UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Bachelor Thesis

Social Democratic and Conservative standpoints on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England and North Rhine-Westphalia

Labour Party and SPD in comparison to Conservative Party and CDU

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Summary

Every political decision, regardless of its topic, reflects the ideas, attitudes and beliefs of those who make it. These ideas, attitudes and beliefs are usually summarised under the expression of political ideology. A common way to illustrate differences in political ideologies is a bipolar scheme which divides the political landscape along the two opposing ends of Conservatism and Socialism.

In this thesis it shall be investigated whether political ideologies play a role for the selection and implementation of major (local) democratic reforms. On the basis of a comparative discourse analysis between the German federal state of North Rhine Westphalia on the one hand and England on the other hand it will be tried to identify ideological differences between Social Democratic and Conservative standpoints regarding local democratic reforms, since Social Democrats and Conservatives are both major actors in the political arena. The local government reform in question deals with the introduction of directly-elected mayors in both countries.

The main research question of the analysis will be: **What are the effects of the different ideological standpoints of CDU/Conservatives and Social Democrats (SPD/Labour) on the respective outcomes of the local government reform debates about directly-elected mayors in England and NRW?**

In order to answer that question parliamentary debates in both countries as well as the corresponding party programmes of the parties will be analysed.

After this short general summary, the following part presents an introduction to the topic of directly-elected mayors in Germany and England.

Introduction

According to Wollmann (2008, p. 279) "In recent years in most European countries local government reforms have been pushed […], motivated and driven particularly by two concerns". He refers to these two concerns as a democratic deficit on the one hand and a performance deficit on the other hand (Wollmann, 2008). With regard to the historical roots of the German, and also of other continental European local-government systems Kersting, Caulfield, Nickson, Olowu and Wollmann (2009, p. 52) state that these systems "[...] have been rooted in the dualistic principle under which deliberative decision-making power falls to the elected local council while […] a local executive (mayor, magistrat) both carries out council decisions and exercises certain executive functions not derived from the council".

In Germany, the introduction of the directly-elected mayor was seen as a means to strengthen participatory possibilities for the citizens, to strengthen the institution of the mayor generally and to boost administrative efficiency (Bogumil & Holtkamp, 2006) already back in the early 1990's when the procedure was introduced nationwide. At this time several important reform waves occurred in German local government. As a first step, a territorial reform was realised "[...] in order to create a territorially viable basis for the traditional multi-function model of local government" (Wollmann, 2004b, p. 652). Moreover decentralisation took place in the sense that many tasks were transferred from the federal to the local level (Wollmann, 2004b) and in addition to that, on the political level, two other very important reforms were started: First of all local referendums were introduced in each federal state of Germany in what Wollmann (2004b, p. 652) calls "[...] a striking sequence of congruent legislative moves [...]". In a second step directly-elected mayors were introduced throughout the whole of Germany. Wollmann (2004a, p. 154) comments: "In the early 1990's, in a spectacular sequence of legislative acts, all Länder one after another amended their individual municipal statutes by introducing a directly elected (chief executive) mayor -as well as, in most Länder, a directly elected (chief executive) head of county administration (Landrat) [...], thus following in the footsteps of the two South German Länder, Bayern and Baden-Württemberg, where the directly elected chief executive mayor has been in place since the late 1940s and early 1950s". Although the different Bundesländer in Germany show certain basic similarities concerning their ultimate adoption of the directly-elected mayor they also show significant differences which have their origins on the one hand in "[...] different regional traditions and political constellations [...]" (Wollmann, 2005, p. 4), but on the other hand also in the influence which the different occupational forces exercised on the political structures of the newly formed Federal Republic of Germany after 1945 (Wollmann, 2005).

With regard to the administrative reforms in Germany in the 1990's Kersting (2008, p. 226) states that they "[...] tended to strengthen the head of the administration" which again takes up one of the main goal of this particular reform wave. Additionally, "representative democracy includes a negative tendency of exclusive hierarchical steering" (Kersting et al., 2009, p. 16). In such an environment means of direct participation, such as the directly-elected mayor, can be used to "[...] optimize the decision-making process [...]" (Kersting et al., 2009, p. 16).

As mentioned before the introduction of directly-elected mayors originated from "[...] a demand for the strengthening of political and administrative local leadership" (Wollmann, 2008, p. 279). Quinlivan (2008, p. 609) goes as far as saying that

"[...] The direct election of mayors is a global movement [...]", referring "[...] to the adoption of the elected mayor system during the 1990s in the former Eastern Bloc [...], in South America […] and in countries as diverse as Uganda, Mozambique, Israel and the Indian states of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh" (Quinlivan, 2008, p. 609-610).

In many countries where the direct election of mayors was debated and later introduced "[...] the arguments in favour [...] focused on increased visibility, better leadership, higher electoral turnout, speedier decision-making and more efficiently run councils" (Quinlivan, 2008, p. 610). These arguments resemble those brought forward by Bogumil and Holtkamp, but also Kersting in relation to Germany as mentioned above and the arguments used in England at the time when the debate on directly-elected mayors started were very similar, too. Quinlivan (2008, p. 611) states: "The Government promoted the concept of directly-elected mayors, stressing speed of decision-making, greater accountability and a renewal of interest in local government".

In contrast to Germany the direct election of mayors has not yet been introduced nationwide in England. In order to illustrate the background of the English situation it is necessary to take a look at the reform developments of the past decades in the country. Compared to Germany the dealing of the central government in London with it's local level was quite different. In England reforms were implemented, too and changes started in the 1980's after the government under Margaret Thatcher came to power. Wollmann outlines several developments: "First, driven [...] by the party political wish to weaken Labour, still well entrenched in local government, the Conservative government aimed at curtailing the powers of the local authorities and at strengthening its top-down grip over them" (Wollmann, 2004b, p. 644). In order to increase it's control further, in a second step, the central government reduced the functional spectrum of the local level and transferred a number of tasks "[...] to special-purpose agencies and organisations [...]" (Wollmann, 2004b, p. 644), so called quangos which is short for quasi-non-governmental organisations. This development can be described as "[...] quangoisation [...]" (Wollmann, 2004b, p. 644) and has, since it's beginnings, become dominant throughout the whole local level of England (Wollmann 2004b). In essence, Wollmann says, the government under Thatcher "[...] transformed England from a (historically) unitary highly decentralised into a unitary, highly centralised country, thereby falling out of step with the rest of Europe" (Wollmann, 2004b, p. 645).

However, when the ruling Conservative government was replaced by a Labour government after the general election in 1997 the situation changed again as the

government under Tony Blair started an ambitious programme aimed at revitalising local government (Wollmann, 2004b). The crucial feature of that programme was the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England. As stated before the direct election of mayors is no nationwide standard in England and it can be argued that the main reason for that is probably the fact that the government did not compel its municipalities to simply adopt the model, but instead the Local Government Act of 2000 gave them the freedom to choose from three different possibilities (Wollmann, 2008). These will be shortly explained in the following: The first option was called 'Cabinet with leader'. "The leader is elected by the council majority while the (executive) councillors are either also elected by the council majority or appointed by the leader" (Wollmann, 2008, p. 284). The second possibility, which was clearly favoured by the government in Westminster, was a direct election model. Here "the mayor is elected by the local population and appoints a small cabinet of councillors, each covering a major policy area" (Wollmann, 2008, p. 284). The third and last option consisted of an elected mayor and a council manager. "The mayor is elected by the local population. The council appoints a council manager and possibly other chief officers, too" (Wollmann, 2008, p. 284). The Local Government Act required each municipality which would opt for one of the latter two options "[...] to get local approval through a referendum. A petition in favour of one of the mayoral models signed by more than 5 per cent of the local electorate could also trigger a referendum" (Quinlivan, 2008, p. 612). However the vast majority of all English municipalities, namely 81% (Wollmann, 2008), chose the cabinet with leader option and not one of the other two direct options thus acting clearly against the wishes of the government.

If one recapitulates these developments and outcomes in both Germany and England the question comes up why these developments in the two countries happened in the ways they happened and why Germany and England have not followed similar paths with regard to the introduction of directly-elected mayors. Wollmann (2008, p. 284) argues that the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England meant -despite "[...] the introduction, by way of referendum, of a directly elected Mayor of Greater London in May 1998 [...]"- a change which was absolutely "[...] unprecedented in England's local government history". Moreover, Kersting et al. (2009, p. 52) state that "the monistic local government systems such as in […] England […] are historically premised on the principle, according to which the elected local council possesses comprehensive powers that comprise deliberative decision-making as well as the executive direction and control over the administration and implementation of local government tasks". The latter statement

further supports the idea that directly-elected mayors were, except for Greater London, something quite extraordinary in the light of the English local-government history. And even though the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia was located in the British Occupation Zone after the end of the Second World War (Wollmann, 2005) it did not enact the introduction of directly-elected mayors in a similar way to England, but instead directly-elected mayors were introduced in a compulsory manner for all municipalities and cities. Thus the question remains, why was that the case?

Coming back to what has been said at the beginning of this work, political ideology is a factor which might have played a role here and it is the aim of this thesis to find out whether political ideology and especially the differences in underlying political ideologies of different parties matter for and what role they play in political reform processes.

Although England and NRW display a similar local government system they did follow different paths of reform. If one assumes that political ideology does play a role and influences the outcomes of political reforms there are two other points which have to be taken into consideration: First, parties which follow different ideologies are likely take different positions in relation to the topic of a reform and second, the degree to which a political party can implement its own ideology within a reform depends on its strength, i.e. the majority situation of that party in parliament. Concerning the latter point it should be noted that NRW and England pursued different reform paths although both their governments were ruled by a majority of Social Democrats at the time when directly-elected mayors were introduced, i.e. in NRW the SPD was the ruling party whereas England was ruled by a Labour Party government. This could be a hint in so far as that despite political ideology and majorities other factors might have played a role in the course of the decision-making process, too.

Research Question

With these points in mind the main research question of the planned analysis will be:

◆ **What are the effects of the different ideological standpoints of CDU/Conservatives and Social Democrats (SPD/Labour) on the respective outcomes of the local government reform debates about directly-elected mayors in England and NRW?**

Sub-questions will be:

◆ What were the ideological positions of the SPD and CDU in NRW and Labour and Conservatives in England with regard to the mayoral reform and what were the major differences between them?

◆ Can the different paths of reform in England and NRW be explained through ideological differences and electoral strengths?

◆ What is the role of certain alternative factors, e.g. factors of path-dependence or a possible punctuated equilibrium for the different results of the local-government reform on directly-elected mayors in England and NRW?

Theoretical Foundations

A basic conception of ideology

The most important theoretical element of this thesis is political ideology, i.e. the basic elements of Socialist/Social Democratic and Conservative political ideas, attitudes and beliefs, especially in relation to political reforms, civic participation, democracy and government. However, before examining these specific points a more general approach shall be presented in order to illustrate the basic assumptions behind political ideology.

There are many different definitions of ideologies, but for the purpose of illustrating the basic elements of an ideology Sargent's definition appears quite useful: "An ideology is a system of values and beliefs regarding the various institutions and processes of society that is accepted as fact or truth by a group of people. An ideology provides the believer with a picture of the world both as it is and as it should be, and, in doing so, it organizes the tremendous complexity of the world into something fairly simple and understandable. Ideologies are organized or patterned beliefs" (Sargent, 2009, p. 2). Consequently ideologies also shape the way people think and act (Ball & Dagger, 2002). Every ideology reflects certain attitudes and assumptions, but probably the two most important of all these are certain "[...] basic beliefs about human nature and [...] a conception of freedom" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 10). Thus "[...] in every case the program a political ideology prescribes is directly related to its core conception of human nature [...]" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 10). At first glance it appears as if human nature and freedom are not directly related to democracy, but it will be shown how the attitudes within Socialism and Conservatism towards human nature and freedom are linked

also to the democratic attitude of these two ideologies.

After having presented a basic definition as well as the core conceptions of ideologies in general and the importance of these conceptions the following paragraph will illuminate the specific conceptions of human nature and freedom within Socialism and Conservatism. The focus will be put on ideas of democracy and government.

Cornerstones of Conservatism

According to Ball and Dagger (2002, p. 4) "Every ideology and every political movement has its origins in the ideas of some earlier thinker or thinkers". Concerning Conservatism the authors state that "[...] there is widespread agreement that the true founder of conservatism was Edmund Burke [...]" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 89). Burke developed his ideas in the aftermath and under the effect of the French Revolution and published them under the title 'Reflections on the Revolution in France' in 1790.

As stated earlier, every political ideology has its own conceptions on particular issues, most importantly human nature and freedom. "In the case of conservatism, the fundamental conviction is that human beings are, and always will be, deeply flawed" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 88). This means that Conservatives consider human beings to be imperfect, especially with regard to human reason, but also human morale. Both are considered weak in the face of the multiple passions and desires a person might have (Ball & Dagger, 2002). Moreover, Conservatives believe that hoping for changes in human nature or hoping to remove human imperfection "[...] is vain and foolish" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 89), even dangerous. From a Conservative point of view any attempt to change human nature or society "[...] is likely to end in disaster" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 89). The only way to prevent such a disaster from occuring is to restrain human passions and desires which are, as stated before, considered the cause of human imperfection. These necessary restrictions can best be imposed by a government (Ball & Dagger, 2002). The particular ideas of Conservatives with regard to how such a government should look like will be explained in the after next paragraph.

The views just described explain the suspicion with which Conservatives view most aspects of change. They resist "[...] bold attempts to improve society" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 89) and rather favour slow, cautious and gradual small-scale changes, because they fear that radical changes endanger the stability of society which has been achieved over generations of citizens. Ball and Dagger

(2002, p. 89) remark: "This has been the fundamental conviction of Conservatism from its beginning 200 years ago in the writings of Edmund Burke". Of course Burke was aware of the fact that change was sometimes necessary and inevitable, but he promoted change through reform, rather than through innovation. Burke regarded innovation as something dangerous, because it meant the abolition of old traditions and the creation of something completely new. For him, innovation was "[...] change for the sake of change, based on abstract reason" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 93) which would ultimately lead to "[...] drastic and dangerous experiments" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 93). This attitude has remained a cornerstone of Conservatism since it's very beginnings.

As mentioned before, Conservatives think that change in the sense of reform can best be brought about if society is restrained by a government which makes sure that the human imperfection does not endanger the order of society. The question which arises from this fact is how a government should be constructed in order to be able to secure that order. Burke and many other Conservatives agreed that there was not one specific form of government which could be seen as the best, but most of them agreed in so far as they thought that a representative government was a good solution (Ball & Dagger, 2002). However, representative government in the Conservative sense meant not that it had to be democratically elected. Instead Burke argued that "The interests of the people should be represented in government […], but one did not have to vote to have his or hers interests well represented. What matters more than the right to vote is having the right kind of person in office–a wise, prudent, and well-informed person to whom we can trust our interests" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 94). Of course this view has changed over time and democratic elections have become common in many countries in the world in the course of time. But Ball and Dagger also state that although Burke formulated his views over 200 years ago "[...] many conservatives continue to share [his] views" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 95) which means that due to human imperfection ordinary people should not be given too much power and influence as they are simply incapable of using it wisely (Ball & Dagger, 2002).

Another important term which comes into play at this point is what is called 'levelling', i.e. achieving greater equality among the different members of society. According to Ball and Dagger (2002, p. 103) "Conservatives have typically been suspicious of attempts to achieve greater democracy or equality because they believe these will 'level' society". They argue that the only way one could achieve a levelled society is by taking something from rich people at the top of society and giving it to the people at the lower levels of society. However, by doing that a great

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deal is taken away from those at the top, but this amount, whatever it may be, does only provide very limited help for those at the bottom. In the end such a strategy will only lead to economic as well as social stagnation (Ball & Dagger, 2002). Additionally Conservatives "[...] see levelling as the enemy of social variety and diversity" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 103).

Summing up it can be said that Conservatives explain the way in which society is constructed through what they call human imperfection. Because of that imperfection the majority of citizens in a society would do best to give the power to a government which is composed of wise leaders who know what to do and what is best for the people. In relation to that "Democracy is acceptable to conservatives […] only if the people generally have limited power and make limited demands" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 112). If any changes might become necessary the best way to bring them about is through slow and careful reform rather than through radical innovation. Anything other than that "[...] might be democratic, but could not be conservative" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 112).

The past paragraphs gave an overview of the most important conceptions and views of Conservatism in relation to human nature and more importantly to government and democracy. The sceptical and reserved attitude Conservatives displayed and still display with regard to change also affects local government reforms, such as the introduction of directly-elected mayors which is in the focus of this thesis. The analysis of the party programmes and parliamentary debates will have to show how much of these basic Conservative conceptions have made their way into the reform debates concerning directly-elected mayors in England and NRW.

After having presented the core conceptions on human nature, democracy and government as they are to be found in Conservatism, the next paragraphs will be dealing with the very own conceptions of these terms as they are inherent within the ideology of Socialism.

Socialism

In contrast to Conservatism, the fundamental assumption of Socialism in relation to the human nature is not that humans are imperfect, but "[...] that human beings are by nature social or communal creatures. Individuals do not work in isolation, but in cooperation with one another" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 115). Socialists regard this cooperation as the basis of society rather than the competition of people against each other, since they believe that all members of a society are connected through certain interdependences. These interdependences and the relations of the different

members of society which connect them form the basic social and economic network of every society (Ball & Dagger, 2002). In relation to society the aspect of levelling is important again. The attitudes of Conservatives and Socialists towards levelling are completely different. As described earlier Conservatives strongly oppose any attempts of levelling a society. In contrast to that "[...] socialists usually call for programs that will distribute wealth and power more evenly throughout society [...]" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 115). Another important aspect is that "[...] socialists, unlike classical conservatives, assign no particular value to tradition or custom" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 115). Private property is equally unimportant. The programmatic approach Socialists pursue is described by Ball and Dagger (2002, p. 172) in the following way: "The socialist goal is simple: to bring about a society that is as nearly classless as possible. […] steps must be taken to promote equality and cooperation among all members of society in order to give everyone greater control over his or her own life".

Turning to the last important element in relation to the focus of the planned thesis, government and democracy, the great emphasis which Socialists put on equality and social relationships between the members of society makes clear that "[...] socialism is an ideology committed to democracy […]. True socialism requires government of, by, and for the people" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 173). Heywood (1992, p. 102) stresses this point, too, saying: "A commitment to equality is in many respects the defining feature of socialist ideology [...]". What is most important in relation to the research questions is that Socialists aim "[...] to give everyone an equal voice in [...] decisions that affect his or her life in direct and important ways" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 173). This standpoint represents a sharp contrast to what Burke and other Conservatives thought about representative governments and the importance of the act of voting. Moreover it might very well have had an influence on the standpoints of the Socialist/Social Democratic parties in England and NRW in relation to the issue of directly-elected mayors. Again, as in the case of Conservatism, the analysis of the party programmes and parliamentary debates will have to show how many of these basic conceptions have made their way into the reform debates in both countries.

In summary it can be said that Socialism puts a greater emphasis on equality, democracy and participation than Conservatism. Furthermore the idea of human nature as immanent in Socialism presents a sharp contrast to the one presented in Conservatism.

Tyranny of the majority

One last, but very important aspect that has to be taken into consideration with regard to any form of democracy is the so called tyranny of the majority. The term or concept comes from political philosophy and was introduced by Alexis de Tocqueville in the first volume of his book 'Democracy in America' which was first published in 1835 (Maletz, 2002). Generally, Maletz (2002, p. 744) considers democracy to be an ethos or a spirit "[...] to which individuals conform almost intuitively, and to which indeed they look up, and that spirit or ethos is rather different from pure individualism".

The core of any democracy is decision-making through the approval of a majority of people. Tocqueville argued that decisions made in such a way will of course reflect the interests of that majority, but more importantly since the people will rarely make decisions which would turn out to be disadvantageous or even harmful for them democracy fosters what Tocqueville called 'the good' for society (Maletz, 2002). However, there is one element which presents a danger to democracy because it can influence the way people think about any decisions that have to be taken. That element is populism. Tocqueville saw a connection between "[...] the unfocused populism of majority-rule governing and the threat of majority tyranny" (Maletz, 2002, p. 744). Thus the crucial question is how the influence of populism on decision-making can be controlled and how a possible tyranny of the majority can be prevented. Maletz (2002, p. 752) even goes one step further by saying: "The issue for democratic societies is not whether popular sovereignty and therefore majority rule should be "absolute" or not. It is whether "absolute" power can be constrained or limited in practice". Maletz tries to solve the issue by referring to what is known as the separation of powers or the principle of checks and balances: "The authority that is "absolute" in principle can be balanced by other essential elements of government or by informal powers, customs, or principles. When such balancing prevails, it is unlikely that the dominant power will be able to rule solely in its own interest [...]. Majority tyranny through direct political means might be a reality if majority power were completely unopposed. But such a case is rather unlikely [...]" (Maletz, 2002, p. 753). These principles of the separation of powers and the existence of checks and balances apply to democracy as a whole and thus also to all democratic ideologies. Moreover both England and NRW are democratic political territories which are equipped with both political checks and balances in the sense of a separation of their executive, legislative and judicial branches as well as with pluralistic and open societies which are able to oppose a

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possible majority tyranny if necessary.

Coming from checks and balances against a tyranny of the majority in general, in the following the specific ideas on such checks and balances within Conservatism and Socialism will be explained.

With regard to the former, and as quoted before, Ball and Dagger (2002, p. 173) first refer to the democratic understanding of Socialism by saying that: "True socialism requires government of, by, and for the people. It aims to give everyone an equal voice in the decisions that affect his or her life in important ways." After that they explain the checks and balances in Socialism which are provided by an equal separation of powers among all elements of society. This point is also once again connected to the aspect of levelling as explained earlier. Ball and Dagger (2002, p. 173) state that giving people and equal voice " […] can only happen, socialists say, if no one person or class controls controls most of the wealth and resources -and thus most of the power- within a society. Wealth and resources must be shared evenly and owned and controlled for the benefit of the whole society if true democracy is ever to take shape". In this sense levelling can also be understood as a form of diversity which prevents any actor from getting too much power and influence and thus acting as a form of checks and balances.

Checks and balances within Conservatism take a similar shape. Conservatives argue that in order "To do its job properly, the government must be strong. Yet its strength should not be concentrated in one person or in one place, lest this tempt those in power to abuse it" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 95). Because of that they emphasize the importance of what Edmund Burke called 'little platoons' which meant "[...] those secondary associations which make up society" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 95) like e.g. "[...] churches, families and other groups […]" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 95) which can help to distribute power among society and act as guards against any majority tyranny. This distribution of power and influence can, as in the case of Socialism, be seen as a means of diversity which prevents any potentially dangerous allocation of power. "In this way government will be strong enough to protect society, but not so strong as to smother the "little platoons" that make ordered liberty possible" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 95) Thus concerning the prevention of a possible majority tyranny a similar approach in both Socialism and Conservatism can be observed in the sense that both ideologies rely, on the one hand, on vital and also watchful societies and citizens to counter such a threat to the democratic order and on the other hand on the classic political separation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial branch of government.

In sum, the past paragraphs dealt with the basic and relevant features of

Conservatism and Socialism in relation to human nature, freedom, government and democracy. With regard to the latter the concept of checks and balances against a possible tyranny of the majority both in general and in particular in relation to Socialism and Conservatism was described and explained, too. In the following paragraphs the focus will be put on the connection between institutionalism and ideology since institutionalism is a second important cornerstone of this thesis. It can be used in order to explain the emergence of the office, i.e. the institution, of the elected mayor in England and NRW and combined with political ideology may provide valuable insights into the development of the local-government reform concerning directly-elected mayors.

Connections between historical institutionalism and ideology

Although institutionalism does not explicitly deal with political ideology it contains many different elements which are linked to ideology in one way or another. Before coming to these elements, first of all it has to be made clear that there is not just one institutionalist theory, but there are various different streams, all of which put a different emphasis on a certain aspect, like e.g. rational choice, sociological or historical institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996). However what all these different streams have in common is the fact that they "[...] all seek to elucidate the role that institutions play in the determination of social and political outcomes" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 5).

In the following the focus will be put on historical institutionalism. Historical institutionalists define institutions as: "[...] the formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 6). Political ideology may very well be regarded as one aspect of these formal or informal factors. Additionally four features which appear distinctive for the historical institutionalist approach can be identified: "First, historical institutionalists tend to conceptualize the relationship between institutions and individual behavior in relatively broad terms. Second, they emphasize the asymmetries of power associated with the operation and development of institutions. Third, they tend to have a view of institutional development that emphasizes path dependence and unintended consequences. Fourth, they are especially concerned to integrate institutional analysis with the contribution that other kinds of factors, such as ideas, can make to political outcomes." (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 7). Here is another point where institutionalism can be linked to political ideology since asymmetries of power

result in parts also from electoral results and thus from political ideologies. Additionally, ideas which influence political outcomes often arise from ideological standpoints, too.

Institutionalists differentiate between what they call a calculus and a cultural focus (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Hall and Taylor (1996, p. 7-8) state that from the cultural point of view "[...] behavior is not fully strategic but bounded by an individual's worldview. [...] It emphasizes the extent to which individuals turn to established routines or familiar patterns of behavior to attain their purposes. It tends to see individuals as satisficers [i. e. people who are content with something that is not the best, but just sufficient], rather than utility maximizers, and to emphasize the degree to which the choice of a course of action depends on the interpretation of a situation rather than on purely instrumental calculation". As ideology is inseparably linked with the specific world view of people it can be taken into account at this point again. Furthermore, "[...] institutions provide moral or cognitive templates for interpretation and action. The individual is seen as an entity deeply imbricated [i.e. integrated] in a world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation, of both the situation and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed. Not only do institutions provide strategically-useful information, they also affect the very identities, self-images and preferences of the actors" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 8). These identities, self-images and preferences may in turn also be partly influenced by political ideologies, ideologies may even be a part of them, depending on the individual actor.

Summing up it can be said that from a historical-cultural institutionalist point of view institutions influence the way people behave through certain patterns of behaviour to which people hold on to and which provide guidance when weighing up the pros and cons of a certain decision and that political ideologies can be considered to be an important part of these institutions, too.

Possible alternative factors in explaining the different paths of reform in England and NRW

The following paragraphs are going to deal with sub-question No. 3, i.e. possible alternative factors which might be useful in explaining the different paths of local government reforms which can be observed in England and NRW. For this purpose both theories which can be used to explain stability and also theories which can be used to explain change are going to be taken into consideration. Concerning stability path-dependence is going to be used whereas the so called punctuated equilibrium

theory (PET) will be used to explain change. In the following these alternative concepts will be presented briefly.

The concept of path dependence or path dependency is used in different areas of science, e.g. both in economics and social science. The general idea behind it is described by Prado and Trebilcock (2009, p. 350) in the following way: "In essence, path dependence describes how the reinforcement of a given set of arrangements over time raises the costs of changing them". Moreover the authors write: "The concept [of path dependence] helps us understand what has happened in the past and is particularly useful in clarifying events that are otherwise hard to explain, […]" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 353). In order to examine any status quo it is always important to examine also those past events which eventually led to that given status quo. As the concept of path dependence can be used to investigate past events it could provide alternative insights into the different paths of reform which can be observed in England and NRW regarding the topic of directly-elected mayors.

Prado and Trebilcock develop a simple explanatory model which contains three elements: "(1) an initial set of choices or random events that determine the starting position; (2) the subsequent reinforcement of those choices or events through 'feedback effects'; and (3) the degree to which switching costs may preclude good alternatives from being explored in the long run" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 351). Although path dependence models such as the one just presented have mostly been used to analyse and explain "[...] a range of economic phenomena that otherwise seem hard to explain […]" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 351) the theory can also be used to explain social and political developments. Generally it can be said that: "In political science, scholars have used path dependence theory to describe the evolution of a wide variety of political institutions, a type of scholarship generally known as historical institutionalism" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 355). Here is the connection to the paragraphs on historical institutionalism presented above. With regard to historical institutionalism scholars believe that "[...] history matters" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 355). Furthermore "In historical institutionalism, the concepts of self-reinforcing mechanisms and high switching costs have been used to better understand the 'stickiness' of certain institutional and political arrangements" (Prado & Trebilcock, 2009, p. 355). This point contributes to the emphasis on stability.

Moving from a focus on stability to a focus on change, the last theory which could provide alternative explanations with regard to the research questions of the planned analysis is the so called punctuated equilibrium theory (in the following

abbreviated as PET). The PET "[...] suggests that systems may be relatively stable for extended periods, but punctuated by short periods of rapid change" (Wollin, 1999, p. 359). In relation to England and NRW this can be considered correct since in both countries the respective local government systems had existed for decades before the debate about directly-elected mayors came up.

In order to explain the PET it is important to understand "[...] the concept of multi-level ordering or hierarchy" (Wollin, 1999, p. 361) which says that in every organisational system there exists a certain hierarchical structure (Wollin, 1999). This structure involves a certain number of "[...] elements or sub-systems at less fundamental levels [...which depend] on elements or sub-sets at more fundamental levels in the same branch" (Wollin, 1999, p. 361). The most fundamental levels are to be found at the top and further down within the organisational structure there are the more marginal levels (Wollin, 1999). What happens during a punctuation, or disruption as it is sometimes called, is that "[...] the most fundamental levels of deep structure [...] are reconfiguring, and causing consequent reconfiguration of more marginal levels in the same branch" (Wollin, 1999, p. 361). In this sense every punctuation also opens a window of opportunity to introduce and discuss new ideas which may, in the course of time and through small-scale but ongoing changes, grow to become more and more influential until they bring about a major change in the end. Generally speaking "Major change in a system requires the 'remaking' of the earlier fundamental choices and the consequent abandonment of more marginal choices that are predicated on them. [...] the more fundamental levels of deep structure are resistant to change and are an explanation for the high structural inertia in organizational systems […]. Thus deep structure resists major change, resulting in prolonged periods of limited change, but results in pervasive change to the whole system when the most fundamental levels transform" (Wollin, 1999, p. 362).

Any form of "Organizational change results from the interaction and interdependences of the different levels of the organization's durable deep structure, its external environment and the purposeful action of actors internal and external to the organization" (Wollin, 1999, p. 364, fig. 3). This process of change in the sense of the PET has four phases, namely disruption, variation, sorting and retention (Wollin, 1999). During a disruption "an irregularity disrupts one or more levels of deep structure" (Wollin, 1999, p. 363, fig. 2). The nature of such an irregularity is by no means limited and could be almost anything, depending on the context that is examined. In the following "new forms of deep structure develop in the vacuum of disorder (Wollin, 1999, p. 363, fig. 2) and a process of sorting takes place after

which "one ore more surviving variations are retained in deep structure" (Wollin, 1999, p. 363, fig. 2). After this process has been completed the system may remain stable until the next punctuation occurs.

This past section was meant to provide an overview of the relevant theoretical concepts which are going to be used in the planned thesis. It has been shown how they intertwine and that in combination they should provide a fruitful theoretical basis.

The importance of party programmes and parliamentary debates as sources of empirical evidence

The final paragraphs of this section will explain the importance of party programmes and parliamentary debates as sources of empirical evidence.

This thesis focuses on parliamentary debates and party programmes in order to determine the political standpoints of the parties in question regarding the introduction of directly-elected mayors. Jahn (2011, p. 746) emphasizes the importance of political documents like e.g. party manifestos by saying that "Since programmatic positions are different in various countries and change over time, we need a country- and time-sensitive measure. This measure can be drawn from party documents which are published on a regular basis (e.g. election manifestos). […] they can be used to deduce a party's underlying ideological position". Bara and Budge (2001, p. 591) stress that a "[...] manifesto is [...] the only official statement of policy made by […] parties". This fact is also relevant and important in the sense that a manifesto binds a party in a certain way. It is published in order to inform potential voters about what a certain party plans in the case it wins the election and thus it is also published to convince these potential voters to vote for the respective party. No voter would probably take a manifesto verbatim, but if the party was not generally holding the promises made in it's manifesto this would have severe consequences for the next election since the party would lose trust amongst it's voters which would consequently result in a severe loss of votes. During parliamentary debates the statements given by the members of parliament (MPs) of a party also present an official reaction towards the issue which is debated. Therefore, in light of these points, party manifestos and also parliamentary debates appear to be useful as empirical evidence.

This past section was meant to provide an overview of the relevant theoretical concepts which are going to be used in the planned thesis. It has been shown how they intertwine and that in combination they should provide a fruitful theoretical

basis. Additionally the importance and relevance of party manifestos and parliamentary debates as sources of empirical evidence has been outlined. In the following section the intended research design and case selection will be explained shortly.

Research Design & Case selection

The research design of choice for the planned analysis is going to be a comparative discourse/content analysis. This analysis will focus on parliamentary debates in England and North Rhine-Westphalia which were held in relation to the topic of directly elected mayors in both countries as well as on the party programmes of the two major Socialist and Conservative parties in NRW and England, SPD and CDU as well as Labour Party and Conservative Party. The case selection was done on the basis of a most-similar comparative approach since the local political and administrative level of NRW exhibits certain similarities to it's English counterparts, not least because NRW was occupied by British forces after the Second World War.

Data collection & method of analysis

Both the parliament of the German federal state of NRW (Landtag) in Düsseldorf and the parliament in Westminster offer an online database where all debates, applications and protocols of the last decades -and in the case of England even centuries- can be found. The respective debates from the period when the issue of mayoral reforms was debated in both countries were collected from there.

The relevant party programmes of the SPD in NRW were acquired via the "Social Democratic Society for local politics (Sozialdemokratische Gesellschaft für Kommunalpolitik (SGK))" with additional help of the SPD in NRW.

Material about the CDU in NRW was collected with the help of federal state association of the CDU in NRW and further material was collected from the "Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS))".

The relevant party programmes of the Labour and Conservative party in England were collected from http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/, from http://www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/ and from http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man.htm.

Conclusions will be drawn first through a content analysis of those parliamentary debates held in the Landtag in Düsseldorf and the House of Commons in London

during which the introduction of directly elected mayors was on the agenda. As a second source of empirical evidence the party programmes of the SPD and CDU as well as Labour and Conservatives, will be analysed. The analytical focus will be on the different argumentative streams brought forward by the different parties which will be related to their ideological views.

The general approach of the content analysis will be qualitative which means it will focus on drawing inferences from the content of particular arguments and standpoints and from the style in which they were formulated rather than from the quantitative counting of certain signal words or phrases. In order to be able to do so, a coding scheme will be developed based on Ole R. Holsti's work "Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities". Since debates about any political issue -or any other issue for that matter- are a matter of communication a content analysis appears appropriate as it represents "[...] a research method developed specifically for any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference" (Holsti, 1969, p. 2). Moreover, in relation to the main research question, the way in which arguments in favour and against the implementation of the direct election of mayors were brought forward, i.e. communicated, is decisive for the success or failure of a specific argument.

Data analysis

General remarks about content analysis

Content analysis is the fundamental analytical tool of this thesis therefore in the following paragraphs some basic information on content analysis as a Social Science method will be presented.

When it comes to finding a basic definition of content analysis Holsti's book "Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities" from 1969 offers two useful terms: "[...] in general terms, content analysis is the application of scientific methods to documentary evidence" (Holsti, 1969, p. 5). Furthermore "content analysis is a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference" (Holsti, 1969, p. 2).

According to Holsti there are three fundamental requirements which every content analysis has to fulfil. These are "[...] objectivity, system and generality." (Holsti, 1969, p. 3). These three elements often go together with three other very important aspects which are sampling, reliability and validity. All in all, these six elements are

crucial not only for a content analysis, but for every kind of scientific analysis. In the following each element will be explained shortly.

Objectivity means that every analysis has to be carried out in such a way that "[...] other analysts, following identical procedures with the same data arrive at similar conclusions [...]" (Holsti, 1969, p. 4). This is linked to reliability which means that "[...] repeated measures with the same instruments on a given sample of data should yield similar results" (Holsti, 1969, p. 135). Objectivity and reliability are also related to another aspect mentioned by Holsti which is that of system (Holsti, 1969).

System simply refers to a systematic conduct of the analysis "[...] according to consistently applied rules" (Holsti, 1969, p. 4). A systematical conduct, in turn, is not only vital to fulfil the requirements of objectivity and reliability, but is to a certain extend connected to the element of validity, which basically deals with the question whether an analysis actually measures what it originally set out to measure (Holsti, 1969). The goal of the analysis at hand is to find out what the effects of the different ideological standpoints of CDU/Conservatives and Social Democrats (SPD/Labour) on the respective outcomes of the local government reform debates about directly-elected mayors in England and NRW are. In order to answer this question a sample of manifestos from the parties in question and a sample of parliamentary debates on the respective reform in both countries was analysed. The analysis is based on a coding scheme which contains codes which were identified as being specific for the political ideologies of Socialism and Conservatism. The development of the coding scheme was based on the investigation of the theoretical foundations of the two ideologies as described before in the theory section of this thesis. The complete coding scheme can be found below, as well as a paragraph explaining the sampling of the data used for the analysis.

The next element, generality, "[…] requires that the findings [of an analysis] must have theoretical relevance" (Holsti, 1969, p. 5). Considering that political ideologies, such as every other thought or idea, are communicated, no matter if in a written or oral form, language is the crucial factor of this analysis in relation to the research questions. Holsti states: "[...] some form of content analysis is often necessary when […] the subject's own language is crucial to the investigation" (Holsti, 1969, p. 17). One final aspect is left, i.e. sampling. As described before the data basis for this analysis consists of a sample of those party manifestos of the SPD and CDU in NRW as well as those party manifestos of the Labour and Conservative Party in England which dealt with the introduction of directly-elected mayors in both countries. These manifestos are supplemented by the corresponding parliamentary

debates held in the Landtag of NRW and the House of Commons in London. The procedure was introduced in each country through an act that governed the relevant administrative and judicial conditions. In order to specify the analysis only those debates were analysed which dealt directly with the respective act. Similarly the analysis of the party manifestos was limited to those published for the specific legislative period in which the respective act was passed. In the case of NRW this was the period from 1990-1995, which means that the electoral manifestos for the state election of 1990 were analysed. In England, directly-elected mayors were introduced through the so called Local Government Act of 2000, therefore the relevant electoral manifestos are those for the general election of 1997.

The coding scheme

Earlier in this thesis the theoretical, political and in parts also philosophical foundations of Socialism and Conservatism as political ideologies have been explained. The relevant empirical sources and their value and importance have been outlined in the last part of the theory section while the next paragraph will be about the coding scheme and the subsequent method of coding which was used during the analysis.

Holsti states that concerning codes, or categories as he calls them, "the most important requirement […] is that they must […] reflect the investigator's research question" (Holsti, 1969, p. 95). Moreover codes should be formulated clearly and independently from each other (Holsti, 1969). As explained before, for the analysis of the relevant party manifestos and parliamentary debates the theoretical basics of Socialism and Conservatism as outlined in the theory section were transformed into a coding scheme which consists of 27 codes in total, nine for each of the two ideologies in question and nine additional code for special statements for which none of the other 18 codes could be applied. This step represents the connection between the theoretical basis of the thesis and the coding system. The codes S1 – S9 in the scheme represent the relevant elements of Socialism and the codes C1 – C9 are used for the respective Conservative elements while each pair of codes represents two opposing elements. The other nine codes represent cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing elements is possible. Since the codes S1 vs. C1, S2 vs. C2 and so forth represent the two opposing ends of a continuum of political ideology it appeared necessary to also include a code which can be applied in cases where a statement is located somewhere between the two opposing ends. Therefore the plain codes were created.

The following table shows the complete coding scheme:

Conservatism	Socialism
C1: Evolution & slow Reform	S1: Drastic Change
1 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C2: Negative Freedom	S2: Positive Freedom
2 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C3: Equality of Opportunities	S3:Equality of Outcomes
3 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C4: Wisdom & Experiences	S4:Rationalisation & Planning
4 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C5: Traditions & Values	S5: Modernisation
5 plain : Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C6: Representative Participation	S6: Direct Participation
6 plain: Used in cases where it cannot be determined whether a statement refers to representative or direct participation	
C7: Strong, independent Executives	S7: Supremacy of directly-elected Executives
7 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C8: Free, less regulated Markets	S8: Controlled Markets
8 plain : Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	
C9: Decentralisation & Subsidiarity, less Central Government Influence	S9: Centralisation, more Central Government Influence
9 plain: Used in cases where no clear distinction between the two opposing ends is possible	

Additional Aspects

Another important element despite the codes themselves is that of the units of observation which are coded. Holsti identifies several possibilities to define such

units, e.g. single words or symbols, but also full sentences or complete paragraphs (Holsti, 1969). For the analysis at hand units of observation which are described by Holsti as 'themes' were investigated. A theme is "[...] a single assertion about some subject" (Holsti, 1969, p. 116). As such it is a part of a sentence where a reference to one of the codes in the coding scheme is made. The research questions of an analysis are the factors that determine which themes are analysed. Due to the main research question of the thesis at hand the themes in question are themes about subjects such as directly-elected mayors, political reforms, local, direct democracy and civic participation. The focus is put on the various assertions brought forward by the parties in question, in their manifestos and during the parliamentary debates, in relation to these themes. In many cases several of the themes just mentioned appear in one statement found in a manifesto or in a debate which is why often several codes are attributed to a single statement. A complete overview of all statements which were coded is given in tables in the appendix of this thesis, where in eight tables the complete amount of statements is listed. One table each is presented for the codes from the manifestos and parliamentary debates, split among the four parties in question.

The past pages presented an introduction to content analysis as an analytical tool and also gave an overview of the most important elements of content analysis as a scientific method. Furthermore the methodological procedures of the thesis at hand were outlined and explained in order to account for scientific accuracy. The following parts will contain a first overview of the analysed data which should be regarded as the introduction to an in-depth analysis of the empirical evidence which will be presented later on.

A first overview of the analysed manifestos

In the following an overview of those sections of the analysed party manifestos which were examined will be presented. Some minor references concerning the coding of these sections will be given, too.

Election manifestos deal with a vast number of different topics. Due to the topic of this thesis the relevant themes, in the sense that was outlined before, which were analysed in the manifestos were those related to directly-elected mayors, political reforms, local, direct democracy and civic participation. All four manifestos which were analysed contained parts on several, though not all, of these themes. The overall length of these parts varied, too. As explained before what comes into play here is the element of themes as units of observation.

In the following the relevant sections of each of the four manifestos will be described.

The manifesto which the SPD published for the 1990 state election in NRW contains a section entitled "We want a transparent administration" (SPD NRW, 1990, p. 42). Although one might suspect that, given the title, the main focus here is transparency, civic participation is important, too and in connection to that also direct democratic elements. Another point which is mentioned is closeness to the citizens (Bürgernähe) which is also related to civic participation and direct democracy. The complete part spans just about two and a half pages, but contains a number of statements on the themes just mentioned which were coded. However, since it could not be determined unequivocally whether these statements referred to direct or representative participation they were coded with one of the plain codes of the coding scheme, namely 6 plain. As explained before the plain codes were designed especially for uncertain cases where it was not possible to make a clear distinction. One fact which is striking right from the beginning is that although the SPD is a Socialist/Social Democratic party, which would be expected to support the idea of directly-elected mayors, the corresponding section of the party's manifesto does not contain a single clear statement in favour of directly-elected mayors.

The section of the CDU manifesto for the 1990 state election in NRW which deals with themes such as civic participation and local democracy is summarised under the headline of "Citizen-close politics in cities and municipalities" (CDU NRW, 1990, p. 38). This title already reflects a certain similarity to the respective section of the SPD manifesto due to the emphasis on closeness to the citizens, a fact which is important for the comparability of the different manifestos. The respective section of the CDU manifesto spans about one page and contains a number of statements in strong favour of the introduction of directly-elected mayors, a fact that is quite surprising given the fact that the CDU is a Conservative party. The respective statements were coded S5, S 6 and S7, depending on their emphasis.

Turning from NRW to England, the manifestos published by the Labour and Conservative party for the 1997 general election contain sections on local democracy and civic participation, too, although, compared to the German manifestos, the headlines of these sections reflect a slightly different emphasis.

The Labour Party manifesto deals with directly-elected mayors within a section entitled "We will clean up politics" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 24). This title already hints at the party's intentions to bring about reforms. It explicitly announces the introduction of "Elected mayors for London and other cities" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 24) and in doing so clearly follows the theoretical foundations of it's ideology.

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The section itself is three and a half pages long and on these three and a half pages only two different paragraphs are important for the research, i.e. those in which democratic reforms on the local level, including the introduction of directly-elected mayors, are announced. They are summarised under the headline "Good Local Government" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 25).

The Conservative manifesto presents a section with a similar heading, i.e. "Local Government" (Conservative Party, 1997, p. 23). The comparability of the two English manifestos is supported by this similarity, but in contrast to the Labour Party manifesto no fundamental reform plans are mentioned. Instead, nine lines of rather general statements are offered. Towards the end of the manifesto another short note of three lines on regional government is given which bears at least a certain resemblance to the topic of democracy at lower government levels, but other than that the manifesto contained no exploitable statements. This fact could already be regarded as a hint towards the general reserved attitude that Conservatives typically show in relation to reforms.

The past paragraphs provided a general overview on the analysed party manifestos. The following section will do the same for the parliamentary debates in NRW and England.

A first overview of the analysed parliamentary debates

In both countries in question local government reforms led to the introduction of directly-elected mayors in one way or another, but the responsible governments pursued that introduction for different reasons. These reasons were, in turn, reflected by a distinctive allocation of the different codes. What is also important and influential is the fact that both countries introduced the reforms in different times which each had different agendas and represented different situations. An overview of these different situation, i.e. the historical background was given in the introductory part of this thesis.

The debates which preceded the introduction of directly-elected mayors in NRW in 1994 show a clear emphasis on direct participation from both CDU and SPD, but another aspect which is probably even more important than the mere strengthening of direct local democracy is that of administrative modernisation. As will be shown later on, modernisation played a strong role for the reform in NRW since especially members of the CDU, but also of the SPD, regarded the old Municipal Code as outdated in the sense that it did no longer mirror the reality of local politics and local democracy at the time. This meant that e.g. many citizens thought that their mayor

was the leading figure in their town hall, but in fact it was the head of the administration, called municipal director (Gemeindedirektor), who was in charge of the administration and who was taking all relevant decisions. Few citizens knew that the mayor himself was little more than a merely representative figure. Therefore many politicians argued that a reform of the Municipal Code was necessary which should end the coexistence of the municipal director and the representative mayor and instead merge the two offices into one so that the elected mayor would become the leading figure as whom he was already regarded by many people. One statement which quite clearly illustrates the underlying argumentation in this regard comes from the CDU manifesto for the 1990 state election in NRW where it reads: "The CDU NRW advocates a wholesale reform of the Municipal Code, which in it's current form does not match the understanding and expectations of the citizens and which is less and less useful for practical local politics" (CDU NRW, 1990, p. 38). Similar statements were also made during the debates on the reform of the North Rhine-Westphalian Municipal Code in parliament.

The driving argumentation behind the local government reform debate in England was about modernisation, too, but the emphasis was a different one. The English debate reached it's peak in the late 1990's, a time during which the focus was put on rising demands from citizens towards their cities and municipalities as well as potential new challenges for local government in the upcoming new century. In order to be able to react to theses challenges adequately and to deliver proper services to all citizens modernisation was, in the eyes of the ruling Labour government in England at that time, absolutely necessary. The English Minister for Local Government and the Regions at the time when the Local Government Act 2000 (in the following abbreviated as LGA) was debated was Hilary Armstrong. She described the situation in the following way: "The Bill will create the framework so that all citizens can be assured that they are governed locally by a local authority that is fit for the purpose for the new millennium" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 3). This statement illustrates the overall attitude of the Labour Party government at the time quite well. However, the Conservative opposition viewed the reform discussion in a different way. Where in the case of NRW the two main parties agreed at least to a certain degree on the standpoint that the introduction of directly-elected mayors was a necessary reform, the Conservative opposition in England delivered strong and in parts even harsh criticism and opposed directly-elected mayors on a broad front. The main concern the Conservative Party expressed was the fact that it felt that the government was imposing the reform in a top-down manner and by means of constraint.

Consequently Conservative MPs formulated their rejection accordingly which will be shown in detail during the following in-depth analysis.

The past section presented a first insight into the parliamentary debates in NRW in England concerning the country specific local government reforms on directly-elected mayors. The different attitudes behind the respective reforms have been illustrated in a general manner. The following section will contain a detailed analysis of the complete empirical evidence in relation to the main research question.

In-depth analysis

The CDU's argumentation

A complete overview of all statements which were coded in the cause of the research process can be found in the appendix of this thesis. However, for the sake of illustration the following table is included here. It presents the total amount of coded statements in all analysed manifestos and debates in both NRW and England split among the four parties which were investigated:

	SPD	CDU	Labour	Conservatives	
Manifestos	3	5	7	2	
Debates	11	22	17	13	
In total	14	27	24	15	**80**

As stated before, the discussions about directly-elected mayors in NRW and England each followed distinctive argumentative lines. In the case of NRW the emphasis was put on modernising the Municipal Code in order to level it with people's expectations regarding the role of the mayor while in England modernisation was seen as necessary in order to prepare local government for new challenges and rising demands of the citizens. In order to illustrate these reasons behind the local government reforms in both countries those statements from the party manifestos, but especially the parliamentary debates will be discussed that can be regarded as most representative of each party's argumentation.

As the summary table indicates the analysis of the manifestos of the SPD and CDU for the 1990 state election in NRW did not reveal many statements which could be coded. However, the CDU manifesto contains two statements which illustrate the party's view on the issue of directly-elected mayors quite well. The first one reads: "The CDU NRW advocates for a wholesale reform of the municipal Code, which in it's current form does not match the understanding and expectations of the citizens

and which is less and less useful for practical local politics" (CDU NRW, 1990, p. 38). Due to the emphasis on reform it was coded S 5. For the CDU, a reform such as the one it demanded in it's manifesto also included the direct election of mayors. The second of the two statements shows why the CDU deemed the introduction of directly-elected mayors so important: "Citizen-close politics need more influence by the citizens. We want the citizens to be able to elect their mayors directly in the time to come" (CDU NRW, 1990, p. 38). This statement was coded S 6 and S 7 for the references to the direct election of the mayor. These two statements show two of the main reasons brought forward by the CDU in relation the local government reform on directly-elected mayors in NRW. On the one hand the procedures prior to the introduction were regarded as outdated and no longer adequate for the political reality and on the other hand the introduction of directly-elected mayors was seen as a means to update the political and administrative system in a way which would reflect the demands and needs of the citizens better.

Additional statements made by members of parliament (MP) of the CDU during the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors further illustrate the party's attitude. As derived from the manifesto, the CDU's goal was to reform the Municipal Code in order to fulfil the expectations of the citizens. Two statements made by CDU MP Mr. Leifert during the first parliamentary debate about the introduction of directly-elected mayors make this quite clear. The first one reads: "70% of the citizens know that the mayor is the representative of the municipality and head of the council, but wrongfully believe that he can give orders to the municipal director and can even decide about the smallest administrative issues or let them be carried out to his orders respectively" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/92, p. 11592). Because of this discrepancy between the citizen's beliefs and the administrative and political reality a reform appeared necessary for the CDU. The second statement made by MP Leifert further supports this. He said: ""The CDU still supports the merging of the two offices [of the municipal director and mayor]" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/92, p. 11593). This statement was coded S 5 due to the demand and support of a local government reform. Another statement made by Mr. Leifert during the second parliamentary debate on directly-elected mayors in NRW furthermore explains the CDU's view of the issue: "A reform was and is necessary in order to prepare our municipalities for the coming decades […] so that they can meet the citizen's rising demands for stronger, more direct rights of participation" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/130, p. 16224). This statement was coded as S 5, too.

In sum, these five statements from the CDU manifesto for the 1990 state election of NRW as well as from the parliamentary debates about directly-elected mayors

present a clear view of the party's attitude towards the respective local government reform and the reasons behind it.

In general, the analysis just conducted on the CDU shows one striking result, i.e. the fact that none of the analysed statements could be coded with any Conservative code, instead all codes detected are Socialist ones. Furthermore, as can be seen in the code tables in the appendix, all arguments brought forward by the CDU were coded with a code from the Socialist part of the coding scheme, not a single Conservative code could be applied. This shows that concerning the whole debate on directly-elected mayors in NRW the CDU completely left it's traditional ideological paths and pursued an argumentation which one would normally expect to find within the SPD as a classical Socialist/Social Democratic party and this in turn indicates that political ideology was not the decisive factor in the case at hand. However, the analysis if the CDU statements was only one part of the analysis as a whole, so before any conclusions are drawn, the next part of the analysis will deal with those statements made by the SPD in their manifesto and during the debates in parliament that can be regarded as quintessential for the party's argumentative line in relation to directly-elected mayors.

Arguments used by the SPD

As described in the overview section before, the SPD manifesto for the 1990 state election in NRW did not contain any statements related specifically to the directly-elected mayor. Moreover, the total number of statements coded from the manifesto was only three (see summary table) and on top of that these three statements were all rather general. The first one reads: "The SPD in NRW banks on responsibility and participation of all citizens" (SPD NRW, 1990, p. 42). This statement was coded as 6 plain, since the term 'participation' as such could both refer to direct or representative forms of participation. The second statement reads: "Local self-administration […] has to be strengthened and expanded" (SPD NRW, 1990, p.43) and was also coded as 6 plain, since local self-administration involves means of participation, too. The final statement simply states: "The SPD wants civic participation" (SPD NRW, 1990, p. 43). This statement, as the other two, was also coded 6 plain since it is not possible to determine whether civic participation refers to direct or representative means. Though these statements are all very general and do not leave much room for interpretation they at least show that the SPD did support means of civic participation which corresponds to it's ideological roots. However, statements made by SPD MPs during the debates on directly-elected

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mayors in parliament in NRW can be used to further illustrate the party's argumentative line.

Especially at the beginning of the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in parliament the statements made by SPD MPs still showed a rather reserved and unspecific attitude. One statement made by Dr. Schnoor, who at the time was minister of the interior of NRW, shows this quite well: "Our proceedings will be about the cornerstones of local self-administration: […] Expansion of direct civic participation without questioning the representative system [...]" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/92, p. 11581). Again, only an 'expansion of direct civic participation' is mentioned, but nothing really concrete, therefore the statement was coded 6 plain. Furthermore, the reference to the representative system is something that fits the Conservative code of C 6, but does not fit to any Socialist code which indicates that at this point of the debate, the SPD did not yet consequently follow an argumentation one would expect from a Social Democratic Party. However, this changed in the course of time. In the second debate Minister Schnoor, who was one of the strongest supporters of the introduction of directly-elected mayors, made a statement in which he summarised the most important arguments in favour of directly-elected mayors: "In the opinion of many citizens and local politicians the current Municipal Code blurs the responsibilities between the council and the administration but above all between the mayor and the municipal director. But for me competences and responsibilities belong together compulsorily. […] This is an important principle [...] and it is why we had to give up the separation between the mayor and the municipal director. […] With this law the competences of the council and the new mayor are clearly described and separated without one side dominating the other" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/130, p. 16243). Although no specific codes could be applied to this statement it certainly is more in line with the expected argumentation of the SPD as a Social Democratic party and also signalises growing support of the SPD for directly-elected mayors. Another statement which underlines this support was made by SPD MP Mr. Farthmann in the final debate. He said: "[...] we are of the opinion that a reform of the Municipal Code was overdue. […] Many citizens expected the mayor to play a leading political role […]. If the mayor had simply followed the Municipal Code he would not have been able to fulfil the expectations of the citizens. […] The office of the mayor, which according to the current Municipal Code is still an honorary office, can no longer be executed on just an honorary basis" (Landtag NRW, Plenarprotokoll 11/132, p. 16528). In this case the code S 5 was applied due to the reference to the need of a reform. Generally, the discussion of these SPD statements, presents an interesting picture

in the sense that the support for directly-elected mayors from the party did build up in the course of the debates, whereas it appears as if the CDU supported directly-elected mayors already from the beginning. This situation, once again, seems to indicate that ideology was not the the important factor in relation to the issue as a whole, since the CDU followed an argumentative line which is not typical for a Conservative party and the SPD needed some time before finally coming to an argumentation that did correspond to her ideological roots, but which in some parts was not as strong as expected. In the end the direct election of mayors was introduced in NRW by an absolute majority, which the SPD held during the respective legislative period.

After having discussed and analysed the quintessential statements and arguments brought forward by the CDU and SPD in relation to the debate on directly-elected mayors in NRW, the results are mixed in the sense outlined above. The following section will contain an in-depth analysis of the statements and arguments used by the Labour and Conservative party in England during the discussion on directly-elected mayors there.

Directly-elected mayors in England: Arguments of the Labour Party government

As explained, one of the goals of the Labour government after it came to power in 1997 was to revitalise and especially modernise local government. This goal is also reflected in the language used, i.e. the arguments employed. One statement from the Labour Party's manifesto for the 1997 state election reads: "Labour is committed to the democratic renewal of our country through decentralisation and the elimination of excessive government secrecy" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 3). This statement was coded S 5 because of the mentioning of 'democratic renewal' which can be interpreted as a reference to reforms. The fact that a statement like this appears quite early in the manifesto, namely on page 3, can also be regarded as a hint on how important the topic was to the Labour Party. One element of the democratic renewal proclaimed by the party was the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England which was announced in the manifesto in the form of a statement which was, among others, put on a list of different elements which the Labour Party planned to put into practice should it win the election. The respective statement simply reads: "Elected mayors for London and other cities" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 24). Since it explicitly names directly-elected mayors it was coded S6 & S 7. On the same page the following statement was made: "We will encourage

democratic innovations in local government, including pilots of the idea of elected mayors with executive powers in cities" (Labour Party, 1997, p. 25). This statement was accordingly coded S 5, S 6 & S 7.

All these statements give a first impression of the argumentative line Labour pursued in relation to the issue of a local-government and local democratic reform which, inter alia, also involved directly-elected mayors. A look at the arguments used by Labour Party MPs during the parliamentary debates about the Local Government Act 2000, which among other issues contained paragraphs on the direct election of mayors, will provide further insight into the party's argumentation.

One statement made by Labour Party MP Louise Ellman presents many of the main arguments behind the idea the Labour government was pursuing through the introduction of directly-elected mayors. She said: "The Bill is about revitalising local government, but it is also about preparing local government for change—change that will be very important if local government and local democracy are to lead developments in the new century by ensuring that local authorities work as effectively as possible, and by leading local communities" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 50). Here the emphasis is put on effectivity/efficiency, an argument which was widely associated with the introduction of directly-elected mayors, as described in the introduction of this thesis. Another aspect is that of participation and modernisation which Hilary Armstrong, the minister for local government and the regions at the time, referred to in the following way: "We have worked to give local people a bigger stake in shaping their future, and to revitalise local democracy—fostering new local democratic institutions that are appropriate for the new millennium" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 1). Both these statements were coded S 5 due to references to reforms. A third element which played a role in the discussions on directly-elected mayors was accountability. If a mayor is elected directly by the citizens, on the one hand his office is strengthened because of the legitimisation he or she receives and on the other hand the citizens know who is in charge of what happens in their town hall and can thus directly hold their mayor liable for whatever decisions he or she makes. In relation to accountability Labour Party MP Lynne Jones stated: "It has been widely suggested that there is public support for elected mayors. If the concept of an elected mayor is distinguished from a leader who is given tremendous powers by means of an internal election in which patronage can be a factor, I suggest that an elected mayor is preferable. At least that person will be directly accountable to the people" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 71). Although this statement does not brim over with enthusiasm it underlines the

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support of the Labour Party for directly-elected mayors. As a final part in the analysis of the Labour Party's argumentation a statement made by MP Beverley Hughes, who at the time was Under-Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions shall be presented. This statement and which can be regarded as quintessential for the Labour Party's argumentation concerning directly-elected mayors. Ms. Hughes said: "The Bill is part of a long-term radical change for local government—a change that is, I believe, essential if local government is to fulfil its responsibilities to local people in the future […]. This is not change for change's sake; it is happening because the present Government, unlike the last, believe in local government. We believe in local democracy, and we want to strengthen it […] to give people a real say in what their councils are doing. [...] local government in its present form simply cannot deliver effectively to local people. Fundamental change is needed" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 78).

The statements presented in the past section illustrate quite clearly the argumentation and reasoning of the Labour government behind the local-government reform it put into action: The reform was enacted as a means to revitalise local government in England which had been strongly controlled and reduced by the previous Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher. In the face of the approaching new millennium the need was seen to modernise local government in ways which would give citizens greater possibilities to influence the decision-making process and which would make local government more accountable and also more efficient. The arguments used by the Labour Party MPs which were just presented were all coded with codes from the Socialist part of the coding scheme which supports the impression that Labour did follow an argumentation which was rooted in the party's ideological foundations as a Socialist party. Moreover the whole attitude and approach with which the Labour Party MPs engaged the issue of directly-elected mayors as a means of local-government reform further supports this impression.

Coming from analysing Labour's line of reasoning concerning directly-elected mayors and local democratic reform, the next part of this thesis will be dealing with the arguments used by members of the Conservative Party during the debates on the direct election of mayors in parliament.

The Conservative Party's reasoning on directly-elected mayors

It has been mentioned in the short overview section on the English debates before that the Conservative Party, which at the time when the Local Government Act 2000

was debated was in opposition, strongly opposed the introduction of directly-elected mayors. In the following, selected statements delivered by Conservative Party MPs during the parliamentary debates on the issue will be presented and analysed in order to evaluate the reasons behind the party's line of argumentation.

One, if not the main reason for the strong rejection shown by the Conservative Party in relation to directly-elected mayors was the fear of over-centralisation. The party regarded the Local Government Act 2000 as a piece of legislation which was being imposed on the English local government level in a top-down manner and by political force. In order to explain the fear regarding over-centralisation as expressed by the Conservatives a short recourse to the ideological roots of Conservatism will be made: As expressed in the coding scheme through the codes of S 9 and C 9 Socialists usually favour a strong state in which the government has a greater influence or in other words, Socialists may favour a centralist approach. In contrast to that Conservatives, especially Liberal Conservatives, are more likely to favour decentralisation and subsidiarity while trying to limit government responsibilities and influence. From this point of view, the strong rejection of the Conservative opposition towards the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England becomes more understandable.

A first statement that demonstrates the general attitude of the Conservative Party was delivered by MP Archie Norman who said: "Far from liberating local government, Labour is imposing an ever tightening straitjacket on local democracy. Jeremy Beecham, the Labour chairman of the Local Government Association, summed that up when he warned of the strange death of local democracy…" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 17). The language and use of rhetorics, e.g. words and phrases like 'straitjacket' or 'death of democracy' clearly show the deep rejection with which most Conservative Party MPs reacted to the Local Government Act 2000. The statement was accordingly coded C 9 since it more or less directly expressed the fear of over-centralisation and thus at the same time expressed the preference for decentralisation as it is typical for Conservatives. Another statement, made by MP David Curry, shows the general reserve with which Conservatives usually tend to react to large-scale reforms: "The present system is dismissed, without finding out whether it can be changed or reformed" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 37). In this case the code C 1 was applied due to the expressed reserved attitude towards the reform. The following statement made by MP Nigel Waterson perfectly illustrates another typical Conservative line of reasoning which is that of preferring traditions and values as opposed to modernisation. Mr. Waterson expressed his regret because

the Labour government had no intentions of including a fourth reform option for the municipalities to chose from, an option that would allow them to retain the status quo. He said: "It is tragic that the Minister has told us yet again that the status quo cannot be an option" (First debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 75). According to the views expressed this statement was coded C 5. Two additional statements by Mr. Waterson will be used to further underline the concerns of the Conservative Party, before ending this section. Both statements were coded C 9 since they expressed a fear of over-centralisation again. The first one reads: "Structures, and the Government's insistence on imposing their blueprint on local government throughout the country, constituted the biggest issue on which we spent the most time" (Second/final debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 5). Once again the rejection towards the local government reform as planned by the government is expressed through strong rhetorics such as 'imposing a blueprint'. Mr. Waterson continued by stating: "To use the words of the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith), who spoke yesterday, this is a centralising Government when it comes to local government" (Second/final debate of the LGA 2000 in the House of Commons, p. 6). This statement illustrates once again the impression that most Conservative Party MPs had of the reform and the way the government was enacting it, seeing it as an act which was forced onto the country by a centralising government in a top-down manner.

In conclusion, it can be said that the English Conservative Party behaved exactly as expected compared to the ideological foundations of Conservatism as described before in this thesis. This observation is further supported by the fact that not a single Socialist code could be applied to any statement delivered by a Conservative MP during the debates in parliament, or to phrase it differently, the Conservative Party in England is an example par excellence of Conservatism.

After having completed the in-depth analysis of the manifestos and debates in both NRW and England, in the following part it will be tried to draw overall conclusions. Additionally the findings of the analysis just presented will be summarised, recapitulated and evaluated.

Conclusions

The case of NRW

The main research question of this thesis is: What are the effects of the different ideological standpoints of CDU/Conservatives and Social Democrats (SPD/Labour)

on the respective outcomes of the local government reform debates about directly-elected mayors in England and NRW?

After having conducted a detailed analysis of the party manifestos of the parties in question and of the parliamentary debates during which directly-elected mayors were on the agenda in both countries some general conclusions can be drawn: First of all, in the case of NRW the parties investigated did not behave as expected. Especially the CDU, but partly also the SPD did not always deliver statements which could clearly be traced back to their underlying ideological foundations of Conservatism and Socialism. While the SPD appeared to be a bit hesitant to support directly-elected mayors at first, judging from the analysis of the manifesto, this attitude later changed during the parliamentary debates in which the SPD MPs expressed their support for directly-elected mayors. Nonetheless this hesitation did come as a surprise since one would rather expect unfettered support on such an important element of direct democracy and civic participation from a Socialist/Social Democratic party.

The CDU, in it's argumentation and support for directly-elected mayors, presented an even greater surprise. Not a single statement of those which were coded, either from the analysed manifesto or the debates in parliament, was coded with one of the Conservative codes from the coding scheme, instead all codes applied came from the Socialist side. Moreover the CDU showed an unexpectedly strong support for directly-elected mayors, a fact which can be regarded as atypical for a Conservative party. Of course the SPD is still a Social Democratic party and the CDU is still a Conservative party, but there was a certain resemblance between the arguments used by both parties in the course of the reform debate. This can be interpreted in such a way that there was a certain basic consensus between the two parties in relation to the introduction of directly-elected mayors.

In sum, all these observations taken together show that the ideological differences between the two parties regarding directly-elected mayors in NRW were smaller than expected and consequently also the influence of these differences was smaller than expected.

This leads to the question what other factor or factors were more important and thus more decisive for the outcome of the decision-making process and this question in turn leads back to sub-question No. 2 of the research questions of this thesis namely: Can the different paths of reform in England and NRW be explained through ideological differences and electoral strengths? Since, as was just noted, the ideological differences between the SPD and CDU in NRW were not very great, electoral strengths, i.e. the majority situation in parliament at the time when the

reform was debated could give an explanation: A party usually formulates it's goals according to it's ideological foundations although there can be, as just described, deviations. However, what a party needs in order to realise it's goals is political power which means a party has to win elections. In NRW directly-elected mayors were introduced in 1994 i.e. during the 11th electoral period (Landtag NRW, 2010) in which the SPD had a majority of exactly 50% in parliament (see Ministerium für Inneres und Kommunales Nordrhein-Westfalen, electoral statistics for NRW (n.d.), last retrieved on January 12th 2014 from: http://alt.wahlergebnisse.nrw.de/landtagswahlen/1950/index.html) Consequently the reform was enacted by the ruling majority of the SPD (Landtag NRW, 1994b). Since the SPD would not have been able to do so had it not been holding the majority this shows that ideology in itself, or the differences between certain ideologies for that matter, was not the decisive factor, but that in the end the majority situation in a parliament appears to be the most influential and thus decisive factor for the outcome of a political decision-making process. Ideology was and is beyond any doubt influential since a party is elected because of it's political agenda which in turn reflects it's ideology, but overall ideology is only one factor among others which influence the results of political decision-making.

For the case of England

In the case of England the picture that emerged after the analysis of the manifestos of both the Labour and the Conservative Party as well as the statements delivered on the introduction of directly-elected mayors by Labour and Conservative Party MPs was clearer and corresponded more to the expected results regarding the ideological differences between the two parties. The Conservative Party in England expressed clear rejection to the reform and thus reacted in the way one would expect from a Conservative Party. Conservative Party MPs delivered harsh criticism on the introduction of directly-elected mayors as planned by the Labour Party government and often pleaded for a fourth option in the Local Government Act 2000 which would have allowed the municipalities to retain the old administrative system. This behaviour underlines the hesitant and refusing approach with which Conservatives often react to reforms of any kind. Also the strong fear of over-centralisation which was one of the main arguments used by Conservative Party MPs during the parliamentary debates can be regarded as typical for a Conservative party. Considering this it can be said that the English Conservative Party is a prime example of a Conservatism and sticks to it's ideological roots.

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The same can be said about the English Labour Party. The overall progressive attitude shown by the ruling Labour Party government with regard to the local-government reform on directly-elected mayors represents typical elements of Socialism as an ideology and thus also typical features of a Socialist party. The Labour Party government saw a need for modernisation in the English local-government system and introduced a reform accordingly. The special emphasis which Labour put on modernisation and partly also on direct democratic participatory possibilities for the citizens can also be regarded as typical for a Socialist party.

All in all can be said that both English parties followed their founding ideologies and consequently offered a picture of strong ideological differences. In relation to the main research question of this thesis this means that also the influence of these ideological differences on the outcome of the reform process regarding directly-elected mayors can be considered strong, analogously to the case of NRW where small ideological differences meant a smaller influence of these differences. Just as in the case of NRW the factor of majorities in parliament plays a role in England, too: The Labour Party was the ruling party at the time of the reform (Morgan, 2001) which enabled it to enact the respective Local Government Act and thus to have it's will. This again shows that ideology plays a role in political decision-making processes, but that it can not be treated in an isolated manner. Instead it is the combination of ideology and political power which influences the outcome.

After having summarised the results of the analysis conducted in this thesis the following part will contain a final summary as well as a small recourse on one of the alternative explanatory approaches presented earlier before some final concluding remarks will be given in order to bring this thesis to a close.

A final recapitulation and a short recourse to a possible alternative explanation for the developments in the case of NRW

Coming back to the main research question what has the analysis conducted revealed? As just described, the analysis of the empirical evidence resulted in different answers as to how strong the influence of the different ideological standpoints of the parties on the respective outcomes of the local government reform debates about directly-elected mayors in England and NRW really was. Additionally it has been shown that there are other and more influential factors at work in a political decision-making process.

A very short highlighting of the ideological foundations of Conservatism shall be enough to recall the very reserved and sceptical attitude expressed by Conservatives in relation to direct democracy in the sense of giving the citizens a greater say. As Ball & Dagger describe it: "Democracy is acceptable to conservatives […] only if the people generally have limited power and make limited demands" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 112). Socialism, as an ideology, presents a different view, aiming "[...] to give everyone an equal voice in [...] decisions that affect his or her life in direct and important ways" (Ball & Dagger, 2002, p. 173). So in how far were these ideological attitudes found in the argumentations of the Labour and Conservative Party in England and the SPD and CDU in NRW with regards the issue of directly-elected mayors?

As stated in the previous part of this work in the case of England the analysis presents quite a clear picture in the sense that both the Labour and also the Conservative Party followed their ideological foundations during their argumentations in the debates about directly-elected mayors, i.e. the Labour Party favoured the reform while the Conservative Party strongly opposed it. Thus in the English case the parties behaved as expected, showing great ideological differences and consequently the influence of these differences on the outcome of the reform focusing on directly-elected mayors was quite distinct, although in the end the distribution of political power between the parties was identified as the most important and influential factor.

In the case of NRW the picture revealed during the analysis was a different one since the parties in question did not behave as expected. On the one hand the CDU as a Conservative party was expected to oppose the introduction of directly-elected mayors, but it showed a strong support for the reform instead. On the other hand the SPD as a Socialist/Social Democratic party was expected to strongly support the introduction of directly-elected mayors, but did not do so from the very beginning of the respective debate. Instead the support for directly-elected mayors among the SPD developed gradually in the course of the discussion. Thus the picture for NRW presents kind of a twist regarding the two parties, their original underlying ideologies and their actual argumentations. Moreover the ideological differences between SPD and CDU were not as great as expected and thus also the influence of these differences was not as great as expected. In the end the outcome of the reform process could, analogously to the case of England, be traced back to the specific majority situation in parliament.

After this final recapitulation and before the end of this thesis a short recourse on the punctuated equilibrium theory (PET) in relation to the case of NRW will be made,

since NRW presents a special case which, analysed within the framework of the PET, appears in a unique light.

There is one factor which makes the case of NRW a special case, a factor that is unique for Germany and consequently also for NRW and that certainly had an influence on the developments regarding directly-elected mayors. This factor is the German unification. One of the alternative explanatory approaches presented earlier in this thesis focuses especially on sudden events which cause fundamental changes in a given system and that is the punctuated equilibrium theory (PET). The following paragraph will contain a short recourse to the PET in order to take a look at the developments in NRW in the special light of the aftermath of the German unification.

Since the developments in England could be explained on the basis of the original explanatory approach no recourse to the alternative explanatory approaches presented earlier in this thesis will be given for this case.

The case of NRW: The result of a punctuated equilibrium?

As presented earlier in the theory section of this work the PET is a theory which can be used to explain rapid changes in systems which until that change were stable over a longer period of time. According to the PET every such system is organised according to a certain hierarchy which is based on "[...] elements or sub-systems at less fundamental levels [...which depend] on elements or sub-sets at more fundamental levels in the same branch" (Wollin, 1999, p. 361). The elements on top of that hierarchy are the most fundamental, i.e. important ones while the sub-elements are to be found at the lower levels. In the case of NRW as one of the 16 federal states of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) it can be said that the system in this case is the FRG as a whole and the most fundamental, i.e. highest and most important level of that system is the federal government.

If a system is struck by a punctuation "[...] the most fundamental levels of deep structure [...] are reconfiguring, and causing consequent reconfiguration of more marginal levels in the same branch" (Wollin, 1999, p. 361) which in the case at hand would mean that a reconfiguration is going on at federal government level which causes other reconfigurations at lower federal levels such as the federal states.

The directly-elected mayor was introduced in NRW in 1994 which means not long after the German unification and this event can be regarded as the very punctuation which to a certain extend triggered the introduction of directly-elected mayors, not only in NRW, but in all federal states of Germany in which they had not already

existed (Wollmann 2004a). Kersting et al. (2009, p. 60), too state: "Local charter reforms started after unification".

As described before, the PET identifies four different phases which occur during a process of change: Disruption, variation, sorting and retention (Wollin, 1999). The details of these four phases have already been outlined in the theory-section of this thesis therefore the explanation will not be repeated at this point.

Starting with the first phase the German unification can be considered as a disruption which caused the rethinking and redeveloping of old structures such as the different municipal codes of the various federal states. This phase of rethinking and redeveloping can be regarded as a variation in the sense of the PET. After the process of literally debating the respective changes, which can be considered as a way of sorting, the municipal codes were amended which finally led, inter alia, to the introduction of directly-elected mayors in all German federal states. This process is equivalent to the phase of retention as described in the PET. Corresponding to this view, Kersting et al. (2009, p. 69) state: "[...] developments such as the German unification [...] made the introduction of direct democratic instruments easier".

It has already been remarked that the introduction of directly-elected mayors in NRW was less influenced by the underlying political ideologies of SPD and CDU since the differences between the ideological standpoints of the two parties with regard to directly-elected mayors were not that great and that the majorities in the Landtag of NRW played a more important role. In light of what has just been outlined it appears as if in the case of NRW, despite ideological differences and majorities, the unique historical developments which took place in the course of the German unification represent a very influential factor, too. They present an example of special window of opportunity that opened up which was used in order to promote changes at the local-government level, one of these changes being the introduction of directly-elected mayors.

Closing remarks

After all that has been said previously in this work, this final part will give some last conclusive remarks.

The results of the analysis conducted for this thesis suggest that political ideology as represented by different political parties can have an influence on political decisions, but it can not be viewed as an isolated factor. Instead, other factors such as majorities in parliament are important, too. In fact they appear to be more important than political ideology on it's own, since any ideology will not have a great influence

if it is not backed up by sufficient political power.

In the case of England the Labour and the Conservative Party corresponded exactly to their underlying ideologies of Socialism and Conservatism and thus showed great ideological differences during the debates on directly-elected mayors. This indicates that political ideology played a role for the final results of the respective English local-government reform, but nonetheless the Labour government was able to put the reform through according to it's preferences because they had the majority in parliament and not just because of their ideology.

In contrast to that in the case of NRW the arguments used by the SPD and the CDU during the debates on directly-elected mayors did not always correspond to the underlying ideologies of both parties. In addition to that there was a resemblance between the argumentations of the two parties and thus also fewer ideological differences. The decisive factor, as in England, was the majority situation in parliament.

All these observations present a picture that ultimately suggest that although ideology is an influential factor in a political decision-making process it is not the only factor that may play a role since the majority situations in the parliaments of NRW and England played a great and important role, too, a role which can be considered more important than that of ideological differences alone. Furthermore, it turned out that in the case of NRW the German unification had a special influence on the developments at the local-government level, too. Of course the German unification was a very rare historical momentum and an event which was unique for Germany as a country, but if one breaks it down it was, in essence, still a punctuation in the sense of the PET that opened a window of opportunity which was used to promote, conduct and enact political reforms such as the introduction of directly-elected mayors in NRW and other German federal states.

In essence this leads to the conclusion that political ideology is an influential factor in political decision-making, but that every decision is also a product of it's surrounding circumstances and that among these there are other factors which are more important than ideological differences like e.g. the majority situations in parliament or even special historical events like the unification of a divided country.

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Appendix

Tables 1-4: All coded statements from the manifestos of SPD, CDU, Labour Party and Conservative Party

1) Coded statements from the SPD manifesto for the 1990 state election in NRW

Statements	Coded as
"The SPD in NRW banks on responsibility and participation of all citizens" (p. 42).	6 plain *"Plain" in this case means that the statement in question fits into the category of "participation", but it is not possible to state if the type of participation is direct or representative.*
"Local self-administration […] has to be strengthened and expanded" (p.43).	6 plain
"The SPD wants civic participation" (p. 43).	6 plain

2) Coded statements from the CDU manifesto for the 1990 state election in NRW

Statements	Coded as
"The CDU NRW advocates for a wholesale reform of the municipal Code, which in it's current form does not match the understanding and expectations of the citizens and which is less and less useful for practical local politics" (p. 38).	S 5
"Citizen-close politics need more influence by the citizens. We want the citizens to be able to elect their mayors directly in the time to come" (p. 38).	S 6 & S7
"We want strong mayors, who as chief of the council and administration are	S 6 & S7

Statements	Coded as
responsible and have to put into action those politics for which they have been elected by the citizens" (p. 38).	

3) Coded statements from the Labour Party manifesto for the 1997 general election in England

Statements	Coded as
"Over-centralisation of government and lack of accountability was a problem in governments of both left and right. Labour is committed to the democratic renewal of our country through decentralisation and the elimination of excessive government secrecy" (p. 3).	S 5, since the reference to democratic renewal can be interpreted as a reference to modernisation
"Elected mayors for London and other cities" (p. 24).	This statement was taken from a list of different elements the Labour Party wanted to put into practice. Since it explicitly names directly-elected mayors it was coded S6 & S 7.
"Local decision-making should be less constrained by central government, and also more accountable to local people" (p. 25)	C 9, since the phrase "less constrained by central government" is a reference to decentralisation.
"We will encourage democratic innovations in local government, including pilots of the idea of elected mayors with executive powers in cities" (p. 25).	S 5, S 6 & S 7

4) Coded statements from the Conservative Party manifesto for the 1997 general election in England

Statements	Coded as
"Radical changes that alter the whole character of our constitutional balance could unravel what generations of our	C 1 & C 5 Although this statement does not deal wit directly-elected mayors, local

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Statements	Coded as
predecessors have created. To preserve that stability in future - and the freedoms and rights of our citizens - we need to continue a process of evolution, not revolution" (p. 37).	government or local democracy as such it was coded and is listed here because it provides an extraordinary good illustration of the overall Conservative attitude towards changes and reforms in general.

Tables 5-8: All coded statements from the parliamentary debates in NRW and England

5) Coded statements from MPs of the SPD during the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in NRW

Statements	Coded as
First Debate	
Plenarprotokoll 11/92, p. 11580-11606	
The minister of the interior of NRW, Dr. Schnoor: "That is why our discussion […] is above all about the keeping of freedom against state intervention and about the preservation and strengthening of civic participation" (p. 11581)	C 9, since keeping freedom against state intervention hints at decentralisation. Also coded 6 (plain) because of the reference to civic participation.
The minister of the interior of NRW, Dr. Schnoor: "Our proceedings will be about the cornerstones of local self-administration: […] Expansion of direct civic participation without questioning the representative system [...]" (p. 11581)	6 (plain)
The minister of the interior of NRW, Dr. Schnoor: "Through this draft law the citizens	6 (plain)

shall be allowed to participate more than before in the political decision-making in the municipalities [...]" (p. 11581)	
MP Wilmbusse: "[...] participation of the citizens in what is happening in their town hall" (p. 11586)	6 (plain)
MP Wilmbusse: "We say: We want to enhance civic participation" (p. 11587)	6 (plain)
Second Debate Plenarprotokoll 11/130, p. 16217-16312	
MP Wilmbusse: "The citizens want and have to be more directly involved in local self-administration" (p. 16219)	6 (plain)
The minister of the interior of NRW, Dr. Schnoor: "In the opinion of many citizens and local politicians the current Municipal Code blurs the responsibilities between the council and the administration but above all between the mayor and the municipal director. But for me competences and responsibilities belong together compulsorily. […] This is an important principle [...] and it is why we had to give up the separation between the mayor and the municipal director. […] With this law the competences of the council and the new mayor are clearly described and separated without one side dominating the other" (p. 16243).	Although no specific codes were attributed to this statement it is listed here because it gives an overview of the most important and decisive arguments behind the whole reform debate in NRW regarding directly-elected mayors. Therefore it is very important for understanding the overall coherences of the reform debate in NRW and is an essential piece of background information.

The minister of the interior of NRW, Dr. Schnoor: "[...] I have long wished for supplementary provisions for stronger civic participation, stronger elements of direct democracy" (p. 16244).	S 6

Final Debate Plenarprotokoll 11/132, p. 16527-16556	
MP Farthmann: "[...] we are of the opinion that a reform of the Municipal Code was overdue. […] Many citizens expected the mayor to play a leading political role […]. If the mayor had simply followed the Municipal Code he would not have been able to fulfil the expectations of the citizens. […] The office of the mayor, which according to the current Municipal Code is still an honorary office, can no longer be executed on just an honorary basis" (p. 16528).	Coded S 5 for the reference to the need of a reform, but also listed because of the background information given, similarly to the statement by MP Dr. Schnoor as listed above.
MP Farthmann: "[...] citizens shall be able to participate themselves, as far as possible" (p. 16529).	6 (plain)
MP Farthmann: "In the future citizens can participate in the decision-making process of the municipality stronger and more direct than before" (p. 16533).	S 6

6) Coded statements from MPs of the CDU during the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in NRW

Statements	Coded as
First Debate	
Plenarprotokoll 11/92, p. 11580-11606	
MP Leifert: "There is still time for the state government […] to introduce the direct election of mayors to this law" (p. 11590).	S 6 & S 7 This statement shows that the CDU supported the introduction of directly-elected mayors.
MP Leifert: "We want to strengthen the direct influence of the citizens, especially regarding the election of people (Personenwahl)" (p. 11591).	S 6 & S 7 due to the reference to civic participation and the election of people (Personenwahl).
MP Leifert: "70% of the citizens know that the mayor is the representative of the municipality and head of the council, but wrongfully believe that he can give orders to the municipal director and can even decide about the smallest administrative issues or let them be carried out to his orders respectively" (p. 11592).	This statement does not offer any specific codes, however it presents one of the main arguments of the CDU with regard to their idea of a reform of the Municipal Code and the introduction of directly-elected mayors. The following statement by MP Leifert is the logical consequence.
MP Leifert: "The CDU still supports the merging of the two offices [of the municipal director and mayor]" (p. 11593).	S 5
MP Leifert: "A full-time mayor requires a strong, direct democratic legitimisation by the citizens" (p. 11593).	S 6 & S 7
MP Leifert: "[...] we want the administration to be controlled not by members of the council and parties, but we want the	6 (plain)

administration to be controlled directly by the voting citizen" (p. 11593).	
MP Leifert: "Let us, beyond all party borders, stand together and dare a real reform which strengthens the direct influence of the citizens [and which] gives the citizens the possibility to elect their master (mayor) themselves" (p. 11596).	S 5, for the reference on a reform, S 6 & S 7 due to the reference to the direct election of the mayor.
Second Debate Plenarprotokoll 11/130, p. 16217-16312	
MP Leifert: "A reform was and is necessary in order to prepare our municipalities for the coming decades […] so that they can meet the citizen's rising demands for stronger, more direct rights of participation" (p. 16224).	S 5
MP Leifert: "The guidelines of our position regarding a modern, open and citizen-friendly administration are: First: Strengthening of the direct influence of the citizens through the introduction of directly-elected mayors [...]" (p. 16227).	S 6 & S7
MP Twenhöven: "We want the citizens to elect their mayor directly [...]" (p. 16260).	S 6 & S7
MP Twenhöven: "We the CDU trust the citizen[s]. Because of that we want the direct election [of mayors] immediately [...]" (p. 16263).	S 6 & S7

Final Debate	
Plenarprotokoll 11/132, p. 16527-16556	
MP Linssen: "The CDU demands: Without any exception shall the citizens have the right to elect their mayor directly" (p. 16537).	S 6 & S7
MP Linssen: "For the CDU it is inevitable that the right to elect a mayor is executed by the citizen at any time and without any exception" (p. 16538).	S 6 & S7

7) Coded statements from MPs of the Labour Party during the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England

Statements	**Coded as**
First Debate	
Hansard, *HC Deb 11 April 2000 vol 348 cc203-87*	
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "We have worked to give local people a bigger stake in shaping their future, and to revitalise local democracy—fostering new local democratic institutions that are appropriate for the new millennium" (p. 1).	S 5 for the reference to new local democratic institutions.
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "We are putting local people at the centre of determining what works best for them in their localities" (p. 2).	6 plain
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "The new Local Government Bill builds on the foundations of that new partnership and delivers a new democratic settlement for local	S 5

communities" (p. 2).	
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "Modern local government is, in turn, a vital part of the fabric of the dynamic, democratic, fair and inclusive society that people want to see" (p. 2).	Coded S 3 for the reference to fairness and inclusiveness
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "The vast majority of local councils have already begun to modernise their working arrangements by consulting their public and devising new ways of working that empower them to tackle 21st century problems. The Bill will create the framework so that all citizens can be assured that they are governed locally by a local authority that is fit for the purpose for the new millennium" (p. 3).	This statement illustrates the reasons and goals which the Labour government pursued with the Local Government Act 2000. Thus it contains important background information
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "[...] community strategies are [...] an important part of our plans to modernise local government" (p. 4).	S 5
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "We simply do not agree that the outdated committee system can deliver. All councils will have to change to reflect the new demands on them and the expectations of local people" (p. 5).	S 5
MP Peter L. Pike: "I hate to have to disagree with the conclusion to which my right hon. Friend is coming on the Bill, but is it not a fact that the Joint Committee, on which I served, expressed the view that an	C 1 & C 4: Experiences from the past show that the status quo has worked well, so small steps of reform are enough and therefore and option to retain the status quo should be offered.

improved status quo should be offered within the Bill? That would not be the status quo exactly as it is now, but a fourth option—an improved status quo" (p. 6).	
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "[...] the new system is part of a new culture of openness, accountability and closer working relationships with the public, and I hope that they will introduce ways of working that express that culture and which are not bound up with traditional methods" (p. 10).	S 5
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "[...] we aim to introduce a new culture, but we are also trying to find ways to ensure that there is proper, effective decision making" (p. 10).	S 5
Ms. Hilary Armstrong, the Minister for Local Government and the Regions: "The Bill is far from being a centralising measure. We intend it to return local government to the heart of local communities. It grants new powers and their attendant responsibilities to councils and the local people whom they serve" (p. 14).	6 (plain) for granting local people new powers. Moreover Ms. Armstrong tries to dispel any fears of over-centralisation.
MP Louise Ellman: "The Bill is about revitalising local government, but it is also about preparing local government for change—change that will be very important if local government and local democracy are to lead developments in the new century by	S 5 This statement is important as it demonstrates the general attitude of many Labour MPs and the overall aim which the Labour government pursued through the whole reform, i.e. preparing local government for the upcoming

ensuring that local authorities work as effectively as possible, and by leading local communities" (p. 50).	challenges of a new century.
MP Neil Turner: "I welcome the Bill, which represents the second phase of necessary change to local government" (p. 66).	S 5
MP Lynne Jones: "It has been widely suggested that there is public support for elected mayors. If the concept of an elected mayor is distinguished from a leader who is given tremendous powers by means of an internal election in which patronage can be a factor, I suggest that an elected mayor is preferable. At least that person will be directly accountable to the people" (p. 71).	S 7, i.e. supremacy of directly-elected executives, in this case due to greater accountability.
MP John McDonnell: "I welcome [...] the Government's objective of reinvigorating local government and giving it strength, new powers, new resources and a range of structures and new methods of organisation and working that demonstrate the vital role of local democracy" (p. 71).	S 5
Ms. Beverley Hughes, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions: "The Bill is part of a long-term radical change for local government—a change that is, I believe, essential if local government is to fulfil its responsibilities to local people in the future […]. This is not change for change's sake; it is	S 5 This statement presents an illustrative summary of many arguments brought forward by the Labour Party in favour of the Local Government Act.

happening because the present Government, unlike the last, believe in local government. We believe in local democracy, and we want to strengthen it [...] and to give people a real say in what their councils are doing. [...] local government in its present form simply cannot deliver effectively to local people. Fundamental change is needed" (p. 78).	

Final Debate

Hansard, *HC Deb 05 July 2000 vol 353 cc371-80*

MP Patrick Hall: "Local councils have served the country well for about 120 years. They have changed many times during that period. My approach to the Bill and to local government reform is that we should add to and improve what we already have. I am convinced, having been involved in the passage of the Bill, that we will reform local government in a progressive direction" (p. 8).	S 5
MP Patrick Hall: "I have no doubt that we are creating the means for local councils to do their job in all the years ahead" (p. 9).	S 5 This statement, as well as the previous one, presents a good illustration of Labour's all over attitude concerning the local government reform as a whole. For the government it was all about modernising local government and preparing it for new challenges of a new century.

8) Coded statements from MPs of the Conservative Party during the debates on the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England

Statements	Coded as
First Debate Hansard, *HC Deb 11 April 2000 vol 348 cc203-87*	
MP John Bercow: "[...] the principal purpose of the Bill is compulsorily to impose a system that thousands of councillors regard as less accountable, less transparent and less representative [...]" (p. 1).	C 6 due to the focus on representativity and C 9 for the fear of over-centralisation expressed in the words "compulsorily" and "impose".
MP Archie Norman: "[...] we regret that the Minister appeared to rule out the Lords amendment to allow councils to keep the fourth option—the status quo" (p. 15).	C4 & C 5
MP Archie Norman: "In short, the Bill is another ill-thought-through collection of proposals that are widely seen as unsatisfactory on both sides of the House. That is apparent today. At its heart, it reflects a fundamentally flawed thought: the Government's belief that imposing detailed structures and processes from on high will solve the problems of local government. It will not, because the problem is not one of process and structure, but one of substance—what local councils are free to do, what controls and restrictions central Government impose on them and how they are financed" (p. 16).	This statement can be coded as C 9 since it clearly expresses the general fear that many Conservative MPs show with regard to over-centralisation. This in turn shows their support for decentralisation, hence the respective code. Moreover this statement is exemplary, even though drastic in it's formulation, for the general concerns of many Conservative MPs in regard to the Local Government Act.

MP Archie Norman: "Far from liberating local government, Labour is imposing an ever tightening straitjacket on local democracy. Jeremy Beecham, the Labour chairman of the Local Government Association, summed that up when he warned of the strange death of local democracy…" (p. 17).	This statement is another clear example of the fear of over-centralisation as felt by many Conservatives. Coded C 9
MP Gillian Shepherd: "[...] it is hard to see how a Government elected on the promise that local decision making should be less constrained by central government can justify the degree of central control that the Bill will impose" (p. 30).	This statement, similar to that of Mr. Norman before can also be coded as C 9. Again it clearly expresses the general fear that many Conservative MPs show with regard to over-centralisation as well as their support for decentralisation.
MP Gillian Shepherd: "[...] the Government's rush to constitutional reform has further blurred the accountability of local government. […] The mayor [...] will be superimposed on the local government system" (p. 30).	Again the word "(super)imposed" is used which clearly describes the view of many Conservatives regarding the introduction of directly-elected mayors in England. Coded as C 9
MP Gillian Shepherd: "It is a mockery that a Bill claiming to make local government more accountable to local people denies local people the choice of retaining the management structures they already have if that is what they prefer" (p. 31).	C 5
MP David Curry: "The present system is dismissed, without finding out whether it can be changed or reformed" (p. 37).	C 1
MP Nigel Waterson: "It is tragic that the Minister has told us yet again that the status quo cannot be an option" (p. 75).	C 5

Final Debate	
Hansard, *HC Deb 05 July 2000 vol 353 cc371-80*	
MP Nigel Waterson: "Structures, and the Government's insistence on imposing their blueprint on local government throughout the country, constituted the biggest issue on which we spent the most time" (p. 5).	C 9 Mr. Waterson expresses a final concern regarding over-centralisation. Especially the rhetorical elements ("imposing a blueprint") underline the statement.
MP Nigel Waterson: "To use the words of the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Mr. Smith), who spoke yesterday, this is a centralising Government when it comes to local government" (p. 6).	C 9 This statement sums up the concerns of most Conservative MPs very well.