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POLITICALLY DIVIDED:
a comparative analysis of German right-wing extremist voter support

By
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B.A., Indiana University Southeast, 2007

A Thesis
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for the Degree of

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Department of Political Science
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2010

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A Thesis Approved on

April 7, 2010

by the following Thesis Committee:

Thesis Director

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,
who were always supportive and knew I could do anything,
even when I had no confidence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis director, Dr. Jason Gainous, for his guidance, support, enthusiasm, and understanding. I would also like to thank Dr. Laurie Rhodebeck for her endless support and advice. Additional thanks to Dr. Frank Goetzke for his comments and assistance. I would also like to express my extreme gratitude to Arlene Brannon and Jessica Kidd; thank you for always knowing what I needed to do and when I needed to get it done – and a particular thanks to Arlene for the much needed chocolate over the past two years. Also, many thanks and apologies to all of my friends and family members whom I feel I have neglected over the past year. Your understanding, support, and midnight calls meant more than you can ever imagine.

ABSTRACT

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Carolyn Morgan

April 07, 2010

Despite twenty years of political reunification Germany remains a politically, socially, and economically divided country. This has fuelled inequalities, which are used by extreme political parties to garner votes from citizens who have become disappointed with the effects of reunification. I aim to examine voter behavior in eastern and western Germany in respect to extreme right-wing parties. Furthermore, I isolated specific factors, such as unemployment and immigration, and test their impacts on latent support for right-wing extremist parties in the two regions. Using Politbarometer 2005 data, I employed logistic regressions to examine voter support for extreme right-wing parties. The analysis shows a significant positive impact from dissatisfaction with democracy and levels of conflicts with immigrants on support for extreme right-wing parties and supports the claim that extreme right-wing parties have found more success in eastern Germany by focusing on some the by-products of reunification, such as xenophobia and dissatisfaction with democracy.

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CHAPTER I

RIGHT WING EXTREMISM AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN GERMANY

Sixty-five years after the fall of the Third Reich and Nazism, the fear of a resurgence remains. Despite attempted bans and other legal actions, extreme right-wing political parties, which espouse what some claim to be Nazi-like rhetoric, remain a factor in the political system and have continued to gain an increasing amount of media coverage and public support in some regions. In some European countries, right-wing extremist political parties often receive five to ten percent of the vote, but in Germany they have failed to garner enough support to play a significant role in the federal government. While extreme right-wing parties have existed in western Germany since the 1950s, they are a relatively new phenomenon in eastern Germany – a by-product of democratization. This research focuses on the differences in voting behavior between eastern and western Germany, aiming to answer the questions: “what influences citizens to support right-wing extremist parties?” and “how have the consequences of reunification affected support for right-wing extremist parties in eastern Germany?” Comparative research allows us to measure and compare the effect of several factors, such as unemployment, anti-immigrant sentiment, and satisfaction with democracy, on right-wing extremist support between the two regions. Given the common political structure, yet differing political cultures, Germany is a perfect environment for a comparative study of what motivates voters to support right-wing extremist parties.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Of interest, for historical and political reasons, is the alleged increased popularity of right-wing extremist parties in Germany, particularly in eastern Germany. In this comparative study the main questions are: are eastern Germans more likely to support right-wing extremist groups than western Germans? And if so, why? To answer this question, I analyze the difference in support for right-wing extremist parties between the regions using two different theories on voter behavior, in addition to theories on ethnic conflict: the theory of relative deprivation and exit, voice, and loyalty as my theoretical framework. The theory of relative deprivation, introduced to political science by Ted Gurr (1970), states that if a citizen's expectations are not met, dissatisfaction will ensue.¹ As dissatisfaction increases, the likelihood of revolt rises. This is a key factor in analyzing eastern German voting behavior, as many citizens have yet to experience the positive consequences of reunification and have become disgruntled with the political system (Gensing, 2009; Fuchs, 1999). With reunification now 20 years in the past, it is plausible that relative deprivation explains right-wing extremist voter behavior. Additionally, Albert Hirschman's "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" (1970) lays out three methods of voter behavior: exit the system, voice concern or dissatisfaction by voting for an opposition party, or remain loyal to the system and create change from within. Assuming that eastern Germans have specific, cynical, attitudes towards democratization

¹ The term "relative deprivation" was coined by Samuel Stouffer and his colleagues in 1949, but has since been used throughout the social sciences, being applied to history, sociology, political science, psychology, and economics (Crosby, 1979: 104). Gurr (1970) bases much of his work on Runciman's work, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice: A Study of Attitudes to Social Inequality in Twentieth Century England* (1966).

and the outcomes of reunification, it is likely that they have become dissatisfied with the system and are using their votes as a protest against the current political situation.

These theories help to answer the main questions of this study: are eastern Germans more likely to support a right-wing party? And if so, is their support a product of their unfulfilled expectations resulting from reunification? It is expected that, with reunification now 20 years in the past and little improvement in eastern Germany, citizens are more likely to resent their conditions and choose to change the system through protest voting. However, this also leads to the question of whether right-wing support in eastern Germany is simply a manifestation of Hirschman's protest theory, where citizens use their vote as a voice of discontent with the current democratic political system. Additionally, since right-wing extremist parties are often highly xenophobic and use immigration as a key point in their campaigns, we must also consider that support for these parties is based more on anti-immigrant sentiment. Using ethnic conflict theory, which states that citizens create in-groups and out-groups based on ethnicity and blame out-groups for problems, we can expect that citizens who perceive a higher level of conflict between Germans and immigrants will also be more likely to support a right-wing extremist party. This is relevant to eastern Germany because of the sudden influx of immigrants into the region after reunification.

HYPOTHESES

The claim that right-wing extremist parties utilize the stable unemployment rates to gain electoral support by exploiting relative deprivation and democratic dissatisfaction and scapegoating immigrants are empirically tested using data from the 2005

Politbarometer. The results show a definitive difference between the regions concerning factors which motivate right-wing extremist support. Reasons for right-wing extremist support vary; do citizens support these parties out of protest against the current political, economic, or social conditions? Or, do they support these parties for ideological reasons? In order to answer these questions, I developed four testable hypotheses addressing right-wing extremist support: H1) *Voters in eastern Germany, when compared to western Germans, are more likely to prefer a right-wing extremism party*, establishes the main framework of this comparative study in that it shows a difference in support between the two regions. The second hypothesis, H2) *Citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to support a right-wing extremist party compared to those who are satisfied with democracy* is based on the theories of relative deprivation and protest voting, where citizens who are dissatisfied will resort to extraordinary means to voice their dissatisfaction or change the system. In line with H2, the third hypothesis, H3) *Citizens in eastern Germany who are less satisfied with democracy, are more likely to support a right-wing extremist party* analyzes the level of satisfaction with democracy within eastern Germany and its effect on right-wing extremist support.

As a result of reunification, eastern Germany has experienced abnormally high unemployment rates, which also feeds dissatisfaction. Although not necessarily caused by increased immigration, many right-wing extremist parties blame the high unemployment rates on foreigners who are claimed to take jobs away from Germans. In order to test if xenophobia facilitates right-wing extremist support, H4) *The stronger the perceived conflict with immigrants, the greater the likelihood that the voter will prefer a right-wing extremist party* is based on ethnic conflict theory, which claims that as

situations worsen, citizens will tend to blame ethnic out-groups for the worsening conditions. It is expected that, the more conflict one perceives, the more likely one is to vote for a right-wing extremist party. Since economic conditions are dramatically worse in eastern Germany, it is likely that eastern Germans are more likely to perceive a greater conflict between immigrants and Germans, and therefore will be more likely to support a right-wing extremist party.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Using a multivariate analysis, I found more support for right-wing extremist parties in eastern Germany compared to western Germany, with xenophobia and dissatisfaction with democracy explaining the regional differences in support for the parties. From the analysis, it is believed that worsening economic conditions, which lead to dissatisfaction, and an increased perceived conflict with immigrants work together to promote support for right-wing extremist parties. The analyses show that although eastern Germans have had less contact with foreigners, because of the worsening economic conditions since reunification and higher levels of dissatisfaction with democracy, combined with an influx of immigrants into the region, eastern Germans have a higher likelihood to support right-wing extremist parties. Despite the lower number of immigrants in eastern Germany compared to western Germany, the perceived level of conflict between Germans and immigrants is higher in eastern Germany, which leads to an increase in support for right-wing extremist parties.

GERMANY AS AN ENVIRONMENT FOR A COMPARATIVE STUDY

The German reunification provided a unique and rare environment for a comparative study of voter behavior and democratization. After 40 years of separation the two countries united, combining two regions which experienced dramatically different political situations. However, significant differences continue to separate eastern and western Germany and have created gross economic inequalities between the two regions. In fact, some refer to eastern Germany as the equivalent of the Italy's *mezzogornio*, a geographical region (southern Italy) that is financially subsidized by a more prosperous region (northern Italy) (Boltho, Carlin, and Scaramozzino, 1997). The inequalities between the two states, an unforeseen consequence of reunification, have led to increased disappointment and overall dissatisfaction with reunification in some regions of the country, particularly in eastern Germany. Increasing unemployment, diminishing social welfare benefits, an increased cost of living, loss of industry, and an influx of immigrants have been cited as reasons for increased dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the unfulfilled expectations of reunification have fueled politics based on resentment in some regions of eastern Germany, which often motivates citizens to support extremist parties.

STUDY OVERVIEW

This study is divided into four substantive sections, beginning with the German reunification and the antecedents of inequality between the two regions and progressing into an empirical comparative analysis of voter behavior and party preferences between eastern and western Germany. Chapter two provides an historical overview of the political and economic situation in Germany shortly before and since reunification.

These factors are highly relevant to analyzing right-wing voter behavior for the fact that a majority of the campaign propaganda refers to the negative consequences of reunification: massive unemployment and cultural change. As mentioned, increased levels of immigration, which are needed to compensate for the negative birth rate, are also viewed by many as a source of the poor economic conditions. Some perceive immigrants as competition and often blame them for the negative repercussions of reunification. Combined with unprecedented high unemployment levels, many extreme right-wing parties have used the effects of reunification to create an environment of hostility toward immigrants by portraying them not only as a burden on the social and educational resources, but also by depicting immigrants as uneducated, antisocial criminals who seek to undermine the dominant European culture (Fireside, 2002).

Although it was widely predicted that equality or social unity throughout Germany would not immediately follow reunification, many have become disillusioned and disgruntled with the outcomes, with some resorting to using their votes as means to illustrate their dissatisfaction. Chapter two also establishes the two prominent theories used in this study. Albert Hirschman's theory of voting (exit, voice, and loyalty) (1970), and the theory of relative deprivation (Gurr, 1970) are used to theoretically explain the possible motivations behind eastern German voter behavior.

Chapter three, a literature review of previous studies of right-wing extremism, highlights the previous research in right-wing extremist voter behavior, which I use to set up my analysis and establish the importance of the selected variables in the analysis of right-wing extremism support. Although some scholars discredit using resentment towards foreigners as a primary independent variable (Kitschelt, 1995), others continue to

use it as an important independent variable, mainly for the reason that it contributes to overall dissatisfaction with the political situation (Art, 2007). Additionally, it remains unclear whether socio-economic status alone can explain support for right-wing extremist groups. Some claim that social group identification plays a more influential role in right-wing extremism (Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim, 2004). However, it has also been found that perceived economic situation does play a role in right-wing extremist support. Portraying immigrants as competition, right-wing extremist parties are capable of tapping into resentment and dissatisfaction by appealing to the lower social strata, poorer educated, and those who hold authoritarian tendencies (Lubbers and Sheepers, 2001; Lipset, 1981; Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim, 2004).

In chapter four, I investigate the factors which influence support for right-wing extremist parties. Beginning with descriptive statistics I find that right-wing extremist groups find slightly more support in eastern Germany, and more importantly those who are dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to prefer right-wing extremist parties. Furthermore, eastern Germans are much more likely to be dissatisfied with democracy. The descriptive statistics indicate that perceived personal economic situation and perceived level of conflict between immigrants and Germans also influence latent support for right-wing extremist groups. In addition, the threat of increased immigration and social factors is found to significantly facilitate support for right-wing extremism, similar to previous studies (Knigge, 1998).

In chapter five, I examine two popular explanations of latent support for right-wing extremist parties: social and cultural changes (i.e. increased immigration), and political developments (i.e. dissatisfaction with democracy and, in the case of Germany,

reunification). The findings suggest that, despite 20 years of official reunification, eastern and western Germany remain politically divided, with eastern Germany more vulnerable in respect to right-wing extremist political influences. The social, cultural and political differences covered in chapter two, in addition to the continuing consequences of reunification such as increasing immigration and unemployment rates, continue to be points of contention. Higher levels of dissatisfaction with democratization in eastern Germany, in combination with the influx of immigrants and poor economic situation create fertile ground for extremist parties in eastern Germany. Additionally, if right-wing parties continue to garner support, they can potentially begin to influence policy decisions concerning immigration and further endanger democratization in eastern Germany.

On a wider spectrum, the overall increase of support for right-wing extremist groups in Europe can effectively block any attempt by candidate countries, such as Turkey, from entering the European Union. As seen in Switzerland with the minaret ban, if allowed right-wing extremist parties can ultimately affect public policy. And furthermore, with perfect timing, these parties can potentially change immigration policies. What is currently portrayed as a minority political party can have dramatic effects on national, and in some cases, international politics. For this reason, it is important to understand what issues and situations motivate voters to support such parties; and for such a comparison, Germany proves to be a fitting example.

CHAPTER II

GERMAN REUNIFICATION AND THE FOUNDATION OF INEQUALITIES

Using populist rhetoric to attract the underprivileged and lower social classes, right-wing extremist groups often focus on social and economic inequalities, as well as increased immigration, to gain electoral support. For this reason, it is essential to establish the source of inequalities that fuel resentment in eastern Germany, which the right-wing extremist groups exploit. This chapter is purposefully divided into three main sections, with section 1 providing a brief explanation of the reunification preceding, and section 2 defining the theoretical framework. The final section, an analysis of the effects of reunification, is used to establish the importance of the inequalities that divide Germany, and to emphasize the relevance of Hirschman's and Gurr's theories in this study. These concepts, in conjunction with the effects of reunification, will be used to analyzing the motivation behind supporting right-wing extremist parties.

Undoubtedly, both eastern and western Germans have been profoundly affected by reunification, both positively and negatively. Understanding the current situation in the Federal Republic and differences in voter behaviors requires an understanding of the reunification and its political and societal effects. Although some reunification processes, such as rebuilding the eastern German infrastructure, are still underway, most of the processes were short-sighted and led to disastrous consequences. These negative

consequences, such as increased unemployment and an ever shrinking social welfare system, have led some to support extremist political parties.

PRE-UNIFICATION RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FRG AND GDR

In 1969, eight years after the construction of the Berlin Wall, the GDR and FRG began to pursue a cooperative relationship with one another (Jones, 1994: 38). Throughout the next two decades, relations between East and West Germany continued to improve. The joint efforts of both East and West Germany helped to maintain a sense of German national identity, which acted as the catalyst for reunification. However, despite a unifying sense of national identity, during 40 years of separation the two countries developed distinctly different political and social norms through political socialization, which continues to influence the different voting patterns between the two regions.

Until mid-1989 the GDR seemed to resist the temptation to institute democratic reforms (Kropp, 2000: 11). For this reason much of the world was surprised by the reunification movements in April 1989. Four months after Honecker's statement that the Berlin Wall would still be standing in 2069, East Germans began to flee and by August 1989, thousands of East German citizens had escaped to the West, while hundreds more sought asylum and political protection in West German embassies in Warsaw, Budapest, and Prague (Quint, 1997: 15-17; Fulbrook, 2009: 271).

An estimated 57,000 East Germans "voted with their feet" and took advantage of the neighboring countries' reluctance to oblige the demands of the GDR to prohibit its citizens from traveling to the West (Thackeray, 2004: 190). Migration rates, shown in

Table 2.1, remained fairly steady between 1967 until 1984, with no more than 20,000 citizens leaving. After 1985, the number of citizens fleeing increased each year (except in 1987), and sky-rocketed in 1989 to 343,854 migrants. However, not all East Germans were eager to leave their homes. Many stayed behind, using their loyalty to the GDR to push for reforms and civil rights, including the right to freely travel (Roberts, 2000: 24).

Table 2.1 Migrants from the GDR, 1962-1989

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Migrants</u>
1960	--	1970	17,519	1980	12,763
1961	--	1971	17,408	1981	15,433
1962	21,365	1972	17,164	1982	13,208
1963	42,632	1973	15,189	1983	11,343
1964	41,876	1974	13,252	1984	40,974
1965	29,552	1975	16,285	1985	24,912
1966	24,131	1976	15,168	1986	26,178
1967	19,573	1977	12,078	1987	18,958
1968	16,036	1978	12,117	1988	37,657
1969	16,975	1979	12,515	1989	343,854

Source: Hirschman, Albert O. 1993. "Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic: An Essay in Conceptual History." *World Politics* 45(2): 173-202 (who used data from Thomas Ammer, "Stichwort: Flucht aus der DDR," *Deutschland-Archiv* 22 (November 1989), 1207; and Harmut Wendt, "Die deutsch-deutschen Wanderungen," *Deutschland-Archiv* 24 (April 1991), 390).

Lacking support from its neighbors and facing imminent economic sanctions from the FRG and other western states, the GDR began its trek towards reform, beginning with instituting the right to travel to the West, announced on November 9, 1989 (Roberts, 2000: 25; Kropp, 2000: 15; Fulbrook, 2009: 275). This announcement spurred the opening of the Berlin Wall – a seminal moment in German politics often used as the symbol of reunification. However, both the GDR and the FRG were unprepared for full reunification. Consequently, after the opening of the border, an estimated 1 million East Germans moved to the FRG, which increased the economic devastation in the GDR,

strained the FRG's social welfare system, and further strengthened the citizens' movement toward reunification (Fulbrook, 2009: 280). Although GDR citizens held high expectations for the reunification, the situation in the former GDR remains disturbed by the rapid reunification process, which feeds dissatisfaction among eastern Germans. This dissatisfaction and its sources have intensified the support for extreme right-wing political parties, such as the *Republikaner* (REP), *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD), and the *Deutsche Volksunion* (DVU), that have exploited the developing resentment against immigrants and foreigners (including East Germans) in order to gain electoral support (Fulbrook, 2009: 280).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

With the precursors of reunification now established, the next section outlines the two theories behind motivation for right-wing extremist support, Gurr's theory of relative deprivation and Hirschman's theory of exit, voice and loyalty. After the theoretical framework, the political and social differences between eastern and western Germany since reunification are discussed, using these theories to establish the relevance of investigating for support right-wing extremist parties in eastern Germany. The political and social differences, and resulting inequalities, provide examples for both theories and how extreme right-wing parties used the inequalities to gain electoral support. Using concepts of voting motivation from Hirschman and Gurr, the following section seeks to explain the theories behind right-wing extremist voter motivation.

EXIT, VOICE, AND LOYALTY: METHODS OF EXPRESSING DISCONTENT WITHIN A POLITICAL SYSTEM

In 1970, Albert Hirschman described three options, referred to as exit, voice, and loyalty, for citizens to communicate to leaders their perceptions of failings within the system (Hirschman, 1970). The “exit” concept derives from voter frustration that has reached a level that leaves the voter so disgruntled with the existing system they chose not to participate (or in the case of the GDR, leave the country). Since democratization, eastern Germans now have the option to participate in government or voice their dissatisfaction through voting. Hirschman’s second option, voice, is defined as “ any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition [...] or through various types of protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion” (Hirschman, 1970: 30). Voice was clearly demonstrated prior to reunification, with massive protests beginning in 1989, directed at affecting change within the GDR system. Furthermore, it remains an important factor in analyzing the current political situation. Similar to Gurr’s theory of relative deprivation, once a voter reaches a certain point of dissatisfaction, the rational option is to protest the system through various means.

The final concept, loyalty, addresses a citizen’s allegiance to a party or political system. Although thousands of people either escaped the GDR or participated in the protests, many channeled their concerns by remaining loyal to the GDR. According to Hirschman, “loyalty, far from being irrational, can serve the socially useful propose of preventing deterioration from becoming cumulative” (1970: 79). Maintaining loyalty to the party or political system allows the citizen to work within the established framework of the system to generate change.

The interplay of these three options can be found throughout reunification, and their combination can be attributed to the successful push for reunification. More importantly, protest voting can be used to explain support for opposition parties, such as right-wing extremist groups. However, combining the theory of exit, voice, and loyalty, which explains behavior of voters, with the theory of relative deprivation can provide more theoretical insight, and highlight why the expectations preceding unification, are highly relevant to understanding the motivations of right-wing extremist support and eastern German voting behavior.

RELATIVE DEPRIVATION

Relative deprivation, introduced to political science by Ted Gurr, is derived from Runciman's study on social inequalities and Davies's "J-Curve" hypothesis which states that "political rebellion is most likely to occur when expected and actual need satisfaction rise for a period of time followed by a sudden decline in actual need satisfaction, resulting in the experience of a substantial discrepancy between expected and actual satisfaction of needs" (Muller and Jukam, 1983: 161).

According to Gurr, the relative deprivation of needs and satisfaction "identifies common but not sufficient conditions for unrest" (Handelman, 2003: 208-209). The actual deprivation is not as important as the perceived discrepancy between individuals' expectations and what they attain; however, the nearer one is to achieving their goals, the greater their frustration will be if they fail to reach those goals (Handelman, 2003: 209; Gurr, 1970). In the case of eastern Germany, citizens had protested and moved for reforms, and once reunification plans were within reach, their expectations increased and

were buttressed by Chancellor Kohl's enthusiasm and encouragement. Their expectations were founded on promises by political leaders, such as Kohl's repeated assurance that he would bring the former GDR citizens to the same socio-economic level as their western counterparts by 1994, without increasing taxes (O'Brien, 1997: 452).

Both theories outlined here are important to understanding the underlying inequalities between eastern and western Germany and how they play into voter behavior. Both theories of exit, voice, and loyalty and relative deprivation are relevant to discussing the effects of reunification and will be used throughout the remainder of this chapter to show how the effects of reunification can influence support for right-wing extremist parties.

REUNIFICATION POLICIES

Many of the negative consequences of reunification are related to the economic restructuring of the GDR and its impacts on the industries, employment opportunities, as well as the overall economic structure. However, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl optimistically assured the people that, within five years, East Germans would enjoy a similar standard of living compared to their western counterparts, explaining that eastern Germany would become a "flourishing landscape" and proclaiming that "no one [in East Germany] will be worse off than before – and many will be better off [after reunification]" (Abshire, 2004: 192; Quint, 1997: 57; Hefeker and Wunner, 2003: 103). Unfortunately, many of the "challenges were unforeseen or ignored by politicians, the media, and many political scientists" (Yoder, 2000: 115).

These promises remain unfulfilled, thereby fueling sentiments of disappointment and resentment. This relative deprivation, stemming from unfilled promises and expectations, encourages voters to protest against the current system, and express their disappointment with the reunification processes by supporting right-wing extremist parties.

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

One approach to creating the “flourishing landscape” was to accelerate the East German economy, thereby minimizing the period of expected economic inequality between the two regions. In contrast to its eastern neighbors, the GDR had “the extraordinary advantage of being able to draw on economic resources from the formerly West German and now all-German public budgets and social security funds” (Wiesenthal, 2003: 40). Despite shock therapy’s relative success within other eastern bloc countries, the added stress of reunification led to different effects in the former GDR. Whereas the other eastern bloc countries could opt to retain their currency, German reunification demanded a controversial monetary unification process in which the West German Mark replaced the East German Mark virtually overnight (Abshire, 2004: 194; Quint, 1997: 59, Wiesenthal, 2003: 40).

The reevaluation resulted in a sudden appreciation of the GDR Mark by approximately 400 percent, which affected the competitiveness of East German goods and services. By some accounts, it tripled the cost of East German goods on the world market, increased the cost of labor within East German, and allowed a massive influx of western manufacturers’ goods to flood the East German markets, thereby severely

damaging the already struggling East German industries that could not compete with the western goods (Quint, 1997: 59, Abshire, 2004: 192; Fulbrook, 2009: 285-286). Furthermore, increased imports and wage equalization, facilitated by huge income transfers from the FRG, resulted in a collapse of the manufacturing industry in the former GDR, as well as a sudden rise in unemployment (Wiesenthal, 2003: 37; Abshire, 2004: 193).² In addition, the currency union, which established the rate of currency exchange between the GDR and FRG, prohibited devaluing the currency as a method to increase eastern competition; so the eastern German firms could not afford rapidly increasing wages, which often exceeded productivity, resulting in higher unemployment rates (Wiesenthal, 2003: 41; Pohl, 1991: 51).

The economic consequences of reunification far exceeded expectations. Between 1989 and 1991 the gross domestic product (GDP) of eastern Germany declined by 40 percent, industrial production declined by 70 percent, and unemployment increased by 40 percent (O'Brien, 1997: 457). In 1994, eastern Germany's GDP equaled 7.9 percent of the total German GDP, while the region contributed to only two percent of the country's total exports (O'Brien, 1997: 457). These figures are directly related to the economic reunification policies. Although eastern Germany would have by no estimates been economically equal to western Germany after the democratic transition, the citizens expected that reunification would provide a more effective transition. The consequences not only affected employment rates but also public opinion, which influences how people

² Abshire estimates that 80 percent of the manufacturing jobs were lost as a result of wage equalization (2004: 193).

vote. The differences in expectations and experience since reunification contribute also to the political distinctiveness between eastern and western Germany.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Another factor that influences both eastern German and right-wing extremist voter behavior is unemployment. While unemployment during the GDR was a concept rarely experienced, it now plagues the new five German states. After reunification, unemployment grew twice as fast in eastern Germany compared to western Germany (Wiesenthal, 2003: 42). By the end of 1992 four million (of the previous nine million) jobs were lost through privatization efforts and despite the massive amount of funding and support from western Germany³, the region is still economically inferior when compared to its western counterpart (Quint, 1997: 148-149; Pohl, 1991: 36-41).

Although some have stated that the “severity of the depression in East Germany [was] without parallel in modern economic history” and “not even the Great Depression of 1928-1933 was as bad,” there has been marked progress in the development of eastern Germany (Quint, 1997: 56). While in 1994 the actual rate of production in eastern Germany was estimated at 30 percent (Abshire, 2004: 192), Grosser (2000: 33-34) reported an increase of 30 percent in productivity, an increase in nominal net incomes from 55 percent in 1995 to 86 percent in 2000, and an increase in enterprise capital stock from 25 percent in 1991 to 75 percent in 2000 – all positive indicators for the still developing economy. However, despite these improvements, unemployment continues to

³ Net transfers of funding in 2002 were estimated between 100-150 billion German Marks, roughly four to six percent of western Germany’s GDP (Bäcker and Klammer, 2002).

plague the region, hovering between 15 and 20 percent in some eastern regions, and has become a political issue that the right-wing extremist groups exploit.

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM: VOTER BEHAVIOR AND SOCIO-POLITICAL FACTORS

Until now, I have explained the economic effects of reunification, briefly touching on the psychological effects that reunification has had on the German people, who once chanted that they were “ein Volk” and now refer to each other as “Wessies” and “Ossies.” Additionally, there has been little discussion of political culture, socialization, or influencing factors of voter behavior.

The feelings of inequality and resentment that right-wing extremist parties exploit stem directly from the quick transition to democracy and reunification. Whereas the FRG had 40 years experience with democracy, the GDR had none – with the exception of the failed Weimar Republic. Furthermore, while other eastern bloc countries were able to stipulate the conditions of their democratic transition, the GDR and its citizens had little to no say in their transition. The method of democratic transition, which was dictated by the FRG, plays an important role in promoting feelings of helplessness, resentment, and relative deprivation throughout eastern Germany.

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

Samuel Huntington described three types of democratic transitions: transformation, which is defined by elites bringing about democracy. Transplacement, which is described as democratization that has “resulted largely from joint action by government or opposition groups,” and replacement, which occurs when opposition

groups take the charge of “bringing about democracy, and the authoritarian regime collapsed or was overthrown” (Huntington, 1991: 114). While Kim and Robertson (2002: 9) assert that replacement democracy best describes the GDR’s democratic transition, “the problem with assuming the German reunification was a replacement transition is that it hides the collective goals of opposition groups” who used protests to promote broad-based reforms.

The reforms, however, did not influence the legal framework of the reunification process. Although the GDR “preferred a modernized democratic socialist East Germany in an economic and political confederation with West Germany,” the chosen method of reunification was found in Article 23 of the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law, German Constitution) (Wiesenthal, 2003: 39). This stated that the *Grundgesetz* was applicable in the 11 western German states, and “in other parts of Germany, it is to be set into force after their entry” into a unified Germany (author’s translation). This meant that all of the necessary adjustments and changes required for merger were to be made by the GDR rather than the FRG (Roberts, 2000: 31) and left little opportunity for eastern Germans to dictate the terms of reunification or the structure of their future democratic institutions.

The assumption was that with the take-over approach and institutional replication, political and cultural democratic behavior would develop (Yoder, 2000: 118). However, these assumptions failed to acknowledge the time required for “demographic integrations, which involves people and their relationship to the norms and institutions of democracy” (Yoder, 2000: 118). While it is understood that institutions can help to develop and promote democratic behaviors, the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy (in the minds of the citizens) is not instantaneous. Consequently, “attempts to

do so are likely to meet with resistance and may have unintended consequences” such as dissatisfaction with the progress of the democratic transition (or lack thereof), resentment, protest, or nostalgia for the previous political system (Yoder, 2000: 118).

“Democracy cannot ... be put on like a coat, rather it must take root in the minds and hearts ... Democracy can only prevail ... if it begins in the souls of men.” (Hans-Joachim Maaz, cited in O’Brien, 1997: 464.)

Recovering from the 40 year absence of democracy in the GDR and accepting democratic norms requires time. Patterns of democratization are transformed slowly through generations, learned through political socialization, and most importantly are promoted by positive experiences with “institutions, procedures, and representative of the new system” (Fulbrook, 2009: 259; Yoder, 2000, 133). However, democratic political socialization is also strengthened by economic progress. So long as the economic conditions in eastern Germany remain stagnant, eastern Germans will remain dissatisfied with the democratic transition and thereby vulnerable to the appeals of right-wing extremist parties. Additionally, the psychological division of Germany further hinders the internalization of democratic tendencies, which can be seen in the measurement of satisfaction with democracy across the two regions in Table 2.2 below. Because of the FRG’s dominance during reunification, and the relative success of western Germany, many eastern Germans blame the current economic and political problems on western German dominance during reunification and therefore resort to supporting extremist parties.

Using Politbarometer data from 2005, we see a distinct difference in levels of satisfaction with democracy between eastern and western Germany. Whereas democratic satisfaction is 86 percent in western Germany, only 74.4 percent of eastern Germans are

satisfied, leaving over a quarter of the eastern German population dissatisfied with democracy. Given the ideological differences among adults who experience political socialization in the GDR and FRG, it is of no surprise that the two regions have different expectations of democracy (Fuchs, 1999). Furthermore, it is understandable that the unfulfilled expectations of the democratic transition have fueled politics based on resentment in some regions of eastern Germany, which often motivates citizens to support extremist parties.

Table 2.2 Region and Satisfaction with Democracy

	<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Total</u>
Percent Satisfied	86.0	74.4	80.4
Percent Dissatisfied	14.0	25.6	19.6
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Count	4,456	4,247	8,703
Chi-Square Tests, Value: 184.293, df: 1, Asymp. Sig (2-sided): 0.000			
Number of Valid Cases: 8,703			

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

In order to understand the level of democratic dissatisfaction, we must remember that Chancellor Kohl promised the eastern German people that within a short period of time, they would enjoy the same standard of living as their western counterparts. Whereas western German democracy had 40 years experience prior to reunification and survived several economic shows, student radicalism and a massive influx of immigrants (Klingemann and Hofferbert, 1994), eastern Germany democracy is still young and its citizens are still undergoing the process of internalizing democratic sentiments. As Putnam (1993: 60), in his analysis of democracy in Italy, explained: “popular legitimacy of new institutions, even successful ones, grows only gradually.”

The reasons for democratic dissatisfaction are many. However, as Fuchs (1999) points out, a great deal of dissatisfaction rises from expectations of the system and the understanding of what democracy should entail. A fundamental assumption, that eastern Germans expected a different model of democracy compared to what they received is one reason why eastern Germans have a more skeptical outlook towards the democratic governing institutions in unified Germany (Fuchs, 1999: 124). Lepsius (1995: 24) described the GDR democracy as a “socialist welfare state with an authority-related, hierarchical decision-making structure,” in which the state pursued collective interests grounded in egalitarian principles of equality.

With this, we can assume that through political socialization many citizens in the former GDR favor a socialist model of democracy, which is substantially different from the liberal model of democracy that was imposed after reunification (Fuchs, 1999: 135-136). However, the guarantee of social rights (which accompany socialist democracy), such as job security and social welfare programs, largely depends on economic development. With the political agenda since reunification focusing on cutting back social welfare programs, eastern Germans have been “hardly able to judge the performance of democracy positively” (Fuchs, 1999: 140). As time has passed, eastern Germans have had to adjust their expectations as it becomes apparent that democracy in a united Germany will not adjust to their socialist-democratic views. This also leads to increased feelings of relative deprivation, in that their expectations have not been met.

Ingelhart and Welzel (2005: 120) state that “if support for democracy is primarily based on unrealistically high policy expectations rather than an intrinsically high evaluation of free choice, it may bring rising frustration,” which has been the case in

many new democracies, including eastern Germany (Schroeder, 2007: 105). Following reunification, rather than create “flourishing landscapes,” the opposite occurred, with some regions of eastern Germany still experiencing unemployment rates above 20 percent. Opp (2000:29), in his study of grievances and political protest in Leipzig, found that the resource deficit (in this case employment) had a strong indirect positive effect on discontent, which in turn leads to a strong increase of general discontent.

More important to consider is the length of time that democracy has been implemented in eastern Germany. Although many theorists have cautioned that extremist political parties pose serious threats to democracy, more important to note is that they also attribute the appearance of extremist parties to a weak party system (Satori, 1976; Duverger, 1954). Democracy in eastern Germany is relatively young, and the party system, although imported from western Germany, still requires more time and citizen support. Even though it remains unclear whether the presence of extremist parties, when strong, is a signal of citizen discontent (Powell, 1986), the previous analysis indicates that there is a connection between dissatisfaction with democracy and region. And, based on the historical analysis, we see that after reunification satisfaction with democracy has been consistently lower in eastern Germany.

Additionally, after reunification an eastern German dependency on western Germany developed, a result of the rebuilding process in which many westerners, who were “practiced in taking decisions, in making things work and for assessing the risks of the market, and who had the skills and funds to take charge,” began to dictate the reunification proceedings (Stern, 1993: 111). Rather than take control of the situation and reassert their role in the reunification process, Stern claims that many East Germans

began to express their dissatisfaction in “terms of self-pity and resentment” (1993: 111), which some have claimed has added to the popularity of extremist groups.

Although in a comparative context, the situation in eastern Germany has dramatically improved since 1989 and reunification has aided East Germany in its improvement, in comparison to Poland and the Czech Republic, it remains far behind its western counterpart. Despite the monetary transfers from West Germany, East Germany still has a lower GDP than its neighbor Poland (Hefeker and Wunner, 2003; Wiesenthal, 2003: 43), which also heightens relative deprivation in another fashion. As eastern Germans see neighboring countries successfully transition to democracy, they begin to resent their current situation and envy their neighbors’ successes, and become further dissatisfied with democracy and the outcomes of reunification. Furthermore, as dissatisfaction increases, so does right-wing extremist support. As dissatisfaction in eastern Germany is higher, there is more support for the claim that eastern Germans are more likely to support right-wing parties.

THE AFTERMATH OF REUNIFICATION

The rallying cries of “wir sind ein Volk” now remain a memory of an optimistic past; on a psychological level, the German people are now more divided than before reunification. Living standards and wages are lower in eastern Germany; unemployment is, in some areas, three times higher than in western Germany. Ever increasing economic inequalities feed disappointment and lead to relative deprivation and self-pity in eastern Germany, while decreasing social welfare programs and the continuing cost of reunification lead to anger and resentment in western Germany (Stern, 1993: 121).

Dissatisfaction with the outcomes of reunification is not isolated to eastern Germany. The federalist arrangement provides a “central element that resource flows from the national government to states and wealthier to poorer states to equalize revenues” (Abshire, 2004: 194). The transfers from 1991 equaled 75 billion DM and have steadily increased to an annual average between 135 to 139 billion DM (Abshire, 2004: 195).⁴ The sheer enormity of the transfers, in addition to the cuts in social services which were necessary to maintain the transfers, have led many to question (and fear) the long-term effects of reunification and invoke the notion of the former GDR becoming a German *mezzogornio*, “which refers to the relatively impoverished region in southern Italy that suffers from chronic joblessness and is sustained, seemingly permanently, through payments from much more prosperous northern Italy” (Abshire, 2004: 195). Although the decrease in social welfare programs is a recurring theme for right-wing extremist parties, rarely do they point to the monetary transfers as the source of the cuts. Rather, they prefer to use an increased immigrant population as the scapegoat, carefully avoiding blaming eastern Germans.

GUEST WORKERS IN THE FRG AND GDR: “Eliminate Unemployment! Stop Immigration!” (Betz, 1994: 416)

Another unforeseen consequence of reunification was the increased levels of xenophobia and anti-immigrant violence in eastern Germany. It is not surprising, given historical context, that scholars have found more xenophobic tendencies within eastern Germany (Schroeder, 2007). However, both the FRG and the GDR implemented guest

⁴ Other estimates (Bäcker and Klammer, 2002) claim that the net transfers of funding neared 100-150 billion DM, roughly four to six percent of western Germany’s GDP.

worker policies, consequently introducing immigrants to the German society, although the two countries differed dramatically in their programs. In 1955, the FRG began to recruit guest workers from Italy to help stoke the post-war economy and alleviate the labor shortages and later expanded its contracts to Greece (1960), Spain (1960), Turkey (1961), Portugal (1964), and Yugoslavia (1968) (Kahanec and Tosun, 2009; Triadafilopoulos and Schönwälder, 2006: 8). The FRG did not expect the immigrants to alter German society, and used a short-term labor market policy to respond to economic demands, thereby failing to consider the long-term social and demographic consequences of inviting a total of over two million guest workers⁵ into the country (Kuechler, 1994: 78-79; Kahanec and Tosun, 2009; Fireside, 2002: 474; Yurdokul and Bodemann, 2006:50; Kil and Silver, 2006: 97; Triadafilopoulos and Schönwälder, 2006: 2, 10).

Much like the FRG, the GDR used guest workers to stimulate its economic success, although it was much more restricted and lucrative. Unlike the guest workers in the FRG, there was never any intention of integrating the guest workers in the GDR into the host society; the guest workers were often subjected to curfews, travel restrictions, and confined to housing segregated from the German population (Oppenheimer, 2004: 167; Kil and Silver, 2006; Fireside, 2004). Given the relatively low number of immigrants in the GDR, when the immigrants did venture into the German society “they were subjected to racist behavior of a petty, repressed population” (Oppenheimer, 2004: 168). Despite the government’s assertion that no xenophobia existed, Oppenheimer

⁵ Although over 300,000 guest workers returned to their home countries during the recession of the late 1960s, Triadafilopoulos and Schönwälder (2006) cite the number of foreign workers in the FRG to be near two million in the autumn of 1970 (10). Kuechler (1994: 48-49) estimates this number to be closer to 2.6 million.

(2004: 168-169) cites that during the late 1970s reports of xenophobic aggression became more frequent. Following reunification, the combination of suddenly increased unemployment and the dramatic increase of immigrants proved a dangerous mixture in eastern Germany, when neo-Nazi inspired violence in the eastern German cities of Hoyerswerda and Rostock (in 1991) captured the world's attention. In addressing the sudden increase in xenophobic violence, a government official postulated that "the distribution of refugees to the East went too fast [...] The population was unprepared for the refugees" (Braunthal, 2009: 100).

Despite the fears that immigrants take jobs away from German citizens, foreign workers are needed to maintain the current economic trends. Fireside (2002:475) states that, due to the negative birth rates, by 2050 the general population (including those not able to work) will decrease from approximately 82 million to 62 million, and the workforce will shrink from a current 41 million to 26 million, thereby requiring an annual influx of 250,000 immigrants to maintain the economy. Schmid-Drüner (2006) agrees with Fireside, however, estimating that Germany will require a positive migration balance of 300,000 immigrants per year. However, this influx will not cure the effects of a decreasing population and will result in a "decline in economic growth by one percent each year due to a decreasing workforce" (Schmid-Drüner, 2006: 191-192).

Nonetheless, right-wing extremist groups continue to attribute the high levels of immigrants to the economic downfall of eastern Germany. By exploiting fears of financial and economic instability extreme right-wing groups are able to use foreigners as scapegoats, portraying foreigners as a threat to citizens' incomes and financial well-being.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The goal of this chapter was to build theories on voter preference that are applicable to eastern Germany and right-wing extremist groups. Since 1990, East Germans have had to adjust to a hasty transition to democracy. The social divisions and inequalities discussed in this chapter render Germany an ideal environment in which to examine what influences voter behavior and what effects unemployment, increased immigration, age, and satisfaction with democracy have on support for right-wing extremist parties. With the brief historical overview of the German reunification now presented, chapter three examines the previous literature and studies on right-wing extremism, focusing on three main factors: unemployment, immigration, and satisfaction with democracy. As all three of these factors are, in eastern Germany, a direct result of reunification, it is important to establish how these three affect the public psyche and relates to relative deprivation and exit, voice, and loyalty. Following the literature review of previous right-wing extremist voter behavior studies, the analysis shows that many of these consequences from reunification do in fact affect support for right-wing extremist parties in eastern Germany more so than in western Germany.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW: RIGHT-WING EXTREMIST SUPPORT

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

In the past two decades, the questions of why extreme right-wing parties have gained popularity in some European countries have attracted increasing amounts of attention from scholars. For historical reasons, right-wing extremist groups, particularly in Germany, have continuously received scrutiny since the end of World War II. Many propose that electoral support for extremist right-wing parties is indicative of “the public’s lacking commitment to democratic values and principles,” which is also based on dissatisfaction with the democratic system (Knigge, 1998: 249, c.f. Almond and Verba, 1965; Lipset and Raab, 1978; Dahl, 1989).

This has been the case in eastern Germany since reunification, with an ever-growing number of right-wing extremist politicians exploiting discontent in order to gain positions in local and regional governments. The goal of chapter three is to examine the conditions under which right-wing extremist gain support in Germany and the factors which differentiate voter behavior in the two regions in relation to right-wing extremist parties.

The following literature review reflects the three main components of right-wing extremist support and is purposefully divided into three substantive sections: unemployment, immigration, and political dissatisfaction, to represent the three factors

most scholars attribute to support for right-wing extremist groups. Within the literature, where appropriate, a brief discussion of how these factors affect eastern and western Germany will be included. Following the literature review, after the methodological section, several hypotheses will be tested using data from the 2005 Politbarometer, and the findings will be analyzed using theoretical and historical explanations found in previous studies.

OVERVIEW OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM

Although the shock of reunification is now 20 years in the past, eastern Germans still face its repercussions daily. These problems, namely massive unemployment and numerous social program cutbacks, often influence the dissatisfaction with democracy that is found in the region and influences choices by voters. Many scholars indicate that unemployment, an increase in immigration, and dissatisfaction with democracy often facilitate support for right-wing extremist parties. But, most scholarship on extreme right-wing support concentrates on the electoral appeal of these parties in cross-national comparative contexts, frequently localized in Europe. These studies often lead to conflicting conclusions, with unemployment remaining a controversial factor as a potential indicator of right-wing extremist support. Lubbers and his colleagues (2002), while maintaining that “economic malaise and competition between its majority group and immigrants can be considered to be relevant in explaining differences between right-wing extremism in any particular country,” found that level of unemployment is not significant in predicting right-wing extremist motivation and “is even negatively related to the differences in the level of extreme right-wing voting” (346; 364).

Knigge (1998) concurs, finding that a declining national economy, often indicated by unemployment negatively affects the electoral appeal of right-wing extremist parties. In contrast, Lubbers and his colleagues found that unemployment levels do not influence right-wing extremism, which could help to explain why some richer regions within countries, such as northern Italy, have a higher level of support for right-wing parties (2002: 371). However, not all scholars have dismissed the influence of unemployment as a condition for right-wing extremist. Golder (2003) proposes that “the effects of unemployment are conditional: only when immigrants exceed a particular share of national population does unemployment spur support for the (populist) extreme right” (Kessler and Freeman, 2005:262). Unfortunately, Golder does not establish the breaking point. Despite these findings, Art maintains that right-wing extremist parties are primarily an eastern phenomenon, feeding off of discontentment, increased unemployment rates and dissatisfaction with democratic institutions (2007: 346).

These studies highlight the contexts and propose many hypotheses concerning economic conditions, immigration levels, democratic satisfaction, and political institutional structures that influence right-wing voter behavior, by relying on individual characteristics found in electoral studies. These studies also show levels of support for right-wing parties vary from region to region. As Lubbers and Sheepers (2002) and Kessler and Freeman (2005) suggest, it is important to examine both the national and individual characteristics which facilitate support for right-wing extremist groups.

While previous studies utilized cross-time and cross-national analyses, I employ a micro-perspective analysis of right-wing voting in Germany and avoid such problems as survey comparability and institutional variation found in previous studies. I concentrate

on the 2005 Bundestag (federal parliament) elections to provide a snapshot of voter behavior in Germany. Although parsimonious by some standards, this approach will provide a detailed explanation of the factors that influence eastern German voter behavior in relation to right-wing extremist parties. While some argue that providing a snapshot of electoral support neglects the impact of social and economical changes, and therefore does not reflect fluctuations in support for right-wing extremist groups, it does provide valuable insight to the factors that promote such support (Jackman and Volpert, 1996; Arzheimer, 2009).

LITERATURE REVIEW

UNEMPLOYMENT: “Gebt den Leuten Arbeit, dann ist alles in Ordnung (Give the people jobs, then everything is fine).” (Gensing, 2009: 65)

While many studies have found no, and in some cases negative, correlations between right-wing extremist support and unemployment, Falk and Zweimüller (2005) show a positive relationship between unemployment and right-wing crime. Although right-wing crime differs from support for right-wing extremist groups, their findings still emphasize the importance of including unemployment in the analysis of right-wing extremist support. They propose relative deprivation as a possible explanation for this, stating that the threat of unemployment leads to feelings of a loss in status and, therefore, a feeling of deprivation. Deprivation then promotes preferences for authoritarianism, the use of foreigners as scapegoats, and violent predispositions (Falk and Zweimüller, 2005: 2, c.f. Lipset, 1964; Falter, 1994). Using unpublished data from the Bundeskriminalamt (Federal Criminal Police Office), Falk and Zweimüller discovered a significant positive relation between state level of unemployment and the prevalence of right-wing crimes.

Furthermore, they found little difference between the significance of impact between eastern and western Germany – meaning that a relation between right-wing crime and unemployment is not merely an eastern phenomenon when considering the level of unemployment. According to Falk and Zweimüller (2005:9), “specific and historical circumstances in the new states are responsible for the higher incidence of crime in East Germany,” leading to the conclusion that once a critical level of unemployment has been reached, “a further increase in unemployment strongly increases right-wing criminal activity.”

This critical level of unemployment mirrors the critical level of discontent illustrated in relative deprivation and further emphasizes the feelings of being left behind during the process of modernization and dissatisfaction with democratization that have manifested in eastern Germany since the reunification (Art, 2007). Decker and Miliopoulos (2009) counter that the feeling of losers of modernization is not unique to eastern Germany and right-wing extremist attitudes are just as prevalent in western Germany. Additionally, Jackman and Volpert (1996) found in their analysis of 16 West European countries between 1970 and 1990 that “higher rates of unemployment increase the electoral support of extreme right parties” (Golder, 2003: 526). In the case of Germany, Jackman and Volpert found that “low levels of income [are] not significantly higher than among those who [perceive themselves as] economically well off” (1996: 505), leading us to believe that unemployment alone does not impact support for right-wing extremist groups.

Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim found that persons of low socio-economic status are “not likely to support right-wing extremism ideologies unless they also have strong

mechanisms of social identification” (2004:2). And, while many of the earlier works on right-wing extremism do not include unemployment as a significant factor of support, per se (Mudde, 1995; Mudde, 2000), Lubbers and his colleagues (2002) discovered that competition over resources (such as employment) led to resentment, in which citizens were less likely to blame people of their own ethnic group, instead blaming out-groups for economic troubles (see also Tajfel and Turner, 1979). According to Jackman and Volpert (1996):

“higher rates of unemployment epitomize uneven economic performance that fosters support for the extreme right by providing the pretext for mounting the xenophobic political appeals that characterize these political movements. Increasing unemployment is significant because it provides a fertile environment for such appeals” (517).

Although controversy remains over the effect of unemployment on support for right-wing extremism, many scholars agree that it plays an influential role in increasing anti-immigrant, xenophobic, and nationalistic tendencies, which in turn enhances the likelihood of support for right-wing extremist groups (Lubbers et al., 2002; Fireside, 2002; Mudde, 1995; Mudde, 2000, Kitschelt, 1997; Hainsworth, 2000; Jackman and Volpert, 1996; Knigge, 1996; Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim, 2004). To see if xenophobia facilitates right-wing extremist support, the analyses in chapters four and five test the hypothesis that: *the stronger the perceived conflict with immigrants, the greater the likelihood that the voter will prefer a right-wing extremist party*. Much of the scholarship relating to xenophobic tendencies includes conversation over economic scarcities, such as unemployment, in addition to scapegoating foreigners for economic and social maladies. For this purpose, I have included a measurement of self-perceived economic situation to account for the previous findings.

IMMIGRATION

Unlike the controversy surrounding consideration of including unemployment and socio-economic indicators as influential factors in right-wing extremist support, many scholars agree on including immigration rates and perceived threats from immigrants as factors in understanding right-wing extremist support. Racism and xenophobia play an integral role in right-wing propaganda; right-wing extremist parties often use the theme of *überfremdung* to attract those who feel replaced, either in the society or workplace, by immigrants.⁶ In his 2006 study of right-wing extremism in Germany, Schroeder (2007) found that among his respondents (N=2,270), 37 percent of Germans (43.8 percent in eastern and 35.2 percent in western Germany) believed that “foreigners exploit the social system,”⁷ 34.9 percent (38.4 percent in eastern and 34.0 percent in western Germany) agreed that “foreigners in short-supply work places should be shipped back home,”⁸ and 39.2 percent (40.5 in eastern and 38.8 in western Germany) believed that “Germany is being infiltrated by foreigners”⁹ (Schroeder, 2007: 92). This shows the applicability of ethnic conflict theory to the situation in eastern Germany.

Recalling the immigration policies discussed in chapter two, it is not surprising that, given the previous absence of foreigners, eastern Germans feel more competition toward immigrants. Schroeder (2007) illustrates a clear difference between eastern and western Germany in regards to attitudes towards foreigners, but he neglects to define the

⁶ *Überfremdung* is the German word for overt infiltration (of the society) from foreigners (author’s translation). For an example of such propaganda, please see the *Republikaner* homepage, illustrated in Appendix A.

⁷ Original: “Ausländer unserer nutzen Sozialstaat aus.”

⁸ Original: “Ausländer bei knappen Arbeitsplätzen wieder nach Hause schicken.”

⁹ Original: “Deutschland durch Ausländer überfremdet.”

relationship between xenophobic attitudes and actual or latent support for extreme right-wing parties. Therefore, using a combination of ethnic conflict theory and relative deprivation, this study examines the hypothesis that those who are more xenophobic, and perceive immigrants as a threat to resources, are more likely to support right-wing extremist groups. Important to note is that a voter may hold xenophobic attitudes, but in holding other issues as more important may decide not to vote based on their anti-immigrant feelings.

As evidenced in the anti-immigrant riots in eastern Germany during the 1990s, xenophobic attitudes can exist in the absence of a noticeably large immigrant population. The question, however, is how does this translate into latent support for right-wing extremist parties? Does a fear of *überfremdung* lead voters to support extreme right parties? Van der Brug et al. (2000) claim that “negative attitudes towards immigrants have a stronger effect on preferences for anti-immigrant parties” when compared to other parties, and social cleavages are of less importance when determining preferences for anti-immigrant parties (77). Additionally, Kitschelt (1997:26) states that “those regions and countries that had to swallow the heaviest load of immigrants give rise to the strongest right-wing extremist parties” (cited in Jesuit et al., 2009: 280). With that logic, it would follow that right-wing extremist parties should find more support in western Germany, given that the region has a higher proportion of foreigners to citizens compared to eastern Germany. Givens (2000) finds support for this claim in both Austria and France, but not in Germany (cited in Golder, 2003). Kitschelt (1997) further explains that while one can expect strong support of right-wing parties in areas with high levels of

immigrants, “right-extremist parties appear both in countries with a small foreign-born population as well as in those with a large immigrant population” (61).

In this sense, ethnocentrism and xenophobic rhetoric may work as the “ideological glue” in both attracting diverse sectors of the population (highly-educated versus lower-educated, white-collar workers versus blue-collar workers), as well as addressing other socio-economic and sociological factors. Scheepers and his colleagues. (2002) support including ethnic exclusionism, which reinforces the economic factors, such as unemployment. The foundations for this theoretical framework lie in competition over scarcities that lead to hostile inter-group attitudes, regardless of whether there is actual or perceived competition (Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim, 2004: 6).

Perceptions of economic and social threat are theoretically based in the ethnic conflict theories, split labor market theory (Bonacich, 1972) and social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Split labor market theory assumes that labor market competition is the basis for ethnic conflicts, which in this case leads to scapegoating and a rise for support of right-wing extremist groups. According to the split labor market theory, when financial security diminishes for any reason, demand to expel cheaper labor (foreigners and immigrants) from the labor force (Bonacich, 1972). Social identity theory, developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), states that groups are not based on economic characteristics; rather they are founded upon shared social identification. Through this social identification, the group creates a fundamental need to perceive itself as superior to other groups.

Despite the fact that there is little evidence to support the claim that increased immigration leads to higher rates of unemployment and economic downturns, ethnic

boundaries are reinforced as competition increases, which triggers intensified social group identification. In order to maintain cohesive and positive social group identification, out-groups are negatively portrayed and blamed as the source of the scarcity (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Lubbers and Scheepers, 2001; Golder, 2003). Most of these approaches to understanding how perceived threat and immigration affect right-wing extremist support can be linked to relative deprivation, where “members of one social group feel that *in comparison with another social group*, they are not getting what they feel they are entitled to, even if they know that they get more than the other group,” a situation that leads to increased dissatisfaction (Arzheimer, 2009: 260).

Although Pedahzur and Canetti-Nisim claim that “this so-called perceived threat cannot be measured in a conclusive way” (2004: 10), many other studies have used anti-immigrant sentiment as a means of measuring perceived threat (Arzheimer, 2009; Kessler and Freeman, 2005; Jesuit et al., 2009; Lubbers and Scheepers, 2001; Golder, 2003). While Jackman and Volpert (1996) found that unemployment directly increased the success of right-wing extremist parties, they neglected to include an immigration variable in their specific analysis. Golder (2003) replicated this study and found a relation between unemployment and immigration. Furthermore, Golder found that the relationship between unemployment and support for right-wing extremist groups was conditional upon the numbers of immigrants, or perceived threat from immigrants in the country (2003: 460).

SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

Both unemployment and perceived threats from immigrants contribute to the third factor in this analysis, satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with democracy. In his case study on the effectiveness of right-wing ideologies in Germany, Gensing attributes the drastic social changes that resulted from the quick reunification to a lack of democratic tendencies in eastern Germany (2009: 65-6). In his opinion, the battle against right-wing extremism, in which many claim that these groups are a threat to democracy, does not influence some in eastern Germany, mainly because “the democratic consciousness is not present in larger segments of the population” (Gensing, 2009: 66).¹⁰ The citizens have become so dissatisfied with their conditions that they are willing to support an anti-establishment party, and in the absence of democratic consciousness citizens vote for parties, not based on their past performance but rather their campaign promises. In this case, these promises are based on solving unemployment and creating a “Germany for Germans.” His case study includes interviews with eastern Germans, who expressed their support for right-wing extremist groups, with many citing dissatisfaction with democracy, *überfremdung*, and feelings of being forgotten as motivating factors. One retiree claimed that “I do not believe in democracy, because it just takes our money. The foreigners here have more money than us. Another system would be better. Everyone should stay in their own country. The Germans in Germany, the Russians in Russia”

¹⁰ “Daher sprechen viele Beobachter beim Kampf gegen den Rechtsextremismus in Teilen Ostdeutschland auch nicht von der Verteidigung der Demokratie. Das demokratische Bewusstsein gibt es dort in weiten Teilen der Bevölkerung gar nicht.” Author’s translation.

(Gensing, 2009: 94).¹¹ Gensing further explains that many eastern Germans feel a disconnection with democracy, claiming that democracy is something that is found in Berlin or Bonn and has nothing to do with the eastern Germans (2009: 95).

Although many thought that after reunification, democracy would take near-immediate effect in eastern Germany and political extremism would wane, this has not been the case (Schoen and Bühler, 2006: 188). As all right-wing extremist groups profess anti-democratic ideologies in one form or another, the fear is that as dissatisfaction with democracy rises, so will support for these parties. This provides the foundation for the hypothesis that *citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to support a right-wing extremist party compared to those who are satisfied with democracy*. As Schoen and Bühler (2006: 190) explain, many believed that eastern Germany would be immune to right-wing extremism, given its 40 year anti-fascist state. However, as explained in chapter two, with little eastern influence in the process and mandates of reunification, “the eastern Germans became remarkably more dissatisfied with the possibility of the consequences” (Arzheimer, 2006: 224).¹² For this reason, I also test the hypothesis that *citizens in eastern Germany, who are less satisfied with democracy, are more likely to support a right-wing extremist party*.

Using Eurobarometer Surveys from 1988, 1994, 1997, and 2000 Kessler and Freeman (2005) found that the majority of support for right-wing parties comes from

¹¹ “Von Demokratie halte ich nichts, [...] weil die einem nur das Geld abnehmen. Die Ausländer hier haben mehr Geld als wir. Am besten wäre ein anderes System. Jeder soll in seinme Land wohnen. Die Deutschen in Deutschland und die Russen in Russland.” Author’s translation.

¹² “Dabei sind die Ostdeutschen insgesamt nochmals erkennbar unzufriedener mit ihren Mitwirkungsmöglichkeiten. Dies gilt wiederum gleichermaßen für ältere wir für jüngere Bürger.” Author’s translation.

young males who hold anti-immigrant attitudes and are less satisfied with democracy. Political dissatisfaction in this sense is viewed as a form of protest politics, where citizens choose an anti-establishment party to voice their discontent with what they view as ineffective traditional parties (Kessler and Freeman, 2005; Hirschman, 1970). Combined with anti-immigrant sentiments, political dissatisfaction strengthens a voter's support for right-wing and anti-establishment parties (Kessler and Freeman, 2005; Kitschelt, 1997; Mudde, 1999; Lubbers et al., 2002). Using the hypothesis that *the stronger the perceived conflict with immigrants, the greater the likelihood that the voter will prefer a right-wing extremist party*, it is expected that this study will reflect the findings of previous studies, as many in eastern Germany attribute an influx of immigrants and diminishing employment opportunities with the rapid reunification and installation of democracy.

OVERVIEW AND APPLICATION TO GERMANY

With previous studies on right-wing extremist groups now reviewed, the next chapter outlines methods and variables used in investigating the support for right-wing extremism in Germany. As shown, many of the previous studies have simultaneously tested unemployment, satisfaction with democracy, and immigration; this study, rather than looking at the effects for all three variables together, controls for alternative explanations by removing and replacing variables, which means we can be more confident in the relative effects of certain factors. All three of these factors for right-wing support are found in eastern and western Germany; however, given the comparatively short time and the conditions under which eastern Germany has had to

experiment with democracy, it is highly plausible that these three factors have individually contributed to a higher rate of right-wing extremist support within eastern Germany and vary in strength. Whereas western Germany has established democratic tendencies, eastern Germany is still in the process of internalizing these values. With the negative repercussions of reunification still present, it is expected that levels of dissatisfaction with democracy will be higher in eastern Germany, and that this dissatisfaction will be a primary source of support for right-wing extremist groups. The next chapter includes preliminary analyses of party preference and the independent variables, region, employment, education, perceived economic situation, perceived level of conflict between Germans and immigrants and satisfaction with democracy, and creates the foundation for the logistic regression models presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the data collection and describe the dependent and independent variables. This will set the framework for the logistic regressions in chapter five which analyze the factors that influence right-wing extremist support. Unlike previous studies, this study controls for alternative explanations to evaluate the relative effects of certain variables on right-wing voter support. The data for this study were collected from the GESIS Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften website on January 15, 2010. The head researchers for the Politbarometer 2005 study were M. Berger, M. Jung, and D. Roth, from the Forschungsgruppe Wahlen in Mannheim, Germany. The surveys were administered between January and December 2005 using standardized questions via telephone interviews. The original data were separated into two datasets to reflect eastern and western Germany. For this study the two datasets were combined and coded to reflect the two separate regions. Prior to applying a weight, eastern Germany contained a sample of 16,715 cases and western Germany contained 24,394 cases, for a total of 41,008 cases. After applying the given overall weight to adjust for oversampling in eastern Germany, the sample size of eastern Germans dropped to 6,002.

Using the 2005 Politbarometer ensures comparative survey questions and measurements and, after weighting for an eastern German over sample, is suitable for

examining differences between the two regions in relation to latent electoral support. Based on previous studies outlined in the literature review, it is predicted that voters in eastern Germany will exhibit more openness in voting for right-wing parties. As outlined in chapters two and three, the egregious unemployment levels and consequences of reunifications are believed to contribute to democratic dissatisfaction and xenophobic tendencies. Furthermore, dissatisfaction with democracy and xenophobic beliefs are believed to influence right-wing support more than unemployment or other socio-economic characteristics. This therefore leads us to believe that the data will show more support for right-wing extremist parties in eastern Germany, which is related to the relative deprivation and scapegoating of immigrants that followed the reunification.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable, *party preference* captures the percentages of latent support for extreme right parties in 2005 and is based on the question, “When you think of the SPD, CDU, CSU, the Greens, FDP, PDS, Republikaner, NPD, and the DVU: which of these parties do you prefer?”¹³ Although the Politbarometer includes a question regarding voter intention, I elected to use the variable that reflects party preference, to adjust for the notorious German strategic voting, in which voters may support a party but strategically vote for another (Herrmann and Pappi, 2007; Sartori, 1994). *Party preference* reflects the respondent’s preference where the respondent was allowed to select from a number of given political parties. The parties were recoded so that the

¹³ For the original questionnaire, detailed recoding schemes, and frequency charts, please see Appendix B. This includes questions used in the cross-tabulations in Part I.

right-wing parties (REP, DVU, NPD) represented 1, all other political parties were coded as 0, regardless of whether the party was a mainstream or minor party. Similar to previous studies, right-wing parties were defined and selected using Ignazi's criteria and investigation of right-wing extremist parties (Jackman and Volpert, 1996: 509; Ignazi, 2003; Hainsworth, 2004). Unknown and not applicable were coded as missing (99).¹⁴ Table 4.1 shows an extraordinary amount of support for non-right-wing political parties, with 82.9 percent preferring mainstream or other political parties over right-wing political parties. sixteen percent of the respondents either refused to answer or did not have a party preference, leaving 1.0 percent (1.2 valid percent) preferring right-wing extremist parties.

Table 4.1 Party Preference

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Mainstream or other political party	25,199	82.9	98.8
Right-wing extremist party	298	1.0	1.2
Missing	4,899	16.1	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables encompass seven factors believed to influence support for right-wing extremist parties: *region, age, employment, satisfaction with democracy, perceived level of conflict between immigrants and Germans, education, and self perceived economic situation.*

¹⁴ All unknown, not asked, and not available data were coded as missing (99).

Table 4.2 Region of Residence

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Western Germany	24,393	80.3	80.3
Eastern Germany	6,002	19.7	19.7
Missing	0	0.0	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

To account for the residency of each case after merging the two datasets, area of residence was recoded to reflect region (*region*) using a dummy variable, with 1 representing eastern states (Berlin-Ost, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, and Thüringen), and 0 representing western states (Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Bremen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Saarland, and Berlin-West). After weighting for an oversampling in eastern Germany, we see that the survey adequately reflects the population distribution in Germany with roughly 20 percent of the population in eastern Germany and 80 percent in western Germany.

Table 4.3 Age

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
18-29 years	4,732	15.6	15.6
30-39 years	5,430	17.9	17.9
40-49 years	6,043	19.9	19.9
50-59 years	4,457	14.7	14.7
60-69 years	6,048	19.9	19.9
70 years and older	3,686	12.1	12.1
Missing	0	0.0	0.0
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Age¹⁵ was coded categorically using ten year increments for convenience of presentation and is based on the original categorically coded data (18-29, 30-39, etc.). Looking at Table 4.3, we see a fairly even distribution among the categories, with percentages ranging from 12.1 percent (70 and older) to 19.9 percent (40-49 years). There are no missing cases for this variable.

Table 4.4 Employment

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Not in work force	12,118	39.9	40.4
Employed	16,443	54.1	54.9
Unemployed	1,404	4.6	4.7
Missing	431	1.4	0.0
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Employment status¹⁶ was originally coded into ten different categories and was recoded so that 1 reflected employment (either full or part time), 2 reflected currently unemployed, 0 reflected those out of the workforce (retirement, pensioner, non-workers, university or civil duty). Table 4.4 shows 39.9 percent of the respondents as not being in the work force, leaving a total 58.7 percent eligible for placement in the workforce. However, 54.1 percent are actually employed. These findings do not reflect the actual unemployment data, which typically range from 8.0 percent to, in some regions, over 20.0 percent.

While unemployment is often used a proxy for the public's economic perception, it fails to capture the public's attitude towards the economy. Although the employment variable measures a respondent's employment status, it fails to recognize the perceived

¹⁵ Survey question: How old are you?

¹⁶ Survey question: Are you currently employed?

economic situation. One may be employed but still dissatisfied with his or her current economic status. Fortunately, the Politbarometer includes a variable that examines the respondents' perception of their own economic situation. The question, "How would you describe your current economic situation?" captures the respondent's own perceived current economic situation. While it is expected that those who are unemployed will also perceive their situation negatively, we must also account for variations. As shown in Table 4.5, a majority of the respondents believe their personal economic situation to be either sometimes good/sometimes bad or good rather than poor (87.3 percent versus 12.5 percent).

Table 4.5 Perceived Personal Economic Situation

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Poor	3,811	12.5	12.6
Sometimes good/ sometimes bad	12,273	40.4	40.5
Good	14,247	46.9	47.0
Missing	65	0.2	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Unemployment and perceptions of their economic situation are not the only influential factors in right-wing extremist support. Satisfaction with democracy taps into the level of dissatisfaction for the democratic institutions (Knigge, 1998: 260). Table 4.6 shows a slight difference in the levels of satisfaction with democracy, with only 2.4 percent difference. However, compared to the previous variables, there is a substantial amount of missing data because this question was not asked during several weeks. Nonetheless, despite the missing data, there are 8,703 valid cases for this variable, which is enough to avoid the problem of a small sample size.

Table 4.6 Satisfaction with Democracy

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Satisfied	4,456	14.7	51.2
Dissatisfied	4,247	14.0	48.8
Missing	21,693	71.4	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

As noted in chapters two and three, many right-wing extremist parties blame immigrants for nationals' problems and propose seemingly simple solutions to these problems, particularly stopping immigration to lower unemployment. As previous studies show, there are some indications that the perceived effects of immigration are conditional on the pervasiveness of unemployment (Knigge, 1998: 260). Anti-immigrant sentiment is measured by the question, "In all societies there are conflicts between different social groups. How do you evaluate the conflicts here in Germany? Are the conflicts between immigrants and Germans..." where the respondents selected the level of conflict they believed best represented their perceptions. Similar to the satisfaction with democracy variable, this question was not asked throughout the year, resulting in a substantial amount of missing data. Nonetheless, as shown in Table 4.7, we see a majority of the respondents perceived a strong or very strong level of conflict between Germans and immigrants (total of 56.4 percent). Nearly forty-four percent of the respondents perceived either a weak conflict or no conflict between immigrants and Germans.

Table 4.7 Perceived Level of Conflict between Immigrants and Germans

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
No conflict	42	0.1	3.4
Not so strong	485	1.6	40.1
Strong	516	1.7	42.7
Very strong	165	0.5	13.7
Total	1,208	4.0	100.0
Missing	29,188	96.0	
Total	30,396	100.0	

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

The final variable in this analysis, education, tests the claim that citizens with a higher level of education are less likely to support an anti-establishment or right-wing extremist party. Additionally, it is assumed that those with a lower level of education are also more likely to evaluate negatively their personal economic situation and be more likely to adapt the anti-immigrant sentiment of the right-wing extremist parties. Table 4.8 shows that only 29.7 percent of the respondents were either still enrolled in school or had below a high school education. Most of the respondents had received either a high school diploma or university preparation (total 64.2 percent), with only 6.1 percent holding a professional or university degree.

Table 4.8 Education

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Still in school, no degree	108	0.4	0.4
8 th grade	8,883	29.2	29.3
High school	10,227	33.6	33.7
University prep	9,234	30.4	30.5
Professional degree	456	1.5	1.5
University-level	1,396	4.6	4.6
Missing	90	0.3	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Prior to evaluating how all of these variables collectively influence support for right-wing extremist parties, it is essential to examine how these variables interact with each other. Table 4.9 mirrors the official electoral results, showing that the right-wing extremist parties received 1.2 percent of the vote. This also shows the relationship between region and party preference, indicating slightly more support (0.5 percent) in eastern Germany when compared to western Germany. However, these findings show a slight difference in voter support for right-wing extremist parties within the regions, with eastern Germany slightly more accepting by 0.5 percent. These findings are significant at the 0.05 level and lend support to the hypothesis that *voters in eastern Germany are more accepting of right-wing extremist parties*.

Table 4.9 Region and Party Preference

		<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Total</u>
Right-Wing Party	Percent	1.1	1.6	1.2
Other	Percent	98.9	98.4	98.8
Total	Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total Count	20,609	4,888	25,497

Chi-Square Tests, Value: 10.481, df: 1, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.001
Number of valid cases: 25,497

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

In examining what promotes support for right-wing extremist parties, the relationship between party preference and the perceived level of conflict between Germans and immigrants (shown in Table 4.10) shows that many Germans feel that the level of conflict between immigrants and Germans is very strong, regardless of political party preference. However, these findings do show that none of the respondents who preferred the right-wing extremist parties felt that there was no conflict between Germans and immigrants. These findings are significant at the 0.05 level; however, they fail to provide support for the claim that *citizens who perceive a high level of conflict between*

immigrants and Germans are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties. This does not refute the claim that citizens who harbor xenophobic sentiments are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties. As stated before, the 2005 Politbarometer does not include a question that can better measure levels of xenophobia, such as “What do you think of the number of immigrants in Germany? 1) not enough, 2) enough, 3) too many.” For this reason, the perceived level of conflict between immigrants and Germans is used as a proxy.

Table 4.10 Party Preference and Perceived Level of Conflict between Immigrants and Germans

		<u>No conflict</u>	<u>Not so strong</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>Very Strong</u>	<u>Total</u>
Right-Wing Party	Percent	0.0	0.2	2.4	7.3	2.1
Other	Percent	100.0	99.8	97.6	92.7	97.9
Total	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Count	35	444	457	150	1,086

Chi-Square Tests, Value: 28.296, df: 3, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.000

Number of Valid Cases: 1,086

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Instead, the perceived level of conflict can be used to measure the acceptance of foreigners between the two regions. As Table 4.11 shows, citizens in eastern Germany are more likely to believe that there is a strong or very strong conflict between immigrants and foreigners in Germany. This can be attributed to the rapid influx of foreigners into eastern Germany following the reunification, and the spread of neo-Nazi and extreme right movements that have proliferated through eastern Germany (Rensmann, 2003: 94). These movements use immigrants as scapegoats for the unemployment rates and problems with reunification. These findings are not significant at the 0.05 level, but are close enough to lend some credence to the statement that *citizens*

in eastern Germany are more likely to perceive a strong level of conflict between immigrants and Germans.

Table 4.11 Region and Perceived Level of Conflict between Immigrants and Germans

		<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Total</u>
No conflict	Percent	3.7	2.6	3.5
Not so strong	Percent	41.2	35.3	40.1
Strong	Percent	42.6	43.5	42.8
Very Strong	Percent	12.5	18.5	13.7
Total	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Count	976	232	1,208

Chi-Square Tests, Value: 7.286, df: 3, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.063

Number of Valid Cases: 1,208

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

I tested the claim that right-wing extremists are more likely to be dissatisfied with democracy, and Table 4.12 shows a positive relationship between party preference for right-wing extremists and dissatisfaction with democracy. This analysis shows that 2.2 percent of those respondents who are dissatisfied with democracy favored right-wing extremist parties. Only 0.2 percent of those who were satisfied with democracy were likely to support right-wing extremist parties. These findings support the claim that *citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to support a right-wing extremist party compared to citizens who are satisfied with democracy.* The findings also support the theoretical expectations based on relative deprivation and protest voting in that, the more dissatisfied people are with democracy, the more likely they are to support a right-wing extremist party.

Table 4.12 Party Preference and Satisfaction with Democracy

		<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Total</u>
Right-Wing Party	Percent	0.2	2.2	1.2
Other	Percent	99.8	97.8	98.8
Total	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Count	4,063	3,580	7,643

Chi-Square Tests, Value: 62.457, df: 1, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.000

Number of Valid Cases: 7,643

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

While the previous analysis examines party preference and satisfaction with democracy, it does not show the difference in levels of satisfaction across regions. Remembering that 0 represents dissatisfaction and 1 represents satisfaction, Table 4.13 shows a positive correlation between dissatisfaction with democracy and region, with a higher level of dissatisfaction in eastern Germany (74.4 percent). Knowing from the previous analysis that democratic satisfaction is weaker among right-wing supporters, this provides the initial support for the hypothesis that *citizens in eastern Germany, who are less satisfied with democracy, are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties*. The current analysis cannot, however, rule out the influence of intervening variables that may also influence voter behaviors. Logistic regression analysis will be needed to show more of a relation.

Table 4.13 Region and Satisfaction with Democracy

	<u>West</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>Total</u>
Percent Satisfied	86.0	74.4	80.4
Percent Dissatisfied	14.0	25.6	19.6
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Count	4,456	4,247	8,703

Chi-Square Test, Value: 184.293, df: 1, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.000

Number of Valid Cases: 8,703

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Using perceived economic situation instead of unemployment (see next page), we see in Table 4.14 that those who rated their situation as “poor” were more likely to choose an extremist right-wing party as their first party preference. Furthermore, those who described their economic situation as “sometimes good/ sometimes bad” were also more likely to vote for extreme right-wing parties, when compared to respondents who had a positive evaluation of their economic situation. These preliminary findings lend credence to the statement that *those who perceive their economic condition as below-average are more likely to support an extreme right-wing party when compared to those who have a “good” economic situation.*

Table 4.14 Perceived Economic Situation and Party Preference

		<u>Right-wing parties</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
Poor	Percent	31.0	11.6	11.8
Sometimes good/ sometimes bad	Percent	48.6	39.6	39.7
Good	Percent	22.2	48.8	39.7
Total	Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Count	297	25,167	25,464

Chi-Square Test, Value: 139.513, df: 2, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided): 0.000

Number of Valid Cases: 8703

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

OVERVIEW

Although the cross tabulations shown above help to define a relationship between two variables, they do not eliminate the possibility that an increase in one variable (for example, employment) is the by-product of another variable’s interference (for example, region). As expected, there is evidence of a relation among region of residence, satisfaction with democracy, and perceived economic situation related to the respondent’s party preference. The level of conflict between immigrants and Germans and region are only slightly significant. The cross-tabulations can indicate relationships between two

variables, but they fail to control for alternative explanations simultaneously. Because the dependent variable, party preference, is dichotomous I employed a logistic regression, which holds all other the variables at their mean, while measuring the impact of a single variable (Knigge, 1997, 261; Lubbers et al., 2002: 361). The independent variables are region, self perceived economic situation, sex, age, education, and employment status, perceived level of conflict between immigrants and Germans and satisfaction with democracy. With the relationships between selected variables now established, chapter five continues to examine how the combined variables affect support for right-wing political parties and leads to an interesting discovery about the impact of satisfaction with democracy and perceived conflict with immigrants on party preference, which supports the findings from this chapter's cross-tabulations.

CHAPTER V

INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

THEORETICAL EXPECTATIONS

In line with previous studies, it is expected that region, personal perceived economic situation, sex, age, education level, immigration, employment, and democratic satisfaction will positively correspond to support for right-wing extremism. According to most studies on voter behavior and right-wing extremism, group conflicts are the primary source of the right-wing extremist groups' success (Arzheimer, 2009: 260). Ranging from classic theories of scapegoating to ethnic conflict theories, these theoretical explanations include xenophobia (in this case a consequence of a strong conflict between immigrants and natives over resources, such as jobs and welfare benefits) and rely heavily on the theory of relative deprivation. However, as Jesuit et al. (2009) and Dülmer and Klein (2005) theorize, "if there are no immigrants to be blamed ... for actually or potentially taking away jobs, there is no reason why unemployment itself should cause right-wing voting (see also Lubbers et al., 2002; Knigge, 1998). Furthermore, Golder (2003b) has found little theoretical or empirical evidence to link increased immigration rates with increased unemployment (Golder, 2003b).

With a relatively low immigrant population in eastern Germany, according to this logic, unemployment should play little if any role in the levels of support for right-wing

extremist groups. It can then be assumed that an overall dissatisfaction with the current democratic state is to blame for an increased amount for right-wing extremism support in eastern Germany. Leading causes of democratic dissatisfaction are linked to relative deprivation. As relative deprivation rises, meaning that the members of a social group become increasingly dissatisfied as expected results fail to materialize (Gurr, 1970; Pettigrew, 2002; Arzheimer, 2009). As noted before, immigrants have been identified by right-wing extremist groups as the reason for social problems, such as rising unemployment rates and a poor economic situation. I expect to find a positive influence from both perceived economic situation and democratic dissatisfaction, given that eastern Germans have yet to experience the full benefits of reunification promised to them by Chancellor Kohl during the reunification.

These increased levels of democratic dissatisfaction can be related to the creation of democratic norms. Democracy is not merely an institution; it also requires the internalization of democratic tendencies, such as free-choice, autonomy and emancipation (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 271). If the preconceived notions of democracy create unrealistically high expectations, as seen in eastern Germany during reunification, an increasing discrepancy between expectations and reality will lead to disillusionment and, in some cases, protest voting and dissatisfaction with the status quo (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 120; Gurr, 1970; Hirschman, 1970; Hirschman, 1993). This disillusionment, as Inglehart and Welzel (2005: 119) state, “may lead to declining support for democracy, if support is not intrinsically rooted in self-expression values.”

Furthermore, democratic tendencies are not implemented instantaneously; they are learned slowly through political socialization and experience. This leads to a dual set

of conflicting expectations regarding age and democratic satisfaction, and in turn support for right-wing extremist support. First, it is expected that older citizens, 40 and older, are more likely not to support right-wing extremists because of the political socialization experienced during the 40 years of the anti-fascist GDR regime. Therefore, it is expected that younger citizens are less likely to support right-wing extremists. The second expectation, based on Watts's case study on racism and ideology among eastern German youth (Watts, 1996), is that younger, more disadvantaged and disillusioned citizens will be more prone to support right-wing extremist groups. .

METHODS

The hypotheses related to factors that facilitate right-wing extremist support are tested using data from the Politbarometer 2005. Conducted yearly, the Politbarometer is very similar to the Eurobarometer and is a primary data source for tracking and analyzing fluctuations in German political and social attitudes. For this research I pooled responses from both East and West Politbarometer 2005 surveys, which have identical questions, to create a full dataset with eastern and western German respondents.¹⁷

The selected variables consist of attitudinal measures, which provide considerable insight into individual-level support for right-wing extremist parties (see also Kessler and Freeman, 2005; Ignazi, 1992; Betz, 1994; Lubbers and Scheepers, 2002). Although Robinson (1950) noted that "individual-level correlation may be much weaker or may even reverse its sign, working in the opposite direction from the relationship found at the

¹⁷ An exact coding scheme is found in Appendix B; exact methodology, descriptives, and frequency tables are found in Chapter four.

aggregate level” (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 231), Inglehart and Welzel (2005) note that to ignore individual-level data would invalidate democratic theory, pointing out that individual-level preferences are often “aggregated into a societal-level phenomenon” akin to the “will of the people” (232). Furthermore, a vast majority of the literature on political culture is grounded in the assumption that “aggregated individual-level values and beliefs have in impact on societal-level phenomena” (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 232). Since the following analysis is based on a logistic regression model, the binomial distribution of party preference is “assumed to adequately account for randomness at the individual level” (Arzheimer, 2009: 266-267). Furthermore, I avoid case selection bias by including all respondents in Germany, rather than singling out eastern or western Germany, and by opting to conduct an analysis of one year, rather than a cross-time analysis (Geddes, 2003). After a brief description of the models and results, a discussion concerning the influences of significant variables, results, and application to right-wing extremist support follows.

In order to analyze the isolated effects of satisfaction with democracy and conflicts with immigrants, I created four models to show the distinct relationships between the variables. Sample sizes vary throughout the models, ranging from 33,692 in Model 1 to 1,393 in Model 4. Because the questions on democratic satisfaction and attitudes on immigrants were not asked throughout the year, in both Models 3 and 4 the sample size is radically reduced. To highlight the change in regional effect on support for right-wing extremism, I have shown the explicit P-values for region. The significance for all other variables is denoted by an asterisk.

The first model (M1) measures the effect of region, economic situation, employment, age, and education on party preference. In Model 1, we see that region plays a significant role in support for right-wing extremist parties; therefore, we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no effect of region on support for right-wing extremist groups. This supports the claim that eastern Germans are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties. Model 2 (M2) includes satisfaction with democracy and shows that the effect of region on right-wing extremist parties is explained by levels of dissatisfaction with democracy.

Model 3 (M3), which replaces satisfaction with democracy with conflict with immigrants, shows that immigration also explains the effect of region on right-wing extremist parties. Model 4 (M4) examines party preference for right-wing extremist groups using both satisfaction with democracy and conflict with immigrants, and shows that immigration plays a larger role in explaining the variation in region than satisfaction with democracy. In fact, Model 4 shows that satisfaction with democracy, when combined with immigration, is no longer as significant. Thus, the variation in support for right-wing extremism explained by region, at first glance, seems to be more reliably explained by satisfaction with democracy. Upon further examination, the variation explained by satisfaction with democracy can actually be accounted for the attitudes about immigrants.

Table 5.1 Models of Party Preference and Right-Wing Extremism

	<u>M1</u>	<u>M2</u>	<u>M3</u>	<u>M4</u>
Region	0.48 (0.14)	0.29 (0.26)	0.06 (0.55)	-0.82 (0.59)
P-Value	0.00*	0.27	0.92	0.89
Economic Situation	-0.72* (0.08)	-0.58* (0.16)	-0.62 (0.33)	-.057 (0.35)
Employment	0.13 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.19)	-0.33 (0.41)	-0.60 (0.44)
Age	-0.26* (0.04)	-0.31* (0.08)	-0.30* (0.15)	-0.35* (0.16)
Education	-0.54* (0.08)	-0.50* (0.14)	-0.36 (0.28)	-0.24 (0.30)
Satisfaction/Democracy	-- --	1.91* (0.35)	-- --	1.01 (0.63)
Attitude/Immigration	-- --	-- --	1.33* (0.34)	1.22* (0.36)
Pseudo R ²	0.07	0.13	0.17	0.19
N	33,692	10,038	1,412	1,393

Note: Data come from the Politbarometer 2005. Table entries are logit estimates. 2-tailed test * $p \leq 0.05$, + $p \leq 0.10$. P-Value represents the probability that we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no effect of region on support for right-wing extremism. Standard errors are in parentheses.

MODEL 1

Looking at region, we find that as region increases from 0 (West) to 1 (East), party preference for right-wing extremist groups also increases. In this model, perceived economic situation, age, and education are significant at the 0.05 level. This model supports the hypothesis that *voters in eastern Germany are more accepting of right-wing extremist parties* and reflects the findings of the initial cross-tabulation.

Self-perceived economic situation shows a negative correlation with support for right-wing extremist groups, meaning that the more negatively one believes their

economic situation is, the less likely they are to support a right-wing party. With significance levels of 0.000, we can reject the hypothesis that *those who perceive their economic condition as below-average are more likely to support an extreme right-wing party when compared to those who have a "good" economic situation*. This coincides with the null relationship between right-wing extremist support and employment status. Employment is found not to be a significant factor in determining support for right-wing extremist groups (at a level of 0.207). Therefore, like many studies before, we find little support for the statement that *those who are unemployed are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties*.

We find a slightly negative correlation with age and right-wing extremist support, with a significance level of 0.000 at the 0.05 level. This means that as people age, they are less likely to support right-wing parties and upholds the claim that political socialization under the socialist government acts as a deterrent to preferring right-wing parties. Similarly, education is also negatively correlated with right-wing party preference. This relation between right-wing extremism supports the influence of education found previous studies, in that the higher one's education level, the less likely one is to prefer a right-wing extremist party.

MODEL 2

When we include satisfaction with democracy in the analysis, we find that region is no longer significant. This means that the dissatisfaction with democracy explains the regional differences found in Model 1. While education is a significant indicator in this analysis of support for right-wing extremist behavior, we can also assume that those with

feelings of relative deprivation are less likely to support the democratic institutions that have failed to effectively introduce policies which will reduce those feelings of relative deprivation. Learning democracy requires political participation and personal initiative, which while present during the initial stages of reunification, have now faded as conditions have worsened. Joslyn and Cigler (2001) note that associational activities also influence one's democratic dispositions; however, due to the massive loss of jobs many eastern Germans lost their associational ties to other citizens. This can also be a potential reason for the lack of democratic satisfaction in eastern Germany.

Interestingly, similar to the previous model, employment remains insignificant. Democratic satisfaction has a positive coefficient of 1.910 with preference for right-wing extremist parties, meaning that as dissatisfaction with democracy increases, the likelihood of preferring a right-wing extremist party also increases. This is an interesting finding and supports the existing statements that right-wing parties attract those who are feeling a sense of relative deprivation and have, therefore, chosen to use their electoral voice as an anti-establishment protest.

This, however, does not mean that all eastern Germans are supportive of right-wing extremists or dissatisfied with democracy. I suspect that as time progresses and economic conditions improve, eastern Germans will become more satisfied with democracy and therefore find little reason to support anti-establishment right-wing extremist parties. Democratic tendencies are not innate and must be developed over time. When comparing eastern and western Germany it is important to remember the process in which democratic tendencies develop: western Germany has a 40 year head start on eastern Germany. Only with time, patience, and education will this disparity decrease.

In the mean while, this leads us to the question of what creates dissatisfaction with democracy. A model of satisfaction with democracy, along with its interpretation is included in Appendix C.

MODELS 3 and 4

Model 3 replaces Model 2's satisfaction with democracy with perceived levels of conflict between immigrants and Germans. The model shows that, like satisfaction with democracy, attitudes towards foreigners also explain the regional differences in support for right-wing extremist parties. Furthermore, the variation explained by satisfaction with democracy is, as shown in Table 5.1, accounted for by attitudes on immigration. In Models 3 and 4 only age and immigration are significant at the 0.05 level. Although age is not a significant factor in determining dissatisfaction with democracy, as shown in Table 5.2 (shown in Appendix C), when used in the other models it remains a significant factor in support for right-wing extremist pasties. The negative coefficient provides support to the claims that those who experienced the GDR are more socialist-oriented and therefore more immune to right-wing extremist groups. It has been noted that ideological identification is acquired early in life (Sears et al., 1980) and that ideology "operates in a nearly emotional level" (Jacoby, 1991: 180). Furthermore, emotions associated with external events (helplessness and anger) often have a stronger influence on evaluation of political systems (Conover and Feldman, 1986). Having experienced 40 years of the repressive East German socialist regime, it is plausible that although eastern German democracy is not perfect, the older citizens who can compare the current system to the GDR are happier under the new system.

Model 4 shows similar results as Model 3 with age and attitudes towards immigration remaining significant and explaining the difference in regional support for right-wing extremist parties. This reaffirms the findings of Model 3 in that regional differences in party preference are linked to age and the perceived level of conflicts with immigrants, meaning that xenophobic citizens are more likely to support right-wing extremist groups, especially in eastern Germany. Unfortunately, the Politbarometer 2005 does not include measures of indicators of xenophobia (such as level of immigrants in the respondent's town or respondent's feelings towards foreigners); therefore, we must rely on the previous theoretical frameworks, relative deprivation, protest voting, and ethnic conflict theories, to understand the factors which influence xenophobia and a higher level of perceived conflict with foreigners.

According to Frederick Weil (1993), distrust for immigrants is not closely related to anti-democratic attitudes. However, xenophobia is often higher among younger and less-educated citizens who harbor feelings of relative deprivation (Klingemann and Hofferbert, 1994). Furthermore, as economic conditions worsen and grievances increase, right-wing extremist parties using foreigners as scapegoats (Braunthal, 2009: 11). Therefore, it is not surprising to find that the perceived conflict between immigrants and Germans influence support for right-wing extremist parties more than the level of satisfaction with democracy. This directly relates to the ethnic group competition theory, in that those not included in the in-group are considered a threat to economic and social resources. As immigrants are seen as a threat to society, it is understandable that those who are most vulnerable to worsening economic conditions and already dissatisfied

with the current system would resort to supporting a political party that proposes to eliminate immigrants, which they see as the main source of the problems.

OVERVIEW

Through the models we find that there is evidence that both perceived level of conflict with immigrants and dissatisfaction with democracy influence support for right-wing extremist parties more than does region. Furthermore, from the discussion on reunification and the cross-tabulations in chapter four, we know that both of these factors are more prevalent in eastern Germany. Therefore, it can be assumed that right-wing extremist groups do feed off of the post-reunification resentments and utilize these feelings of relative deprivation in eastern Germany to gain electoral support. These dissatisfactions are directly related to the consequences of reunification and unfulfilled expectations. The current situation in eastern Germany, high unemployment rates and a high level of dissatisfaction, provide an ideal opportunity for eastern Germans to voice their discontent by voting for right-wing parties as a sign of protest against the current system. The well-intended quick reunification paved the path for inequalities and dissatisfaction which, as shown in these analyses, have been used by right-wing extremist parties to gain support. Since legal actions and proposed bans have proved nearly impossible to reinforce, only by addressing the eastern German concerns and improving the economic and social conditions can the government prevent the expansion of these parties and their increasing support in eastern Germany.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this study, the motivational factors for supporting right-wing extremism in Germany were shown to have a strong relation to satisfaction with democracy. In chapter two, the ramifications of the German reunification were explained and used to establish the massive inequalities that the right-wing extremist parties exploit in order to gain electoral support. Chapter three detailed the previous literature on right-wing extremist support, and provides the necessary support for establishing the framework of this investigation of right-wing extremist support in Germany. Using mostly socio-economically based variables, chapter four provided a preliminary examination of potential motivations of right-wing extremist groups, such as age, unemployment, region, dissatisfaction with democracy, and perceived level of conflict with immigrants.

Chapter five went beyond these preliminary examinations and employs multiple models based on logistic regression, finding that above all, conflicts with immigrants and dissatisfaction with democracy play the most influential role in determining support for right-wing extremist groups. The cross-tabulations in chapter four showed that both of these factors are more prevalent in eastern Germany. From these findings, it is safe to conclude that the ethnic conflict theories, where out-groups are blamed for problems, combined with the negative repercussions of reunification, lead to a few immigrants to be successfully used as scapegoats, thus contributing to support for right-wing extremism.

Additionally, this study showed that eastern Germans are still in the progress of “learning democracy” and the dissatisfaction with democratic institutions is grounded in relative deprivation. Since 1990, eastern Germans have experienced an identity crisis while transitioning to democracy. Some believe that socialism was better, while others have become completely dissatisfied, enough to lend their support to the anti-establishment right-wing extremist political parties. While right-wing extremism is not a phenomenon isolated only to Germany, this preliminary investigation finds many variables that can be used in an expanded investigation of right-wing extremist support.

METHODOLOGICAL SHORTFALLS

One of the biggest problems faced when examining right-wing extremist support involves the social surveys and censored data. As many social surveys only investigate voter intent or voter preferences for mainstream parties, the selection of data usable for such an investigation of right-wing extremism is extremely limited. Right-wing extremist political parties do not appear often as selection choices on social surveys, thereby rendering those surveys unusable for any investigation into right-wing extremist support. Additionally, had this research concentrated on mainstream parties, or even extreme left parties, ALLBUS survey data would have been perhaps more appropriate as it includes many more cases and many more variables that can be used to investigate voter behavior.

Another problem faced with this study is the phenomenon of social desirability. Although the surveys were conducted via telephone interviews, thereby increasing the distance between the interviewer and respondent, the survey cannot rule out the desire to fit into social norms that respondents feel. While it is plausible to use multiple variables

to seek the exact ideological preferences of respondents, thereby narrowing the respondents actual political party preferences, it is not possible to eliminate the threat of social desirability that is present in any social survey.

Additionally, more sophisticated models, such as a Tobit model, would provide more insight as to how variables interact with each other to influence right-wing extremist models. A Tobit model, used in other studies, rather than holding other variables at their means like with a logistic regression model, controls for the interaction of certain variables. While using crosstabulations also helps to understand the relationship between certain factors, a Tobit model renders a more sophisticated and precise model for estimating factors which influence voter behavior.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

In investigation German voter behavior, ideally, I would create a cross-time analysis covering elections from 1991 to 2005. A cross-time analysis would help us to evaluate the effects of public policy (such as social welfare program cutbacks, political scandals) and other events (such as terrorist attacks, international turmoil, etc.) have on the levels of support for right-wing extremist groups. It is suspected that with the rise of Islamophobia sparked by the events September 11, right-wing extremism also increased. In addition, it is expected that public opinion will be influenced by other events in Europe, such as the minaret ban in Switzerland. However, given the resource limitations, in addition to inconsistent survey questions between 1991 and 2005, a snap-shot comparison between eastern and western Germany sufficed to explain the factors which influence right-wing voter behavior in the united Germany.

Concentrating on the 2005 elections also reflects the availability of social survey data, as the 2009 Politbarometer has yet to be published. Another possible improvement would be the inclusion of ALLBUS survey data. The problem, however, with combining ALLBUS and Politbarometer data is that they are two separate surveys, conducted in different fashions. Another suggestion would be to compare the results from the ALLBUS and Politbarometer surveys to check for similarities or differences in the results. Although this is a preliminary study of the influences on right-wing extremism, the parsimonious investigation relies solely on social survey and neglects to control for actual election, unemployment, and immigration data. This may not be an especially serious limitation. As evidenced in previous studies, sometimes the perceived levels of immigrants and level of perceived threats are more important than actual immigration rates. Nonetheless, including the actual levels of immigration and unemployment data would also help to see how actual events influence voter behavior.

Also, like many other studies, it would be more beneficial to understand the differences between several countries. Not only would this help us understand how political systems (parliamentarian versus majoritarian system) influence right-wing extremist support, but also see how cultural aspects that vary from country to country play into right-wing extremism support. These institutional and cultural variables might be used to explain why extreme right-wing political parties have gained more support in France, Switzerland, France, and Italy compared to Ireland, Spain or the new democracies of the former Soviet Union.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Despite the parsimonious nature of this study, it provides valuable insight into the motivations and factors that influence voters to support right-wing extremist groups. Dissatisfaction with democracy is shown to be the primary motivating factor in determining the party preferences, with a positive relation between dissatisfaction with democracy and support for right-wing extremist political parties. In addition, the analyses show that dissatisfaction with democracy is linked with the negative consequences of reunification.

Although hindsight is often 20/20, using the historical analysis, it can be assumed that if the German governments had enforced a slower, more thorough option of reunification, satisfaction with democracy might be higher in eastern Germany, suggesting that the right-wing extremist groups would not find as much support in eastern Germany. Moreover, had the governments slowly integrated immigrants into the eastern regions, perhaps the levels of conflicts with immigrants would be lower, thereby leading to a decreased amount of right-wing extremist support in eastern Germany. The differences in voter behavior between eastern and western Germany are directly related to the perception of the effects of reunification. That said, the differing levels of support for right-wing extremist groups (on the federal level) between eastern and western Germany are not enough to raise alarms. What is more alarming, as shown in many case studies, is the increasing prevalence of right-wing extremist groups in eastern German local governments, compared to western Germany. This supports the idea that although eastern Germans are more likely to support right-wing extremists on the local level, they strategically elect not to support these parties on the same level in federal elections.

After 40 years of socialism, it is not surprising that many question the internalization of democratic tendencies within eastern Germany. Twenty years after reunification, eastern Germans are still learning the lessons of democracy, even if it means experimenting with right-wing extremist parties. It is expected that, as economic situations improve, satisfaction with democracy will increase and lead to an overall decrease in support for the anti-establishment right-wing extremist parties. Although this is a presumptuous claim, given that this analysis only examined one election, previous studies have shown that, with time, satisfaction with democracy increases. As this is a key indicator of support for right-wing parties, the estimation that right-wing extremism support will decrease over time is validated.

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Appendix A

Right-wing Extremist Anti-Immigrant Campaign Propaganda



Exploiting xenophobic fears of a cultural takeover by immigrants, right-wing parties often distort the actual effects of immigration, often targeting Muslims and those who are distinctly non-European.

Source: Die Republikaner, available at <http://www.rep.de/> Last accessed March 18, 2010.

Appendix B Variables and Recoding Scheme

Example:

variable name

Original question in German (*translation*)

1. First original option (*translation*)
2. Second original option (*translation*)

Recoded options

1. First recoded option (number in original options)
2. Second recoded option (number in original options)

<Frequency Table (after recoding, weight applied)>

Dependent Variable

Party Preference

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Mainstream or other political party	25,199	82.9	98.8
Right-wing extremist party	298	1.0	1.2
Missing	4,899	16.1	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS.

Und nun noch einmal zu den Parteien in Deutschland ganz allgemein: Wenn Sie einmal die SPD, die CDU, die CSU, die Grünen, die FDP, die PDS, die Republikaner, die NPD und die DVU denken: Welche dieser Parteien gefällt Ihnen am besten? (*And now again to the political parties in Germany in general: When you think of the SPD, CDU, CSU, the Greens, FDP, PDS, Republikaner, NPD, and the DVU: which of these parties do you prefer?*)

01. SPD
02. CDU
03. CSU
04. Grünen
05. FDP
06. PDS
07. WASG (only in weeks 25 and 27)
08. Republikaner
09. NPD
10. DVU
99. Keine Ahnung/ Split (47, 49)

Recoded options:

00. Mainstream party/other (01-07: SPD, CDU, CSU, the Greens, FDP, and PDS)
01. Right-wing extremist party (08-10: Republikaner, NPD, and the DVU)
99. Don't know (99)

Independent Variables

Region

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Western Germany	24,394	80.3	80.3
Eastern Germany	6,002	19.7	19.7
Missing	0	0.0	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

In welchem Bundesland sind die wahlberechtigt? (*In which state are you eligible to vote?*)

- 01. Schleswig-Holstein
- 02. Hamburg
- 03. Niedersachsen
- 04. Bremen
- 05. Nordrhein-Westfalen
- 06. Hessen
- 07. Rheinland-Pfalz
- 08. Baden-Württemberg
- 09. Bayern
- 10. Saarland
- 11. Berlin-West
- 12. Berlin-East
- 13. Brandenburg
- 14. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- 15. Sachsen
- 16. Sachsen-Anhalt
- 17. Thüringen

Recoded options:

- 00. West (01-11: Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Bremen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Hessen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Saarland, and Berlin-West)
- 01. East (12-17: Berlin-East, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt, and Thüringen)

Satisfaction with Democracy

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Satisfied	4,456	14.7	51.2
Dissatisfied	4,247	14.0	48.8
Missing	21,693	71.4	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Was würden Sie allgemein zur Demokratie in Deutschland sagen? Sind sie... (*What would you say about democracy in Germany? Are you...*)

- 01. eher zufrieden
- 02. eher unzufrieden
- 9. keine Ahnung
- 0: missing/ nicht erhoben

Recoded Options:

- 00. more satisfied (01: eher zufrieden)
- 01. more dissatisfied (02: eher unzufrieden)
- 99. don't know/missing

Perceived personal economic situation

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Poor	3,811	12.5	12.6
Sometimes good/ sometimes bad	12,273	40.4	40.5
Good	14,247	46.9	47.0
Missing	65	0.2	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Wie beurteilen Sie heute Ihre eigene wirtschaftliche Lage? (*How would you describe your current economic situation?*)

- 1. gut
- 2. teils gut/ teils schlecht
- 3. schlecht
- 9. keine Ahnung

Recoded options:

- 01. poor (03: schlecht)
- 02. sometimes good/ sometimes poor (02: teils gut/ teils schlecht)
- 03. good (01: gut)
- 99. don't know (9)

Perceived Level of Conflict Between Immigrants and Germans

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
No conflict	42	0.1	3.4
Not so strong	485	1.6	40.1
Strong	516	1.7	42.7
Very strong	165	0.5	13.7
Total	1,208	4.0	100.0
Missing	29,188	96.0	

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

In allen Gesellschaften gibt es Gegensätze oder sogar Konflikte zwischen verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Gruppen. Wie stark sind Ihrer Meinung nach die Konflikte hier in

Deutschland? Sind die Konflikte zwischen Ausländer und Deutschen ... *(In all societies there are conflicts between different social groups. How do you evaluate the conflicts here in Germany? Are the conflicts between immigrants and Germans...)*

1. sehr stark
2. stark
3. nicht so stark
4. gibt es da keine Konflikte
9. keine Ahnung
0. nicht erhoben

Recoded options:

1. not so strong (3: *nicht so stark*)
2. strong (2: *stark*)
3. very strong (1: *sehr stark*)
99. there is not conflict/ don't know/ not asked (4: *gibt es da keine Konflikte*. 9, 0)

Age

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
18-29 years	4,732	15.6	15.6
30-39 years	5,430	17.9	17.9
40-49 years	6,043	19.9	19.9
50-59 years	4,457	14.7	14.7
60-69 years	6,048	19.9	19.9
70 years and older	3,686	12.1	12.1
Missing	0	0.0	0.0
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Wie alt sind Sie?

1. 18 bis 20 Jahre
2. 21 bis 24 Jahre
3. 25 bis 29 Jahre
4. 30 bis 34 Jahre
5. 35 bis 39 Jahre
6. 40 bis 44 Jahre
7. 45 bis 49 Jahre
8. 50 bis 59 Jahre
9. 60 bis 69 Jahre
10. 70 Jahre und älter

Recoded options:

1. 18-29 years (01-03: 18 bis 20 Jahre, 21 bis 24 Jahre, 25 bis 29 Jahre)
2. 30-39 years (04-06: 30 bis 34 Jahre, 35 bis 39 Jahre)
3. 40-49 years (01-03: 40 bis 44 Jahre, 45 bis 49 Jahre)
4. 50-59 years (01-03: 50 bis 59 Jahre)
5. 60-69 years (01-03: 60 bis 69 Jahre)
6. 70 and older (01-03: 70 Jahre und älter)

Education

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Still in school, no degree	108	0.4	0.4
8 th grade	8,883	29.2	29.3
High school	10,227	33.6	33.7
University prep	9,234	30.4	30.5
Professional degree	456	1.5	1.5
University-level	1,396	4.6	4.6
Missing	90	0.3	
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Welchen Schulabschluss haben Sie selbst?

1. Hauptschulabschluss
2. Mittlere Reife
3. Abitur
4. Abgeschlossenes Fachschulstudium
5. Abgeschlossenes Universitäts-, Hochschul- bzw. Fachhochschulstudium
6. Keine Hauptschulabschluss
7. Noch in der Schule
8. Keine Ahnung

Recoded Options:

0. No degree or still in school
1. Secondary school
2. High school degree
3. Higher education (university prep)
4. Professional degree
5. University-level

Employment

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Valid Percent</u>
Not in work force	12,118	39.9	40.4
Employed	16,443	54.1	54.9
Unemployed	1,404	4.6	4.7
Missing	431	1.4	0.0
Total	30,396	100.0	100.0

Source: POLITBAROMETER 2005, GESIS

Sind Sie zur Zeit berufstätig? (*Are you currently employed?*)

1. Voll beschäftigt
2. Teilzeit beschäftigt
3. In Kurzarbeit
4. Erziehungsurlaub, Mutterschutz
5. Arbeitslos, un Umschulungsmaßnahme

- 6. Arbeitslos, ohne Umschulungsmaßnahme
- 7. Rente, Pension, Vorruhestand
- 8. In Ausbildung/ (Hoch-)Schule
- 9. Wehr-/ Zivildienst
- 10. Nicht berufstätig/ Hausfrau/ Hausmann
- 99. keine Ahnung
- 00. nicht erhoben

Recoded Options

- 0. Out of work force (07-10: Rente, Pension, Vorruhestand, In Ausbildung/ (Hoch-)Schule, Wehr-/ Zivildienst, Nicht berufstätig/ Hausfrau/ Hausmann)
- 1. Employed (01-04: Voll beschäftigt, Teilzeit beschäftigt, In Kurzarbeit, Erziehungsurlaub, Mutterschutz)
- 2. Unemployed (05-06: Arbeitslos, mit Umschulungsmaßnahme, Arbeitslos, ohne Umschulungsmaßnahme)
- 99. Don't know/ not asked (0,9)

Appendix C

Satisfaction with Democracy

Table 5.2 Satisfaction with Democracy

	Estimate (B)	Standard Error	P value
Region	0.75	(0.17)	0.00
Economic Situation	-0.57	0.10	0.00
Employment	0.05	0.13	0.69
Age	0.04	0.44	0.419
Education	-0.18	0.07	0.01
Attitude/Immigration	0.48	0.09	0.00
Pseudo R ²	0.13		
N	1,589		

Note: Data come from the Politbarometer 2005. Table entries are logit estimates. 2-tailed test. P-value represents the probability that we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no effect of region on dissatisfaction with democracy. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Both region and perceived economic status are significant in predicting support for satisfaction with democracy; however, they have different correlations. It is shown by this analysis that region significant influences dissatisfaction with democracy with citizens in eastern Germany more likely to be dissatisfied with democracy. Personal economic situation is negatively correlated with satisfaction with democracy, meaning that the more positively one perceives their personal economic situation, the more likely to be satisfied with democracy. Logically, this makes sense, as one is not likely to be dissatisfied with the status quo if they perceive their economic situation positively.

Employment status is, much like with support for right-wing extremism, insignificant to predicting satisfaction or dissatisfaction with democracy. Similarly, age

is not significant in predicting satisfaction with democracy. This means that those who experienced the socialist regime and were indoctrinated with socialist ideology are neither more likely nor less likely to be satisfied or dissatisfied with democracy. However, education remains a predictor of satisfaction with democracy, meaning that the higher the level of education one receives, the less likely they are to be dissatisfied with democracy.

A perceived level of conflict with immigrants is significant in determining satisfaction with democracy. Using the results from the previous models, it can be assumed that in eastern Germany, dissatisfaction with democracy is positively correlated with a higher perceived level of conflict between immigrants and Germans. We see a positive correlation indicating that the stronger the perceived conflict between immigrants and Germans, the more likely one is likely to be dissatisfied with democracy. While this finding is not enough to support the statement that *citizens who perceive a high level of conflict between immigrants and Germans are more likely to support right-wing extremist parties*, it is enough to support the claim that *citizens in eastern Germany are more likely to be dissatisfied with democracy* which has been shown to be positively correlated with an increased perception of higher levels of conflict between Germans and immigrants and support for right-wing extremist parties.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Education:

- University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
M.A. 2010, Political Science
Master's Thesis: "Politically Divided: a comparative analysis of German right-wing extremist voter support"
- Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN
B.A., 2007, International Studies, Political Science and German
Senior Thesis: "Wir sind ein Volk!: Democracy and exit-voice dynamics in eastern Germany post unification"
- Albert-Ludwigs Universität Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany
Indiana University/IES Joint Overseas Study Program

Research Interests:

Voter Behavior - European Politics - Comparative Politics - Methodology

Awards and Honors:

- J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship, Germany, 2010-2011
- Graduate Dean's Citation Award, University of Louisville, 2010
- Best Graduate Research Paper, Kentucky Political Science Association, 2010
- Jean and Eleanor O'Sullivan Award, University of Louisville, 2008-2009, 2009-2010
- Outstanding Political Science Senior Seminar Paper, Indiana University Southeast, 2007
- Outstanding Student, German Department, Indiana University Southeast, 2007
- Outstanding Student, International Studies Department, Indiana University Southeast, 2007
- Deans List Award, Indiana University Southeast, 2003-2007
- Overseas Study Scholarship, Indiana University, 2005-2006
- Overseas Study Scholarship, Indiana University Southeast, 2005-2006
- Lee Hamilton Scholarship, Indiana University Southeast, 2005-2006
- Phi Eta Sigma, Indiana University Bloomington, 2002-2003

Research Conferences:

- “Sind die Deutschen wirklich ein Volk?: Voter Behavior and Leftist Party Support in a “united” Germany” Kentucky Political Science Association Meeting, Murray, Kentucky, March 2010.
- “Wir sind ein Volk!: Democracy and exit-voice dynamics in eastern Germany post unification” National Conference of Undergraduate Research, Salisbury, Maryland, April 2008
- “Voter Behavior Prediction Theories and the Front National,” Indiana University Undergraduate Research Conference, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2006
- “German Welfare Reform and its Effects on German Politics,” Indiana University Undergraduate Research Conference, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2005

Employment:

Graduate Research Assistant, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY (2008-present)

- Assisted Prof. Michael Fowler and Prof. Julie Bunck in the preparation of two book manuscripts and four journal articles; researched topics ranging from the United Nations to drug trafficking in Latin America; checked citations and bibliographies.
- Collected data for Prof. Jason Gainous on Internet campaigning and electoral success: tracked Congressional candidates nationwide in the 2008 election and tabulated their web pervasiveness using weekly Google Page Ranks; researched candidates and compiled a database in SPSS to organize factors which influence vote share, such as age, incumbency, campaign funding, years in political office, district, ethnicity, and district competitiveness.
- Utilized academic databases, such as Academic World News and Ethnic News Watch, to conduct content analyses for Profs. Laurie Rhodebeck and Jason Gainous of American print media from 1988 until 2008, focusing primarily on gay rights, presidential candidates, major political parties; and minorities and moral values.

Additional Research Experience:

- Edited and proofread for Cliff Staten. 2008. “From Terrorism to Legitimacy: Political Opportunity Structures and the Case of Hezbollah.” *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* 8(1): 32-49.
- Edited, checked citations and created bibliography for Sumihiro Kuyama and Michael R. Fowler. 2009. *Envisioning Reform: Enhancing U.N. accountability in the twenty-first century*. New York: United Nations University Press.
- Created tables and figures, used DEA and State Department data to analyze specific drug use (marijuana, cocaine and heroin) in Central America for Julie Bunck and Michael Fowler. Anticipated publication 2010. *Bribes, Bullets, and Intimidation: drug trafficking and the law in Central America*. Penn State Press.
- Edited, organized and checked citations, and proof-read for Dewey Clayton. 2010. *The Presidential Campaign of Barack Obama: A critical analysis of a racially transcendent strategy*. New York: Routledge.

Teaching Experience:

University of Louisville, Louisville, KY Graduate Assistant, Spring 2009

- Assisted Prof. Laurie Rhodebeck in Spring 2009 in teaching two sections of POLS 201: Fundamentals of the American Government, concentrating on the Articles of Confederation, the Constitution, Federalism, Civil Liberties and Civil Rights, and Voter Behavior; organized and led study sessions to help prepare students for exams; graded approximately 70 student research papers; maintained grades using Blackboard for roughly 200 students.

Kelly Educational Services, Jeffersonville, IN, Substitute Teacher, 2007-2008

- Taught approximately 100 students 11th grade English, concentrating on American Revolutionary Literature, at Corydon Central High School during teacher's maternity leave.
- Created and executed lesson plans on early American Literature while incorporating Indiana Education Standards.

Indiana University Southeast, New Albany, IN, Supplemental Instructor (Introduction to International Relations), 2005

- Introduced students to various studying and note-taking methods while reviewing lecture and reading materials.
- Increased students' interest in International Relations by incorporating news into weekly supplemental instruction.

Additional Relevant Work Experience:

World Affairs Council, Louisville KY Intern/Volunteer (2007- 2008)

- Worked with the Executive Director, Benjamin Jones, and Program Manager, Matt Madden, to broaden and to revitalize the Global Issues Forum and Global Economic Forum.
- Researched, invited, and accommodated international speakers.

Extracurricular Activities:

- Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville, 2009-2010
- Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville, 2009-2010
- Graduate Research Symposium Committee, University of Louisville, 2010
- Model Arab League, Miami University, Hamilton, OH, 2007
- High School Model United Nations, Chair, Indiana University Southeast, 2005, 2007
- Indiana University Southeast Civil Liberties Union, Member, 2004-2005; 2006-2007
- Model United Nations, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, 2006
- Model European Union, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, IN, 2005
- Indiana University Southeast International Student Organization, Member, 2004-2006
- Indiana University Southeast International Student Organization, Vice-President, 2004

Foreign Language Qualifications:

- English: first language: fluent reading and listening comprehension, advanced writing
- German: second language: B.A., German; one year study in country, lifelong family exposure
- French: studied three years, intermediate levels for reading and listening comprehension

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