

**MARGINALIZED SUBJECTS, MAINSTREAM OBJECTIVES:
INSIGHTS ON OUTSIDERS IN RECENT GERMAN FILM**

Uns geht es um ein genaues Erfassen von Lebenswelten und psychologisch nachvollziehbar erzählte Figuren. Jeder Film ist eine persönliche Sicht auf einen Aspekt, zusammen werden die 12 Filme der Reihe ein Bild des Wandels im Osten ergeben, das sonst in den Medien so nicht zu finden ist.¹

For those who remained unconvinced as to the merits of German unification, the acts of violence perpetrated against the immigrant population and against asylum seekers, which received considerable media interest in the early nineties, tended to confirm their suspicions that the east Germans not only lacked the liberal values that the west Germans had supported and upheld since the end of the war, but that they posed a possible threat to them.² The continuing support for extremist parties in the eastern states (in recent elections, both the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NDP) and Deutsche Volksunion (DVU) succeeded in surmounting the 5% needed for parliamentary representation) tends to be viewed as a sad indictment of the east Germans' illiberal attitude and of their failure either to accept or support the spirit of pluralism that underpins a healthy democracy. The negative view of the east is encouraged not only by the high-profile media attention usually given to any right-wing activity in the east but also by the imprudent comments periodically uttered by various public figures.³ These have ensured that the east continues to be associated with a series of unflattering, often offensive characteristics, ranging from the east Germans' alleged indolence, to their moral depravity, and their political radicalism (manifest in the support for fringe parties, on the left and the right). A former government spokesman, Uwe-Karsten Heye, for example, recently commented that non-white

¹ Cooky Ziesche and Annedore v. Donop, 'Ostwind Editorial'. Provided by the television station Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg (RBB).

² I follow the convention whereby any reference to the pre-unification population/state/region is referred to by using upper case spelling (East/West) and use lower case (east /west) when referring to the period since unification.

³ According to Eva Kolinsky, though the East 'took the lead in attacking foreigners, West German right-wing extremists soon committed more xenophobic offences'. Eva Kolinsky, 'Non-German Minorities in Contemporary German Society', *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, ed. by David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996), pp. 71-111 (p. 104).

visitors would do well to avoid certain hostile eastern provinces. Although Heye later withdrew the comment, such remarks do little to combat the view of the east as a region defined by its alleged xenophobia. A multiple infanticide, which was discovered in 2005, provoked perhaps one of the biggest *faux pas* when the CDU politician, Jörg Schönbohm, implied that the murders bespoke a moral waywardness that was the product of East German ideology.⁴ Others, such as the Conservative politician, Edmund Stoiber, have exploited the situation, claiming that the economic and social conditions in the east are reminiscent of those in Weimar Germany and warning of a similar outcome (remarks that were roundly criticized for scaremongering).

The rise in right-wing politics in east German communities has been variously explained. Where some see the region's parlous economic state as providing fertile ground for political extremism, others believe hatred of outsiders to be a legacy of the GDR, pointing to a political culture in which suspicion of the outsider (an ideologically constructed 'other') was part of everyday rhetoric.⁵ The east Germans' lack of contact with outsiders is another factor frequently cited in explaining their intolerance, for despite its proclaimed internationalism, the GDR never successfully integrated the few non-nationals living there, a policy of exclusion that resulted in a state that was essentially 'ausländerrein'.⁶

Of course, right-wing extremism is not a problem confined to Germany's eastern territories: racially motivated attacks have also taken place in the west, and far right parties enjoy some support in western constituencies. Fearing the damage it would do to the country's reputation shortly before the 2006 World Cup tournament, the police forbade the NDP from marching in the west German town of Gelsenkirchen. Despite the existence of a violent right-

⁴ See Otto Köhler, 'Heiliger Georg kämpft gegen ostdeutschen Lindwurm', *Freitag* 32, 12.8.2005. Online at: <http://www.freitag.de/2005/32/05320402.php> [Accessed 10.7.2006].

⁵ See Hermann Kurthen and Michael Minkenberg, 'Germany in Transition: Immigration, Racism and the Extreme Right', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1995), 175-196.

⁶ Kolinsky, p. 86. Kolinsky gives this some historical context when she says that 'the status of non-German minorities had hardly changed and fewer foreign nationals than in 1939 lived in the territory which had been the GDR.' p. 72. See also Bill Niven's summary of explanations in his *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 238. See, too, Kathrin Hörschelmann's discussion of the media's narrow focus when it comes to reporting and researching east German neo-fascism: 'Deviant Masculinities: Representations of Neo-Fascist Youth in Eastern Germany', in *Spaces of Masculinities*, ed. by Bettina van Hoven and Kathrin Hörschelmann (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), pp. 138-152.

wing scene in the west, the incidents in the east appear to attract greater attention. No data yet exist for us to gauge whether the media give equal coverage to offences committed in east and west, but certainly the feeling among many east Germans is that local crimes are given undue attention by the national media. According to Kathrin Hörschelmann, who conducted research into audience interpretations of east German representations, (east German) respondents generally felt that the media tends to place ‘the former east at the margin of (post)unification society, while reinforcing notions of western superiority.’⁷ The eastern interviewees hoped eventually to see programmes that would ‘depict their lives from a wide range of perspectives, but which also interrogate the effects of political and economic conditions on east Germany’s inclusion/exclusion, rather than drawing on stereotypes as quasi-explanations.’⁸ Surveys routinely confirm that the east Germans feel they are treated as second class citizens.⁹ There are myriad factors to consider when seeking an explanation of this, of course - the eastern states’ poor economic performance, the east Germans’ lack of representation in elite positions (with the exception of the current Chancellor: there are few of Angela Merkel’s compatriots in positions of power), the material condition of the region, the disparate salaries. Given that media culture is generally held to constitute the ‘dominant force of socialization’ in contemporary society, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the media representation may have contributed to the east Germans’ unease about their status, which they perceive as being lower even than that of ‘Giuseppe and Achmed’ (a reference to the two most established immigrant groups in Germany) as Peter, one of the characters in Hannes Stöhr’s *Berlin is in Germany* (2001) notes.¹⁰

⁷ Kathrin Hörschelmann, ‘Audience Interpretations of (former) East Germany’s Representation in the German Media’, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2001), 189-202 (p. 192).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁹ See Wolfram Brunner’s and Dieter Walz’s assessment of the east Germans’ perceived second-class status, ‘Selbstidentifikation er Ostdeutschen 1990-1997. Warum sich die Ostdeutschen als ‘Bürger 2. Klasse’ fühlen, wir aber nicht auf die ‘innere Mauer’ treffen’, in *Werte und nationale Identität im vereinten Deutschland*, ed. by Heimer Meulemann (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1998), pp. 229-250. The phrase was previously used in reference to West Germany’s labour migrants. See, for example, Haris Katsoulis, *Bürger Zweiter Klasse. Ausländer in der Bundesrepublik* (Berlin: Express Edition GmbH, 1984).

¹⁰ Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 17. I do not think the character’s indignation is intended to indicate a racist attitude – he and his friends later confront local neo-Nazis. Yet, for other east Germans their lowly status is all the more humiliating because it is measured against that of other minorities who, the implication goes, should expect

Despite some legitimate grievances, the east Germans cannot claim to be as disenfranchised as the German-Turks – or indeed any of the other minority groups living in Germany. The east Germans may often feel that they have had to endure countless indignities as a result of policies drawn up by west German administrators, but their automatic membership of the Federal Republic was never in question, a privilege long withheld from other minority groups in Germany. It took a change of government and several years of constitutional and political wrangling for Germany's archaic immigration laws to be modernized, resulting in the citizenship law of 2000, which, following the principle of *ius solis* rather than *ius sanguinis*, finally granted citizenship and accompanying rights to thousands of German-Turks resident in Germany (though the rights of citizenship were dependent on certain conditions including, for example, the legal resident status of the parent).¹¹ But though the Turks are undoubtedly among the most socially disadvantaged groups in Germany – Horrocks and Kolinsky have suggested that 'Turks appear to draw the short straw and are less likely than other minorities to benefit from avenues of acceptance and social opportunity' – the real hurdles that they must surmount (in terms of political representation, disappointing educational achievement, violent xenophobia) do little to contextualize or lessen the east Germans' own sense of injustice, however inflated that might be.¹² 'Social exclusion is', as Kolinsky notes, 'defined as the gap between reality and expectation, and constitutes a subjective category. *Perception of disadvantage*, however, may be as forceful a social and political motivation as objectively measured disadvantage.' [my emphasis]¹³

no better. One of the east Germans interviewed by Robin Ostow, for example, complains that when west German entrepreneurs arrived, "they opened stores in which they treated us like Turks." See Robin Ostow, "'Ne Art Burgerwehr in Form von Skins": Young Germans on the Streets in the Eastern and Western States of the Federal Republic', *New German Critique*, No. 64 (Winter 1995), 87-103 (p. 94). See also David Morley's discussion of this issue in *Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 167-170.

¹¹ See Lydia Morris, 'Rights and Controls in the Management of Migration: The Case of Germany', *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (2000), 224-240. See also Simon Green's useful discussion of citizenship laws, 'Between Ideology and Pragmatism: The Politics of Dual Nationality in Germany', *International Migration Review*, Vol. 39, No. 4, Winter (2005), 1-31.

¹² David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky, 'Introduction: Migrants or Citizens? Turks in Germany between Exclusion and Acceptance', in Horrocks and Kolinsky, pp. x-xxvii (p. xxiv).

¹³ Kolinsky, p. 100. One could also draw a comparison between some west Germans' reception to labour migrants and the attitude of some west Germans to their eastern compatriots. Klusmeyer's observation that 'during the 1950s, the differences that marked the refugees and expellees made them seem dangerously "foreign" in the eyes of many

The imagined east German community

This article addresses the ways filmmakers have recently gone about challenging the dominant modes of representation of east Germans and eastern Germany. I will focus specifically on the final films produced as part of the *Ostwind* series, a unique collaboration between the national public service broadcaster, Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF) and the regional east German channel Ostdeutscher Rundfunk (ORB).¹⁴ However, before considering the commissioning editors' claim that the films made under their remit are unique in their representation of the east, it may be useful to offer a necessarily brief summary of the different approaches to representing east Germany since unification.

After 1989, mainstream depictions of east Germans offered the region as an amusingly backward region populated by an appealingly primitive people, who were frequently confused and intimidated by their experiences of the west. Though their naivety made them easy prey for west German profiteers, these unsophisticated east Germans challenged the new administration (as represented by bankers, politicians, civil servants), with the provincial underdogs usually able to triumph over their would-be colonizers. These representations were largely sympathetic, if not a little patronizing (and would have been unthinkable if applied to other minority groups), and bore little relation to the realities of life in Germany at that time.¹⁵ While television reports from the east routinely documented the region's failings, ranging from the alarming environmental

native inhabitants, who routinely criticised their unwillingness to work, their general uncleanliness, their proneness to criminality, and their lack of gratitude' is strikingly similar to comments often directed at east Germans. See Douglas Klusmeyer, 'A "Guiding Culture" for Immigrants? Integration and Diversity in Germany', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (2001), 519-523 (p. 527). See also Toralf Staud, 'Ossis sind Türken. 13 Jahre Einheit: In Gesamt-Westdeutschland sind die Ostdeutschen Einwanderer', *Die Zeit*, 02.10.2003, Nr.41. Online at: <http://www.zeit.de/2003/41/Einwanderer> [Accessed 23.6.2006]. Also see Wolf Wagner, 'Das Quasi-Volk. Stand der Einheit. Die Ethnisierung der Deutschen nimmt zu', *Freitag*, 22. 26.5.2000. Online at: <http://www.freitag.de/2000/22/00220101.htm> [Accessed 23.6.2006].

¹⁴ The series was originally between ZDF and Ostdeutscher Rundfunk (ORB), which later merged with Sender Freies Berlin (SFB), becoming RBB in 2003. It also co-operated with the prominent film school, 'Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen, 'Konrad Wolf' in Potsdam.

¹⁵ See Hörschelmann (2001), whose interviewees confirmed that these assumed characteristics were prevalent, too, in other media representations. See p. 195

damage to the equally alarming violent racism, audiences were flocking to see sentimental comedies such as *Go, Trabi, Go* (Peter Timm, 1990). These films capitalized on, and perhaps hoped to prolong, the early euphoria that followed the state's collapse. Any reference to post-unification tension – the challenge of system transformation, racism, unemployment, ecological disaster – was usually played for laughs. At a time when German society was undergoing the most dramatic changes in almost half a century, many commercial filmmakers were thus content with exploiting the comic possibilities that the encounters between east and west offered. The conflict that arose between the populations east and west of the former border may have been the source of genuine antagonism, but it was invariably presented as a dialectic of global enterprise (predatory west Germans representing corporate interests) and local industry (represented by vulnerable east Germans), which lack of specificity accounts for the films' popularity in the west.

Providing a balance to these mainstream comic accounts of life in the east were several dozen, low-budget films which performed a critical dissection of the *Wende*. These narratives addressed the economic and social realities facing the east German community, usually providing a critique of both the GDR and the FRG. The majority of the films searched out places and locations unfamiliar to most German audiences and focused on provincial communities that had ruptured since unification. Where the mainstream films situated their narratives in the region's picturesque locations, it is the barren fields, abandoned homesteads and derelict industrial premises that provide a standard backdrop for these bleak accounts. The east Germans' apparently innate provincialism, which in the mainstream films had indulged a nostalgia for a pre-modern Germany, was often inverted so that the east Germans' lack of sophistication was no longer old-fashioned or charming, but an indication of backwardness, a way of thinking and behaving that prevented the population from rising to the challenges of a modern German society. Unlike the mainstream comedies, individuals found no solace among members of their own community. What did unite individuals in these social-critical narratives was a mutual fear of outsiders, one that was often articulated using the vocabulary of the far right, and the east Germans' alleged propensity for violence and discrimination was one of several recurring topoi in many of the films made in the nineties. The narratives ultimately highlighted the inhabitants' limited options and marginalized existences, exposing the post-unification rhetoric of integration, opportunity and parity as political cant.

Perhaps the most significant development in the depiction of east Germans was the emergence of the nostalgia film which came to prominence in the late nineties. The *Ostalgie* films challenged the dominant practices of representation, both the cheery condescension of the early comedies and the gloomy outlook of the period's social dramas.¹⁶ Profiting from the east Germans' new-found interest for used east German culture, which had contributed to the articulation of a separate cultural identity, these films celebrated aspects of life in the GDR in a way that would have been unimaginable some years earlier. Not surprisingly, there has been considerable debate among scholars and commentators as to whether the nostalgic narratives are, as some would have it, revisionist accounts of life in the GDR or, as others claim, a harmless celebration of life under socialism, which enables east Germans to protect their experiences and memories from the western version of events.¹⁷

The *Ostalgie* trend is related to the east Germans' perception of disadvantage. The failure fully to integrate minority groups in a host culture exacerbates feelings of exclusion and inevitably promotes a reassessment and reassertion of the culture of origin, and is by no means unique to the east Germans. Feeling that they are somehow barred from full integration with west German society (or at least that access to similar levels of prosperity has been unjustly deferred), they have set about preserving their cultural distinctiveness, a process that is viewed as a provocation and an insult by some Germans. It would be incorrect to see the east Germans' reappraisal of life under socialism as an attempt to forge a wholly separate identity or as a rude rejection of democratic values. They may routinely distinguish themselves as *east* German, but they also recognize their attachment to a pan-German culture, a hyphenated identity not dissimilar to developments among other minority groups who move between mainstream German culture and the culture of origin - be it Turkish, Kosovan, or Vietnamese. The attempted promulgation of separate identities is often viewed with some suspicion by members of the host culture. One of the persistent allegations made against foreigners in Germany, according to

¹⁶ A neologism that combines 'Nostalgie' (nostalgia) and 'Ost' (east).

¹⁷ These three different approaches broadly correspond with the sociologist Rolf Reißig's claim that there have been three distinct stages in the east Germans' response to their changed socio-economic environment, which he defines as 'Einheitseuphorie', 'Transformations- und Einheitsschock', and 'Ankommen und Distanz'. See Rolf Reißig, 'Ostdeutschland: Am Ende des Systemwechsels - am Anfang einer nachhaltigen Transformation', *BISS public, Beiträge zur sozialwissenschaftlichen Diskussion*, No. 26, Halbjahresband II/1998. Online at: http://www.biss-online.de/htm_beitraege/BISS%20pub%20Heft%2026.htm [Accessed 17.4.2005].

Kolinsky, 'concerns their alleged distance from mainstream German culture and their lack of willingness to integrate'.¹⁸ Symbols of obvious cultural difference may be regarded as a wilful rejection of their values. The more obvious the cultural signifier, the stronger is usually the reaction. The Muslim headscarf, the hijab, which prompted heated debate in several European countries, including Germany, is such an example.¹⁹ Some east Germans' decision to wear old Party shirts and insignia is doubtless more of a provocation, but the effect is not dissimilar (although this does not suggest that the east Germans are likely to sympathize with outward displays of difference among other minority groups).

Recent years have seen politicians, generally conservatives, demanding that minority communities integrate more closely with their host community. While the conservatives' proposed *Leitkultur* policy was widely dismissed when it was first outlined in 2000, the call for greater participation by (ethnic) minorities and for cultural assimilation has grown in urgency since 9/11, albeit without the chauvinistic overtones inherent in the CDU's proposition.²⁰ East Germans have likewise been urged to abandon their culture (where this is seen as the product of a socialist dictatorship) and to demonstrate greater commitment to German democracy. For some commentators, the celebration of GDR culture was an affront to Germany's democratic sensibilities, and the nostalgic revival that first began in the mid-nineties and which has continued through various manifestations and permutations was interpreted as revisionism. What these commentators failed to recognize was that that this performative nostalgia often signalled an ironic take on the past rather than any genuine commitment to Marxist-Leninist ideology; only very few are likely to have donned official dress as a way of demonstrating their loyalty to the East German regime. Other commentators, such as Slavoj Zizek, have suggested that, 'Ostalgie for the defunct Socialism mostly consists in such a conservative nostalgia for the self-satisfied constrained way of life', though this fails to explain adequately *Ostalgie's* appeal amongst the

¹⁸ Kolinsky, p.93.

¹⁹ See Veysel Oezcan, 'Germany's High Court Allows Teacher to Wear Muslim Headscarf', *Migration Information Source*, 1.11.2003. Online at: <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=175> [Accessed 9.2.2006].

²⁰ The principles behind the 'Leitkultur' proposal have been echoed in other countries. Consider, for example, Lord Tebbit's 'cricket test', which would apparently establish whether or not a minority community had successfully integrated with their host culture. For more on the 'Leitkultur', see Klusmeyer.

young, for whom mementoes from the GDR function as fashion rather than political statements (though the two are not incompatible).²¹

Despite *Ostalgie*'s commercial significance and its appeal across generations and regions, it should not be viewed only in terms of its profitability or as a postmodern trend that has seen the kitsch commodification of communism. The east Germans' nostalgia for particular aspects of the past was undoubtedly a response to the dissatisfactions of the present. One of the major frustrations for east Germans was the feeling that they were no longer able to narrate their own past, and that the GDR had suddenly become a history to be told by outsiders. In this sense, *Ostalgie* allows memory to assume primacy over history; it elevates the particular above the universal, hence its original importance for the east German community – original, because *Ostalgie* has largely been assimilated into mainstream German cultural life.²²

***Ostwind* - a breath of fresh air?**

The commercial hijacking of *Ostalgie* obscured the circumstances that had given rise to the trend, and the resulting *Ostalgie* television shows were less a celebration of east German culture than a comical post-mortem. The socio-economic realities facing present-day eastern Germany tend to be overshadowed by both these nostalgia narratives and by the popular historical accounts of the GDR which focus predominantly on the iniquities of the dictatorship. The decision, then, by ZDF and ORF to initiate a series of films that would promote young directors from the east and west wishing to represent the lived reality of the east in both feature and documentary films offered a palliative to the essentializing tendencies that have characterized the media's usual approach to representing eastern Germany. Although a number of filmmakers have offered realistic accounts

²¹ Slavoj Žižek, 'Repeating Lenin', 1997. Online at: <http://www.lacan.com/replenin.htm> [Accessed 4.7.2006].

²² The release of Wolfgang Becker's *Good Bye, Lenin!* (2002) was undoubtedly a major factor in popularizing *Ostalgie* still further. Though not the first film to address or facilitate the east Germans' celebration of their past, it was the first film to enjoy success in both halves of Germany and beyond – Becker's film was an unprecedented international box-office hit. Capitalizing on the vogue for retro fashion, the film offered an original and entertaining insight into the early months of social and political transition facing east Germans and, in the process, attempted to comment on the east Germans' idealization of their past, a past that is clearly invented. *Good Bye, Lenin!* fostered a wider interest in east German, that is GDR, culture, and the film's popularity prompted television channels to produce their own *Ostalgie* shows, variations of the nostalgia show format popular in much of European television.

of the east over the years, these films (financed by regional film-funding boards and generous state arts subsidies) received limited distribution, if they received distribution at all, and did not always secure the broadcast slots that were guaranteed as part of the *Ostwind* package.

Ostwind, which was originally conceived by the Chief Executive of ORB, Hans-Jürgen Rosenbauer, owes much to ‘Das Kleine Fernsehspiel’, the influential series established by the German public service broadcaster, ZDF, more than forty years ago. This series has long championed non-commercial filmmaking in Germany, reaching its critical apogee in the seventies, during which time directors associated with New German Cinema were able to take advantage of the channel’s progressive attitude towards films that gave voice to the politically and socially marginalized.²³ The channel’s willingness to support novice directors and projects that would otherwise doubtless fail to find the necessary finance has continued, and ‘Das Kleine Fernsehspiel’ has been instrumental in providing a platform for directors who have since gone on to win awards and critical kudos.

A dozen films, comprising nine feature films and three documentaries, were made as part of the *Ostwind* series between 1999 and 2003.²⁴ Though the focus was principally on eastern Germany, two of the films extend beyond the German border. In *Normal People* (2001), director Oleg Novkovic offers a portrait of life in Belgrade during the war, and the cameras travel as far as Russia in *Mit Ikea Nach Moskau* (2001), Michael Chauvistré’s documentary about two east Germans who move to work at the country’s first Swedish furniture store.²⁵ Unusually, most of the titles were given a theatrical release and subsequently broadcast on both stations. Despite the limited contact with audiences that a run at low-profile film festivals offers and the typically late night broadcast slots, the films probably enjoyed greater exposure than would have otherwise been the case – assuming that they had ever succeeded in getting the films funded. The choice of films that were offered under its rubric reveal a progressively liberal principle, namely to reflect

²³ See Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), p. 215.

²⁴ See the *Ostwind* website for more information on the series and links to individual productions: <http://www.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/6/0,1872,1022118,00.html> [Accessed 3.6.2006].

²⁵ Or, as the channel’s website puts it: ‘junge Regisseurinnen und Regisseure bekamen die Möglichkeit, in persönlichen Geschichten über die Veränderungen im Osten Deutschlands und in Europa nach dem Fall des Eisernen Vorhangs zu erzählen.’ See http://www.rbb-online.de/_/ostwind/index_jsp/key=teaser_1799097.html [Accessed 3.6.2006].

and to promote east Germany's diverse culture, focusing on communities and regions that have either been neglected or subjected to reductive accounts by the media.

The films to be released as part of the *Ostwind* series would, according to the producers, Cooky Ziesche and Annedore von Donop, privilege accounts of ordinary, everyday life in the east:

Die Entscheidung, ausschließlich Geschichten aus dem Osten zu erzählen, gründet sich auf dem Wunsch, den historischen Prozess nach dem Fall der Mauer und des Eisernen Vorhangs in Filmen festzuhalten. Dabei interessiert uns nicht das "große" politische Geschehen, sondern das ganz "normale" Leben in seinen verschiedenen Facetten.²⁶

Inherent in this vision is a determination to provide genuine insights into life in areas that seldom feature in mainstream accounts.²⁷ At the same time, the narratives seek to acknowledge the diversity of east German culture and to balance what Klusmeyer rightly refers to as the 'one-sided, top-down approach toward the East Germans' that has dominated unification discourse.²⁸ Whether the series truly achieves this is debatable. Despite similarities in their production budgets, visual style and eastern orientation, the twelve films made by young directors (the oldest was born in 1957, the youngest in 1973, and many of them were still studying at the celebrated film school in Potsdam) are qualitatively inconsistent (though the series won over twenty film prizes in all).

Not all of the films bear out the rather earnest statement of intent outlined by the commissioning producers. *Befreite Zone* (Norbert Baumgarten, 2002), for instance, is a satire set in a provincial east German town where the residents' spirits are raised when the local football team recruits a talented Nigerian player whose arrival makes a positive impact not just on the team's scorecards but on the town's fortunes. While Baumgarten's film reflects some of the contemporary unification issues – racism, regional economic decline, the imposition of west

²⁶ Ziesche and von Donop.

²⁷ I use mainstream here as a designation for those productions which, adhering to certain commercially successful, tried-and-tested principles, generally enjoy bigger budgets. The *Ostwind* films discussed do not necessarily challenge the formal conventions of commercial filmmaking (artistic experimentation with no concern for audience tastes rarely receives much financial support from public television production), but their subject matter often runs counter-current to the mainstream.

²⁸ Klusmeyer, pp. 527-28.

German business practices – the film hardly evidences the ‘firm grip on the historical process’ mentioned in Ziesche’s and von Donop’s editorial. The same could be said of Gordian Maugg’s *Zutaten für Träume* (2001), which saw Renate Krößner, one of the most popular actresses in the GDR, play a former haute cuisine chef who enters a cooking competition that is ultimately a contest between east and west. Maugg, too, includes topical issues in his film – migrant workers, neo-Nazis, the east-west antagonism – but resists exploring these issues in any detail. Several of the films, however, present more serious considerations of life in the east. Issues of culpability and loyalty, central to the unification debate surrounding the role played by the *Stasi* and the east German border guards, are examined in Karsten Laske’s *Hundsköpfe* (2001), a drama that follows a unit of former border guards who are reunited in order to clear an area of the former no-man’s-land of mines. Other unification issues, such as the problem of negotiating the move from one political system to another, are explored in *Ostwind* films like *Berlin is in Germany*, which offers a practical guide to integration by highlighting two contrasting responses to unification. For the former wife of the returning convict, who is now married and living in suburban Berlin, complete assimilation is the solution, and she undergoes a kind of cultural ecdysis, blending in perfectly with her upwardly mobile surroundings. In contrast, the risks of not integrating are made obvious in the film’s characterization of Peter, the luckless individual mentioned above. The character’s self-pity, inelegant clothing, and lack of responsibility mark him as the stereotypical east German, and the lead character’s future success lies partly in recognizing his friend’s mistakes. The narrative is not so crass as to suggest that the east Germans must learn to be exactly like their western compatriots, however. Stöhr’s film outlines the dangers of not moving on, but it also offers a subtle critique of the west by focusing on the wife’s new milieu in which material comfort is linked to a vacuous western culture.²⁹

For the directors making the final *Ostwind* films, which, after runs at film festivals and in theatres, were broadcast in 2006, the region’s young population is the focus of interest. The series producers’ claim that the filmmakers are interested in depicting ‘normal life’ in the east is perhaps not quite accurate. The films may be concerned with presenting authentic portraits of ‘normal life’, but it is the ordinary life of the region’s underclass that is of principle interest here. Susanne Irina Zacharias’s *Hallesche Kometen* (2004) is set among the unemployed in the

²⁹ See Nick Hodgkin, ‘Berlin is in Germany and Good Bye, Lenin! Taking Leave of the GDR?’, *Debatte: Review of Contemporary German Affairs*, Vol. 12, No.1 (May 2004), 25-46 (pp. 30-34).

depressed town of Halle. A neo-Nazi fringe group is the subject of both Franziska Tenner's documentary, *No Exit* (2003) and Mirko Borscht's *Kombat Sechzehn* (2004), while Esther Gronenborn's *Adil Geht* (2004) considers a community of refugees from the war in Kosovo living in the small east German town of Altenburg.

What these films offer is a differentiated view of the east to those that have hitherto prevailed. The films broaden the narrowly imagined eastern community found in mainstream accounts. Where the films revisit ground already trodden, the approach is more nuanced. At first glance, for example, there is little to distinguish Susanne Irina Zacharias's debut film, *Hallesche Kometen*, from other post-unification narratives. The themes that are central to *Hallesche Kometen* – unemployment, petty crime, depression, alcoholism, the desire to escape the provincial east German environment – were raised in a number of films released in the years following the demise of the east German state. The film's visual composition, the panoramic takes of the east's prefabricated residential flats and the views across the city's uninspiring socialist-era architecture, is by now something of a convention when representing the urban east. But where earlier narratives tended towards a cause-and-effect schema, according to which the east's social and psychological problems were seen as a corollary of unification or a legacy of life behind the wall, Zacharias's film, like other recent films, resists this kind of reckoning and minimizes reference to either unification or to the east German past.³⁰

In keeping with the series producers' intention that the *Ostwind* films would offer realistic portraits of everyday life in the east, the film strives for the kind of authenticity that critics had often found to be lacking in post-unification dramas and which prompted positive comparisons with British filmmaking (presumably a reference to the tragic-comedy of Mike Leigh and the social realism of Ken Loach). Zacharias's film pays forensic attention to the humdrum aspects of its subjects' lives. Like many of the *Ostwind* films, these are lives in the balance. In *Hallesche Kometen*, the young protagonist, Ben, struggles to deal with his own frustrations (in trying to earn enough money to travel abroad) while also caring for his father, a depressed, unemployed widower. Ben's father may be seen as one of unification's victims – many post-1989 narratives

³⁰ For the critic, Raimund Gerz, the film makes use of the 'Accessoires der Ost-Tristesse' without allowing them to dominate: 'Diese Impressionen aber sind nicht dominant, sondern bilden nur die Kulisse für die kammerspielartigen Szenen'. See 'Hallesche Kometen. Preisgekrönter Debütfilm um einen Vater-Sohn-Konflikt', *epd-film*, 1/2006. Online at: http://www.epd.de/epdfilm_neu/33194_39302.htm [Accessed 7.6.2006].

erroneously show men to be unification's losers when in fact research indicates that it was women who have faced the greatest challenges and prejudices during the period of social and political transformation – but Zacharias's film also suggests that he perpetuates his victim status, much to the consternation of his son. This is an altogether surprising approach to her protagonist's circumstances, given the sensitivity of the issue. Unemployment is high in eastern Germany and has been attributed to various causes, including the mass redundancies that followed the downsizing or closure of many businesses after unification (which contributed to the east Germans' sense of injustice), and the east Germans' alleged reluctance to work (a familiar west German complaint).³¹ But like *Berlin is in Germany*, *Hallesche Kometen* promotes the notion of individual responsibility, showing how a pro-active approach, as advocated by the son, may be a solution to escaping their moribund situation. This does not lead to any of the fanciful schemes that offer east Germans a way out in the mainstream post-unification films. Though the son is briefly engaged in petty crime – selling black market cigarettes, an occupation typically associated with eastern Europeans and Vietnamese – he soon pursues more conventional methods, approaching prospective employers, both for him and for his father.

Filial obligation is an increasingly common trope in contemporary German film, especially in those films set in the east. Responsible sons who are determined to help their seemingly incapable parents are also be found, for example, in *Netto* (Robert Thalheim, 2004), *Das Lächeln der Tiefseefische* (Till Endemann, 2005) and *Good Bye, Lenin!* With little connection to the state in which their parents' generation was socialized, the sons (but never the daughters) act as intermediaries who enable their parents to disinvest themselves of the past and to participate in the new society. There is no clear indication that the son's and father's situation is suddenly about to improve, but the confrontation between the two not only results in a resolution of their differences but also indicates a renewed confidence that may ultimately bring about a change to their economic circumstances. The films thus avoid both the fairytale ending of the mainstream films and the grim tragedy that concluded many of the earlier dramas.

Generational difference is a theme that emerges also in Esther Gronenborn's *Adil Geht*. Gronenborn, who came to prominence with *alaska.de* (2001), her prize-winning film of east

³¹ Economic disparity is central to the east/west antagonism. The recent introduction of the welfare reform package known as 'Hartz IV', which seeks to reduce the support given to the long-term unemployed, led to mass demonstrations in the east, where this change in policy looked set to affect a considerable portion of the population.

Berlin teenage culture, employs a similar lo-fi documentary aesthetic for her *Ostwind* film. Set among a refugee community located since the Kosovan war in the provincial east German town of Altenburg, the film likewise uses lay actors, drawn from Turkish, Bosnian and Kosovan Roma communities. Though not the only recent German film to delve into post-migrant German communities and youth culture (Neko Celik's *Urban Guerillas* (2003), Christian Wagner's *Ghetto Kids* (2001), or Till Hastreiter's *Status Yo* (2003) explore similar milieus), *Adil Geht* does provide a rare insight into the lives of teenagers who are among society's most marginal figures, belonging neither to the established German community nor to the hyphenated post-immigrant communities associated with the original 'Gastarbeiter' (Turkish-German, Greek-German etc.). These refugee families are kept in a state of limbo by the German immigration authorities and though they hope to be granted residency rights, they live knowing that they may be repatriated at any time.³² For the children of these families who have, to a large extent, been socialized in Germany, this transitory existence is particularly difficult. Knowing that they might be sent back to their country of origin, with which they have little connection, results in a group solidarity that mostly transcends any traditional antagonism between the adolescents of different ethnic backgrounds. Though the teenagers are acculturated in German society, facilitated by their attendance at a German school where they dress and behave like most of the other kids, they also maintain some distance from mainstream German culture. Hip hop provides them with a scene in which they are able to practise an identity that is neither German nor non-German. More than a counter-cultural scene, hip hop assumes considerable significance for these youths, who are kept in a state of flux while the immigration authorities process their claims, for it constitutes, as Andy Bennett has suggested, 'a series of strategies which are worked out and staged in response to particular issues encountered in local situations.'³³ Accordingly, the break-dance contest at which the teenagers plan to perform is less a competition between contesting groups than a venue of

³² The families' status in Germany falls under the legal title of 'Duldung', or tolerated residence, a title that grants only limited residency to asylum seekers and which can be withdrawn at any time, resulting in their deportation. The use of lay actors lends validity to the film project, not least because the actors' real-life biographies are not much different from those they portray. Indeed, it took considerable effort by the filmmakers and relevant bodies to prevent Ali Biryar, who plays the eponymous lead, from being repatriated during the period of filming.

³³ Andy Bennett, 'Hip Hop am Main: The Localization of Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture', *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1999), 77-91 (pp. 80-81).

conflict between the teenagers and the state – as represented by the police officers and immigration agents searching for Adil.³⁴

Research into hip hop culture has shown that it carries particular significance for immigrant and marginalized communities.³⁵ As in other countries, hip hop in Germany evolved from an imitation of the American street sub-culture to a distinctly national product, one that the country's marginalized groups were more easily able to harness and participate in than with other musical genres (even if the media initially neglected their involvement, focusing instead on the more accessible version advocated by white German rappers).³⁶ Hip hop's appeal for Germany's immigrant youth lies, then, in its *'different, non-German cultural pattern'*.³⁷ In that sense, it enables otherwise different cultural groups to coalesce, for it creates, as Fatima El-Tayeb has observed, 'a broad forum of expression and exchange between marginalised communities, fostering interactions between minorities becoming aware of their similar situation.'³⁸ Certainly, this is the case in *Adil Geht*. Gronenborn's film shows how hip hop culture provides the teenagers of diverse ethnic groups (Kosovans of Albanian (Ashkali) and Roma background) with a means of expression that is not only separate from mainstream German culture but alien to their own traditional way of life, for the teenagers' musical tastes also marks them as 'other' from their own culture, which is signalled by the traditional music heard or sung during the scenes set at their family homes. At the same time, this sub-culture provides its subjects with a form of cultural expression that approximates Bhabha's notion of a liminal 'third space', allowing the adolescents to resist simple categorization – they clearly reject both the inclusionary impulses of their

³⁴ It is worth noting that break-dance has its roots in US street gang culture, where it was as much a form of conflict resolution as an exhibition of athleticism or choreography.

³⁵ See Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal, *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2002). See also Sabine von Dirke, 'Hip-Hop Made in Germany: From Old School to the Kanaksta Movement', in *German Pop Culture. How American is it?*, ed. by Agnes C. Mueller (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), pp. 96-113.

³⁶ See Fatima El-Tayeb, "If You Can't Pronounce My Name, You Can Just Call Me Pride": Afro-German Activism, Gender and Hip Hop', *Gender & History*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2003), 460-86 (p. 476).

³⁷ Dietmar Elflein, 'From Krauts with Attitudes to Turks with Attitudes: Some Aspects of Hip-Hop History in Germany', *Popular Music*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1998), 255-65 (p. 257).

³⁸ See El-Tayeb, p. 477. Gronenborn echoes this point, saying that 'Viele Jugendliche benutzen den Tanz als Flucht, als eine Insel auf der sie Anerkennung und Bestätigung finden, ob sie nun einen Pass haben oder nicht.' See 'Interview mit der Regisseurin Esther Gronenborn', *Adil Geht Press Pack*, p. 11.

families and any exclusionary tactics by the German community.³⁹ Possessing the language skills and cultural references that their parents lack, they are able to negotiate with the host German society represented by its various institutions (schools, authorities, workplace); but they also fulfil traditional roles inside the micro-culture of their parental home. More than simple recreation, the youth-club environment where they practise their dance routines is an opportunity for these teenagers to engage with, and participate in, a culture that is all their own.

One of the most interesting aspects of *Adil Geht* is its refusal to bow to issues that typically dominate such sub-cultural portraits. Gronenborn's film avoids reducing the various immigrant families to a composite of 'otherness' but highlights cultural differences within this marginalized multi-ethnic community. The director also eschews the usual antagonists: the retinue of skinheads often found in films focusing on migrant and ethnic communities are notable by their absence. Instead, the migrant families are put under pressure by German migration and residency laws which are exercised by various civil servants. Pressures also exist within the wider migrant and refugee communities. While the families from the former Yugoslavia recognize the similarity of their status and circumstances, Gronenborn's film acknowledges the real cultural differences between and within these families. For the young generation, the memories and experiences of their country of origin have begun to be supplanted by their experiences and interaction with German society; similarly, their understanding of their families' customs and conventions is removed from the original context and problematized by newly learned codes and values. Gronenborn's film offers no salutary conclusion, no positive denouement. Resisting the kind of last-minute reprieve that might have been offered in a mainstream picture, Gronenborn's film finishes with Adil being forcibly repatriated. The film ends with a scene featuring the remaining friends, revolving in a circle as the closing song of the soundtrack repeats the phrase, 'Ich bin deutscher' met by the refrain 'Sie sind kein deutscher'.

Figures alienated from their surrounding community are central, too, to Mirko Borscht's *Kombat Sechszehn*. But the protagonists in Borscht's film, which is set in Frankfurt an der Oder, close to the German-Polish border, are self-styled outsiders, anti-social figures who provoke and threaten those they see as different. The target of their abuse is a newly arrived west German from cosmopolitan, multicultural Frankfurt am Main who, as the only 'foreigner' in their midst, is taunted and bullied – unsuccessfully, as it turns out, since he is a talented Taekwondo player.

³⁹ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

While Borscht's film might initially confirm popular stereotypes of the east and west (xenophobic provincials with a poor economic outlook set against affluent, modern urbanites), *Kombat Sechszehn* is less interested in expanding on these particular issues. Instead, Borscht's film is an attempted exposition of the neo-Nazi milieu and its manifestation within east German youth culture. The right-wing scene has attracted other filmmakers in recent years, not least Franziska Tenner, whose *Ostwind* documentary film, *No Exit*, likewise reports from Frankfurt an der Oder, and Neo-Nazis have periodically appeared in post-unification dramas.⁴⁰ *Kombat Sechszehn* is the first feature film to go beyond the standard representation of these counter-cultural subversives and to consider in some depth what attracts young east Germans to right-wing politics, a commitment to meaningful enquiry that was acknowledged by critics, many of whom thought the film well-intentioned, if a little clumsy.

What distinguishes Borscht's film from other post-unification accounts in which neo-Nazis appear, is the director's attempt to imbue the film with a degree of authenticity generally lacking in other dramas. For the most part, the neo-Nazis in these films are crudely realized characters, usually introduced as either shaven-headed village idiots or menacing figures, and fulfilling a narrative role that reveals little about their motivations or circumstances. *Kombat Sechszehn* eschews this kind of representation, seeking instead to provide a more realistic insight into this particular sub-culture in a way reminiscent of better-known neo-Nazi dramas, such as *American History X* (Tony Kaye, 1998) and *Romper Stomper* (Geoffrey Wright, 1992).⁴¹ Like these films, *Kombat Sechszehn* hopes to illuminate the reasons for young people's drift towards these marginal groups and advances a number of explanations for its adolescents' transformation

⁴⁰ Documentaries include *Beruf Neonazi* (Wilfried Bonengel, 1993) and Thomas Heise's two films about radical, young east Germans (*Stau – jetzt geht's los*, 1992, and *Neustad.: Stau - der Stand der Dinge*, 1994). They are also represented in fiction films such as Helke Misselwitz's *Herzprung* (1992) and Bernd Böhlich's *Landschaft mit Dornen* (1992).

⁴¹ See Bodo Mrozek, 'Harte Treppe', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 11.6.2005. Online at: <http://archiv.tagesspiegel.de/archiv/11.06.2005/1869538.asp> [Accessed 4.3.2006]. Like these two films, Borscht's was criticized, though to a lesser extent, for its alleged Nazi aesthetic. See Rüdiger Suchsland, 'Wir sind auch Helden', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 21.1.2005. Online at: <http://archiv.tagesspiegel.de/archiv/24.01.2005/1608422.asp> [Accessed 9.5.2006]. The film is clearly not regarded as a propaganda piece by the German authorities, since the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (BpB) has produced a booklet designed for pedagogical purposes, something it also did for Hayes' film. See Manfred Rüssel, *Kombat Sechszehn. Filmheft* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2003).

from everyday teenagers to neo-Nazis. For some of its members, the attraction of being in such a group is to be found in the social, male-orientated world that it represents; for others, it is the faction's ideology (which, as Tenner's documentary also shows, reveals a shaky grasp of history).⁴² Other factors explaining this *Mitläufertum* may be cited too: the individuals' subordinate social status, their economically disadvantaged lives, peer group pressure, the influence of older figures. These issues, which are mostly absent in other post-unification narratives, go some way to rationalizing the teenagers' conversion without condoning it. The film even allows for a rare, sympathetic view of neo-Nazis – or at least one of them, the charismatic Thomas. Where his *Kamaraden* show little understanding of right-wing ideology and are far more interested in venting their aggression on the vulnerable individuals that they encounter, he is a more even-tempered figure, who recognizes that Georg, the west German newcomer, might be a valuable recruit to the right-wing cause, not least because of his martial arts expertise. The developing friendship between Thomas and Georg, which bears some homoerotic overtones, ultimately threatens the former's position within the hierarchy and results in a savage beating for the east and west German when they try to prevent one of the gang's assaults.

Borscht's film faces greater problems in trying to rationalize his main protagonist's temporary transition from enlightened, modern west German to local skinhead. A combination of factors apparently precipitates such a transfer in attitude – his relocation from the west to the east and the ensuing sense of displacement, the potential friendship offered by the gang and, finally, a feeling of betrayal brought on by the end of his relationship with Jasmin, an Afro-American-German girl back in the west. His conversion is ultimately little more than a drastic haircut.

⁴² The films documenting the neo-Nazi scene were not without their detractors. A jury member on one of the festival panels objected to Borscht's handling of right-wing imagery. Some critics disagreed with Tenner's *No Exit*, which is a useful companion piece to *Kombat Sechzehn*, seeing her focus on these individuals' rather unexceptional lives as a failure to address or condemn their politics in a sufficiently robust manner. Tenner follows the banal routines of her subjects, following the day-to-day habits of their domestic, professional and social lives. The film thus normalizes individuals generally demonized by the German media. In contrast to other documentaries and news items, Tenner's film lets the subjects speak for themselves. Rather than providing a platform for neo-Nazis, this approach engenders its own critique, since the political rhetoric consists of the usual clichés, and the individuals are exposed as political naïfs who are generally unable to summon any logical or convincing responses when challenged by others. *No Exit* and, to a lesser extent, *Kombat Sechzehn*, emphasize the ordinariness of these lives, and, in so doing, alter the usual image of Neo-Nazis as outré or fringe figures.

Finally, his decent, liberal principles prevail, and he and Georg are able to break away from their erstwhile peers. Sceptics might accuse *Kombat Sechzehn* of reinforcing the notion of the westerner as the better-informed, morally responsible German, but the film also outlines the east German's capacity for change.

Conclusion

Several of the films showing as part of the *Ostwind* series reveal a new interest in focusing on a young generation of east Germans that has little, if any, connection to the GDR. Accordingly, the protagonists' socio-economic circumstances are no longer viewed explicitly through the prism of Germany's transformation process. Nor do the films adhere to the east/west dialectic that commonly reduced the relationship between the two populations to one of colonized and colonizers, though this is not to suggest that no east/west tension exists, rather that its coordinates may have been recalibrated: for the refugees living in Altenburg, their east German neighbours are, of course, westerners. Indeed, while many post-unification films tended to portray a region populated by individuals from a similar socio-economic milieu, resulting in a one-dimensional view of the east German 'other', recent films enable a differentiated picture of east German society, one that not only foregrounds the everyday lives of young (teenage and early twenties) east Germans but also one that acknowledges the region's increasingly heterogeneous makeup. Increasingly, it is Germany's vulnerable, socially excluded groups that are central to these films' narratives, and, for the first time, these do not consist only of poor, disenfranchised east Germans, but also acknowledge recent arrivals from the east and beyond.⁴³

It would be wrong to suggest that the *Ostwind* series constitutes any ideologically grounded opposition to dominant modes of representation. The series producers may assert that the films offer a unique take on life in the east, but this ignores the contributions made by other independent filmmakers over the years, even if these films did not generally enjoy the exposure offered through public service broadcasting. However, the films referred to, and discussed here, do represent a shift in discourse, extending the field of vision to the margins and allowing audiences some insight into lives that have mostly been ignored. The films do not offer a positive

⁴³ In addition to the films already mentioned, one can point to similar themes and concerns in *Netto*, *Das Lächeln der Tiefseefische*, and *Knallhart* (Detlev Buck, 2005).

counter-position of the east, one that cancels out the presence, say, of neo-Nazis, or shifts the focus away from unemployment. Nor do they ascribe the region's problems to the difficulties of adapting to life in the Federal Republic or indict the west Germans' administration of the new states. Rather, they offer a multi-perspectival view of the east. In contrast to the earlier social dramas, often 'narcissistic self-reflections without real references to society', these final *Ostwind* films confront standard representations of the east, acknowledging the region's diversity, from its undesirable representatives to its new arrivals, the old, established residents and the young generation.⁴⁴

Though less consistent than the producers might think, the significance of the *Ostwind* series should not be underestimated. In articulating those stories that 'are kept silent and out of view rather than actually not existing', these films represent counter-narratives to commercial accounts of the east.⁴⁵ These more nuanced views of Germany's diverse communities and cultures offer insights into marginalized and de-centred groups and challenge the mainstream's adherence to an exclusionary narrative of a homogeneous, ethnocentric community.

NICK HODGIN

SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY

⁴⁴ Massimo Locatelli. 'Ghosts of Babelsberg: Narrative Strategies of the Wendefilm', in *Textual Responses to German Unification*, ed. by C. A. Costabile-Heming, R. J. Halverson and K. A. Foell (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), pp. 211-224 (p. 216).

⁴⁵ Kathrin Hörschelmann, 'Breaking Ground - Marginality and Resistance in (Post) Unification Germany', *Political Geography*, Vol. 20 (2001), 981-1004 (p. 993).