993.

Citizen associations accounted for between 42% and 16% of mentions for local areas and for most areas the dominant issue was urban renewal, with other issues varying from industry and business (Plagwitz and Gohlis), to social issues (Stötteritz) and illegal activities (Gohlis). Local events were reported in all five. However, citizen associations were not the only local bodies mentioned. Planners were mentioned in all areas, while local churches and schools were mentioned in Neustadt. Political parties, professionals and social service groups were mentioned in Waldstraßenviertel and Plagwitz while in Stötteritz two project-based groups (one providing local supported living for former psychiatric patients (44%) and a model ecological renewal project (12%)) were important. The importance of the new local spheres of public action is reinforced by the fact that in areas where no citizen association developed, others such as local party groups (B18, 4/5/92) or the Culture Department (LVZ, 11/11/91) sought to develop them.

Rather than existing in isolation from these other elements of local life, most citizen associations sought contacts to the main community institutions, particularly those with premises such as local churches (12 of 15 groups in BVSURVEY) and schools (11/15). Links were also made to those with common aims: welfare organisations (9/15), cultural groups (7/15) and children's organisations (6/15). In one area the contacts were formalised in the 'Network South East' which aimed to co-ordinate and organise action between different organisations (LVA, 1992, 2/7).

Table 6.17: Participation in group activities
(% of members)

	discussion	public event	advice	child/elderly project	contact with council	publicity	Inter group contact
Neustadt	58	92	58	25	42	33	0
Plagwitz	80	90	40	10	60	90	0
Waldstraße	67	94	22	17	33	39	6
Gohlis	40	96	12.5	6	19	25	3
Stötteritz	91	100	54	36	73	91	0
TOTAL	59	92	29	15	36	42	2

Source: MEMSURVEY

One might of course question whether group members participated broadly in these activities. Table 6.17 illustrates greatest participation in public events (92%) and group discussions (59%). Fewer members participated in more service-type actions (giving advice, 29%, particular projects, 15%) but

rather more in general publicity (42%) and in contacts with the city council (36%). Only very few were involved in inter-group contacts. Overall, members in smaller groups participated more widely than those in larger ones. Who undertook tasks related partly to which groups had ABM staff. In Neustadt and Plagwitz 40-45% of members were in ABM posts, moving the groups more towards service provision and community development work of the West German model of professionalisation and service provision, or 'decentralised corporatism' (Mayer, 1987, 359) where being accepted by formal structures meant groups conformed to the state's models. However, the Leipzig groups were still most strongly focused on campaigning issues. Groups established later enjoyed a broader mass membership, 53% of all members spent more than one hour per week on group business and running the groups still had to be covered by a non-employed committee. Many members were therefore heavily involved in a voluntary capacity and were not passive supporters.

3.2 Campaigns and direct actions

Citizen associations and similar groups were developed specifically by the local population with the common aim of establishing the right of the local population to be heard on issues relating to local development and, through the development of local public spheres, to provide a channel for information and for local action. In this context, making themselves visible to the city council and gaining recognition was a major achievement for neighbourhood associations (A43, 11/5/93). By acting 'responsibly', seeking to use local knowledge and develop understanding of the processes underway, groups proved their legitimacy. They further strengthened it by utilising the established local discourses of careful renewal and democratisation in their statutes and in published material. Substantively, most groups were able then to press for urban renewal and sensitive planning which also involved demands for formalised local involvement. One group saw its main achievement as 'giving influence and information to the citizens' (BVSURVEY) and BV Gohlis argued it had 'consciously demanded citizen participation in construction and renewal projects and in traffic and open-space planning' (annual report 1992-1993). An increase in consultation resulted, with groups acknowledged as important local actors:

'people in the area who up to now were very reserved about us ... will now sit down round a table with us.' (A43, 11/5/93)

'The word has got round with investors that it is better to involve the associations from the beginning because afterwards then there are less problems and so we have only really experienced a great deal of openness from the [city] departments.' (A38, 3/5/93)

However, such recognition was not unproblematic and often had to be contested and recontested by a variety of means, often using the local press:

'Things which are at odds, where there are problems which we cannot solve, where we find no common ground with the administration [...] they have to be made public.' (using the local press). (A35, 11/5/93)

As well as campaigns for local urban renewal, most groups undertook direct actions such as area clean-ups and took action on local services. Some met with considerable success. The Gohlis association successfully persuaded the city council to purchase the local community centre from owners to whom it had recently been privatised and there were smaller successes too (having a pedestrian crossing installed). Groups lobbied the city council and other service providers to keep local swimming baths, nursery provision, youth centres and health services, but here success rates varied and were particularly poor where commercial considerations rather than local council policies were decisive: 'Did we manage to save the local store? no. [...] Did we manage to save the cinema? No. And so on, and so forth' (A38, 11/5/93). Groups also sought to remove local disturbances such as illegal car markets, street-traders or abandoned car wrecks, acting to 'defend local turf' (Cox and Dear, 1989). There was some ambivalence to such campaigns since the markets and street traders were for many a useful addition to limited local shopping facilities. Finally, as seen already, groups also developed their own local community services, whether new ones or in replacement for those lost with the withdrawal of business and the state from certain sectors (help for the elderly, local cultural and community education projects). Here, in time, it was clear to the groups that as the state retreated from areas of service provision, they could be drawn into becoming a 'shadow state' (Wolch, 1989) for a range of issues from citizen advice, to senior citizens and social care (A39, 28/4/93), showing a convergence with the experiences of citizen action groups in western countries (Mayer, 1991).

3.3 Place politics

Groups used particular images of their local areas to point to the need for local action and at the same time to stress the worthiness of the area for attention by the authorities and the local population. To stress the urgency of local action, Bürgerverein Neustädter Markt (1992) surveyed the local population and found that 54% of flats were without a bath, 58% without inside toilets and only 13% had central heating.²⁶ Their demands for attention to problems utilised a language of 'decay, collapse, rottenness, depressing greyness' and they argued the area must be 'awakened to new life' or that the 'old lady should be given a facelift' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 5 and 6).

Areas were alternatively portrayed as places worthy of attention. Pro Plagwitz stressed the importance in cultural terms of the area's nineteenth century structures (A3, 11/11/91) and its 'European significance' (LVZ, 15/1/91). This was reinforced with an academic symposium and links to other European cities (LVZ, 1/4/92; 26/5/93) and with a series of articles in local papers.²⁷ The local community, a 'functioning lifeworld' of traditional face to-face communication (LVZ, 9/8/90), was argued to be valuable and under threat. Equally important were visual images which some groups produced (figure 6.6). Pro Plagwitz employed a photographer on an ABM basis to produce images²⁸ to reduce the population's alienation from the area and to convince the city council to address local issues:

'We are really pleased if anyone finds our Plagwitz beautiful. Since I have been in the association here I think Plagwitz is really beautiful too. [particularly because of the photos] [...] Plagwitz is like an old woman. She has a face. [...] Plagwitz has earned its face.' (A3, woman, 11/11/91)

Similarly a new attention to local history served to assign the past, and therefore the present and future, significance and value. By documenting local areas (in Gohlis or Musikviertel) or writing local histories (in local news sheets in all five areas, in special publications and at public events) groups could argue how current developments should be implemented. A project which found Waldstraßenviertel had always incorporated social housing was used to argue, successfully, for new social housing to be built in an otherwise 'highly desirable' area.²⁹

**Figure 6.6: Roof-top view of Plagwitz:
Pro Plagwitz's representation of the local area**

Photograph: H. Kirschner, Pro Plagwitz e.V.



3.4 Links with city politics

The issues addressed by citizen associations required extensive involvement with the city authorities in Leipzig. Groups in the BVSURVEY named on average 3.8 departments with which they had had contacts. 47.5% had contacted offices in the Department for City Development and Planning (DCDP), 15% the Department for City Construction (including the Urban Renewal Office (URO)) and 15% the Department for Environmental Protection. In other words, they involved the departments concerned with urban renewal. There were also contacts to the Department of Social Services, Youth and Health, the Department for Law, Order and Security, and some to the Department of Economic Development. Thirteen of the BVSURVEY groups, including all five study groups, had also contacted their local city councillors (often contacting several councillors in the multi-member constituencies).

Table 6.18: Evaluation of city administration (index)

	openness to suggestions	providing information	help for group	Interest in local issues	concrete actions in area
Neustadt	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.1	3.3
Plagwitz	2.9	2.7	3.5	2.5	2.9
Waldstraße	3.7	3.2	3.8	2.9	3.6
Gohlis	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.6
Stötteritz	3.0	2.4	3.5	3.0	3.2
TOTAL	3.29	2.84	3.36	2.77	3.16

Source: MEMSURVEY.

Note: Index weighted average on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was very positive and 5 was very negative.

When asked to evaluate contacts to the city administration, (table 6.18) the most satisfied members were in Gohlis and the least in Waldstraßenviertel. Not surprisingly, satisfaction was higher where the action required by the city council was more limited or less specific (giving information or being open to groups). Evaluation of the city administration's support also changed over time. However, far from being fixed, the relation to the city administration was characterised by a level of uncertainty:

'It is not all so fixed as it is in the western states, or in West Germany. [...] At the beginning we had a very strong response from the departments here [...] as they wanted to prove they were open to these new initiatives, to show their democratic profile. [...] Now the same old patterns are emerging and they have tried to block

several things.' (A3, 11/11/91)

This narrative suggests a period of openness and then one of closure which is reminiscent of GDR structures. The period of disruption to established models also affected political parties, particularly at the local level: 'the parties are also insecure [...] so we have to rely on each other in some ways' (A3, 11/11/91). Local parties or councillors sometimes sought local connections in the neighbourhood groups and those on the centre-left of the political spectrum were especially supportive (A3, 11/11/91).³⁰ However, by definition all registered associations had to be unattached to any political party. In addition many members rejected party politics in reaction to the political domination of the 'Party' in the GDR. They saw the groups as a site of protest outside, or against the party political system:

Woman 1: 'We are not political.'
 Woman 2: 'A small stone in the large cogs?.'
 Woman 1: 'Above party politics [*überparteilich*].'
 (A43, 11/5/93)

Neighbourhood action groups were therefore often an alternative or, for party members, a complement to party political involvement. Groups offered space for independent action so that one could say 'Well, you made your contribution without permanently having to rely on the political parties.' (A40, 3/5/93). Such action was said to conform not to the interests of a party but to the 'interests of those affected' (A40, 3/5/93). Citizen associations were aware that they constituted only one of a range of ways of influencing city decision-making, such as the council Petition Committee, party membership, councillors' surgeries, or the press (A34, 5/5/93). They tried to influence local decision-making in a way which ensured the city served local interests:

'The departments [should be] there for the citizens. And the difference is, when one person comes along and has a problem it might be heard and it might not. But when a citizen association comes along which also utilises publicity [...] it can influence the departments in a different way.' (A40, 3/5/93)

Seeking to influence the city council was not universally deemed possible or acceptable and some groups were divided about whether to lobby the city council or concentrate on informing and educating the citizens:

Man: 'As a citizen association [...] even where we can't pay for anything ourselves, we can shape tastes and protect cultural values and be active.'

Woman: 'That's the one thing. And the other is that we [...] can try to influence the city which does have money somewhere even if it is poor, [...] try to force them to maintain the buildings by adopting a renewal statute.'

Man: 'We can only try to waken people's consciences.'

Woman: 'No, we can try [...] citizen involvement. [...] I mean it is important that the city notices they can't act without us.'
(A40, 3/5/93)

Despite the apparent lessening of openness, many groups saw the city council and councillors not as adversaries but as partners in local action. They were happy to see their local studies used by the city in area renewal programmes (A38, 3/5/93). Some even held surgeries where local councillors could be available to the population. A level of reciprocity developed in some cases where local councillors proposed motions to the city council on issues of concern to the citizen associations. Generally the citizen associations knew they could not achieve their aims without city council support, and they often voluntarily undertook particular tasks (registering car wrecks) so the area would benefit because the overworked city administration was aided in its work. Despite this often close co-operation, groups maintained a critical distance which, if anything, increased over time as groups became more critical of plans to adopt west German models of development unchanged: 'We have to say to the politicians - sure this may have been a good idea in Hanover but here we are in Leipzig - and here the mentality and the social situation is very different' (A40, 3/5/93).

Links to government beyond the city were limited.³¹ Most groups argued this required broader alliances: 'an association is too small. It is perhaps something which Pro Leipzig should do' (A39, 28/4/93). That citizen action was strongly supported in the city, particularly by several senior figures in the DCDP, the Culture Department and by the Mayor who promoted civic action as a key part of Leipzig's restructuring, was in part a function of the effectiveness of individual groups and their use of the two key discourses. It was also a function of the extent to which groups organised together. In a radio discussion on the future of Leipzig the head of the Culture Department

named a variety of organisations as significant elements of local development: the city council, citizen associations and initiatives where 'the citizens are stirring themselves [...] and are engaged in urban renewal', EcoLion, the Association for ecological Building and Pro Leipzig. She said, 'They are all co-operating to hold a large exhibition in November 1992 about urban renewal in Leipzig to collect citizen opinions and [...] to show [them] in relation to the planning processes and renewal processes' (A33, 22/4/92). Section 3.5 shows how such alliances developed in Leipzig and beyond, often established tactically and even despite resistance towards moves to any form of centralisation.

3.5 Non-state alliances

Several factors contributed to increased contact and alliances between civic initiatives in Leipzig. In February 1991 a city-wide group, "Pro Leipzig" began to campaign for a fuller public discussion of the city's planning decisions. Pro Leipzig argued residents must be enabled to participate, suggesting the best way to 'mobilise' them was in decentralised local initiatives with local offices and ABM personnel, creating new forms of democracy to ensure careful urban renewal (Leipziger Tageblatt, April, 1991). Pro Leipzig sought to co-ordinate such citizen associations but this was strongly criticised by those associations in existence which rejected any suggestion of renewed centralisation (A2, 11/11/91; A1, 4/11/91). Emphasis then shifted to facilitating co-operation between groups and by late 1992 over half of the groups had regular contacts to Pro Leipzig. In addition the large majority of groups had direct inter-group contacts (14/16 in BVSURVEY). Other city-wide organisations were also promoting co-operation, particularly in the area of ecological renewal. The Association for Ecological Building had contacts with 11/16 groups and the environmental pressure group EcoLion was involved with 9/16.

The themes for inter-group and city contacts often involved issues which no single group could solve alone. In their responses to city traffic planning the groups saw the danger of divisions between them:

'we work together with other neighbourhood initiatives because of course it doesn't just affect our neighbourhood. We can not say "the main road isn't going through my area so I am not interested."' (A34, 5/5/93)

In that way '64 associations and initiatives can have a certain strength [and] will achieve something' (A43, 11/5/93). Co-operation was particularly helped by widespread involvement in an exhibition in November 1992, co-ordinated by Pro Leipzig and the Association for Ecological Building, called 'Citizens shape their city', where all neighbourhood and civic action groups could show what they had been doing, press for changes and 'alert people to all the things they can do' (A43, 11/5/93). Furthermore, a key focus for the development of city alliances was a move to have the citizen associations take on the responsibility for the 'structures close to the citizens' which were 'more decentralised and more attractive and effective when they are accepted and supported by the residents of the neighbourhoods' (A7, 25/3/92). Pro Leipzig and the citizen associations wrote collectively to the city council to argue the citizen associations should be given the resources to staff such offices for the city while remaining independent from it. While the chances of success here were not great, co-operation between citizen associations and the city was increasing. In fact in several areas the citizen associations were given access to an office which the city planners for the area also used, and both a city Round Table on urban renewal and a campaign for neighbourhood committees with decision-making powers in urban renewal were part of the overall trend to reinstate the neighbourhoods as meaningful socio-spatial elements in the city. This was further reflected in an administrative re-ordering of the city, largely for data collection and administrative purposes, reinstating 49 neighbourhoods alongside 9 city sub-districts in Leipzig (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992a).

One must note in relation to non-state alliances that there was little evidence of networking between Leipzig groups and other eastern German groups (although such links do exist, B30, 16-18/10/92).³² However, there were strong links between local groups and considerable support from the city was forthcoming while groups also succeeded in finding contacts in western cities for their work.

4 Action in the context of change

This account appears to give a very positive picture of local activism, even if there are some hints of problems. The tensions which developed for such action are explored in chapters 7 to 9, but first this final section notes the problems which local groups identified (4.1) and, in the light of the nature of

group membership, structures and functions, explores some interpretations of the nature of such local action in a time of change (4.2).

4.1 Problems and limitations for neighbourhood action in reunification

When asked about any difficulties, group leaders identified the lack of time, of members and of finance (table 6.19), lack of interest by local residents and problems with the city administration. Group members emphasised the more general problems of the lack of willingness by the population to be involved (table 6.20). These problems relate largely to the nature of social change and the constraints of funding and staffing involved in reunification, as well as to some groups' styles of working.

Table 6.19: Main problems identified by group leaders (counts, N=16)

Rank	Problem	All groups (16)	ABM groups (7)	ABM-applied for (6)	No ABM (2)
1	lack of time	9	2	5	2
2	lack of members	8	3	4	1
3=	lack of charitable status	7	3	4	0
3=	group finances	7	3	4	0
3=	lack of interest from citizens	7	3	3	1
6	other*	6	3	3	0
7=	city finance	5	4	1	0
7=	city administration	5	4	1	0
9	lack of information	3	1	2	0
10=	internal group problems	1	0	1	0
10=	co-ordination of group	1	0	1	0
	Average/ group	3.7	3.7	4.8	2

* 'Other' problems include ABM funding, lack of active members and lack of premises.

Source: BVSURVEY

Table 6.20: Main difficulties for local groups (%)

	Disinterest of citizens	Problems with city admin.	Group finance	Internal problems	General resignation in politics	Socio-economic processes
Neustadt	83	50	58	17	42	8
Plagwitz	90	40	50	70	30	0
Waldstraße	73	78	39	11	50	11
Gohlis	89	64	42	8	92	3
Stötteritz	91	36	73	11	73	11
TOTAL	84	59	34	16	67	6

Source: MEMSURVEY.

Any attempt at local participation had to cope with the dual legacy of, on the one hand, the legitimisation of local action in the *Wende* and, on the other, with the way that action was in some ways discredited because 'it was promoted in the GDR [...] under a different ideological situation, [...] as part of a socialist way of living, so people now don't understand that it is also necessary for [...] the new system' (A39, 28/4/93; A38, 11/5/93). A further GDR legacy was that people were used to the dominant culture of remaining passive in the face of change, as one group leader argued: 'remaining passive is the burden of the GDR citizen' (A3, 11/11/91). Hence, finding a new mode of action was difficult, particularly in the face of a new complex political system, unfamiliar to many:

'There is still too much of a wait-and-see, or a powerless attitude. And at the moment somehow it is being encouraged by the politics which are getting less and less comprehensible for most people. [...] Then they give up and give in.' (A39, 28/4/93)

In this situation of revolutionary change, 'people must change their whole way of thinking and their whole way of acting so totally that they are completely concerned with that' (A39, leader, 28/4/93). However, despite a certain resistance to actual involvement, most groups were convinced, and often had survey material to show, that the population was generally supportive of local organisations: 'they are comforted that there is someone to represent our interests' (A35, woman, 11/5/93).

The groups were themselves equally involved in the highly complex new situation and found it difficult to cope with the rapidity of change. Many came to the conclusion that the local agenda 'can hardly be managed by volunteer enthusiasts' (BV Gohlis annual report, 1992-93). Together with a perceived need for personnel and funding, many groups saw ABM staff as a way out of these difficulties since the funding provided staff dedicated to working for the group. Table 6.19 shows that in every area, except dealings with the city administration, groups with ABM staff reported fewer problems proportionately than those which had applied for them.³³ There were, however, problems in relying heavily on ABM posts since they were both project-bound (usually in cultural and social issues, organisation and urban renewal) and time-limited (a more generous two years in the first round and thereafter one year). Reliance on ABM left groups open to changes in federal

employment policy as the large number had essentially been a response to employment restructuring occasioned by reunification. In 1992 and 1993 ABM posts were to be reduced drastically, largely for budgetary reasons (LVZ, 5/6/92). Protests on a range of fronts nationally produced the announcement in early 1993 of the 'Solidarity Pact' with funding for a further 225,000 posts in environmental projects. Local groups then had to alter their priorities in some ways to match the new funding conditions.³⁴ Despite such moves, future funding difficulties faced the groups at the end of the field work period. Several were considering sponsorship, although they were often unclear how to attract this. Alternatively, the local council was persuaded to fund certain projects for some time.³⁵

Some problems identified related to styles of working in groups. Extensive use of ABM, for example, tended to divide the work of the association from work done by volunteer members,³⁶ especially since many members were likewise unemployed or faced early retirement. Some groups thought one could only work with ABM and that without them 'a group will never be in the position of realising any projects. It will only be able to inform itself about things happening in the neighbourhood' (A38, ABM personnel, 11/5/93). Yet the practice in other groups showed this was only true to a limited extent. Groups with no ABM also succeeded in developing local services and local events (in Gohlis or Waldstraßenviertel).

The tendency to use ABM posts and the divisions between the ABM and the active local population reflected moves towards the 'professionalisation' of local action. Some initiatives outside Leipzig established just before the *Wende* saw involvement with architects and planners as a conscious tactic of 'professionalisation', using specialists so that the groups could not be rejected by the state as 'lay dillettantism' (IBIS, 1990, 1, 3). However, forms of professionalisation in Leipzig, while including this strategic approach, also reflected attitudes to the population. It was particularly marked in Pro Plagwitz. A re-examination of the photographs they produced (figure 6.6) suggests a distance between group and population since the images meant to encourage local attachment actually survey the area at roof level rather than at the level of everyday experience. The language used in a locally-distributed leaflet was too often highly technical and academic and failed to identify how local residents could be involved and what identifiable goals there might be for the area. One group member argued 'as a representative of interests one must take the citizens seriously' (A40, 3/5/93), suggesting

citizen associations needed to make a more conscious effort to deal with issues in an appropriate manner. By mid 1993 many groups were actively considering how to increase their openness to the local population and to encourage a broader level of popular participation despite the resistance of many local residents to local action.

A further issue caused growing divisions in the city alliance of groups. Only a few Leipzig groups adopted radical tactics for local action. In Connewitz, for example, this included occupying the city council chambers because the council reneged on agreements to consult the squatters. These actions were similar to initiatives in Berlin, particularly in Prenzlauer Berg (B30, 16-18/10/92) or to those in Dresden's 'Äußere Neustadt'. Other Leipzig groups adopted a less directly radical stance, working mainly within the existing systems of local government. Such differences made it increasingly difficult to find common approaches. At a meeting in 1992 (A29, 8/10/92) it emerged that Pro Leipzig and some longer established citizen associations from higher status inner city areas were very much interested in the 'culture' of local involvement and sought 'consensus'. Other associations were more concerned with the technical problems of how to get established, fund-raise and organise. The radical action groups saw both as remote from their situation where they often dealt with violence between right and left wing radicals as well as direct protests against the city authorities. For them, compromise, consensus and technical issues of organisation were not appropriate and trying to remain non-party political was not a sufficient response. These divisions reflected a more general ambiguity in interpretations of how to locate civic action in Leipzig in relation to the GDR and the FRG and to bourgeois or radical forms of action.

4.2 Meaning of local action in relation to past and present, East and West

The groups established between 1989 and 1993 in Leipzig were part of a wider range of initiatives concerned with urban renewal in the East, which according to IBIS-Berlin covered around 100 groups in 50 towns and cities.³⁷ Some had been established in the late 1980s in inner city areas where GDR policies had moved from neglect and decay to active policies of demolition and new construction in the mid 1980s. These acts of re-place-ment, changing whole landscapes to the point of unrecognisability, had resulted in initiatives which were often illegal or semi-legal as they were located within the WBAs,

the Kulturbund, or the churches. Leipzig's initiatives developed somewhat later and were generally less concerned with direct actions on particular buildings³⁸ and with forms of alternative housing ownership and administration.

Clearly there were some links between GDR actions and Leipzig's local groups. The Neustädter Markt group grew directly out of the WBA and took over its office which had been home to 'the WPO, that was the Neighbourhood Party Organisation, the WBA, and the local discipline commissions' (A2, member, 19/11/91). Some therefore saw the groups as a continuation at least of the GDR ideal of local action:

'[WBA etc.] was the form at the time of working with the citizens [...] like they do nowadays with the neighbourhood e.V.s. How precisely they worked depended, like it does today, on the particular people.' (A2, founder member, man, 19/11/91)

However, for many others the *Wende* and the consolidation through reunification of the legal right to organise locally represented a distinct break with GDR experiences which had, for example, prohibited collection of local information (A26, 28/9/92). Local action groups therefore seem to form part of what Tismaneanu (1989) called a 'nascent civil society'. In terms of their concerns they were also part of a wider range of environmental and other groups which constituted the 'new social movements' of the GDR (Knabe, 1988), often growing out of local constellations of such actions, relating them not only to the official forms of local action (through the WBA) but to the whole civic movement and through that to wider processes of change in eastern Europe (Pickles, 1993). As such, the experiences of local action, particularly in groups which were established prior to reunification, constituted 'something independent which the population of the GDR can bring to the process of unification of the two German states' (Kintzel, 1990, 5). Groups were often both intrigued by the possibilities of action in the FRG and wanted to use the 'chance' in a sense to test the declared nature of this new 'democracy'. At the same time there was considerable disquiet about the possibilities of developments going wrong and of the former GDR losing out again in the processes of capitalist-based restructuring:

'My aims were to be involved again, although I had wanted to keep out of politics a bit for a while, but I wanted at first a better

GDR and because that was not successful I at least want to see that we do not become the **worst** part of the Federal Republic.' (A40, man, 3/5/93)

This conforms to Knabe's (1988) analysis of 'new social movements' in both East and West which he argued were 'directed less against a specific - capitalist or socialist - organisation of industrial society modernisation' than against:

'the functional logic of the modern, whose costs and consequences are [...] security problems, environmental destruction, global problems, lack of opportunities for participation in political decision-making [...] as well as a general loss of traditional life styles and personal meaning for life.' (Knabe, 1988, 558)

However, he argued that in socialist states such concerns often 'overlay old problems such as housing, shortages and poverty' (*ibid.*). Post-reunification, these forms of action occupy a position between rejection of the GDR and acceptance of the FRG. Even the language used in group statutes illustrates this in-between position as it veers between echoes of GDR political statements, using old German terms such as '*Brauchtum*' for local customs, or calling for 'solidarity', and west German linguistic practices such as the use of '*BürgerInnen*', a grammatical way of including the female and male in the term. Such linguistic confusion continues in uncertainty about what to call the GDR or the current place in which they find themselves. Phrases used commonly included '*früher* - in the past', 'in old times', 'in the former GDR', 'in the time of the GDR', 'the time before the *Wende*', 'the East', '*bei uns*' ('with us here'). Such uncertainty confirms the precarious position in which many felt themselves to be situated.

At the same time, other accounts of citizen action groups suggest they are a reinstatement of the interrupted development of bourgeois civil society, claiming common roots for all of the over 1000 different associations registered in Leipzig after 1989. The view was typically articulated in the Leipzig Association Advertiser (LVA), published monthly by one cultural initiative as a forum for communication. A simple content analysis (table 6.21) shows it concentrated on 'cultural' groups, charities and groups with social concerns.

**Table 6.21: Content analysis of Leipzig Association Advertiser,
October 1991 to April 1993**

Rank	Group categories	Frequency
1	Culture, local arts projects	73
2	Interests, hobbies	39
3	Charities, social concerns	38
4	Local and association history	35
5	Association administration	28
6	Youth and children	27
7	Citizen associations (Bürgervereine)	25
8	International contact	17
9	Training	15
10	Campaigning organisations	12
11	Ecology issues	7
12=	City development in general	4
12=	Other	4

Source: LVA

Citizen associations were part of a restoration of Leipzig's pre-1933³⁹ 'association life' (LVA editorial, 10/92) in a common German tradition in what is effectively a Habermasian account of the emergence of a 'public sphere'⁴⁰ from the late eighteenth century onwards when 'burgher' groups sought to influence political, economic, social and cultural interests within a framework of 'Enlightenment thinking' (LVA, 12/91). Faust (1981) provides a similar analysis for West German citizen associations, arguing that the historical legacy of 'participation by the citizens in the process of local informed opinion' (113) goes back to the bourgeois revolution in Germany of 1848 and has undergone cycles of activity, each 'characterised by the reawakening of bourgeois (self)-consciousness' (*ibid.*). In this interpretation 'association culture' [*Vereinskultur*] offers a 'public sphere' [*Offenheit*]⁴¹ which is locally connected, a 'managable social sphere for the individual and has an integrative function for the individual in society' (LVA, 12/92). The re-emergence of such activity after 1989 signalled the return of a non-state public (middle-class?) sphere and a return of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of association (LVA, 10/91). Some elderly group members interpreted their actions in this light:

'In the past [pre GDR] there was [...] in every neighbourhood a **Sports Club** [*Turnverein*] [...] And you belonged to it. And **the type of connection** which there was through these groups and small sports clubs [...] is similar to what we now want to try and achieve in this citizen association.' (A34, elderly man, 5/5/93)

'The old citizen associations .. before 1933 [...] were organised so that city councillors were also in the citizen associations and the councillors passed on what was discussed in the citizen associations to the city council.' (A34, older man, 5/5/93)

Others, particularly the younger members, rejected any suggestion that groups were part of this tradition of bourgeois social clubs, arguing instead that their actions constituted both a legacy from reactions against the GDR and a new form of action against the problems of the immediate situation:

'I am not the kind of German who joins a club [to get away from his family to drink beer]. Emotionally I brought to the group that which I had brought with me from the old ties of the *Wende*. That means the *élan* - everyone wanted things to get better - I liked that enormously. I put in a lot of work with many setbacks - but everyone contributed something and accepted great risks and after this ... *Wende* then everything suddenly happened and everyone just clasped their hands over their heads, or **many** did, and said "Oh dear, the problems!" and everyone was occupied with themselves and no-one did anything.' (A40, younger man, 3/5/93)

In such a situation, neighbourhood action groups with their emphasis on a well-known local area, on personal experience and active citizenship may offer a form of escape from a positioning in which the population is passively subjected to change. In their ambivalence to the GDR and the FRG it is perhaps possible that in the framework of reunification such groups offered an opportunity where, at least for certain periods in time and space, individuals and groups could come to terms with, try to resist and seek to alter the processes of reunification as they were manifested locally. Chapters seven to nine explore these issues further.

1 For example, the 'People's Solidarity', an organisation providing care for the elderly in the GDR and after reunification (LVZ, 15/1/92).

2 The 'Grey Lions' a support and campaigning organisation for elderly people, (LVZ 5/1/90).

3 Women's Cultural Centre opened in August 1990 (LVZ, 31/8/90).

4 The 'Disabled Association' active from 9/12/89 onwards in Leipzig.

-
- 5 League of Friends of Children (LVZ, 9/2/90).
6 Worker's Welfare (LVZ 12/6/90).
7 AIDS (LVZ, 4/12/92), drug and alcohol problems, single parents,
unemployment, asylum seekers (LVZ, 7/4/93).
8 The *Siedlungen* were areas which had often been laid out after 1949 to give
plots of land to those who had lost their homes in the German lands lost further east.
9 This was true of Connewitz Alternative, the Bürgerverein Meyersche Häuser and
the Bürgerverein Krochsiedlung, all of which sought co-operation and increased self-
management of properties owned by the city housing company or by single landlords.
10 Redeveloping a factory site or old railway as local open space.
11 BVSURVEY (appendix 4) is a postal survey of all twenty-six groups in existence
in October 1992 and achieved a 61.5% response. The small number of cases means results
are considered indications of the patterns of action and the characteristics of the groups.
12 In earlier works Harvey (1973) argued that 'community consciousness' ran
against 'class consciousness'.
13 Half of BVSURVEY groups had from one to three thematic working groups where
members, non-members and job-creation personnel worked together. Four of the five
study groups had working groups on urban renewal, ecological and traffic planning
issues.
14 The survey of group members, hereafter MEMSURVEY (appendix 3) was
administered to all members of the five study groups in 1992. The responses totalled 87,
a rate of around 65% of members. The responses were divided between areas as follows:
Neustädter Markt 13.8%, Plagwitz 11.5%, Waldstraße 20.7%, Gohlis 41.4%, Stötteritz
12.6%.
15 This interpretation is reinforced by the finding in table 6.3 that 45% of
Stötteritz members were previously active locally.
16 Compare this with the level of higher education in Leipzig's population, 18%
(Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991a) or 7% of the West German workforce and 9% of the East
German workforce in 1990 (Kolinsky, 1993, 276).
17 Such overtly class-based terminology was largely absent from any local
narratives about differing status. Instead language tended to use descriptors of status,
such as 'elite', or 'the simple working folk', or 'bourgeois' to describe people or places.
18 The comparative West German figure is 58% for 1990 (Kolinsky, 1993, 276).
19 For the comparison between East and West German figures, see chapter 5.
20 See chapter 7 on the change in housing costs.
21 Childcare, neighbourhood expertise, shifts in availability and location of
employment, transport, the feminisation of poverty and experiences of crime and
violence were all mentioned.
22 Women's groups were also active in the city on a range of issues from culture to
reproductive rights, training, environmental issues, sexuality, and so on.
23 From 1990 to 1991 all areas of Leipzig saw almost a doubling of the crime per
population rate. The overall city level rose from 23.3 per thousand of the population in
1989 to 38.0 in 1990, although crime levels had been rising gradually since at least
1975.
24 See translator's note in Habermas 1992b.
25 The main source of information about the local area was the press (52%),
followed by family and friends (33%) and public notices (25%). Source: Pro Plagwitz e.V.
(1992).
26 These figures compare to 17%, 15% and 52% respectively for Leipzig as a whole
(Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991a).
27 Particularly written by the leader of Pro Plagwitz, these included LVZ, 9/8/90,
17/10/90, and 20/21/10/90.
28 This production of images of place was reinforced by a series of photographs of

industrial architecture in Plagwitz published in the LVZ, albeit by someone not attached to Pro Plagwitz. The Pro Plagwitz photographs were also used in a public exhibition at the Plagwitz festival of May 1992 and in an article in Leipziger Blätter (Krüger and Dietze, 1992).

29 Interestingly, in the few local history publications produced in GDR times, revolutionary traditions (Leipzig's Red East or Plagwitz's place in the workers' movement) were much more prominent. There were also more attempts to link particular local areas to key figures of revolutionary history. In contrast, few post-1989 publications discussed these issues so although the Waldstraßenviertel leader argued local history projects were about 'making it clear to the citizens what kind of territory they live in and what happened here in the past' (A1, 4/11/91), there were obviously new limitations on what was considered interesting in local history.

30 Chapter 9 discusses more fully the relation between this action and the city's local councillors.

31 BV Waldstraßenviertel received no reply to letters about child care from the parties of the Land government.

32 This was true even at the city level. The Association for Ecological Construction, for example, had links to West Berlin, Hannover, Tübingen, Freiburg, Basel, and Hamburg but not to other east German groups. The leader only noticed this when I asked the question. (A4, 19/11/91)

33 Given that ABM groups are also more likely to be involved in specific projects it is not surprising that they experience more problems with city finance and difficulties dealing with the city administration. This was confirmed by other city-wide organisations (Association for ecological Construction, A4; EcoLion, A6 and Elsässer, 1992).

34 Pro Plagwitz was applying for environmental ABM posts to develop a cafe with wholefood to act as a base for local education and action on the local environment.

35 The Children's Studio of Pro Plagwitz received Youth Department funding for the two part time posts for a further six months

36 Informal discussion, 11/6/92.

37 IBIS is the 'Information and Advice Institute for Participatory Urban Renewal', a campaigning and support organisation which was originally the representative of initiatives on urban renewal at the Round Table for Planning at the GDR Ministry for Construction which then went on to consider its advisory and campaigning role after reunification. It produced a monthly newsletter 'IBIS'.

38 For example in Rostock there was an attempt to create a model 'eco-house' with an alternative living project and a creche, or in Wittenberg a cultural initiative to renew and preserve two complexes of houses which were associated with the artist Cranach (IBIS, various issues).

39 Under the National Socialists all associations were 'incorporated'. The term used was '*gleichschalten*', to be forced into line. After a short re-emergence after 1945 organisations were subsequently incorporated into the state/party-led cultural policy of the SED, with the exception of those based within the church.

40 See chapter 2; Habermas, 1992b.

41 See chapter 3.

Chapter 7

Contested geographies of transformation (i): Capitalisation of the city and alternative alliances

1 Introduction

'Times of radical change - times for idealists and speculators.' (C. Richter, 1992, 42)

Chapter 6 offered a reading of developments in Leipzig from the viewpoint of civic action. Yet other major factors influence restructuring in the city and civic politics: interactions between capital, administration and local population; the power relations of German reunification. This chapter and chapter 8 form a pair which seeks to examine these intersections by exploring differing and contested geographies of urban transformation, at city and neighbourhood levels respectively. In this chapter, section 2 explores the impact of capital on Leipzig's urban environment and looks at the reactions to and constructions of these processes in Leipzig in the discourses and experiences of 'modernisation' and 'colonisation'. Section 3 discusses housing policy to show how privatisation and marketisation have altered the relation between residents and urban environment. Another urban development discourse is also present in Leipzig, namely 'careful renewal' and its intersection with the modernisation and colonisation tropes is discussed in section 4.

2 Capitalisation and restructuring of the urban environment

In common with the rest of East Germany, Leipzig faced rapid economic restructuring both in its employment structure and in the structures of the urban environment from early 1990 onwards and particularly after economic and monetary union in July 1990 and German reunification in October 1990. In 1989 and 1990 Leipzig lost over 5% of its population (27,000 people) (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991b). Almost all went to West Germany and were mainly young and well-trained (Schmidt, 1994).

In 1989, a high percentage of Leipzig's labour-force was in industrial production (35.3% in 1989: Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c), especially in mechanical and precision engineering, publishing and printing, textiles,

and foodstuffs. Unlike other GDR towns it had a less mono-structural labour market (Zeuchner, 1992) as its historical development as a city of services, culture and learning, administration, transport and trade (based on Leipzig's Trade Fair) left 54.3% of the city labour force in tertiary sectors in 1989 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c). Between 1989 and 1992 Leipzig subsequently lost 72% percent of its manufacturing jobs due to plant closure, restructuring and de-industrialisation (Schmidt, 1991): 101,000 or 35% of the labour force in 1989 compared to 27,900 or 12% in 1992 (Breuste, 1994). Trade, service and construction sectors also lost jobs as subsidies were removed and businesses privatised (*ibid.*). New businesses were founded: 12,750 newly registered companies in Leipzig in 1990 alone (Reuther and Doehler, 1994) but these could not counter other losses. In January 1992 there were around 500-600 business closures each month against around 1000 new businesses (Sommerlatt, 1992). By 1992, therefore, unemployment levels were at 9.7% for Leipzig city, and 10.4% for the Leipzig region.

Figures for the Leipzig region show the extent of restructuring. In September 1992 33.5% of the region's workforce was dependent on various schemes supported by the Federal Employment Department (job creation, re-training, short-time working, early retirement arrangements) (Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Leipzig, 1992). By 1993 this fell to 25.7% primarily because of reductions in job creation measures, in short-time working and perhaps most problematic for economic restructuring, in training, while at the same time early retirement and unemployment actually rose (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1993).

Within this restructuring, women, who previously constituted over half of the labour force (1989 = 50.3% in Leipzig) were disproportionately affected. In 1990 they constituted between 58 and 61 percent of the unemployment total in Leipzig district (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c). This continued as recession hit Germany forcing unemployment in Leipzig to 14.0% in the fourth quarter of 1993, with male unemployment at 9.1% and female unemployment at 19.1%. To place this in context, however, Leipzig's levels were the second best in Saxony, in turn a relatively prosperous region of East Germany (Schmidt, 1994, 500) and in fact several large-scale developments meant that in 1993 per capita investment in Leipzig was three times the average for the five new *Länder* (Die Welt, 9/3/93). Leipzig was therefore in some ways a 'boom

city', with high levels of inward investment, in spite of the reduction in employment (Industrie- und Handelskammer zu Leipzig, 1992).

2.1 Capital restructuring of a crisis region

Clearly restructuring in the Leipzig region has been severe. The introduction of market forces hastened the collapse of the GDR industrial base. At the same time extreme environmental pollution and extensive tracts of mining wasteland meant interest in the region around Leipzig was low, making disinvestment difficult to counteract. A heavy industrial region with a strong reliance on extensive exploitation of open cast lignite mines as a resource for electricity, domestic fuel and chemical production, reinforced by the GDR drive for autarchy in industrial production, its landscapes were heavily polluted and disrupted. Mining had removed thirty-two villages from the map as they were either displaced or demolished and the people relocated (Werner, 1990; R. Richter, 1992). After reunification, several projects were developed to combine environmental improvement and employment. Leipzig City Council and the Rural District of Leipzig together with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce established several public-private partnerships to encourage environmental renewal and development of environmental technologies.

Like other processes in reunification, there were also continuities after the introduction of capitalist relations in 1990. Privatised mining companies were still involved in removing villages,¹ provoking arguments about the balance between environmental issues, the local population's wishes, demand for employment, and capital formation in newly privatised industries. Similar issues were raised in the rural fringes of built-up areas which were spaces of intense interest for developing out-of-town sites for industrial estates and shopping parks, and increasingly for suburban house building. Their proliferation was exacerbated because planning sovereignty lay with each tiny parish constituting the rural district. Developments were uneven, as capital investment in the region ranged from strong investment pressures to disengagement, from over-use for particular functions to a lack of interest in environmentally damaged areas and industrial production.

2.2 Modernisation - Leipzig as European service centre

In this context, policies for Leipzig city's development after 1989 can be somewhat simplified and seen as following either a modernisation model, discussed here, or a 'careful renewal' model (section 4). Many elements of the former come from a study (Institut für Geographie und Geoökologie, 1990b) of Leipzig's long-term development - which envisioned tertiarisation and international competition based on local restructuring for the benefit of capital. The study essentially constructed the development of the city as a 'catch-up' process within a modernisation paradigm.

In 1991 Niels Gormsen, head of the Department of City Development and Planning (DCDP), presented a similar vision for Leipzig emphasising large-scale developments (new trade fair, modernised city centre, connections to eastern Europe, a second city centre in the former site of the trade fair with university, offices, culture and shopping, museums of the trade fair, the GDR and railway history; B15, 28/11/91). Further plans included substantial investment in transport (airport, motorway, rail-freight terminal, high-speed rail connections) and in communication (digital telephone network, Leipzig's Media City project) (Stadt Leipzig, 1991). New industrial estates were developed, particularly for 'innovative industry' or environmental technologies (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e). Other key developments were in tertiary and quaternary sectors.² It was argued this modernisation did not ignore traditional elements of Leipzig's development, but sought to build on its historical position as a centre of trade, transport, publishing and science. However:

'The traditional image of the City of Leipzig which is linked to the synonyms such as 'Trade Fair City', 'Book and Music City', 'Culture Centre', 'Academic City', 'Sport City', 'Industrial location', is no guarantee for future economic and structural development as a Trade Fair location, tertiary metropolis and media city.' (Reuther and Doehler, 1994, 117)

The modernisation model locates Leipzig in a particular understanding of time, where development involves following previously established patterns from elsewhere adapted to local traditions. Leipzig is simply reclaiming its development which the GDR period disrupted, it will 'once again be' what it was (Stadt Leipzig, 1991; Süddeutsche Zeitung, 15/10/90). One of the most repeated phrases is that current developments 'set the

course for the future'. The German phrase '*die Weichen für die Zukunft stellen*'³ is a mechanical metaphor, the railway points are set for the future. Similarly mechanical metaphors are used for other elements of the modernisation model: the new trade fair will be a 'locomotive for growth' (Wohlfarth, executive of trade fair administration, Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e).

The mechanical one-way track is not accepted without reservations, and there are questions about which track to chose. Gormsen's 'vision' includes concerns about suburbanisation and the 'spectre' of loss of identity and loss of local functions in neighbourhoods (B15, 28/11/91). Among the model's proponents there is the oft-repeated wish to avoid the 'mistakes of the West' (B22, 23/1/92), thus disrupting the inevitability of the forms of the West in the modernisation time-frame. There is the possibility of learning from mistakes and the self-confidence of not having to accept western models as entirely positive. The desire to alter modernisation overlaps with alternative developments discussed in section 4.

The modernisation model also required a particular construction of Leipzig, the place, as suitable for modernisation and 'deserving' investment, linking into many arguments similar to those from the People's Building Conference (see chapter 5). Given the poor quality of much of the city's physical fabric, it would be difficult for the local government to adopt a campaign claiming Leipzig was superior to other places. Instead statements frequently stressed Leipzig's uniqueness and potential: the city's importance was as a place 'on which hopes are pinned' and as one of the 'most interesting' economic and investment locations⁴; Leipzig's city centre is 'like no other' (A33, 22/4/92). This uniqueness was reinforced by statements about Leipzig's good reputation. Mayor Lehmann-Grube said its 'degree of recognition and reputation in the world' was 'amazing', particularly because of the revolution of 1989. The problem he argued was that the reputation exceeded the substance, particularly as experienced by the local residents (LVZ, 10/4/91). However, a survey in 'Die Welt' newspaper in 1993 showed that the city was rather less well-known than was assumed by those in the East. One third of all West German residents questioned could not name anything specific about the city (Die Welt, 9/3/93). This suggests Lehmann-Grube's statement was as much for domestic consumption as for capital attraction.

Viele Wege führen nach Rom. Alle nach Leipzig.



Many roads lead to Rome. All to Leipzig.

Figure 7.1: Leipzig in a new Europe

Note: Leipzig is positioned in a 'new' Europe by using medieval trade routes.

Source: Rat der Stadt, 1991e.

Leipzig was also portrayed as an important location in space (Industrie- und Handelskammer Leipzig, 1992). Leipzig is 'at the heart of Europe', a 'European turn-table' in trade. A map published by the Economic Promotion Department (figure 7.1) places Leipzig at the centre of trade routes in Europe. The city is presented as being in competition with other cities in a Europe whose centre lies further east than would be common in other countries of the EU.

Such attractions help to argue that Leipzig should be a centre for investment because of the ways it 'helps itself'. In 1992 the city began an advertising campaign on the theme 'Leipzig is coming/ on its way'. It built on an image of a vibrant city working hard to become once again a centre of business - through the work of the council, of the 'enterprising' citizens, of investment.⁵ One could argue that this presents a city 'overcoming all the odds' of GDR problems. Leipzig follows its *Wende* role as a 'heroic' city when the people of Leipzig showed their importance in the 'historic' days of 1989 (Mayor Lehmann-Grube, Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e).

The modernisation approach to urban development in Leipzig therefore adopts many standard western practices and assumes a certain linear path of development in time. However, there are references to the disjunctures and inconsistencies which the place, Leipzig, offers to this development with attempts to avoid western mistakes. Constructions of place and space portray Leipzig as a centre of new European development and as both worthy of and working itself towards the processes of modernisation.

2.3 Differential capitalisation

Such modernisation has particular geographies. Within the city, employment and economic functions have shifted across space as well as sector. Primary sites for new developments were the city centre and a green-field axis north of the city linking the new trade fair site, airport, motorway and rail links (Schmidt, 1991). The relatively small city centre became the site of intense competition for office and commercial uses (Topfstedt, 1992; Schmidt, 1993), and because office space was severely underdeveloped property prices rose in the city centre and in adjacent areas zoned for redevelopment (Schmidt, 1994). The introduction of a land market (albeit imperfect because of ownership problems) produced



Figure 7.2: Recommended local land prices, Leipzig
Land prices, end 1992, in DM/m²

Note: Note how the designation of the areas for mixed land-use [M] or as core areas [K] raises prices considerably.
Also note the influence of the main radial roads, and of the positioning of high-price residential areas [W] in the West and South-West of the city centre and the low-priced industrial areas [G].

Source: Schmidt, 1993.

differential exchange values for property across the city (see figure 7.2). Capital interest in the urban fabric is not even and the processes of revaluation of the urban environment and of the neighbourhoods in which the five study groups are active are fundamentally affected by this new geography of exchange values:

'In the desolate inner city quarters of Leipzig processes of reprivatisation, of social differentiation and physical [...] decay overlap and aggravate each other. The influence of the market economy and private initiative seems to end one block behind the main roads.

In contrast the historical city centre and its pre 1914 extensions will be the best addresses in Leipzig. In these advantaged areas well off classes will have unlimited access to many urban consumption, cultural and communication opportunities.' (Doehler, *et al.*, 1992, 367)

Revaluation of the urban environment varies even within small areas. In Plagwitz, for example, capital's interest in the existing urban environment is low. Some factories and companies were privatised as on-going concerns, but many were closed or rationalised with a diminished workforce. The main interest was in transforming property to other uses. Tertiarisation of old factories converted them to shopping, office and leisure facilities. As with all other capital developments this was partly reinforced by city planning decisions, in this case to use the area to extend city centre functions.⁶ Land was to be used for house-building or real estate speculation and there was considerable discontent at the size of holdings which companies and individuals were able to amass (meeting of Pro Plagwitz, B28, 28/9/92).

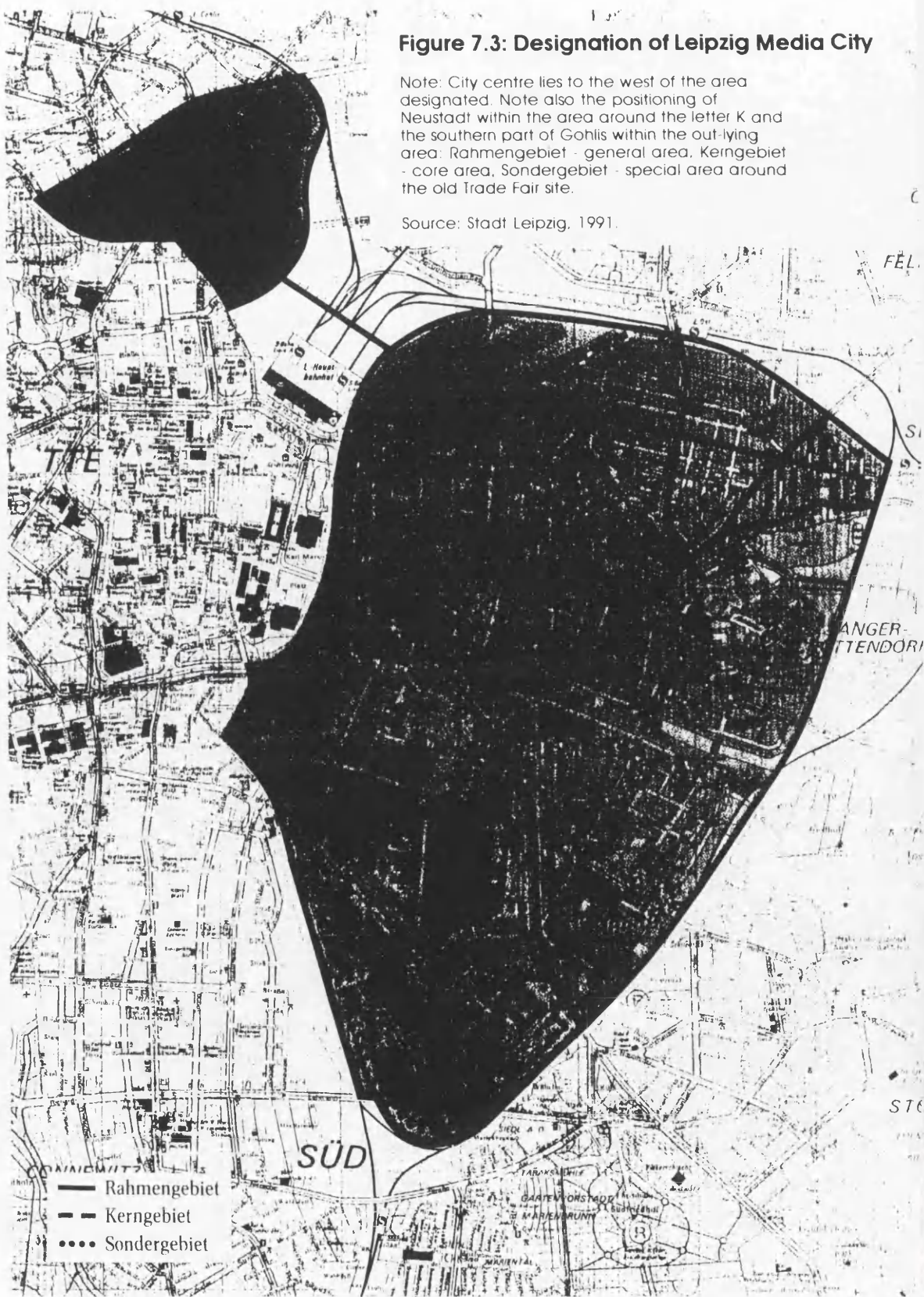
Sometimes capital was challenged by local action, but elsewhere it remained dominant, particularly in areas adjacent to the city centre which had been designated for commercial development (figure 7.3). Here, a large proportion of the local population and the buildings had been removed before 1989 in preparation for whole-sale area renewal. Those who remained found their social contacts severely disrupted. At a meeting in 1992⁷ local residents were sceptical of their ability to influence developments:

'the area is just offices and we are driven out by money. We are pushed out by investors and by quiet threats.' (local resident, B25, 16/9/92)

Figure 7.3: Designation of Leipzig Media City

Note: City centre lies to the west of the area designated. Note also the positioning of Neustadt within the area around the letter K and the southern part of Gohlis within the out-lying area. Rahmengebiet - general area, Kerngebiet - core area, Sondergebiet - special area around the old Trade Fair site.

Source: Stadt Leipzig, 1991.



'[Empty buildings] are then used for businesses. Renewal is used as the way to push up the rents. Then they legally have exorbitant rents. We're right next to the city centre. Can a local group be of any use?' (local resident B25, 16/9/92)

Again local council designation of specific areas for commercial development meant the local population had a very much reduced chance of influencing developments. In the Inner East End, one could argue disruption from GDR urban policies removed the sense of the area as a particular 'place' and so made it both more difficult for community groups to develop and to appeal for its importance. This apparently confirms Harvey's (1989) proposition that social movements are more able to control 'place' rather than 'space'. Similarly capital is more able to utilise these areas precisely because the planning process has designated them essentially as 'empty' of current meaning and value and available for development (Kazemian, 1991).

2.4 Colonisation

Such a construction of 'empty space' awaiting colonisation and subsequent creation of meaning and value is by no means limited to small parts of the city. Saxony's Minister President described East Germany as a 'wide open space for initiative and shaping places' which offered opportunities to those who found it difficult to find a niche in the West's markets,⁸ echoing nineteenth century claims for settler colonies. East Germany is, of course, not an 'empty' territory, but this does not remove the desire by some sectors of capital to create the area as such. The resistance of capital to the existing built environment sometimes takes extreme forms, such as professional arson attacks on properties where new investments were blocked by tenancies or uses, threats to existing tenants and attacks on the buildings of a village resisting removal for open cast mining (R. Richter, 1992; LVZ 18/9/91).

These experiences evoked criticism of market forces in the East German urban environment. Many observers described the processes as a loss of control and increased lawlessness: the 'Wild East' (Leipziger Blätter 20, 29). Dissatisfaction was underlined in April 1994 when a West German real estate speculator, Herr Schneider, absconded, leaving a vast array of prominent properties facing debt problems. The way the developer had

exploited the East German property boom of the early 1990s and was able to leave local companies with unpaid contracts not only affected the local economy but also, as Mayor Lehmann-Grube (a west German) argued: 'it is about the trust in our economic system' (Die Zeit, 22/4/94). Ironically, the Connewitz Alternative initiative had campaigned for self-help development and for a participative form of development. Instead the contract for social housing was given to Schneider's company. At an initiative meeting in January 1992 concerns were expressed that the socially very diverse area was under threat from the housing owners, the city housing department and 'all these Wessis'. They argued 'Connewitz should stay Connewitz and not become a noble quarter for capitalists' (B38, 28/1/92). Such distrust was justified.

Interestingly the feeling of a loss of control extends to some employees of the city administration. A council official from the Office for Economic Promotion, who had also been employed in the GDR in the city's plan fulfilment department, complained of problems with 'proper economic planning' because of the extreme lack of figures and data: 'The city has no overview of how much office space there is [...] The picture cannot be seen clearly' (B29, 14/10/92). The problem for her was that the 'market works independently of the commune' (*ibid.*), representing a fundamental shift from the ordered ideals of GDR planning. Capital's independence from planning and public administration led to complaints about the injustice of the situation: 'it was like an ambush from the West. Everyone thought that there would be so much up for grabs but that was a false calculation' (*ibid.*). Metaphors of violent attack reinforce the experience of powerlessness. Experiences with western investment are viewed negatively, with unfair competition as many companies and institutions were 'liquidated', or investors bought up large tracts of land. The official argues there are 'more promises than come to fruition'. Processes of capitalisation therefore involve disillusionment with western capital.

There are several reactions to such experiences. The first positions the East as passive. 'Capital is taking over the city' because the city is too poor to resist (Geist, 1992, Leipziger Blätter, 21). It is subject to the 'arrogance of western investors' and the 'triumph of a brave new Shopping-World' (Böhme, *ibid.*). This 'victim' position also involved a rejection of any commonalities between the processes in East Germany and other

experiences in the west of deindustrialisation or unemployment. At a group discussion with the team developing the Plagwitz Industrial Museum project (B33, 26/4/93) I suggested certain parallels between economic changes in Leipzig and in the west of Scotland. This was swiftly rejected by those present who argued I did not understand the East German situation. The colonisation narrative argues that 'another economic system was forced on us', that the 'competition consciously was made bankrupt here by western firms' and 'was systematically razed to the ground' (*ibid.*). This narrative of being tricked by the promises of the West positions the East as an innocent victim of a take-over by the 'occupying force of the FRG' (*ibid.*). Knowing now the negative effects of the restructuring they say they realise the advantages of the GDR, including the 'life-long security' which it offered. Such statements emerge from the context of the experiences of those making them. All were formerly academics who had lost their jobs and were now only employed on short-term job-creation measures.

A second and related reaction is a readiness to question the 'system' of the market economy as such and not to view problems as an aberration within the system. For many the experience of another system of economic and social organisation means that problems are regarded more quickly as calling the market economy into question.

Others however give a certain ironic reaction, arguing that 'the East of Germany is a sales colony of the brothers and sisters in the West' but that the east Germans who are 'supposedly free and independent citizens' accept this and are themselves 'consumption slaves' (C. Richter, 1992). This disrupts the positioning of the East as victim and demands independent consideration of the East's actions in the apparent 'colonisation'. This positions the East as equally responsible for change.

However, as Christ and Neubauer (1991) argue, the experience of colonisation is not 'just [*sic*] a subjective impression' in the East but relates to 'objective' conditions such as ownership and control of property and businesses. What convinces Christ and Neubauer that reunification is a colonisation process is the assumption from the West that western thought processes and forms of action will be internalised in the East. The following section explores these relations in the case of the transformation of the housing system.

3 Housing tenures in transformation: questioning geographies of ownership

Property relations, the social, economic and power relations of ownership and control of land and property, have not been a particularly strong focus in geographical research, and often remain the preserve of political theorists, whether liberal or Marxist (Hayek, 1963; McPherson, 1973). There are exceptions, particularly in the work of David Harvey (1973) where he differentiated between the use and value characteristics of land and property for different interests (landlords, owner-occupiers, tenants, developers, and so on). More often, though, ownership and tenure are treated as explanatory categories rather than questioned in their assumptions. This is particularly curious since, aside from state citizenship, ownership and tenure is one of the most common relations recognised in law and in everyday practice between people and particular spaces and places. Such limited consideration suggests that these relations are so naturalised that it is only when legal rights and normative behaviour are challenged, by alternative land-holding or property-holding systems, or by other claims for the relation between people and property, such as Australian Aboriginal land campaigns (Huggins *et al.*, 1995) that normative assumptions are questioned.

Housing tenure and property relations have changed in many western countries, particularly through the 'commodification' of the housing stock (Adams, 1987) which substitutes market provision for state provision. Such developments have been identified as part of what Krätke (1991) calls the 'capitalisation' of land and property in the move to both neo-Fordist and post-Fordist forms of economic development (Harvey, 1989; Leborgne and Lipietz, 1990). In the housing sector particularly this is accompanied by the transformation of state involvement from direct provision to privatisation and entrepreneurial management within the public sector (Johnston, 1993), whether in Britain, Sweden (Agren, 1995), Germany (Schubert, forthcoming) or elsewhere.

These changes all occur within the capitalist system. In contrast privatisation of ownership and commodification of the built environment in eastern Europe challenge the assumptions and problematics of different ownership systems, and tensions are created in transformation

of one form to another. Western models are faced not only with their Cold War 'other' but with attempts to (re)create western forms, often from first principles. While many places find themselves, and indeed promote themselves as, the focus of international investment and speculation interest is more often in commercial property development and less in domestic housing investment (Musil, 1993; Judge, 1995; Sykora, 1995). In an attempt to create such markets and reduce state subsidy, almost all governments opted for housing policies combining firstly privatisation, either return to former owners, sale at reduced rates to sitting tenants, or sales to third parties with, secondly, marketisation, introducing market-led rent levels and a land market (Hegedüs and Tosics, 1992). While issues of ownership, property and tenancy are in themselves significant for urban change and improving the housing stock in eastern Germany, they also play an integral role in the (re-) introduction of a capitalist economy by restructuring the geographies of ownership and control of the built environment.

Differential changes in the use and value of land and property affect the legitimacy of claims to control or 'own' places either legally or morally. The actual processes by which transformation is implemented, and the assumptions about normative actions by citizens, as residents or owners or both, fundamentally alter the relations between people and places. While such issues are common across eastern Europe, German reunification added a unique dimension as East German residents and their 'place(s)' acceded to the already established political-legal system of western Germany.

3.1 Privatisation and marketisation - processes and difficulties

Issues of ownership and the introduction of a market-economy were key features of the transformation from GDR to united German state. There were discussions in the GDR Volkskammer after the March 1990 elections about the nature of such a change. Many forecast serious problems. Ibrahim Böhme (SPD-GDR) warned of a 'latent civil war' because of the ownership laws which would 'rob people of the whole understanding of their existence' (LVZ, 7/5/90). Similarly Bündnis 90/Greens argued that the plans would be the 'expropriation of the people [*Volksenteignung*] by

state treaty' (LVZ, 16/5/90). However, in the end the arguments by de Maziere (CDU-GDR) and others failed to convince and were rejected as they 'would not fit at all with the picture of the future all-German economy' (Lambsdorff, FDP - West; LVZ, 2/5/90).

The basis for this all-German market economy was laid with German Economic, Monetary and Social Union and privatisation of state property and introduction of market-led pricing (Pilz and Ortwein, 1992). Increasing private property and introducing a land market was central to a policy which aimed to create a unified legal and ideological system of property relations. For housing, as all other property, priority was given to returning property to former owners or their heirs (Osmond, 1992). To promote private ownership and further encourage private sector investment, state property was also to be sold to the private sector. Introduction of market prices meant removing direct state subsidies and raising rents gradually to market-set levels and removing state control except that to curb exorbitant rents. The key executors of all these housing policies were local authorities although the legislation and substantial funding packages came from national and regional governments.

Reunification brought major changes in the significance attached to ownership of property and in the promotion of particular tenure types. Existing owner-occupied housing was largely unaffected, although some faced prior claims to ownership. The large rented sectors were more seriously affected. In privately rented housing the relationship between owner and property, and between owner and tenants, shifted to benefit the legal rights and claims of the owner, and in publicly-rented housing changes have been most severe and most uncertain.

3.1.1 Property privatisation

Whether it be land or housing, the federal government has consistently confirmed the priority of returning property in kind and only giving financial compensation as a last resort. This has an ideological basis in priorities given to private property, a legal basis in rightful claims of previous owners and a pragmatic basis in the need to mobilise private capital to renovate the housing stock and to reduce public sector costs. Previous owners were defined as those dispossessed between 1933 and

1945 and those who had lost or left behind their property after 1949. The expropriations of 1945 to 1949 were deemed legal and irreversible as they took place under a recognised legal framework. Overall housing policy is consistent with West German policies during the 1980s which sought to increase the role of the market and to reduce the role of the public sector (state and charitable housing trusts) in housing provision (Krummacher, 1992).

In practice, however, the privatisation of property has proved one of the major blocks on urban renewal and housing improvement for the often long-suffering tenants. This is despite a ruling to allow productive investments priority over ownership because this failed to include housing and many other 'non-productive' social investments.⁹ East German local government was ill-equipped to deal with the volume of claims. By May 1992 1.3 million claims for returning housing had been lodged (Pilz and Ortwein, 1992) and in Leipzig claims covered 95% of the pre-1948 publicly-owned housing.¹⁰ Processing this volume of claims has proved time-consuming and because German inheritance law operates according to the Napoleonic Code, dividing inheritance between heirs, all heirs must come to an agreement about the fate of their inheritance. A further complication is that land and property registers largely ceased to exist after about 1952 in the GDR since the state did not anticipate returning property to former owners in the future. By September 1993, therefore, Leipzig's office had only processed around 7000 of the 55 000 claims (LVZ, 29/9/93), or 12.7% of claims, a figure which is particularly low, reflecting the extra complexities and the volume of the task in older urban areas where properties may have multiple claimants because of successive expropriations.

The difficulties of returning property have forced periods of inactivity in housing improvement since 1990. Following the neglect of the GDR period, unification brought not the hoped for general improvement in housing, but brought improvement to some buildings, where ownership is clear, and a further decline for many others. Local authorities have responsibility for property as yet unreturned, but since new-old owners are not legally required to pay for work carried out after unification without their consent most local authorities cannot afford to spend their limited resources on re-claimed housing. At the same time, prospective new owners cannot invest until claims are legally established. Since they

are primarily for pre-1945 properties this again affects renovation of older housing stock, precisely those neglected by GDR policies.

National, regional and ostensibly local council policy is not only to return property where former owners claim it but also to privatise all housing not required to cover the social sector. In Leipzig, although there have been tenant buy-outs, success has been hampered by uncertainty of ownership (two-thirds of the 2700 applications for tenant buy-outs up to April 1992 had return claims on them; LVZ, 29/4/92) and by tenants' lack of capital reserves (Pilz and Ortwein, 1992). Sales are relatively simple in the newer housing where public ownership is established, but these buildings make poorer investments because of the expense of structural renovations in the pre-fabricated buildings.

Housing remaining in the social-rented sector without claims for privatisation also faces difficulties. For example, Leipzig's local housing authority, the LWB, controlled approximately 135 000 flats in December 1990 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c). Like other authorities it inherited massive problems from its GDR predecessor. Debts were high, staffing levels poor and knowledge of FRG procedures understandably low. Severe financial problems meant that by 1993 the LWB only had funds for urgent repairs and the LWB chief executive declared 'the decay cannot be stopped'. The problems were aggravated by the poor administration of the LWB which led it to the edge of bankruptcy in mid-1992 and the failure of a subsequent enquiry in the city to look beyond the immediate management to broader issues of the systematic problems of such an enterprise and the policies of the city in relation to social housing (Reuther and Doehler, 1994).

3.1.2 Housing finance

Of course not only ownership changes affect the capacity of the new forms of ownership to improve the housing stock. In the GDR, as in other eastern European countries, there was a general acceptance among the population that rent levels would have to increase to allow housing to be improved (Mandic, 1994). Federal legislation therefore increased rents in both public and private sectors and reduced housing subsidies (Pilz and Ortwein, 1992). A series of increases up to the end of 1995 aimed to bring private sector rents up to market levels, subject only to legislation

curbing exorbitant rents, and to increase rents in the social rented sector to cover costs. To cushion the social impacts of these changes, housing benefit was introduced. Between the end of 1990 and February 1993, rent and housing costs rose 420% in East Germany, against a 30% increase in overall living costs (Leipziger Wirtschaft, 1993).

Despite these increases, the economics of housing renovation remain problematic because of the extent of past neglect which makes substantial structural repairs necessary on most properties. Restoration costs cannot be added to the rent levels by law, so the economics of simple restoration are poor. In contrast any 'modernisation' (improving accommodation) can be added to rent levels at 11% per annum, making modernisation more attractive for landlords, but severely affecting rent levels for tenants. State policies for housing improvement have aimed to encourage private investment by leveraging private sector investments with public sector loans and grants. However, since these are often tied to guaranteed cost-level rents for a particular time period (typically 15 years), not all owners are prepared to involve themselves in these arrangements. One of the major problems has therefore been the inability of existing West German models to deal with the requirement for social housing.

Even within the state sector (or the city-controlled sector) there have been strong tensions between the SPD-led city council and the CDU-majority Saxony government which has responsibility for developing state programmes to promote housing. Saxony's priorities lie in construction for owner-occupation while there are also programmes for social housing (see table 7.1). At the same time the Saxony government criticises the local council in Leipzig for not implementing the programmes correctly. The problem of the very size of the LWB and the inadequacies of its predecessor's records meant that at the first rent increase around half of all calculations were incorrect and another quarter received no bills at all (LVZ, 14/11/91).

The other pressure on housing is to convert it to commercial land-uses, particularly in prime locations, because of the general shortage of commercial and office property (Schmidt, 1993). High financial returns mean that many false or speculative claims were made for property or owners were offered high prices for sales to third parties. Ironically, however, the uncertainties of property ownership may have helped to

Table 7.1 : Federal and regional government housing programmes, 1990-1993.

PROGRAMME	Origin of programme	Funding	Eligible property	Eligible applicants	Effects on (a) rents and (b) ownership
Urban renewal	Land of Saxony programme for urban renewal	Federal, regional and local government jointly funding each project in form of grants	Designated urban renewal areas and preservation areas	Local authorities either for themselves or for those with property in the areas	(a) rents limited and city housing authority has placement right (b) none
Securing housing	Land Saxony programme from 29/9/92 for securing residential buildings for urgent structural repairs (roof, facade, etc.)	Land Saxony (DM 17.8m) to December 1992) and local government (DM 8.9m)	Areas in process of being designated as urban renewal areas	Owners via the local authority	(a) (Indirectly costs are kept slightly lower as the overall stock of flats is maintained) (b) None
Private rental programme	(a) Credit agency for reconstruction (KfW), federal programmes for promoting building and renewal of rented housing (b) Land Saxony programme for 1993 for same purpose	(a) Interest free five year loans and thereafter low rates of interest (b) Saxon Reconstruction Bank, Land government and 15% owners. Reduced interest loans (DM 1.570m for 1993)	Particularly poorer quality housing (building quality categories 3 and 4) but can be used for -maintenance and modernisation -reclaiming (from an uninhabited building) -new construction and conversion of rented housing	Especially owners in designated urban renewal areas	(a) Rent restrictions, limits on the size of flats and on the income of the families to be housed there (b) None
Privatisation of local authority housing	Part of the Land Saxony's state housing programme	Saxon Reconstruction Bank. Reduced rate loans, maximum DM 1500 per m ² of living space	Housing currently owned by local authority and with proof that there are no property claims	Tenants	(a) No direct effect (b) Transfer to private sector
Promotion of owner-occupied building	Part of Land Saxony's state housing programme	Saxon Reconstruction Bank. Tax reductions, low interest loans over 15 years.	n.a.	All citizens	(a) None (b) Increases owner-occupied sector
Housing benefit	Subsidy legislated by federal government for payment of rent to tenants with a low income	Rent subsidies	All rented property	All households with low incomes	(a) Does not reduce rents, effectively a rent subsidy to owners (b) None
Privately financed renovation of rented property	No government or public sector involvement	Private finance	All property with clear ownership	Owners	(a) Rent increases and tenancy may change (b) None

prevent some of the most extreme forms of speculation at the time when local government land-use controls were not yet fully developed.

3.2 Tenancy and housing changes

What then of the geographies of ownership in transformation? Clearly there has been a crucial shift in the relations between many people and their homes and between residents and the urban environment as a whole. Federal and regional government (in Leipzig's case both Christian Democrat controlled) prioritise the creation of private property and particularly of owner-occupation. It is projected as a form of 'secure and independent' tenure and 'as much a part of democracy as free elections' (Sächsisches Staatsministerium des Innern, 1993). Private property therefore links the country's political form and its economic and social relations and as such this adopts the principles of liberal theorists such as Hayek. Tenancy as a form of housing supply, promoted in the GDR as the 'solution' to housing problems, is now devalued by the state, particularly in the social-rented sector.

Changes in ownership and property can be grouped in three main complexes relating to market concepts of property and land values, control and ownership, based around issues of political, legal, moral and financial legitimacy of control, and increased heterogeneity of experiences with divergence between places, social groups and individuals. Here they are addressed through two themes, namely the changed relation to the urban environment and the assumptions around the citizenship of tenants and their position in the new state form.

3.2.1 Relation to the urban environment

In the specific forms adopted in the property policies of German reunification, the east German urban environment and housing particularly has become increasingly subject to externally determined capital accumulation processes and to ownership transfers over which residents have no control, particularly since much is now owned by west German companies and individuals. Not only is the value of urban property changed qualitatively as well as quantitatively, but this change also represents a shift in control over the urban environment. It is easy to forget the extent to which local residents had little control over the

urban environment in the GDR. Indeed Grésillon (1991) argued that the removal of opportunities for urban citizenship, based on property, local politics and the opportunity for individual and collective action was manifested in the urban-based revolutions of 1989. However, post-reunification, control is differentially established.

As ownership patterns have diversified so too have property exchange values. In turn the extent to which housing has improved is also increasingly diversified. Overall levels of change showed no improvement in the standards of Leipzig's housing from 1990 to early 1993, so given the noticeable improvements in many privatised properties, others will have suffered serious decline. However, in demands for improvements, residents' claims to legitimate concerns based on occupancy and on a wider relations to place are countered by legal claims to ownership of particular territories.

The reinstatement of private ownership, particularly in the form of restoration of property to previous owners who lost their property in another state system, fundamentally affects claims to 'moral ownership' of the places where properties are located and which they constitute. After 1990 property owners enjoy *de facto* priority in local development. This situation is complicated by urban renewal legislation, similarly 'imported' from western Germany, which allows for social considerations and planning controls on land-use and sales and the promotion of particular social goals in designated urban renewal areas but not outside them. In such designated areas (the city effectively becomes divided into areas where such intervention is legally possible and those where it is not), the legislation gives 'those affected' (*Betroffenen*) the right to be consulted. Such demands to be consulted (chapter 6) are based on local knowledge, citizenship and the presence of residency. However, the legal right to be consulted extends not only to residents but to public sector bodies and principally to the owners. A notable trend after initial enthusiasm for citizen involvement in urban renewal decisions is the retreat of city planners to argue that owners had the prime decision in such change (see also Rada, 1991, on developments in Berlin):

'I have to say this clearly to everyone here, the City Urban Renewal Office [URO] will not come along and repair all the houses for the people who live here. That is **not** its role and I would really like to

emphasise this because again and again we get questions, "when is it my turn?" [...] The URO can make offers to support the building owners in renewing their buildings.' (Planning official, public meeting, A25, 26/9/92)

And this refusal is firmly related to a system-change from socialism to capitalism:

'We [URO] cannot act as if there were no claims for returning property, no unclear ownership, no private owners. [...] We cannot come along and act as if we were still in socialism and say, "well I'll just alter this flat."' (Planning official, public meeting, A36, 20/4/93)

In the shift to a capitalist system as economic rents are introduced, previously insignificant mismatches between house size and household income present problems. The lack of a housing market and immobility in the local authority housing sector mean alternatives are difficult to find. Price-led sorting of the population produces new forms of urban segregation, disrupting existing local communities. Particular areas around Leipzig's city centre, depending on the standard of the areas, face gentrification pressures (Waldstraßenviertel), pressures from the expanding city centre (part of Gohlis) and tendencies towards slum creation (Neustädter Markt). Again precisely the areas neglected in the GDR face either further neglect or the disruption of existing populations.

Heterogenisation of living conditions is reflected in the divergence of ownership and tenancy relations and in increasing uncertainty in the relation between the resident and the local area. This heterogenisation is particularly related to the effective lottery of the return of property and thus the transfer of many tenancies from the public to the private sector. Tenants have no choice of landlord or tenancy status although legal guarantees protect leases from before reunification. The subordination of tenancy rights to ownership is entirely consistent with the new prioritisation of ownership as the most-favoured relation between the individual and housing. It is effectively possible (and often happens) that the relation between individual or household and their home is altered with no choice being made. This situation establishes tenants as essentially passive recipients of change rather than offering them the control over the urban environment which Grésillon argued they sought.

Of equal importance is the increased uncertainty. While political influence by local residents in the GDR was limited, there was certainty that housing was affordable and leases permanent. Now there is no guarantee that a household can afford their home or remain in it. Nor is there any guarantee that a house will be repaired in the near future or a mechanism by which active tenants can substitute their own labour or capital if the owner is still not known.

3.2.2 Citizenship - normative action by tenants in a market economy

For tenants therefore the period after reunification has been one of increased costs and uncertainty. In this situation, the normative expectation is that the legal system allocates rights and responsibilities to tenants and owners. The public administration system is essentially designed to ensure these rights and duties are kept and to offer some extra mechanisms by which housing and local areas can be improved. However, such programmes are only offered to owners, who cannot be forced to accept public funding. Emphasis is then placed on the tenant to proceed with a legal case if owners neglect their duties or act illegally (forcing a tenant to leave, demanding unreasonable rents, or the like). Although responsible for maintenance, there is effectively no obligation on owners to renovate properties nor is there restriction on the extent to which buildings can be modernised, unless tenants take legal action. West German law is based on an active tenant instigating legal proceedings on such issues and being well enough informed to resist actions by unsympathetic landlords. As one city official said at a public meeting about problems of displacement of tenants from their inner city housing, 'you have to stand firm [...] you should accept the need for court proceedings [...] rather than have modernisation carried out and afterwards you cannot pay the rent and your lease is terminated because of rent arrears' (Public meeting, A44, 27/4/93).

However, tenants' use of the legal system to defend their tenancies is something which, in the case of eastern Germany, does not operate as it is assumed it will. For citizen groups, for example, one of the first problems was that of becoming acquainted with the planning legislation of the reunited Germany. Not only was this new law important and complex, but in fact the way of dealing with the administration through the rule of law was unknown in the GDR, 'because the GDR was in principle a law-free

space, where a legal culture was to the greatest extent unknown' (IBIS, 1990, 1).

A study by Blacksell (1995) has shown how the structural difficulties of access to legal representation are considerably worse than in the West. Even in terms of access to legal representation, only 10% of Germany's lawyers are working in the new federal states in eastern Germany and of these over 70% work in Berlin. This leaves only 2.5% of the country's lawyers working in an area which covers 18% of the population. Secondly, tenants are generally uninformed or unsure of their rights and are unwilling to take court action (Leipzig Tenant's Association, A44, 20/4/93). Consequently owners experience few pressures to renovate properties, especially when it is financially unattractive. This has provided fertile ground for illegal activities: threats and intimidation to remove tenants to allow changes in use; unauthorised changes of use; black market rental arrangements, and so on. Many tenants therefore fear an ownership system in which they view themselves as having little or no influence. Consequently, they acquiesce in the actions of landlords:

'[The tenants] are afraid now of saying something, especially in privately rented housing. If they were to go to the landlord and say "you have to do this" then they would say to get lost. They are afraid that the landlord would look for some reason or other and then they would face the alternative of accepting everything the landlord does or moving out to the car park. [...] The landlord says "what will be done is what I want, not what you want."' (Member, BV Neustädter Markt, A35, 11/5/93)

Such fears are well-founded in some cases and the post-reunification legislation certainly shifts the balance of power in favour of the landlords. However, the apparent unwillingness to attempt to control this power suggests something more, namely that East German tenants often believe the 'false mirroring' of the Cold War (Borneman, 1992) which from the GDR view stressed the absolute power of the forces of capital in the West. Some now believe the more draconian owners' actions are parts of the western system which cannot be altered (such as through challenges in the courts and using tenants organisations).

These experiences affect whether residents are willing actively to influence the development of their area. For many residents rents have increased dramatically while their own housing conditions have remained unchanged, or even deteriorated. Several local activists reported that a common reaction was to refuse to make any more effort in improving the local area:

'It's a real problem, if you go and ask people to do something. They say "why should I? I used to pay 30 deutschemarks, now I pay 300, so what do I care about the dirt. The rats can eat me for all I care."
(Member, Pro Plagwitz, A3, 11/11/91)

Such a reaction effectively disrupts assumptions that if people are paying more, they will actively pursue improved conditions. This resignation is again reinforced by fear that activism could bring a negative response from landlords.

The citizen action groups are therefore involved in campaigning, not on the basis of property values but because of their position as tenants, attempting to establish claims to legitimate demands on a basis other than property ownership. The heterogenisation of experiences, issues of control and ownership simultaneously give rise to agendas for local action and undermine the capacity of residents to be active. The forms in which changes were implemented offered some resistance to the normative forces of these changes (see section 4). Notably, citizen initiatives claim alternative versions of 'ownership' and control of place based around the importance of residency and experience of place, of being present. They reject the dominance accorded to western notions of legal ownership as the primary control and show the tensions between changed use and value of property for different groups. At the same time, many of the manifestations of the change to a western ownership system, in particular increased uncertainty, loss of security, divergences in housing conditions and disruption of existing populations have undermined the acceptance of the new forms. However, the nature of German reunification in the legacy of the Cold War leads many residents to accept such changes as either necessary or system-determined rather than particular manifestations of a general system which could be challenged. In spite of, or perhaps precisely because of this, a significant

element of local activism in Leipzig was concerned with proposing alternatives and modifications to this system.

4 Contesting developments for Leipzig - alternative models

Chapter 6 showed how local agendas of neighbourhood change developed within a framework of careful renewal and participation. This section explores how the framework was carried forward from the *Wende* to reunification by the actions of particular groups at the city scale in Leipzig. In November 1990 a city-wide exhibition on urban renewal held in the town hall represented the first post-reunification attempt to find local specificities for new urban planning ideas from the *Wende*. Significantly, this exhibition ran in parallel with a very professional exhibition examining forty years of urban renewal in the FRG. These parallel exhibitions pointed to the tensions and commonalities between western expert knowledge and attempts to negotiate locally developed plans. This section illustrates, firstly, that the framework of careful renewal and participation did not simply continue by itself after reunification but was promoted and contested by particular groups, organisations and individuals, and, secondly, that such a framework was often in tension with other models of city development.

4.1 The establishment of 'careful renewal' as a key local planning discourse

There were two main groupings of city-wide initiatives. The first developed from those most active in the People's Building Conference in the 'Pro Leipzig' group and related initiatives (section 4.1.1). The second involves ecologically oriented groups (section 4.1.2). Section 4.1.3 explores how they developed alliances and section 4.2 examines how they and the city council promoted participation in the planning process.

4.1.1 Historical-cultural concerns

The first grouping involved some initiatives focussing on architecture and planning which emphasised historical and cultural issues. They had considerable overlap of membership and key individuals¹¹ (Pro Leipzig representative, A24, 21/9/92), most of whom were architects, planners, artists and academics. Pro Leipzig developed from the Initiative of Leipzig

Architects which promoted the People's Building Conference. Many of its key members 'sit in important posts in the city' in the planning committee, or as renewal agents for particular areas (Pro Leipzig representative, A24, 21/9/92). Often prominent individuals, when they speak, 'they do not speak so much for Pro Leipzig' as in their individual capacity as concerned citizens (*ibid.*).

Despite their members' expertise, Pro Leipzig and related groups positioned themselves firmly in the tradition of the civic movement. Pro Leipzig is an 'initiative' of 'Leipzig citizens who have been engaged in the city for years' which aims to 'make the city conscious of its unmistakable values' and to 'keep what is valuable and develop new ideas'.¹² However, the group also has a strongly didactic project: Pro Leipzig aims to undertake a series of academic studies and projects to document the city's development. The disjuncture between self-positioning and the relation to the citizens is reminiscent of the positioning of expert knowledge at the People's Building Conference.¹³ There are other continuities in attention to the design of the city, its identity and uniqueness, the need for connections to the culture and history of the city, and metaphors of the city as organism, now often as a female body.¹⁴

Much of the discourse employed parallels the repertoire arguments of the citizen associations, suggesting a standard phraseology coursing around the trope of 'careful renewal'. This involves a desire to 'heal' and to 'protect' areas, or the city as a whole from new threats. The organic-based metaphors stand in some tension to the other aims of these groups, which set them apart more from the tropes adopted by neighbourhood citizen initiatives. They employ, not unsurprisingly, architectural and design terms, calling for a restoration of the structure of the city, the completion of its contours so that it is 'readable', comprehensible, and small-scale. The desire to restore completeness parallels a desire for a re-appropriation of the urban landscape through a 'readable' structure. In this way, they argue, identity of the city is re-established and the ability of residents to identify with the city improved.¹⁵

These groups have been largely successful in creating forums to discuss their aims and to some extent in having the agendas adopted by the city. Planning forums were developed in partnership with the city administration and senior council officials, and an economic development

brochure argues that one important element of the planning is housing renewal, 'particularly in the architecturally valuable areas' (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e). The city's aim is to keep Leipzig's character using careful renewal and maintaining Leipzig's identity and restoring its 'proud traditions' (95-97). Local actions and demands are thereby to some extent appropriated to promote the city for incoming capital investment.¹⁶

As well as professional influence, the groups promoted public debates beyond planning circles. A large public meeting expressed concerns that the city centre 'could become a collection of banks and hotels and department stores' and arguments that the city centre should be about 'more than money' (LVZ, 12/13/1/91). Leipzig should be protected from 'pure real estate sales and speculation' (LVZ, 21/1/91). There were appeals to the tropes of threat, identity and personification which were established as a form of argument around the People's Building Conference: 'the city will lose its face' (LVZ, 10/1/91). Relocating the Trade Fair was criticised on ecological and city development grounds, but much criticism was about the decision-making process. Pro Leipzig called for a wider debate and criticised the 'steam-roller methods in the city administration' (LVZ, 1/10/91). Whether either public debate was successful is debatable. The Trade Fair was relocated and the draw of capital to the city centre remained. However, a developer whose plans for converting a historic building in the city centre were highly criticised by Pro Leipzig and other architectural specialists felt it necessary to host a public exhibition to emphasise that consultation had taken place and to correct the 'false conclusions' of opponents, suggesting investors were aware of the strength of local arguments.

4.1.2 Environmental concerns

Alongside these historical-cultural concerns, other groups pushed for ecological urban renewal. The Association for Ecological Building (VöB) suggested traffic control, a more polycentric but compact city structure, ecological building techniques, and reductions in pollution.¹⁷ Adopting such measures in the most severely affected areas, such as Connewitz or Neustädter Markt, would produce 'ecologically healthy islands in the urban organism' (Chair of VöB in Elsässer, 1991). Their model involved social and democratic issues too as it was to be cost-neutral to existing residents and required early citizen involvement and independent advice

for all involved 'as one of the most important democratic regulative processes'. In this VöB argued they were questioning GDR developments and current modernisation (*ibid.*).

The most visible vehicle for these arguments and evidence of co-operation with the city and the official recognition of such ideas was a second exhibition held in November 1991 entitled 'Lebensraum - ecological urban renewal'. A joint initiative between VöB, EcoLion and the city administration, it attracted extensive press coverage and had around 10,000 visitors in three weeks (LVZ, 13/11/91). It resulted in an in-principle decision by the city council to develop ecological renewal plans. At the exhibition both the city and EcoLion, VöB and a related group, the Association for Ecological Nutrition (GöE), presented their concepts for urban development,¹⁸ which implicitly and explicitly involve criticism of the modernisation model. Despite declarations of support for developing local neighbourhoods, VöB could not find a single city council plan for a neighbourhood centre to exhibit and criticised Gormsen for having promoted the city centre at the expense of the local centres: 'That is dangerous because then these different things act as a pull towards the city centre and the city will lose its balance even more.' (Chair of VöB, A4, 19/11/91). The groups argue that instead there must be 'fantasy'¹⁹ and new ideas to find a different form of development:

'Sensible and healthy city structures are those [...] of urban balance. That means small-scale, managable, for sociological or social-psychological reasons, for urban planning reasons, for traffic reasons - [...] a place of short distances.' (Chair of VöB, A4, 19/11/91)

'a city of managable size, divided in harmoniously formed neighbourhoods where living, working, and recreation, environment and nature grow together as a unity and the socially weaker people - elderly, disabled and children - quite simply are part of it.' (C. Richter, chair of GöE, 1992, 12)

These overlap with statements from the historical-cultural groups, although there is less evidence of concern for architecture *per se* or for identity and historical values and more concern with ecological and social issues. The groups stress the 'great chance' (A4, 19/11/91) which the current situation in Leipzig (and East Germany) presents:

'the key thing is to use the existing historical chance for ecological development. That means to establish principles, now, to set the points now²⁰ in a very fundamental way and not to waste the chance now.' (Representative of EcoLion, A6, 19/11/91)

The situation is an 'attraction', is 'exciting' and offers the opportunity to avoid the 'wrong' type of development and the losses of urban flexibility which the West has experienced (A5, 25/11/91). The groups argue that ecological renewal is the 'most complex view of the city', 'not just window-dressing' added to economic, social and employment issues but a way of balancing them all (*ibid.*). That such developments are political is clear because 'without priorities, without political will there will be no healthy city in the future' (chair of VöB, in Elsässer, 1991). Ecological renewal will provide 'healthy' development for city and residents and can be achieved by using the 'chance' or 'free space' which the legacy of the GDR has left in the East for choosing an alternative form of development. This is not necessarily an anti-modernisation or an anti-western view. In fact, representatives of VöB and EcoLion argue that the ideas come from western experiences of dealing with urban problems (A4, 19/11/91). Potential solutions come from an 'international' recognition that there have to be alternative models of development. Indeed several criticised east German planners for failing to adopt new, progressive western ideas:

'What I would occasionally charge some people from the administration here with is that they spent their trips abroad sunning themselves on an island somewhere instead of taking a trip around to see what sorts of things there are in the world, not just in the Bundesrepublik [i.e. in the West]. It is really shocking how narrow the views have remained here. I wouldn't have thought that some people have kept very .. eh backwards-looking ideas of planning. [...] With ideas from the 60s.' (Chair of VöB, A4, 19/11/91)

VöB in contrast had developed contacts to a range of projects in other cities (Berlin, Hanover, Stuttgart and Basel). Because of very different conditions, their ideas could not simply be adopted in the East. In addition, the group 'sometimes had difficulties getting recognised by west German groups' (*ibid.*). This misrecognition - by East German planners of western

planning, and by West German action groups of the East German groups - suggests certain continuities in Borneman's (1992) 'false mirroring'.

Despite such criticisms, these groups all worked with the city administration and local politicians to promote this particular model of urban development. EcoLion was fortunate in being an officially recognised environmental organisation and as such had the right to be consulted or give position statements on planning applications and to produce other documents (in Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992). The extent to which this occurred varied with the council's willingness to enter into debate and the presence of sympathetic individuals in the administration. Where there were people 'from the civic movement' in new posts there were better contacts. Success also depended on EcoLion's own actions. The best results came when it 'went on the offensive' or 'grasped the initiative', particularly if it was an issue which the city administration had not considered itself:²¹

'then we're one step ahead. It is always more difficult when we, when we are reacting to plans and say "we don't want that" [...] But at the moment we have the opportunity, the situation that we can **often** go on the offensive and occupy many fields which are as yet unoccupied. [...] I think it is fundamentally our chance that at the moment particular statutes and ordinances or principles are being established, to look to see how things stand.' (EcoLion representative, A6, 19/11/91)

VöB had close ties to the administration with a professional advisory committee comprising key individuals, such as Gormsen (DCDP), representatives from the university, the URO, the Environmental Office and regional administration. Although varied, contacts were generally met with 'an extremely open approach' (A4, 19/11/91). VöB, EcoLion²² and the Association for Ecological Nutrition (GöE) were also involved in planning workshops run by the DCDP in summer and autumn 1991²³ and not simply in protest or lobbying actions. Their influence followed not only from their ability to convince the city council of the 'moral' correctness of their approach within the traditions of the civic movement but also from their achievement of specialist knowledge.

4.1.3 Alliance building

Despite apparent common cause, there was, at least initially, some tension between the environmental groups and Pro Leipzig. The chair of VöB argued in late 1991 that while the functions which Pro Leipzig fulfilled were useful, their attempt to establish themselves as a co-ordination office for the citizen associations was not appreciated:

'it's no secret [...] Their aim in itself is very good but they do it in a very, eh, stupid way [...] because they set themselves up as the representative of the citizen initiatives. [...] And that can be an unbearable situation if someone sets themselves up and says "from now on I will represent your interests and if you want to say something now then you have to ask me first" without even having been elected first.' (A4, 19/11/91)

Nevertheless, he argued contact was important and by 1992 they were collaborating with Pro Leipzig on a third exhibition (Pro Leipzig, EcoLion and VöB). Despite divergent interests, a range of city-level organisations were working towards similar, if not identical, goals for the city. There was even a certain overlap of imagery used. The environmental groups also used extended organic metaphors. The irony of having an exhibition entitled 'Lebensraum' and with so many contributions to it based around metaphors of the city and its people as part of an organic whole seemed to go largely uncommented. However, I would suggest that the trope ties in directly to a common theme of existential threats, health problems because of pollution and threats of loss and disruption. The metaphors of 'fighting', and 'occupying fields' used by the EcoLion representative are understandable as part of the same complex.

That the city administration was prepared to be closely linked in public with the exhibitions and the groups suggests perhaps a relative openness to debate and new ideas. Mayor Lehmann-Grube in the preface to the Lebensraum exhibition catalogue wrote: 'may this exhibition contribute to the opening of comprehensive public debate about the future development of Leipzig' (in Elsässer, 1991, i).

4.2 Citizen involvement

What is curious, however, is the extent to which such a 'public debate' had not explicitly involved the wider public. Despite large attendances, several of those involved were not content with the *Lebensraum* exhibition. It was too 'expert-oriented' (representative of GöE, A5, 25/11/91), so a new exhibition was planned for the following year:

'The question of that exhibition [*Lebensraum*] was, eh, how does the city see future development, that is, the city administration, the VöB, Ecolion. Let's say the environmental organisations and the city. [...] That's a lot of planners' views, you know? [...] so that however creative and lively it all was, the citizens themselves - they didn't get to speak there except where we were conscious that they should be able to express themselves and had a survey [...] and the evening discussions. [...] So some people said that was a proper beginning but now we must perhaps go a bit further and say, let's talk to the people themselves, ask how they see things themselves.' (Chair of VöB, A4, 19/11/91)

Even in the *Lebensraum* catalogue there were calls for broad participation:

'the experiences of those living in the neighbourhoods are often more important than the theories of the specialists [and the city must develop methods] which guarantee comprehensive citizen participation in the true sense of the word [...] simply putting plans on display is by no means adequate.' (Elsässer, in Elsässer, 1991, 31)

Whereas 'the talk up to now was more of **what** the city was doing for the citizens [...] and] the possibility of involving them played a much too minor role' (LVZ, 19/21/10/91), later moves suggested actually giving space to citizens to show what they were doing²⁴ rather than seeking to educate them. This raised issues of control and power, and of expertise and democracy.

In the foreword to the catalogue for the 'Citizens shape their city' exhibition, the third exhibition, held in November 1992, Wolf-Dieter Tümler of VöB wrote that the process of preparing the exhibition showed 'there was in the form of the citizen initiatives a potential as in

no other city of the new federal states' (Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992). The catalogue listed 56 initiatives, of which 26 were neighbourhood-based, including all five case study groups. Others were thematic or project-based. Preparation for the exhibition involved intersections between city-wide actions and neighbourhood groups. A debate among local initiatives in March 1992 about the importance of the exhibition raised several issues. While some wanted the exhibition to continue the pedagogic approach of previous exhibitions and be used so that the groups could show themselves to the city and make the citizens aware, others argued it was more important that the exhibition 'reflect the life in the city, unlike other exhibitions, and have more ideas from the "small people" and not the "big" ones' (A7, 25/3/92). The tension between leading by example, and seeing the groups as part of the citizens has already surfaced in chapter 6. However, what is interesting in this discussion is the emphasis that the exhibition must, firstly, also show tensions between citizen demands and city council and not deny these and, secondly, it must show positively what citizens are doing for their city or neighbourhood, including some notable successes and innovative projects. The citizens are finally positioned as active agents of change.

Pro Leipzig later developed a 'co-ordination' function between the neighbourhood initiatives alongside its academic/ architectural role and played a role in promoting this position. The co-ordination office was staffed by people also involved in the Bach Quarter and Music Quarter initiatives. They argued (see Zumpe, 1990; and IBIS, 1991, 9) that local initiatives were a key element in Leipzig's development and could rebuild the trust between people and the administration, while producing 'specialist knowledge and self-responsibility, identification and life experience'. Pro Leipzig demanded neighbourhood groups be promoted by the city council with support for office space and job creation measures and a central co-ordinating office. It was itself active in bringing groups together on issues of traffic, city support for neighbourhood groups, and training in running groups, and providing a contact between groups and the city council, particularly on issues of consultation.²⁵

Nevertheless, it is a mistake to assume that only civic action forced changes in citizen participation. Many councillors and officials were supportive too, keen to show their new democratic credentials. Of those newly appointed after the GDR elections of May 1990, several had emerged

from the civic movement, including the head of the School and Education Division who saw civic action as continuing this tradition:

'The citizen movements want to be a mouth piece and political body for a place. The future belongs to this form of politics. [...] I myself come from the civic movement. In the days of disruption [*Umbruch*] at the Round Table I learned how good it is to have such bodies where people from different professions, from very different backgrounds and political views can contribute their opinions. [...] Citizen movements are for me an institutional instrument for citizens to take direct influence on politics and to concern themselves with alternatives. Citizen movements are not just reactive but active. They are motor, initiator and catalyst.' (Wolfgang Tiefensee; Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992, 18)

Similarly the head of the Culture Division, Georg Girardet, argues that citizen initiatives are 'spaces for democratic experience' (*ibid.*). Such support contradicts Osterland's (1994) findings that administrations tended to complain when grass-roots groups emerged and interpreted this as a lack of democratic understanding by the groups and not as a lack of their own ability to cope with criticism.²⁶ Far from criticising them, Girardet praises the development of a 'sovereign citizenry' for returning to the civic traditions of Leipzig's past and developing them (*ibid.*).²⁷

These officials were aware of the tensions in local development between environmental and other local considerations on the one hand and the need for economic growth on the other (Hannes, Head of Environmental Protection, B10, 1/10/91); between demands for historical preservation and economic pressures in the city centre (A33, 22/4/92); between rapid change and having time for participation and consideration. These tensions became more pronounced as time went on:

'The transparency [of decisions] is not great enough. However, if I wanted to increase it, I could only do so at the cost of making the process last much, much longer. And we can't afford that at the present time. We in the new federal states are after all in a fundamental conflict, wanting on the one side very rapid changes and on the other, wherever possible, wanting to develop the things from the inside. [...] I know for certain how important it is that things should grow organically, that those affected now themselves can [join in the creation and the decisions]. [...] One simply has to accept that as a conflict which cannot be solved.' (Mayor Lehmann-Grube, LVZ, 10/4/93)

'The city councillors take their task seriously and don't want to decide blindly or on trust, but want to understand and be able to justify what they decide. That takes time. [...] All efforts [...] must

be aimed at speeding up the economic upswing and expanding it to industry and manufacturing which have not been able to participate up to now.

It would be good if the administration and the politicians in the city hall, if the citizens of Leipzig too could recognise and accept that this is a conflict for which there is no simple solution.

[...] We must be careful that the desire for fast economic upturn does not come to dominate the foremost goal of our city policies: the further development of Leipzig according to its distinctive tradition and identity.' (Mayor Lehmann-Grube, LVZ, 7/8/8/93)

Perhaps it was this which meant some planners tended towards limiting participation to the legally required minimum, a tendency found in West German cities (Gude *et al.*, 1981; Thomaßen, 1988). Gormsen (head of DCDP) argued that citizens could be involved in planning 'according to the law' (B24, 29/10/91; LVZ, 6/7/90) (although this does not reflect the extent to which he supported involvement). Scrutiny of Leipzig's draft traffic plan (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992e), for example, shows the limitations of discourses of careful renewal²⁸ and citizen participation.²⁹ Others argued that citizens failed to use even the legally guaranteed forms of involvement (LVZ, 29/2/1/3/92) and so should not demand other methods. Frustration at this apparent retrenchment led some activists to argue:

'Leipzig, like no other East German city campaigns vehemently for an ecological transport policy, but the practice often shows the opposite. [...] We talk but unfortunately very little is happening.' (LVZ, 24/2/92)

Despite such caveats, the city administration did propose citizen involvement and at least sought to implement it in some form. Throughout three years of field work there were myriad public meetings about planning issues, displays of plans, three major exhibitions in which the city participated, neighbourhood contacts, newspaper coverage of issues, direct contact to local initiatives by the city culture department (see chapter 6), and so on. A survey of LVZ reports alone indicates coverage of most of the city's territory and a predominance of planning issues and large projects. However, public forums are by no means limited to those called by the city administration. Instead council actions are part of a broader move for local consultation which sees local groups of virtually all parties as well as other initiatives holding such events.³⁰ One might argue citizen action groups became part of a new corporate structure for Leipzig as they are cited along with 'renowned architects, institutions, scientific academies and development

corporations' in Leipzig's economic development literature (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991e, 10). However, the tensions and differences between positions suggest changes are more contested and are not agreed unanimously.

5 Conclusion

It is a mistake to see the changes in East Germany and Leipzig simply as the collapse of pre-existing structures. Instead, in a period of change when almost every element of daily life and the organisation of society was being altered, discursive spaces and spaces for action were opened up for new or altered discourses of power and innovative action. In Leipzig this took place within a context of pressures for development, continued urban decay, demands for preservation and maintenance of the city, and housing problems with the introduction of market pricing (Reuther and Doehler, 1994). New discursive and active spaces were developed by the pressures of capital, federal and regional legislation, the normative pressures of west German practices, as well as local city policies and a series of non-official initiatives. Chapter 8 explores through the experiences in the five study areas the tensions in Leipzig's development which led an Urban Renewal Office (URO) spokesperson to comment after two houses had collapsed in autumn 1992:

'Spectacular large projects like the [out of town shopping park] and the new trade fair and exhibition centre [... leave] the fundamental questions of how much renovation this city can and wants to afford still open [...] The sick structures [of the city] can recover. [...] But the 'how' of the therapy for the patient which is the city is still controversial.' (in Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992, 55)

1 At least three villages were under pressure in the period in question.

2 These included plans for attracting banking and financial institutions, a major mail-order distribution centre for East Germany, and expanded office, leisure, tourism, logistics and retail sectors.

3 Found for example in publications about the Media City project: Stadt Leipzig, 1991. Also in mayor's foreword to the catalogue for the 1991 'Lebensraum' exhibition: Elsässer, 1991.

4 Lehmann-Grube, preface to catalogue of Lebensraum exhibition; Elsässer (1991, 1).

5 The series of adverts ironically included one with Herr Schneider who in 1994 left vast debts and uncompleted building projects in his wake. See section 2.3.

6 One result of the Workshop on Plagwitz in August 1991: LVZ 2/9/91.

- 7 The meeting was held by the Working Group "Revive the Eastern Inner City", a group consisting largely of outsiders to the area, which sought to encourage local development of an action group.
- 8 Economic promotion brochure 'Der neue Markt, Ausgabe Sachsen' (1992).
- 9 The so-called 'Investment Priority Act' was established in response to the emerging problems in early 1991 and was to run until the end of 1995.
- 10 The final date for lodging a claim was 31st December 1992.
- 11 The list of involvement is extensive, including Leipziger Blätter, the Kulturprojekt Waldstraßenviertel, Pro Leipzig, the Working Group for the Inner East City, the Fechner-Society, the New Riverbanks project [*Neue Ufer*] and others.
- 12 Description of self in catalogue for 1992 exhibition (Verein für ökologisches Bauen, 1992). Other groups also chose this lineage. The 'New Riverbanks' project is described as an 'initiative' in the same lineage as the Cospuden demonstrations of spring 1990 (Sikora, in Stadt-Kultur-Projekt, 1991).
- 13 See chapter 5.
- 14 A major traffic junction is described as a having 'raped the cityscape' (Böhme, Stadt-Kultur-Projekt, 1991, 1). Similarly:
'modern urban structures, as they developed in the twentieth century were forced on the existing body of the city [*Stadtkörper*] with no relation and in conscious rejection of the earlier spiritual and cultural strengths. The wounds which resulted form today new chances for the development of a new architectural quality suited to the former niveau of city culture.' (Ammann and Dejozé, Stadt-Kultur-Projekt, 1992)
- 15 See Stadt-Kultur-Projekt (1991, 1992) which reports the proceedings of two planning symposia on the New Riverbanks project. Also Pro Leipzig (1992) written by Pro Leipzig and the Architecture Co-operative of Waldstraßenviertel, four architects involved in many historical/cultural groups.
- 16 Media City promotional material (Stadt Leipzig, 1991) uses the existence of many local initiatives in social, cultural and other sectors as an element of their strategy. Similarly, Leipzig tourist board was using Leipzig's position as a site of the GDR revolution to attract visitors (LVZ, 7/8/3/92).
- 17 VöB thesis paper for Lebensraum exhibition.
- 18 One such is the *Stadt-Umland-Projekt* (City-Countryside-Project) headed by the GöE and VöB developed over a period of around ten years from a concern with organic farming. It subsequently covered a series of projects running from the centre of Leipzig to the East of the city, including a local centre for promoting organic produce, a park, the renewal of Stötteritz together with the projects of a supported living project for former mental patients and a VöB ecological model settlement and finally two farming projects. The projects involved an 'integrative approach' and crossed traditional boundaries of architecture and planning, of social and lifestyle concerns and of the urban/rural divide.
- 19 Brigitta Wend in Elsässer, 1991, 18.
- 20 Here again we find the mechanical metaphor of 'setting the points' but what is interesting here is that there seem to be several possible routes to development, one of which will offer more useful ecological development. In contrast, the modernist use of the term implies often a single possible course (see section 2.2).
- 21 EcoLion regularly developed their own proposals on issues such as traffic or refuse disposal (EcoLion representative, A6, 19/11/91).
- 22 Ökolöwe's origins and aims are described in Elsässer, 1992.
- 23 The chair of the GöE promoted workshops in Stötteritz and in the surrounding countryside to the East of Leipzig. The chair of VöB was involved in the Workshop for the West of the city.
- 24 A brief survey of photographs used in the respective catalogues shows a much stronger emphasis in the '*Bürger gestalten ihre Stadt*' exhibition (Verein für

ökologisches Bauen, 1992) on active citizens in their local areas and on positive signs of locally-determined change. There were a total of 48 'positive' photographs as opposed to 36 showing problems. This is a strong shift from the concentration in the '*Lebensraum*' exhibition catalogue (Elsässer, 1991) on ecological and urban renewal problems.

25 A Pro Leipzig representative mentioned in particular consultation by the city culture department about local facilities and the encouragement by Pro Leipzig of responses to the city's Land Use Zoning plan (A24, 21/9/92).

26 However, see chapters eight and nine on the less than enthusiastic response from some sectors.

27 C.f. chapter 6 in the link to such Leipzig traditions.

28 While the rhetoric of the report (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992e) emphasises a polycentric city structure, increased importance for neighbourhood centres, and the priority of public transport and cycle and foot journeys over car transport, many of the plans proposed involve a road expansion programme which includes building inner city ring roads through many of the old areas.

29 Much of the plan actually originated in 1986-87 plans for the city and evolved through official processes of consultation with experts and transport professionals, passage through the committees of the city council and then discussion with public bodies. Only then did it come to 'discussions with the citizens, with environmental groups and citizen initiatives.' There is also only limited recognition of the input from other non-professional groups. However, the traffic plan was precisely one of the city plans which brought neighbourhood groups together to lobby for alternative models of city traffic planning (see chapter 6).

30 Such concern with the processes and the outcomes which is apparent in Leipzig is the very opposite of federal decision-making which, for example, reduced consultation times for planning road and rail construction projects. This led to criticism from the editorial of the LVZ that 'the imbalance of quality of life between West and East Germany can [...] not be evened out more quickly by lifting bureaucratic limitations on the one hand in order to reintroduce them on the other as a ministerial decision' (LVZ, 4/11/91).

Chapter 8

Contested geographies of transformation (ii): Neighbourhood planning and civic action

1 Introduction

This chapter examines neighbourhood processes in their articulation between the two key discourses of careful renewal and democratisation/local activism. It explores normative constructions of citizenship in the views of various actors and their understandings of change in relation to reunification. Chapters 5 and 7 showed how constructions of planning expertise in Leipzig were coded particularly in the discourse of careful and historically-appreciative renewal. As chapters 6 and 7 show, this was contested by citizen action, particularly that which defined citizen action as legitimate, and by representations of place. This action challenged positions of expertise and the naturalisation of modernisation discourses in local development.

Action by local groups or other activists began in most areas with the twin aims of protecting the area from the excesses of capitalist development and of ensuring success for acceptable forms of renewal. The former illustrated ways in which appropriation by capital processes was interpreted locally and the latter was affected by the ways in which local areas were constructed within the GDR planning system and by subsequent renegotiations of this positioning in relation to discourses of renewal and democratisation. This chapter asks how such local actions might in fact not only reflect but also constitute German reunification in their hybridities, transitions, and transformations. Is there resistance to West German forms in oppositional actions (a continuity of GDR ideas and actions) or are there also hybrid, third spaces which produce new forms of action, not caught between East and West/ past and present, but evolving in a productive relationship to both. Deleuze and Guattari suggest a movement or strategy rather than a fixed position which is:

'Between things [...] not [...] a localisable relation going from one to the other and reciprocally, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement carrying away the one and the other, a stream without beginning or end, gnawing away at

its two banks and picking up speed in the middle.' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, 58; quoted in Thrift, 1994, 191)

The chapter examines contested local geographies of reunification in constructions of time and space, tropes of visibility, existence and false imagery, issues of action and retreat, hybridity and incommensurability, citizenship and participation and the intersections of East and West.

2 Capital-based restructuring of neighbourhoods

Chapter 7 illustrated the differential impact of capital's (re)appropriation of urban space after 1989. Among the study areas, those with higher quality housing such as Waldstraßenviertel were becoming extensions of the city centre and were targeted for retail, office and hotel development (figure 8.1). This was reinforced in Gohlis when part of the area was designated for the Leipzig Media City project. Gap sites in central Gohlis were attractive as the area was an arterial route from the city centre to the new sites to the north of the city where the 'modern' international Leipzig was developing. Interestingly, these sites were also of considerable interest to somewhat less regulated flows of international capital as they were used for illegal markets of second hand cars from across Europe in 1990 and 1991 (A21, 19/11/91). Parts of Stötteritz were affected by the redevelopment of the old Trade Fair site and the development of green field sites with a heart clinic and hotels. Overall such changes increased demand for better quality housing (figure 8.2b) (A22, 29/4/92; A41, 29/4/93). Interest in existing industry or in housing renovation at a rent level which local residents could afford was vastly less attractive, although some took advantage of public programmes (figure 8.2a). Other areas with more working class housing and industry were less attractive to capital after 1989, including Neustädter Markt and Plagwitz where processes of tertiarisation and deindustrialisation were advancing rapidly (figure 8.3). In all areas major tensions emerged between aspects of change - housing, local capital, local residents' needs, external capital, environmental issues and social concerns.

Figure 8.1: Architects and consultancies in former residential property, Waldstraßenviertel, June 1992



Figure 8.2a: Publicly funded housing renewal, Neustädter Markt, June 1992



Figure 8.2b: Privately funded renewal, Gohlis, November 1991



Figure 8.3: Former factory used as security firm offices, Plagwitz, May 1992



2.1 Insiders and Outsiders: social changes and power relations

Planning studies immediately after the *Wende* in 1990 argued that introduction of capital to the urban environment would lead to social differentiation and segregation (Reuther *et al.*, 1990b, 2-3) as market-based rents essentially became a spatial sorting mechanism, and ownership altered the control of the urban environment. At the same time the condition of the environment required a massive level of private and public investment. The balance between encouraging investment and resisting negative change was obvious in a planning study of Gohlis (Stadtbau, 1993) which identified displacement pressures on both residents and small businesses, time pressure to make decisions on investments and the need to maintain Gohlis's attractiveness as a 'good address' for capital. The effect of ownership change grew over time and by 1992/93 local understandings stressed that investors 'are not interested whether the buildings fit in here or not, they want a return for their money. [...] They come in from outside this neighbourhood, or outside the city [...] and there just isn't the personal relationship there' (A34, 5/5/93). Outside capital interests, such as 'West German real estate agents' would 'ignore the interests of the Gohlisers'. Local residents are 'never asked' and 'West German companies who have large capital reserves' were apparently favoured over local concerns (Gohliser, 92, 8, 6). Structural inequalities between capital systems became essentialised as East/West, and insider/outsider divides.

Similar concerns were found in Waldstraßenviertel, where residents feared having to leave their present homes because of changed building use, rising costs after rent subsidies were removed, or changed ownership. In Waldstraßenviertel and parts of Gohlis costs for renovating architecturally valuable property were considerable and the size of apartments meant increased rent levels affected all except the most well off.¹ The major fear of displacement concerned return of property to private owners and potential further sale to developers unconcerned with local residents and seeking to maximise profit levels. Policies of sales to tenants were problematic because while there were some richer people in the GDR (through inheritance), most people 'if they started from scratch couldn't create a fortune so as to be able to afford such a flat as an owner' (A42, 11/5/93). The response from the URO was at least to provide social housing in gap sites (A42, 11/5/93). The citizen initiative largely

accepted this would happen but wanted transitional arrangements to be found to keep people locally (A1, 4/11/91).

Individual tenancies were affected but many adopted a wider view and questioned the development of areas as a whole arguing the danger, particularly in areas close to the city centre, was that developers would see them as potential 'tax relief objects' with buildings left to decline until future rent gaps were high enough to justify redevelopment (Sikora, Pro Leipzig, 1992). Areas as a whole were being restructured for the benefits and needs of external capital and owners. Even social facilities were affected by return of property. Youth clubs, nursery schools or other social and cultural facilities had often been located in large apartments or houses and were displaced when property was returned because either the new owners did not want the city as a tenant or the city, itself under severe fiscal pressure, could not justify spending resources.²

One irony, recognised by the URO planner for the Waldstraßenviertel (A42, 11/5/93), was that having achieved recognition for the qualities of the area, the very process of valuing the area contributed to disrupting its social structures. Designation as a conservation area brought 'joy' at the prospect of improvements and 'fear' of the costs, both for owners and tenants. Owners reacted by 'throwing up their hands' at the high costs of renewal, while tenants 'reacted with clenched fists' to increased rents (Sikora, Pro Leipzig, 1992). Citizen initiative members argued this designation created conditions whereby ownership of property was based on 'investment' rather than on personal connection (A43, 11/5/93). It was a local cultural-academic elite of people involved in Pro Leipzig, although in many cases their social position and employment were severely disrupted by the *Wende*, which had been most influential in pressing for renewal. This suggests an emergent class division along cleavages of professional/ lay and artistic/ everyday interests, but the desire to restore the area was actually supported by most residents. Lower income levels in the East meant even the 'cultural elite' could not always afford high rents so apartments either remained inhabited by the local population and were not repaired, stayed empty and subject to speculation, or were used by incoming 'westerners'. Issues of capital and class became displaced to divisions between West and East.

A similar class versus East/West displacement was evident as applications to change properties from residential to commercial land-uses in order to allow the local population to remain could, it was argued, be rejected because of the demand for large flats 'from many banks and businesses and firms which are settling here who are looking for flats for their employees' (URO planner, A42, 11/5/93). In other words, a key argument for refusing changes to commercial uses was the existence of a property market, not for the resident population, but for incomers. The resident population will therefore move in either case and be provided with social housing and renovated conversions in attics or back court houses as displacement occurs from primary to secondary residential locations within an area.

3 Responses to processes of capital restructuring

Capital appropriation of the urban environment produced a semiotics of dislocation and displacement in the urban environment (see Grésillon, 1991). New projects were described by residents as 'faceless'. The "City Center", an office development, was criticised for not at least using a locally significant name, such as 'Lützow Gate' (the site where it stood) (Gohliser, 8/92, 1). Loss of specificity by name was reinforced as capital altered the appearance of the city: 'the city scape has covered itself with a layer of new advertisements', creating an 'almost surreal picture' (Reuther *et al.*, 1990b) and 'that which is still present of the old things is overgrown by the all-too-smooth and highly styled modernism' (woman, A34, 5/5/93). (This was said with disgust.)

In Plagwitz, despite official intentions to maintain diverse ownership, properties were becoming concentrated in a few hands (A39, 28/4/93), blocking development for local businesses (B28, 28/9/92). The area was seen as being 'emptied' for future speculation not just materially but also in terms of its local meanings associated with labour and production:

Group worker: 'Plagwitz had the largest proportion of industry in Leipzig, 80% it was [...] of all the industry in the city. And now there is practically nothing left which is still working, and the people who have work in ABM, they are just employed to clear out the buildings. [...] One doesn't

know what was sold, [...] what is to be torn down. There is some really bad speculation.' (A38, 3/5/93)

Negative reactions to capitalist change were, however, present even before reunification and were originally a stimulus for some local action groups. Neustädter Markt, a rundown area of poor nineteenth century tenements, had been part of a designated reconstruction plan since 1973. Progressive depopulation as properties were not maintained and tenancies not reallocated meant a population fall of 18% from 1984 to 1989 (compared to a city rate of 5%). Only after 13 different proposals (LVZ, 17/18/2/90) were clearance plans finally passed by Leipzig council in June 1989 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1989). These aimed to move out the population in winter 1989-90 and to reconstruct the area with WBS70 blocks by 1992 but after autumn 1989 long-awaited redevelopments were abandoned, resulting in local consternation. In spring 1990 activists called a local meeting to demand action in response to anger and disappointment that the long-awaited renewal would not happen, and to express fear of the future effects of a market economy, particularly since the area lies adjacent to the city centre:

Woman 1: 'The fear of being forgotten in the whole thing because of the change-over. That was really the first thought. [...]'

Woman 2: 'We had the idea - 'this wild capitalism will now wash over us'.. [laughter] [...]'

Woman 3: 'We thought we would all be put out on the streets.'

Woman 1: '[...] No-one knew what would happen. Yes. We all knew that this area would not be redeveloped. [...]'

Woman 4: 'It was a real fear for your existence.' (A35, 11/5/93)

In the face of changes of ownership and capital interest and changes in the state system (and with it the system of urban planning), a great deal of uncertainty existed. The prospect of no change or of unwanted changes essentially elicited differing responses. Among local action groups the responses were firstly to influence the planning system to protect local areas and secondly to assist residents in defending their rights as tenants. Both involved new forms of local politics in which new rights and alliances could be contested (see chapter 6).

3.1 Protecting areas

The first response in many areas was to demand state protection from the loss of planned improvements and to demand protection from the effects of capital. The extent of planning intervention in the five areas had varied considerably in the period before 1989. Waldstraßenviertel with its grand apartments and town-houses had been partially renewed but not in an architecturally acceptable manner (Sikora, Pro Leipzig 1992) and buildings had decayed further despite campaigns by several prominent local artists to have the area and its 80 percent of listed buildings protected. By 1989 there were even plans to clear most of the housing, replacing it too with prefabricated blocks. Gohlis too had been much neglected but its central zone of working class housing had been subject to considerable demolition from the mid 1980s onwards, suffering a similar GDR style planning blight to Neustadt (Reuther *et al.*, 1990a). Plagwitz had extremely poor housing conditions and high levels of air, water and ground pollution exacerbated conditions so that the policy response of the GDR (in line with its prioritisation of production over reproduction) was to aim to remove the housing (LVZ, 17/10/90). Stötteritz was effectively ignored in GDR plans.

In demanding action on local areas, assertions of local values and meaning became more important. In common with Waldstraßenviertel and unlike Neustadt, Gohlis enjoyed a good reputation and there was 'much worth preserving' (LVZ, 13/1/92). Studies showed identification of Gohlis people with their area was high.³ 'It has a good image' (Reuther *et al.*, 1990b, 12). However, the preparatory study for urban renewal planning (Stadtbau, 1993) and other documents found that, although conditions in Gohlis varied, there were considerable problems: 13% void rate (ranging from 0% to 37.5% across the different blocks); 1/3 of buildings with a poor roof, 1/3 with very poor facades, 80% with poor windows, 88% of flats with coal heating, 35% without a bath or shower, and 40% with a toilet outside the flat. The contrast between the perceived proper status of Gohlis as a 'good area' and the 'shocking conditions and threat of slum creation' (LVZ, 13/1/92) led to a consensus on the need for action. In comparison, demands in Stötteritz and Neustadt were based more on the absolute need for decent housing for residents.

Changes in planning began almost immediately after the 1989 demonstrations (see chapter 5). The GDR government responded to calls to save Leipzig by setting up a working group of the Building Academy of the GDR to examine change in Leipzig (15/11/89). Led by the ISA (Institute for City Planning and Architecture) a team reported on Gohlis in late 1990, calling for 'careful renewal' and identifying key problems in the condition of the buildings, gap sites, environmental pollution, lack of greenery, and the poor quality of the 1960's construction in the area.⁴ In keeping with the People's Building Conference approach their key idea was to establish a method of 'neighbourhood renewal' to act as a transition between GDR plans, actual conditions and the Federal Building Code which would be implemented later (Reuther *et al.*, 1990a). These planners wanted to get away from the 'technocratic planning praxis of the old GDR' where users and their desires played little or no role, nor did owners, but they also rejected expectations by residents that planners would do everything. Instead they argued:

'local planning is above all publicity [*Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*] and involvement of those affected in the planning process. The key point is not only the plan drawn up with an anticipation of the conditions desired, but also the way of getting there. There should be decision-making with those affected and interested so that knowledge about an area is deepened by an iterative process.' (Reuther *et al.*, 1990a)

The document stressed the co-equal involvement of independent and competent citizens in a reflexive and democratic process. The view was reinforced in the foreword by Gormsen, the newly-appointed Head of DCDP, writing on developing democratic and open planning where 'citizens were adult [*mündige*], competent partners to the planners.'

This was a period of action and new ideas, often within the new discourses of urban change. The situation in Waldstraßenviertel drew attention from students from (West) Berlin's Technical University, who in a project and series of meetings and events in summer 1990 did much to stimulate local interest in planning (Krusenbaum, 1990, IBIS, 3). Pro Plagwitz campaigned to make sure their area was not forgotten and was seen as a significant area for action:

Leader: '[Plagwitz] had been discredited in the administration [...]
publicly .. and it wasn't difficult to do because the

structural problems were simply so enormous, but they promoted it consciously so as to increase acceptance with the citizens that it should be torn down.' (A39, 28/4/93)

Plagwitz was not originally on the list of the city's renewal areas in autumn 1990 and Pro Plagwitz's major initial achievement was to gain recognition for the area so that 'the city has even received some kind of idea of Plagwitz. [...] Now the city is prepared to stand up for its ugly corners. Leipzig really does have attractive areas, but Plagwitz is not one of them by a long way' (Leader of Pro Plagwitz, A3, 11/11/91).

In Stötteritz a range of interests combined to develop non-state local planning. One group, the 'Association for Re-integration of psycho-socially damaged People' (VWpsgM) aimed to provide supported work and living for people who had been institutionalised in the GDR, renovating an old farm to create workshops and a neighbourhood cultural centre. The Association for Ecological Building (VöB) developed an 'ecological settlement' model project in part of Stötteritz. The two projects, although working relatively independently (A5, 25/11/91), promoted common views of Stötteritz's careful development. The Citizen Initiative Neustädter Markt demanded an approach to local development which would keep the buildings, even though this might take longer, favouring temporary relocation and a guaranteed right to return (LVZ, 28/29/4/90). The group advocated both careful renewal and, fundamentally, early participation by the local population so that 'the people who are really affected could get involved in their own neighbourhood' (A35, 11/5/93). The group surveyed problems and wrote to the new administration with suggestions on renewal policy.

The major new factor after October 1990 was the introduction of the west German Federal Building Code and regionally adopted western models of urban renewal.⁵ The new planning system differed from that of the GDR in its emphasis on legal ownership, rights of public consultation and less prescriptive possibilities for public sector intervention. The Federal Building Code provides for three main forms of planning intervention in urban renewal areas, land use zoning and conservation areas. In the first, local planning controls and participation are extended to protect the local population from market forces by promoting social rented housing

and avoiding 'luxury renewal'. Land use zoning covers entire cities, but urban renewal and conservation areas require designation of specific areas where, according to the western rationale for public sector intervention, market economic processes had failed to maintain the housing stock or threatened to disrupt the local community. Given the extensive nature of problems in East German cities (estimated in 1991 at 4.368 billion deutschemarks for the 18 renewal areas in Leipzig alone: Reuther and Doeher, 1994), most of which were not caused by market failure, choosing limited areas for action was problematic. Most West German cities had only one or two such areas. Leipzig's 18 (subsequently 19) areas were designated for preparation in 1990. By December 1992 five were receiving funding, including Neustädter Markt and Gohlis, and by January 1993 four more were eligible for special maintenance programmes (Leipziger Amtsblatt, 25/1/93). Waldstraßenviertel was designated a conservation area, establishing a legal framework within which the city could protect the physical fabric and the social milieu of the area. This gave the area access to federal funding and did not preclude it from future incorporation in the urban renewal programme.

By May 1993 all five study areas were funded in some form. However some URAs covered only part of the local neighbourhood and other areas were by definition excluded. Gohlis, for example, was given priority in the URO list of potential renewal areas in 1991, but the need to reduce public spending meant that the preparatory study for renewal from 1992-1993 (Stadtbaubau, 1993) divided it into a sub-area which could be left to private capital, the most run-down area requiring full 'renewal area' status and a transitional area which required co-ordination and 'simple renewal'.⁶ Nevertheless the five areas studied were relatively privileged, receiving almost 37% of urban renewal funding in Leipzig in 1991 and 1992 (table 8.1) although in fact funding was heavily skewed to Waldstraßenviertel and the two confirmed renewal areas, Neustädter Markt and Gohlis. Recognising the need for action in other parts of Leipzig, in mid 1992, the city agreed a programme of 'simple renewal' which would at least aim to co-ordinate the various special housing programmes in the areas without urban renewal status. These policies together formed the framework within which neighbourhood groups actively campaigned for appropriate local development and for participation in decision-making.

Table 8.1: Funding for five study areas, 1991 and 1992 (DM millions)

	1991	1992
Waldstraßenviertel (CA)	6.494	5.891
Plagwitz (PS)	0.050	0.850
Stötteritz (PS)	0.02	0.475
Neustädter Markt (URA)	4.446	8.265
Gohlis (URA)	3.600	10.165
TOTAL	14.610	25.646
% Urban renewal spending	36.7%	36.8%

Notes: CA = conservation area, PS = preparatory study for urban renewal funding, URA = urban renewal area.

Source: Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992c.

3.2 Protecting tenancies

As chapter 7 suggested, another strategy was for local groups to help residents protect their tenancies as individuals, particularly since uncertainty in the new system was reinforced by the city authority's inability to act effectively in the newly booming property market because of shortage of staff, lack of information and knowledge of the new system.⁷ Groups held meetings and advice sessions on tenancy rights. Seeing their action as part of a strategy of disrupting the hegemonic position of outside capital interests, the Waldstraßenviertel citizen initiative's key aims were 'representing the interests of the people who live and work in the area' and 'protecting and utilising the rights of the citizens in the forthcoming planning process' (LVA, 3/92). These they tackled in a series of information evenings with public officials, including the LWB, the URO and the Leipzig Tenants' Union (Bürgerinitiative Waldstraßenviertel e.V., 1993; B12, 12/11/91) and with rent and housing benefit advice (B9, 24/9/91). Such actions followed a 'legalistic' model of citizen action which in its emphasis on education and defence of legal rights actually coincided with actions pursued by the Leipzig Tenants' Union⁸ and the city Housing Department which both stressed the need to be willing to take recourse to legal action (A44, 27/4/93).

This common approach produced alliances between the city housing department and the local group against the actions of property owners which had meant that 'no-where [...] except the city centre are things more complicated than Waldstraßenviertel or Musikviertel, because of demand from investors, from developers' (A44, 22/4/93). The alliance

even extended to calls by the head of the Housing Department for the initiative, population and administration to pressurise the city council for changes:

Head of Housing Department: 'It is important that the administration, the parties, the councillors learn [...] what the needs are. [...] We need arguments to be able to work against the conditions politically because otherwise you just get told "that's the way it is and you have to accept it." (A44, 27/4/93)

He gave the example of special payments to the elderly in Waldstraßenviertel due to actions by the citizen initiative's elderly group in a council committee. Resistance to 'the way it is' therefore also came from within the administration. The head of the Housing Department wanted people to write to the state ministry in Saxony 'as those really affected' to protest at the planned relaxation of prohibitions in changes to building use (A44, 27/4/93). Rather than criticising the URO or essentialising problems as East/ West divisions, the citizen initiative also directed criticism at the Saxony and federal governments. Such strategic alliances de-naturalised the status quo and formed the basis for political action. There was some sympathy for the city's efforts at controlling problems in the area as well as for their problems caused by lack of personnel (B36, 22/4/93).⁹ In turn the Housing Department representative refused to adopt wholeheartedly the political prioritisation of owner-occupation, arguing:

Head of Housing Department: 'I think it is important to say - no-one should believe that they will be forced, despite the big theme of privatisation which is continually in the press, to buy their flat because everything else is [supposedly] terribly insecure. The main tenure form is quite simply rental. Most people in the Federal Republic will remain tenants. [...] There is nothing bad or socially unacceptable about that.' (A44, 22/4/93)

Sharp practices of capital restructuring were viewed by many as confirming their worst fears about the market (in other words, all the dire warnings which the GDR had given them). In this, however, there

was exasperation at the failures of the local state to protect residents against violence and threats by owners and exorbitant rents:

Man in public: 'What happens when the landlord starts some terror campaign and says "when the building is renovated you won't be able to afford it anyway"?'

Others: 'Exactly! That's right! [...]'

Man: 'What if the person is an elderly citizen sitting in their flat alone and [...] the landlord sends in the heavy mob and starts off with heavy legal threats and lawyers and the rest?' (A44, 27/4/93)

This period therefore witnessed an increasing complexity in the local situation which began to show the limitations of state action, divisions between legislative and executive and between political policies at different levels, as well as system changes from East to West and the local choices of forms in planning. How such interests were articulated locally is the subject of the next sections.

4 Tensions between form and process in planning

Legislative and administrative changes in city planning altered the balance between administration, politicians and local population, at least ideally, with new rights of participation by citizens, citizen initiatives and other statutory groups (B32, 17/9/91). The legal framework for western style planning such as land use zoning plans took time to establish, so that some rights to participation could not be guaranteed and the period was one of flux where many planners were also unsure of the system. Importing western planning did not occasion a large influx of western personnel, except to some key senior posts in the local administration. In other posts wage differentials and poorer living conditions in the East meant there was little attraction for western planners to relocate. Most employees in Leipzig's planning department and Urban Renewal Office (URO) were redeployed from within the GDR administration. The URO was staffed largely by engineers and planners from the Leipzig HAG, the body which had previously implemented GDR area clearance and rebuilding (A41, 29/4/93). Staff had to adapt to new organisational forms and a new planning philosophy. Tensions developed between those seeking precise application of western planning in order

to prove their ability to adapt to the new system and others who argued that 'suddenly introducing everything which worked over there over here, without knowing the local situation [cannot work]' (Mayor Lehmann-Grube, LVZ, 8/9/12/90). At the same time, many local action groups found considerable support from the actions and rhetoric of the administration in the city. The chief executive of the Leipzig Housing Authority (LWB) announced at a meeting in Waldstraßenviertel that 'the only way we can have a living city is by involving the citizens. If it is just a bureaucracy then the city will die or disintegrate.' Such statements utilised the careful renewal discourse of the People's Building Conference' (A1, 4/11/91) (see chapter 7).

This was essentially a more fluid period where groups could hope to influence planning. Their most commonly named ideals of 'careful renewal' were 'progressive' projects in urban renewal in West Germany, such as Kreuzberg in Berlin where extensive consultation was involved,¹⁰ and the situation in Leipzig seemed favourable because of the extent of local organisation. Action groups sought to negotiate a position where they were accepted as valid and useful local partners in the new processes of urban renewal.¹¹ In Waldstraßenviertel, both the local planner and the local group saw their relationship as supportive of the other:

Planner: 'I think we have **good** contacts to the citizen initiative and that is very **important** for us because all the tasks which we have to solve in our department, [are] in the interests of realising the statutes, for the citizens and the building conditions [...] And we assume that the citizen initiative represents absolutely the interests of the **citizens**.' (A42, 11/5/93)

Leader of group: 'Plans were presented to us and we therefore . sat together round a table, discussed and decided that not everything was possible as it had been planned on paper. [...] We as residents of the quarter are sometimes better informed about the area than some town planner from Osnabrück, or wherever [...] So they work **with** us. [...] At the point where the departments notice that we .. work

in a complementary way to them and are a **partner**, then we are accepted and asked about things.' (A43, 11/5/93)

Such views were reinforced in a study for the planning department in 1991 by a west German planning student which concluded citizen initiatives were a useful 'partner' as their concern with participation in decision-making and with doing something actively for their local areas meant they avoided a narrow class-based or project-based focus. Groups were 'good points of contact' because of their local knowledge, motivation, 'engagement and inventiveness'. They could act as a warning-system for the local administration but should not be reduced to mere 'information delivery' (Stührmann, 1991).

Of course, because of different positions in the capital restructuring of the city and because of the differences in insertion in the planning process, local areas were influenced by different constellations of public bodies, producing in turn differing local political geographies (table 8.2). Neustädter Markt as a whole was an urban renewal area and therefore the dominant actors were the Urban Renewal Office (URO) and their agent (lindener baukontor) along with the Housing Control department and the LWB. In Gohlis, Waldstraßenviertel and Stötteritz, each was in the process of at least partly becoming an urban renewal area and this involved the above organisations and also the DCDP and the city Planning Department. Plagwitz offered a particular case where, because of the dominance of industrial property the Office for Economic Development was particularly important. A public-private partnership, ESPLA was established in 1991 between the public agencies and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce to develop the area. Pro Plagwitz was invited to be involved in the consultation process as a non-voting advisory member and in local workshops on possible development plans (LVZ, 2/9/91).

Table 8.2: Local planning and local actions over time in five neighbourhoods

Area	Prior to 1989	<i>Wende</i>	Reunification
Neustädter Markt	Clearance and reconstruction due to begin winter 1989/90	Plans halted, initiative demanded action (founded March 1990)	New planning within careful renewal model.
Waldstraßenviertel	Neglect until around 1980 followed by selective repairs and plans for clearance	Kulturprojekt Waldstraßenviertel architects, planning students from Berlin develop arguments for the preservation of the area	Citizen initiative established February 1991, preservation order established 1990, extensive public funding, economic pressures on area growing.
Gohlis	Plans for area reconstruction of part of district	Studies by architects and planners of ISA, city administration and planning students on the possibilities of 'careful renewal'	Increasing economic importance of the area, citizen initiative established January 1992, declared urban renewal area in early 1993.
Plagwitz	Plans to remove housing from area	Silence from planning department, concerted action from local activists	Initiative Pro Plagwitz established officially January 1991, careful renewal established as important, economic pressures growing. ESPLA partnership established.
Stötteritz	Largely ignored	Actions by VöB and VWpsgM	Established area as important, developing new concepts for area with URO and DCDP, Citizen initiative established June 1992, part of area adopted as renewal area.

4.1 New alliances in planning

These (selective) alliances between local state and citizens developed new forms of planning and styles of participation. A good example was found in Neustädter Markt, the first area to be adopted as a preparatory area for urban renewal in mid 1991, as a result of co-operation with the head of DCDP, Herr Gormsen and the Urban Renewal Office (A2, 19/11/91). Official support for the principles of renewal came from Gormsen:

'fundamentally we want to improve and revitalise this area in the style of careful and preserving urban renewal' (letter from Gormsen, 4/12/89). A renewal agent was appointed to develop local plans, and the citizen initiative enjoyed official recognition as an 'advisory body' representing local interests. The citizen initiative then undertook a variety of projects. A monthly newsletter presented an 'opportunity for writing and reading about what was going on, about the results of citizen representation versus the city, the planners in the area and the owners' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 1, September 1991), and monthly public meetings were introduced 'so residents can have as active part in the formation of the area' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 6, February 1992). Information and communication were vital since it was 'important to know our rights and to use them' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 4, December 1991). This continuity guaranteed intensive understanding of complex issues:

Leader: 'Those are things which you can only argue about when you have already dealt with them for a while and discussed them.' (A35, 11/5/93)

The style of planning changed from what Faßbinder (1991) called 'results planning' in the GDR to 'process planning', a concern with more consultative forms, while others sought to move it towards 'negotiation planning', developing a model of 'co-production' (Oosthuizen, 1984). Issues concentrated closely on citizenship, democracy and the position of the local residents and their action group. A sign of the changing relations brought about by the process of the GDR revolution and new western planning came at a planning forum held as part of a local festival in autumn 1991 when the planners had 'finally decided to stop all the big speeches and to ask the citizens for their opinions' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 2, October 1991). This also required a change of response from the citizens:

'We still need to learn how to express our own wishes. Many citizens do not understand clearly what the choices are in local renewal. But this information is precisely the basis for constructive dialogue in the future, otherwise there is the danger that we won't get beyond complaining about the problems which we have all known for years.' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 2, October 1991).

Overall, at this time many planning professionals at a higher level of the city hierarchy, independent planners and certain lay groups agreed, at least in their public rhetoric, that the processes in the East offered particular opportunities for new forms of action and new types of development which had been lost or missed in the West because of the dominant planning paradigms of past periods and they saw new opportunities in a possible hybrid development (see Stadt Leipzig, 1992; Reuther *et al.*, 1990a, 1990b). Such proposals shared a language of seeking negotiation in planning, of seeking involvement by the final users and utilising the opportunities which the lack of development in the GDR offered for new urban planning with more integration of land uses and a more ecological approach, matching arguments discussed in chapter 7:

'The East still has open spaces and structures. But instead many things do not function. [...] This produces various views of reality and opinions which could become relatively creative and positive where planners from East and West come together.'
(Stadt Leipzig, 1992, 21)

Some argued alliances between East and West, and between lay and professional planners could produce a collaboration in a 'free space' which the period offered as a conceptual space and political space. However, this development also depended on the specific features of Leipzig as a site of civic action:

'Leipzig has an engaged civic movement. The roots reach far back into the East German past and by now there is an association landscape rich in nuances and with a multiplicity of future-oriented projects. In this connection the Workshop 'Stötteritz' is in a special way a child of its time, this unique mix of dissolution and new formation which found its beginning in autumn '89. Here we succeeded in developing future-oriented key ideas for urban development in a co-operative working between city administration and citizen initiatives in an atmosphere of human warmth and mutual respect.' (Richter, VöB, Stadt Leipzig, 1992, 2)

Nevertheless, most of those involved were aware that the early period after 1989, while being rather chaotic, was also a rather more open period of discussion and innovation while even by 1993 opportunities for such alternatives were narrowing:

Richter: 'This flexibility in Leipzig will not be permanent. [...] The administration cadre will become independent. In the

West the citizen initiatives have it difficult too. Here it is really a unique [*einmalig*] situation in the way we are accepted as partners by the city, basically that there is consensus at the moment that the tasks which are faced can **only** be solved by a broad coalition of city and citizens.' (A5, 25/11/91)

4.2 Limitations to new forms of participative planning

As earlier sections show, several issues subsequently served to limit participative planning. The first was the complexity and costs of renewal which frustrated attempts by planners and public alike. The second was that tensions also emerged between the forms established to develop local areas and the processes by which these were operationalised. The third was the way in which neighbourhood civic actions were confronted with the 'modernisation' project of capital and the city council. The latter two are discussed here.

Some city planners redeployed within the administration were strongly resistant to implementing the rhetoric of consultation and democratisation, being more concerned to implement western policies correctly, in order to prove their indispensability to the new structure which was subject to cutbacks. The logic of the situation for them was to implement policies correctly rather than to create new forms of involvement and run the risk of countering legal requirements or administrative limitations on actions which planners could take.

Despite intentions and supportive structures, responses to local participation were often highly ambivalent in practice. At one local meeting (B8, 21/4/92) traffic plans for the neighbourhood were presented as a series of technical solutions, ignoring local social conditions. When residents rejected proposals and offered alternatives, their views were generally rejected. Thus when the leader of the citizen initiative questioned the assumption that all local residents could afford cars, an official replied 'if you don't provide car spaces then the people who can afford cars won't move here' suggesting that planners and existing population had strongly differing views of the appropriate future for the area. Officials adopted (largely unconsciously it seemed) three tactics which delegitimated local concerns. Firstly, by focussing on

questions of finance over which local people had no control, local voices were devalued. Secondly, planners argued these were not neighbourhood but city issues, so subverting the claims of the neighbourhood to any consideration. Thirdly, they disrupted the 'us/them' dualism set up by local residents who positioned themselves in relation to all others seeking to use their area, by arguing, for example, the roads department could not stop the traffic and that the residents were 'creating traffic themselves by living here'. In spite of intentions to develop consultation, planners' actions were exclusionary and helped to reinforce their own expert position. Resorting to technical discussions among themselves, they asked local residents for decisions on highly technical issues of road construction with no input of information. When, unsurprisingly, the reaction was that planners should at least provide suggestions, the planners' position as the source of expertise was restored. Planners presented residents with what were effectively non-choices, asking which solution was favoured and replying to suggestions with a list of reasons why these were impossible (legal restrictions, finance). Similar processes happened at other meetings (A23, 18/9/92).

The limited views of participative planning were obvious in many areas in a tension between stated intentions and their implementation. A URO leaflet about Gohlis in autumn 1992 adopted the discourses of careful renewal and citizen involvement, which should 'steer [the renewal] from below' with 'extensive participation by the citizens', but suggestions for an advisory committee of specialists and a local office with a social planner restricted citizens to a recipient role in a similar way to the dominance of expertise found at the People's Building Conference, as did the suggested forms of 'participation' in the leaflet ('public meetings, discussions with experts and city departments, or pamphlets which could be published in close contact with the BV Gohlis') all of which involved large public events or the transmission of information rather than any iterative process. Similarly, the Stötteritz planning team held a local exhibition where the concepts developed for the area were 'presented' to the local residents who would 'learn what is possibly planned' (A41, 29/4/93) but were then bemused that the residents did not attend:

URO planner: 'We had it in the newspaper, we had posters everywhere, and they even reported it in the regional news. [...] We assume it was [sigh] the good weather. [...]

Really it wasn't the demand we had expected.' (A41, 29/4/93)

Citizen involvement was often regarded by planners as a nuisance or necessary evil, rather than a means of developing better planning. The citizen association in Stötteritz was described as having acted in ways which were 'not always to our pleasure'. Because it and other organisations were established before the URO activity, 'we are now trying [...] to work together with these associations,' but this was meant to be a form of control rather than of co-operation 'because not just everyone can come and arbitrarily push through his own ideas. That's not on' (A41, 29/4/93). In such a situation the citizen association's attempts to present an independently drawn-up local protection statute were not appreciated:

URO planner: 'They concern themselves with the needs of the population, not always necessarily to our joy, ... because they also do things where they, I won't say stick their noses in [*einmischen*], but well, ... ' (A41, 29/4/93)

Such local actions were criticised as a problem of lack of understanding of the functions of planning and the costs of implementation, because if there are legal limits on building change then there must be financial means to achieve this, because 'you can decide all sorts of things' but implementation is the problem (A41, 29/4/93). In this, planners were as aware as local residents of the ultimate sanction which ownership placed on actions since they could plan developments, but if owners were intent on another plan, they could not implement their ideas: 'The citizens practically can turn to us with their questions but we cannot ... force anything in particular. We really have to wait for investors or private people to renew their houses or sites' (A41, 29/4/93).

The planning process produced more detached views of local problems than those of the civic groups since planning constructs places in a particular way. Kazemian (1991) concluded that post-war urban planning in Sweden essentially constructed places as 'abstract, emptiable and fillable space' (173). There was certainly a tendency in Leipzig for planning documents to consider places in abstract fashions, as a series of 60 blocks in three standard categories (A42, 11/5/93) or to make

recommendations for 'axes of development' and land use categories (A41, 29/4/93). This contrasted with approaches such as that of the Stötteritz Workshop which was described as dealing with the 'heart and soul' of Stötteritz (Stadt Leipzig, 1992) although some planners did mention, often in less 'scripted' moments that they themselves or local residents were attached to the areas (A42, 11/5/93). Generally, however, although the official assumption was that West German planning would guarantee participation by the population, in a pattern similar in outcome to that discussed in chapter 2 for West Germany, many 'planners actually sought to use participation as a legitimisation tool and as a form of early warning to avoid conflicts while assuming that rational-technocratic planning could avoid a political process' (Thomaßen, 1988, 24).

Planners at all levels were not, however, uncritical of the limitations of the West German system. The Federal Building Code had been designed for a very different situation in West Germany in the 1970s:

URO planner: 'When the western *Länder* do their urban renewal they concern themselves with, well, with a tiny city quarter. [...] But with us time is burning under our nails.¹² We really have to act immediately and approach whole areas. [...] The book really needs re-written for us.' (A41, 29/4/93)

Other planners, especially independent planners from the East or employed as consultants from either West Germany or other western countries, were more strongly in favour of extensive consultation and tried to adapt the western system rather than apply it unchanged to the East. The Swedish planning consultancy for Stötteritz, FFNS, advocated:

'democratic participation in the renewal process of those first affected [as] an operational principle which finds its tangible [*handfest*] core in small-scale decision-making and development of each individual planning decision and will form a key foundation for the development of a democratic planning culture. The practical and concrete aim of participation of the fellow citizens [*Mitbürger*] is the task of solving conflicts, or avoiding them, and thereby shortening the planning process.' (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992f, 17).

At the same time such processes would help the development of a 'democratic culture':

'Especially in the new *Bundesländer* and therefore also in Stötteritz where a key element of the liberation from "real socialism" is that citizens [created] democratic relations locally to increase confidence in democracy and a state based on the rule of law.' (*ibid.*)

While FFNS saw this as a process of 'liberation' and a continuation of the *Wende*, others were less unequivocal in their estimation of the advantages of western development. Most agreed that one function of planning at neighbourhood level was to attempt in some way to exert control to prevent social segregation while influencing capital interests to maintain and develop local areas.

However, many groups discovered that finding a consensus between action group and planning system was particularly difficult when capital interests were involved which coincided with the modernisation aims of the administration. Pro Plagwitz had some evidence of its influence since a property speculator threatened the group if it did not support his aims (B28, 28/9/92). Less spectacularly, those proposing large developments generally had to hold public meetings. The first such in Plagwitz was the Thread Factory [*Buntgarnwerke*] which had employed 1800 people, mostly women, until 1990 when it closed. Bought by a western developer, it was planned to develop it as a 'neighbourhood centre' [*Stadtteilzentrum*] with a hotel, offices, shops and leisure facilities which would employ around 680 people when complete (A3, 11/11/91). The developer held a local exhibition and a public meeting with Pro Plagwitz and the planning department (LVZ, 13/6/91) while Pro Plagwitz organised a subsequent meeting (LVZ, 19/3/92). However, local residents were less than happy that this 'neighbourhood centre' was in fact a shopping and business centre and wanted more social facilities, but their involvement only served to change the project on the margins, adding a play area and better parking (B2, 30/3/92). Local concerns had less chance of success if the plans matched the views of the city council, while a common view between groups and city could mean developers had to reassess plans.

Pro Plagwitz recognised that the 'primary concept of the city' was:

Leader: 'really just about greening the area and [...] we think it is just about improving Plagwitz for the investors and [...] there is of course great development potential [...] but

also a great danger of ... gentrification [spoken in English].
So we want promises that at least the population will have
a certain local protection.' (A39, 28/4/93)

This view was mainly promoted by the DCDP which had mayoral support but the URO wanted 'more milieu protection, or land price controls' while it was surprisingly the Office for Economic Development which most protected Plagwitz by insisting the area remain a site for production and not purely for tertiary activities because 'no investors are interested in production. [...] They are interested in anything which brings a very quick and large return so they can exploit their property. (A39, 28/4/93). Pro Plagwitz was therefore heavily involved in consultation on getting 'Plagwitz declared an urban renewal area as soon as possible, to fight land speculation and keep the rent levels at some bearable level' (A39, 28/4/93). This section suggests that neither the divisions between population and administration nor the apparent unity surrounding discourses of civic action or careful renewal were as clear-cut as the city rhetoric may have suggested.

5 Contesting neighbourhood planning

How then did local action groups and the citizens involved with them contest processes of local change in relation to the varied positions of the planning establishment and in relation to capital interests? A particularly interesting case is the city's first urban renewal area, Neustädter Markt where only one year after the first successful planning forum what had seemed a tentative consensus on the way forward had met with limitations:

'as is well known the hopes for new, nice flats cannot be fulfilled this year. [...] The citizens were hesitant to ask questions directly to the city departments present but that isn't surprising, [because] either they couldn't give concrete answers or the answers weren't positive for the citizens. [...] This is not a good basis for this oft-quoted citizen participation [...] The departments are about to lose the trust of the citizens - if they ever had it.' (Neustädter Markt Journal, 14, October, 1992)

By early 1993, despite consensus on the substantive aims for the area (renewal, keeping the population, controlling rent levels, developing local facilities), the URO planner for Neustadt largely discounted the local

initiative, seeing them as irritants to the smooth running of the plans and the local population as a whole as essentially passive recipients of planning, rather than active participants. The exception came when some asserted their legal rights as tenants, but even there many were afraid to do anything:

- FS: 'Do the people who are tenants [...] defend their tenancy rights?'
- Planner: 'It varies. There is a house [...] which is to be renovated and everyone in the building signed new rent contracts, just like that! [Leaving them open to rent increases.] Some are afraid and will sign anything. [...] There are many who come to ask about things. [...] Many are now relatively sure of their rights and will complain [...] But not with private owners. More do with the LWB because there they are not so afraid.' (A37, 23/4/93)

Over time planners increasingly stressed the costs of renewal, especially in relation to public funding levels, the reluctance of private investors to accept public grants (thereby avoiding rent controls), and delays caused by ownership difficulties¹³ to explain delays in improvements and to discourage local actions which might increase these difficulties, by for example demanding more consultation. Technocratic solutions rather than new negotiations were required. In contrast, a position more supportive of local consultation came from the area's renewal agent, Hannover-based lindener baukontor, but disagreements with the city planning department meant their contract was terminated in early 1993, creating further tension between the citizen initiative and the URO (A37, 23/4/93).

5.1 Five views of local renewal

The clearest example of how such tensions came about was at a meeting of planners, officials, local councillors, citizen initiative members and the public held in April 1993 in Neustädter Markt (A36, 20/4/93). It is explored here in some detail as it provides key categories by which the differing understandings of renewal, place and citizenship can be explored across the different areas of Leipzig. Table 8.3A summarises five key, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, positions which can be

Table 8.3A: Local renewal in Neustädter Markt - Contested Viewpoints: Summary

Source: public meeting A36, 19/4/93.

Planning and participation view	Construction of area	Possible solutions	Reaction to other positions	Who involved
1A Administrative-technocratic	Area is very poor, a problem area, and one of many deserving areas	Effective advice. Correct implementation of programmes. Legislative changes at political levels.	Conflict with citizen association and with renewal agents. They are either 'unrealistic' or 'false'. There is anger that the URO's actions are questioned and rejected. They question other's knowledge and defend their own professional knowledge. LWB shares similar views but is more open to co-operation forms (see category 5).	URO LWB
1B Economic	Property owners as much part of area as residents	Market forces. Accept situation and use subject subsidies.	Citizen association is wrong or misguided. The oppositional viewpoint belongs to a previous era.	FDP councillor URO planners LWB
2 Co-operative	Current and future residents as core of concerns. Differences between residents.	Local solution. Alternative models of development. Import positive western models. Improve consultation, participation, open planning. Need clear information for residents.	Others may be true to some extent, but the local area needs alternative solutions and different viewpoints. URO is excluding the citizens and therefore reducing activity.	Citizen association Former renewal agent Berlin Statbau self-help housing projects Bündnis 90/ Greens councillor
3 Legalist	No concern with area, rather with individuals	Tenants defend their legal rights in court.	Need to accept individual responsibility and to see the time for state intervention is past.	Lawyer Former renewal agent Department for Housing
4 Oppositional	Area has common problems with others in Leipzig.	Housing not regarded as commodity. Federal legislation.	Do not understand their logic.	Committee for Justice
5 Mediating		Co-operation and co-ordination	Problem at federal level. Local can only change margins.	LWB Former renewal agent

Table 8.3B: Local renewal in Neustädter Markt - Contested Viewpoints: Excerpts

Planning and participation view	Construction of area	Possible solutions	Reaction to other positions
1A Administrative-technocratic	<p>'The city has 11 renewal areas (or even will have 21 in the end) [...] you can see it is the same situation everywhere. In GDR times many moved out to the new buildings, it's mostly the elderly, single people who stayed. Then I don't know how the city should ever be able to carry out the renewal if there aren't important contributions from the rents.' (URO planner, p7)</p>	<p>'Renewal is not a panacea' but 'With a very competent advice service for tenants' can prepare people better for what is coming and problems can be 'cushioned'. (URO planner, p6)</p> <p>'we also need a decision by the politicians. That's why we invited you today.' (URO planner, pp7-8)</p> <p>'In the private buildings, if there is just normal renovation, no luxury you get rents of 12-15 Marks [...] just completely normal federal German average standards. [...] In the buildings which are funded entirely from private capital and it is these ones where, let's say, the tenants are caught out and where there is no real way of avoiding it to any great extent.' (URO planner 2, p8)</p>	<p>'It is eyewash to think of rents of 3.50 Marks. [...] It is just not financially viable.' (URO planner, p60)</p> <p>'I analysed that there is not a single flat where the tenants have applied to buy their houses. There is a reason for this. The buildings are kaput. You cannot renovate them yourselves. That is an illusion. [...] We cannot <u>force</u> any tenant or force the LWB to give us the flats for self-help. This initiative which comes from the population .. with respect - it, it is just not possible any more.' (URO representative, p34)</p> <p>Citizen association representative: 'I think here it is all a bit lacking in concepts.'</p> <p>URO representative: 'Well you're being very unfair there. We have the Thursday advice session and it is used by the tenants a lot. [...] And on the other hand I sometimes ask myself where the support from the citizen association is, particularly in relation to work with the tenants. That is, I must say, what <u>we</u> miss here. When I look at other areas in the city where it works <u>better</u>.' (p36)</p>

1A Administrative/ technocratic contd.			<p>'Herr R. [action group], I thought you were the building specialist for the citizen associations. [...] The only buildings where tenant self-help is possible are the [...] LWB buildings with no claims on them, perhaps five of them. They are being renewed slowly with the ... eh 'Rental Housing New Construction Programme, Part B'. [...] But those are the only ones. This tenants' self-help just <u>does not</u> fit in the area round the Neustädter Markt. You cannot expect anyone to accept such conditions.' (URO planner, p42)</p>
1B Economic	<p>'It is also important for the owner who got his property back - the rent is so low that it is difficult to get together their own contribution of 14% so they can get public funding.'</p> <p>(URO planner, p8)</p>	<p>'We simply have to recognise that in 1990 we took on the legal system of the Federal Republic, that we took on the employment market, that we took on their conditions [...] That means that now we simply have to accept that rents to cover costs will lie around 20-30 Marks. Some tax reductions could get it down to around 15 Marks. After that there is only social housing. And we just have to accept this. [FDP councillor, p17]</p>	<p>Take political decisions to create as many jobs are possible so that the city grows. That is the only way out. And there is an intermediate way [housing benefit].' (FDP councillor, p17)</p> <p>'The time of equal rents is past.' (FDP councillor, p59)</p> <p>'I think it is high time that the population is really clear that the rent levels will diverge and will diverge considerably. [...] We cannot determine the whole rental market. We can only develop it for a small social rented sector.' (URO planner, p59)</p>

<p>2 Co-operative</p>	<p>'This area [...] was generally always a worker's quarter. [...] That means that here there are above all workers, eh, less qualified workers who have the relevant income. [...] So [...] there is a concentration of so-called , eh, problem groups [...]' The [...] factors multiply.' (Citizen association representative, p1)</p> <p>'The problems which we see for the further development of the quarter is that one can see two possibilities for development at the moment, and we hope that neither happens. The one is the tendency towards a sinking number of flats and residents [...] and that the better-off and higher qualified will leave the area, that means a homogenisation of the quarter will continue, the population structure will become even more one-sided than it is now. [...] The second tendency is the [...] absolute improvement of the value of the area [...] so that the current residents won't be able to afford it.' (Citizen association representative, p2-3)</p>	<p>'Somehow one must also try to give new ways of thinking about it. And what we want to suggest [...] is to strengthen tenant initiatives here. They did much in the GDR-times too, many people. [...] We are used to it, it is nothing new for us. [...] We have to escape from these thought structures that we go to the bank, get the money, renew the house, then sit back and cash in.' (Bündnis90/Grünen councillor, p32-33)</p> <p>'We need a differentiated renewal plan. Renewal from the point of view of the population, of the population who live here and those we want to have move here. [...] But that would mean that, eh, the renewal process happened with the citizens. And closeness to the citizens means that one speaks with the citizens. That means too that the responsible departments speak directly with the citizens and not just at large events. I think we can't see that at the moment.' (Citizen association representative, p3-4)</p> <p>'It is about a differentiation of the housing market with different segments including the very cheapest, about parts of the housing market which are then secure. Not wholesale coverage of very low rents, or even social housing maximum rents in all houses. You can't do that. [...] But it is about funding very particular segments of the market and to decide politically how one does this and what the aims are.' (former renewal agent, p16)</p>	<p>'We invited you all to this meeting because the suggestion of rents in the quarter in the renewed houses of the LWB of 6.50, or 7.50 Marks/ m2 are for us, in our eyes unacceptable for the population resident here. Because in our opinion the limit for the proportion of income spent on rent has already been reached and already many people here cannot afford it.' (Citizen association representative, p4)</p> <p>'There were in the Federal Republic or Old Federal States projects where they have tried out renewal close to the citizens, in Frankfurt, for example [...] where the tenants themselves said how the renewal was to happen.' (Citizen association representative, p19)</p> <p>'Wholesale adoption of old federal laws leads to the wrong types of development here.' (man, p26)</p> <p>'I think there are often false understandings of the [possibilities for self-help] because of the high level of structural repairs required.' (Former renewal agent, p26)</p> <p>'You are not working with the people here. [...] One must be ready to talk too .. And to talk with the people too. And I have the feeling that people .. there aren't all too many people here this evening, I know that a few years ago it looked very different at such meetings. And that must have some reason.' (Citizen association representative, p36-37)</p>
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'Of course one must decide whether one wants to keep the existing population [...] or in renovating it for them also try to attract additional people in order to achieve a good stable economically-viable mix.'
(Berlin Stattdbau - self-help housing projects, p30)

'There has to be [...] social planning not where once and for all the, let's say 'ten year plan' is set out, but where there is a process. And it is important now to describe this process.'
(Berlin Stattdbau - self-help housing projects, p31)

'If there is no money we still think [we could achieve more] with newer forms of renewal, that is, with renewal more aimed at the tenants, renewal together with the tenants. With closeness to the citizens to create certain conditions such as self-help programmes, for example.'
(Citizens association representative, p5)

'At the moment unfortunately there is no concept here. A new one will take two years [...] but, please, there are already experiences elsewhere. Why don't they get used? Why do you just take the laws and say, right now we have to create cost rents? We should perhaps be arranging it in a way which is just to the people. [...] At the moment the only concept I can see for Leipzig is that one continually tries to convince the people to buy their own flats. Well excuse me, but you can forget that in this area. [...] That means one must perhaps look for other versions or possibilities.'
(Citizen association representative, p19-20).

'The problem is that at the moment particular repair measures are being carried out which the people aren't even being informed about them. That's the problem. I have the joy of living in a half-renovated house at the moment which is apparently still administered by the LWB. The tenants aren't told what is happening. [...] That means that you are not even working with the people here. [...] You have to work together with the people. You can't wait for the initiative to come from them because they don't own the flats.'
(Citizen association representative, p35-36)

'Frau E. [URO], participation by the tenants, independent work in the renewal process means more than simply acquiring property!'
(Citizen association representative, p35)

3 Legalist		Tenants have to be informed and inform themselves of their rights and take legal action. We are waiting for them 'but we are amazed that nothing really happens'. If you don't take action about the rent levels or renovation measures then you can't do anything. (Lawyer, p53)	'The tenants must be clear that the times are past' when the state will do everything. (Lawyer, p53)
4 Oppositional	'Then I ask myself whether we can accept such conditions? What is to happen to the people? Where are they to go?' (p57)	<p>'The question of social housing, of security in life [...] is completely wrongly directed. That is the core question. When <u>housing</u> [...] is regarded in the first instance as a commodity then I think many people will fall by the wayside.' (p58)</p> <p>'This was a useful discussion [...] but there are limits to local action and things which need to be tackled at a federal level, particularly the way subsidies are distributed, and social housing.' (p58)</p>	'The people here [...] will probably mostly never understand it. You can come with rights, with explanations, with laws, they go from their experiences. It possibly wasn't a good experience, you know, lots of decay or so, but it was a logic of security.' (p58)

'We don't have to see everything so negatively I think. [...] We can see what houses are to be renovated, where there is new construction, the possibilities of creating flats for ownership. They are all positive approaches. [...] It is now a question of information. The advice sessions are being used, from the URO. There are complaints at the lack of communication between the citizen association and the URO. Perhaps one can bring that together. I mean, they are small attempts which could become positive. The LWB is there to help. [...] We can meet, have someone go to the citizen association, to go to other areas, compare and say what we could do.' (LWB representative, p51)

'What I hope for in the further development of the renewal is something similar to what happened here this evening. Perhaps then a bit more concrete. [...] You can see that everything is not everything is possible quickly in the way we dreamed it would be and imagined and wished for and as the citizens wish. That means one must also make compromises [...] and discuss politically. Eh the question about an institutionalised citizen participation [...] should perhaps be developed further to make the whole thing more public, and to demand from the URO regularly to report what has happened [...] And perhaps then you would get the whole thing democratically legitimated in some way. There are different models for it [...] so that such a committee could meet publicly, then co-determine and give suggestions and perhaps encourage the compromises.' (Former urban renewal agent, p52)

'Last year the federal government spent 55 billion DM on housing promotion of which one fifth, 11 billion went to social housing and housing benefit. 44 billion went via tax relief and grants to promoting ownership for those with higher incomes. I think that is a figure which is politically very interesting.' (Former renewal agent, p15)

'I don't have a solution ready but I am trying to describe a bit what the real problems are. Yes? That, that these many, many problems are there simultaneously. We have, I tried for a whole year to work on this rents thing like it is in the old federal states and how it is here - we don't have any ready solution. It is unsatisfactory for all those concerned. It just is. One can probably only do small-scale work now or there will be a political change. I don't know.' (Former renewal agent, p50)

identified: the administrative-technocratic, and the related economic view, the co-operative, legalistic, oppositional and mediating views. Table 8.3B gives excerpts from the discussions to illustrate the various positions.

The two dominant positions are the administrative-technocratic (and related to it the economic) and the co-operative. The administrative-technocratic view (1A) is essentially represented by the URO and to some extent by an LWB representative. The local area is constructed as a 'problem' area with a poor local population, but it is essentially one among many needing funding. The problems of urban renewal can only be solved either with political decisions to change the legal framework, or by a recognition that it is of limited application and that costs have to be borne in the long term by the tenants. Until the framework for development changes, planners should stick to correctly applying existing programmes. Related to this is an economic view of development (1B) which stresses the importance of local owners and the market economics of rent levels, requiring that the population, having 'accepted the west' now accept higher rents. Only housing benefit would be available to cushion the effects (FDP councillor). There is little consideration here of renewal as locally negotiated development. Instead the development of the area is more affected by market forces.

The 'co-operative' view (2) is espoused by the citizen initiative and by the (by then) former urban renewal agent, by a Berlin-based organisation on alternative building forms and by a local councillor from Bündnis 90/Green Party. In this view, the construction of Neustädter Markt should be resident-focused. Accepting market forces would only present the area with the dilemma of further decline and decay or massive renewal costs, all of which would force out the resident population. This co-operative view was present to an extent in the preparatory study outlining the renewal of the area which recognised tensions between local expectations and the tendency towards 'resignation and aggressive disappointment' caused by previous failures in renewal (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991d). However, 'the necessary urban restructuring [...] is unthinkable without the involvement and participation of the residents. Urban renewal measures cannot be realised successfully against the interest and will of the citizens involved' (*ibid.*, 83). Consequently, appropriate structures should be created - public forums, advice and information both 'early and regularly', support for citizen

representatives and avoidance of finalising a full plan, and instead 'working with people to enable the citizens to participate in an active and partnership form' (*ibid.*, 88). Many proposals were adopted, at least in reduced forms. The aim of having some form of 'advocacy planning' (funded independently of the city administration) and defined in the preparatory study as 'open planning and intensive advice' was, however, not included in the area renewal statute, unlike the other renewal aims of the preparatory study. The tension between the outer form of participation and a deeper commitment to the processes of involvement was therefore evident and this came to the fore in the April 1993 meeting.

Planners rejected criticism from the citizen initiative as misguided or false and attacked it for not carrying out its function properly. While the LWB adopted similar approaches, giving reasons why particular demands were not possible, their representative also adopted a more mediating role (see below). Emphasising their inappropriateness, the planners argued that the citizen initiative's views belonged to a previous era. A new time had arrived and it was 'high time' people realised what the new ways were. On another occasion a URO planner explained to me what she saw as the lack of understanding among the population of the changes in urban renewal towards a structure which can offer to facilitate actions by owners but cannot prescribe action or carry it out itself:

Planner 'Renewal is the responsibility of the owner. We can only **support** the owners. [This new relationship] is something which the people don't get. In the past the URO simply started [...] at one end and worked like a conveyor belt along the roof, or whatever, regardless of whether it was private or not. [...] And the people must now slowly realise that is not possible today any more. And ... that is difficult. When they come now we have to say, "we are sorry but it is the owner's responsibility" .. Now it's getting better. At the beginning [...] it was much more difficult. They came and said, "My roof is leaking - I want it repaired." Then you just had to say, "we can't do anything" [...] Many still don't understand. [They say] - "he's getting a new roof, so when is it my turn." (A37, 23/4/93)

Returning to tables 8.3 (A) and (B), the 'co-operative' view argued that the URO, in particular, was not flexible enough in its approach to local renewal and should in fact adopt elements of western planning, seeking alternatives to standard practices of funding renewal through private owners or privatising state-owned housing. As such the 'co-operative view' was not anti-western. It appealed to positive experiences in the 'old federal states' where renewal programmes had been developed 'with the people'. At the same time, though, advocates of this view referred to positive experiences of involvement in the GDR in self-build projects, for example. The co-operative view was, therefore, a more hybrid position between East and West, past experiences and possible current developments. It also demanded local political action, requiring active decisions about a more open relation between planning and the population. In contrast to the administrative-technocratic views there was more concern with the process of planning as a political and negotiated or even contested development. By avoiding real debate on fundamental issues and by failing to consult or even in some cases to inform the population, the URO had, they argued, reduced people's willingness to attend meetings and thus created a negative spiral of lack of information and lack of willingness to participate.¹⁴

These two main views were supplemented by three others. The 'legalist' position (3) concentrated on the need for individual tenants to know and actively to defend their legal rights. This was adopted by the city's Department of Housing, the (former) renewal agent and a western lawyer. Individual rather than collective in approach, it overlapped to some extent with the economic position in its claims that people should see the time when the state provided for them was 'past'. The next position, represented by a few present at the meeting was purely 'oppositional' (4) and rejected the logic of western development by arguing that housing should not be regarded as a commodity, and that as long as this prevails there could be no solution to the housing problems. This position, largely represented by a member of the Leipzig Committee for Justice,¹⁵ argued that the logic of western forms of renewal and rent levels was incomprehensible to the local population.¹⁶ The final position was a 'mediating' position (5). Here two agencies, the LWB and the (now former) renewal agent, in addition to their other positions, also offered a 'mediation' between the URO and the citizen association, arguing there was scope for co-operation and compromise at the local level although

major solutions may require federal action. The local level could, they argued, offer a forum for using the margins for hybrid or compromise solutions which should be arrived at by a process of communication.¹⁷

Similar tensions between form and process in Gohlis came to a head in late 1992 as renewal planning was really getting underway. At a public meeting with planners (B26 23/9/92), the chair of the citizen association argued the area was 'not just houses but people', that not only the 'centre' should decide and that the opinions of local people 'as Gohlisers' should be addressed, stressing co-production based on local citizenship. In contrast, the two senior administration staff (both west Germans) adopted an administrative-technical approach. The head of the URO stressed the limitations of policies and of the funding programmes while Gormsen, head of DCDP, adopted a didactic explanation of the limitations of public planning and redirected criticisms to the legislative of the council for the decisions made about the plans, on the ground that the administration only prepared them, and to the Land and federal levels in relation to funding levels. He stressed that 'in the social market economy' primary responsibility lay with the owners and that the state was only involved where the market failed. He therefore also used the economic views which stressed the integral nature of the whole western system. Any local complaints were effectively trivialised as local residents were told they should be glad something was happening. Not surprisingly, this met with considerable disapproval by the residents. One argued that 'we are discussing here like we did before' and the citizen association has little effect. As in Neustadt, the experience was that little had changed:

Local resident: 'We hear phrases this evening like, "new buildings must be sensitively fitted in" or "taste and sensitivity" but since there is no consideration of these concerns, why are we sitting here? (applause from public).' (B26, 23/9/92)

6 Reactions and interpretations by local activists

The period of research witnessed a great increase in the levels of consultation and involvement in comparison to the GDR, but also extreme frustration at the lack of progress in implementing change and increasing co-production of planning. This was found in the city as a whole too. A survey in 1993 showed 66% of the 213 people questioned had

seen a plan on public display but knowledge about how to be involved varied (highest among 40-49 year olds and lowest among under 20s, while women were generally less well informed than men). Despite these variations, a key finding was that the majority thought their ideas would not be taken seriously by the city administration and 'the citizens experience that plans already prepared are pushed through even against massive protests' (LVZ, 31/7 and 1/8/93). This mirrors experiences in many neighbourhoods.

Such disparities meant groups often had to be careful to balance their desire to create particular forms of grass roots action and to change local material conditions. Pro Plagwitz had been instrumental in having a project to revitalise the local canal adopted as city council policy in 1991 but as the plan was made official and taken over by an Austrian planning consultancy, some of the aspects were not acceptable locally. The Austrian architect rejected Pro Plagwitz's inputs (B28, 28/9/92). The group found itself wanting to criticise plans to keep their credibility as a local group and to illustrate publicly the learning processes and problems of such change, while city politics required that Pro Plagwitz remain silent so the project was not undermined and funds diverted to other projects:¹⁸ 'we just can't say we don't like our child any more' because 'we would make ourselves look laughable' (B28, 28/9/92).

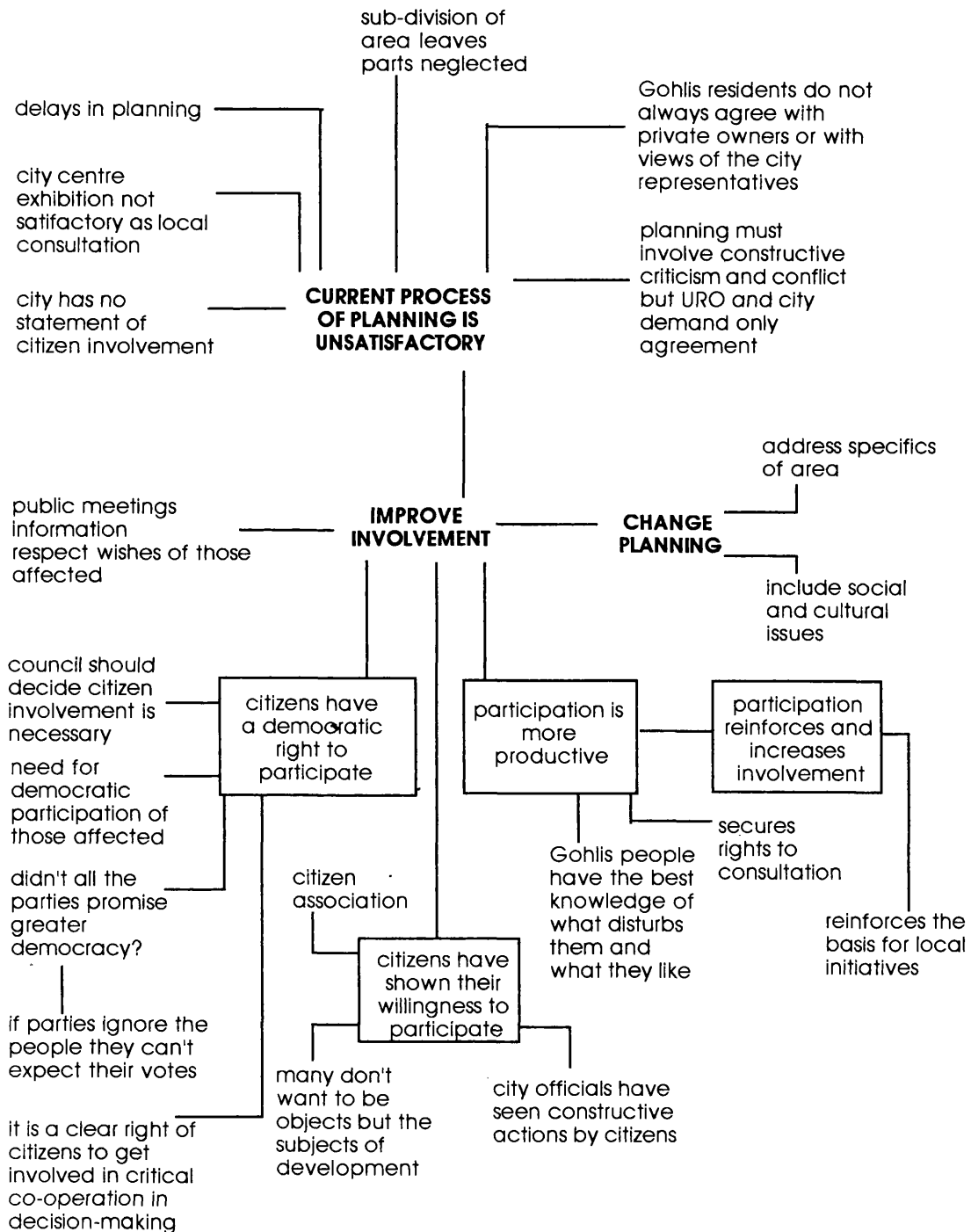
There were a variety of reactions more generally to the disparities between promised participation and the lack of renewal or participation. These included demands for more action, assertions of local citizenship, or reactions of dislocation, of fear and retreat, or of anger. Calls for more action particularly emphasised the need for collective action to change policy rather than individual action to deal with specific problems:

'I can't do anything about my income being too insufficient after 42 years of work. [...] I just need a reasonable, affordable flat. [...] Flats, offices stand empty, and many go to bed with housing worries and get up with them again. I know you can't do anything about this. But perhaps as an association with the necessary energetic voices you can achieve something.' (elderly resident in newsletter of Citizen Initiative Waldstraßenviertel, November 1994)

A second reaction was that groups increasingly began to question action by the city council in terms of the very discourses of careful renewal and democracy which it espoused. The demand for local citizenship had been

Figure 8.4: Contesting local citizenship

Source: Bürgerverein Gohlis, Gohlis newsletter, 1/93, 1



expressed by the leader of Pro Plagwitz in 1991 who argued that neighbourhoods were important for strong and deep social and cultural identification, and particularly for neighbourly and collective actions. 'Here the city resident becomes a citizen by not just defending individual interests but also by supporting and promoting public urban issues'. Citizenship was predicated on local activity. The 'best specialist [*Fachmann*] is the affected citizen [*Bürger*]' (in Elsässer, 1991, 7-8). The Gohlis association later returned to precisely these demands to criticise the city authorities. In the BV Gohlis newsletter the chair of the citizen association working group on urban renewal issues argued the way the preparatory study was produced was unsatisfactory because the URO and the city administration were unwilling to accept the need for argument as a positive process. He suggested a range of guarantees and specific forms for participation in the future for three main reasons (figure 8.4). Firstly, citizens have a democratic right to participate and will use their 'democratic veto' (their vote) if parties are less than willing. Secondly, citizens have already proved their ability and willingness to participate through the citizen association and involvement in various local issues. Thirdly, participation is more productive than planning over the residents' heads, because they have local knowledge, while the process in turn reinforces active involvement. Such arguments are based strongly on demands for changed forms of local governance on which many group members based their agendas for joining groups. The demand for shifts to recognition of local citizenship contested the basis of the planners' right to decide locally and of external interests (primarily capital) to drive local development.

Finally a trio of reactions express the sense of lost opportunities and frustration of many local activists by mid 1993. The situation in Neustadt illustrates these views. Paradoxically, despite the highly critical exchange over participation and renewal in April 1993, citizen association members later argued at a group meeting that, viewed strictly in legal terms, participation had taken place but this was not satisfactory because 'nothing has actually happened in local renewal until now' (man, A35, 11/5/93) The extent of official participation opportunities was, therefore, of little importance, since:

Man: 'What is much worse [than the lack of progress] is that the citizens don't come. [...] We lack the pressure from the

citizens, .. to take the city and the planners to task ... [The planners] notice when there are just three [...] or seven citizens. [...]

FS: 'Why don't the citizens come?'

Leader: 'The pressure of expectations was so great in 1989. [...] And now three years have passed, four years, and not much has been achieved. A few facades have been painted, a few houses fell down, many have moved away because nothing happened. [...] The people are like "Weebles".¹⁹' (A35, 11/5/93)

Rather than a discourse of modernisation, of liberalisation in finding new public spheres of action, the sentiments here concern continued divisions between the levels of decision-making and local action:

Woman 1: "I really have a high regard for you all, the way you keep going really, because, because it is, it is not tangible [*greifbar*]. [The whole change, especially the renewal process] is independent on the will and the actions of the individual.'

Leader: 'It is also a very different level that we work on. We cannot attack the departments or ignore them. That way we won't achieve anything.'

Woman 3: 'You have .. you can get so far.'

Woman 2: 'Yes.'

Woman 1: 'You see connections but can't really change anything. Whatever you do, it is just, just a different front to what there was before. You have the right to say something but it only works for some things.' (A35, 11/5/93)

This sense of disappointment and frustration where it seems little has changed produced several reactions. The first was a feeling of dislocation, of disruption in the connection to place, of dis-orientation. This is expressed in a series of postcards (figure 8.5) which the Neustadt initiative produced in late 1992. The brightness of the weather and the presence of trees or flowers (weeds) contrast sharply with the condition of the buildings and reflect the sense of disruption. Three pictures show a building which collapsed in September 1992 (figure 8.5, i-iii), the front door barricaded to prevent access. On it the initiative hung a wreath of

Figure 8.5: Set of postcards produced by BV Neustädter Markt,
September 1992

Leipzig-Neustadt

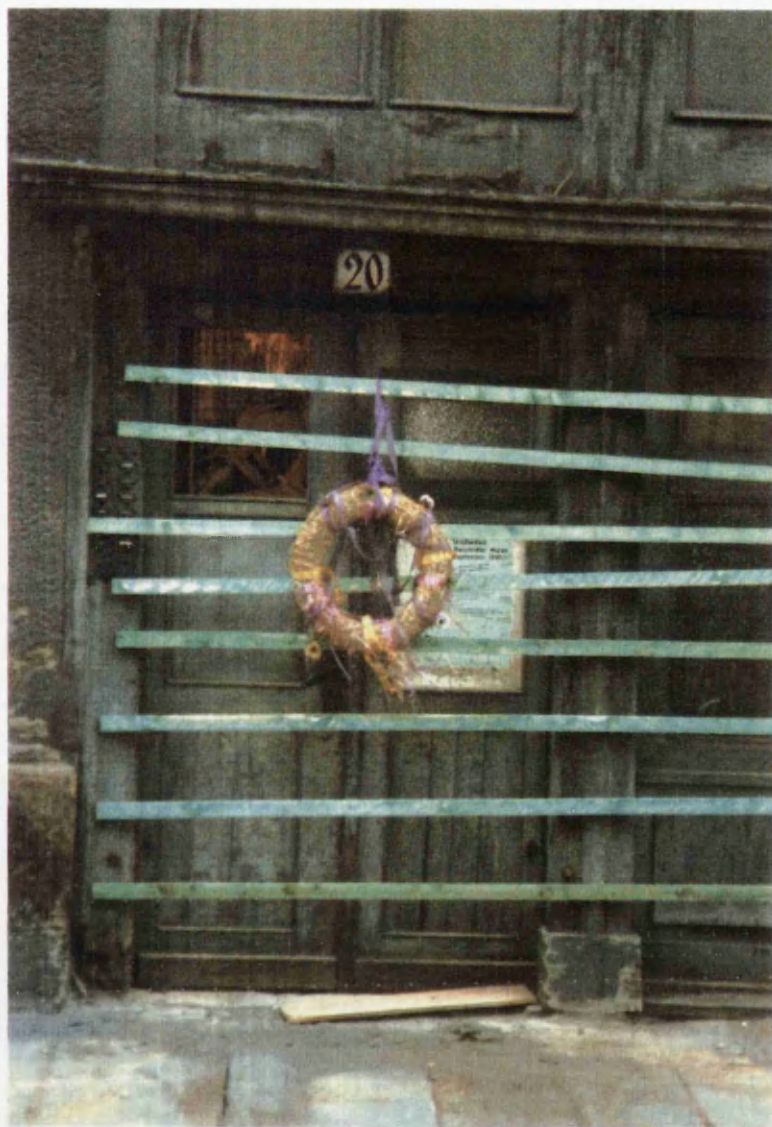
(i)



Leipzig-Neustadt

(ii)





(iii)

(iv)

Leipzig-Neustadt



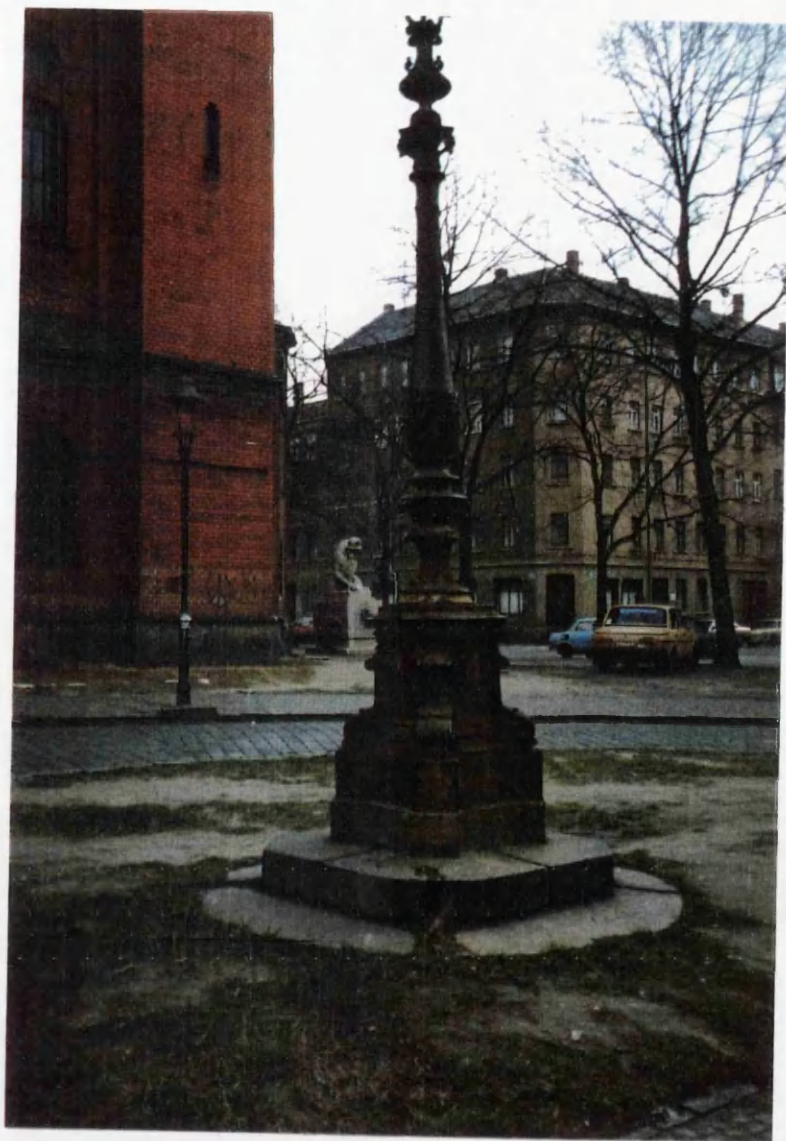


(v)

(vi)

Leipzig-Neustadt





(vii)

(viii)

Leipzig—Neustadt.



summer flowers, now tattered. The planks partially hide a poster advertising the first local festival the group organised in 1991. Four other pictures show the conflict between change and lack of progress. An entire row of four storey tenements with ground floor windows is bricked up with crumbling plaster, empty windows and broken glass (figure 8.5, iv). There are two pictures of restored buildings, yet both apparently positive signs are ambiguous. Figure 8.5, v shows a building with a new facade, windows, roof and satellite dish. Yet the ground floor is unrepaired and the shop still bricked up. The buildings on either side are unrepaired - one a ruin, the other untouched and fully occupied, while the repaired building has only one flat occupied. Figure 8.5, vi shows a corner building apparently fully restored which houses the URO local office on the ground floor. The upper three floors are empty. Since these were to be used as temporary housing for families relocated during renewal of other properties, that they are vacant is doubly significant. A further picture shows a grey day with little change to the local landscape (figure 8.5, vii). The only changes are graffiti on the war memorial and western cars parked between east German models. The final picture (figure 8.5, viii) is almost a cliché of weeds sprouting flowers in cracks in an old building. One reading is a hopeful one of overcoming the odds, but another more literal reading may be that this is the condition of the area; only weeds flourish while houses decay. The sense of disruption and alienation in this series of images is, it seems, intended, since it would also have been possible to choose pictures of positive changes to show more measured change and less disjointedness.

The next set of reactions to the lack of change is that of fear and retreat. Despite renewal area status, fear for the future of the area continued, and was increased by the uncertainties of the labour market:

Woman 1: 'The main concern is really work. And of course one's own house and flat, but little else.'

Woman 2: 'I would also say that many people in the area are now unemployed.'

Woman 1: 'Sometimes even both of them. They live in these old houses regardless of whether they are LWB or private. They now really are *afraid* to say anything, especially in a private building. If they went to the landlord and said 'You have to do this, or whatever' then they would say 'get

lost'. They are afraid, I mean, the landlord will find some reason or other so that [the tenant] is faced with the alternative, .. of putting up with everything the landlord does or moving out to the car park.'

Woman 2: [laughs].

Woman 1: 'You're all laughing now. But it is like that for many people. And if someone is unemployed now, he says to himself, 'move out? You can't. You can only just get the rent together' and people who are looking for a flat have a need but they can't fulfil it because they don't have the means. Even renovating by yourself, you can't do that either, especially not in a private building, because then the private landlord will say 'here we will do what I want and not what you want'. And this fear sits deep in the people.' (A35, 11/5/93)

Such fear often translates into a position of inaction or retreat - the group in Neustadt talked of people 'hiding behind their ovens'²⁰ (A35, 11/5/93), yet descriptions of this retreat were tempered with long discussions of the extent of the problems. Some argued that 'people would have preferred it' if the area had been renewed as planned in the GDR because 'then they would have had something visible, something tangible' and had a 'proper flat' (*ibid.*). While this view was not uncontested, there was agreement that 'it is not so important for the people how the house looks. The main thing is I have a flat and it is dry, warm and secure.²¹ And affordable too'. Unfortunately this 'shitty Wende' [*Scheißwende*] had prolonged any solution to the problems for another fifteen years. The disappointment was too much for many:

Woman: 'Everyone had a notice to move out for 1990 and then everyone who lived here said, well okay you can hold on for two years. Everything was always a bit delayed in the plan economy! [laughs] But some time at the beginning of the 1990s [something would happen] ... and then nothing happened and the disappointment was really huge.' (A35, 11/5/93)

The elite discourse of the People's Building Conference on careful renewal may not have been what some local people wanted. In retrospect,

many would be happy with any kind of improvement. This discussion was so important that all group members gave their own stories, not able to talk of the processes only in the third person. Many were disillusioned with the effectiveness of local action since 1989:

Woman: 'In the past [GDR] so much was promised. [...] I know my building was supposed to be renewed in 1980 and it has been delayed until now and there is not much done apart from a bit of paint, a few patches on the roof. None of it is proper. And that, that makes the people so depressed, because they have **always** heard just promises and the promises **continue**. Just like us [the initiative]. We said we would get involved but what have we achieved up to now? I mean we have achieved some things and we can be proud of them. But it is not enough for the citizens.'

(A35, 11/5/93)

A final reaction, however, was anger. Initially full of optimistic pronouncements about the area, the Neustadt neighbourhood newsletter by December 1992 contained critical observations, including regular columns with the by-line of 'Xanthippe'. (A 'Xanthippe' is "an unpleasant, quarrelsome, nagging woman",²² a negative term after the reputed characteristics of Socrates' wife.) The negative term is consciously employed to produce several pieces of 'angry writing', to borrow a phrase from Keith (1992). In figure 8.6, such a piece, one sees the anger at the lack of substance to forms of local involvement. That the need was felt to keep this in some way anonymous and to distance the texts from the group is perhaps a sign of the tension between the necessity to remain within the reasoned/ rational status necessary to be credited as serious contacts by planners and the need to reflect local exasperation with a lack of progress. Criticism was most sharp when focused on processes of 'careful renewal' and avowed characteristics of 'democracy'.

To summarise, the elements of the contested terrain of local development in the neighbourhoods of Leipzig include the nature of renewal of the area for the benefit of owners, capital, current residents, future residents or other architectural and planning considerations. There was a considerable shift over the period from 1989/90 to mid 1993 away from the ideal pronouncements of renewal for the 'good of Leipzig', for the

Figure 8.6: Angry writing in Neustädter Markt

Betroffenheit: Being affected

[Excerpts]

Be honest, it has definitely happened to you. You [...] make a nice plan. Then suddenly and unexpectedly some obstacle pops up and destroys your nice plan. That doesn't just happen to you, but also to people responsible for big plans, like town planners [...]

Renovation is more complicated than new construction because of the obstacles. The obstacles in this case are people or 'those affected', tenants, leasers, or the like. And because these people are there already the legislator has created specific rules about the way they are to be treated. One rule is [...] "Those affected should be encouraged to participate in the renovation (§137 in Planning Act)", [...] because it's really partly their business. But it was no doubt also clear to the legislators what those affected are as well - that is they are hurdles who disrupt the nice plans of the town planners, or even destroy them. So that's why the law is so vague [...]

[Example of a planning process for a part of the Neustädter Markt where the ostensible purpose of public consultation about possible development of the area is then undertaken by a jury with only one person from the area.]

You will think this cannot be true. But you are wrong. This event is in fact an especially good example of 'citizen participation'. Firstly some citizens are encouraged to participate so that one follows the law. Secondly the town planners did what was necessary so that the obstacles which come up in their planning don't get too big. You know - the main obstacles are the people, those affected, tenants, or the like ...[...]

Xanthippe

benefit of the neighbourhoods and for the residents. Instead the process becomes narrower, focusing on rent levels, renewal of any kind or no renewal at all. There are strong limitations to participation, resulting from the self-positioning of many planners as expert. The inability of established western planning praxis to cope with the need for renewal is compounded by the selective view of the western model adopted by the URO despite encouragement by others to adopt both East German and West German alternatives. This sense of closure and limitation, of increased uncertainty, frustration, fear and anger, of resignation and inaction, and the 'false' mirroring of the western models by the administration restricts the scope for alternative forms of action.

7 Constructions of transformation

Despite diverse details of renewal and local action in the five neighbourhoods, what emerges can be viewed as a series of tropes describing change due to reunification in relation to time and space, presence and absence, citizenship, action and retreat. All constitute discourses of the geography of reunification. They can, I will argue, be read within a framework provided by concepts of colonialism, hybridity and incommensurability.

7.1 Time and space

Concepts of space, time and space-time are part of what constitutes our everyday understandings of the geography of the world. In terms of reunification in Leipzig, a key element to understanding local change and varied interpretations of it was the contrasting characterisation of reunification as processes in time and space. On examination, the five case studies show that concepts of change adopted by Leipzig's planners used the distinction of time to explain the changes going on 'then' (in the GDR) and 'now' (post-reunification). This time metaphor divides previous practices in the GDR from the present and defines past practices as no longer appropriate. Time is seen as a linear process and the major disjunctures of 1989/90 lead to the construction of time periods which means that there cannot be parallel times. 'Now' cannot be two different periods at once.

In this time construction, the West is placed ahead of the East in a developmental paradigm. The official description of the "Old Federal States" and the "New Federal States" is one example of this process. This description, employed predominantly by advocates of the administrative-technical, economistic and legalistic views (section 5.1) constructs the Western states as experienced. The New *Länder* now follow their model along similar paths to learn from the West. Catching up is even a possibility. This view assumes a possible time-sequence as follows:

- 1 'Opening up' and reactions to the East, creating space for debate.
- 2 Establishment of institutions of government, and agenda-setting.
- 3 Recognition of the problems to be tackled by correctly applying western principles.

In effect this 'modernisation' view fits with the interpretation of western 'victory' after the 'fall' of communism. Interestingly, many group members used phrases such as 'we have democracy now' or 'we are living under capitalism now', both of which seem to indicate a similar assumption of discrete time, and indeed these were often used to complain about the lack of particular supposed system characteristics ('we are in a democracy now, so why aren't we being involved?'). However, more often local activists argued that while the system may have changed, the people and the places were still the same: 'we may have adopted the new state forms but the people have not changed' (A36, 20/4/93).

This was not a professional versus lay people's view. There was also conflict between the city planning authority and the western architects commissioned to carry out the renewal studies, as there was between city departments. In terms of the models of local development and the relation between citizens and administration, conflicts emerged particularly in understandings of how to deal with existing western practices. By and large, at least in their repertoire accounts, URO planners adopted the administrative-technocratic and economistic views which concentrated on implementing western practice as best as possible, according to the letter of the law and giving priority to ownership rights. Planners' own frustrations at a lack of change were tempered by a tendency to seek to explain to citizens why processes would take longer and attempts to instill 'realism' (A37, 23/4/93). However, this diachronic perspective was of little use to current residents. Many members became very pessimistic, angry, frustrated during the various meetings and discussions:

Woman: 'You cannot do anything without having to check things out all over the place. [...] You cannot say there is a particular time and it will be clear by then. That makes people mad .. It is [...] an elastic band. There is the theory and the legal basis that particular steps have to be taken and the citizens should be asked and the right to participation guaranteed but practically it is not implemented.' (A35, 11/5/93)

For residents, promises that renovation would happen have been ongoing for literally decades. The disappointment which the *Wende* brought in some areas was huge. There was a gradual recognition that the planning problems for other areas, the blockage of property claims and the shift in planning practice from state-led comprehensive, prescriptive renewal, to 'possibilist' subsidies, would all make the process take much longer. Consequently time felt 'like an elastic band', the fifteen years when the area might be renewed are fine, but the elderly say 'I won't be alive then', the younger members say 'it is too long'. Plans to renovate areas for the current residents seem almost doomed to fail, since these are precisely the people who will probably not be there. At the same time, people experience reunification as a process of time-space compression, everything is 'like a speeded-up film', out of control.

Such constructions contrast with any notions of time as a measured, constant dimension. Group members did talk of time-scales marked by landmarks on a terrain of fast-moving change - revolution, 'the time of the many elections', the time of the meeting, setting up the group, reunification 'they all believed in Helmut then', and then the 'absolute rock bottom' [*absolute Ebbe*] of 1991 (A35, 11/5/93). However, this time frame is not marked as a divide between epochs, as it seems to be in planners' arguments about what was suitable 'then' and what is appropriate now. Instead it is a continuum linking past and present, a 'tide washing over' while the residents and places remain.

In contrast to the constructions of time, local group members seem to talk of change more in spatial terms of divisions between East and West, not of the East moving towards the West, but of the West moving to the East, fearing that the 'Wessis' would come and take their houses, that the

'Golden West' or 'Wild capitalism is coming to engulf us' (A35, 11/5/93). Change comes from outside to affect the local situation. It is not a predestined development which can be caught up on. Rather than the East joining the West in its 'progress', the West has 'come' to change the East. While many such statements are articulated with irony, the implied power relations are clear. Learning how to deal with the situation is presented as losing false ideals and realising what lies in store, understanding how little one can do, becoming aware that the practices of the West are differently articulated in the East (B26, 23/4/92).

By adopting the metaphor of change as a spatial process residents invoke a whole range of implications such as colonisation or attack. However, in contrast to the time metaphor, spatial processes also allow for simultaneous differences. The metaphor of change as 'time' blurs power relations, eliminates possible different versions of change, asserts current problems are necessary but transitional to a new and better existence. In contrast different realities can exist in separate places simultaneously, different developments are possible. It is possible therefore for the division between East and West to remain. The prime dualism used in terms of 'here' and 'there' is of course East and West (Germany). This dualism may, in some cases, be used to set up oppositional positions, particularly in opposition to the forms of development taking place,²³ but at the same time there were signs that people were not arguing for an oppositional position but for something alternative, hybrid, questioning the West as the only possible outcome. This reflects Bhabha's argument presented in chapter 2 that this 'gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (Bhabha, 1990, 211, quoted in Rose, 1994, 50).

7.2 Presence, absence, visibility and false visions

A major reason for all five groups to form was either a fear the area would be 'forgotten', the market would mean the 'end' for local people (LVZ, 17/18/2/90), or that existing features would be lost. The groups' successes were measured by getting the area and the group 'recognised' as important (meaningful, significant) and their key tactic was publicity, making issues public, open and known, making them visible. The linguistic links are made because the term for 'publish' (*veröffentlichen*)

has the same root as to make public (*öffentlich machen*). In many areas, repertoire statements about local renewal revolved around complexes of stopping unwanted change (prevent, secure, exclude, remove), the need for positive change, the threat of attacks on the area and the lack of completeness which its physical and social fabric suffered. The trope of the threat of disappearance and attack recurred. Increased visibility was effectively used to ensure the existence of a particular feature, the local area, the population and as such visibility became an existential necessity as well as a political tool. The threat that an area might 'die' was, of course, the ultimate step in existential disappearance.

However, such making public, making visible was not paralleled by development in public action by a broad sector of the population, despite the extensive organisation of local action groups. Several discussions with local groups revolved around the extent to which in everyday life there had in fact been a retreat from the public sphere. Some figures of speech indicate the effect of the problems: 'hiding behind the oven', 'retreating into a shell' (A3, 11/11/91), or even 'dying'. Participants (A35, 11/5/93) described how face-to-face contacts in the area existed, or did at least until the early 1980s. Subsequent loss of neighbourhood contacts related to the revolution or to the material run-down of areas before 1989. Conditions post-1989 exacerbated the process because of changes in workloads and work times, in the level of daily bureaucracy, and the lack of physical change for the better in the area. The effect is that neighbours become 'invisible' to each other, that common support networks are lost. That this amounts to a certain sense of nostalgia is clear (Radstone, 1992), but there seems to be a shift in the organisation of social life. Gone was the state organisation which at the very local level provided one form of involvement, and many lost their work place solidarity and support while informal networks of family, close, street and neighbourhood which had provided another form of contact were reduced as people had other concerns.

As a political tool, making areas visible prevented them from being cleared completely, dis-appearing, and to some extent prevented the population from being removed. However, this was seen as a hollow victory in some areas, an illusion, or false kind of seeing, since many promises to develop areas seem to have been impossible to keep. Even the houses where renovation work has begun are not what they seem. Behind

the facades, new windows and roofs renovated, living conditions often remain unchanged or no-one lives there. The phrase '*Potemkinsche Dörfer*' (Potemkin villages) refers to facades erected by Duke Potemkin to pretended to Empress Catherine II that there were nice villages in the Crimea. As used here (A25, 26/9/92) it referred both to the facades of such buildings and, figuratively, to illusions of change, the deceptiveness of the process. City planners denied this but responded in a public forum arguing that new facades had at least 'lightened the picture' of the neighbourhoods, again stressing appearance. The sense grew that little had changed:

Woman 1: 'The situation is no different to before. [...] Nothing has been done and now we also have the whole legal insecurity. Your existence is threatened. Those who have a job don't get to do anything else and practically there is this withdrawal [...]'

Leader: 'Yes. Waiting for death.'

Woman 1: 'The elderly, yes. [...]'

Woman 2: 'It makes no sense for many people. For me personally it is better to leave than to just get active in the local area and then you can still wait for 10 or 15 years, which is just too long, so I am going to move away. I do not want to stay living here.' (A35, 11/5/93)

Woman 1: 'And when they now withdraw, the people who have been engaged, [...] it's true that we were just about at the point of giving up too. We counted out - do we go on, do we not? [nervous laugh]'

Man: 'Now don't all be so pessimistic.' (A35, 11/5/93)

Such disappointment (or a slow sober realisation of the situation) that the visions of the West were false are in line with Borneman's thesis of false mirroring. All of these experiences seem to confirm what one western observer wrote:

'Whereas West Germans see [reunification] primarily as an economic burden, East Germans understand it as a process which [...] brings long-term hope but short-term disorientation. This disorientation is sometimes expressed in radical terms which suggest parallels with the disenfranchised way of life under the old GDR regime. The themes of loss of control over

one's own destiny and of returning to the status of objects of policies are common in public discussion of the impact of unification.' (Woods, 1993, ix)

7.3 Hybridity and incommensurability

While constructions of time and space seem to have little relation to the visibility or false visions of local action there is a key linkage. False mirroring of East and West reciprocally was found to underlie the division of Germany and the construction of the two states in the Cold War (Borneman, 1992). This false mirroring is, I would argue, continued after reunification. The insistence on the system purity of then and now, that 'now' must involve the entire opposite to the GDR, and can have no common linkages is a function both of eastern acceptance that the two were and are incommensurable, and of the western promotion of itself as the mirror opposite of the GDR. Calls for any hybrid or compromise developments in planning in eastern Germany violate these divisions and force those involved to accept the falsity of their past images. The extent to which such visions were disruptive of local development were shown where western planners (notably lindener baukontor or the Swedish company FFNS) were happy to advocate alternative types of development which had been practised in the West while URO planners refused their validity.²⁴ Such problems were recognised by other parts of the Leipzig administration more quickly than in the URO. The LWB and the housing department were both advocates of alternatives models of privatisation and the housing department called for a pro-active stance in housing renewal, encouraging self-build and tenant participation (LVZ, 26/5/93).

7.4 Action and citizenship

While the discourses of retreat and inaction were strong, it must be remembered that these interviews and discussions were all collected in situations of action and involvement. Thus, despite such retreat, a framework of active citizenship had also emerged (or remained). It could be argued in the case of the local groups in Leipzig that stressing the local community based on presence, commonalities ('*wir Gohliser*') and residence constituted a retreat from the unfamiliar, from the speed of change and from the schizophrenic problematic of tensions between too much and too little change. At another level one could see this retreat as

what Bhabha calls 'a symbolic space of cultural survival' which he calls a 'melancholia in revolt' (1992, 65). Adopting a position of 'wearing one's wounds on one's skin as an eyesore to the coloniser' rather than making what seems like attempts at resistance, offers a position which refuses the dominant logic validity.

On the other hand, many reacted against such passive/ victim/ object positioning. The Mayor was surprised at the 'will and readiness of many people to help with reconstruction' where he had expected resignation (Neues Deutschland, 20/2/91). Business leaders and diplomats argued people should 'have courage', 'take chances', 'express the will of the people', develop 'entrepreneurial personalities' (A31, 15/10/92). Such 'active personalities' willing to take chances and risks are in many ways almost a parody of the supposed characteristics required to survive in the 'risk society'. However, the active, struggling subject could also act in opposition. Christian Führer (pastor at the St Nicholas church) argued:

'We have to get involved in our own affairs once more. Others are doing it anyway and without being asked [...] We must be responsible for ourselves once again and with grim determination search for, recognise and use our chances.'
(quoted in FAKT, 4, 1993)

As another participant argued 'I am getting fed up with this pessimism. It is projects that come undone - not people' (B13, 21/11/91). The inability to distinguish between the individual and the surroundings repeats Stührmann's (1991) findings that people could not disassociate themselves from the problems faced, something which is suggestive of the schizophrenia which Shurmer-Smith and Hannam discuss (1994).²⁵

One of the key metaphors of the change in urban planning practices demanded by the local groups and others was that planning 'from above' be replaced with planning 'from below' (see chapter 5). Such changes advocated by the People's Building Conference and in the immediate post-Wende period stressed that citizens should be adult, co-equal partners. As this chapter has shown, however, this changed over time so that the citizens were continually restricted in discourse to positions subordinate to planning administrators and particularly to property owners. Their major problems come in the tensions between what was expected (or promised) and what was delivered. One problem perhaps arose from the ambiguity of the term '*Beteiligung*'. Meaning both involvement and

participation it is both an active and passive verb (*beteiligen*), 'involvement' being offered by the administration, or 'participation', which implies a more active construction and allows for independent action.

A further issue is, as a planner from Rotterdam argued (B30, 18/10/92), that the reversal between 'from above' [*oben*] and 'from below' [*unten*] was not sufficient to alter the power relations of planning since that remains within the confines of hierarchical thinking, rather than treating all participants in the process as equally responsible. Indeed, attempts at 'reversing' relations simply lead to defensive reactions by many planners who find it too easy to argue from their position '*oben*', as Osterland (1994) found in the case of city administrative staff who dismissed criticism from citizen initiatives as a 'lack of democratic understanding' from people who do not understand their correct position, because they constructed the initiatives as purely oppositional, rather than accepting them as equal but different. Simply reversing the former GDR relations of 'centre and local' or 'up there' and 'down below' does not seem to provide a solution, because in many cases what occurs is that one finds new forms of the GDR activist groups which speak at the local population and speak for them rather than trying to change their positions as active citizens. It was only later that the discourse of rights and democracy developed to demand 'democratic rights' of involvement.

7.5 East and West

Leipzig's changes were fundamentally part of a process of readjustment between East and West. For many activists and some planners, the East was constructed as a mix of problems and yet with chances for developments which avoided the 'mistakes' of the West. The West is viewed with ambivalence as either the only way or as a mix of good or bad developments. Yet there are also differences within this position. These issues are often underlain by other political and social relations. In other words there are also relations between the anti-systemic movements of east and west, suggesting possible future alliances between advocates of a more co-operative model of local renewal.

Local action, however, was about more than influence over the development of the local area in the face of 'incoming' administrators,²⁶

or of capital processes. It was also about finding a protected site for identity and action in which and from which new identities could be negotiated. The importance of the citizen association was 'to find a way where one does not have to wait quietly to see what will happen to one, but one is rather active oneself, where one perhaps just works a very narrow field but precisely that is too an expression that one is finding some identity' (A1, 4/11/91). It is an attempt to defend oneself against powerlessness and to resist the 'devilising' of the East by having somewhere where people from the West are not in control:

Man: 'Many are trying to defend themselves against some kind of situation of powerlessness [...] whether socially or ecologically or conservation or whatever [...] I think they are trying to take the citizens' identity away from them by damning this old society - everything which was there was bad. [...] Because the initiatives and everything are run by the residents, you have to say they are largely independent of the so-called *Wess/s*. [...] You are amongst yourselves again and have certain common experiences and from these then also a certain common aim.' (A1, 4/11/91)

The actions of groups in Leipzig constitute the use of hybrid positions as strategic choices. It seems that the identities are only just beginning to negotiate a path along 'between the river banks'.

8 Conclusion

The contested development of Leipzig's neighbourhoods after 1989 was affected by the appropriation of the urban environment by capital and by the application of (West) German administrative norms. Not surprisingly many problems arose within this system change, often exacerbated by lack of knowledge, of both how arrangements should work and how to defend oneself should they be otherwise. As chapter 7 showed, capital appropriation involved changed norms of ownership, but, the issues of reunification were and are not simply about learning processes and overcoming practical difficulties. Instead this chapter has illustrated that there are (within the East as much as within the West) competing, although not exclusive, discourses around the nature of local

development, the position of the administration and the population and more generally about the nature of reunification which cross cut East/West divides in many cases. The chapter illustrated the administrative-technical discourses and the co-operative-grassroots discourses employed largely by URO planners and by local group members (and some western planners) respectively. They used differing constructions of the nature of reunification in relation to time and space, normative models of citizenship and East/West divisions. Far from being aligned exclusively with West and East, the two discourses rather fall within modernisation versus colonisation models. The administrative-technical discourse is aligned within a promotion of correct western models, although they may not be perfect, viewing time in relation to before and after 1989/90 as two distinct periods where only 'pure' system views are possible. Any hint of hybrid action is deemed incommensurable with the acts of a democratic-capitalist state.

However, one must also be careful in such categorisations since it becomes clear that some of the discourse is a learned one of repertoire answers and that the personal responses of URO personnel in some situations are concerned with adapting western models and with local input (A41, 29/4/93). Similarly, the 'pure' or distinct time construction also related to some of the oppositional discourse which argued that people cannot understand the logic of the new system. Both involve false mirroring about the purity of system change.

In comparison, the co-operative model adopts a hybrid position, or at least aims for it. Alliances across East/West divides for progressive forms of development seem possible. Ironically, however, the very way in which the groups assert the need for hybrid forms (of avoiding the mistakes of the West, of GDR experiences of self-help, and so on) is by emphasising the here/there, East/West divisions and the colonial power relations, arguing that 'here' we need different policies for our different places. This may contain within itself enough contradictions to prevent effective alliances with western organisations, although there is some evidence of co-operation. Perhaps more interesting is that there is little evidence of alliances across the East for the Leipzig groups (B30, 18/10/92), perhaps because groups are concerned with such a wide range of issues that they become less like other single issues and tenant rights organisations.

The colonisation discourse de-naturalises choices made in Leipzig and Germany after the *Wende* and undermines any claims that changes are the only possible choice. The following chapter relates to the change of elected politics in the post 1989 period to ask whether these discourses find their expression in political debate or whether, as the careful renewal model claimed, people were acting 'for the good' of Leipzig.

1 Rents in Waldstraßenviertel had, by 1992, risen to levels around £500 to £1000 equivalent for monthly rents (A42, 11/5/93).

2 Kindergartens, a community centre, an after-school centre, and an arts project were all affected.

3 73% 'felt well in Gohlis', and 62% 'were happy to be Gohlisers', because of the good surroundings, greenery, attachment to the local area, accessibility, and closeness to the city centre, as well as the relative quality of the area in relation to other worse areas of Leipzig (Reuther et al., 1990b).

4 The loss of 15% from 1985 to 1989 was much higher than the city rate (Reuther et al., 1990a).

5 Saxony adopted the Baden-Württemberg model (Reuther and Doehler, IBIS, 1991, 8, 6).

6 The 1993 study also proposed a preservation statute for one sub-area and an ordinance preventing changed use.

7 See chapter 9 for a fuller discussion of the limitations of administrative change.

8 Leipzig Tenants' Union also attempted collective forms of action, including a petition to prevent rent increases.

9 They also developed contacts directly with Leipzig Tenant's Union to campaign for housing hardship payments in Saxony (Bürgerinitiative Waldstraßenviertel e.V., 1993).

10 Ironically, such projects were subsequently threatened by cuts in funding after reunification and the chances for such extensive programmes of involvement were reduced as the pressures for change meant planners saw them as an unnecessary 'luxury' (Hannemann, 1993).

11 See chapter 6.

12 The German term is '*unter den Nägeln brennen*', literally to 'burn under one's nails' and figuratively meaning to be 'dying to' or 'itching' to do something.

13 Only around thirty of the buildings in the area were LWB-owned and without claims (A37, 23/4/93).

14 Not surprisingly the URO planners rejected this interpretation vociferously, but the finding matches similar findings in western Germany (Thomaßen, 1988).

15 The 'Komitee für Gerechtigkeit' was a non-aligned organisation established after reunification by those particularly concerned about the ways reunification was dealing with the GDR past, both in the cases of individuals and in more collective forms.

16 Such opposition was found among residents in other areas in their reactions to the apparent injustices of the new housing system, so that in Waldstraßenviertel, although there was some more consensus between citizen initiative and city administration because they adopted a similar legalist view of change, there were also tensions where residents took an oppositional stance:

Man in public: 'In our building someone has converted the attic flat and is asking 20DM. And how is the pensioner whose flat is

too big supposed to afford that - then the smaller one costs more than the big one did!

Head of Department of Housing: 'For new housing the landlord can set what rent he likes. [...]'

Man: 'Can he charge 20DM or not? Yes or no?'

Head of Housing Department: 'He can demand it if he financed the building from the free capital market. Yes.' (A44, 27/4/93)

17 The renewal agency, before its removal, trod a line between pragmatic co-operation, participation and exposition of problems; at a public meeting where a local building owner complained about a lack of official responses despite a 'war of paper' the renewal agent explained the problem was because of the 'complicated legal situation which there is here in East Germany, that there is West German law and there are [...] co-ordination problems.' He then offered to arrange a meeting of all concerned. (A25, 26/9/92).

18 Some in the city council wanted to discredit the whole project so the money would be diverted to 'economic development'. They would use any criticism by Pro Plagwitz as a pretence to argue the 'citizens are against it' (B28, 28/9/92).

19 The German was '*Stehaufmännchen*' - 'stand-up-man', a children's toy which is weighted so that however hard it is knocked over it stands up again. The 'Weebles' were a similar British toy.

20 Large tiled and free-standing stoves for burning lignite or wood standing in the corner were features of almost every flat. They provided efficient heating and high levels of pollution.

21 'Dry, warm and secure' was a slogan of the long GDR campaign to solve the housing problem. It is used here with mild irony. That 'affordable' had to be added and was not part of the GDR phrase indicates the extent to which price was unimportant in the GDR housing market.

22 From Duden Deutsches Universal Wörterbuch.

23 A leaflet distributed by the PDS delivered a very much more oppositional message (PDS press release, 11/10/91) demanding that housing be anchored in the constitution as a human right, that the government undertake a social housing programme which would avoid the mistakes of the FRG social housing, (although there is no mention of the mistakes of the GDR social housing sector), that speculation be prohibited, rent increases be linked to income increases, and that squats for the purpose of renovation be legalised (in this point they concur with the oppositional movements of Berlin or Hamburg, for example, Rada, 1991).

24 This situation was also found in Berlin where most east Berlin initiatives had contacts to precisely these kind of protest or action groups in the western part of Berlin. They therefore found an ambiguous relation to the west which at once rejected many of the forms which it took, but saw the potentials which the actions of groups in the west and the potential of planning legislation for the development in the former GDR.

25 Shurmer-Smith and Hannam (1994) discuss Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'body without organs', 'a product of schizophrenia, which is based on clinical experience that 'an inability to perceive oneself as fragmentary or discontinuous with one's environment and contacts is one of the manifestations of the condition ... schizophrenia' (p165), and that this is in turn 'a serious way of perceiving the world' (p166).

26 There is criticism of some departments, especially where there are 'new young people from the West' who come and just want to solve their particular problem without regard for the local area (such as moving the old-folk's home to a green-field site) 'it is as if we are ruled from outside' (A43, 11/5/93).

Chapter 9

Geography and politics: councillors, citizens and contested geographies of citizenship

1 Introduction

Most studies of local government restructuring in East Germany concentrate on changes in the administration of local government.¹ Less has been done to study the new links between citizens and city council mediated through local councillors. This partly reflects the tendency to regard unification in administrative and technical terms rather than examining social, political and cultural adjustment. In practical terms help from western states or cities focused on administration rather than elected councillors and processes of local democracy (Frank, 1991). Such approaches exclude analysis of political processes and ironically reproduce the GDR emphasis on administration rather than local decision-making.

What is apparent from the preceding chapters on the contested nature of urban change in Leipzig is that elected city councillors are also largely absent from this account. This chapter aims to address this absence. It asks how councillors constructed their relation to local action and local change, both in normative statements and in practice, and asks how structures of local political representation may influence this relation. It asks whether the definition of citizen associations as non-party political affects the ways in which councillors are involved, and how this intersects with the discourses of action and urban change in Leipzig, and with concepts describing reunification in the previous chapter.

2 Method of chapter

This chapter is based on interviews with ten local councillors and one party officer carried out in spring 1992, mid-term between the May 1990 elections and elections in 1994. In 1990, 128 councillors were elected to Leipzig city council (the number is a legacy of the GDR emphasis on the numerical value of participation; Richter, 1989). This was on a proportional basis, structured around ten large multi-member electoral

wards. Each ward had between 8 and 17 councillors, in proportion to the population of the area. As a result, none of the five study neighbourhoods (nor indeed any other neighbourhood) was represented directly by one councillor. When I asked each party group for contact names of councillors able to speak about the five areas, the larger areas were more comprehensively covered while only few could speak about Neustädter Markt. Not all councillors could be interviewed. Those interviewed for Gohlis came from SPD, CDU, FDP, Bündnis 90 and PDS, those for Stötteritz and Waldstraßenviertel from CDU and Bündnis 90, for Plagwitz from SPD and Bündnis 90, and for Neustädter Markt from SPD.

Information and opinions were sought on the councillors' personal links to the area in question and on the ways in which they viewed local issues and problems (appendix 5). Councillors were asked about their awareness of local activities to alter local conditions so as to gauge their awareness of, or involvement with the citizen associations and other local organisations. They were asked directly about their reaction to the work of the citizen associations and about links between action and local identity. I asked about links to other councillors representing the same part of the city and to local parties. This chapter sets out to show variations and similarities among councillors in their responses to these questions (section 3 and 4) in order to help explain their relative absence from the previous chapters. Section 5 then explores the redefinition of the locus of politics and of 'the political' in general.

3 Personal contacts and evaluations of local areas

The May 1990 local elections in Leipzig produced the only SPD majority in Saxony, with CDU second, PDS third and Bündnis 90 fourth.² Levels of party representation varied between electoral wards (table 9.1), but not significantly so. The SPD was first or first equal with CDU in all ten. CDU was joint first or second and PDS and Bündnis 90 shared third and fourth. Partly a function of larger areas which obscure local variations, these similarities may also reflect a less pronounced area segregation of socio-economic groupings (see chapter 5).

In terms of the councillors' social make-up, there are considerable biases. Women constitute between zero (Inner South) and sixty percent (North) of councillors with 21% overall, compared to 53.7% in Leipzig's population

Table 9.1: Results of Leipzig local elections, 6th May 1990 by electoral district

(number of councillors by subsequent party groupings)

Electoral district (a)	SPD	CDU	PDS and DFD (b)	B90, Greens and UFV	FDP, BFD, and VS	DSU	Indep	Total	Female	Male	Doc-torate
Central	4	4	2	3	-	-	1	14	5	9	8
North	5	4	3	2	-	1	-	16	6	10	3
Outer NE	6	3	2	1	-	-	-	12	2	10	4
Inner NE	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	8	2	6	3
Inner S	4	2	2	2	-	-	-	10	0	10	4
Outer S	4	3	1	1	1	1	-	11	2	9	4
SE	5	4	2	2	2	1	-	16	2	14	4
SW	4	3	1	1	1	1	-	11	2	9	3
Inner W	4	3	1	1	1	1	-	11	1	10	3
Outer W	5	4	3	2	2	1	-	17	4	13	2
CITY (c)	45	34	18	16	8	6	1	128	26	100	38
% of seats	35	27	14	12.5	6	5	0.8	100	21	79	30
% of city vote (d)	35	27	14	12	6	4	1	100	-	-	

Sources: For electoral districts the source is LVZ, 18/5/90.

Notes

(a) The electoral districts do not coincide with administrative sub-districts. The five study areas fall in the following electoral districts: Waldstraßenviertel and Neustädter Markt in Central, Gohlis divided between North and Central, Stötteritz in South East, Plagwitz in South West.

(b) For parties see note 3 chapter 3. Other parties are German Social Union (DSU, East German counterpart to CSU), BFD subsequently merged with FDP (liberal democrats), DFD (Democratic Women's Federation) a GDR mass organisation allied with PDS, UFV (Independent Women's Association) women's movement aligned to new parties. Independent candidates could stand. The one elected was Superintendent Magirus of the Nikolai Church, subsequently elected City President.

(c) District information is from provisional lists and one each of the CDU and SPD is omitted. The totals for SPD and CDU are therefore one greater than the sum from electoral districts.

(d) Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1992a, 157. Note how close the distribution of seats was to the vote. The hurdle for achieving one seat was 0.5% of the vote.

(Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c). In 1985 in the GDR 42.6% of all county councillors and 38.7% of councillors in regional assemblies were women but they were severely underrepresented at higher levels in Party and State (Dennis, 1988). Direct comparisons with GDR averages are difficult as women were better represented in smaller communes. However, it seems there is a lower proportion of women councillors now and that a higher proportion are found in the citizen associations. While 9.3% of Leipzig's population had completed higher education in 1989 (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991c), 30% of councillors have doctorates or a professorial title. It is particularly high in Centre which includes Leipzig University and other educational establishments, and is low in Outer West (Grünau).³ Councillors are therefore disproportionately highly-qualified men.

In the system adopted in May 1990, the mayor was an elected councillor put forward by the largest party, who simultaneously became chief executive of the administration (appendix 7). Dr. Lehmann-Grube, former chief executive of Hannover city council was invited to campaign as SPD senior candidate and was subsequently elected mayor. In contrast, as with lower administrative levels, virtually all councillors were Leipzig residents. Not all were newcomers to political office. Some, particularly in CDU, PDS and the liberal parties had been city or sub-district representatives in the GDR. Others, particularly in SPD and Bündnis 90, were newcomers to political office. For analysis, however, the newcomer/old hand divide offers little scope as it reinforces party divisions, obscuring possible links. Likewise only two women were interviewed and both were Bündnis 90 councillors. Instead I would argue that the transformations of reunification affected all councillors, new or old, and the constructs they brought to bear on their involvement.

3.1 Evaluation of local problems

All the councillors interviewed lived or had lived recently in their area and were directly affected by local conditions. Their appreciation of local problems mirrored that of the citizen associations (see chapter 6). Four fifths of councillors discussed housing and decay of the built environment, three quarters talked about problems in industry, local businesses and unemployment. Lack of facilities and traffic problems were mentioned by six of the eleven. Many are local council responsibilities, making their mention unsurprising, but others are not,

particularly the industrial policy of the *Treuhand* (A14, A10) and social legislation.

Problems with facilities were said to originate in the decline of the GDR and had been exacerbated since by competition from out-of-town developments (A10, A11) and higher business rents (A16, A21). Common problems arose for social and cultural facilities from the end of factory-based services (A10, A11), cuts due to demands and costs (A9) and problems with the ownership of property (A21). Councillors are therefore aware of the problems resulting from the modernisation thrust of local and regional developments.

One specific issue raised was the presence of 'foreigners' (*Ausländer*), especially in Gohlis. This was seen as a 'problem of presence' resulting in complaints about noise, traffic and illegal street trading. While all Gohlis councillors mentioned the issue, they were involved in different ways in seeking solutions.⁴ Finally there were 'problems of threat' (e.g. building a hotel in a quiet street, a petrol station near a nursery school or road plans, A11). Often highly localised, they were seen as valid problems but in some cases councillors thought protest was only aimed at displacing problems in a German 'NIMBY' reaction, the 'St. Florian Principle': 'St. Florian not my house! Set some other on fire!' (A11, 3/4/92). Councillors felt exasperated because local residents failed to see the larger picture (A11, A16) and they criticised the limited focus of such actions.

Despite problems all councillors found potential in their areas for better living conditions: access to parks and relatively good buildings in Gohlis and Waldstraßenviertel, the latter's proximity to the city centre, integration of work and home in a 'working-class-community' of neighbourly contact in Plagwitz, and Stötteritz's potentially pleasant, quiet surroundings. Even Neustädter Markt was seen to offer a better quality of life in an older area compared to inner city clearance areas or peripheral estates. The tension between the current condition (*ist*) and what the areas 'should' be (*soll*), used as a basis for action by the citizen associations (chapter 6), was also present in the councillors' responses.

3.2 Identity and local action

Local identity as a motive for local action and as a desired outcome of local action was mentioned by councillors. However, they were not unanimous in the importance they attached to local identity. Most argued Leipzig provided a greater focus for identification than individual neighbourhoods, but there were variations within and between areas (not on party lines) in the origins, extent and effects of identity in relation to action.

Two accounts of identity in Waldstraßenviertel illustrate this well. The CDU councillor for Waldstraßenviertel (A20, 30/4/92) had lived there since birth and stressed the importance of past experiences. In the GDR most WBAs were only active at election time, but some, including Waldstraßenviertel, held local cultural, community events despite government disapproval. Current local action is not a direct effect of recent events but rather 'a certain protest attitude'. GDR government attempts to 'destroy old traditions which had grown over the past centuries, in order to build the new traditions of socialism' included replacing the *Länder* with districts. The language used stresses that local attachment and traditions are organic (*gewachsen*) in contrast to their destruction (*zerstören*) and the artificial construction (*aufbauen*) of GDR districts. However, since the 1970s old identities had been revived, particularly for older people, in local cultural organisations, including those based on the traditions of Saxony and on links to one's neighbourhood. This was also a 'defence mechanism' against the politicisation of local life, a 'rather passive thing really'. The councillor argued that the demands for localised decision-making were a positive step 'for the simple reason that it is always good when people are committed to their area, [...] a great attachment to home [*Heimatverbundenheit*] [...] because only through such attachment' do people take care of the local area. However, after 1990 the councillor saw little local activism in general terms (e.g. welfare organisations) except when issues directly concerned people's homes or cars. Another Waldstraßenviertel councillor, from Bündnis 90 (A9, 30/3/92), had recently moved to the area and argued that commitment to action was present. Levels of identification depended on improvements in the area but action for the area also created identification: 'I notice that now that I am in city politics I also identify a bit with my quarter. Don't know if I

would have previously.' This councillor was herself a member of the local citizen association.

In Plagwitz councillors argued that repression of local identities in the GDR led to an upsurge post-1989 in the 'Plagwitz identity' (A10, 1/4/92). Urban clearance had threatened to destroy Plagwitz's 'face' and 'flair' (A8, 30/3/92), echoing the personification of Leipzig's problems at the People's Building Conference (chapter 5) and by local activists (chapters 6 and 8). The extent to which this produced action was seen as limited. Stötteritz, in contrast, was deemed to have no particular identity and little action except on specific projects (the citizen association had yet to be established), while Neustädter Markt was seen as a focus of identification (A16, 16/4/92) but this was not described as the cause or effect of local action. Actions came instead from demands that material conditions improve and the area be preserved. This set of formulations matches fairly closely those expressed by the citizen associations for these areas.

In Gohlis some argued that people often felt they were 'Gohlisers' (A11, A21) and stayed in the area in the past, even when life was bad. Now they want to feel proud of the area. Identification is not an end in itself but if younger people feel they belong they will stay (A21, 30/4/92). These councillors (SPD and Bündnis 90) were members of the Gohlis citizen association. The PDS councillor argued that while local attachment may have existed it was not a prime reason for local action and he was sceptical of the virtue of local 'pride', following the SED rejection of 'local patriotism' (A14, 7/4/92). The FDP representative argued that Gohlis was 'no different' from the rest of Leipzig North. 'The people who still feel especially they belong to [the area] are still active' (A17, 22/4/92) but the majority are inactive.

In these accounts identity of or identification with an area are neither reified as something innate in a locality nor are they sufficient in themselves to create action, but in some cases are a source for local action and are increased by local involvement. How then do councillors view the actions of local residents and their motives for contesting local change, particularly in relation to the discourse of active citizenship?

4 Ideals of citizenship

This section discusses the legal basis for the population's involvement in political processes and the ways in which councillors talked about citizens and neighbourhood action (section 4.1). Section 4.2 illustrates variations between councillors in the models of citizenship which they construct. It shows how varied constructions of citizen/councillor relations disrupt any single definition of Leipzig's or East Germany's politics, creating conflicting models of citizenship as expressed in attitudes to administrative decentralisation and citizen involvement, and particularly to citizen associations. Section 4.3 discusses the effects of these constructions in Leipzig's 1994 local election.

4.1 Constructions of the citizen

On 17 May 1990, the GDR *Volkskammer* passed a new local government constitution (Gesetzblatt der DDR, 1990). It was sufficiently compatible with the west German local government principles of local self-administration and subsidiarity (Presse- und Informationsamt, 1990; Wengst, 1990; Wollmann, 1991b), and sufficiently removed from GDR practices where 'local organs of the state' (*örtliche Staatsorgane*) were executive organs of the central state and fulfilled participation functions rather than local decision-making (Petzold and von der Heide, 1991), that it remained as statute after reunification until new *Land* legislation was drafted. As such, the 1990 legislation enacted in the GDR was in effect in Leipzig for the duration of the field-work. While other territorial structures changed, the geographical bases of local government remained largely unchanged.⁵

Under this legislation, local councils have rights and duties related to 'residents' (*Einwohner*) and 'citizens' (*Bürger*). Residents have rights to local authority services and duties to contribute to their costs (§14). 'Citizens' are defined as German citizens over eighteen years of age who have lived in the area for more than three months, or foreign or stateless people over eighteen who have lived in the area for over two years (§13.2). In addition to their rights as residents, citizens have the 'right and duty to take responsible part in the administration', can form citizen initiatives, and are bound to participate if called to serve on council

committees (§17). Legally, political participation is based on a citizenship which includes some locally resident foreigners.

The relationship between council and residents is further stipulated: 'The mayor and the heads of the administration have the duty to inform residents and to support their activity in solving commune problems,' through residents' meetings, public forums and debates and 'other suitable forms of commune public relations close to the people' (§16.1). Residents 'must be given the opportunity to express themselves in a suitable way on any planned measures' which affect them directly (§16.2). Rights of information and consultation therefore spring not from the status of citizen but from being a resident. The legislation as a whole was constitutive of and arose from within the discourses of active citizenship and participatory democracy which characterised public debate in the GDR after the 1989 revolution (see chapter 4).

However, the relationship between councillor and voters was not directly expressed in the legislation. Possibly it was seen as self-evident, or it was not seen as important to the ways in which local government should work. Such silences are interesting, given the attention to new democratic forms at the time in spring 1990 (see chapter 4). This section asks, given this legislative context, how the councillors use the terms 'resident' and 'citizen' and what this says about the relationships between them as they developed by late 1992. It also raises issues of how citizenship is constructed in relation to local residence, something of particular significance given the emphasis of the *Wende* period on the citizen as local expert (chapter 5) and given subsequent processes through which residents contested urban change (chapters 6 to 8).

Table 9.2 shows the incidence of different descriptors of the local population and the contexts in which they were used during the interviews with councillors. From differences between my use of '*Bürger*' in questions and the range of terms used in responses, it is clear I had a particular agenda in my questioning (a concern with citizenship and councillor-citizen relations). Councillors did not follow this pattern. Their most commonly used terms were forms of 'people' and 'residents', perhaps reflecting the legislative emphasis on rights to information and consultation related to residence and not to formal citizenship. This was followed by 'citizens', social characteristics and job types. The most

Table 9.2: Descriptors of the electorate used by councillors and party representatives.

(Numbers in brackets show use by interviewer)

	Citizen - Bürger	People, Residents - Leute, Menschen Bewohner	Job type	Social characteristics (age, family, ownership)	Area identity label	Member (Mitglied)	Foreigner: German
Character of area	0	16	28(2)	6(1)	0	0	3:0
Identity of area	1	16(4)	0	8	22(7)	0	0:0
Local activity	7(3)	28	0	3	1	0	0:0
Local problems	2	38	22	45(4)	2	0	14:5
Citizen Associations	17(6)	10	3	1	3	6(1)	0:0
Contacts to/ from council and councillor	55(15)	15(2)	3	2	0	0	0:0
In Party or council	1	21(4)	8	3	0	10(1)	0:0
In other associations	0	4	0	0	0	2	0:0
Totals	83(24)	148(10)	64(2)	68(5)	28(7)	18(2)	17:5
Rank by responses	2	1	4	3	5	6	7:8
Rank by interviewer	1	2	5=	4	3	5=	n.a.
Rank by overall total	2	1	4	3	5	7	6

Source: Author's Interviews

notable difference in how these were used is the use of 'citizen'. In contacts with the councillor/the council people are described as 'citizens'. When actual members of parties or elected councillors they are less likely to be referred to as citizens and are described as 'people' or by other socio-economic characteristics, implying 'citizens' are outside the official political establishment and that the 'resident' or 'person' is only considered a 'citizen' when they take on what is considered a civic role. 'Citizenship' is therefore not innate but is constructed in relation to civic actions (as the increased use of 'citizen' in discussions of local activity shows) or in relation to official political bodies. The more even mix of 'people' and 'citizens' in relation to the citizen associations suggests uncertainty by councillors about how they relate to the standard political scene and variations in direct involvement with them.

In the range of descriptors, one characteristic does not change. Foreigners remain 'foreigners'. 'Germans' is used only in contrast to foreigners. One councillor was clear the issue was not all foreigners:

'I'll say it's about strange foreigners, people who look different or .. are different or come from the Orient, or have slitty eyes or whatever, other people, it's less about the Europeans or the closer ones, for example English people or Greeks or whatever. The whole foreigner problems relate, and one can't forget that, to the questions of eastern Europe, all of them, the people who are now rushing in [*eindringen*] from Romania, from Russia and all.' (A17, 22/4/92)

Councillors mentioned foreigners in relation to area characteristics (usually negatively) and to local problems for the council or others to deal with. This construction ignores the legal position whereby, for the purpose of local government legislation, foreigners resident for over two years are considered citizens.

Also noticeable from table 9.2 is the extent to which socio-economic characteristics are articulated in relation to neighbourhood characteristics, identities and problems. In relating to the local areas individuals are 'people' or are described by specific characteristics. That is, problems and identities are often sub-divided, perhaps denying a unified basis for local actions. One could argue the local area is largely

characterised as a non-political realm or more correctly one with problems to solve, but where local residents are not 'citizens'. The local is apparently placed outside what is 'really' politics.

One caveat to this analysis is that if table 9.2 included the common practice of using compounds with *Bürger-* as prefix,⁶ the total use of 'Bürger' would in fact increase greatly. Terms such as *Bürgermeinung* (citizens' opinions, public opinion) or *Bürgerpark* are often simply shorthand for something involving the local population. The prefix 'Bürger-' may also be the new political touchstone, in the way the prefix *Volks-* (People's) was used extensively in the GDR, as in *Volkskammer*, or *Volksarmee*. The major shift is from 'The People' to 'citizens'. However, the use of the term *Bürgerbüro* (citizens' office) which denotes any local office in a neighbourhood or designed for contact and information for citizens, whether local offices parties, city administration, citizen associations, the housing company, urban renewal agencies or whatever, possibly reinforces the tendency to see 'people' as 'citizens' only when in contact with 'official' bodies. Usage may be partly linguistic, because 'community' does not exist in the English usage (chapter 3) but it does help to construct the way in which residents become recognised as 'citizens'. It suggests that citizens relate to a local level and not the 'broader picture' which councillors and other official bodies see (reflecting similar findings around the local specificity of citizens' expertise in planning issues discussed in chapter 5). Again the 'local' is constructed as non-political and it is only when in contact with official bodies that people are seen as 'citizens' and not only as 'residents'. Such an interpretation may well reflect a rejection post-1989 of the GDR tendency to extend political organisation into even the private sphere (see chapter 4) but it is important to look more carefully at the councillors' constructions of local action.

Some councillors were involved directly as members or even in the founding of citizen associations. Bündnis 90 councillors in particular were involved in setting up groups, or at least in creating structures through which they could be formed. Some SPD and PDS councillors were also members. CDU and FDP councillors interviewed were not members of citizen associations. Unsurprisingly, this variation in involvement is reflected in the wide variations in councillor's understandings or assertions of what citizen associations are or should be. Common terms

which they use are *Bürgerverein*, *Bürgerinitiative*, also *Verein*, *Gruppe* and *Initiative*, used relatively interchangeably. Some saw citizen associations as similar to 'other interest groups' (A16, 16/4/92), including self-help health and social groups, non-neighbourhood single-issue campaigns (re-building a church in the city centre, A17, 22/4/92) or area tenant organisations (A15, 8/4/92). Little differentiation was made between actions by citizen associations and by other groups. Some viewed citizen associations as a force for lobbying the city council, especially where councillors themselves were involved:

'If a **citizen association** appears and says we demand this and this, then it has a completely different face than if now one person appears. And so we [in BV] want to make ourselves the speaker of the citizens of Gohlis and be involved really in **all** important decisions.' (A21, 30/4/92- note the use of the 'we' pronoun)

The citizen association can be a contact point for councillors to the area and for council and administration when they wish to hold meetings (A10, 1/4/92). A citizen association could also create continuity, stability and a contact for local projects. In Stötteritz:

'everything else really happens more through single campaigns. Well, the people are really interested. [...] But as I said, it would be great if an association was being founded now so that one would have a partner to talk to [*Ansprechpartner*] because otherwise it all drifts apart again and again when, well, certain things are finished. And then one must always talk to new people and it's difficult to build on.' (A9, 30/3/92)

Those less sympathetic to the citizen associations have less to do with them (and vice versa) and misrepresent them to some extent. One CDU councillor refers to groups as having more to do with 'civic rights groups or the like' (A20, 30/4/92). Yet Bündnis 90 councillors, although most involved in the groups, also talk of the groups as beyond their party and certainly not part of party politics. One talks of 'us, the civic movement' (*wir Bürgerbewegung*) referring to the party and not the local group. All those who were members stressed that they were private individuals who

could help with contacts. Even when Bündnis 90 local party groups were active in promoting a citizen association independence from the party was emphasised:

Councillor: 'We are using this [forum] to call for the founding of such a citizen association. That worked very well in Gohlis too. There we had a forum on housing and rents. And then the citizen association Gohlis was founded on the fringe of the forum. [...]'

FS: 'Yes. And in [this area]?'

Councillor: '[...] It always depends what the citizens want. If the citizens don't want it then there will of course be no citizen association because we won't impose one, for example. We have our grassroots group there, [Bündnis 90] South West, and are trying to achieve something there [...]. And we would of course really like to work together with the citizen initiative but we are first of all attached to Bündnis 90/Greens. [...] Citizen associations must work in a party-neutral way. We would never do that either, (*take over?*) some citizen association, but we want to work as (*partners?*) with them. It's very much about that and the more there are, the better it will be. Because we say, the citizens have to govern themselves, decide for themselves what they want and how they want it.'

(A8, 30/3/92)

In marking their boundaries, citizen associations are set apart from the city administration, parties and party politics, councillors, private actions and the private economy. Citizen associations do not therefore fit dichotomous models of public/private or citizens/politics. Some constructions place citizen associations along with neighbourhood concerns and local populations in a non-political sphere while others construct them as political but not party political. Councillors do not define themselves only by the citizen/councillor divide. Rather, in relation to areas, problems and politics multiple forms of identity are employed. These usually constitute a 'we' defined in opposition to the excluded 'other'. Identities already noted include councillors/citizens, party members/other parties, activists/non-activists. Others reflect experiences of unification and political power: Leipzig/Saxony, women in the GDR/women in the West, Easterners/Westerners. Some are functional,

others are clearly strategic and political. Adding these to individual experiences (age, experience as politicians, housing conditions, family, gender, employment, and so on) one finds a range of identities and bases for concern. It is misleading to present a unified position for Leipzig's councillors, despite similarities which might divide them from the West. It is inadequate to construct 'the East' as a unitary category. This simply reinforces popular concepts which take East/West as the primary divide and ignore the contested nature of local government within Leipzig. Section 4.2 explores different forms which the construction of citizenship took among councillors and asks how these relate to ideals and experiences of relations between citizen, state and place.

4.2 Models of local politics

One might expect councillors' constructions of citizens to relate to ideals of active, mature (*mündige*) citizens established in the discourses of the GDR revolution and in opposition to the dominant political culture of the GDR. These stressed the rights of citizens to be involved in politics (chapter 4) which was particularly desirable for local political development where citizens were 'local experts'. As chapter five showed the ideal had limitations because of the tendency to see citizens as active only in relation to the smaller scale of the neighbourhoods where their expertise was to some extent subordinate to that of professionals. 'Citizens' were also constructed as an undifferentiated entity and citizen-based politics would not apparently involve conflict with other citizens or the administration. As there was also no city council at the time councillors did not appear in the equations of the People's Building Conference which referred instead to citizen committees and to Round Tables. As chapters 6 to 8 showed, variations emerged between the stated goals of citizen involvement within this discourse and the ways in which participation was articulated in the neighbourhoods and the city, especially in relation to planning and urban change. The discourses of participation and careful renewal were confronted with discourses and practices of modernisation, economics, expertise and efficient administration.

This section uses cognitive mapping (see chapter 3 and appendix 6(iii)) in an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of analysing interviews as if they consisted of disconnected elements of cross-cutting discourses. Using the

whole structure of an interview makes it clear that there are widely varying combinations of ideas which express a range of possible models of citizenship, either ideal or actual, which councillors expressed. Six cases are used here to represent three general views in a spectrum of opinions. These combine different understandings of local politics across four key issues: the normative position of citizens; the function of citizen involvement; the position of councillors; advocacy of new or existing institutional forms. No councillor's arguments relate exclusively to one position on all issues. However, the three models show distinct combinations. While aligned to parties, it is not an exclusive relationship.

To illustrate the arguments I use diagrammatic representations 'to help understand the way in which the interviewees make sense of their world - attributing meaning and significance through explaining and predicting the consequences of events, for themselves and/or others' (Jones, 1985b, 61). Figures 9.1 to 9.3 show summary diagrams for the three models. The labels attached are analytical simplifications, based on different levels of abstraction. Lower case phrases are either quotations from transcripts, or concepts directly from the interviewees (boxed). Phrases in capitals indicate 'second order' categories grounded in the interviews but reflecting my own research interests. Arrows indicate causal relations suggested by the interviewee. Plain lines show non-causal links. Plus and minus signs indicate positive or negative linkages.

The first two diagrams summarise arguments from councillors who stress individual, private action, long-term city development, the councillor as prime contact and the utility of existing institutional forms. In the argument in figure 9.1(a) the prime justification for the relationship between councillor and citizens is the need for long-term city development achieved through efficient local government. This closely parallels the economic/administrative model of debate in chapter eight. Rather than neighbourhood contact, which is 'unfortunately' lacking, the councillor has city-wide responsibility for 'redevelopment'. The inactive majority of the population is considered a potential resource which could be 'activated' by administrative decentralisation which would increase contact to the citizens ('*Bürger Nähe*') and utilise local knowledge. There is already a minority in the population which appears to fulfil the ideals of a motivated populace. However, 'groups like Pro Leipzig' are seen as seeking to displace the councillor's function of

Figure 9.1(a): Citizenship subordinated to efficient local government

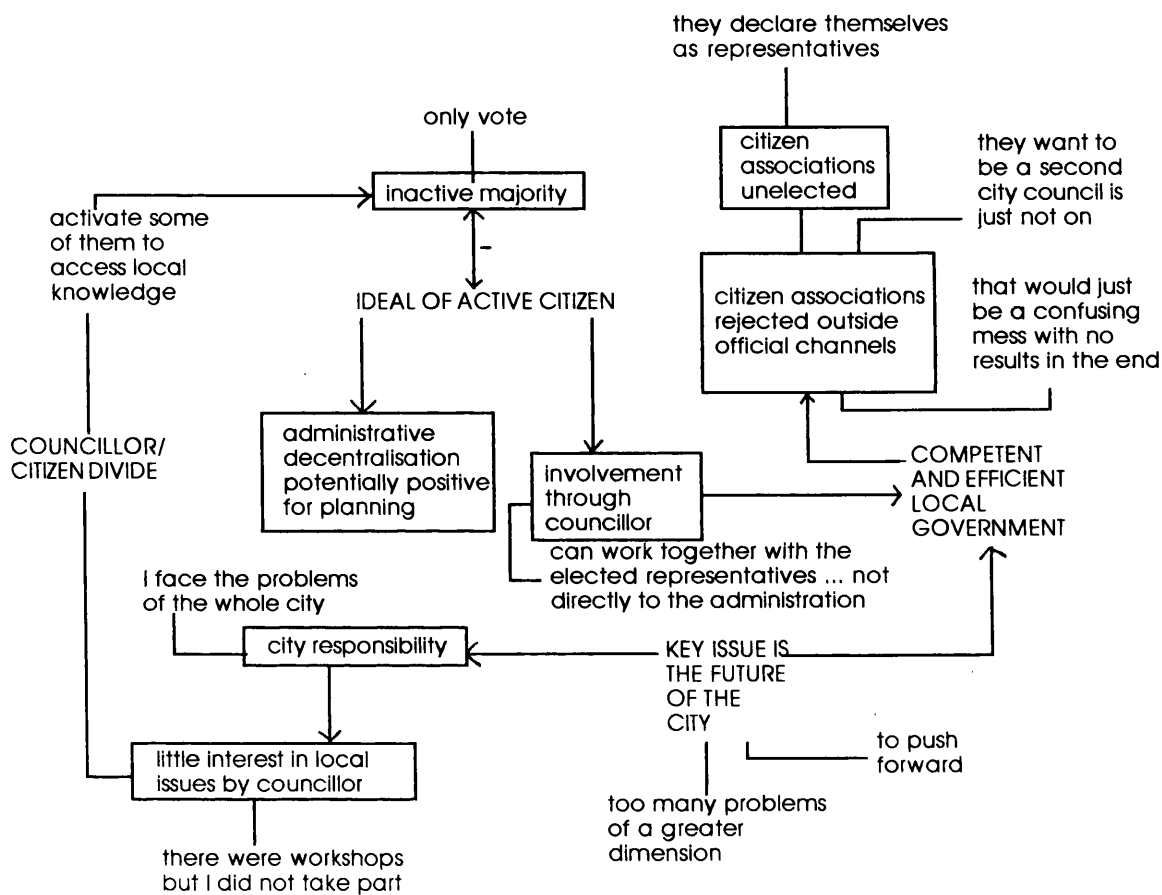
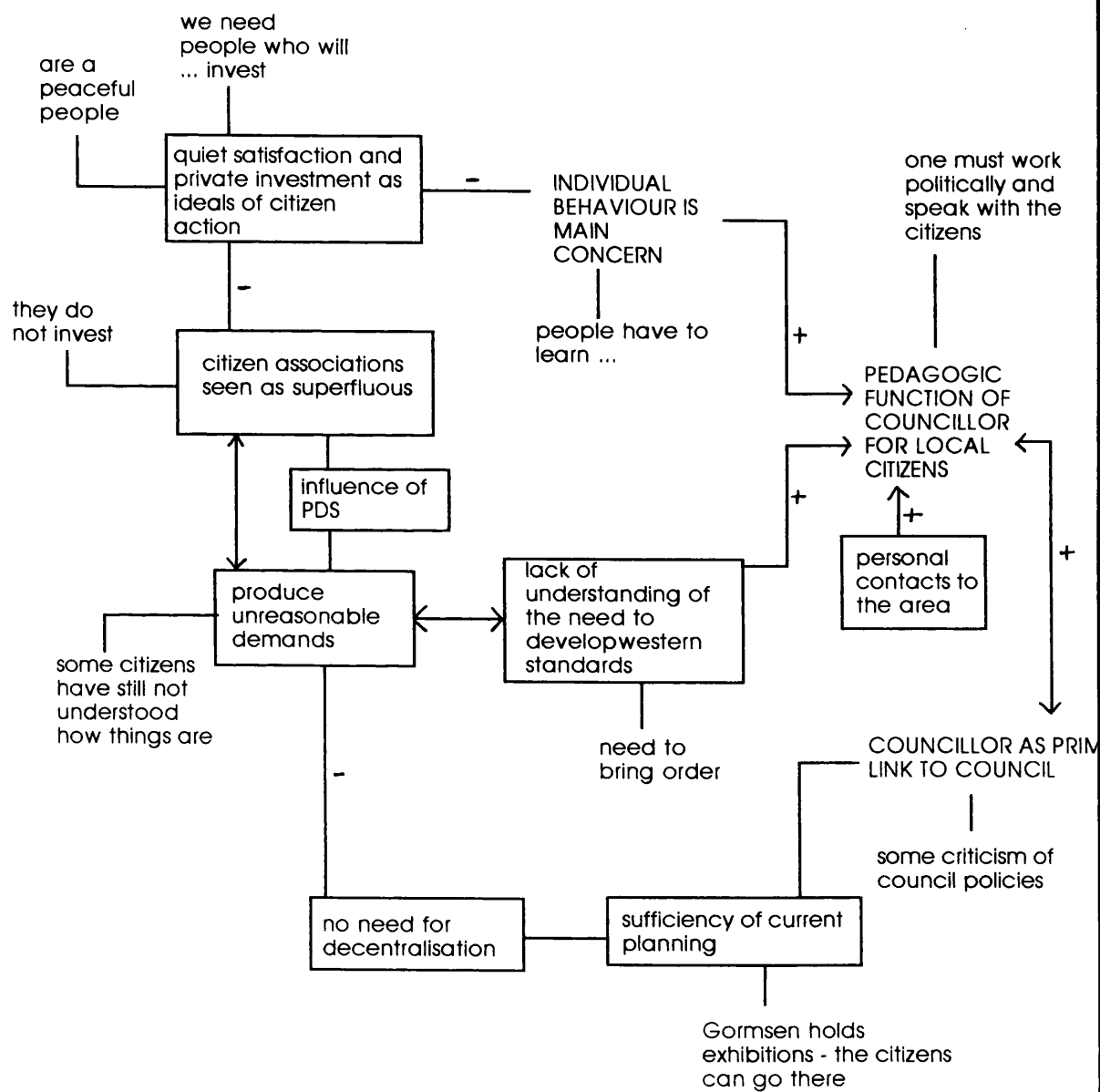


Figure 9.1 (b): Paternalist approach to citizenship



contact between citizen and council. The citizen associations appear to want to by-pass councillors, 'working directly with the administration' and 'they want to be a second city council'. This is rejected for two reasons. Firstly 'we have elected representatives and do not need another level which declare themselves as representatives'. In other words, voting, which is possibly the only political action of the inactive majority, legitimates the councillor's position as the area's contact while paradoxically the absence of voting in the active associations delegitimises their attempts at action. Secondly, in undermining the councillors as the key decision-makers, it is argued associations create a 'confusing mess' and endanger the aims of efficient local government working for the city's development.

Figure 9.1 (b) shows variations on these themes. This councillor argued citizens should be involved in private investment: 'we need people who say, "yes, I will invest my money here."' Otherwise his ideal is of a 'peaceful people'. Involvement aims for 'modernisation'. Citizen associations are rejected as they do not create investment: 'you know, citizen associations, they sit and [...] chat'. They are viewed as unnecessary in planning since existing public consultation is sufficient. A further problem with citizen associations, particularly those where the PDS is apparently involved, and with the population in general is the continuation of old ideas about how to behave in the new situation and the tendency to present unreasonable demands:

'some citizens have still not understood how things are. [There were complaints about a proposed development.] They wrote to the newspaper, "we don't want big houses so that they can look into our homes." It is primitive, it is! There is still much political work to be done so that the old ways of thinking are overcome.'

In this argument, the councillor's task is to educate citizens to 'understand properly' the correct ways of behaving in this new time. He leaves notes on cars to remind people not to park on the grass: 'the people have to learn that costs money. [...] I did it recently and two women no longer do it. [...] One must work politically and speak with the citizens so that they grasp that everything costs money and that we now have to look to it that we can achieve this western standard.' The councillor adopts a

paternalistic approach as the scolding and educating parent, and a developmental approach stressing the move from 'primitive' approaches to the ideal of citizens personally investing in an area. Personal local contacts are important and the councillor should be the main contact to the council. The pedagogic project began with the councillor himself who 'went to sit on the school bench again' to 'learn how to go about politics'.

Both interviewees in this category are CDU councillors. One can see the typical arguments of the Right about private capital and individual action as the key to citizenship (Hill, 1994). Western developments are prioritised and there is no mention of those who are unable to participate in these forms of action because of lack of wealth or property. Women are also excluded from the analysis, except when transgressing norms of acceptable behaviour.

Figure 9.2 shows very different arguments to those in figure 9.1. In figure 9.2(a) the councillor argues it is important that 'the people grasp that they should and could get involved themselves. Not just to accept any old changes now'. Neighbourhoods are now seen as areas of resistance to particular changes where people can be actively involved in shaping policies. Although in practice city issues dominate councillors' time, this councillor argues this is not ideal and 'real politics happen locally. [...] It is really important to go to the people, not just to sit in the town hall or to think, "We are the ones doing the politics here."' In this interpretation, citizen associations provide a valuable resource for activity and contacts. Their actions and their position as local residents serve to legitimise any claims to represent the area: 'I think they do it so well that it is representative. The citizens can really identify [*sich finden*]. It is not some different group [*eine abgehobene Truppe*] who are doing something. They all live in the middle of it too.' The councillor is involved in the concerns of the area through the citizen association as a fellow resident also experiencing local problems. Official channels are not prioritised, 'it doesn't have to be big politics all the time'. Contact to local parties or the administration is valid and co-operation between citizen associations and city administration in local offices has the potential for improving local development.

Likewise in figure 9.2(b) another councillor argues citizen associations are 'very, very important' because the 'citizens should govern

Figure 9.2(a): Citizen association as ideal of active citizenship

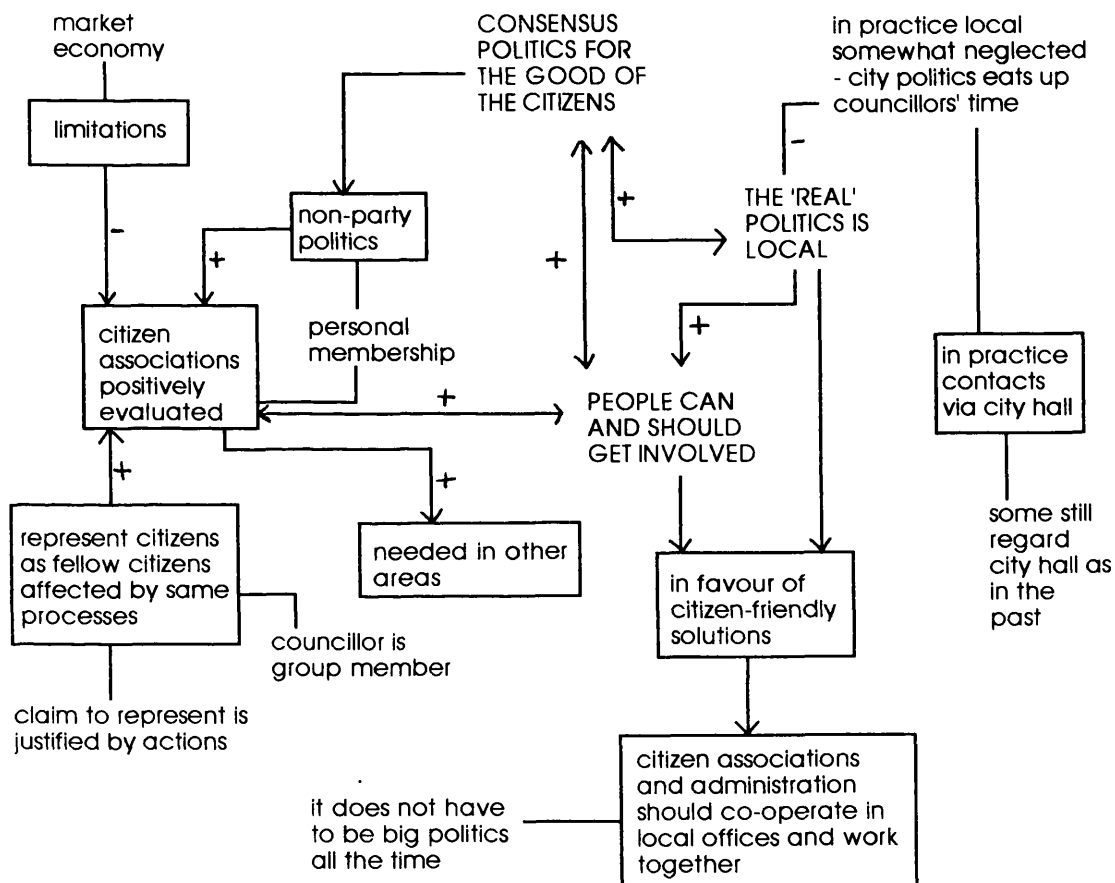
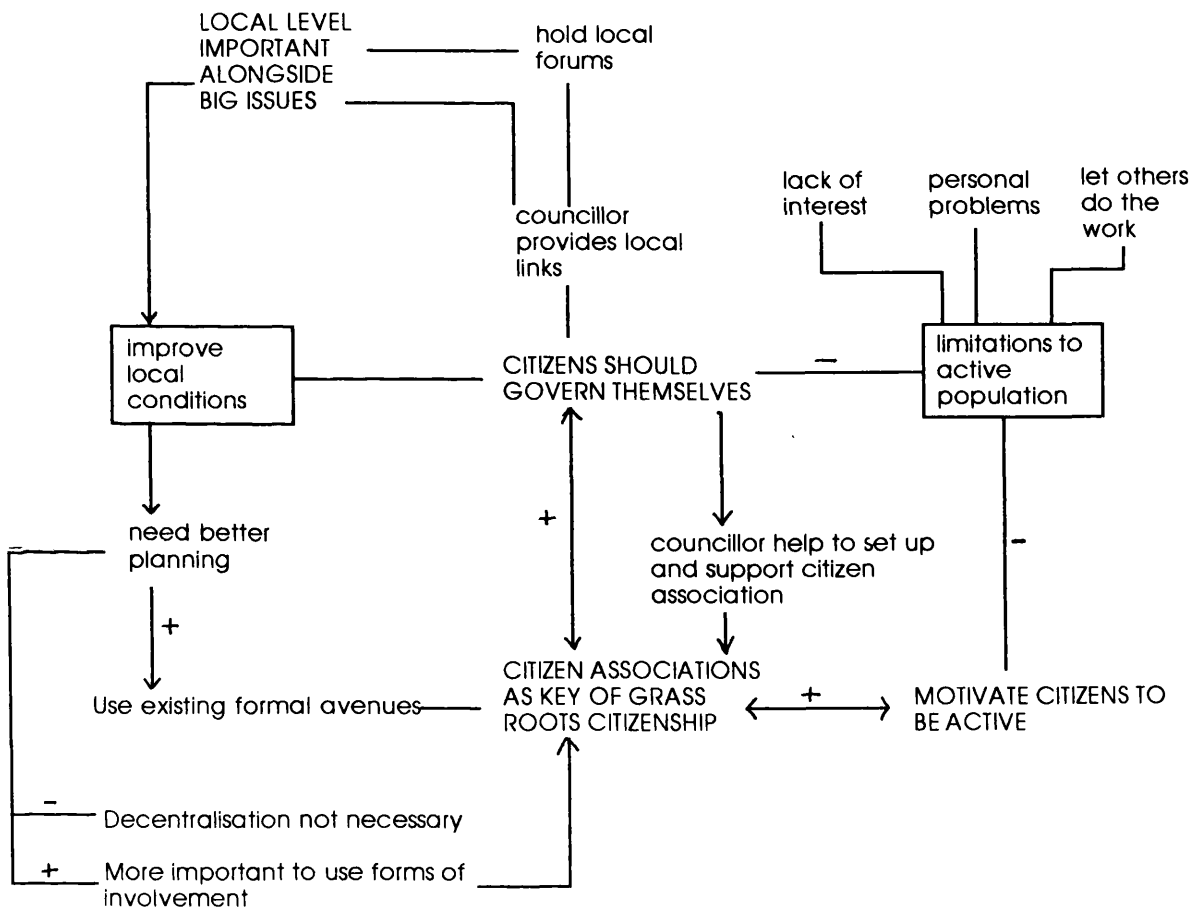


Figure 9.2(b): Ideal of grass roots activism



themselves, determine themselves what they want'. The councillor helps associations 'when they can't get any further themselves' and they in turn 'make councillors aware of problems'. Grass roots participatory structures are encouraged through public forums. The 'resigned' majority in the population should ideally be 'motivated', but those who are active deserve support. Instead of advocating new decentralised administrative institutions, the councillor sees it as more important to improve existing arrangements. Involvement produces better planning because without the views of residents local plans 'have to be changed in retrospect'. Citizen associations are seen as part of the range of contacts between council and local area and are not separate from other forms of political activity.

The approach in figure 9.2 is identified as Bündnis 90 local politics: 'it is really our political principle to work directly with the citizens and not to want to build up any kind of hierarchy', a 'citizen-friendly' approach. Its limitations are clear to both advocates - if citizens are not interested then neither councillor nor local party can force them to be involved. Even the suggestion of forcing participation is a reflection of discredited GDR practices. This relates strongly to the 'co-operative' model of citizen-council relations which the citizen associations and others expressed in chapter eight.

Figure 9.3 shows intermediate positions in this scenario where councillors argue citizens should be active publicly but there are limits to these forms, and they have an ambivalent reaction to citizen associations. They are often involved but are also critical of the lack of reasoned debate and of understanding for city issues. This questions the citizen associations' status in constituting 'real politics' and being the 'proper place' for action.

In figure 9.3(a) the councillor shows an appreciation of actions by the local association and accepts that contact with the council may occur in other ways than through the councillors. Indeed most groups have their own 'contact people in council, really in every party if they are not too extreme' (a clientelist approach). However, associations should produce 'sensible' demands, producing well thought-out cases rather than a series of demands to the council: '[in another district] nothing happens without a public meeting [...] and they talk and talk and talk. [In contrast in this

Figure 9.3 (a): Reason and knowledge as bases of citizen involvement

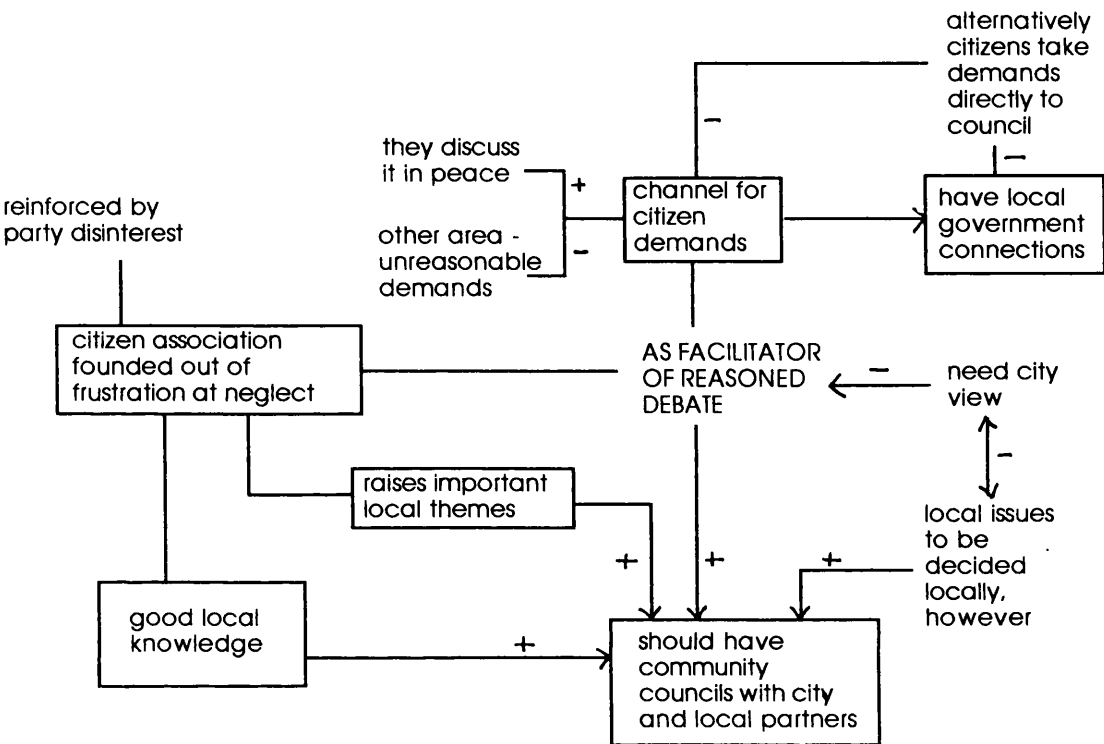
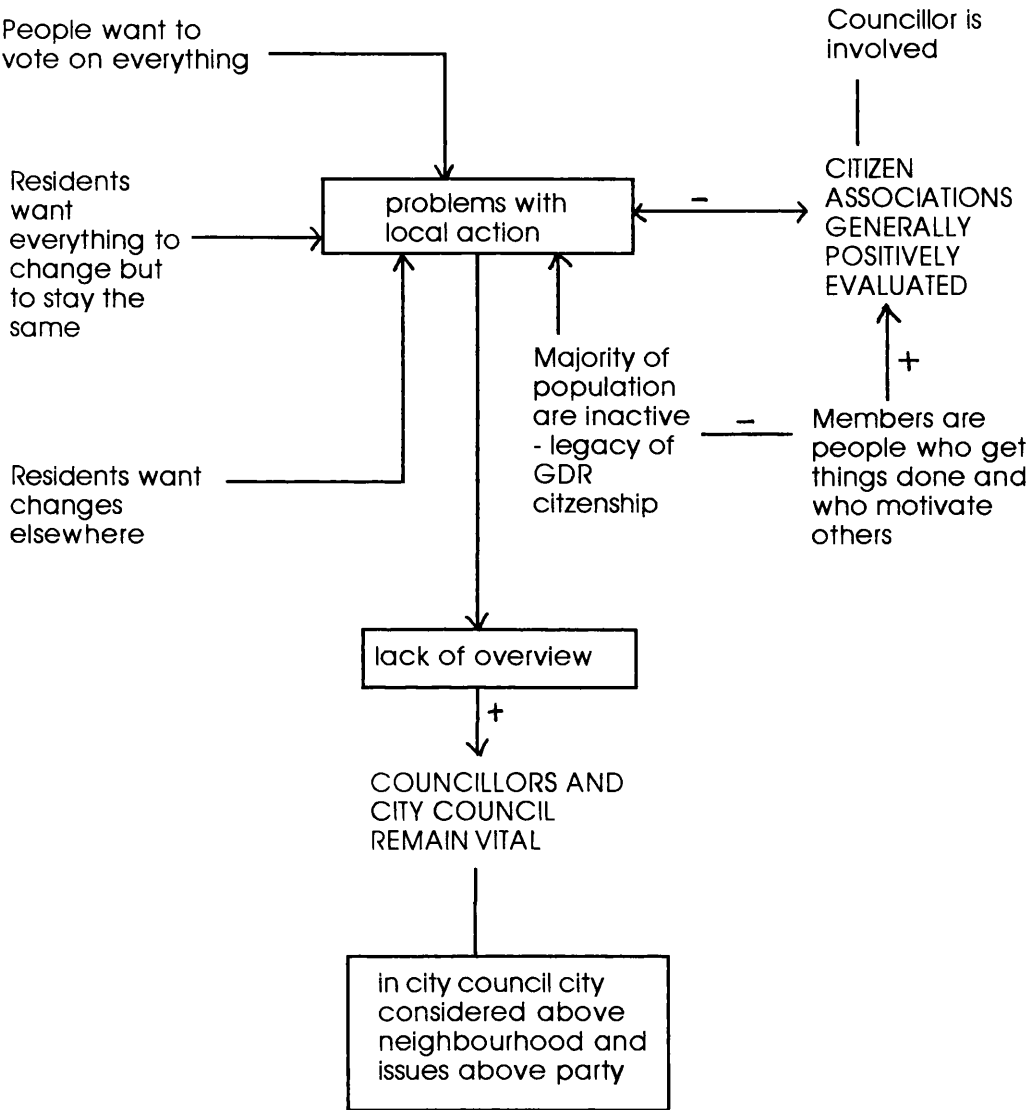


Figure 9.3(b): Limitations of local activism



area] they sit down and discuss it in peace', forming a reasoned and unified approach. Such groups 'are accepted better'. Protests which lack a city view and demand that developments happen elsewhere are regrettable. Despite this, the councillor argues there should be community councils with local representatives deciding issues which exclusively affect the neighbourhood, both for reasons of local democracy and better decision-making because of local knowledge, an organisational response to the problems.

Figure 9.3(b) gives a related view which shows the councillor's involvement with and sympathy for the citizen associations. Again, local decision-making has limitations, particularly in the displacement of problems to other areas or in apparently unreasonable demands: 'the city administration is often attacked from all sides although often [it] can't change anything at all.' Residents want 'everything to change but to stay the same'. 'It probably relates to the newly won democracy, everyone imagines they have to vote on everything [...] but the tram has to be built and eh .. one cannot ask every single citizen, "Would you like the tram here?"'. Councillors and council policies remain vital for city development. Citizens should recognise the limitations to their involvement.

These two interviews are from SPD councillors. Their positions seem more pragmatic than CDU or Bündnis 90 approaches. They favour the city focus of CDU councillors tempered with neighbourhood issues. Citizen involvement, legitimate as it may be, should occur within 'reasonable' bounds of consensus. For them it seems citizen involvement has instrumental value rather than ideal value in itself. This reflects many positions adopted by the city administration which argues that involvement by the population is desirable, but may produce unfortunate outcomes for the administration (see chapter 8).

Overall the three categories could be summarised as models of private citizenship, grass roots active citizenship, and limited active citizenship. They can be characterised in relation to two key dimensions relating to the scale of local politics - city or neighbourhood, and the relative positions of citizen and councillor. They illustrate a range of positions in reaction to the GDR and reunification and show that, as in differences among citizen associations, their members and the city administration,

any assumption that the East/West dichotomy is the primary divide obscures the variety and political nature of models of citizenship being constructed and negotiated in Leipzig. At the same time, western assumptions about the positions of political parties are challenged. For example, reactions to suggestions of administrative decentralisation show that not only do those in favour and those against come from a mix of parties but the most radical suggestions come from a CDU councillor who proposes it as a basis for local action, an SPD councillor who advocates a lower tier of political decision-making and a PDS councillor who advocates the involvement of citizen associations in order to create forums where alternative or controversial views can be included. They often disrupt the view of the city as the key site for politics and some even accept or encourage neighbourhood disagreement. Nevertheless, it seems that many councillors see neighbourhoods as beyond their main concerns and construct both citizen actions and neighbourhood issues as apolitical and subordinate to consensus decisions for the good of the city's development.

4.3 Neighbourhoods and elections

One major exception to this non-political, non-localised view was in relation to elections, and it is important to remember that the interviews were conducted mid-term:

'In May we will have been in office two years. There have been of course far too many big themes and [neighbourhood concerns] probably got a raw deal but I suppose that now in the next two years [they] **must** be again very strongly in the foreground because, **above all, of the elections**. We were elected in the area and there one must again strengthen the contacts to this area for the simple reason, if one does not campaign one will not be elected.'
(A20, 30/4/92)

This view is surprisingly close to the lowly position of neighbourhoods in the GDR, except at election times. When, two years after the interviews, Leipzig had its second local government election in June 1994, an LVZ editorial claimed 'everything stayed the same as before' (14/6/94). The SPD won 29.9%, CDU 23.4%, PDS 22.9%, Bündnis 90 13.8% and FDP and DSU

3.5% each, again leaving no majority among the four main parties. Newspaper editorials argued that while voters 'honoured the competency and commitment' of the mayor (LVZ, 27/6/94), the main parties lost votes. SPD and CDU lost 5% and 4% on 1990 levels respectively. PDS (+9%) and Bündnis 90/Greens (+2%) gained. PDS was well organised locally and mobilised its large membership to take advantage of a broad trend of dissatisfaction. Parties which were active locally, such as Bündnis 90 were supported for their 'openness and interest for the small problems of the small people' (*ibid.*). Their local focus was translated into council election gains which did not materialise at state or national level.

5 Depoliticising place: depoliticising politics?

The construction of the local as apolitical and the limitation of citizen action by many councillors relates to several key issues which structure the geographies of politics in Leipzig. Some geographical imaginings place the local and its residents beyond the necessary focus of politics, others argue the local scale of action is equally important, while yet others seem to support local action but subordinate it to demands for effective government. What seems evident, however, is that there is a certain reification of scale as a defining characteristic of what is political (see chapter 3). There is also a common silence on the importance of party politics and of conflict within the city. Following on from the careful renewal arguments, and in opposition to both GDR ideology and party-political wrangling in the West, decisions are made 'for the good of the city'. This section questions how scales of action are constituted (section 5.1), how changes have affected local politics (section 5.2), and how 'the political' was redefined (section 5.3) so as to explore the absence of city councillors from previous chapters.

5.1 A change of scale?

Changes in local government altered the form and content of the relation between councillor and neighbourhood. Some councillors had experience of the GDR system where local representatives had limited significance, except in terms of participation (Richter, 1989). They were expected to hold office hours, receive petitions and be available generally for local residents (Baylis, 1976). Some councillors therefore complained:

'Before the *Wende* the delegates were really swamped [*zugeschüttet*] with, you would say today, with such small things. We concerned ourselves that the dustbins were upright and such things. [...] Big decisions, they did not decide on them.' (A20, 3/4/92)

After 1989, many relished the opportunity to avoid mundane neighbourhood contacts with which they were 'buried' in the GDR and to concern themselves with issues over which local representatives previously had no control, such as strategic city planning. Post-reunification some councillors were no longer interested in local surgeries, for example, because problems raised were 'personal' and therefore 'insignificant': 'Listen, I personally do not have a surgery. You know, then someone comes, my cat is ill, or my oven isn't working' (A18, 28/4/92). Formal methods of contact were not deemed a reasonable use of time since they did not raise obviously political issues. Some expressed relief at moving on to more 'significant' issues (indeed, one saw limited contacts to citizens as a useful reduction in workload; A20, 30/4/92).

Others bemoaned the loss of more direct contacts apparently available in the formal frameworks of urban sub-districts, neighbourhood groups and National Front committees in the GDR, but were aware of the inability of these levels to affect city problems. This matches points made about local governance by citizen associations (see chapter 6):

'If the citizen **wanted** this contact [...] it did exist in the sub-districts, the ward activist groups [*Wahlkreisaktiven*] and the citizen advice which there was ... The problem was just that the problems which the citizens brought up were mostly city problems which the individual representative ... could not influence completely. He could only follow it up to see that the problems were taken to the city administration, and that they were suitably taken into account. But ... that was really very complicated because the arena for decisions [*Entscheidungsfeld*] and the opportunities for making decisions were, for the councillors, relatively limited. There were many things, financial resources and such like which were decided centrally and where the council had hardly any way of influencing it.' (A14, 7/4/92)

There is nostalgia for the modes of involvement, at least formally, and for local organisation, combined with acceptance that despite mechanisms and time opportunities for contact, scope for influence was strongly limited by the centralisation of decision-making. The change in focus from neighbourhood to city-level decision-making is seen by some as a positive shift away from dealing with the mundane non-political issues of local order to taking strategic decisions for urban development, 'setting out today what will stand there in thirty years' (A15, 8/4/92):

'Now the problems of the whole city permanently come to me [*kommen auf mich zu*]. I can't just say "nope now we have to do this and that [in the neighbourhood]." Now we have far too many problems of a greater dimension which affect the city as a whole or serve city development. [...] So we can't go into the fine planning of the city districts.' (A15, 8/4/92)

In contrast neighbourhood issues appear as 'details', for a 'small part of the city', as part of overall plans. The city-wide focus was reinforced by the removal of the urban sub-districts in 1990, so that many councillors now see their priorities within an argument about effective local government which establishes the correct frameworks for economic development and modernisation in the city (c.f. chapter 8):

'We may be elected by the city areas but we only have one city council in Leipzig and it is responsible for the whole of Leipzig.' (A15, 8/4/92)

'Here in Leipzig eh really the decisions do not [...] relate to city districts or wards. Rather they are about the whole city.' (A11, 3/4/92)

Some councillors stressed they could maintain their local contacts through such factors as shared characteristics with a section of the population through work (A15, 8/4/92) or age: 'If one is older oneself, the older citizens probably think that one accepts their concerns more than a younger person, you know?' (A11, 3/4/92). The emphasis which some councillors put on workplace contacts is not new. GDR council candidates were subject to questioning by their work team.⁷ Others stressed their

personal contacts to the local area as a paternalistic relationship between councillor and electorate, based on personal characteristics, individual contacts and face-to-face encounters:

Councillor: 'I prefer [*pfllege*] conversations with the citizens at home, on the street, with acquaintances, with business people, who also ask, "do come, we have the following problem". [...] You know, it is as we like to say, one must have one's ear to the masses in conversation.⁸ [...] But direct **surgerles** we don't do them, I don't do them.'

FS: 'But the citizens when they have concrete questions, do they come to you?'

Councillor: 'They know, don't they, that I carried out rather a lot of election propaganda [*Wahlpropaganda*], really presented myself, spoke then too. In the CDU I received the most votes in Stötteritz, didn't I? And they really actually know me. [...] So I gather a bit of citizen opinion [*Bürgermeinung*].' (A18, 28/4/92)

This geographical imagining makes councillors responsible 'for the good of the city' and fixes the neighbourhood and the citizen in a personal, private and non-political realm while the city is seen as the major strategic area for action. However, there was a problem in this argument because councillors generally claimed that the Saxony government, controlled by an absolute majority of CDU, disadvantaged SPD-governed Leipzig in its allocation of funds and facilities (A14, 7/4/92) so that while many tasks were now *Land* responsibilities, the local council's capacity to deal with the tasks it faced were reduced:

'Leipzig loses out [*fällt hinten runter*] with everything that is decided in Dresden [capital of Saxony]. Dresden is expanding its education sector for example at Leipzig's expense [...] instead of first guaranteeing that both can equally keep what they have. Now Dresden is starting a whole load of new things and demands that we in Leipzig close things down.' (A16, 16/4/92)

A desire to reduce Leipzig's influence was seen as a prime reason why in Saxony's local government reform of 1993 Leipzig (the only SPD

controlled urban district in Saxony) was the only urban district council not to be expanded to cover at least part of the (CDU-controlled) surrounding rural district. Similar frustration emerged in relation particularly to industrial policy where decisions were made by Bonn and the Treuhand. As one councillor declared: 'The whole thing has just gone so wrong, the whole carry-on and there is still no end in sight to everything that will go up the spout [*den Bach runtergeht*]' (A16, 16/4/92, emphasis in original). This, together with other changes in local government, reduces the ability of councillors to address neighbourhood issues and the ability of local government to implement the policies it chooses for the city.

5.2 Changing nature of local government

Councillors and the parties assume responsibility for the whole city, particularly the four main parties with councillors in all electoral districts. Because of the multi-member districts there is no direct one-to-one correspondence between a councillor and a local area. This combines with residual understandings of how the relation between council and city is structured to produce a much more random pattern of contact. Instead of targeting councillors, individuals or groups often send their letters to all party groups in the hope that one or two might respond.

'It isn't that the people look or remember, "who did we vote for, we'll go to them", because we too had a personal election⁹ - by party and then there were the names and I don't have the feeling really that they target it and look again and remember, "man, I did vote for them or them, so I'll go and see them." You can't say that, but the people simply come here [council party office] from all areas of the city, no matter what kind of problems they have. So we can't complain that the people don't come to us. It is constant. We deal with everything possible [...] And it is completely irrelevant which quarter it is in.' (A9, 30/3/92)

This blanket approach is supplemented by continuing prejudices against the functionaries and their attitudes in GDR local government:

'everything is simply so **new**, it simply hasn't registered that policy [*Politik*¹⁰] is now made by the councillors. They still think like previously. "Ach, in the town hall, previously they were always called the functionaries [*Bonzen*¹¹]. They decided." First of all that's a certain image of an enemy [*Feindbild*]. They already have some preconceptions about who works in the town hall [...] And only very few people have really understood that they **can** come here, that it is really important or that if we go to the local areas that we [councillors] are the people who put [policy] into action. They still think that an official [*Stadtrat*] carries out all the policies [*macht die ganze Politik*], yes? That he is only the executive organ, so to speak, after the councillors have said, "yes we'll do that", only very few have understood that properly now. It is simply still a bit of old-style thinking and there we must enlighten people and say, "turn to the party council groups".' (A9, 30/3/92)

Such a view was reflected in the ways many citizen associations chose to deal directly with the city administration. For the population the tendency is reflected in the results of a survey which show that when faced with a city action of which they disapproved 49% would write to and 38% would speak to the office concerned. Only 18% would turn to their city councillor (Rat der Stadt Leipzig, 1991a). The GDR legacy and lack of understanding of the new structures of local government meant, it was argued, that many issues which people did raise with the council included what were now federal or state concerns. Whereas in the GDR local councils were the 'first address' for all concerns (since they were integrated into state and party structures), after reunification competencies were divided between levels of government and local government had responsibility for particular issues (A16, 16/4/92).

Perhaps because local government was the only scale of government whose geographic identity was unchanged throughout unification, residents were less aware of the change in logic and purpose, described as an 'epistemic shift' (Wollmann, 1992, 5) in local government. This involved new horizontal power relations between the city administration and elected council; new vertical relations between levels of government; new relationships between commune and economy (Wollmann, 1991a). These were achieved through the official control of the executive by the

legislative, subsidiarity of decision-making, subjecting planning ordinances only to legal control by higher levels of government, and in changes from direct economic participant to 'enabler' of private business (Wollmann, 1992).

However, demands for effective local government in the East were not only based on ideological and legal preferences. They also revolved around the political economy of local economic and social restructuring. Urban change, housing provision, infrastructural improvements, economic restructuring and social and cultural provision were all urgently in need of attention at the same time as the administration and legislative were disrupted (Prinz, 1991). Increasingly the social and economic effects of restructuring raised demands for social services and welfare benefits. Local government also had to continue for a time with facilities and services not yet adjusted to the west German models, particularly in health care and social services where private and voluntary sector organisations did not exist in the mode of West German subsidiary social provision. Because regional administrations (*Bezirke*) and state organisations had been the main employers of GDR administrative and service-providing staff, cities like Leipzig did not initially have the staff to deal with the tasks now allocated to them. Leipzig had just 2000 direct employees when re-established in May 1990. However, as staff were transferred this rose rapidly. By September 1990 this had risen to 15,000 and by February 1991 to 34,060 (Prinz, 1991).

The costs of these increased tasks and staffing overwhelmed existing financial arrangements. Local tax bases fell as economic restructuring continued. East German communes in 1991 had 13% of West German revenue levels (LVZ, 13/1/92) despite having greater needs. Poor economic performance meant Leipzig in 1991 had local business revenue of 44 Million DM. A similar-sized West German city might expect ten times that level (LVZ, 19/2/92). Fiscal unification did not foresee involving the East in federal equalisation measures until 1995,¹² but the new *Länder* governments were not equipped to cope. Leipzig, like many other towns and cities, repeatedly came close to bankruptcy, particularly in 1991. Federal government had to intervene with direct transfers of funds and increased taxation, despite assertions to the contrary (the 'tax-lie'¹³) and had to adopt a more interventionist and welfare state approach than before. However, despite federal transfers, revenue remained low. In

these conditions the reformed city council faced a mismatch between its workload, the nature of the problems, which were often new, unexpected and urgently requiring attention, and its ability to deal with these changes (see chapters 7 and 8). Neighbourhood issues became less important to councillors as even city problems seemed less amenable to intervention. This reflects arguments by West German theorists of the shift to a 'shadow state' left dealing with such issues while the city administration concentrates on the strategic thinking of the city (chapter 2), though obviously the citizen associations, individually and collectively strongly contested this view (chapters 6 to 8).

For most councillors, the extent of the workload was seen as limiting their ability to address neighbourhood issues: 'we are not that big a group [Bündnis 90] that we can keep up these contacts permanently. We are eaten up by the daily politics' (A9, 30/3/92). Local political involvement as councillors demanded heavy time commitments: 'if I don't do anything except politics then it is really possible, but .. like on the side it is not possible' (A10, 1/4/92). Even then, most time is spent in meetings and business (A14, 7/4/92). Time spent on council business affected councillors' main jobs, creating a 'professional burden because we work voluntarily [*ehrenamtlich*¹⁴]' (A8, 30/3/92). Those with limited income reported a lack of personal financial resources to cope with being a councillor (telephone, typewriter, meals and travel):

'I don't have the right to say because of this, okay (*I won't do the job any more?*) [but] when you look at the hours you put in [...] it is in principle almost a second job on the side. In Leipzig with all the committees included we make 500 D-Mark [sigh] per month. [...] You can't earn, or it's not meant to be that anyway.' (A10, 1/4/92)

These experiences are not limited to Leipzig or East Germany (time spent by councillors in a similar-sized West German city was over 1000 hours per year; Teufel and Kanitz, 1983) but many councillors were obviously surprised by their workload and found it difficult to cope with that in addition to their personal experiences of change. Wollmann (1991a) notes that many councillors in the East withdrew over the first session and in places even the reserve list of candidates was exhausted. Nevertheless, in the West German case one fifth of time was spent in contact with citizens,

surgeries and advice. This was not reflected in the Leipzig interviews, suggesting the greater tasks of transformation affect the ability and willingness of councillors to engage with neighbourhood issues and reinforce, or are used to justify the rejection of the neighbourhood as a valid political sphere.

5.3 Redefining the political

While the issue of scale and the nature of transformations affects how the city and councillors relate to residents and neighbourhoods, it should also be clear that this relation is strongly affected by new definitions and practices of what is or should be seen as 'the political'. Section 4.2 indicated such discussions while chapters 4 to 8 showed clearly the intersections between contests around place and the political which characterise developments in Leipzig after 1989.

5.3.1 Non-party political discourses

A key feature of politics in Leipzig was the non-confrontational consensus which was the officially approved mode of political interaction in Leipzig and has its bases in the discourses of the *Wende* and in subsequent articulations of local policy which stress actions should be for the good of the city. Paradoxically this often denied differing demands from the population. When no party won an absolute majority in Leipzig in 1990, rather than a fixed coalition the SPD established a 'consensus' with CDU and Bündnis 90 (LVZ, 17/5/90). The PDS was excluded from this consensus. Its local party secretary recognised that other parties had serious 'reservations' (B3, 31/3/92). A CDU councillor argued 'they are people who have learned nothing new. [...] Very educated doctors, professors, but they still want socialism, you know' (A18, 28/4/92). Similar sentiments were expressed by SPD councillors: 'They [PDS] swing to one side or the other. [...] Everything that they messed up before they want to catch up on, almost, or they want to take the lead' (A16, 16/4/92).

Mayor Lehmann-Grube described the consensus:

'[It is not a grand coalition.¹⁵ In spring 1990 SPD, CDU and Bündnis 90] agreed to come to decisions between themselves about important, fundamental questions - local government constitution, order of council business and division of local

departments [otherwise it is a process of coming to a decision].' (LVZ, 21/22/3/92)

One result was the mixed party affiliation of elected and appointed senior council posts.¹⁶ This established co-operation in the administration and the elected council. Local newspapers praised this avoidance of party politics, supporting the emphasis on subject competence over party interests as a basis for decision-making. 'There is general understanding between parties that subject competence [*fachliche Kompetenz*] is the decisive criterion' (LVZ, 25/9/90). As a Bündnis 90 councillor argued: 'when it's about the individual citizen then all try really to do something good for the citizen and not just to shout party slogans and say, "CDU for wealth" or whatever. What use is that when the people are unemployed?' (A9, 30/3/92). Put succinctly, one interviewee argued, 'No party can afford to have utopian goals' (A17, 22/4/92).

Rejection of party politics was partly a legacy of and reaction to the GDR. Leipzig's consensus model developed when the GDR still (just) existed and it proceeded from the Round Tables and interim *Volkskammer* parliament where party politics were rejected and issues were predominant (Wollmann and Jaedicke, 1993). As a councillor involved in Leipzig's Citizens Committee explained 'it was not about political fundamentals, it was about change. Moving to democracy' (A18, 28/4/92). This follows findings elsewhere in East Germany which show that the East Germans who had moved newly into local government were 'unanimous in their belief that local politics must not be allowed to degenerate to party politics' (Osterland, 1994, 13). This is reinforced by approaches among those continuing in office from the past who reject too much politicisation of local government, preferring administrative competency. This may be a legacy of GDR preferences for strong administration over debate (Wollmann and Jaedicke, 1993; see chapter 8).

Rejection of party politics in Leipzig's elected council (rather than the administration) also relates to unification. The consensus approach challenges western party discipline 'that for some is beginning to bear an uncanny resemblance to politics as practised by the SED in the past' (Osterland, 1994, 14) and sets Leipzig's politics apart from West German standards or the oppositional stance between parties at federal and state levels (A16, 16/4/92). Positive reasons for consensus were that it gave

Leipzig an 'advantage' in its restructuring and improved trust between citizens and politics. Osterland identified this generally among East German councillors: 'what dominates is the obviously unshakeable resolution to help the town or city, to which one feels so attached in a strangely emotional way, out of its desperate situation' (1994, 15). Osterland, a western academic, finds emotional attachment to place and local politics a 'strange' mix. It may well be that this local consensualism is generalisable as a product of the particular harsh context of eastern Germany during the period of restructuring. Certainly in Leipzig a determination among most of the key actors to act in the interests of the 'good of the city' was evident throughout the period studied and did not end after the careful renewal debates of the People's Building Conference: 'what unites all the parties is the will to lead Leipzig out of its misery [*Misere*] as fast as possible' (A15, 8/4/92)

However, this avoidance of conflict and political argument can also open the way for arguments based around efficient administration and the modernisation of the city, since it too is posited as being 'for the good of the city'. Focus on issues, city and citizen needs, rejection of party politics and development of political practices distinct from dominant West German modes are all reasons given in favour of party consensus:

Mayor Lehmann-Grube: 'This special way of going about municipal politics may not be uncontroversial but in the town hall it is at the moment the dominant point of view [*herrschende Meinung*]. It is good for Leipzig. In competition between cities and regions it is a locational advantage for our city which must be kept and further developed. [...] We need not copy everything which the West shows us. Wherever it is necessary and possible we must go our own ways, thought out for ourselves and decided for ourselves. [...] [Western parties] do not primarily look for the right solution for problems. They first look for the appreciation of public opinion or the electorate. That is precisely the way that increasingly loses the trust of citizens and voters. [...] [In Leipzig] at all levels up to the city council there are discussions and arguments about which solution for a problem is the right one for the development of the city and the welfare [*Wohl*] of its citizens.' (LVZ, 21/22/3/92)

Councillors expressed varied views as to whether there was acceptance of co-operation in principle only or evidence of it in action. Most SPD, CDU and Bündnis 90 councillors agreed that ideally issues not party politics should dominate and party discipline should be subordinated to personal integrity:

'Most councillors only vote according to their opinions, their conscience. [...] There are some things of course where we [CDU] must be of one opinion but only very few.' (A20, 30/4/92)

Councillor: 'The decisions in the city parliament, they are often decided cross-party [*parteiübergreifend*]. [...] With us it is still [...] that well there was a vote where, let's say, eh, [...] half of the SPD said together with half of the CDU and parts of the PDS, yes we want that. [...]'

FS: 'And the people who vote against, are they thought of badly?'

Councillor: 'No. Well [...] at the most someone is spoken to or annoyed. But it is quickly forgotten.' (A11, 3/4/92)

Although by law councillors in East and West Germany are not bound to any party line and are free to decide according to their consciences (Teufel and Kanitz, 1983), western branches of the parties might well be horrified at the pragmatic views of Leipzig's councillors. Indeed assertions of a councillor's individual responsibility to her/his conscience and to the voters who are the final judges of decisions exhibit a certain naiveté. Party organisations outside the council objected to the consensus and at regional and national levels there were calls to 'stress unity a bit more' (A20, 30/4/92). Practically parties still sanctioned or rejected a councillor's further candidacy: 'when questions come, "why did you decide in this or this way" [...] you must have the backbone to say I decided this way for these reasons. (A10, 1/4/92).

The pragmatism of the focus on city issues and less strict party politics has mixed implications in the neighbourhoods. Councillors are busy with city issues generally (by choice or necessity) and have less time for local problems. However, co-operative approaches may mean that local issues are not polarised and are solved 'for the good of the people'. Levels of cross-party co-operation in the neighbourhoods vary. In Plagwitz, Stötteritz, and Gohlis there is a level of limited contact between SPD, CDU, FDP and Bündnis 90 councillors. Contacts are often restricted to general acquaintances (A18, 28/4/92), even between councillors from the same

party (A20, 30/4/92). Among local party groups there are even fewer reports of contact: 'each party just does its tasks alone' (A15, 8/4/92).

The ideal of such a political style is associated with grass roots politics and in many ways continues within the discourses of political action established at the *Wende*. In an account of her experience of local politics, a Bündnis 90 councillor identifies weaknesses and strengths in the approach. She argues that in practice many followed standard party discipline and identifies co-operation as a specific citizens movement characteristic, which can perhaps produce a different logic of politics rather than an 'apolitical' one which stresses administrative competence:

'I myself keep coming up against my limits, that I don't know something. In conversation when someone asks me what I don't know myself, I have to read up again. [...] We are all anchored in the subject committees in the city council. Well then unfortunately one really only knows about these subject committees and [...] as councillors one really should know about everything, because after all one talks or one votes about all the other things too. So it is bad for me if I simply vote with others for the reason that someone who I know well in the council and who once said to me vote this way and this wants to persuade me, I have to be able to carry it **myself**. [...] That means not like we sometimes observe, CDU, SPD, sometimes also the PDS, they always vote solidly together. It is really rare now that someone there dances out of line. [...] We discuss everything of course, we form a group policy. Despite that each is still free in his decision. He should clear it with his conscience. That is for me the type of politics that must have chances in the future and should have chances. Yes. So when I have a look at the politics¹⁷ of the big parties, CDU, SPD, then [...] it seems, looking from a distance, they all really want the same, or that first of all they proclaim the same, "enforce human rights, we want [...] to promote affluence". But in very precise small points if ever one of the parties has said something then the opposite party is only left with saying the opposite.

[...] And that is really the reason why we, the Civic Movement, we want it to be that for specific subjects people [...] from the

most differing parties come together and reach a decision.'
(A21, 30/4/92)

She advocates debate, not an avoidance of discussion, but this should be based on issues and policies and not simply on reacting to points made by another party.

5.3.2 Changing nature of local party activities

However, one of the key issues of the process of reunification is that existing categories' meanings are changed. Political parties, like most other elements of life in the former GDR, have not escaped some redefinition of their significance. The CDU, the Christian Democratic Union, became the ruling federal and regional party. It existed in a different form in the GDR as one of the so-called block parties allocated seats in GDR assemblies by a fixed proportion and which voted with the SED while apparently offering a voice for those who did not want to vote for the SED (Lapp, 1988). Its transition to the FRG caused divisions and differences within the party between those who espouse more of the party's GDR ideals than the policies of the Bonn government. The SPD, the Social Democratic Party in Germany, began in the GDR as the SDP which emerged as a new or re-formed party in the autumn of 1989 (Weilemann *et al.*, 1990). It then united with its West German counterpart in the run up to unification. Bündnis 90 (Federation 90) emerged from the electoral pact of the 'new civic movements' which were heavily involved in the transformation of the GDR, particularly New Forum and Democracy Now. It is now merged at a national level with the Green Party (Müller-Enbergs, *et al.*, 1991; DDR, 1990b). SPD and Bündnis 90, which had not existed before, had to develop from campaigning and oppositional movements to party structures. For the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) the changes were from the 'leading role' of the SED primarily organised through places of work, to being a party seen as oppositional to the project of the West, reduced to organising in neighbourhoods instead of the workplace. The FDP (the Free Democratic Party) is the liberal party which in the GDR emerged from a union of a block party, the Liberal Democratic Party and newly established liberal democratic parties (Weilemann, *et al.*, 1990).

In the process, local party organisations were changing too:

have got too old so that at our meetings at the moment we are around twenty, twenty-five members. That is still relatively good compared to the city average, but [...] In the past we had a full-time employed secretary practically. And that is lost because of financial reasons. The party at the moment has hardly any money, the membership payments are very low, and so everything is being reduced.' (A15, 8/4/92)

The CDU not only lost membership. Its functions also changed:

'You must realise these groups of the so-called Block Parties [had] a certain function that the people could talk [...] now and then with like-minded people about problems which they otherwise couldn't do in the factories or where they worked. We were all very much surrounded by SED-comrades, they had to hold back with their opinion. Where did they get a chance to exchange their opinions? That was possible either only in the **family** circle or in groups of **like-minded** people and then the local groups had, let's say, a certain **alibi**-function, or one could complain there, do you understand? And this function is no longer there today. ' (A20, 30/4/92)

Block parties had provided a forum for public communication which was a substitute for the private sphere which the family provided in the GDR so they were seen as ways of resisting the SED. Simultaneously critics saw them as part of the dominant GDR culture which served to legitimate the GDR system by giving the impression of a multi-party state (A11, 3/4/92). Confused use of 'they' and 'we' when talking about the former CDU indicates this ambivalence. An FDP member presents a similar narrative:

'Our party [...] comes from the LDP mostly and also from the NDPD, they were GDR parties and they were all parties whose members wanted to have nothing to do with the SED and as such they previously had the function of being against the SED but not in the sense of how an English person might imagine. [...] This party was previously a party where the people tried to be a little different from the ruling SED [...]. Now one could assume that the people (*under these conditions?*) will be glad they can finally change something and try to be

to be a little different from the ruling SED [...]. Now one could assume that the people (*under these conditions?*) will be glad they can finally change something and try to be politically particularly active and to be involved in daily and regional politics. And the depressing thing is that it is exactly the opposite. [...] I have seldom experienced such lethargy and indifference [*Unbeteiligung*] as at this time.' (A17, 22/4/92)

Echoing the citizen associations, he argued that such lethargy results from the extent of social change, the loss of control as 'the conditions of West Germany were forced onto the us', and from the feeling that 'one can't change anything anyway'.

Following the FDP and CDU councillors, several others argued that party members were often only interested in problems 'which really mostly affect the really close living surroundings of these people. It mostly isn't even about the whole city district [*Stadtteil*]. It is often well that eh the neighbourhood is the most interesting thing for many at the moment. [...] "The neighbours are building something. Is it allowed?"' (A15, 8/4/92). Likewise the SPD reportedly has 'great difficulties making something happen in the neighbourhood' (A20, 30/4/92). So the focus for local party members became more immediate at precisely the same time as many councillors rejected the local and personal as politically valid areas of action, although this varied between parties. From the newspaper survey, the local parties most active in neighbourhood issues (rather than internal party meetings) are Bündnis 90, PDS and SPD to an extent, although this varied across the city: Bündnis 90 and SPD in Plagwitz; Bündnis 90, SPD and CDU in Gohlis; PDS and Bündnis 90 in Waldstraßenviertel; and SPD in Stötteritz.¹⁸

5.3.3 Rejection of 'the political'

The third aspect of interest here is that the retreat from local action as political and the rejection of party-political argument and conflict were accompanied by a general narrative of the rejection of 'the political'. Several councillors indicated that while there was an active minority in the population ['we have one group, it is very active in the population, it is small, it gets involved everywhere, it informs itself about everything,

voting (A8, 30/3/92), and were generally disinterested except in issues directly affecting their flat or car (A20, 30/4/92).

This lack of interest or lack of willingness to be involved was seen as related to the overwhelming effects of unification producing 'political tiredness' or 'disaffection' [*Politikverdrossenheit*]:

'There are probably too many private problems with work and with this and that.' (A20, 30/4/92)

'Most people are hardly interested, or they are interested in politics but aren't prepared to do something themselves. That is my feeling, or my observation.¹⁹ [...] There is at the moment a fight [*Kampf*] for jobs and the whole situation so that one is concerned with work and can't do anything else or can't be very active there any more. That's how I'd see it.' (A17, 22/4/92)

The reason for inactivity shifts from citizens' ignorance to structural changes which overwhelm personal action. People are too involved in the 'struggle' for a job and problems with housing to have the energy for the apparent luxury of political activity. Most councillors do regard this as inadequate and councillors keen to involve local citizens are frustrated in anything except the most direct of issues (e.g. rent, parking). The frustration is expressed even more strongly in the use of the informal plural 'you' form (*ihr*):

'[To do anything] first I must have the citizens, that means that the citizens have to come to us for once. [...] [sigh] Apart from rents, there is really, really, little interest [...] I can't force any citizen. Only publicise that [the meeting] is there and then and [say] 'if you [*ihr*] have some concern you [*ihr*] are warmly invited', but you can't ... [sigh] run from house to house.' (A10, 1/4/92)

It could be argued that councillors are simply using journalistic assertion of the trope of 'tiredness with politics' to justify their lack of contact with citizens. Reification of disenchantment with political processes serves to obscure mechanisms, processes and power relations which make people

It could be argued that councillors are simply using journalistic assertion of the trope of 'tiredness with politics' to justify their lack of contact with citizens. Reification of disenchantment with political processes serves to obscure mechanisms, processes and power relations which make people more or less active and affect the ways that the population relate to the political sphere. At the same time, while some interviewees proposed such views, they also disrupted them. A discussion with one SPD councillor (below) serves to locate problems in structural changes in the East and resulting current personal concerns of individuals but it also identifies the political origins of declining activity in political developments of the *Wende* and unification. As such this passage both confirms and goes beyond arguments which others present. '*Politikverdrossenheit*' is not reified as an explanation in itself. Political and structural changes underpinning the transformation combine to produce this situation. At the same time standard characterisations of 'poor Easterners' are disrupted as it is argued that differences exist between those for whom changes have been positive and those who are not so well off, so that the positioning of the East as the victim of western processes is challenged, raising questions about the apparent acquiescence of certain sections of the East German population. Interestingly here in relation to formal politics one finds similar responses to those offered by citizen associations (see chapters six and eight).

Councillor: '[At first the parties experienced] popularity, an uprising of the parties, [...] especially October, November, December [1989] when it all began [...] and then there was the change of direction [to reunification - *Umschwung*] and the new money [D-Marks] and the (*promise?*) of the CDU that ... everyone will be better off, and no one worse off, and who knows what else. [...] With the exception of Oskar Lafontaine who did say that eh unification would cost money, cost a load of money and we should discuss it and see that we can carry it out in certain steps, [but] then in the elections the SPD collapsed completely here in the new states too. [...] Now there is in my opinion a greater disenchantment with politics [*Politikverdrossenheit*]. Because ... the people are just concerned with unemployment, with adapting [*Neuanpassung*], with travel. Mind you, also many, many ... many people are much better off than they admit to.'

- FS: 'Do you mean, they complain as if they had problems?'
- Councillor: 'Yes, yes. Apart from the unemployed. [Others say] [...] [mimic] money is so tight, and the rent so high, and everything so expensive and so on, you know? [normal] But when you go into the city, then you see how the people buy and buy and buy, and when you only need to look along the street here, there are five/ six western cars [*Westautos*] and one eastern car [*Ostauto*], and so on.[...].' (A11, 3/4/92)

6 Conclusion

One can construct from this a general argument that in fact one of the key issues in restructuring in Leipzig has been the struggle over the politics of space and place. Disenchantment with the process of reunification developed partly because politicians at the federal level asserted the process would be straightforward and would simply require an extension of the West to the East (the administrative model), although the catch was that the process was not unproblematic and was in fact underlain by unstated relations of power and control (normative, economic and political). At the city level, the rejection of political dogma after the GDR revolution developed as a particular local articulation of discourses of active citizenship and development for the good of the city. However, while this offered scope to citizen associations and some councillors to argue for the importance of the neighbourhood in local decisions, it paradoxically also served to obscure local power relations allowing others to deny scope for conflicts through the removal of the local from the political and by defining the political as non-conflictual. These discourses could be utilised to argue that neighbourhood concerns should be subordinated to city issues, that councillors should concentrate on the city, that citizens were not interested in politics and that consensus (or effective administration) and not conflict should be the basis for local decision-making. As previous chapters have shown, the actions by citizen associations and others effectively challenged the depoliticisation of space, challenging the concept of unproblematic administrative change and increasingly doing so in terms of citizenship rights and the need to recognise the differential power relations which people and places experienced in relation to urban transformations during reunification. That the consensus among citizen associations was

also being challenged by other groups which argued that cleavages other than place were involved merely serves to confirm the trend.

As an interesting post-script, the Leipziger Volkszeitung argued that the results of the 1994 local elections which saw reduced votes for the two main parties and a relatively low turnout (58%, the lowest eastern German turnout) reflected two factors. What had seemed to councillors to be a consensus approach was interpreted from the outside as 'boring' and exclusionary. Consensus among parties left little room for political debate and effectively excluded public discussion in early stages before a common line had already been found. 'The feeling could not be passed on to the Leipzigers that they really have a voice in the concerns of their city' (LVZ, 14/6/94). A second reason for the low turnout is suggested in the massive achievements of the council which meant that councillors had little contact to the electorate (a finding supported here): 'Because the councillors, most of whom were standing again, were not known in their neighbourhoods, the people did not go to vote' (*ibid.*).

¹ 'Local government' is used here as a generic description of all levels of territorial administration below those of *Land* and *Bezirk*, whether in the GDR or FRG and translates the German '*Kommunen*'. GDR '*Bezirke*' are translated as 'regions' and Federal German *Länder* as 'states'. Local government, i.e. levels below the regions or states, is made up of 'municipalities', which are unitary city or town authorities (*kreisfreie Städte*), 'counties' (*Kreise*) and subordinated to the counties, the *Gemeinde*, or 'parishes'. The larger municipalities formerly had city sub-district assemblies and administrations (*Stadtbezirke*). These are now only administrative units.

² Bündnis 90 was not founded until after the local elections. At that point the various parties (New Forum, the Greens, Independent Women's Association, Democracy Now and so on) campaigned as separate parties.

³ In 1984, 30% of Rostock's councillors had degrees (Richter, 1989), but the situation in Leipzig is more extreme.

⁴ Bündnis 90 and SPD councillors were involved in local meetings. The 'problem' was aggravated because the city did not have control over the allocation of foreign workers.

⁵ There were plans for territorial reorganisation in 1994.

⁶ See chapter 3 for a further discussion of these terms.

⁷ Candidates were initially proposed by the parties and organisations to which they belonged. They then were subject to work-place examinations by their work team which had to approve their candidature. The link to the workplace was considered very important and in his analysis of the 'representativeness' of the councillors in Rostock Richter considered the extent to which they represented the major enterprises and institutions in the city as well as other considerations (Richter, 1989).

⁸ Note the self-conscious use of a GDR phrase.

⁹ Voters could vote for specific individual candidates and not simply for party lists as a whole.

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- 10 *'Politik'* is both policy and politics. The division between policy which is carried out by the administration after the political discussions of the elected representatives is difficult to explore in this situation.
- 11 *'Bonze'* is a pejorative term and comes from French and Buddhist terms for a priest. In the GDR it referred to officials of party and state who were estranged from the people and largely pursued their own ends.
- 12 Originally fiscal redistribution would not apply to the eastern states until 1998 but this was subsequently brought forward.
- 13 See F.M. Smith, 1994.
- 14 *'Ehrenamtlich'* means literally 'in an honorary capacity'. The other commonly used terms are *'nebenberuflich'*, meaning 'besides one's job', and *'freiwillig'*, meaning 'of one's free will'. The former two are commonly used for such official tasks as being a councillor while *'freiwillig'* is used for such tasks as the voluntary fire service.
- 15 The Grand Coalition in the West German parliament of 1966-1969 between CDU and SPD provoked strong reactions, including the APO, or Extra-Parliamentary Opposition. Hence the stress that this is not a grand coalition but a consensus.
- 16 The city president (Leipzig's official representative) is independent, his deputy from the SPD. The mayor is SPD, his deputy CDU. Ten heads of department and other senior officials were nominated by the three parties (see appendix 7).
- 17 The word used is *'die Politik'*, grammatically a singular noun with no plural form. This suggests, perhaps, again that there is little separating these parties.
- 18 Bündnis 90 local party groups in North and South West (including Gohlis and Plagwitz respectively) were active in promoting and supporting citizen initiatives and holding public meetings. After party restructuring, the PDS too became more active locally, covering issues of the constitution, traffic, rents and building conditions. SPD local parties were active in South, South West (Plagwitz), West, South East (Stötteritz) and North (Gohlis) on issues of childcare, rents, local development plans, women and planning at local and city level. The CDU tended to concentrate on city-level issues such as traffic, economic development, and construction.
- 19 Note here the way in which a 'feeling' is perhaps not a justified way of reasoning. Rather the statement is given a more solid backing by asserting it as an 'observation'. The speaker was a university scientist.

Chapter 10

Revolution and Reunification: Politics and Geographies

1 Introduction

Chapter 1 began with questions about the nature of reunification processes in Germany and the difficulties and importance of studying processes of transformation generally. Processes of reunification, it was argued, involved immense disruption to existing patterns, shaped by the forces of capital and the power relations between East and West. However, they are also shaped by the actions of East Germans, the experiences of the GDR and of the GDR revolution, and by understandings in East and West of self and other formed in forty-five years of Cold War. The thesis set out to study changes in Leipzig and five of its neighbourhoods in order to understand how these processes were articulated in specific places and times, but also how they were contested and re-shaped through the interactions of place (changes to places, contested significance attached to particular places, newly public and private spaces) and politics (new forms of citizenship, changing definitions of the political). This involved not simply applying the western conceptual baggage which I brought to the study but also trying to explore complexities of concepts of place and space, of citizenship, of neighbourhood, of ownership, of work and home, East and West in the time and space articulated between GDR experiences and western views. These were further complicated because there was no simple divide between then and now, here and there. Instead different people and different institutions sought at different times and places to advocate particular understandings and interpret these concepts in particular ways.

A key issue in the study was to discuss the creation of and contested nature of particular discourses surrounding transformation. Two in particular were strongly rooted in Leipzig, namely those of 'careful urban renewal' and of 'citizen participation'. These intersected with the metaphors of change as a developmental process and as colonisation. The discourses were not simply ways of talking about change. They had material effects on forms of urban change in Leipzig and the mode in

which this could be contested. Such locally contested processes took place within the broader power relations of reunification which prioritised private capital and the pre-existing western norms.

In this final chapter I want, briefly, to stand back from the thesis and to ask some questions about the study as a whole: what was the scope and effect of local action in Leipzig (section 2); what were the discourses and practices around restructuring which were important (section 3); does this study of one particular place have any relevance for understanding the wider processes and nature of restructuring during reunification (section 4)? I want to suggest that both geographical practices and particular 'geographical imaginings' were important in the inter-connections between place and the political (section 5). Finally (section 6) I will address the issues of the relevance of the theoretical approaches adopted, and whether this study has any wider relevance to issues elsewhere in Germany and to eastern Europe more generally, what limitations the study has and what implications it has for exploring inter-connections between the political and geography.

2 Effects of citizen action: contesting local development and citizenship in reunification

Over the period from 1989 to 1993, a high level of local activism was established and maintained in Leipzig. After the mass actions of the GDR revolution, other local networks were formed and citizens, through their involvement in these groups, were able to seek to influence city policies and investment decisions and to change to some extent the forms of local development. Despite this, local action faced considerable limitations, including its inability to mobilise large sections of the population, the extent to which certain citizen groups tended towards professionalisation and the ways capital processes quickly became dominant in the city. One reaction could be a rather gloomy 'why they failed' account which is symptomatic of highly critical accounts of new social movements in the West. However, Wallerstein argues expectations are simply too high:

'Antisystemic movements are not free-floating avenging angels sent by Jehovah: they are mundane products of the real world. [This] is not such a banality, for the very language in which we usually discuss the limitations of antisystemic movements is a language of purity appropriate only to avenging angels.' (Wallerstein, 1991, 27)

Leipzig's groups are grounded in specific geographical, material and social relations of power, resources and control. This was particularly obvious in the changing power relations of planning and housing. Power relations in urban change shifted markedly after 1989. Local government is more able to take strategic decisions, and local pressure groups and residents have broader access to local planning procedures and to influencing priorities, but there are major caveats. The interests of capital dominate economic restructuring. Local planning and neighbourhood demands operate within the legal frameworks of ownership and the financial limitations of government (especially in the absence of high levels of private finance) and, more significantly, within the ideological priority given to ownership. There are still limitations (if very different from those of the GDR) on the scope of local influence by council and residents, but they have sometimes modified market-led transformation. Effects differ between neighbourhoods as some become renewal areas based on careful urban renewal and others remain outside concerted local government programmes.

In housing, power relations are complex. For many households the lottery of having a public or private owner removed the chance for control over residential choices. Economic pressures from other land-uses, renovation or other less legal pressures all acted on neighbourhoods, blocks and households in differing ways. Comparatively low income levels and the split between employed and unemployed or those in the second labour market all affected potential access to housing, and will do so increasingly in the future. At the same time the shortage of alternatives means that those in council housing are not always those who most need lower cost housing. Yet they enjoy secure tenancies, particularly in newer housing areas. The often residual inner city population is most affected by privatisation, higher rent levels and uncertainty about neighbourhoods. These developments make increased social segregation and differences between attractive and less-attractive areas more likely. One cannot determine any one direction of development for the city as a whole. Rather the processes involve multi-dimensional transformations acting differentially across the physical, social and economic terrain of Leipzig as the legacy of past forms, forces of capital restructuring, and national, regional and local political processes combine.

It could be argued generally that there is a progression of disruptions from the political agendas of the *Wende* to a period immediately after reunification which assumed that the new system would produce an issue-based politics and that it would be the policies which were the subject of debate and not whether and how the citizens could be involved. However, as this period progressed it became clearer to many groups that they would have to be active in the processes of involvement if they were to be allowed to be involved. Their actions then followed on from the new sites of action and the new places for politics established by the transgression of a whole series of boundaries in the GDR revolution (between home and street, between citizen and state, between church and politics, and across the borders of the country). The *Wende* developments of discourses of 'careful renewal' and civic participation helped create strategic alliances between certain sections of the population and the administration. Initially this new form of development was constructed as a unitary and united front acting against the GDR status quo (chapter 5). However, the politics of place and the place of politics emerged rapidly as more contested, negotiated and fluid.

3 Discourses and practices of place-politics and the place(s) of politics

Renegotiation and contestation of the nature of citizenship regularly entailed new spaces, scales and sites which were claimed as legitimate locations for civic action. Most dramatically shown in the GDR revolution (chapter 4), this continued in actions by civic groups and others. Such actions were often involved with contests around the changes affecting people and places. These not only questioned the appropriate nature of change but who could legitimately argue about this change. Struggles over place were inevitably also struggles over definitions of the political.

Neighbourhood action groups were engaged in a series of actions around constructing localised struggles over place and citizenship. Local areas became invested with meaning and significance (whether as sites of affection or of 'despair'). However, almost all groups refused to be restricted to bounded concerns with the neighbourhood. Their actions often had porous boundaries. Most groups had open membership for residents and non-residents. Identification with the local area was used as a marker for action but was as often a goal in action as it was a pre-

requisite for membership. Groups rejected defence of the local area at the expense of all else. In traffic planning and city policies, alliances developed between groups in a range of ways (exhibitions, Pro Leipzig, meetings, common actions) to ensure that while actions were locally based they were not the actions of one place against another. The groups usually rejected a zero-sum logic to activism. At a wider scale several sought contacts to broader groupings, around thematic issues or to groups elsewhere in the East (to a lesser extent) or in the West (chapter 6).

This open but local action was one which held in tension a series of spatialities of activism. The local base and in particular the dichotomy of insider/outsider was often used as a mobilising factor (chapter 8). Within discourses of local citizenship and careful renewal, people's local residence, their history of local attachment, their presence, their being-in-place were all claimed as valid bases for the right to influence the future of local areas and to argue an alternative to restructuring for outside capital. At the same time discourses which supported demands for local action also contained elements which could be articulated in a manner which undermined these demands. In urban change, there was a certain elitism among the key proponents of the argument who stressed the artistic, architectural and cultural elements of design in the built environment (chapter 7). Similarly, the very phrases which declared the rights to and utility of local residents' involvement also restricted the citizenship of residents to these local areas and to being a source of local knowledge (chapter 5). Local action was supported by and simultaneously undermined by a determination among certain parts of the city council to avoid party politics, to support supposedly 'non-political' forms of interaction between citizens and council and a restricted view of citizenship which in fact denied local actions as a political form, except when in contact with official actors (chapters 8 and 9).

Local action was not the only form of action. Alliances around class or questioning political choices locally and nationally undermined the logic of the local area as a useful area of action and for many people meant they saw little point in local action (chapters 6 and 8). Group members and members of the public at events would discuss change in terms of processes of capital and capitalist exploitation of the built environment. The legacy of a Marxist-Leninist schooling and educational system meant ordinary people were more willing to talk in terms of the workings of

'the market'. However, this often became conflated with the East/West divide, a tendency reinforced by the relatively limited application of class analysis to the existing experiences among different strata of eastern German society, in relation to work and status, unemployment and the positions of power and control in which they found themselves.

Yet it was often when the dichotomies of inside/outside or of East/West were questioned, especially in the contestation of planning and the priorities for housing policy (chapter 8) that the 'naturalisation of choices' (ter Borg and Dijkink, 1995) was undermined. Alliances could be established between some sections of the city administration with groups against, for example, the decisions of the *Land* government or the city council (in the legalist positions of certain groups and the city Housing Department). Common views were also found between groups and planners, both in the East and from the West, particularly around the refusal to accept the western planning system as a monolithic given. In advocating a co-operative view of planning and local development many refused to accept the assumption of system purity which underlay assertions of the incommensurability of any new forms or, particularly, of any elements of GDR experience with western planning (chapter 8). These alliances questioned the mirroring of the GDR and FRG as precise opposites (Borneman, 1992).

Questions in Leipzig related to constructions of the meaning and significance of places, whether 'the East', Leipzig or individual neighbourhoods. By autumn 1989 Leipzig was a 'dying city'. The metaphors of illness, death, and organic remedies for the city were at once an expression of the material conditions of the city and a reason behind the levels of action there (Grésillon, 1991). Such metaphors demanded attention from government and citizens alike and set the scene for widespread discussion of the ways GDR policies should be changed. Such suggestions stressed local meanings and the ecological and living conditions of the neighbourhoods and the city, discussing its 'proud history' and restructuring for the local population. The early debate largely omitted concerns with capital, ownership and property rights.

Ironically, the metaphor of the existential threat to Leipzig as a city was by mid 1993 found to describe the residents of the city who, some argued, have adopted a spatiality of retreat to the domestic and the private, to self

and survival in response to the false appearances of state promises and actions and the dominance of the rights of capital which have replaced the rights of the Party (chapters 6 to 9). This is particularly driven by concentration on the discourse of modernisation in city development policies. Parts of the city policies such as tertiarisation were designed to encourage the emptying of places for international capital investments, designating parts of the city for such uses and restructuring for competition between Leipzig and the other European and global places (chapter 7). This was often interpreted by residents as creating non-places, where one could not tell if one was in the east or the west (chapter 8) and which effectively erased the meaning of places developed over years of change, another form of disappearance. Such processes had the material effects of relocating the population, often relegating them to secondary residential locations or altering their relation to the form of housing tenure or to the character of local areas. A final irony was the way in which the very local actions which groups undertook were influential in marking particular places as significant, usually through their inclusion in a planning programme, and making them more interesting to exploitation by capital.

It is difficult to determine what would have happened in these places without the planning interventions which were made. Certainly in some areas, such as Neustädter Markt, demolition and redevelopment as an expansion of the city centre would likely have been the outcome. Likewise in Plagwitz, tertiarisation may have occurred more quickly than it did and in Waldstraßenviertel there may have been almost no houses for the residential population left, as demand for office space and high class accommodation for incoming professionals was satisfied. How much was prevented and how much was positively done to develop the areas for the local population remained a topic of local debate (chapter 8).

4 Contested geographies of reunification

It is essential to ground the events in Leipzig in the processes of revolution and reunification and the power relations of those processes. However, I would argue that the events in Leipzig are actually part of the multitude of processes which constitute and shape the nature of revolution and reunification. One must start in Leipzig not with reunification but with the GDR revolution which, as chapters 4 and 5

showed, created new spaces and places of active citizenship, demanded new agendas for local change and contested new forms of citizenship. Yet revolutions are, by their nature, ambiguous times and spaces. Discussing the National Socialist 'revolution' of the 1930s, the Dresden philologist Victor Klemperer argued:

'In every revolution [...] there are always two tendencies at work: firstly the desire for the completely new, where the opposite to that which was previously valid is sharply emphasised, and at the same time also the need for connection, for justification through tradition.' (Klemperer, 1987, 81)

In this case there was the problem that it was not clear which past or even which future was meant. It seemed the future was decided quickly with reunification in 1990, ending the arguments about a 'Third Way' (chapter 4). The past, in contrast, seemed much less clear cut. Citizen action in Leipzig was variously constructed as a re-connection with bourgeois German culture of the past, as a continuation of GDR traditions of local solidarity and resistance to the state, or as a continuation of the grass roots actions of the GDR revolution (chapter 6).

In fact, as the study showed, neither past, present nor future were or are uncontested. Reunification in some ways prolonged the open space of the *Wende* into the early 1990s as the structures of western administration and governance were renegotiated to some extent in the particular places and spaces of eastern Germany. The standard modernisation approach to restructuring (that described as 'transition-to', or catching up) was supported by many who saw it as the way of achieving rapid material improvements. However, a nuanced understanding of processes and structures of power, meaning and change shows that even the transformations of nationality, world system and economic system (chapter 1) are not complex enough to encompass the range of changes evident in the spaces of challenge and resistance, of negotiation and co-operation which local action created.

Instead the study shows that processes of local change are a reflection of the structures and processes of reunification and at the same time are local negotiations of the processes of reunification which simultaneously serve to refashion the nature of reunification in these places. Their forms are a function of the false mirrorings of the Cold War, which create misunderstandings of past and future. They are both reactions against

and continuations of the geographies of the GDR, in opposition to the West (chapter 8) or in complete embrace of it, or in an ambivalent positioning which argues that not everything in the GDR was bad. These processes are played out in relation to structures of capital, to legislative and ideological priorities set by national government and within the pressures of internationalising capital which seek to (re)appropriate the newly available spaces and places of eastern Europe. However, in and through this, local actions construct a series of local spatialities - contested geographies of local citizenship, of renewal, of the rightful position of the local residents. Many are oppositional to reunification. Others seek a hybrid positioning, a spatiality holding in tension divergent demands on people and places, although not always successfully. In this they were aided to some extent by the success of the early development of the two key, and inter-linked, discourses of careful renewal and of democracy and citizenship.

Discourses and practices can reinforce or contradict one another and socially construct/ constitute identities. There can be discourses which are exclusive to other discourses and deny the validity of other ways of viewing the world. Discourses are both sources of power as they constitute what is right and 'same', proper to do or know, and who has the right or knowledge to speak and act for themselves and others. But discourses and practices can never be entirely closed in their meanings and significances. There are always ways in which meaning escapes, is misinterpreted, misrepresented. Such processes were clearly part of everyday life and people were aware of this. Groups formulated their aims and objectives in the language appropriate to achieve charitable status and people were aware of strong forces which disallowed the validity of GDR experiences. In a continuation of the ideological construction of reality of the GDR, a common response was to sigh and say with bitterness or irony, *'Es darf nicht sein, was nicht sein darf'* - 'That which cannot be, must not be.' Anything which was considered inappropriate (that GDR experiences were actually useful, or that there were further alternatives to the west German model) must not be allowed or be admitted to exist within the administrative-technocratic view of renewal (chapter 8).

This reflects the power relations of reunification and the dominance of western norms, of capital and global culture. Restructuring (desired by some and not by others) was dominated by the western *status quo*. A study

by the west German Allensbach Institut für Demoskopie argued that unification for West Germans was 'basically a media event' and life had not changed much. For East Germans on the other hand there had been 'serious and radical changes in the whole of life'. From the West unification was viewed as basically a management and financial problem while in the East the problem was seen as being deeper:

'Those surveyed indicated that they were filled with fears about safety because crime and brutality in street traffic are growing and growing, they complain of a growing coldness and lack of feeling in society, little solidarity and a general cooling of the social climate. People want more influence of the state in the economy - a rejection of the momentarily preferred dominance of the [...] pure market.' (LVZ, 9/3/92)

Some reacted by retreating from the confusion. Others chose resistance and opposition. The spatial and temporal processes of revolution/reunification created spaces for new identities around independent citizenship, local attachment and action but also resulted in feelings that something had been lost (the 'melancholy of the passing of the GDR', LVZ, 6/7/20/90) and that the new world was more frightening (the GDR as a time of 'quiet' supplanted by a time of 'terror, violence and fear': reader's letter, LVZ, 29/11/90). Reunification has new and negotiated spatialities of the place of politics and the politics of place around control and identity, but many of the tensions in such processes are strangely similar to those of the GDR:

Bärbel Bohley, member of GDR civic movement: 'Again and again I experience that the old fears have changed themselves into new ones. Just as the people then leaned opportunistically on the state, so they are interested again today in not being noticed. They are afraid of losing their job, of violence or of being put on some kind of lists again. In the end everything has just stayed the same. It just has a different colour. Now as then many expect that someone will do something for them instead of demanding it themselves. That is why one is silent again and does not explain oneself.' (LVZ, 4/11/91)

Yet this 'non-change' can also be used to create spaces for action which do not recognise the right to dominance of the newly powerful (particularly of capital and private ownership and the value systems of the west), just as they did not recognise the previous dominance of the GDR state in its 'real existing' form. At the same time people can seek to

challenge the new system on the basis of its own rhetoric as the opposite to the GDR.

5 Geographical imaginings and contested change

In the restructuring which constitutes reunification, neither the political nor the geographical have fixed boundaries or meanings. Some interpretations of the relation between the political and space, place and scale can be seen as reactions to the GDR. The rejection of ideology and politics for local levels can be seen as a reaction to the all-pervading attempts of the GDR state to define all realms as political. The tendency among some planners and administrators to see planning as non-political matches the GDR tendency to treat spatial location as an administrative issue as well as functionalist approaches in FRG planning legislation. The development of local attachments is partly a reaction against GDR tendencies to see local attachment as bourgeois. However, processes of revolution and reunification are inextricably linked to actions to create new public and political spheres of action (chapter 4), to develop locally specific constellations of actions through recourse to particular discourses and alliances and actions to create spaces of citizenship, and finally space and place are used to contest the very nature of reunification, to contest the dominant construction of reunification as a developmental process, to validate the transculturation of western ideas such as 'democracy' or 'citizenship', to highlight processes of false mirroring and to create alternative meanings and practice. They create hybrid meaning in spaces of contested citizenship.

The substantive chapters of the thesis have shown that reunification in Leipzig was contested through, among other things, differing 'geographical imaginings'. It is possible to identify two primary geographical imaginings and their related effects on local restructuring, on defining the political and even on understandings of reunification. The first is essentially one which rejects space and place as problematic and political. City planners and councillors define the neighbourhood as non-political or beyond politics, restricting citizenship to the points of intersection with official channels and to reasonable demands within an administrative/economistic view of planning. Developments in Leipzig have to be judged on their merits 'for the good of the city'. Such a view can also be extended to the nature of reunification where it is not space

which is seen as the primary marker of change, but time which divides past from present. Capitalism is victorious (whether this is welcomed or not) and the only response is for education and administration to apply the western system most effectively to the East.

The second geographical imagining is that it is precisely in place and space that the political is constituted. Space and place are intrinsically contested, whether at city, neighbourhood or state scales, as sites to assert forms of concern and control other than legal ownership, in the creation of spaces and places to define the nature of the political and of citizenship, and in contesting the control of space and place through discourses of citizenship.

These two views are not pure ones. It is hopefully clear from previous chapters that people and groups can hold both views at different points in time, in space and in different contexts. There are also commonalities between these two imaginings in the way they selectively intersect with discourses of careful renewal and of citizen participation as articulated in Leipzig. Neither discourse related purely to one or other geographical imagining. Discourses escaped the intentions of those utilising them and were variously interpreted. Their effects were altered in relation to actions by people and institutions, to the effects of capital, to the power relations of reunification, to embodied experiences of GDR and FRG, and to the differential effects of the continuing false mirroring of the Cold War in the post-reunification period.

6 Theoretical relevance, limitations and implications

Chapter 2 set out a range of western theoretical perspectives which seemed relevant to the study. Western literature on the local state and new social movements is of some relevance, particularly as there were claims by some that civic actions in Leipzig were reconnecting with earlier German traditions of such action (chapter 6). One can find similar outcomes in many cases, but it is more significant that the processes by which these outcomes were achieved and the meanings which are attached to them are very rarely the same as those given by western accounts. This is partly a result of, and partly a cause of the silences in many of these theoretical approaches towards the 'second world'.

Absolute definitions of the public and private spheres, and of the political which were discussed in chapter 2 seem of less practical use in this study. What is more applicable are ways of thinking about how the political is contested and what significance such definitions might have. This is also true of the insights of post-colonial studies. While the direct application of these views is problematic, there is a question to be asked about the use of the 'colonisation' term in describing reunification. That the term is used as a metaphor by those affected is clear (chapters 1, 7, 8, 9). It refers to the rapidity of change, the extent to which previous value systems are delegitimated and to the power relations of reunification which privilege western capital and western norms of administration and organisation. However, use of this metaphor can also serve to challenge these processes by making them visible, by naming them and de-naturalising the dominant view. In this the use of the 'colonisation' metaphor helps in the analysis to question these processes, to ask how such processes are challenged, such as via local spatialities of citizenship and contested restructuring which question the construction of spatial processes as apolitical or uncontestable. As chapter 8 showed, in practice the essentialising of East and West in relation to discourses of colonisation (spatial processes) and modernisation (temporal processes) was cross-cut by the alliances between East and West, the differences between political views and administration in the East. In other words, the discourse of colonisation was on the one hand related to a dualism of us/them but in practice produced alliances which undermined these very dualisms and de-naturalised the assertions made within the modernisation discourse that only one form of development was possible. This leads to an understanding of processes which aim to create alternatives to the logic of the superiority of the West over the East/ the past.

One effect of this discourse was that the sense that there must be something other than a total relinquishment of GDR identities, for the new identity even reached *Land* politicians. As Kurt Biedenkopf, Minister President of Saxony said:

'As politicians our task is to build bridges between the old and the new so that the people don't fall into the abyss [*Bodenlose*].'
(LVZ, 29/2/92)

This is the same logic as in the poem by Emily Dickinson at the start of the study, that it is not the opposite which fills the gap, the assertion that

there is no gap, but, as many local activists argued, a mixing of the two sides brought about by local actions and cross-cutting alliances. It is then that the theories of post-colonial writings are useful. One might argue that local action groups are not seeking to bridge the gap between the East and West, past and present, but in many ways are actually trying to appropriate the best of both worlds and create something new and hybrid, which is neither a continuation of the past nor an embracing of the West as it has been (Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor of the stream eating away at each river bank). Action is not seen as partly western and partly eastern but is a product of the particular experiences of GDR, revolution and reunification in particular places and times, creating hybrid identities and 'Third Spaces' (chapter 2).

Does this study have relevance for situations elsewhere in eastern Europe? Clearly, the framework of German reunification is unique. However, one can take from this study a much more critical view of processes of transformation underway in eastern Europe. Reactions against the difficulties of restructuring as well as the desire for a faster move to market economic approaches are both evident. People in the East are neither innocent bystanders nor passive recipients of change. One must look at the ways local places and people negotiate the tensions they face in relation to the state, their own past, the reinstated ideologies of ownership and private property, the market and western/global culture, to which there was always some form of access, especially via television.

Theoretically the study has shown the relevance of the local as a means not simply of illustrating a general trend with a 'case study' but of exploring the constructions of meanings and the significance of broader processes as they are articulated in the contested spatialities of restructuring. Postcolonial writings around resistance, dominance, change and the creation of hybrid or Third Spaces offer scope for understanding and exploring these processes of negotiation, of the limitations of such contests and of the nature of reunification, as experienced and articulated in what was the GDR. The metaphor of colonisation is too easily dismissed as a false equation, but in terms of processes and meanings, positions of dominance and resistance, it is very pertinent. One must, however, also see the extent to which processes are differently influenced by state, officials, local residents, local political representatives and owners of property and businesses and question the

very use of this metaphor which can also naturalise power relations as a product of the positioning in space (East/West) and lead one to fail to deconstruct such positions in their relation to other sources of dominance (within particular discourses, in terms of capital and ownership, in the political system). To do this allows a differentiated view of the complexity and the contested spaces (both material and political) of reunification. This theoretical view of reunification (or indeed of restructuring in eastern Europe as a whole) also provides a political tool within which these processes can be contested as other alliances can form to undercut this dominance and assert the availability of alternative courses of action.

The study does of course suffer from several major omissions, such as the positions of race, gender, age and other aspects in reunification which, if included, would have exceeded the scope of the institutional constraints of such a piece of writing. These are issues for future study, as are questions of how such processes are articulated in other places which enjoy different significance both locally and in relation to capital. The time framework of the study also stops before it is perhaps possible to determine whether the period studied was 'transitional' or whether processes and strategies of hybridity are sustainable or can be developed in particular ways which resist the dominance of 'the West' and of capital. Further studies of the restructuring of other parts of eastern Europe will provide useful additions to the understanding of one of the major transformations of the late twentieth century.

Despite its limitations, the study has provided a detailed account of a significant period of change in Germany. It has sought to allow the voices of those most directly affected in eastern Germany to be recorded. Through this I have attempted to question western theoretical understandings of change. I have shown how geographies of the politics of space and place are contested, articulated and worked out particularly in relation to moves to define certain processes and spheres as political or apolitical. This should provide scope for further studies seeking to understand the ways places and the lives of those living in them can affect and be affected by the selective ways place, space, scale and spatialities are politicised or depoliticised, naturalised or opened to challenge and change.

Appendix 1

Interviews, group discussions and meetings in Leipzig, April 1991 to May 1993

In brackets are the code number for each interview. An 'A' indicates the event was tape recorded and transcribed. A 'B' indicates that the event was recorded with notes at the time.

A: City of Leipzig

(a) City planning and economic development

- (1) Public lecture by Rudolph Ahnert (CDU), Deputy Mayor and Head of Building Division on theme of housing policy, 17/9/91, (B32).
- (2) Public discussion on theme of urban renewal and development as part of Lebensraum Exhibition, 29/10/91 (B24).
- (3) Public discussion on theme of traffic planning as part of Lebensraum Exhibition, 6/11/91 (B23).
- (4) Discussion evening on the development of Leipzig Medienstadt (Media City) held by Pikanta Arts Association, 21/11/91, (B13).
- (5) Public lecture given by Niels Gormsen, Head of Department of City Planning and Development (DCDP), Leipzig, 28/11/91, (B15).
- (6) CDU council group, city council Leipzig, press conference about city traffic plan, 8/4/92, (B5).
- (7) Radio discussion with local councillors, Chamber of Commerce and Journalists on the future of Leipzig, 22/4/92, (A33).
- (8) Public meeting to discuss development of Old Trade Fair, town hall, 12/10/92, (A30).
- (9) Public meeting on Leipzig's economy in Europe, 15/10/92, (A31).
- (10) Interview with Office for Economic Promotion, Leipzig City Council, 14/10/92, (B29).
- (11) Public discussion on theme of "Women plan their city" organised by council Office for Equality and SPD, 22/10/92, (B31).
- (12) Speeches at Augustus Platz by trade unions for strike demonstration, 24/4/93, (A27).

(b) 'Wende' and anniversary of 1989 events

- (1) Speeches at Augustus Platz (formerly Karl-Marx-Platz) on third anniversary of first major demonstration in Leipzig, 9/10/92, (A32).

B: Ecology and Ecological Building

- (1) Speech by Head of Environmental Protection and Sport Division, Hannes, 1/10/91, (B10).
- (2) Interview with representative of Town Planning Group of EcoLion, 19/11/91, (A6).
- (3) Interview with Chair of Association for Ecological Building (Verein für ökologisches Bauen, VöB), 19/11/91, (A4).
- (4) Interview with Chair of Society for Ecological Nutrition (Gesellschaft für ökologische Ernährung, GöE), 25/11/91, (A5).
- (5) Public meeting about traffic with EcoLion and Leipzig transport authority, 23/1/92, (B22).

C: Citizen Associations

(a) General

- (1) Meeting of Connewitz Alternative initiative, 28/1/92, (B38).
- (2) Public meeting of Altschönefeld Citizen Association, 5/2/92, (B37).
- (3) Meeting of representatives of citizen associations called by Pro Leipzig, 25/3/92, (A7).
- (4) Interview with editor of "Leipzig Association Advertiser" (LVA), 6/4/92, (B4).
- (5) Public meeting of PDS/DF in Grünau, 4/5/92, (B18).
- (6) Public meeting about founding citizen association in Ostvorstadt, 16/9/92, (B25).
- (7) Interview with representative of Pro Leipzig, 21/9/92, (A24).
- (8) Interview with representative of Musikviertel Citizen Association, 28/9/92, (A26).
- (9) Discussion at meeting held by Pro Leipzig in Kulturfabrik, 8/10/92, (A29).
- (10) Conference in Berlin held by IBIS (Initiative for Citizen Involvement in Urban Planning) on participation in planning, 16-18/10/92, (B30).

(b) Gohlis

- (1) Public meeting on the possible formation of an association and discussing housing problems, 26/11/91, (B14).
- (2) Founding meeting of Gohlis Citizen Association, 10/1/92 (B17).
- (3) Interview with representative of Gohlis Citizen Association, 30/4/92, (A21).

(4) Public meeting on urban renewal and renovation in Gohlis jointly held by Citizen Association and planning departments in Leipzig, 23/9/92, (B26).

(5) Group discussion with members of Gohlis Citizen Association, 5/5/93, (A34).

(c) Neustädter Markt

(1) Interview with committee member and employee of Neustädter Markt Citizen Initiative, 19/11/91, (A2).

(2) Urban Renewal Meeting (Sanierungsstammtisch), 21/4/92, (B8).

(3) Urban Renewal Meeting (Sanierungsstammtisch), 19/5/92, (B21).

(4) Urban Planning Colloquium with planners and citizen initiative, 18/9/92, (A23).

(5) Planning forum at citizen initiative summer fete, 26/9/92, (A25).

(6) Urban Renewal Meeting (Sanierungsstammtisch) on theme of rents and urban renewal, 20/4/93, (A36).

(7) Interview with city planner for Neustädter Markt, 23/4/93, (A37).

(8) Group discussion with members of Citizen Initiative, 11/5/93, (A35).

(d) Plagwitz

(1) Interview with Chair of Pro Plagwitz and two group workers, 11/11/91, (A3).

(2) Meeting of members of Pro Plagwitz, 30/3/92, (B2).

(3) Meeting of Selfhelp Plagwitz and Pro Plagwitz on urban renewal, 25/5/92, (B19).

(4) Meeting of members of Pro Plagwitz, 28/9/92, (B28).

(5) Meeting of members of Pro Plagwitz on subject of Industry Museum, 26/4/93, (B34).

(6) Interview with Chair of Pro Plagwitz, 28/4/93, (A39).

(7) Group discussion with members and workers of Pro Plagwitz, 3/5/93, (A38).

(8) Meeting with Industry Museum team, 5/5/93, (B33).

(e) Stötteritz

(1) Meeting of people interested in forming a Stötteritz Citizen Association, 23/3/92, (B1).

(2) Meeting of group "Bread and Circuses" (Brot und Spiele), 28/4/92, (A19).

(3) Meeting of Stötteritz Citizen Association, 29/4/92, (A22).

- (4) Meeting of Stötteritz Citizen Association, 25/5/92, (B16).
- (5) Public meeting on traffic issues in Stötteritz, 2/6/92, (B7).
- (6) Interview with representative of Stötteritz Citizen Association, 20/4/93, (B35).
- (7) Interview with city planner for Stötteritz, 29/4/93, (A41).
- (8) Group discussion with members of Stötteritz Citizen Association, 3/5/93, (A40).

(f) Waldstraße

- (1) Public meeting held by Waldstraßenviertel Citizen Initiative, 24/9/91, (B9).
- (2) Interview with representative of Citizen Initiative, 4/11/91, (A1).
- (3) Public meeting held by Waldstraßenviertel Citizen Initiative with Herr Trabalski, Head of Leipzig Housing Company (LWB), 12/11/91, (B12).
- (4) Interview with representative of Citizen Initiative, 22/4/93, (B36).
- (5) Public meeting held by Waldstraßenviertel Citizen Initiative on rents and renovation policies and practice, 27/4/93, (A44).
- (6) Interview with city planner for Waldstraßenviertel, 11/5/93, (A42).
- (7) Group discussion with members of Waldstraßenviertel Citizen Initiative, 11/5/93, (A43).

D: Interviews with city councillors and members of political parties

(a) City

- (1) Interview with Chair of PDS in Leipzig, 31/3/92, (B3).

(b) Gohlis

- (1) Interview with SPD councillor in Gohlis, 3/4/92, (A11).
- (2) Interview with PDS councillor in Gohlis, 7/4/92, (A14).
- (3) Interview with CDU councillor in Gohlis, 8/4/92, (A15).
- (4) Interview with chair of FDP association Gohlis, 22/4/92, (A17).
- (5) Interview with Bündnis 90 councillor in Gohlis, 30/4/92, (A21).

(c) Neustädter Markt

- (1) Interview with SPD head of administration for council group, 16/4/92, (A16).

(d) Plagwitz

- (1) Interview with Bündnis 90 councillor in Plagwitz, 30/3/92, (A8).
- (2) Interview with SPD councillor in Plagwitz, 1/4/92, (A10).

(e) Stötteritz

- (1) Interview with Bündnis 90 councillor on Stötteritz, 30/3/92, (A9).
- (2) Interview with CDU councillor in Stötteritz, 28/4/92, (A18).

(f) Waldstraßenviertel

- (1) Interview with CDU councillor in Waldstraßenviertel, 30/4/92, (A20).
- (2) Interview with Bündnis 90 councillor in Waldstraßenviertel, 30/3/92, (A9).

Appendix 2

Interview schedule for first interviews with leaders of neighbourhood groups

Interviews aimed to cover the following basic points and any other specific points arising in conversation or specific to the area concerned.

1. How the group was established, when and for what reasons.
2. Specific aims of the group and its self-understanding as to its function in the local area.
3. Number of members, levels of activity and recruitment.
4. Modes of working towards the group's goals, e.g. specific projects, publicity, etc.
5. Evaluation of the work so far by the group and responses from residents of the area.
6. Relations to the city council (elected and appointed).
7. Co-operation with other groups or organisations in the neighbourhood.
8. Contacts with any other neighbourhood initiatives elsewhere in Leipzig or thematic groups in the city (ecology, senior citizens, etc.).
9. General description of how the local area is perceived.

Appendix 3
Survey of membership of citizen associations
(MEMSURVEY)

Department of Geography,
 University of Glasgow,
 Glasgow G12 8QQ
 GB-Scotland

30th May 1992

Dear Sir/Madam,
 Dear Group Members,

CITIZEN GROUPS IN LEIPZIG
SURVEY OF MEMBERS
1992

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. You have helped greatly with a study of citizens' actions and the relationship to local neighbourhoods in Germany.

If you would like a free copy of the summary of the results of this survey please put your address on the form below and send it to the above address. No details will be passed on to third persons.

As a further part of the study I will be holding some discussion groups in Leipzig in the autumn when the study will be looked at more closely. Please indicate below if you are interested in taking part in such a discussion. Should you have any queries about the study I am only too willing to give you further information.

Yours faithfully,

Fiona Smith

 I would like a free copy of the summary of the results.
 Yes.

I am interested in the discussions in autumn 1992
 Yes.

Address: _____

University of Glasgow, GB

CITIZEN GROUPS IN LEIPZIG

SURVEY OF MEMBERS

1992

ABOUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE

AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF A LARGER STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW (SCOTLAND) MEMBERS OF CITIZEN GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS IN LEIPZIG ARE BEING ASKED ABOUT THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THEIR GROUP.

ALL MEMBERS OF THESE GROUPS WILL RECEIVE A QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTED VIA THEIR GROUP. THEIR PERSONAL DETAILS (SUCH AS NAME, ADDRESS, AND SO ON) HAVE NOT BEEN PASSED ON TO OTHERS AND ANONYMITY IS THUS GUARANTEED.

ALL ANSWERS WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY AND NO QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE PASSED ON TO ANYONE ELSE.

THE ANALYSIS WILL ONLY CONSIDER MEMBERS AS A GROUP.

A SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS WILL BE PROVIDED FOR THE GROUPS. IN THE LETTER ATTACHED IT IS EXPLAINED HOW YOU CAN ALSO RECEIVE A FREE COPY OF THE SUMMARY AND HOW YOU CAN TAKE PART IN FURTHER PARTS OF THE STUDY IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR HELP AND WOULD BE PLEASED TO GIVE YOU FURTHER INFORMATION SHOULD YOU REQUIRE IT.

YOURS

MS FIONA SMITH,
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND TOPOGRAPHIC SCIENCE,
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW,
GLASGOW G12 8QQ
GREAT BRITAIN

INSTRUCTIONS

- IN THE QUESTIONS THE TERM "NEIGHBOURHOOD" ALWAYS MEANS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WHERE YOU ARE INVOLVED IN THE CITIZEN GROUP OR ASSOCIATION.

- "NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP" MEANS THE CITIZENS GROUP OR ASSOCIATION WHERE YOU ARE A MEMBER OR ARE ACTIVE.

- TO ANSWER A QUESTION, PLEASE MAKE A SMALL CIRCLE ROUND THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER, E.G.:

You are

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1 | male |
| 2 | female |

PLEASE DO NOT PUT ANYTHING IN THE SMALL BOXES.
THEY ARE ONLY FOR USE IN THE ANALYSIS.

SHOULD YOU NOT WANT TO OR BE ABLE TO ANSWER A QUESTION, PLEASE SIMPLY LEAVE THE QUESTION BLANK.

PART A

The following questions are looking at the links between the members and their neighbourhood.

1. Do you live in the neighbourhood where your group is active?
 - 1 Yes, I have always lived in the neighbourhood ☐
 - 2 Yes, I have lived here for some time
 - 3 No, but I used to live in the neighbourhood
 - 4 No, I have never lived in the neighbourhood

2. If you answered question one with answer 1 or 2, how many of your neighbours do you know personally?
 - 1 less than 5 ☐
 - 2 5 to 10
 - 3 11 to 20
 - 4 more than 20
 - 9 don't know

3. About what part of your friends and acquaintances live in the group's neighbourhood?
 - 1 none ☐
 - 2 a quarter
 - 3 half
 - 4 three quarters
 - 5 all
 - 9 don't know

4. Do you have relatives who live in the neighbourhood?
 - 1 yes ☐
 - 2 no

5. Does your place of work lie in the neighbourhood?
 - 1 yes ☐
 - 2 no, but I used to work in the neighbourhood
 - 3 no
 - 4 does not apply

6. What are for you the three most urgent problems in the neighbourhood?
 1. _____ ☐
 2. _____ ☐
 3. _____ ☐

7. Please circle the three words which you would use to complete this sentence:
"At the moment I would describe my neighbourhood as"

friendly	anonymous	optimistic	<input type="checkbox"/>
	sceptical	satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>
lively	overwhelmed	tired	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. How satisfied are you personally with the following aspects of the neighbourhood?

	completely satisfied	satisfied	neither one or other		completely unsatisfied	
unsatisfied						
(a) Access by bus, train or tram	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Daily shopping	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Facilities for young people	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Facilities for children	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) How clean the streets are	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) How clean the air is	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(h) Open space and parks	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(i) Housing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(j) Entertainment for yourself	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(k) Safety and security	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. How would you rate these aspects of your neighbourhood **when compared to other neighbourhoods in Leipzig?**

	much better	better	about the same	worse	much worse	
(a) Access by bus, train or tram	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Daily shopping	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Facilities for young people	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Facilities for children	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(f) How clean the streets are	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(g) How clean the air is	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(h) Open space and parks	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(i) Housing	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(j) Entertainment for yourself	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
(k) Safety and security	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

PART B

Now there are some questions about the group itself.

1. How did you come to get involved in the Group?
Please say whether these reasons apply to you.

		does apply	does not apply	don't know	
1	I heard about it from other members	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I was asked if I would join	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I went along to a meeting	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I read about it in the newspaper	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I went along and introduced myself	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I was involved from the beginning	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I got involved as ABM	1	2	9	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which of the following were reasons for you to join the group?

- | | | | | |
|-------|---|-----|----|--------------------------|
| 1 | No-one else in the neighbourhood was doing anything | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | I wanted to do something for the neighbourhood | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | I was interested in a specific project | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | The people in the neighbourhood have to do something themselves for their own neighbourhood | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | It means that the people in the neighbourhood have their own representatives | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | I have always been active in the area | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | I wanted to do something for me personally | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | Another reason (please specify)..... | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | | |
| 9 | Don't know/ Can't say | yes | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. Are you a member in any other groups, clubs or associations?

- | | | yes
actively | yes
passively | not any
more | no | |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----|--------------------------|
| (a) | ecology groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) | church | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) | children's/youth organisations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) | political parties | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) | cultural groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) | social services/charity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) | other..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. How many hours an average do you spend on Group activities per month?

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | less than five hours | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | 5 to 10 hours | |
| 3 | 10 to 20 hours | |
| 4 | more than 20 hours | |

5. Have you taken part in any of the following group activities?

- | | | |
|-------|--|--------------------------|
| 1 | internal discussions (project groups etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | events run for the public (public meetings, neighbourhood fairs, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | citizen advice | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | children's projects | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | contacts with city administration/politicians | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |

6. What are the **three** tasks in the neighbourhood where you think the group can achieve the most?

1.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What do you see as the three main difficulties for the work of the group?

Please choose **three** of the possibilities?

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| 1 | lack of interest or uncertainty amongst the residents | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | problems with the council
(e.g. bureaucracy, lack of funds) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | finances of the group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | difficulties within the group itself | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | general disenchantment with politics | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. How would you rate these aspects of the city administration according to your own experience?

	very good	good	mixed	very poor	poor	don't know	
(a) openness to group's suggestions	1	2	3	4	5	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) readiness to supply information	1	2	3	4	5	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) practical help for the group	1	2	3	4	5	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) interest in local problems	1	2	3	4	5	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) concrete actions in the neighbourhood	1	2	3	4	5	9	<input type="checkbox"/>

PART C

This last part looks at the kind of people who get involved.

1. Which age group do you belong to?

- | | | |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | under 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | 25 to under 35 | |
| 3 | 35 to under 45 | |
| 4 | 45 to under 55 | |
| 5 | 55 to under 65 | |
| 6 | 65 and over | |

2. Are you

- | | | |
|---|--------|--------------------------|
| 1 | female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | male | |

3. What do you do at the moment?

- 1 worker
- 2 clerical (without higher qualifications)
- 3 clerical (with higher qualifications)
- 4 civil servant in lower rank
- 5 civil servant in higher rank
- 6 self employed
- 7 pensioner
- 8 unemployed
- 9 student
- 10 retraining
- 11 other (please specify).....

☐

4. What is your highest qualification?

- 1 none (still studying)
- 2 unskilled
- 3 semiskilled worker
- 4 skilled worker
- 5 master
- 6 college
- 7 university/higher degree

☐

5. How many hours per week do you work at the moment?

- hours
- 9 does not apply

☐

6. What is the current state of ownership on your home?

- 1 belongs to me/my family
- 2 private rented
- 3 LWB/ council house
- 4 housing coop
- 5 uncertain
- 6 other (please specify).....
- 9 don't know

☐

7(a) Do you have children still living at home?

- | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | no | |
| 3 | not any more | |

7(b) If yes, do your children attend crèche, kindergarten or school in the neighbourhood?

- | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|
| 1 | yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | no | |

8. Do you have elderly relatives living in your household?

- | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|
| 1 | yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | no | |

9. Do you have

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|----|--------------------------|
| (a) | a weekend house | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) | an allotment garden | yes | no | <input type="checkbox"/> |

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE PRE-PAID ENVELOPE SUPPLIED BY THE **END OF JUNE AT THE LATEST.**

PLEASE USE THIS SPACE IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN COVERED IN THE QUESTIONS

Appendix 4
Survey of Leipzig Citizen Associations
(BVSURVEY)

Leipzig, 6th October 1992

Dear Sir/Madam,

As part of my doctoral thesis I am asking all Citizen Associations and Citizen Initiatives known to Pro Leipzig about various aspects of their neighbourhood work in order to provide an overview of the situation.

In addition there should be an anonymised report of the results at the exhibition "Citizens create their city" (6/11/92). I would therefore ask you for a speedy response.

Yours faithfully,

Ms Fiona Smith.

NOTES

1. For clarity, the term 'Association' always includes Citizen Initiatives, Action Groups or Citizen Associations.
2. So that a comparative basis is established would the groups with whom I have already had contact please also complete the survey.
3. It would also be of help if you were to answer some of the questions by sending a copy of the group constitution or other printed matter.

6. Does the association have job-creation posts (ABM)?

(a) YES.

How many posts are there?

What areas are they involved in?

When do the posts end?

(b) NO, BUT WE HAVE APPLIED FOR SOME

How many posts?

What areas will they be involved in?

(c) NO.

7. Does the association have project groups or working groups?

Yes No

If YES, then what are their aims?

8. Which of the following activities are ones which the association has pursued up to now? Please tick.

(If only job-creation personnel involved please indicate with 'ABM' next to category.)

Citizen advice

Public meetings

Local festivals

Work with senior citizens

Work with children

Your own surveys in the neighbourhood

Local history

Protests/ demands of the city administration

Letters or reports to the newspapers

Neighbourhood newspaper

Ecology projects

Information passed on to the city departments and offices

Collection of information on contract for a city department or office

Developing your own concepts for the future of the area

Responses to the city land-use plan/ city traffic plan/ local planning applications

Cultural projects

Petitions

Direct action (e.g. local clean-up operations)
 Contact with local property owners
 Contact with investors
 Contact with local businesses
 Other:

Contacts with other groups and associations

9. Does the association have/ or has it had contacts to any of the following in the neighbourhood?

Yes No

Cultural groups (including local community centre)
 Church parishes
 Welfare groups, e.g. senior citizen groups, etc.
 Schools
 Children's groups
 Other active groups, associations
 Please give details:

10. Does the association have/ or has it had contacts to the following in Leipzig?

Yes No

Architects/ independent planners
 EcoLions
 Association for Ecological Building
 Leipzig Tenant Association
 Chamber of Industry and Commerce
 Chamber of Trades
 City councillors for the area
 Citizen Associations in other neighbourhoods
 Other welfare or charitable organisations
 outwith the neighbourhood
 Other organisations?
 Please give details

11. Please name the council departments with which the association has most frequent contacts.

12. (a) How often does the association have contact with Pro Leipzig?
often regularly irregularly seldom
- (b) What form do these contacts take? personal discussions
exchange of information
at meetings
- Other:
- (c) Does the association desire more regular contacts?
- Yes No

Evaluation of the association's work

13. What are the main difficulties of the association's work at the moment? Please tick.

- City finances
- Not being registered as association
- Association finances
- Problems with the city administration
- Internal difficulties at the association
- Lack of information
- Too few members
- Lack of co-ordination of the work
- Lack of interest from the citizens
- Too little time
- Other:

14. What are, in your opinion, the most important achievements of the association so far?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT.

Space for further comments:

Appendix 5

Interview schedule for interviews with Leipzig city councillors

1. What is your personal link to the area(s) concerned?
2. What are the most important problems which need to be tackled in the area?
And are they specific to that area?
3. Which efforts are there to tackle these problems and who is involved?
Do you and/or the party council group support these efforts and their approaches?
4. Do you have good contact with the local electorate?
Do they approach you with their concerns and problems, - i.e. letters, requests for action, etc.?
5. How do you view the involvement of the local population, particularly in the citizen associations, in local politics (administrative decentralisation or local decision-making)?
6. To what extent do you think the local people identify with their area and to what extent are they active in their area?
7. Do you co-operate with any of the other councillors for your area?
8. Is there a good relationship between the city council group and the district party association/ local groupings?

Transcript extract

dieser Angst sitzt man am Kassenband. Und die alten Leute sowieso, viele alleinstehende Frauen, mit oder ohne Kind, die älteren Damen, die können sich nicht mal ein Handwerker nehmen bezahlen können. Und der kann ich mir vorstellen, wenn die alten Damen sich einen Handwerker nehmen, egal was zu machen ist, er macht alles andere nur nicht das, was er machen sollte.

~~Und viele~~ wollen sich nicht neu organisieren? ~~Ja~~ Und die haben die Nase voll.

Ja. ~~in GDR~~. Weil da früher viele Versprechen worden ist.

Und hier im Wohngebiet. Ich wohne auch in der Reihe hier dann. Lernen und ich kenne das schon von 1980 sollte schon z.B. mein Haus saniert werden, es hat sich nun bis jetzt ^{mit} ~~hinge~~zogen, hat sich noch nicht viel getan, bis auf Anstrich, das Dach ein bisschen geflickt. Es ist alles nichts.

nichtiges. Und das ist. Das macht die Leute so depressiv, weil die immer nur Versprechungen gehört haben und die Versprechungen gehen weiter, genauso wie wir ^{das ist} ~~Wir~~ haben gesagt, wir setzen uns ein, aber was haben wir bis jetzt erreicht? Ich meine, wir haben erreicht, und wir können eigentlich stolz drauf sein. (Aber) es ist nicht ausreichend für die Bürger. [Mm] Und wir sind bestimmt an der Ecke auch uns runterknien, kann ich mir vorstellen. Ich meine, nicht wir machen -> nicht von sonst ??

und auch unsere ABM Kräfte die sicher auch vieles versucht haben + manches ist eben gegangen

FEAR

?? nicht

cant pay

will be to

? In Verein

Enough enough

poor repair

Slippage

Return to
Brd person

Slippage

Dangers
self-question

herunk

- to cost
to pick

Appendix 6 (ii)

Transcription conventions

<i>(in Italics?)</i>	unclear phrase from tape
[German word]	original word or phrase
[louder, forcefully, sarcastic]	interviewee talking as indicated
['yes']	interjection by interviewer
bold text	word or phrase spoken more loudly
[...]	text omitted from transcript extract
....	one point for every half second of a pause
[explanation]	explanation of phrase, indication of gesture, paraphrase of omitted text.
<u>underlined text</u>	overlap of two/ more speakers

Extract from 'cognitive map'

Stimulus (180):
Wie würden Sie dann
Plagwitz charakterisieren?

185 das ist sehr
stark für Plagwitz
denke ich, daß dort
immer die Arbeiter
gewohnt haben, die
in Nachbarbetrieben
gearbeitet haben.

LANDSCAPE, ECONOMY +
POPULATION DEFINED
BY INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT
(TRADITIONAL
INDUSTRIAL AREA)

A POSITIVE VIEW
(c.f. pollution + poor
housing + social
problems in sections
c. 7/8)

181 Plagwitz ist ureigene
Arbeitergegend,

WORKING
CLASS

182 hat wirklich die
Gründerzeitgebäude,
Arbeiterhäuser sehr eng
gebaut,

NARROW,
CROWDED

183 Innenhöfe noch mit
Industrie besiedelt

MIX WITH
INDUSTRY

184 mit sehr vielen
kleinen Geschäften,
Einkaufsmöglichkeiten
ohne großflächige
wie Kaufhäuser -
sondern die Tante
Emma laden

SMALL
LOCAL
SHOPS

186 Schulen, Kessige
Schulen, Altersheime,
alles immer ein sehr
großer Maßstab
eigentlich.

LARGE
SCALE

Stimulus (187):
Glauben Sie, daß dieses
Gesicht noch zu retten ist?

191 Das ist eine ganz
große Herausforderung

192 aber auch eine
ganz große Chance für
Leipzig

188 Wir haben keine Wahl
(x2)

189 Wir müssen dieses Gesicht
retten, sonst wird die Stadt
ihr Gesicht

190 und ihre Identifikation
verlieren

196 Ich denke schon, daß noch was
zu retten sein wird, weil wir
haben einfach keine Wahl

197 wir können nicht alles
wegreißen, wie es so in den
Zoo Jahren gemacht worden ist,

WRONG
WAY 198 Das ist
der falsche

CORRECT WAY

Stimulus (204):
Selbstinitiative?

Stimulus
(201): andere
Organisationen?

202 2 Kirchen.
Ansonsten mir
nichts bekannt
203 Seniorenrat
= ganz spezielle
Aufgaben

QUESTIONS
EXTENT OF
COMMON
FEELING

My link

(216) Stimulus: Wenn
Sie für Plagwitz in 10
Jahren Ihre Idealform
vorstellen könnten?

217 Großflächige
Häufung verhindern

218 daß das Gesicht
erhalten bleibt

219 diese Nähe der Wohnform

220 daß sehr viele alters- und
behinderten gerechte Wohnform
gebaut worden sind, daß die
Menschen dort wohnen
bleiben können

221 in ihrem angestauten
Gebiet

222 einfach ein herzliches
P. des Untereinander
der Menschen die dort
leben entsteht

223 oder noch da ist from po.

224 was jetzt ist, daß
Menschen eben
zusammen sitzen
sich unterhalten oder
auf der Straße sich
kennen

225 Aktivität in Zusammenhang
mit produzierenden Gewerbe
damit die Leute arbeiten

IDENTIFICATION
HOME
FEELING OF
COMMUNITY

PEOPLE-
CENTRED/
FACE-TO-
FACE COMMUNITY

N.B. - is

CONCESSION TO JCB

c.f.
CLES

SHIFT
IN SCALE.

199 abgesehen von den sozialen
Problemen, die dann
immer in den Neubausiedlungen
immer verstärkt auftreten

200 dies Gemeinschaftsgefühl
geht verloren

198a denn die
Leute verlieren dann
ihre Identifikation,
ihre Heimatgefühl

Appendix 7

Leipzig City Administration

Shown below are the relevant sectors of the city administration which affect urban development.

Head of the administration: Mayor Dr. Hinrich Lehmann-Grube (SPD).

The administration is divided into eleven functional Divisions (*Dezernate*) each of which is controlled by a '*Dezernent*', or Divisional Head.

The relevant divisions are:

Finance Division:

Department to Resolve Ownership which processes claims for the return of property.

Law, Order and Security Division:

Department for Housing

The department does not own housing, it merely administers tenancy allocations and rent levels for those in which social housing conditions exist. It also monitors building use to prevent illegal conversion to non-residential uses.

Division for City Development and Planning (DCDP)

Head - Herr Niels Gormsen

City Planning Office responsible for planning structural development and specific local plans for the city as a whole.

Building Control Office responsible for declaring buildings safe and habitable.

Section for Historical Buildings

Traffic Planning Office

Building Division

Head - Herr Dr. Rudolf Ahnert

Urban Renewal Office (URO) is responsible for implementing programmes for urban renewal whether in particular urban renewal areas or through city-wide programmes.

Head of URO is Herr Gerkens and the Public Relations Officer is Herr Sophos Sophianos.

Economy Division

Head - Herr Christian-Albert Jacke

Office for Economic Promotion develops the city's external marketing and provides serviced industrial estates.

Environmental Protection and Sport Division

Head - Herr Jörg Hannes

Office for Environmental Protection

Parks Department

Wildlife Protection Department

Culture Division

Head - Herr Georg Girardet

Department for Culture includes sections which deal with local clubhouses and community centres and a team of 'neighbourhood culture workers' whose aim is to support local cultural developments, including registered associations of any form, amongst them the Citizen Associations.

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- FAKT* - montly newsletter of Leipzig Committee for Justice
- Gohliser* - monthly newletter of Citizen Association Gohlis
- IBIS Information* - monthly magazine produced by IBIS (Initiative for Citizen Involvement in Urban Renewal) Berlin
- Leipziger Amtsblatt* - bi-weekly offical newspaper of Leipzig City Council
- Leipziger Blätter* - biannual arts and culture magazine for Leipzig
- Leipziger Rundschau* - weekly free newspaper in Leipzig
- Leipziger Tageblatt* - daily newspaper in Leipzig
- Leipziger Vereins-Anzeiger (LVA)* - monthly newsletter, Leipzig Association Advertiser
- Leipziger Volkszeitung (LVZ)* - Leipzig daily newspaper
- Leipziger Wirtschaft* - monthly magazine of Leipzig Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Neues Deutschland* - daily newspaper, former newspaper of the GDR SED
- Neustädter Markt Journal* - monthly newsletter of Citizen Initiative Neustädter Markt
- Plagwitzer Leben* - irregular publication on Plagwitz, supported by Pro Plagwitz
- StadtAnzeiger Leipzig* - weekly free newssheet, Leipzig