CHAPTER 7. The "Three Spheres of Foreign Policy Making":

Party, State, and Society

> "Of course that is the downside of a centralized state like this. When the boss says: "This is how you do it," then this is how you do it."[1]
>
> Interview with Wolfgang Bator on the 27th of May 2011

To understand East German engagement in South Yemen, we have to understand the mechanisms and details of East German foreign policy. What institutions, bodies, or persons formulated, interpreted, and implemented the policy? Who was supposed to execute this policy within East-Berlin's tight scope of action? Compared to Western democracies, the internal structures of the GDR did not only pose a very different background for foreign policy making, they also played quite a different role for foreign policy formulation itself. The political system excluded any significant participation in the state's external affairs that was beyond the control of the party apparatus. Companies, cultural societies, youth groups, the media – the SED selected any actor who was about to move outside the allied states of the Eastern Bloc with great care. The party instructed them to adhere to the Party's foreign policy directives and monitored them closely for compliance.[2] To be able to analyze and interpret the generation of East German foreign policy in South Yemen, this chapter first sketches the determinants of the political system of the GDR. Then, the Soviet Union's policy towards East Germany in the first decade after WWII[3] and the "planned development of socialism"[4] are introduced in more detail. Second, the chapter gives a short account on foreign policy actors in

1 | Interview with Wolfgang Bator, May 27 2011.

2 | A major task of the HV A of the MfS was to monitor GDR citizens working or studying abroad and to find out about their possible plans for escape, in: Kowalczuck, 2013, 252.

3 | The major policies draw on Wentker's findings and modify his analysis, Wentker, 2007, 3. On Soviet policies towards Eastern Europe also see: Applebaum, 2013, Introduction.

4 | Schroeder, 1999, 119ff; Schroeder, 2013, 110ff.

the GDR, as well as the decision-making process at the national level. Finally, this chapter introduces the relevant actors for the case study of South Yemen. Based on these findings, this chapter develops and presents the "Three Spheres Approach," a general conceptualization of East German foreign-policy-making.

1. On the Political System of the GDR and its Social Reality

> "As Marxists we should know: When we form a government, we will never give it up again, neither because of an election, nor because of any other procedure."[5]
> (Gerhart Eisler, Chief of the Department for Information)

In democracies not only is the reciprocal relationship between the national and international level decisive for foreign policy generation – so too are the demands from within the national system. For example, Robert D. Putnam's theoretical approach of the "two-level game" is fully based on the fact that interest groups at the national level are able to put significant pressure on their government to influence the country's foreign policy and its strategies according to their preferences.[6] On the international level, governments aim to consolidate their internal power and reelection within the national system: "First of all we have to make sure that we keep our majority at home."[7] Furthermore, foreign policy decision-making in democracies is complicated by both the separation of powers as well as attempts to represent "the will of the people" in policy. A concrete example is the ratification of an agreement or treaty. For this step, state policy cannot simply be "run" by the government, as von Bredow points out.[8] A functioning democracy regularly demands a positive vote in parliament at the national level as a prerequisite for the ratification of international agreements, such as in the U.S.A. or the Federal Republic of Germany.[9] In conclusion, pressures from within the system may determine a state's scope of action to a similar extent as external factors do.

Unfortunately, the convincing model of the "two-level game" and the resulting conclusions turn out to be useless when looking at the one-party system of the GDR. The central principle of organization, "democratic centralism,"[10] created a political system based on the absence of democratic control by and political participation of the governed. In Ursula Lehmkuhl's reply to Czempiel's argument

5 | Eisler, Gerhart, quoted in: Suckut, 1991, 160f. Gerhart Eisler had been a major functionary during the founding years of the GDR, in: Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffman (Ed.), 2001, 180f.

6 | Putnam, 1989, 433ff.

7 | Stoltenberg, 1986, in: Putnam, 1989, 437.

8 | Von Bredow, 2006, 38.

9 | Brugger, 2001, 36f und Maurer, 2003, 443f.

10 | The first Party Congress of the SED in January 1949, Avantgardeanspruch und innerparteiliche Diktatur Januar 1949, in: Judt, 1998, 46f.

about the limitations of foreign policy originating at the national level, she notes that in "dictatorial-authoritarian systems"[11] the state and its official agents remain the only relevant actors in the international realm. She puts forward the socialist dictatorships in Europe in the 1970s as explicit examples. According to Lehmkuhl, the leading elites in socialist regimes not only directed the state's foreign policy without any interference from within, but also restricted, controlled, and guided any international exchange below the level of government to uphold their monopoly of power. What Lehmkuhl does not take into consideration, though, is the growing dependence of the dictatorial government, in this case the SED regime, on foreign policy outcomes. In the GDR, economic and political success in the international realm over time had come to compensate for the regime's lack of legitimacy and a tool to appease the population. Therefore, foreign policy making in the East German socialist dictatorship was not fully decoupled from society, but indeed was one of the few policy fields in which the regime intended to satisfy its population's demands.

As a consequence, the following sub-chapter aims to serve two purposes: First, it clarifies the role of internal conditions and developments of the GDR's political system[12] in forming foreign policy and introduces a general conceptualization of East German foreign-policy-making, the formulation of the "Three Spheres." Second, the sub-chapter summarizes the major features of the "planned development of socialism," which was the "road map" for the SED's policy of state-building in 1952. In Chapter 10, "Methodological Prelude: Between Bonn and Moscow," these features are connected to Hippler's approach to state- and nation-building. This connection serves as the method of analysis for the concept of socialist nation- and state-building to interpret concrete East German foreign policy in South Yemen.

1.1 "It only has to look Democratic": The "D" in GDR

Reconsidering the initial quote in this chapter by Eisler, it reminds of the often-quoted statement by Ulbricht, "It only has to *look* democratic while we keep everything in our hands."[13] Even though the authenticity of the latter quote is sometimes questioned, it still aptly summarizes the SED's approach to the GDR and its nation- and state-building process. As Schroeder's comprehensive analysis of the political system of the GDR and its history concisely suggests in its title "Der SED-Staat,"[14] the state and its institutions were incorporated into the party apparatus and not the other way around.

11 | Lehmkuhl, 2001, 29.

12 | Internal developments of polity and politics, Van Waarden, in: Schubert/Bandelow, 2004, 257f.

13 | Ulbricht, Walter, May 1945, in: Leonhard, Wolfgang, 1961, 365. Leonhard, as a former member of the "Ulbricht Group" and the "Moscow cadres," quotes Ulbricht from his memory.

14 | Schroeder, 1999 (2013).

Accordingly, Storckmann pinpoints that academic discourse in Germany today is beyond the question whether the GDR was ruled by the SED, but rather occupied with the *"how"* of party rule.[15] As such, the following sub-chapter is occupied with Real Socialism, the East German interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, and how this interpretation directly affected the GDR's political system.

1.2 Marxism-Leninism, Its Claim to Truth, and the Promise of "Salvation on Earth"[16]

Despite the "democratic" in the middle of the country's name, its leading party never had the intention to establish a Western-style democracy, instead choosing to found a "dictatorship of the proletariat."[17] The principle is not only in accordance with the theoretical approach of Marxism-Leninism, but also based on the role model of the Soviet system. This study does not allow for a thorough discussion of the ideological differences between Marx and Engels' writings and Lenin's[18] interpretation of them, nor an examination of the gap between Lenin's theory and his praxis after 1921.[19] Nonetheless, the major differences at the very least have to be named to be able to interpret the discrepancy between the GDR's constitutional ideals and East German political reality.

According to Marx and Engels' approach of "historical materialism," it was inevitable that the capitalist system would exhaust itself at one point. Then, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" would overcome the condition of the worker's exploitation to finally realize worldwide communism.[20] However, both authors repeatedly warned their contemporaries that not any outcome of history could be "deducted from a general theory," as "history [was] a consequence of the interaction of many factors that must always be empirically analyzed in their specific situations."[21] Current Marxist theorists such as John F. Sitton often use sections of Marx and Engels' writings to emphasize the differences between their writings and Lenin's and Stalin's interpretations[22] led to the totalitarian reality of

15 | Storckmann, 2012, 55.

16 | Löwenthal, Messianism, Nihilism and the Future, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 462.

17 | The Dictatorship of the Proletariat [in Russia], in: Courtois (Ed.), 2007, Courtois, 1917 bis 1922, Die Oktoberrevolution, 63.

18 | Born in 1870 as Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, he later on was known as Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Read, 2005.

19 | Lenin abolished any possibility of political opposition after the Kronstädter Uprising of March 1921. Löwenthal considers this a turning point at which Lenin leaves behind his own theoretical principles. Löwenthal, Jenseits des Stalinismus, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 395.

20 | Baudouin, Jean, Marxismus, in: Courtois, 2007, 568; Kowalczuck, 2013, 25.

21 | On this interpretation of Marx and Engels' "Historical Materialism," see: Sitton, 2010, 24.

22 | Josif Wissaryonowich Zhugashwili.

Real Socialism in the Soviet Union and the GDR. These modern Marxists contrast with Richard Löwenthal, who does not attempt to "save Marxism" by emphasizing the differences between Marx's writings and Real Socialism. Rather, Löwenthal addresses Marx's writings as a theoretical starting point that caused Marxism-Leninism's landslide development toward a "totalitarian ideology."[23]

The academic debate over "totalitarianism" is a crucial one in the social sciences. As such, a comprehensive discussion of the topic simply exceeds the scope of this study. Thus, neither the history, nor the theoretical debate on "totalitarianism" will be discussed here;[24] Rather, the argument contents itself with the referral to Löwenthal's enlightening insights on the transformation of Marx's writings through Lenin and the consequences that this transformation entailed. According to Löwenthal, it was Lenin's approach that transformed Marx's

> "abstract [...] myth of the inevitable victory of the proletariat that would bring about the classless society [into an] unconditional identification of the hope of secular salvation, not with the victory of a class, [...] but with the power of a specific organized group and its leader."[25]

Despite the ideology's explicit secularism, Löwenthal considers Marxism-Leninism a political religion, as it "promise[s] salvation on earth," and "the millennial rule of the saints." What Löwenthal also touches here is the difference between Lenin's theory and political praxis. According to Lenin, "the end justifies the means" for the higher, quasi-transcendent goal of a better world. The ultimate goal of worldwide communism could only be reached by the realization of Lenin's version of a vanguard party under his leadership. Any opposition to this leadership was considered an obstacle to the ultimate goal, as Löwenthal lucidly comments: "An abstract paradise may justify crimes – but only a concrete Messiah can authorize and order them." In Real Socialism, it was the vanguard parties and their leaders who stepped forward to fill the role of this Messiah.

While Lenin relocated the driving force of revolutionary change from the whole of society to a Soviet-style vanguard party,[26] his contemporary, Stalin, modified the idea of worldwide revolution and its role in achieving worldwide communism.

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23 | This study cannot offer a full discussion of Totalitarianism. According to Löwenthal, one of the core elements of a totalitarian ideology and system is the: "institutional possibility of terror", in: Löwenthal, Die totalitäre Diktatur, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 552. The quotes of the following paragraph can all be found in Löwenthal, Die totalitäre Diktatur, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009.

24 | On the "Totalitarianism" debate in Germany: Süß, 1999, 16-27.

25 | Löwenthal, Messianism, Nihilism and the Future, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 462. For the following quotes in this paragraph also see: Löwenthal, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 462-464.

26 | Read, 2005, 66.

Stalin's notion of "socialism in one country"[27] considers the establishment of Socialist regimes in nation-states an intermediate step before worldwide socialism and communism can be achieved. The concept is considered a law-like principle, laying the foundations of "scientific socialism,"[28] which "declares history an object of exact science."[29] Stalin's argument follows a progressive logic of development with world communism being the inevitable outcome of history. This encompassed the necessity to "give back all functions of the state to society"[30] and thus included the inevitable withering away of the nation-state in the end, at least in theory. According to Löwenthal, Lenin had moved away from his own aspirations rather grotesquely and his successor "only carried Leninism to its logical conclusion,"[31] just as one may interpret the German version of Marxism-Leninism a "logical conclusion" of Lenin's ideas and writings in combination with Soviet instructions to the SED regime.

1.3 The Two Conditional Determinants of the GDR's Political System: "Democratic Centralism" and the "Primacy of the Party"

> "Political power was exercised by two parallel bureaucracies in the Soviet Union, those of the state and the Communist Party. On paper, the party had a democratic structure, [...] [b]ut in reality, power flowed from top to bottom, not from bottom to top. The general secretary was the dominant figure in the system, and the political bureau, chaired by the general secretary, was the most important organ for policy formulation [...] The central committee had a full-time executive staff known as the "secretariat," which served as the executive arm of the politburo. [...] [I]ndividual party members merely carried out the policies decided at the top."[32]
>
> (Kotz and Weir on the Political Structure of the Soviet System)

According to Lenin, it was the elitist vanguard party that had to lead the revolution and transformation of society toward communism. From this notion, two mutually dependent principles emerged as the major determinants of the Soviet political system: "Democratic centralism"[33] and the "primacy of the party."[34] Though neither of the two principles was explicitly included in the first East

27 | Kapitel 6: Die Frage des Sozialismus in einem Lande, in: Stalin, 1946 (1924).

28 | German: Wissenschaftlicher Sozialismus. The concept is opposed to "critical-utopian socialism" of Saint-Simon and Fourier, in: Dilas-Rocherieux, Yolène, Sozialismus: Courtois (ed.), 2010, 688.

29 | Dilas-Rocherieux, Yolène, Sozialismus, in: Courtois (ed.), 2010, 688.

30 | Schroeder, 2013, 520.

31 | Löwenthal, Die totalitäre Diktatur, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009.

32 | Kotz/Weir, 1997, 23f.

33 | The first Party Congress of the SED in January 1949, Avantgardeanspruch und innerparteiliche Ditatur Januar 1949, in: Judt, 1997, 46f.

34 | Schroeder, 1999, 421.

German Constitution of 1949, they served as the political compass during the early years of East German "state- and nation-building" and later on grew into a specific German form.

> "Germany is an indivisible, democratic Republic."[35]
>
> (Article 1, Constitution of the GDR 1949)

Without doubt, the constitution and the constitutional reality of the GDR could not have been further apart. Officially, the Volkskammer was declared the "highest organ in the Republic."[36] However, neither the Soviet occupiers nor the SED ever wanted Parliament to wield actual political power. All in all, with some minor exemptions, the East Germany political system followed the Soviet model:

> "The organization of political institutions within the Soviet Union concentrated special powers of agency among a select group of decision-makers. In contrast to pluralist regimes, the Soviet political system did not allow for alternate centers of political power either within or outside the state."[37]

Just as in the Soviet Union, internal and external decision-making in East Germany was centralized in the party by what Jessen called the "secret constitution of the GDR."[38] As a consequence, the political system did not include regulated control by the governed based on free elections, nor did it provide for any other control outside the SED party apparatus. In addition to that, loyalty of party cadres was secured by a tightly controlled cadre selection process. The political elite relied on its own structures and recruited personnel and functionaries independently from the rest of society. This apparatus was tightly intertwined with the state and its institutions, including party equivalents to state institutions at all levels. Within this system, the party was supposed to overrule any state actions and decisions.[39] The "primacy of the party"[40] was the fundamental determinant of the political system, as Fürnberg's song so succinctly summarizes: "The Party is always right."[41] This notion also includes the universal truth claim of "the party," which

35 | Constitution of the GDR. October 7 1949, Art. 1.

36 | Constitution of the GDR. October 7 1949, Art. 51-70.

37 | McFaul, 2002, 34.

38 | German: heimliche Verfassung der DDR; Jessen, in: Judt, 1998, S.77f; Richtlinien über die Fertigstellung von Regierungsvorlagen zur Entscheidung durch die zuständigen Organe des Parteivorstands sowie über die Kontrolle der Durchführung dieser Entscheidungen, Anlage Nr. 5 zum Protokoll Nr.57 der Sitzung des Kleine Sekretariats [des Politbüros] am 17.Oktober 1949, in: SAMPO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/3/57.

39 | The so-called "Kompetenzkompetenz", Schroeder, 1999, 388.

40 | Schroeder, 1999, 421.

41 | "Das Lied der Partei" by Louis Fürnberg, 1950. in: Judt, 1997, 47; See: Giordano, 1961.

pertained to the provision and interpretation of ideological principles.[42] This claim, originally introduced in the Party statute of the SED,[43] was finally raised to constitutional rank in 1968 when the "leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party"[44] acquired priority over any other constitutional norm.

The idea of absolute party leadership was based on the principle of "democratic centralism."[45] Schroder describes this principle of political organization as the "strict party hierarchy" wherein "lower levels were subordinated to higher levels of organization. [Thus] all fields were subject to the highest level of leadership."[46] The official interpretation of socialist publications stresses that the principle was based on "collective leadership," the socialist interpretation of democratic participation. The consequences implied by this, however, were "absolute party discipline; minority's subjugation under the majority; unconditional commitment to the higher organ's decisions for the lower organs and their members."[47] Hence, every political decision on any level, including questions of cadre selection, had to be approved by each higher authority, while every state entity had to answer to its administrative equivalent within the SED.

Apart from the praxis of personal unions among higher party posts and state functions, party and state were connected by two major state organs, the "Ministerrat" and the "Staatsrat," both pro forma elected by the "Volkskammer." While the former brought together the ministries, secretaries of state and high-ranking administrative officials, the latter was formed after Wilhelm Pieck's death as the "collective representation of the state."[48] Together they acted as the communicative and administrative interface between state and party.

The principle of "democratic centralism" also extended to the party apparatus. In theory, the highest organ within the party structures was the Party Congress, an assembly of all party members. In between Congresses, the Central Committee,[49] a body of well-served and loyal Party members, was supposed to lead. In reality, however, the Party Congress acclaimed what had been decided by the CC, and later on by its smaller version, the "Politbüro."[50] In the final decade, decisions were further concentrated within the Politbüro's Secretariat, the "small Politbüro."

42 | Muth, 2001, 10.

43 | Stellung des Bereichs Kommerzielle Koordinierung im Partei- und Staatsgefüge der DDR, in: Deutscher Bundestag, 1994, 103.

44 | Article 47 II, Constitution of the GDR of 1974.

45 | The first Party Congress of the SED in January 1949, Avantgardeanspruch und innerparteiliche Ditatur Januar 1949, in: Judt, 1997, 46f.

46 | Schroeder, 1999, 389.

47 | German: "Demokratischer Zentralismus", in: Kl. polit. Wörterbuch, 1973, 148-150.

48 | Diedrich/Ehlert/Wenzke (ed), 1998, 10.

49 | German: Zentral Kommittee (ZK).

50 | Schroeder, 1999, 398.

"We don't demand negative proof of non-culpability [with regard to National-Socialism], [or] neutrality, we demand positive proof of participation."[51] Thus, the Party was also organized hierarchically, with obedience and loyalty emerging as the most important merits of the party members. As a consequence, party loyalty became the prominent prerequisite for professional success. In these early years it became apparent that the political system marginalized the GDR's constitutional organs, including the government.[52] This was accompanied by a power concentration in the hands of the SED, its leader, the secretary-general, and his secretariat. This was especially true for the field of foreign policy. In addition to that, the SED system of nomenclature cadre recruitment ensured loyalty and conformity to the political course of the party.[53]

1.4 "Homogenization of Society" and the Creation of the "Socialist Human"

The ultimate goal of social policies under both Soviet occupation and SED governance was the reconstruction of German society as a socialist, and thus homogenized, society. In the late 1940s, the Kremlin had launched intensive and comprehensive "Sovietization" in the Soviet Occupied Zone (SOZ, SBZ), a forced transformation of society as a whole. This also meant that "the Soviet Union did import certain key elements of the Soviet system into every nation occupied by the Red Army, from the very beginning."[54] The narrow timeframe of implementation did not allow for voluntary or gradual adoption of the transported values[55] and can be considered a first example in GDR history where social change became a matter of official declaration: "Social stratification changed profoundly during the existence of the GDR, while the ultimate goal of a classless society was never achieved."[56] Political forces outside the SED were either channeled into a bloc party system or swallowed by newly founded mass organizations.[57] Likewise, the Catholic and Protestant churches had been disempowered and marginalized early on as well.[58]

To eliminate any possibility of control by the governed and thus fully secure the "primacy of the party," the SED had to eliminate civil society and the agency

51 | Tagung der Oberbürgermeister, Landräte und leitender Mitarbeiter der Regierung, 2-4 April 1949, in: BArch, SAPMO, NY 4277/4, Blatt 147, Quoted in: Kowalczuck, 2013, 23.

52 | The organs of the President, the Council of Ministers and the State Council, which were founded in the 1960s, degenerated rapidly and ended up as mere executive institutions, in: Muth, 2001, 10.

53 | Schroeder, 1999, 407.

54 | Applebaum, 2013, Introduction.

55 | Schroeder, 2006, 86.

56 | Segert/Zierke, in: Judt 1998, 169.

57 | Schroeder, 1999, 101-104.

58 | Goerner/Kubina, 1995.

of its actors. As a consequence the only other independent source of social power disappeared, allowing the party to monopolize any communication between the political system and society. To perfect regulation of the political system and its exchange with society, public opinion was deliberately steered by a party-controlled media. Former editor-in-chief of the "Nachrichten des DDR Funks," the radio broadcasting organization of the GDR, summarizes:

> "Information policy was an important, at certain times the most important sinew of the leadership and apparatus of the SED. In short, the monopoly worked like this: There was reality, and there was truth about this reality communicated by the Party."[59]

In the field of international relations, the East German public almost fully depended on party-directed information on happenings outside their state's borders. The intense control disrupted the connection between society and the rulers' politics and eliminated any basis for assessment of the SED's politics. In accordance with Lenin's notion of "socialist journalism,"[60] the major task of the media in the GDR was to impart ideology to the "masses" by supporting "collective propaganda" and "agitation." In the GDR, this was especially the case for international coverage, even more so after international recognition. While the primary goal of "Auslandsinformation"[61] before the 1970s had been the promotion of recognition,[62] its major task afterward was to disrupt and fend off Western ideological influences.[63] Growing economic difficulties increased the need for reports of political success and distraction through state media. One of the most effective party instruments to form both the public space and the media, even was of constitutional rank: "Boycotting demagoguery"[64] was introduced under Article 6 of the GDR's constitution of 1949 as a criminal offense. In its vagueness, this article opened the door for excessive punishment of any unwanted oppositional behavior. As a consequence of full media control and concentration of political and social forces in mass organizations, there neither existed free public space nor any civil society to speak of. The centralization of the economic system had

59 | Klein, in: Spielhagen, 1993, 84.

60 | Lenin, in: Function of socialist journalism, Excerpt in: Wörterbuch der sozialistischen Journalistik, Berlin-Ost, 1984, in: Judt, 1998, 354f.

61 | English: international information or propaganda. Until now there only exist very few studies on this tool of the GDR's foreign policy. Brünner, 2011, 14.

62 | Protokoll Nr.8/63 der Sitzung des Politbüros, March 27 1983, Annex 5, in: BArch SAPMO, DY 30/JIV 2/2 A 953, 1.

63 | Brünner, 2011, 29.

64 | "Boykotthetze", in: Article 6(2), Constitution of the GDR of 1949, October 7 1974.

enforced the socialization of all larger companies.[65] Thus, all social and non-state organizations of economic importance were either embedded in or at least associated with the party in one way or the other.[66]

However, "homogenization of society" went beyond the public space. According to Marxist-Leninist ideology, the creation of the socialist society was only possible by creating the "new human." This "new human" first and foremost was defined as part of the "collective" and free of egoism.[67] Accordingly, youth in the GDR always played a highly political role in the "planned development of socialism" to ensure the next generation's ideological loyalty and engagement. This goal was pursued by forming and "educating the socialist personality"[68] early on in children's lives. The GDR's pedagogy drew extensively from Anton Semyonovich Makarenko's writings. Based on the idea of the mutability of human nature, Makarenko elaborated on the creation of the "new human" and the logic of "collective education." His pedagogical approach aimed at minimizing individualism for the sake of solidarity in the collective community. According to Makarenko, the ideal type of the "socialist human" had be reeducated through a "homogenized socialization process" to form the ideal of the "homo sovieticus"[69] in the end.

The SED's education policy fully embraced Makarenko's concept: Socialist education in the GDR meant that "the individual was transferred from one collective to the other throughout his life."[70] Applebaum quotes Otto Grothewohl in this context, calling the youngest children the "cleanest and best human material"[71] for the GDR's Socialist future. About eighty per cent of East German infants and toddlers spent their days at the "Kinderkrippe" while ninety-five percent of children under six learned about socialist virtues in kindergarten.[72] Furthermore, the obligatory forms of social organization were complemented by "facultative" organizations, such as the Freie Deutsche Jugend (FDJ) founded in 1946 and its preparatory organization, the Ernst-Thälmann Pioneers.[73] Not surprisingly, these "facultative" organizations ostracized all those who refused to join and celebrated the "good socialists." Finally, the youth received vocational training in the "Betrieb,"

65 | On the requisition of some property categories in Germany, October 30th 1945, excerpt of military order by the Soviet Military Administration, in: Judt, 1998, 183.

66 | On the reorganization of political society and its actors see: Schroeder, 1999, 416 and 532f.

67 | Segert/Zierke, in: Judt (ed.), 1998, 171.

68 | Segert/Zierke, in: Judt (ed.), 1998, 177.

69 | Alexander Zinoview, quoted in: Applebaum, 2013, 300.

70 | Schroeder, 2013, 738.

71 | Otto Grotewohl in: Partei und Jugend: Dokumente marxistischer-leninistischer Jugendpolitik, East-Berlin, 1986, quoted in: Applebaum, 2013, 301.

72 | Numbers in Anweiler, 1989, in: Schroeder, 2013, 746.

73 | Segert/Zierke, in: Judt (ed.), 1998, 177.

the socialized enterprises idealizing collective production. The idealized idea was that the "new human" was integrated in collective communities from the cradle to the grave. Even the social nucleus of the small family was included in this logic. The families were supposed to dissolve into other social collectives, mostly by reducing the time families spent together.

1.5 Conclusion: A Substitute for Legitimacy? The GDR's Carrot-and-Stick-Policy

After "Nazi Germany," many functionaries and the population alike at first had hoped for a "better Germany" in this young, socialist state.[74] However, the harsh realities of the GDR were hard to reconcile with the high hopes of the early founding years: Economic hardships, suppression of opposition, political cleansings, and the forced "homogenization of society" quickly disillusioned early idealists. Elections were considered a mere formality without any effect on political conditions. After the national uprising of 1953 against SED rule was quelled violently by Soviet tanks, the number of refugees trying to flee westwards reached an all-time high.[75] The GDR's citizens simply decided that there was no other way than a "walking ballot"[76] to turn their backs on East Germany. The SED's reaction was to make "fleeing the Republic" a criminal offense.[77] And even after the wall was built in Berlin and the inner-German border further fortified after 1961, thereby significantly reducing the numbers of registered refugees, the Ministry of State Security successively expanded their personnel and their operational activities.[78] To prevent the GDR's citizens from leaving the country and starting their new lives as citizens of the Federal Republic, state control intensified in an unprecedented way. These repressive measures are one of the most impressive examples for the citizens' lack of identification with their state.

Over the decades, the SED-regime developed and applied two major strategies to counter its lack of legitimacy in the eyes of its citizenry. The first major strategy was the oppression of resistance and opposition. The intensity of this strategy

74 | See, for example, the memories of the GDR author Christa Wolf on the hopes for the creation of a "new society" after the defeat of German fascism, June 1987, in: Judt, 1998, 59f.

75 | Compared to East-West migration, the numbers migrating from the FRG to the GDR were relatively low. Including the last year before the founding of the two German states, only about 600.000 people moved from West to East, in: Wunschik, 2013.

76 | German: Abstimmung mit den Füßen; Müller-Marein, 1961.

77 | After 1957 the attempt to leave the GDR without state permission, the "unlawful border-crossing" under § 213 Abs. 2 StGB of the DDR, usually led to a prison sentence, Stöver, 2007, 237.

78 | From 1961 to 1968 the MfS personnel increased by more than fifty per cent, in: Schroeder, 1999, 436.

decreased somewhat after the closing of the inner-German border and the erection of the Berlin Wall. Then the strategy transformed into a policy to create fear among the population by assumed or real surveillance carried out by a specialized security apparatus. The second major strategy was the appeasement of the population. Socialist welfare promises and grants fed into this strategy, as well as notions of the "socialist nation" that were intended to create a feeling of community and belonging. Just like sports and culture, foreign policy achievements served as an integrative factor to legitimize this nation and its policies to distract the population from its internal strife.

In conclusion, "foreign policy" in the GDR not only highly depended on the two major structuring determinants, the Soviet Union and the "other Germany," but also must be considered a too used to appease society and achieve internal national consolidation.[79] Being part of the political system, foreign policy served as a tool to secure the SED's position; it was a "maid of politics."[80] Hence, one has to disagree with Lehmkuhl's conclusions about the restricting influence of national politics on the scope of action in foreign policy. She contends: "the more authoritarian the rule on the inside, the higher the 'autonomy' of the state from internal determinants on the outside." In theory, this would result in an extremely high level of autonomy for the GDR in the international system. However, even without including the restrictions posed by the international determinants, such autonomy never existed.

The combination of the principles of "democratic centralism" and the "primacy of the party" transformed the SED's retention of power into a moral and legal sine qua non for the GDR's survival as a socialist state. Hence, and in spite of the obvious separation and apparent independence of governors from the governed, there existed a profound flaw of insecurity in the power relationship that ostensibly was so fully dominated by the SED. Any questioning of the SED and its cadres had to be avoided at any cost. From the very beginning, the SED had to struggle with a lack of legitimacy – not only with respect to the FRG, but towards its own population as well. This assumption agrees with Gidden's "dialectic of control/leadership." Giddens denies the existence of situations of absolute powerlessness, as long as one option to act remains: "[S]ubordinates and the ones subjugated to power regularly may claim a considerable scope of action, as the rulers depend on the cooperation of the ruled."[81] In the GDR, the existence and thus the autonomy of the state did depend on the affirmative behavior of its citizens. Apart from fear and collaboration, the SED regime's power and thus the existence of the

79 | Ludz, 1971, in: Scholtyseck, 2003, 54. Even though many of his conclusions must be reviewed critically today, Peter Christian Ludz contributed to research on the GDR and its political and social realities in the 1970s in an extraordinary way.

80 | Scholtyseck, 2003, 53; Siebs, 1999, 19ff.

81 | Joas, 2011, 416f.

state itself depended on acquiescence, or at least apathy, of the population. As a consequence, this acquiescence was ensured by the population's awareness of Moscow's guarantee of existence for the SED regime. The crushing of the June uprising in 1953 made that clear in no uncertain terms.

2. Ideological Principles and Foreign Policy in "Socialist Germany"

> "International relations, like all politics, is also most vividly interpreted, as much as anything, through what people think and believe. [...] [H]erein lies the international importance, and impact of ideologies – sets of belief about how the past shapes the present, [...] how the world works, and, equally important, about how it should [sic!] work."[82]
>
> (Fred Halliday, 2005)

First, foreign policy in the GDR had been ideologically embroidered and geared toward the "planned development of socialism." Second, due to the GDR's role in the Cold War, East Berlin's foreign policy had to clearly position the GDR within the Bloc confrontation to secure its existence as the "German alternative." And third, any element of foreign policy had to be firmly based on the ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism. According to Lenin, Marxism-Leninism[83] was based on three "inseparable elements:"[84] Dialectic and historical materialism, the political economy of capitalism and socialism, and scientific socialism. According to Marx's approach of "historical materialism,"[85] socialism is considered the transitional phase between capitalism and communism. This approach was adopted by Lenin who then predicted that the socialist phase would follow the seizure of power by the proletariat.[86]

Lenin expected that not all countries would aspire to this ideal nor struggle to make it a reality. His successors in the Soviet Union thus concluded that the world would be divided into two camps until the ultimate goal of a communist world society was achieved: The camp of the "imperialistic-anti-democratic West" and the camp of the "anti-imperialistic-democratic East."[87] At first, this camp division was

82 | Halliday, 2005, 195f.

83 | Official interpretations and recommendations with regard to Marxism-Leninism were centralized exclusively at the Institute for Marxism-Leninism at the central committee of the SED" (German: "Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus bei Zentralkomitee der SED"). Sindermann, 1980.

84 | Schroeder, 2013, 716.

85 | Baudouin, Jean, Marxismus, in: Courtois, 2007, 568; Kowalczuck, 2013, 25.

86 | Dilas-Rocherieux, Yolène, Sozialismus, in: Courtois (ed.), 2010, 688.

87 | Zhdanov, Andrej, answering Stalin's and Truman's "declarations of war" on Sept 22 1947.

interpreted as a violent struggle. The resolutions of the XX Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1956, however, modified this to the more pragmatic approach of "peaceful co-existence." It was meant to regulate the relations between socialist and capitalist states based on "mutual respect for each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in internal affairs," but also included "a specific form of class struggle [...] on the international level"[88] that focused on economic and social development. Derived from this highly ideological view of the international system, the GDR developed its own interpretation of Marxist-Leninist principles as the basis of its foreign policy.

> "Socialist Foreign Policy [rests] on the nature of class of a Socialist state, which is shaped by the character of the ruling working class and its revolutionary fighting party. The Communist and the working parties of the Socialist countries analyze every stage of development of international relations based on a fruitful application of the theory of Marxism-Leninism."[89]
>
> ("The Little Political Dictionary," East Berlin, 1973)

"The Little Political Dictionary," a widely read reference book in East Germany and today a priceless source of the GDR's ideological orientation on many topics of social life, lists the following "general laws" for the "development of socialist society." These "laws" are especially relevant for the field of foreign policy, as they form the basis of the socialist interpretation of international relations:

> "[1] To erase national oppression and establish equality and brotherly friendship between the peoples; [2] to promote political and economic approximation of the countries of the community of Socialist states; [3] to uphold solidary of our working class with the working class in other countries."[90]

The concept of "proletarian internationalism"[91] was considered the most important principle of the GDR's foreign policy towards the Global South and was included in the GDR's constitution of 1968 under the term "socialist internationalism."[92] The concept is based on Marx and Engels' idea of "internationalism" as introduced in the "Communist Manifesto": Capitalist nations have to rely on a working-class proletariat for their development. These proletarians "know no country," but share "common interests."[93] And due to capitalism diminishing the role of national

88 | Kleines Politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 87.

89 | Außenpolitik (English: foreign policy), in: Kleines politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 86f.

90 | Außenpolitik, in: Kleines politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 86f.

91 | Sozialismus und Kommunismus (English: Socialism and Communism), in: Kleines politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 761.

92 | Article 6 of the Constitution of the GDR of 1968.

93 | Marx, in: Gilbert, 1978.

borders, proletarians all over the world would be able to connect and unify. As neo-Marxist Alan Gilbert points out, there are no further specifications to be found in the "Communist Manifesto" on how this unification is to evolve, so he draws from other writings by Marx:[94] The actual unifying force for the "international proletariat" is a common enemy threatening the very existence of the workers, thus generating a "want for solidarity."[95] To promote the spread of socialist societies, "internationalism" is supposed to forge an alliance "with the national liberation movement to support peoples and states fighting against colonialism and its aftermath." This support is summarized under the label of "international anti-imperialistic solidarity"[96] and includes any other "support of countries of the socialist world system who fell victim to imperialistic aggression."[97]

The concepts of "international socialism" and "international anti-imperialistic solidarity" were integrated into the Soviet Union's strategy towards the countries of the Global South and copied by the GDR – though the GDR took them considerably more seriously than the other states of the Warsaw Pact: East Berlin was struggling for its survival and hoped to broaden its international maneuvering room under Moscow's wings. Ingrid Muth distinguishes between ideologically-inspired long-term strategies and goals and pragmatic mid- and short-term policies.[98] A former diplomatic functionary herself, her conclusions strongly resemble the conclusions of other former diplomatic personnel: Many of those who had been part of the GDR's state apparatus are still convinced of the ideological orientation of the GDR and share the opinion that its ideology merely failed due to its neglect of socialist ideals.

According to Muth, the elite first of all rigidly followed ideologically-defined long-term interests that led to severe discrepancies and even "mistakes" in the end. However, Muth's assessment has to be reviewed critically. Even though a significant number of functionaries and bureaucrats of lower rank in the diplomatic field were quite convinced of the truth and success of these ideological foreign policy concepts,[99] actors higher up in the hierarchy followed a more realistic approach. Whenever ideological principles were contradicted by the rational reasoning of the state, the SED leadership would adjust ideology to political realities rather than the other way around. In conclusion, ideology very rarely was an actual limitation on the GDR's scope of action and it may and must be doubted that the SED's political

94 | Alan Gilbert refers to Marx's critique of German Social Democracy's Gotha Program, in: Gilbert, 1978, 348ff.

95 | Marx, Karl, Critique of German Social Democracy's Gotha Program, in: Gilbert, 1978, 349.

96 | German: antiimperialistische Solidarität.

97 | Außenpolitik, in: Kleines politisches Wörterbuch, 1973, 86f.

98 | Muth, 2001, 50.

99 | As the interviews with Wolfgang Bator, Heinz-Dieter Winter, Fritz Balke and Hans Bauer have shown.

elites felt more obliged to this socialist idealism than to rational "raison d"état." Ideology merely remained the basis of foreign policy theory, a theory that had to yield to the demands of political praxis.

3. Foreign Policy Actors, their Competencies and the Decision-Making Process: The "Three Spheres Approach"

Foreign policy has been defined as an "interactive process,"[100] evolving over time due to influences both inside and outside of the state. Among the major internal factors of influence are the actors who develop foreign policy as a reaction to internal and external circumstances. Thus, the GDR's foreign policy making is described by situating the most relevant actors within the structures of the political system. With regard to responsibilities of foreign policy making, the former foreign policy personnel Muth identifies three hierarchical levels, equivalent to the overall structure of socialist society in the GDR: first, the "party apparatus," second, the "state apparatus," and finally, the homogenized "political actors of society." All in all, this is just another way to look at the concept of political power of Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties known as "democratic centralism." Nonetheless, Muth's approach can further elucidate the discrepancy between the "written" political system and its political reality. In the following, Muth's approach is introduced and modified.

First of all, notional inconsistencies and weaknesses in Muth's approach have to be pinpointed. Muth introduces the term "foreign policy apparatus"[101] for her three-level approach. Unfortunately, she does not use the term consistently. Most of the time, the term in her work refers to all foreign policy actors,[102] but Muth sometimes narrows down its meaning to the actors of level two and three to contrast them with level one, the party apparatus.[103] To generate more conceptual coherency, this study opts to consistently use the term "foreign policy apparatus" for all actors – party, state or society – occupied with foreign policy in the GDR. This use of the term firstly emphasizes the close connection between the three levels and secondly accounts for a significant weakness of Muth's approach: The party level, though superordinate to levels two and three, always had to rely on the legwork of state and society actors. This undeniable dependency of the party apparatus – regardless of the party's overpowering dominance in foreign-policy-making – and the overlapping of functions are not captured by the concept of hierarchical

100 | Haftendorn, 1989, 33.

101 | Muth, 2001, 54f.

102 | For example Muth, 2001, 57.

103 | Muth, 2001, 249.

levels. As a consequence, this study replaces the term "level" with "sphere," while the numeration indicates the actors' position in the process: The first sphere, the party apparatus, directs the second sphere, the state apparatus, and the third sphere, the homogenized political actors of society. The term "sphere" offers both meanings necessary for a convincing conceptualization of East German foreign policy making: It expresses the close connection between the three kinds of actors and the party's dependence on the unconditional loyalty of state and society actors.

3.1 On the Director of Foreign Policy and Its Executive: Interweaving Power between the Spheres of Party and State

East German Foreign Policy and its Ministry

Foreign policy defined as any state policy beyond the state's borders usually is conducted by designated state actors, typically a state's foreign ministry, its minister and the head of state. In the GDR's political system, however, the spheres of party and state were closely intertwined to ensure full control of the party over all political decisions and decision-making processes. This also applied to the field of foreign policy. Thus, the majority of analysts of East German foreign policy tend to describe the MfAA as a mere executive organ of Politbüro directives. Opposing this interpretation, former MfAA personnel Wolfgang Bator gives his personal perspective on the GDR's foreign policy making of the early 1960s and thereafter. According to Bator, foreign policy directives usually were based on the work of the MfAA, processed by the Volkskammer and its commissions, and then decided by the Politbüro. This account of the process of GDR foreign policy making as primarily "bottom-up" and only secondarily "top-down" undeniably idealizes East German foreign-policy making. The political system's mode of operation first of all was based on "top-down" administrative processes.[104] But to simply label the MfAA a mere executive organ oversimplifies the working procedures of the ministry and its interconnections with the corridors of power in the Politbüro.

All in all, both perspectives encourage the right questions about the foreign policy network and the distribution of responsibilities. While Bator's perspective may help to understand the self-perception of foreign policy personnel, a perspective farther removed from the individual actors reveals that the GDR's state apparatus first of all was tailored to suit the SED's needs. Just as in the Soviet Union,[105] the ultimate decision-making responsibility lay with the party, regardless of the sources of information on the topic, and thus with its most powerful organ, the Politbüro, and later on the Secretary-General of the SED, Erich Honecker. Bator admits:

104 | Möller, 2004, 56f.

105 | Shearman, in: Shearman, 1995, 14; Malcom, in: Shearman, 1995, 23-26.

> "Ultimately, the Politbüro decided on the final version and this directive was binding for everybody. [...] And before this decision [was] made [...] not much happened."[106]

The MfAA was merely meant to be "handyman and advisor"[107] to the SED's socialist foreign policy, just as any other state organ was supposed to serve the party policies.

Nonetheless, the field of foreign policy has to be considered a special case among the SED's policies: The external inputs and outputs of foreign policy in the end laid beyond the SED's – and even the Soviet Union's – sphere of control, especially after the international recognition of the GDR in the early 1970s. In addition to that, foreign policy making in the GDR depended on the influence of individuals. Thus, foreign policy making was more flexible than forms of policy-making. Furthermore, the MfAA's role in the process varied considerably over time and space due to the personalities of the respective minister, the head of section in the MfAA, and the ambassadors, as well as their relation with the secretary-general. Even though the MfAA clearly acted on behalf of the SED and its Politbüro, the ideal of full party control over the GDR's foreign policy could not always be achieved in practice.

By law, the MfAA was subordinate to the "Ministerrat" (Council of Ministers)[108] and the parliament, the "Volkskammer." While the "Ministerrat" indeed instructed the MfAA as an executive organ implementing party decisions,[109] the "Volkskammer" was irrelevant in the decision-making process. Article 112 of the GDR's constitution of 1949 leaves "the exclusive law-making responsibility with regard to foreign relations"[110] to the "republic," meaning the state organs and, most prominently among them, the GDR's legislative body. However, constitutional reality never granted the "Volkskammer" any room for actual policy-making. "Democratic centralism" in principle declared the "Volkskammer" a mere organ of acclamation for the decisions of the party apparatus, the Central Committee and the Politbüro,[111] while the "Ministerrat" served as an implementing organ for these decisions.

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106 | "Important decisions always demanded for a Politbüro resolution," in: Interview with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011 and Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter July 3 2012.

107 | Storckmann, 2012, 137; Wentker, 2007, 382-387.

108 | Verordnung über das Statut des Ministeriums für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten vom 14.Dezember 1959, in: Gesetzblatt der DDR, Part I, No.18, March 23 1960, 160ff.

109 | Schaubild Partei und Staat, in: Schroeder, 2011, 38f.

110 | Constitution of the GDR, 7th of October 1949. This formulation cannot be found in the version of 1968 anymore, but is expressed implicitly.

111 | This was secured by the SED's majority of votes within the parliament, Neubert, 2000, 880; Weidenfeld/Korte (ed.), 1999, 181.

Personal relationships between ministers with high-ranking party positions, however, positioned the "Ministerrat" at an important juncture between party and state. From here, foreign policy tasks were delegated to the ministries. Until Honecker's "reform of leadership" in 1976, the central figure of this juncture was Willy Stoph, a member of the "inner circle" of power from the very beginning. Stoph, a former KPD intelligence agent, had become a member of the Politbüro in 1953 and served as Minister of Interior and Defense in the 1950s, until he succeeded Otto Grothewohl as Head of "Ministerrat" in 1964.[112] In 1976, Stoph was finally sidelined when Honecker claimed the position as Head of "Ministerrat" for himself. Instead he was "promoted" to Head of "Staatsrat" and thus was banished to second-tier representation.[113]

In the early years of the GDR, the Soviet occupying forces established a "Commission for Foreign Affairs"[114] in East Berlin and then the "Ministry for Foreign Affairs" only shortly thereafter. In comparison to the FRG, which was not able to resume work in its foreign office until March 1951,[115] this was an early move by the Kremlin toward granting supposedly more autonomy to the GDR in the international realm. Nonetheless, these early years of the MfAA were characterized by close guidance and supervision of the Soviet Control Commission (SCC) while foreign policy was made in the office of Secretary-General Walter Ulbricht.[116] As a result, foreign policy personnel for a long time lacked the ability or will to act without concrete orders.[117]

The Role of the Central Committee in the Process of Foreign Policy Making

The GDR's foreign policy in the beginning was formulated among the members of the Central Committee as the "most important body for decision-making and coordination"[118] and its "Abteilung Internationale Verbindungen des ZK," the "Section of International Relations" (CC Section IV). The section, headed by its

112 | Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffmann (Ed.), 2000, Stoph, Willy, 829f. Pieck's and Grothewohl's deaths in 1960 and 1964 profoundly changed the major foreign-policy constellation, the triumvirate of "Grothewohl – Pieck – Ulbricht," which had dominated the early years of East German foreign policy making.

113 | Schaubild Partei und Staat, in: Schroeder, 2011, 38.

114 | "Kommission für außenpolitische Fragen", Scholtyseck, 2003, 6.

115 | Schöllgen, 2004, 29.

116 | Muth, 2001, 75 and Lemke, in: Pfeil, 2001, 71.

117 | First Foreign Minister Georg Dertinger decries the situation in 1951: "Due to habit, there prevails an understandable but fundamentally wrong attitude: the good friends of the SCC will straighten it out. If there is something to do, they'll tell you to! This is a fundamentally wrong attitude. [Now] [W]e have to rack our own brains!". Dertinger, stenographisches Protokoll der Tagung der Chefs der Missionen der DDR, 3.Tag, March 9 1951, in: PA AA, MfAA, A 15465.

118 | Meyer, 1991, in: Scholtyseck, 2003, 70.

long-lasting Secretary Hermann Axen, claimed responsibility for foreign policy making[119] though it mostly focused on countries where strong party ties already existed.[120] Indeed, it was ZK Section IV, not the MfAA, that commissioned country analyses and policy papers. It also had the final say about suggestions from the embassies.[121] After the death of its section head, Paul Markowski, the section's influence started to wane.[122] Until their fatal accident in Libya, Paul Markowski[123] and Werner Lamberz,[124] were considered the central figures of foreign policy making in the Global South. According to Möller, it was the duo who took over the political aspects of agreements, while Alexander Schalck-Golodkowsi of the Ministry of Foreign Trade was responsible for the economic.[125] After Markowski's and Lamberz' death, Schlack-Golodkowski began to fill the emerging power vacuum on the economic side, while Honecker did so on the political side. The secretary-general's interest in the field was clearly growing. None of Markowski's successors as Head of CC Section IV were able to reclaim his power and influence.[126]

Apart from the MfAA, other state organs claimed significant responsibilities in the field of foreign relations early on: The Ministry of Foreign Trade[127] and Inner-German Trade, the Ministry of Culture, and even the Ministry of Education. The ministries were under the authority of different sections of the CC, leading to an unexpected side effect of the system of "democratic centralism": Efficient policy communication between the ministries and the SED leadership, and in turn a ministry's impact on policy-making, depended on whether the CC secretary responsible for the ministry or section occupied with foreign policy was a member of the Politbüro, the "inner circle" of power.[128] The same applies for the "rule that each Secretary of the Politbüro was responsible for [one or several countries of focus]."[129] In addition, the fragmentation of responsibilities among the state

119 | BStU MfS HA II 28713, 263.

120 | Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter on July 3 2012.

121 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberatertätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA MfAA C 156276.

122 | Paul Markowski, Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffman (Ed.), 2001, 553f.

123 | Ibid., 553f.

124 | Lamberz had been a member of the Politbüro since 1971, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 59.

125 | Möller, 2004, 326.

126 | Egon Winkelmann succeeded Markowski, who was followed by Günter Sieber in 1981. Winkelmann kept the post until 1989.

127 | German: Ministerium für Außenhandel (MAH). The Ministry was responsible for "planning, implementation, and control of the entire foreign trade," including the preparation and completion of bi- and multilateral agreements, in: Möller, 2004, 59.

128 | Muth, 2001, 56, 61 and 63.

129 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 52.

organs naturally led to unhealthy competition for attention of the "inner circle" of the CC and the Politbüro.[130]

Civil Society Actors without Civil Society?

> "There existed no organizations 'on the side,' like, for example, NGOs."[131]
> (Wolfgang Bator, former East German diplomat)

In the GDR, the majority of state and society actors in the field of foreign policy,[132] such as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Agency of Service for Representation Abroad,[133] the League of the United Nations,[134] and the Committee of Solidarity, were subordinate to the CC International Relations Section. The "Foreign Information" Section oversaw the League of International Friendship,[135] as well as any media activities outside the GDR[136] or media reports *on* foreign affairs for the GDR public, including the major publishing house. The described dominance of the party over the state's foreign policy actors becomes more tangible with the following example of publication policy: In preparation for Honecker's official visit to Ethiopia and South Yemen in 1979, the party tightly controlled the number of texts written, and features produced:

> "The media in the GDR will receive orientation about amplified coverage about both countries and the bilateral relations in preparation of the visits and for the journalistic work about the visits themselves by the Section Agitation. [...] For the purpose of their support, the media will receive written materials [...]."[137]

130 | Muth, 2001, 73; Storckmann, 2012, 78; Wentker, 2007, 53.

131 | Interview with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011.

132 | Organization refers to Muth's work based on Wagner, Matthias, Ab morgen bist du Direktor. Das System der Nomenklaturkader in der DDR, Berlin, 1998, 138-210, in: Muth, 2001, Annex VI "Overview subordination of state and society institutions of the foreign policy apparatus to the Party apparatus," 249f.

133 | German: Dienstleitungsamt für Auslandsvertretungen der DDR.

134 | Founded in 1954.

135 | German: Liga der Völkerfreundschaft.

136 | Like Radio Berlin International, the foreign affairs agency PANORAMA and the publication house "Zeit im Bild," which published material on the GDR used abroad, and finally DEWAG (Deutsche Werbe- und Anzeigegesellschaft; English: German Society of Promotion and Advertisement), which coordinated promotion and organization of trade shows and exhibitions.

137 | Brief Oskar Fischer an Joachim Herrmann, Mitglied des Politbüros und Sekretär des ZK der SED, 1979, in: PA AA MfAA C 4959, 23.

Thus, no actor, not even the MfAA itself nor its embassies, had the authority to decide on materials to be distributed abroad. The decision on publications, and more often than not their content as well, lay with the "Foreign Information" Section.[138]

Nonetheless, mass organizations and other society actors such as the "Societies of Friendship" played a significant role abroad, especially before the "wave of recognition" in the 1970s. They not only have to be considered the predecessors of, but for quite some time even the GDR's substitute for official diplomatic state relations. Of course, the party leadership did everything to secure control over these makeshift actors of foreign policy as well. While the work of these societies and mass organizations in the respective countries was coordinated and controlled by the embassies,[139] the SED created a central organ to control their work within the GDR. Founded in 1952, the "Society for Cultural Relations" was supposed to coordinate all these societies, each of which had to work closely with the state and thus the party organs.[140] Until the late 1950s, these societies were open for engagement from the public sphere, but then the members were added in accordance to a quota as defined by the SED. The Society's work in the GDR and abroad, including publications, was of course financed by the state. In 1961 it was succeeded by the "League for International Friendship," which immediately focused on the formation of "committees of recognition."[141] Hence, these societies played a significant role in East-Berlin's foreign policy for the next decade until the GDR was finally recognized internationally and able to establish "regular diplomatic relations" with a majority of states itself. As a consequence, the relevance of the "Societies of Friendship" and its equivalents decreased, as did the importance of the "Foreign Information" Section.

The Centralization of Responsibility in the Field of Foreign Policy

As in other policy fields, responsibility for the field of foreign policy was over time withdrawn from constitutional state organs. The influence of the party was growing, mostly at the expense of the MfAA's responsibilities. This process was clearly in the interest of the members of the Politbüro[142] and can be reconstructed by looking at the succession of personnel at the top of the Ministry for Foreign

138 | Muth, 2001, 67.

139 | Interview with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011.

140 | Muth, 2001, 89.

141 | Muth, 2001, 93f.

142 | Compare the loss of the MfAA's responsibilities from 1959 to 1970, which is even documented in the official Statutes of the MfAA, "Verordnung über das Statut des MfAA" of December 14 1959 and of February 18 1970; See also: The Department of the Head Deputy of the International Relations Section at the Central Committee of the SED, Training of Party Secretaries of diplomatic representations from August 11 to 18 1967, in: BArch, SAPMO, DY 30/IV A 2/20/1141, quoted in: Muth, 2001, 56.

Affairs. Until the mid-1960s, the most influential post in the MfAA was not the minister, but the state secretary. The reason for this was that the first two ministers were both members of bourgeois bloc parties that had been selected to appease the "integrated" political actors. From the very beginning, the post of state secretary was occupied by a loyal party member.[143] The secretary's role changed in 1965 when Otto Winzer became minister. At least in the field of foreign policy, the centralization process of political responsibilities and decision-making was quite complete.

Winzer died in 1975 and was succeeded by Oskar Fischer, the second and last SED foreign minister.[144] Fischer showed more initiative than his predecessor and aimed to regain certain responsibilities for the MfAA by tightly integrating the ministry into the party structure. In Fischer's view, the ministry was supposed to work like a section of the Central Committee[145] and thus he aimed to centralize it even further. Fischer, the former leader of the youth organization "Freie Demokratische Jugend" (FDJ), "obviously had been trained within the MfAA to be qualified for his future position as minister."[146] In his analysis, Möller even considers Fischer's appointment a consequence of Honecker's inauguration. Heinz-Dieter Winter, a high-ranking East German diplomat and GDR vice-minister of foreign affairs from 1986 to 1990, remembers the close relationship between Honecker and Fischer, who used this contact to skip the regular processes of decision-making: "Sometimes even Axen was excluded." Winter considers it likely that there existed a range of issues in foreign affairs that no MfAA personnel other than the Minister knew about, such as certain weapons exports.[147] All in all, Fischer's style of leadership furthered the integration of the MfAA in the "primacy of the party" system instead of expanding its scope of action.

Both the ministry and its minister remained more reactive than proactive with regard to foreign policy making, their domain more a supportive than a directive one. This arangement is also due to the fact that Honecker aimed to concentrate all foreign policy authority in his own hands. As a consequence, the development of this Honecker-centred foreign policy often reduced the highly-centralized political system to absurdity. Honecker's final authority in all matters of the international,

143 | Wentker, 2007, 44.

144 | During the last months of the GDR's existence, Markus Meckel took over the MfAA in Lothar de Maizière's cabinet before de Maizière himself became foreign minister. Scholtyseck, 2003, 51.

145 | Muth, 2001, 71.

146 | Grunert, 1995, in: Möller, 2004, 57; After he had taken office, Honecker had rewarded his "fellow conspirators" by including them in the Politbüro, along with a high number of Honecker's loyal followers and comrades from the FDJ, among them Egon Krenz and the new minister of foreign affairs, in: Hertle/Stephan(ed.), 2012 (1997), 29.

147 | Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter July 3 2012.

for example, sometimes allowed ambassadors to cut through red tape and address the secretary-general directly instead of consulting the MfAA first:

> "When we were lucky, we [the MfAA] received a copy. We had our opinion on the ambassador's suggestions. But this opinion was of no more importance. Honecker had decided as he saw fit."[148]

Storckmann even claims that "Erich Honecker already had been pulling all the strings of security policy during [the late years of] Ulbricht's reign."[149] According to Storckmann, the ministries of Defense, Interior and State Security had reported to Honecker, not Ulbricht.[150] There is no shortage of indications that this early power shift toward Honecker began well before Ulbricht's departure.

Thus, the centralization process in the field of foreign policy did not stop at the party level but rather expanded into the party apparatus itself. Over time, the ZK of the SED lost authority to the smaller, elitist circle of the Politbüro, while the government ministries only could claim some influence if the minister was also a member of this party organ. In addition, the gradual shift of power toward the secretary-general accelerated after Honecker's inauguration. Wilhelm Pieck's and Otto Grothewohl's deaths in 1960 and 1964, respectively, had ended the major foreign policy power constellation of "Grothewohl – Pieck - Ulbricht." And while Ulbricht had always held on tightly to the strings of foreign policy direction, he nonetheless had been aware that "his rule depended not only on Soviet support, but also on the loyalty of the leading party institutions and its apparatus."[151] Honecker, on the other hand, gradually extended his sphere of influence into the parallel system of party and state. From there, he created a separate apparatus of decision-making comprised of loyal henchmen. In 1976, Honecker took over the position as head of the Staatsrat as well, the organ of international representation, deciding on matters of national defense.[152] Current academic discourse considers Honecker as the major director of East German foreign policy from the early 1980s on.[153]

Nonetheless, these assessments remain generalizations about a policy field that has to be considered the most complex, with regard to responsibilities and influence, in the GDR's short history. Oftentimes, the position of the secretary-general of the SED has been likened to the leader of the CPSU, omnipotent and omniscient. And indeed the decision-making processes in the GDR shifted the

148 | Ibid.

149 | Storckmann, 2012, 71f.

150 | Storckmann mainly refers to interviews with former NVA personnel, but also presents several examples to support his claim. Storckmann, 2012, 73f.

151 | Wentker, 2007, 371. Also see Storckmann on Honecker's "collective style of leadership," in: Storckmann, 2012, 71.

152 | Diedrich /Ehlert/Wenzke, Rüdiger (ed), 1998, 10.

153 | Scholtyseck 2003, 70; Siebs, 1999, 61-63; Storckmann, 2012, 70; Wentker, 2007, 372.

position of the secretary-general, if it had ever been, far away from a "primus inter pares."[154] Nonetheless, to simply conclude that Honecker had "nearly unlimited"[155] influence does not do justice to the complex reality of the GDR's day-to-day politics.[156] One must recognize the existing limits of human capacity, not only due to Moscow's watchful eye, but also to an inherent competition between the various organs included in the process of foreign-policy making. Honecker's ubiquitous signature of "Einverstanden E.H." or "Einverstanden Erich Honecker"[157] may not simply be considered automatic proof of the secretary-general's omniscience, as the signature does not automatically mean Honecker had the time or interest to read all of the document in question. Even though one may assume that the majority of functionaries acted in anticipatory obedience,[158] this clearly does not exclude other actors reaching beyond or even working against Honecker's ideas of foreign policy.

The "Inner Circle" of Power and the Role of the "Ministries in Arms" in Foreign Policy Making

Despite the increased concentration of foreign policy decision-making in the hands of the secretary-general, the "inner circle" of policy-making included both the party and the state level throughout the GDR's history. According to Wentker, the formal processes of decision-making in the higher state and party organs assured the consent of the central functionaries and thus their loyalty, which was indispensable for the regime's survival.[159] This "inner circle" regularly included the leading figures of the security apparatus. An indication as to who was in this "inner circle" can be found in the context of who was present when high-ranking military and political officials visited from allied countries. During South Yemeni Minister of Defense Muti'a's visit in May 1972, he met with not only Walter Ulbricht, Willy Stoph, and his deputy Weiß, but also Minister of Defense Heinz Hoffmann, Minister of Interior Colonel-General Dickel, and Minister of State Security Erich Mielke.[160] Apart from Weiß all of them dealt with issues of security and the "ministries in arms."

While the "soft" ministries, such as the Ministry of Culture or the Ministry of Education, were subordinate to a section of the CC, the "ministries of power" or "ministries in arms" regularly moved beyond this system of control. "The ministries of power" – the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, and the

154 | Modrow, 1994, 44.

155 | Wentker, 2007, 371.

156 | Möller, 2004, 35; Storckmann, 2012, 111.

157 | Malycha/Winters, 2009, 211; Möller, 2004, 341; Storckmann, 2012, 127.

158 | Möller, 2004, 40f; Storckmann, 2012, 59.

159 | Wentker, 2007, 376.

160 | Aktenvermerk Treffen Genosse Minister Mielke mit Genosse Minister Armeegenereal Hoffmann, in: BStU MfS HV A Nr.778, 1.

Ministry of State Security (MfS) – were all linked directly to the Politbüro and this "inner circle" of power clustered around the secretary-general. This arrangement intensified after Ulbricht was succeeded by Honecker, as he had been working closely with the MfS and its Minister Mielke during the 1960s. But when he became secretary-general, Honecker finally was able to initiate, formulate, and implement international policies of the security apparatus himself.[161] The three ministries listed above were in constant exchange with their Soviet overseers, though the development of this subordinated relationship developed differently for each of the three ministries. While the MfS and the Ministry of Interior successfully emancipated their day-to-day business from Soviet supervision in the late 1960s, the Ministry of Defense never was able to claim a comparable autonomy. The Ministry of Defense de jure led the Nationale Volksarmee (NVA), but de facto all relevant decisions were made by the Politbüro, which received its orders concerning the military from Moscow. Nonetheless, longtime Minister Heinz Hoffmann was well-established within the GDR system. Thus, he was able to realize at least some of his policies based on his personal position.[162] However, the NVA and its ministry were far more integrated into the hierarchy of the Warsaw Pact and thus into the Soviet sphere of control than any other ministry. The NVA's policy in the developing world is an excellent example for the character of the relationship between the Ministry of Defense and the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact: In early 1972, Minister of Defense Heinz Hoffmann asked for permission to answer requests by states of the developing world to support their military training. In July 1972 this request was granted[163] and the GDR began to expand its military engagement. In conclusion, the activities of the NVA abroad in general and the Near and Middle East in particular contribute to an analysis of the wider Soviet strategy rather than to one of the GDR's foreign policy, motives, and goals. However, military issues as a focal point of collaboration cannot be ignored when analyzing East German engagement in the Global South.

The Reciprocal Relationship between Leading Figures in East German Foreign Policy Making and Their Institutions

As indicated above, some individuals were able to move beyond both the centralized structures of foreign policy making and the strict party-state parallelism. The reasons for exemptions like these usually can be found in a combination of personalities and connections to the "inner circle," but sometimes also in the responsibilities of the organ or institution itself. Oftentimes, this included

161 | Möller, 2004, 37.

162 | Before Hoffmann took office as minister of defense in 1958 he had served within the HV A of the MfS, as head of the Kasernierte Volkspolizei (KVP), the GDR's police and as vice-minister of interior, East Germany's police, in: Diedrich/Ehlert/Wenzke (ed), 1998, 261, 267, 356, and 644.

163 | Engelhardt, 1993, in: Möller, 2004, 30.

personal unions of a high-ranking state post and a seat in the ZK or even the Politbüro. This was a popular method to assure the functioning of "democratic centralism" in the sense of party-state parallelism. The following subsection introduces three major figures in East German foreign policy making who moved somewhat outside the regular hierarchy of authority, but have to be considered highly influential: Hermann Axen, Gerhard Weiß, and Günther Mittag.

Axen, oftentimes considered the "architect of the GDR's foreign policy,"[164] was the secretary of the CC responsible for Section IV starting in 1966. He remained a central figure in the field of East German foreign policy until he was forced to leave his post during the Peaceful Revolution of 1989. In 1979 he became head of CC "International Information" Section.[165] With regard to final decision-making, Axen's political power was quite limited[166] and only was included in the "inner circle" of actual policy-makers when the powerful wished so. However, Axen's impact on East German foreign policy making as a close confidant of Ulbricht may not be underestimated: One of the major tasks of his Section IV was to coordinate relations with the communist parties of the Eastern Bloc and thus with the CPSU.[167] Accordingly, Axen always was well informed about the current state of affairs between East Berlin and Moscow. Also, the theoretical analysis and policy papers produced by Axen rooted Honecker's foreign policy in socialist ideology. Axen had been close to Ulbricht and joined the Politbüro in 1970 where "international relations" became his field of expertise, but was able to hold onto most of his competencies under Honecker as well. Most importantly for this analysis, Axen became member of the Koko late in his career in 1981 and remained, more or less, a major consultant on the Middle East for Honecker until the late 1980s.[168]

In the field of foreign policy, one example for a mere coordinator working well-beyond his position is Gerhard Weiß. He had been vice-chairman of the Ministerrat from 1965 to his death in 1986 and advanced as a member of the Foreign Policy Commission of the CC in 1971.[169] From 1958 to 1970, he was Vice-President of the "German Arab Society"[170] and acted as a coordinator for military exports and "non-

164 | Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffman (Ed.), 2001; Axen, Hermann, 34.

165 | German: Abteilung Auslandsinformation. This section was the successor of the Section Agitation which at first had been part of the Section International Relations. in: Muth, 2001, 65; In the late 1980s Axen even was Head of the ZK Section of International Economy, in: Modrow, 1994, 34.

166 | Storckman, 2012, 78ff.

167 | Möller, 2004, 38.

168 | On the demise of Axen's position see: Uschner, Manfred, in: Storckmann, 2012, 79.

169 | Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffmann (Ed.), 2000, Weiß, Gerhard, 901.

170 | On the GDR's Societies of Friendship (Freundschaftsgesellschaften), see: Golz, 2003.

civilian solidarity support" in the 1960s and 1970s.[171] From 1969 onward, Weiß had a working group at his disposal, formed by high representatives of the MfAA, MfNV and MAW:[172] Wolfgang Kiesewetter, from 1963-1971 a vice-minister of the MfAA,[173] Werner Fleißner, from 1964 to 1985 a vice-minister of the MfNV,[174] and MAW Secretary of State Hans Albrecht.[175] Between 1965 and 1977, foreign policy procedures regularly included a proposal for support by the minister of foreign affairs or his deputy to Stoph, his deputy Weiß, Minister of Foreign Trade Horst Sölle, and the Chair of the Planning Commission Gerhard Schürer. Confirmation clearly depended on Weiß. An example for this process are the letters on the establishment of a Generalconsulat in Aden in August 1968.[176] However, under Honecker, Weiß was "eliminated" from the coordination process in 1977 and in the course of political centralization, his former responsibilities were moved to the MfNV.[177]

Based on the power shift towards the position of secretary-general under Honecker, another important figure in the realm of the GDR's foreign policy was on the rise: The "No. 2" in foreign affairs in the 1980s, Günter Mittag. For Storckmann, Mittag is one of the most prominent examples of an individual actor who extended his sphere of influence considerably beyond his nominal function.[178] Positioned at the interface between foreign policy, foreign economy, and secret service, Mittag found himself at the interface of foreign policy power in the GDR. In the late 1970s, Mittag took over the presidency of two foreign policy commissions, the AG "BRD-Westberlin" and, more importantly for the Middle East, the "Commission for Coordination of Non-civil Activities in the Countries of Asia, Africa, and the Arab world."[179] The commission was meant to coordinate all contacts and activities concerning the "developing countries" in Africa and Asia. Later on it was simply called "Mittag Commission,"[180] an undeniable indicator for Mittag's role. The commission was closely connected with the "Kommerzielle Koordinierung" (Koko), a special unit with the explicit task of acquiring foreign currency for the internationally weak economy of the SED regime.

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171 | Storckmann, 2012, 121ff.

172 | BArch, DC 20/16653, Also see: Storckmann, 2012, 125.

173 | Müller-Enbergs/Wielgohs/Hoffmann (Ed.), 2000, Kiesewetter, Wolfgang, 423.

174 | Ibid., Fleißner, Werner, 215.

175 | Ibid., Albrecht, Hans, 19.

176 | Briefe Winzer an Stoph, Weiß, Sölle, Schürer, August 1968, in: PA AA MfAA C 1219/71.

177 | Storckmann, 2012, 127.

178 | Storckmann, 2012, 89; Wentker, 2007, 378.

179 | Translation of name shortened by author. German: "Kommission zur Koordinierung der ökonomischen, kulturellen, wissenschaftlich-technischen Beziehungen und der Tätigkeit im nichtzivilen Bereich der Länder Asiens, Afrikas und des arabischen Raumes", Protokoll Politbüro Nr.49/77, 12 December 1977, Annex 13, Bl. 156, in: SAPMO BArch, DY30 J IV 2/2 1705.

180 | See, for example, Möller, 2004, 40.

Mittag's role with regard to Koko is more evidence of his special position within the foreign policy making process. Founded in 1966, the Koko's task was to "acquire forex 'outside the plan' [through arms trade or trafficking], as well as products banned by Western embargo."[181] The Koko is regularly mentioned in context of military relations and exports, its major function being exchange transactions to increase foreign currency reserves.[182] It relied on several dummy companies, like the IMES (Internationale Messtechnik) GmbH founded in 1981 or the "Ingenieur-Technischer Außenhandel" (ITA). On behalf of but officially without knowledge of the SED, these dummy companies struck the deals in the field of military trade with political friends and enemies alike, including terrorist groups.[183] The decision-making process and responsibilities of the Koko were quite complex: While Honecker himself was responsible for inner-German affairs, Erich Mielke decided on security issues, and Mittag on questions related to the economy.[184] Furthermore, and despite its official affiliation with the Ministry of Foreign Trade, the Koko was directly subordinate to the Secretariat of the CC and Mittag. Under Schalck-Golodkowski's leadership, the unit itself acquired functions and responsibilities similar to those of a section of the CC.[185] The working processes related to the Koko had to be connected to and coordinated with the party. At first this was mostly achieved by Mittag himself, later on also by Schalck-Golodkowski. The Koko's mode of operation was deeply entrenched with the work processes of the MfS and especially the HVA, at times even observed and directed by the MfS, again highlighting its importance and the level of secrecy applied to it.[186] All in all, the Koko is an excellent example for the SED-leadership's tendency to obscure certain foreign policy decisions by creating additional organs not only beyond the state but also beyond the party apparatus. The case of Koko furthermore illustrates how the GDR's foreign policy over time more or less was used as a tool of East Germany's security, military, and economic policies. Just like any other policy field, foreign policy was subordinate to pragmatic goals when deemed necessary by the "inner circle."

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181 | Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 236.

182 | Möller, 2004, 61.

183 | Aktivitäten von Unternehmen des Bereiches KoKo zur Devisenerwirtschaftung, in: Dt. BT (ed.), 1994, 170-250; On arms tarde with Iraq-Iran and terrorist groups in particular see: ibid., 191ff and 204; The Koko was actve until the very last year of the GDR, 1989-90. Bericht über die ADR nach Nord- und Südjemen, Arbeitsgruppe BKK, January 30 1989, in: BStU MfS BKK Nr.95 Teil 1 von 2, 30-36; Storckmann, 2012, 90.

184 | Buthmann, 2004, 5.

185 | Deutscher Bundestag (ed.), 1994, 103.

186 | In 1983 the independent working group "Bereich Kommerzielle Koordinierung (AG BKK)" took over the surveillance and guidance of the Koko from the HA XVIII/7.Befehl Nr.14/83 des Ministers für Staatssicherheit, September 1 1983, in: Dt. BT (ed.), 1994, 107 and 115. Buthmann, 2004, 5; Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 236f; Möller, 2004, 61.

3.2 The Foggy Fringes of the Political System: The Ministry of State Security and the HVA in the International Sphere

In the parallel structures of party-state hierarchy, the MfS clearly occupied a special position and ranked at the highest level of decision-making.[187] However, the MfS never operated *outside* the structure of the GDR's political system and "democratic centralism," and *always* remained subordinate to the party. The following section introduces the structure and responsibilities of the Ministry of State Security to offer information on responsibilities and changes in structure and personnel. This extensive approach allows to both evaluate and understand the comprehensive archival material of the MfS as well as to interpret the MfS' role in the GDR's foreign policy in South Yemen.

Between Secret Service and Secret Police: The Origins and Functions of the Stasi

> "The major function of the MfS [or Stasi] is [...] to guarantee state security of the GDR against attacks by all internal and external enemies [of the state]."[188]
>
> (Dictionary of State Security, 1985)

The Stasi relied on two major principles that had been significant elements of the Soviet secret police as a "new type" of service: The "enemy" of one's state was not first of all defined by competition for resources or power, but based on ideological bogeymen. In doing so, the distinction between internal and external enemies[189] gradually vanished and "preventive" action could be justified even before actual crimes under GDR law had been committed.[190] Thus, the Stasi was both a secret police and a secret service,[191] not only spying on "external" but also "internal" enemies. Of these, the ministry found plenty among its own citizens, not only because of real opposition against the SED regime, but also because of the ministry's self-perception: Kowalczuk considers the early Stasi personnel a paranoid group "surrounded by overactive enemies."[192]

When in 1950 the Department of Defense of the Political Economy[193] was extracted from the Ministry of Interior and reformed as an independent ministry, this step neither draw much attention by the public, nor drew international recognition as

187 | Schaubild Partei und Staat, in: Schroeder, 2011, 38.
188 | Das Wörterbuch der Staatsicherheit, 2001, 164.
189 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 27f.
190 | Schroeder, 1999, 437.
191 | Engelmann (et al.), 2011, 11; Kowalczuk, 2013, 13 and 249.
192 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 24.
193 | German: "Hauptverwaltung zum Schutze der Volkswirtschaft."

a significant change of the political system.[194] However, the new Ministry of State Security[195] (MfS) was meant to play a significant role in the establishment and maintenance of the SED dictatorship. The super-ministry cast a conspiratorial net to gather any information, regardless of importance or political relevance. Furthermore, the MfS incrementally extended its responsibilities within the system.

The notorious Stasi did not settle for mere observation of "hostile-negative forces"[196] from within. Rather, it aimed to subvert and destroy these "forces," that is, groups and individuals, through conspiratorial operations.[197] The activities of the Ministry included recruiting, bribing, or threatening friends and family of the suspect, known in Stasi jargon as the "target." Violence and murder – even though not common practices – were part of the ministry's aresenal.[198] After all, its political mandate as "shield and sword of the party"[199] granted it universal access to every part of society. Nonetheless, the GDR's secret service was never quite the omnipotent center of power as the picture painted by the media might suggest:

> "Officially, the Ministry of State Security had been a state institution. In fact it had been founded as a party organ of the SED and as such by the Soviet occupational forces and its Communist Party."[200]

Institutionally, the Stasi was positioned under direct control of the secretary-general of the SED and to a certain extent the Politbüro as well.[201] Hence, the MfS was fully embedded in the political system of the SED and – at least in theory – subsumed under the principle of "democratic centralism." As part of the GDR's foreign policy as directed by the Politbüro, the MfS always hovered under the watchful eye of Soviet supervision.[202] Like the German police of the SOZ, the installation of the MfS itself had been prepared and accompanied by Soviet institutions, notably the People's Commission for Internal Affairs and the

194 | Engelmann (et al.), 2011, 213; Kowalczuck, 2013, 21.

195 | German: Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (MfS).

196 | German: feindlich-negative Kräfte.

197 | Deutscher Bundestag (ed.), 1994; 107; Schroeder, 1999, 445.

198 | On the MfS' "mode of operation" and work procedures also see: Dt. BT (ed.), 1994, 107; Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 245-255; Schroeder, 2013, 576-579.

199 | Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit als Herrschaftsinstrument der SED. Kontinuität und Wandel, Protokoll der 23. Sitzung der Enquete-Kommission, "Aufarbeitung der Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland", 15. Januar 1993, in: Materialien der Enquete-Kommission, Vol. VIII; Schroeder, 1999, 430.

200 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 54.

201 | Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 200f.

202 | Hilger, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 99.

People's Commission for State Security of the USSR,[203] renamed "KGB" in 1954.[204] For example, every work unit was supported by their own "instructor" from the Soviet Union.[205] As a consequence, the structures of the security services, organs of the SOZ and later on the GDR, were modelled on Soviet institutions, just as East Berlin aimed to do in South Yemen about two decades later.

Development on Soviet terms was guaranteed by the fact that the majority of early functionaries of the GDR's secret service had been trained and educated in Moscow. All of them, in one way or the other, had proven their loyalty to the Soviet ideology and system.[206] The Stasi's longtime Minister Erich Mielke, who had fled to the USSR in 1931 to be trained as a military-political lecturer at the Lenin School, is one of the most renowned examples.[207]Throughout the 1950s, Soviet counselors obtained not only the position to observe, but also the authority to control the processes and decisions of the GDR's secret service.[208] The early activities of Soviet security organs may be considered an indicator of the role of the GDR in Moscow's security strategy for Central Europe. "After all, the KGB built up the SOC/GDR as their own line of defense against [secret] services of the West"[209] and as a home base for Soviet espionage. And despite a tenacious shift from full supervision to guided cooperation between Stalin's death in March 1953 and 1958,[210] the Stasi remained tightly connected with and depended on Soviet guidance throughout the GDR's existence.[211]

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203 | NKVD – Narodnyjkomissariat vnutrennich del; German: Volkskommissariat des Innern, in: Werth, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 38. In February 1941 the KVD was divided into NKGB and NKVD. NKGB - Narodnyi komissariat gosudarstvennoj bezopasnosti, in: Werth, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 38; From 1946 both NKVD and NKGB were considered ministries: MVD and MGB. For further information on the restructuring of NKGB and KGB see: Hilger, 2009, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 44ff; Engelmann (et al.), 2011, Soviet Secret Service, 275. On the influence of the KGB see: Borchert, 2006, 42; Kowalczuk, 2013, 43-45; Schroeder, 1999, 431.

204 | From 1954 to 1978 Komitet gossudarstwennoi besopasnosti pri Sowjete Ministrow SSSR; German: Komitee für Staatssicherheit beim Ministerrat der UdSSR. The KGB in Berlin-Karlshorst, Wentker, 2007, 367.

205 | Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 200.

206 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 46ff and 67.

207 | From 1952 to 1957 Erich Mielke had been Vice-Minister of State Security and then succeeded Ernst Wollweber as Minister of State Security. He remained in office until December 1989, in: Müller-Enbergs (et al), 2000, 579f.

208 | Engelmann (et al.), 2011, Soviet Counselors, 56.

209 | Hilger, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 100.

210 | Hilger, 105 and Gieseke, 200, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009.

211 | Borchert, 2006; Engelmann (et al.), 2011, Soviet Secret Service, 275-279; Schroeder, 1999, 433f.

Espionage or Politics? The Activities of the MfS Abroad

The Stasi's task of preserving "peace and security" within the GDR became even more pressing after the international recognition of the GDR due to the perceived and actual influence of "Western ideology and thought." Gieseke even considers the MfS the "decisive guarantor of inner stability under the condition of détente" inside and outside the GDR.[212] The major actor for the Stasi's work beyond the GDR's borders was the HV A,[213] the former Hauptabteilung XV.[214] To this day, researchers haven't been able to fully analyze and reconstruct the duties and working-processes of this section, as the lion's share of its files were either destroyed or manipulated before they could be secured and reviewed after 1990.[215] Nonetheless, some significant progress has been made in this respect due to ongoing archival research in Germany. This research allows for a rough description of the work of the HV A, its subsections, and estimate numbers of personnel.

Role and competencies of the HV A

Even more than in other fields, the Stasi's activities outside the GDR were controlled and later on guided by the Soviet Union. Despite a certain air of elitism held by the HV A and its employees, it had always been an integral part of the Stasi. As such the HV A received direct orders from the minister of state security who himself had to rely on the advice of the KGB.[216] Just as with the leadership of the MfS itself, the HV A had been under the reign of one single functionary almost throughout the whole existence of the GDR: Markus Wolf. At the age of eleven Wolf had immigrated to the Soviet Union. When he returned in 1945, he came equipped with the "fitting pedigree" for the future East German state. Wolf advanced as the head of HA XV as early as 1953[217] and became head of the reformed Section "HV A" in 1956 until he resigned due to private reasons in 1986.[218]

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212 | Gieseke, 2001, 84.

213 | English: Main Administration A. "A" in HV A does not stand for "Aufklärung" (English: reconnaissance). The name is modelled on the No.1 Administration Section of Espionage of the KGB (komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti), the Soviet Committee for State Security, in: Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 21 and 41; The former Major Department XV (Hauptabteilung XV) was renamed to HV A in 1956, Engelmann (et al.), 2011, 131 and 142f.

214 | The Hauptabteilung XV was restructured as the HV A in 1956. Its major field of activity was West Germany, Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 208.

215 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 43.

216 | Schroeder, 1999, 447; Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 41.

217 | In 1953 HA XV was formed out of the "Institute for Economic Research" (German: Institut für Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Forschung), founded in 1951, Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 20f.

218 | Müller-Enbergs (Ed.), 2000, Markus Wolf (Mischa), 935f; Wolf, 1997, 437.

Within the MfS, the HV had been assigned had a special role.[219] Nonetheless, it applied just the same methods as the other MfS Sections and was tightly connected with them.[220] Organized in a strictly hierarchical way, the MfS was subdivided in Hauptabteilungen (HAs) that were under direct control of the minister or one of his deputies. The guidelines of responsibilities for the HAs followed either thematic or operational considerations.[221] In this context, MfS Minister Mielke's style of leadership is regularly described as patriarchal if not despotic. For this reason, Möller ascribes the efficiency and success of the ministry's work rather to the independent nature of the ministry's highly specialized subunits[222] than to its inflexible leader. This probably was the case for the sections occupied with the ministry's activities abroad, especially the HV A, as they relied not only on their own employees, but on a wide network of "unofficial employees," their agents and spies, as well.

Like all sections of the MfS, the HV A was not only assigned to observe, but to act – reactively and preemptively. In the case of the HV A, this meant inside and outside the GDR, towards its own citizens as well as the citizens of the "partner countries." Officially, the sections' work was based on two "pillars:" First, the work of the legal residencies, that is, official representations abroad, and second, the cooperation with the "partner countries." Former special officers (OibEs)[223] never ceased to emphasize that these two were always supposed to be separate, while downplaying the special role of illegal residencies and illegal intelligence.[224] However, residential work and cooperation with the "partner countries," meaning their secret services, always tended to blend together, as in Aden. Furthermore, both legal and illegal residencies were integrated into the GDR's trade missions, other international representations, and later on embassies abroad, all of which were usually led by OibEs. This was made possible through the Politbüro directive

219 | In 1958-59, the HV A was reorganized and subdivided into eight sections and "Object 9," the separate school for HV A cadres. Also, the head of the HV A was one of several deputies of the minister of state security, which also illustrates the prominent role of the HV A within the ministry. Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 41.

220 | Like the other sections, the HV A relied on the Officers on Special Mission (OibE), IME (IM–experts), GSMs and a network of IMs abroad. IME: Unofficial Employees on Special Mission, German: Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter im besonderen Einsatz; GSM; Societal Employees for Security. German: Gesellschaftliche Mitarbeiter für Sicherheit.

221 | English: Main Sections.

222 | Möller, 2004, 42.

223 | Officers on Special Mission, German: Offiziere im besonderen Einsatz. These MfS officers could rely on a second identity and usually acted from an important political, social or cultural position, e.g., as security personnel of GDR representations abroad, in: Engelmann et al., 2011, 226f;

224 | Bernd Fischer and Rudolf Nitsche, in: Fischer, 2009, 20; Nitsche, 1994, 51. "illegal residencies": German: illegale Residenturen.

of February 1957 that aimed to create "a type of IM immediately depending on the MfS."[225] Oftentimes these IMs worked undercover, mostly as delegates or representatives of other ministries both abroad and in the GDR. Thus, and especially before "international recognition," illegal residencies and intelligence were at the center of East German foreign policy.

Among the different subsections of the HV A, subsection HV A III must be considered the most relevant for this analysis, as one of its major tasks was to coordinate support for those countries of the Global South that were classified as countries of "socialist orientation." In the following, its structure and leadership are introduced. Until 1971, the subsection HV A III was led by Horst Jänicke, who travelled to Aden frequently.[226] His next post was deputy head of the HV A, which illustrates the importance of subsection III within the HV A. Jänicke's successor in subsection HVA III, Werner Prosetzky, was followed by Horst Machts in 1983 and lastly Dietmar Bauer in 1989.[227] HV A III/B coordinated the lion's share of activities in the Middle East in general and gathered and analyzed general information. Unit HV A/B/4, the former unit HV A III/7, focused on Algeria, Kuwait, Libya, the two Yemens and the PLO.[228] Head of unit HV A III/7 was Herbert Fechner, of unit HV A/B/4 Klaus Guhlmann. For the whole unit, Müller-Enbergs registers seven operative employees and 15 IMs/KPs from abroad and counts 140 process files.[229] During the 1970s, Oberstleutnant Fiedler, head of a working group on the "young nation states," regularly appears as addressee of reports, information, or financial statements in the HV A III/7.[230]

225 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 96.

226 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 36 and 38.

227 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 73.

228 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 42 and 80.

229 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 85.

230 | Hilfeleistungen gegenüber jungen Nationalstaaten auf nichtzivilem Gebiet. Übersicht über Ausgaben [...] von 1967 bis 1976, Brief Oberst Henning Abt. Finanzen an HV A/III, 26.April 1977, in: BStU MfS Abt. Finanzen Nr. 1393, 151-161 (166 including notes); Brief Stellvertreter HV A an MfS Abt.Finanzen Oberst Hennig, November 30 1977, in: BStU MfS Abt. Finanzen Nr.1419, 163.

Other Stasi Sections and their role abroad

Apart from the HV A, other sections of the Stasi active abroad or involved with international issues were HA I, HA II, HA XX, and HA XXII. HA I was assigned to observe the activities of the Ministry of National Defense and its subordinate organs including the NVA itself.[231] HA II was occupied with counter-intelligence and, in addition to the special officers of the HV A (OibEs), its employees were deployed in the embassies for just this purpose.[232] HA XX focused on the prevention and termination of "political-ideological diversion"[233] and "political underground activities,"[234] both inside and outside the GDR. The "struggle against ideological enemies," that is espionage and surveillance towards the West, demanded close cooperation between HV A, HA II and HA XX.[235] After Honecker succeeded Ulbricht in 1971, HA II almost quadrupled its personnel, to "penetrate and control the recently established diplomatic representations of Western states."[236] Furthermore, the newly established international diplomatic representations of the GDR were infiltrated as well. It was the assigned task of the HV A employees to watch GDR citizens and prevent possible defections or treason.[237] The internal exchange of information, espionage and counter-intelligence within the Stasi naturally eased the path to involvement of the HA II and HA XX in the Global South, as will be seen in the analysis of the MfS' activities in South Yemen.

Finally, Special Section XXII was involved in all countries connected to international terrorist groups. Due to the public's interest in the subject, the files of Section XXII are likely the most quoted in the media, though the files only offer restricted information with regard to actual operations abroad. In 1975 the section was founded as a "counter-terrorism unit," though it also verifiably excelled in supporting international terrorist organizations and cooperated with the Koko.[238] Terrorist groups in the Near and Middle East were observed and "handled" in XXII's subsection No.8. This subsection also coordinated the infiltration of these groups with IMs, among them the Abu-Nidal and the Carlos Group, both of which had close ties to the South Yemeni regime.[239] The recruitment of international

231 | Engelmann et al., 2011, 120f.

232 | Möller, 2004, 42.

233 | German: politisch-ideologische Diversion (PID), Suckut, 2001, 303; Auerbach et al., 2008, 151.

234 | German: politische Untergrundtätigkeit (PUT), Suckut, 2001, 17; Auerbach et al., 2008, 150.

235 | Auerbach et al., 2008, 157.

236 | Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 229.

237 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 252.

238 | Deutscher Bundestag (ed.), 1994, 207; Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 235; Möller, 2004, 44.

239 | Möller, 2004, 45.

IMs was combined with the education and training of members of these terrorist groups, coordinated by Section XXII and implemented by Section AGM/S.[240]

Three phases of the Stasi's "foreign policy"

Müller-Enbergs defines three phases marked by turning points for the HV A's activities: The erection of the wall in 1961 and the enforcement of the "Grundlagenvertrag" in 1972.[241] In the following, the three phases of HV A activities are interpreted with regard to the GDR's foreign policy towards the Global South, among them the states of "socialist orientation" and especially South Yemen. While the HV A had mostly focused on the newly formed FRG before 1961, the scope of operations in the Global South was broadened significantly thereafter, including the profile of the special officers (OibEs) and the work of the responsible subsection, HV A III.[242] As a consequence, the Ministry gradually expanded its influence abroad at the expense of the regular diplomatic personnel of the GDR until the "wave of recognition" in the early 1970s. Until then, the HV A had had to fully rely on illegal residencies, that is, disguised operative bases abroad. However, due to the lack of diplomatic relations and thus representations, this had also meant a "monopoly of information" (Müller-Enbergs) for the HV A in the international realm at the time.

Consequently, this had to change after the establishment of official diplomatic relations and embassies. Afterward, the number of legal residencies grew and the HV A's work became more integrated into the GDR's "official" foreign policy endeavors: The GDR had successively expanded its cooperation with developing countries of "socialist orientation" and in doing so promoted a "state-building policy" with a focus on security organs and the educational system of recipient countries, the most prominent of which were South Yemen, Ethiopia,[243] and Nicaragua. It was mostly the special officers (OibEs) who were highly involved in the installation of secret services modelled on the GDR's system in the "partner countries," including the training of personnel and the preparation and the delegation of so-called advisory groups.[244] Furthermore, East German embassies now served as the ideal coverage for short-term visits of Stasi personnel. In early

240 | AGM/S: Arbeitsgruppe des Ministers; English: Working group of the minister. AGM/S was also occupied with acts of sabotage abroad. It later on was renamed Section XXIII, in: Möller, 2004, 45 and 47. On the recruitment process see for example: Operative Einschätzung des GMS "Leonhardt"-Vorg.-Nr.XV 3481/82, August 28 1986, in: BStU MfS AGMS Nr.1020-88, 66-68. On training courses see for example: Konzeption für die Durchführung eines Sonderlehrganges zur Ausbildung von Mitarbeiter des MfS VDR Jemen, Section X to Section XXIII May 4 1988, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 125f.

241 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 22.

242 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 42.

243 | Borchert, 2006, 201 und 241; Dagne, 2006.

244 | German: Beratergruppen; In this, the HV A worked closely with the GDR's Army, the NVA (German: Nationale Volksarmee), Kowalczuck, 2011, 259; Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 73.

1984, for example, four high-ranking Stasi employees, of the HV A Section N, and two delegates from HA III, visited Aden to check on the condition of the GDR-financed surveillance base "Netzwerk 3," with the two HA III delegates travelling under cover as MfAA diplomats.[245]

3.4 Responsibilities for and in the PDRY: East Berlin and the Diplomatic Mission in Aden

According to Wolfgang Bator, former GDR ambassador, each embassy, regardless of its size, had a section or at least one diplomat each responsible for political affairs, foreign trade, and culture. All of them officially answered to the ambassador.[246] The East German embassies on the ground mostly fulfilled an executive and coordinating function, directed by the MfAA in Berlin.[247] Apart from the minister of foreign affairs, one of his deputies in Berlin was assigned to coordinate and decide on the relations with the countries of the Near and Middle East. After 1972, this was Klaus Willerding,[248] and after 1988 Heinz-Dieter Winter.[249] Sometimes this deputy was head of the respective regional section.

The "Arab States/Near and Middle East" Regional Section

South Yemen was part of the "Non-European Countries No.3: Arab States" regional section, which was renamed "Arab States Section" and then "Near and Middle East Section" in the 1970s. Head of this section in the late 1960s was Kiesewetter and after him Siegfried Kämpf.[250] He was followed by Karl-Heinz Lugenheim who officially

245 | Konzeption für die Durchführung einer Dienstreise im Rahmen der Aktion "Netzwerk 3", in: BStU MfS HA III Nr.8, 212-215. In South Yemen, this part of the GDR's nation- and state-building policy was coordinated by HA X which first of all regulated relations of the MfS with security organs of countries of the Eastern Bloc but also other close allies like South Yemen and thus worked closely with the HV A. Möller, 2004, 42. See for example a comprehensive file on South Yemen, BStU MfS Abt.X Nr.324 Teil 1 von 2; Korrespondenz Oberst Kempe (Abt.X) und Oberst Machts (HV A), Zusammenarbeit mit den Sicherheitsorganen der VDRJ, February/March 1989, in: BStU MfS Abt.X Nr.324 Teil 1 von 2, 23-25.

246 | E.g. the "culture section," coordinated and directed the activities of East German actors from the social sphere, esp. the "Societies of Friendship". Int. with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011.

247 | The major sources for the succession of personnel are archival material and Muth, who relies on Radde, Jürgen, Der Diplomatische Dienst der DDR. Namen und Daten, Köln, 1977, in: Muth, 2001, Annex XVII "Overview of the Heads of Country sections from the 1960s to 1972-73 and Annex XIX "Overview of personnel of diplomatic missions of the GDR from 1949 to 1975, 279-295.

248 | Brief Scharfenberg an Rost, December 20 1973, in: PA AA MfAA C 1555/76, 116f.

249 | E-Mail Heinz Dieter-Winter, May 26 2014.

250 | Brief von Winzer an W. Stoph und Prof. K. Hager, June 12 1969, Berlin, in: PA AA MfAA C 1219/71, sine pagina. Kämpf followed in 1970.

remained head of the section from 1970-1977.[251] In between, Günther Scharfenberg substituted for Lugenheim for about half a year until Günter Mauersberger took over in July 1972.[252] In 1977 Wolfgang Konschel became the new section head, followed by Wolfang Schüßler from 1978 to 1985. Heinz-Dieter Winter took over until 1986 and was succeeded by the last head of section, Reiner Neumann, who served until 1990. Another important link between the foreign policy headquarters in East Berlin and the respective embassies in the 1970s was the official appointment of a Politbüro secretary to one or several countries as his "countries of focus" to improve political relations and personal contacts. "The relations of the PDYR [for example] were assigned to Gerhard Grünberg"[253] who appears regularly as the coordinator of meetings with high-ranking Yemeni delegations in East Berlin.[254]

East German Ambassadors to Aden

With regard to the number of diplomats and employees, the embassy in Aden was one of the biggest East German embassies in the Global South. All in all, six ambassadors were sent to Aden: Karl Wildau, who had been general consul in Aden since 1968, served as ambassador from July 1969 to 1972. He was likely well acquainted with Honecker, as he married Honecker's daughter Erika.[255] Wildau was dismissed from his post after South Yemen complained about the disclosure of secret information by the minister of justice to Soviet and East German officials.[256] Wildau was succeeded by Günther Scharfenberg who remained in office until 1978 and thus was the longest-serving ambassador to the PDRY. Scharfenberg was replaced by Ernst-Peter Rabenhorst who remained on his post until 1981. Rabenhorst had been a member of the CC "International Relations" Section and had recommended himself for the post during a visit to the PDRY while consulting on foreign policy regarding the establishment of relations with Washington and Bonn in 1974.[257] Rabenhorst was succeeded by Reiner Neumann who had to leave the country due to the "January 1986" massacre. The next ambassador to Aden,

251 | Beschlußvorlage [sic!] zur Konzeption Entwicklung der politischen, ökonomischen und kulturellen Beziehungen zur VDRJ 1968, in: PA AA MfAA C 1219/71; E-Mail Heinz Dieter-Winter, May 26 2014.

252 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 17.

253 | Grünberg, member of the Politbüro since 1966 and mostly occupied with question of agriculture, was assigned to entertain relations with the PDRY at the highest party level. Scharfenberg, 2012, 52.

254 | Stenografische Niederschrift der Beratung mit der Delegation der NLF Südjemen am 2.11.1970 im Hause des ZKs, in: BArch, SAPMO/DY 30/11407, 5-71.

255 | Erika Wildau, in: Der Spiegel, No.49, 1988,

256 | SAPMO BArch, DY 30/IV B/2/20/285; Scharfenberg, 2012, 33.

257 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 48; A few years later Rabenhorst even published an article on the PDRY's progressive development in the SED magazine on theory and praxis of scientific socialism "Einheit" (Unity). See: Rabenhorst, 1977.

Freimut Seidel, then gradually aimed to revive relations. Though East German-South Yemeni relations did not recover fully until 1990, they were very well on their way after March 1989. Seidel left the country in 1989 and Werner Sittig took over in August. Sittig witnessed the beginnings of Yemeni unification and initially was supposed to establish the GDR embassy of a unified Yemen in Sana'a. However, he wasn't able to put his experiences to use anymore. Sittig was only to serve until 1990 and was the very last ambassador of the GDR sent to Aden. With unification on the horizon, Sittig was called back to East Berlin to take over as Head of the MfAA Near- and Middle East Section[258] under the last two ministers of foreign affairs in East Germany, Markus Meckel, from April to August 1990 and Lothar de Maizière, for the final three months of the existence of the GDR.

Inside the Embassies: Cadre Selection and Responsibilities

Future embassy staff and their families had to meet a certain "standard" of Party loyalty. This was especially true for the ambassador and his family for two major reasons: The ambassador firstly was considered responsible for the East German "collective" in his country of service. The "Aden collective" was comprised of more than 240 GDR citizens.[259] But secondly, the ambassador was afforded much mobility and had to act independently but in accordance with the SED regime in countries of the developing world. As a consequence, ambassadors were tested and screened thoroughly with regard to their party loyalty. Werner Sittig, for example, reports of that each ambassador had to attend the SED party school for one year.[260] An everyday example for the self-controlling nature of the system is the reaction of the HV A resident's wife to the arrival of the Scharfenberg couple in Aden. Repeatedly she reminded Scharfenberg's wife, Meike, of the fact that she was not an SED member which was a rare condition for the wife of an East German ambassador.[261] This exception probably occurred due to extraordinary circumstances. The Scharfenbergs had met merely a year before Günter Scharfenberg was called upon as ambassador.[262] Furthermore, he was only the second choice, after Wolfgang Bator, to serve in Aden. Nonetheless, the post demanded a high level of experience in both the state and party apparatus, and in the middle of the "wave of recognition," there was an extreme shortage of able and loyal foreign policy cadres. Thus, it must have been enough for the Politbüro at the time that "there didn't seem to exist any doubts about Meike's political reliability and attitude,"[263] whereas this clearly didn't stop the MfS personnel from commenting on the situation.

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258 | Notes on telephone interview with Werner Sittig, May 8 2014.

259 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 88.

260 | Notes on telephone interview with Werner Sittig, May 8 2014.

261 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 25.

262 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 13; 16.

263 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 16.

Officially, it was the ambassador who had the highest authority over GDR citizens abroad. In reality though, this authority depended on the character of each ambassador and his relationship with the MfS residents. Scharfenberg reports about a conflict of "positions" between himself and the visiting political cadres:

> "But regardless of the political cadre's position at the headquarters [in East Berlin], abroad, the ambassador was the designated representative of 'party and government.'"[264]

However, the ambassador's authority by no means was a given that any ambassador could rely on. According to the principle of "democratic centralism," the ambassador was regarded a representative of the government, i.e., the state sphere, and thus subordinate to any high-ranking party representatives. Apart from Scharfenberg, several former ambassadors report of conflicts due to an unclear assignment of responsibilities with visiting cadres, especially Stasi delegates. Heinz-Dieter Winter remembers: "The Resident and his people had their own rooms. I visited the embassy in Aden in 1990. The ambassador had no access to these rooms,"[265] At the time, the Stasi's work obviously was beyond the ambassador's sphere of control.

Not only did the ambassador's family have to prove they were "in line" with SED politics. Indeed, every other GDR citizen had to display his or her loyalty to the regime. This was ensured by the expansion of the system of control from the GDR to its "partner countries." Aden was no exceptional case in this regard and not only official HV A officers, but also several East German and Yemeni IMs were on duty at the embassies until the very last days of East German foreign policy, usually without knowledge of the ambassador himself.[266] According to former special officer (OibE) Rudolf Nitsche, the special officers of the Stasi within the MfAA were meant to merely provide "counter-surveillance" for the MfAA and its representatives abroad, while working "just like any other" international secret service. But even though Rudolf Nitsche emphasizes that neither the HV A in general, nor the special officers in particular were intended to "spy upon employees of the MfAA [in the GDR and abroad],"[267] Nitsche's own history tells a different story. Under the code name "Winter," he was appointed deputy of a GDR trade mission in the Arab world in 1966 – without the knowledge of the head of the mission. Nitsche writes about these years:

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264 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 34.

265 | Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter, July 3 2012.

266 | Abschrift einer IM-Information der HA VII, Abt.1, February 28 1990, in: BStU MfS HA VII 7054, 51-53. In the PDRY, MfS-officers remained active until the official disbandment of the Ministry, announced in January 1990 by Hans Modrow. Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 209.

267 | Nitsche, 1994, 51.

> "One should be aware that only the best and most conscious citizens of the GDR were appointed to posts in the capitalist [countries]. I expected to join a small, steadfast socialist collective of convinced and collegial Genossen. I was badly mistaken."[268]

Among others, Nitsche was on duty to improve what he viewed to be scandalous circumstances by intensifying control of the MfAA functionaries even before they were sent abroad, such as through Nitsche's "operation" in the MfAA to form the "Internal Information" Section.[269] Regardless of a certain autonomy for the East German embassies and their employees, the watchful eye of the SED regime was omnipresent. The Stasi observed and reported about life and work of the diplomatic personnel at home and abroad to be able to react to internal disloyalties, but also preemptively to prevent possible "treason" or attempts to flee the GDR.

4. Summary: Competencies and Influences over Time

This chapter aimed to embed the actors involved in East German foreign policy making into the reality of the GDR's political system to be able to interpret the GDR's activities in South Yemen as typical or atypical for East German foreign policy making. While concrete implications of the relations between the actors are illuminated in Chapter 8 on the dominant foreign policy strategies in the Arab world, this chapter sketched the complex system of the GDR's foreign policy making process in general to assess the role and position of the Aden embassy and its policy within the system. This chapter pointed out two actors which moved outside the rigid hierarchical system that was East German foreign policy, though both were an integral part of it: The major external determinant of foreign policy, the Soviet Union, and the Stasi and its officers.

Moving beyond the SED System of Foreign Policy: The Stasi and Moscow

After two decades of access to a huge corpus of documents, research and academic discourse on the structures, decision- and policy-making process of the Stasi, research has moved from its infancy to adolescence,[270] but a big share of material still awaits academic attention and thus oftentimes conclusions remain speculative at best. The MfS was able to gradually expand its own sphere of action within the political system of the GDR. The Stasi was able to create a certain aura of omniscience, elitism, and influence within East German society and successfully combined this policy with an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, insecurity, and

268 | Nitsche, 1994, 55.

269 | English: Internal Information Section; Nitsche, 1994, 40. Later on after the "wave of recognition" the "Schutz und Sicherheit" Section was formed, simply called "Section S" in this context.

270 | Schroeder, 2013, 558; See also: Engelmann (et al.), 2011; Gieseke, 2011;

even fear among the foreign policy personnel to use the "wrong" that is, non-party conform, political statements and engagement in public. Abroad, this created extraordinary power for a ministry which otherwise was subordinate to the party like any other state institution.

The work of the GDR's secret service in the Global South, and particularly in the Arab world, played a decisive role in the GDR's activity during the establishment of a communist state system. This was especially the case in efforts to support the socialist state- and nation-building of the Aden regime. All in all, the MfS and the adjunctive section HV A both served the same purpose as the MfAA: "[T]o stabilize the GDR-system, [and] secure the rule of the SED"[271] by increasing East German prestige abroad and improving the political and economic outputs of GDR foreign policy. The concrete case of South Yemen gives an excellent example of this involvement, as will be shown in the analytical chapters on the GDR's policy in the country.

Apart from the foreign policy headquarters in Berlin, it was not only the Stasi that had a close eye on East Germany's embassies. "[C]lose contacts between the GDR's diplomats abroad and the Soviet representatives had to be emphasized."[272] To this day, the mechanisms and processes of Soviet control over the GDR's foreign policy remain insufficiently analyzed. Nonetheless, it may be concluded that the Soviet urge and "need for control"[273] of the SED regime seemed to decrease over time. After 1955 there merely remained the Soviet embassy to direct East-Berlin's politics, at least officially. Nonetheless, Moscow made sure to create its very own power base in East Germany by establishing their organizational system and thus securing a certain structural power for themselves: Similarities between the Soviet and the East-German security services KGB and Stasi were numerous, among them a hierarchic system modelled on military ranks.[274] This emphasizes the special role of the Stasi within the system and may explain its employees' self-perception as a distinctive political elite. In addition to that, the Soviet Union ensured control of East German activities abroad, based on the close cooperation between KGB and MfS, but also between Soviet and East German diplomats in the respective countries, such as South Yemen.

Foreign Policy Responsibilities in the GDR: Three Phases of Development

As indicated above, the reality of power distribution among state and party organs did not correspond with the constitutional political system. Constitutional genesis rather has to be considered a belated confirmation of actual circumstances, as the constitutions of 1968 and 1974 merely adapted constitutional law to political

271 | Müller-Enbergs, 2011, 20.

272 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 62.

273 | Wentker, 2007, 29.

274 | Kowalczuk, 2013, 48.

realities. Distribution of responsibility within the GDR depended on two factors: First, the efficiency of the complex relation between party and state and second, the personality and the power network of foreign policy functionaries. Based on these two factors, three phases of development of foreign policy responsibilities can be identified that coincide with Müller-Enbergs' three phases of the Stasi's activities abroad, but also agree with the major phase of East German foreign policy introduced in chapters 5 and 6: The first "Phase of Collective Improvisation" from the founding of the GDR to 1961, the second "Phase of Consolidation and Professionalization" until international recognition in 1971-72, and the third and last "Phase of Established Administration" until 1989 during which the state, its political system and the ruling elite were able to act from an established position.

Understandably, the transition from the "Phase of Consolidation and Professionalization" to the "Phase of Established Administration" is the most relevant period for collecting information on the development of power distribution within the foreign policy apparatus. The expansion of the GDR's activities in the international sphere in the 1960s, mostly in the Global South, had led to a "certain [...] professionalization"[275] of the foreign policy apparatus, while selection processes and training made sure that foreign policy personnel were among the most loyal to the party, its policies, and political survival.[276] Muth mentions the common slogan according to which the MfAA personnel first of all were "workers for the party before they were diplomats."[277] Hence, Wolfang Bator's memories as a long-time, high-ranking foreign policy functionary cannot be too surprising. His impression of a more influential role of the MfAA on the GDR's foreign policy without doubt belittles the fact that the CC and Politbüro not only decided on the final version of foreign policy directives, but also whether the draft handed in by the MfAA was to be discussed at all. In addition to that, the majority of the MfAA personnel were integrated into the party at a considerably high level, ensuring that they were less likely to suggest policies outside the general "party line," as they had internalized what was expected from them.[278] Furthermore, these personal unions of party posts and other functions oftentimes created shortcuts in the "chain of command," and policy-making sometimes became an almost impossible task without consent of the highest party levels.

275 | Wentker, 2007, 191.

276 | As early as March 1949, diplomatic personnel was trained at the Institut für Internationale Beziehungen (IBB), the Institute for International Relations, in Potsdam-Babelsberg, in: Crome, 2009, 9.

277 | Muth, 2001, 73.

278 | On the process of "internalization" in the sense of creating "habits of order and obedience" as part of what Foucualt described as "subjectification" see: Foucault, 1995 (1975), 242.

All in all, the actual accomplishment of the MfAA may not be found in proactive policy-making, but rather has to be sought in the reduction of friction losses within the spider web of responsibilities and involvement between party, state, and "society actors": Within the second and third sphere, responsibilities were highly fragmented, and the MfAA was able to acquire the role as coordinating "mediator"[279] between state and society actors. During and right after the "wave of diplomatic recognition" of the early 1970s, the MfAA personnel had high hopes for the extension of its authority, but these hopes were not to be fulfilled. Only occasionally did the room for actual "policy-making" expand, as in the case of the GDR's embassy in Aden:

> "After consultations [...] with Genosse Dr. Weiß in August [1973] and delegation Heydel in Aden in fall 1973, we aimed to process relations with the PDRY through the embassy as a matter of principle."

However Scharfenberg does not end here, but continues: "insofar as there do not exist immediate contacts between central state institutions of the GDR and partners of the PDRY."[280] Thus, the question of responsibility with regard to decision-making always had an easy answer: Regardless of the contacts of the GDR state apparatus with the respective county, it was always the party apparatus and its "inner circle" that decided on matters of importance.[281] Despite a certain influence with policy suggestions in emergency situations, the MfAA rarely left the policy path staked out by the leaders of the SED. The MfAA rather remained an active executive "subordinate regulator."[282] The one-party system combined with nomenclatural recruitment concentrated the decision-making process of all policy fields in a very small circle of decision-makers.[283] Furthermore, the already-centralized political system over time condensed power distribution among the SED's leading functionaries even more, so that in the 1980s, individuals' opinions and interpretations, most prominently those of the secretary-general, became highly influential. On the one hand, this allowed for quicker and more flexible responses than before, but also led to rash actions without the necessary comprehensive consideration, as will be illuminated with the analysis of East Berlin's foreign policy engagement in Aden.

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279 | Muth, 2001, 67.

280 | Brief Scharfenberg an Willerding, Aden, March 20 1974, in: PA AA MfAA C 1555/76, 4f.

281 | Schmitt's definition of the "exception" as "a danger to the existence of the state" reveals his wish for the securing of the state's existence, Schmitt, 2005 (1922), 6.

282 | Scholtyseck, 2003, 71; Wentker, 2007, 382.

283 | Principles of nomenclature in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, June 18 1964, in: PA AA, MfAA, LS-A 29, in: Muth, 2001, 268.