

**CARTELIZATION AND THE STATE OF POLITICAL PARTIES: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PARTY ORGANIZATION IN THE UNITED
STATES, GERMANY AND POLAND**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies political party organization in the United States, Germany and Poland during national election campaigns and regular party operations. According to conventional wisdom, changes in party organization, such as professionalized campaigns and communications technology, have detrimental effects on political parties. Katz and Mair argue (1995) that political parties have become agents of the state and fail to provide linkage between the state and the electorate due to these changes in party organization. As cartel parties, political parties are then financially dependent on the state and do not need the support of the electorate. Katz and Mair further suggest that developing a closer relationship with the state has weakened political parties, especially the party on the ground. This dissertation tests whether Katz and Mair's cartel theory applies to political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland examining the parties' organizations during and in between election campaigns and finds that the political parties do not confirm the cartel theory. American and German political parties do not primarily rely on government financing and possess too strong of an electoral linkage to their voters to be considered cartel parties. Political parties in Poland better fit with the cartel theory due to strong financial ties with the state and insufficient linkage with their electorate, both inside and outside of election campaigns. This dissertation argues that the cartel thesis should not be considered a theory since it cannot explain observations regarding political parties and their organizations in the United States, Germany and Poland. Instead, the cartel thesis should be considered a heuristic

tool to characterize political parties, continuing the tradition of prior descriptive party models such as those of the mass and the catch-all parties.

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To my family.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union (Christian Democratic Union)
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Social Union)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
Grüne	Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen (The Green Party)
PiS	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice)
PO	Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform)
PSL	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Polish People's Party)
ROP	Ruch Odbudowy Polski (Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland)
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party)
SLD	Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (Democratic Left Alliance)
SDPL	Socjaldemokracja Polska (Social Democracy of Poland)
UP	Unia Pracy (Labor Union)

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation investigates political parties and their organization during and in between contemporary election campaigns. Recent campaigns appear significantly determined by professionals using the latest communication technology rather than relying on party members and volunteers to carry out the campaigns. This transformation or professionalization of the campaigns is often referred to as Americanization since it originated in the United States. Conventional wisdom suggests that these campaign trends impact political parties negatively. More specifically, the literature implies that parties and their organizations have been weakened by the prominence of political consultants and professional campaign experts. Consequently, this dissertation examines to what degree these trends occur in current campaign and their effects on the parties and their organization.

Katz and Mair's (1995, 2009) influential cartel theory predicts that in the current environment of modernized campaigns and a disconnected electorate, parties have gradually transformed from elite/cadre parties to mass parties. In the next stage, parties have transformed into catch-all parties and then most recently to cartel parties. Per Katz and Mair's definitions, a cadre party is elitist in membership and organization and receives resources through personal contacts. A mass party depends on its large and homogenous membership for resources and also relies on the work of its members. The catch-all party seeks to include members from all kinds of backgrounds and relies on a mix of resources for its funding. Lastly, cartel parties are funded largely by state subsidies and do not need a large membership. Cartel parties run capital intensive campaigns and make heavy use of the latest communication technology to win votes.

Most importantly, cartel parties have become agents of the state rather than agents of the citizens. Instead of providing linkage between the state and its population cartel parties treat citizens like consumers.

Applying Katz and Mair's theory, we should expect parties to take on cartel characteristics. For example, the parties' work and campaign style should be capital intensive, relying on the services of professionals and experts rather than on volunteers, members or activists. We should also expect heavy use of the latest communication technology to mediate the party's message. Financially, parties should rely mostly on state subventions and less on membership dues and contributions. There should also be limited direct involvement from citizens and members/activists, for example, in formulating campaign themes, strategies and organization. This could show through low density of local party organizations, groups and associations and a strong national party organization with one central office.

Whether contemporary parties fit into this mold of the cartel party in these characteristics, however, is not clear. While some studies focusing on western European democracies seem to support the cartel thesis some studies including newer eastern European democracies do not. What is more, there is a lack of research applying cartel theory to various types of democracies, old and new. Similarly, few studies apply cartel theory to geographically diverse democracies but instead focus on one area exclusively, i.e. western or eastern Europe. As a result, this dissertation tests the cartel thesis to find out if it in fact holds true when applied to a variety of cases including a variety of democracies. This dissertation therefore investigates whether contemporary parties actually fit the description of the cartel party as predicted by Katz and Mair. Using the

comparative method, I analyze party organization of major parties in the United States, Germany and Poland, evaluate the relationship between parties and the state and also examine the parties in the context of national election campaigns.

To test whether contemporary parties in the United States, Germany and Poland are in fact organized like cartel parties we need to ask more specific questions. For example, do local associations and branches matter? How many of such groups are there and how often do they meet? What about the members and activists – do they have input in the campaigns? How much of the campaign work is carried out by professionals versus volunteers (members/activists)? Do the three political systems privilege political parties and create fertile ground for cartel parties? Regarding their funding, do parties actually receive more money from the state than from members and activists? Also, how much do parties rely on the latest communication technology? Do parties themselves organize their grassroots during campaigns?

1.1 Contribution

Most broadly, this study contributes to general electoral research of democracies. Elections are a crucial part of democracy in that they allow citizens to participate politically and hold their government accountable. Election campaigns are significant since they can sway votes one way or another and thereby influence the citizens and the election outcome. Therefore, changes in election campaigns need to be examined to determine what their broader consequences are. This study helps identify changes in electioneering and their possible causes and effects. This knowledge will help us determine whether observed changes in fact pose a threat to the functioning of democracy.

More specifically, this study sheds light on the actual role of political parties in election campaigns. As Schattschneider observed long ago, “modern democracy is unthinkable save as in terms of political parties” (1942, p. 1). Parties are important: they enable political engagement; recruit candidates and run election campaigns; and they make and implement policy. According to Crotty, parties are indispensable to a democracy: “they fulfill functions that no other organization, then or now, could” (Crotty 2006, p. 25). In addition to mobilization of the electorate and candidate recruitment, Crotty points out several other key services by the parties. For instance, parties represent the “interests of the mass of voters”, present issue alternatives relevant to the problems facing the nation and enacting them once in office” and also provide “the unity and cohesion to make a fragmented governing system perform adequately” (Ibid). Others have also illustrated parties as historical agents of democratization. In their efforts to gain resources and ultimately win elections, parties sought to enfranchise parts of the American people that had not been included. Hoping to gain new supporters, parties demanded greater inclusiveness leading to the introduction of American universal suffrage (Keyssar 2000).

Furthermore, a key contribution of political parties is that of linkage. In other words, parties are responsible for linking citizens with the state. This linkage provided by the parties is crucial to the electoral process and the functioning of democracy. Ideally, political parties should link the citizens with its government. In this role, parties enable political engagement and government accountability. As organizations parties recruit candidates and run election campaigns. In government parties make and implement policy. Parties provide “the mechanism that links the formal structures of political power

to the various components of civil society, by placing their representatives in positions where they can exercise that power on their behalf. Parties are thus “a conduit of communication, informing citizens and allowing their opinions to be expressed through institutional channels” (Szczerbiak 2001, p. 2). In a democracy, political parties “are the principal mediators between the voters and their interests, on the one hand, and the institutions of decision-making, on the other. They are the channels of political interaction between ‘civil society’... and ‘the state’. Hence the study of political parties is an essential contribution to the study of democracy...”(Puhle, 2002, p. 58). Or in the words of Lawson, a political party is the “one agency that can claim to have as its very *raison d’être* the creation of an entire linkage chain, a chain of connections that runs from the voters through the candidates and the electoral process to the officials of government” (Lawson 1988, p. 16). Parties therefore provide the essential linkage between the citizens and the government. Consequently, a major contribution of this study is to shed light on the role of political parties in the election campaigns to determine whether they continue to fulfill these important tasks. More precisely, this study shows that parties still hold a linking role between the citizens and the state. The specific focus here is on the parties’ organization during campaigns. Investigating contemporary electioneering and its effects on the parties can help us determine the status of political parties, and their ability to fulfill their democratic linkage duties.

Accordingly, this study helps fill gaps in our knowledge of political parties that the existing literature does not fully address. As I show, we have limited knowledge on party organization, on the organizational structures and on party staffing during the campaigns. It remains unclear how electioneering trends have affected parties and party

organization. In particular, we do not know whether these trends have actually weakened parties and their organization as the literature has implied. Party weakness or strength here then refers to whether the parties are or are not able to fulfill their traditional tasks in democracy, i.e. linkage and responsiveness.

Another contribution of this study is to broaden our knowledge regarding the character of modern election campaigns around the globe. In addition, while much has been written on the ways in which such modernization or transformation takes place, little is known about the effects and results of this process, particularly regarding political parties. Katz and Mair's (1995) influential cartel theory describes the transformation of mass parties into cartel parties as one of possible consequences of modern campaigns. Testing the applicability of the cartel model to contemporary parties we can learn to what degree this transformation has taken place. While studying political parties and their organization we can learn of the possible consequences of modern election campaigns.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Americanization/modernization literature

Generally, scholars agree that election campaigns around the world have undergone a process of modernization. This process is often referred to as "Americanization" which essentially means that campaigns have adopted a majority of U.S. campaign methods (Scammell 1998, Plasser 2000). While there is a plethora of different definitions the most useful definition of Americanization appears to be by Schulz (1997). According to Schulz, Americanization means increased personalization, professionalization and media-orientation of election campaigns. This includes negative

advertisements, use of marketing strategies as well as the staging of events and emphasis of certain issues over others.

The academic literature primarily deals with the causal factors of Americanization and the way in which the transfer and adaptation of American campaign methods takes place. As will become apparent, this body of literature does not satisfactorily address the consequences of Americanization. For example, the literature does not illustrate how Americanization affects political parties. The majority of the Americanization literature focuses on the ways in which this transfer process takes place rather than its causes or its effects.

Some scholars argue that Americanization takes the form of a directional one-way convergence process between the U.S. and European election communication leading European campaigns to adopt American electioneering methods, with particular emphasis on political marketing (Plasser 2000; Bowler and Farrell 1992; Butler and Ranney 1992; Scammell 1998). Mancini and Swanson, for example, argue that “campaigning in democracies around the world is becoming more and more Americanized as candidates, political parties, and news media take cues from their counterparts in the United States” (1996, p. 4). However, Mancini and Swanson suggest that Americanization is just another way of describing a global process of modernization. This view is widely held by a number of scholars who argue that the transfer of American campaign techniques is part of a global modernization process of shifting global, social and media structures (Negrine and Papathanassopoulos 1996; Swanson and Mancini 1996; Gunther and Mughan 2000; Norris 2000). The modernization scholars rightly find the term “Americanization” misleading since it is not always clear that all transfers occur from the United States to

other countries and not otherwise or from completely different sources, such as the European Union. Another group of scholars suggests a shift in focus to the individuals involved in the transfer of U.S. campaign techniques (Buerklin 1997; Plasser 2000, 2002; Farrell 1998; Farrell, Kolodny and Medvic 2001; Sussman and Galizio 2003). Some scholars of this conviction even go as far as arguing for a conspiracy of the transnational corporate sector class that together with political consultants as their agents seek to transform electoral processes and election outcomes (Sussman and Galizio 2003).

As this brief review of the Americanization literature shows, most studies focus on the causal factors behind electioneering changes and the ways in which campaign methods are adopted. Few studies, however, focus on the actual effects of this modernization process that campaigns have undergone around the globe. There is an understanding that political campaigns around the globe have generally become more professionalized and that this has led to a rise of political consultants, pollsters, as well as advertising executives. Some scholars find that this has changed the ways in which political parties and other organizations conduct their strategic communication (Swanson and Mancini 1996; Newman 1999; Thurber and Nelson 2000; Thurber, Nelson and Dulio 2000). Norris (2002) suggests that throughout this modernization process political campaigns have evolved in three stages, the pre-modern stage, the modern stages and the post-modern stage. In the pre-modern stage, lasting from the mid- 19th century to the 1950s, campaign organization was carried out inexpensively by local and decentralized party volunteers. In the modern stage, between the 1960s and 1980s, campaigns lasted much longer, made increasingly use of new media and also involved using specialists, all of which increased campaign costs dramatically. Lastly the post-modern stage,

beginning in the 1990s, is marked by professionally run permanent campaigns that are very cost intensive due to the high use of media advertisements and their management, consultants and other professionals to help coordinate and run campaign operations.

1.2.2 Party and Campaign Literature

The party and campaign literature has established that campaigns around the globe have been transformed by Americanization or a process of modernization (Bowler & Farrell 1992; Butler and Ranney 1992; Gunther and Mughan 2000; Swanson & Mancini 1996). “Studies have shown how electioneering by parties [...] and candidates has changed in terms of the three “T’s” of technology, technicians and techniques” (Farrell 2006, p. 124-5). Parties themselves have particularly been affected in their organizational dynamics. As Farrell points out parties have responded in several ways. First, parties have established professionally staffed fulltime campaign units, sometimes even external to party headquarters as was done by the British Labour party in 1997 and the German SPD’s Kampa in 1998. Second, there has been an ever increasing role of campaign specialists and agencies in the campaigns leading to the creation of a new industry of political consultants and specialists (Plasser & Plasser 2002).

The literature also notes the move towards greater personalization of the campaigns, i.e. the increasing focus on individuals such as candidates and party leaders (Bowler and Farrell 1992; Farrell 1996; Swanson & Mancini 1996). Some scholars even suggest a “presidentialization” of the campaign (Mughan 2000; Donsbach & Jandura 2003).

Despite these insights, however, it remains unclear how parties’ internal organization and staffing has been affected by the changed campaign environment. As

Webb and Kolodny show, the study of party employees remains one of the most under-researched fields in the study of political parties (2006). We know that American parties increasingly hire specially trained professionals and consultants and that it is often difficult to distinguish between consultants and internal party employees (Jalonick 2002/03; Thurber & Nelson 2000; Johnson 2001). Some scholars see this as a clear indicator for the demise of political parties. For example, Sabato argues that consultants “along with their electoral wares, have played a moderate part in ... the continuing decline of party organization... [and have] abetted the slide, sometimes with malice aforethought. ... The services provided by consultants, their new campaign technologies, have undoubtedly supplanted party activities and influence” (1981, p. 286).

Another group of scholars, however, disagrees with this view. As Dulio (2004; 2006) argues the rise of political consultants was merely a response to changes in campaigns and a reaction rather than a cause of political party decline. “Political consultants stepped in to fill a void that was left when parties were weakened and when they could not help all their candidates as effectively as they once did” (2006, p. 349). What is more, some research even supports the view that consultants and parties should be viewed as allies and not as enemies. In fact, they argue, consultants help parties achieve their goal of getting their candidates elected. As Kolodny shows political parties “could not offer the specific information and persuasion techniques that candidates believed were vital to their chances of victory” (2000, p. 111).

It is not clear and should be explored whether this debate is similarly applicable to other parties such as European parties. Conventional wisdom suggests that parties in parliamentary systems have more autonomy and rely less on consultants than American

parties. Recent research, however, suggests that in the areas of media, marketing or fundraising even European parties hire larger numbers of consultants (Webb & Fisher 2003). This could mean a loss of party control over the campaigns since autonomous consultants cannot be controlled as easily as internal employees (Webb & Kolodny 2006). There is thus a need to follow up on these assumptions and test how they apply to parties other than those of the United States, particularly in the modernized campaign environment. What is more, the literature generally does not address the exact role of consultants in the campaigns and their relation to party organization. Further research is needed to show the consultants' place in the campaigns and whether this can help determine the ally or enemy debate surrounding parties and consultants.

1.2.3 Americanization and Party Weakness Literature

Overall, scholars treat the subject of “Americanization” rather critically and assume that this transformative process of the campaigns will affect the modernizing politics negatively. Some argue that these changes in electioneering, including personalization, professionalization and strong media focus of the campaigns, affect political parties negatively. In the case of U.S. political parties some scholars believe that the changing campaigns have contributed to the continued weakening of political parties (e.g. Wattenberg 1998). Other observers find that the professionalization of the campaigns seriously undermines party relevance and vitality (Franklin 1994; Kavanagh 1996). Some even go as far as claiming that parties have experienced a “destruction of their status” (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 1997: 12). In the words of Dalton and Wattenberg, it “has become a recurring fashion in political science research to proclaim that parties are in decline – just as there is a counter-reaction arguing that these claims are

overstated” (2002, p. 16). However, the literature fails to show whether parties are in a state of decline or merely a period of readjustment to electioneering changes. Dalton and Wattenberg see party weakness and decline in several factors. They point to declining party identification and membership, lower election turnouts as well as decreasing willingness by the voters to actively participate in the campaigns (ibid). Webb et al. find increasing anti-party sentiment in the electorate and see this as indicator for party weakness (2002). Others agree that party weakness is most obvious in the ‘parties in the electorate’ function (Needham 2005). On the other hand, numerous scholars refer to party change rather than party decline in regard to modernized and professionalized campaigns (Farrell and Webb 2000; Norris 2000; Paterson 1996; Scammell 1995).

What is more, the current literature on party weakness does not specify which aspect of the political party it addresses. Any discussion of party weakness and the possible effects of modernization or Americanization needs to be preceded by a clarification. Traditionally, political parties have been viewed in three distinct categories. These three faces of political parties contain the party in the electorate, the party in government, and the organizational party. The party in the electorate refers to the voters who sympathize with the parties or consider themselves allied or associated with the parties. This aspect of political parties is crucial since it provides the foundation for the other two faces of parties, party in government and party organization. The party in government refers to the parties’ role inside of government institutions and thus comprises the relatively small group of office holders and candidates who run under the party’s banner. On an individual level, party organization comprises the workers and activists who make up the parties’ formal organization running day to day operations as

well as the campaign. In addition to these individuals, discussions of party organizations now also include aspects such as media advertising, voter contact, polling and canvassing.

Regarding the party in the electorate, scholars generally feel that parties are weakened in this key function. Citing low turnout rates, generally negative views of parties and politicians, scholars argue that parties are particularly struggling in this function. Numerous scholars hold this view (Dalton and Wattenberg 2002; Webb 2002; Needham 2005).

In contrast to the party in the electorate, parties appear to experience continued strength in the party in government function. This long-term stability of parties is addressed by supporters of the so-called cartel theory (Katz & Mair 1995). This theory by Katz and Mair posits parties as active agents and even accelerators of the modernization process (1995). As a result of declining membership rates and voter participation while facing capital intensive campaigns parties turn to the state for resources. Increasing costs of modern high-tech campaigns force parties to tap the state for funding. As a result of their dependence on state subsidies, parties' ties to society begin to erode and they take on 'cartel characteristics'. As cartel parties they use their closer ties to the state to excluder smaller and newer parties and become agents of the state in place of their traditional role of agents of the electorate. In the context of Americanized/modernized campaigns, cartel parties rely on professionals rather than volunteers to carry out party work. Being mostly funded by state subventions, parties do not need to rely much on the electorate for support and hence feel less accountable to it.

The strength of the governmental party stands in stark contrast to the weakness of the electoral party. In order to assess political parties overall we need to focus on the third face, party organization. This factor is the key to the parties and their ability to fulfill their role in democracy. As mediators between the population and the state, parties have linkage duties (Lawson 1988). In particular, parties should encourage political participation of the population. They should also assure policy responsiveness by the state. In their efforts to win votes, parties should also offer the electorate incentives and services. And lastly, parties should provide the people with a vehicle for coercive control of the state.

In addition to helping parties fulfill their linkage duties, parties ultimately depend on their organization. Were it not for the workers, activists and associations comprising party organization political parties would not exist. Political parties rely on their organization to enable responsiveness towards the people. Practical aspects of this nature include voter contact, polling, canvassing and advertising. Party organization also links the electoral party with the governmental party. Consequently, further knowledge of party organization will help us determine the overall state of political parties.

The literature defines party weakness in different ways. Some scholars have shown declining voter identification with the parties and regard this as sign for party decline (Wattenberg 1990, 1991). Numerous observers find that around the globe, voters have become disillusioned with the parties due to the “boredom of success” in mature democracies and the “anger of frustration” in developing countries (Burnell 1995, p. 6). Others perceive party weakness in declining membership rates as well as lower election turnouts (Scarrow 1996; Scarrow & Gezgor 2006; Needham 2005). The logical

conclusion from these observations is that democracies other than the United States and their political parties are equally subject to modernization as well as its consequences. As Farrell, however, points out the literature has not satisfactorily answered this question and it currently remains unclear how political parties in other democracies are affected and whether they are weakened by modernization (2006).

Most explanations for the increasing professionalization of campaigns, or the Americanization of the campaigns, do not focus enough on the parties themselves. Instead parties are merely discussed as victims of modernization and professionalization rather than as causal factors themselves (Gibson & Römmele 2001). Meanwhile, current findings indicate that parties are responding to the changing environment and are actively pursuing higher professionalization and more extensive use of technology to reach the electorate (Needham 2005). Luther and Müller-Rommel, for instance, argue that parties shift their resources from local organizations to the center and that campaign staff is recruited with loyalty to the party elite rather than to the grass roots level (2002). These findings are in line with proponents of Katz and Mair's cartel theory.

Susan Scarrow's (1996) work on German and British parties, however casts doubt on the consequences of Americanization/modernization as predicted by the cartel theory. Contrary to the findings of Wattenberg (1990, 1991, 1996) and Luther and Müller-Rommel (2002) for example, Scarrow reports that parties have actually become more member-oriented. Scarrow finds that the parties have actively increased their efforts to keep existing members and gain new members. Internally, decision making has become more inclusive of the party members and it appears that the members have actually become more important and valuable to parties in recent years. This contradicts the cartel

theorists who predict greater orientation towards elites as well as lower levels of accountability towards members and the general electorate. Nevertheless, Scarrow shares with the cartel theorists and the party decline theorists that they do not fully address the state of party organization during campaigns. Although the party weakness literature leads us to assume that parties have lost ground to the candidates and the political consultants, there is a need for more research to test this assumption.

1.2.4 Party Organization Literature

Within the political party literature a subset has developed centering of the aspect of party organization. Overall scholars are convinced that party organization is relevant (Cotter et al. 1984; Herrnson 1988, 1994; Baer and Bositis 1988; Patterson 1989; Shea and Green 1994, Coleman 1996). Nevertheless, this literature deserves further research and expansion since a bulk of the studies focus solely on American parties. Earlier studies have shown American party organization to be healthy and strong (Bibby et al. 1983, Gibson et al (1985). Studying state and national party organizations in the U.S., they find that party organizational strength has increased. Gibson et al (1989) studied county party organizational change over time in the 1980s. They focused largely on a multitude of factors such as a changing environment including partisan attachment and electorate composition, impact of legislation and policy, technological developments, availability of resources and the particular motivations of party leaders and activists. Kaze and Thornberry (1990) interviewed congressional candidates and found that party organization and the candidates' prior involvement with it played a crucial role in congressional candidate recruitment. However, while these studies are highly relevant we do not know whether they apply at all to parties in other countries.

A growing body of literature investigates political parties in other countries, a few of which should be mentioned here. Kitschelt (1988), for example, studied party organization of ecology parties in Belgium and West Germany and questioned the persistence of the mass party model. Kreuzer (1998) compared French and German socialist parties and found that the character of their organizations depends on electoral mechanisms such as district size and magnitude as well as ballot structure. Szczerbiak (1999, 2001) found the cartel thesis confirmed after examining the organization of Polish parties as well as the character of local party associations and clubs. Grabow (2001) examined party organization development in East and West Germany. Not surprisingly, he found that parties in the east are organized more like a cadre party and that parties in the west follow the model of a people's party. Consequently, Grabow's findings contradict cartel theory which predicts parties to take the form of cartel parties. On the contrary, Maria Spirova (2005) argues that Bulgarian parties are much like cartel parties and thereby confirms cartel theory. Studying organizational trends in Bulgarian parties Spirova found that they lack robust structure and organization. Instead, she found that Bulgarian parties are highly professionalized, personalized and closely linked with the state, characteristic of parties in the cartel mold.

These interesting but contradicting findings leave open the question whether the cartel thesis universally holds true. It is not clear that the transformation of political parties from people's agents to state agents is inevitable and takes place as a result of modernized campaigns. Numerous scholars have tested the cartel thesis without settling the debate one way or another. There seems to be an equal amount of cases supporting and contradicting the cartel thesis. Among the supporters are Szczerbiak (1999, 2001),

Kristjansson (2004), Spirova (2005), Ashton (2006), Jones & Hwang (2005), Blyth & Katz (2005). Scholars finding the cartel thesis inapplicable include Kitschelt (1988), Young (1998), Grabow (2001), Gallagher & Marsh (2004) and Scarrow (2006). With an exception of a few studies focusing on new democracies in central and eastern Europe, i. e. Szczerbiak (1999) on Poland, Sikk (2003) on Estonia, Spirova (2005) on Bulgaria, Yishai's (2001) study of Israeli parties and Jones and Hwang's (2005) study of Argentine parties, the bulk of the studies focus on industrialized western democracies, predominantly Europe. These include Heidar & Saglie's (2003) study of Norwegian parties, Hooghe, Maddens & Noppe's (2006) study of Belgian parties, and Koelble's (1987) study of the British Labour party and the German SPD party among others. Furthermore, there is a lack of studies testing the cartel thesis comparatively, including western and Eastern Europe as well as old and new democracies. The existing comparative studies focus primarily on Europe and on old democracies, such as Van Biezen (1998) on Spain and Portugal, Kitschelt (1988) on Belgium and West Germany, Kreuzer (1998) on France and Germany. Similarly, most studies do not focus on party organization but instead exclusively on aspects such as party membership and party finance.

1.3 Methodology

This study investigates political parties and party organization during contemporary election campaigns using the case study method combined with interviews. More specifically, I collected data concerning party membership, paid staff, and volunteers and of external consultants employed by the party during election campaigns. I also collected data on both quantity and quality of local party organizations, branches,

and associations, sources of party funding as well as the use of modern communication technology during campaigns. In addition, I conducted interviews with select party managers, candidates and experts in the field of party organization, elections and campaign research. Combining the results of the data collection with those of the interviews provides detailed insight into party organization. In particular, the combined research methods revealed the degree to which the political parties studied met the mold of Katz and Mair's cartel party.

Per definition, a cadre or elite party is most simply put elitist in membership, and organization, i.e. few members and activists, and receives resources through personal contacts. The cadre party is characterized by its "skeletal organization" meaning that local party organization is barely existent and invisible except prior and during elections when the party "turns into a well-oiled machine, distributing literature, organizing rallies, and getting voters to the polls"(Wolinetz (2002), p. 136). Furthermore, a cadre party has low membership numbers and usually once elections are over returns to its usual organizational form that has only a small constant office staff. Consequently, in the absence of elections, a cadre party does not require members, activists and also does not seek their involvement or opinions regarding the party. A mass party, on the other hand, contains high membership numbers, a socially diverse membership, permanent active and strong local organizations and associations. The organizational set up of the mass party is bureaucratic and also increasingly professionalized. Another key characteristic of the mass party is the relatively high influence of members and activists. (Grabow 2001:p. 3). Mass parties depend on their large and homogenous membership for resources and rely on the work of its members. In contrast to mass parties, cartel parties are funded largely

by state subsidies and do not have a large membership base. Campaigns are capital intensive and make heavy use of the latest communication technology to win votes. Most importantly, cartel parties have become agents of the state rather than agents of the citizens. Instead of providing linkage between the state and its population cartel parties treat citizens like consumers. More specifically, the cartel parties' work and costly campaign style relies on the services of professionals and experts rather than on volunteers, members or activists. Cartel parties also operate making heavy use of the latest communication technology. Financially, cartel parties rely mostly on state subventions and less on membership dues and contributions. Cartel parties do not really encourage direct involvement from citizens and members/activists, for example, in formulating campaign themes, strategies and organization. This shows through low density of local party organizations, groups and associations and a strong national party organization with one central office.

This study takes a comparative approach and investigates parties of different democracies both of older and newer democracies. In their original research leading them to formulate the cartel thesis, Katz and Mair only studied eleven West European countries and the United States which allowed for very little variety of types of democracy as well as age of democracy. As a result of their choice of cases, we can only expect to learn more about political parties in established democracies and not about political parties in general. However, to learn the most about political parties it is crucial to have a variety of cases. More specifically, a variety regarding the establishment of democracy is more useful. Therefore I chose the United States as the longest established democracy, Germany as the next oldest democracy and Poland as a new democracy. I chose these

three cases also to have more variety on the type of democracy. Accordingly, the United States is a presidential democracy, Germany a parliamentary democracy and Poland a mixed presidential-parliamentary democracy.

Studying political parties in the United States enriches this study in several important ways. In addition to being the ‘land of origin’ for modern election campaigns, the United States’ presidential system seems most prone to the effects of campaign modernization. For several years now, campaigns have employed experts and consultants and waged highly media-driven campaigns. Moreover, American campaigns are notoriously expensive, costing more than tens of millions of dollars. Also, scholars have frequently argued for the weak linkage role of parties in the American democracy where parties are merely a tool that candidates use to get elected. The intense focus on personalities and candidates seems to leave little room for ideology or the discussion of salient issues during American campaigns. These facts seem to support the view that American parties have become cartel parties and are no longer responsive to the electorate. However, there have been increasing efforts of political grassroots organization as well as door to door canvassing and activation of young voters in the most recent campaigns. According to cartel theory, we should not be able to observe any of these trends. Consequently, it is interesting to see how these apparently contradicting facts can be explained and how a detailed analysis of American parties relates to the cartel thesis.

The case of Poland is a great fit for testing cartel theory and also for probing the consequences of modernized campaigns. While there have been studies focusing on Poland and its parties, they are very few in numbers and have been done more than five

years ago. In addition, Poland has not been studied together with western democracies. Instead most comparative studies have grouped Poland with other young democracies of central and east Europe. Poland's relative inexperience with democracy also makes it a fascinating case for this study. The analysis of Polish party politics gives us good insight into the inner workings of a new democracy that did not experience the political development of western (European) states. Existing studies suggest that Polish parties might very well be described as cartel parties. Without a long history and culture of democracy, Poland appears to have a weak civil society and also a weak linkage between citizens and the parties. Instead, parties seem much Americanized, i.e. waging high-tech campaigns that address the voters directly without the mediation of local party organizations. However, the literature also suggests a variation in these findings, i.e. new parties resemble cartel parties and post communist successor parties still resemble mass parties. This dissertation tests whether Polish political parties can be called cartel parties.

Germany is also a great case for the study of cartel theory especially since in their original study, Katz and Mair concluded that German political parties were a near-perfect match with their cartel model. Germany is also a good case due to the countries' political system. From the end of the Second World War on, Germany has had a well functioning mixed parliamentary system and can also has a rich culture of democracy. This has been enhanced by the incorporation and democratization of the eastern part to a united democratic Germany. Interestingly, popular accounts describe German campaigns as Americanized in terms of their media use and their personification. Also, German parties have reported declining membership numbers. However, past studies report strong party efforts by the parties to incorporate and activate their members. Furthermore, in the last

national election we could also observe a surge of grass roots mobilization efforts, particularly of the parties' youth organizations. As it presents itself, the case of Germany is thus a fascinating puzzle to be solved.

In conclusion, the case selection of the United States, Poland and Germany offers a multitude of benefits including significant variation, wide applicability and relevance to the study of contemporary political parties and their campaigns. Having this variety will ultimately lead to a greater understating of political parties, their organizations and the usefulness and applicability of the cartel model.

1.4 Analysis

I collected data using existing studies, databases and interviews. Initially, I clarified what party organization should look like under the cartel model. Then, I examined each of the three country cases to determine whether they match up with the definition of a cartel party. To further solidify findings from the case studies, I collected data through interviews with select individuals from the parties, candidates, specialists as well as political consultants. The combination of detailed case study with expert interviews facilitated the ensuing assessment of the cartel party model and its applicability. The data analysis measured things such as composition of party staff, consultants, members and volunteers, organizational structures and characteristics, use of technology during campaigns and disbursement of party finances. The interviews reflected the views and perceptions of the individuals directly involved the contemporary parties. Thereby the interviews gave us insight into the daily operations of political parties and also gave us the 'insight story' on party organization and the applicability of cartel theory.

1.5 Cartel Theory and Definitions

In their influential 1995 article, Katz and Mair state that contemporary parties have taken on the new form of a cartel party. Katz and Mair argue that the cartelization is the latest form parties have taken in their transformative process over time. Accordingly, they describe political parties of the 19th century as elite or cadre parties which then transform into mass parties until the 1960s. Subsequently, parties transform from mass parties into catch-all parties and then most recently, beginning in the 1970s transform into cartel parties. Katz and Mair blame this most recent change of political parties on the current environment of modernized campaigns and a disconnected electorate. More specifically, Katz and Mair define a cadre party as elitist in membership and organization, receiving resources through personal contacts. A mass party, on the other hand, depends on its large and homogenous membership for resources and also relies on the work of its members. Building on the mass party, the catch-all party also relies on a large membership but seeks to include members from all kinds of backgrounds and relies on a mix of resources for its funding. In contrast to these party types, the cartel party does not need nor have a large membership and is funded largely by state subsidies. Cartel parties run capital intensive campaigns and make heavy use of the latest communication technology to win votes. Most importantly, cartel parties have become agents of the state rather than agents of the citizens. Instead of providing linkage between the state and its population cartel parties treat citizens like consumers.

If Katz and Mair's predictions hold true we should generally expect parties to take on cartel characteristics. In particular, the parties' work and campaign style should be capital intensive, relying on the services of professionals and experts rather than on

volunteers, members or activists. We should also expect heavy use of the latest communication technology to mediate the party's message. What is more, we should find close ties among parties and the state. This could take the form of financial dependence on state subventions and/or through specific legal provisions tying parties to the state, enabling them to exist and also privileging them. For example, the state could grant the parties certain rights and benefits such as campaign support or media access. Financially speaking this could mean that parties rely heavily on state subventions rather than on membership dues and contributions. We should also see only very limited direct involvement of citizens and members/activists with the parties on a regular basis and during campaigns. Specifically we should expect little citizen/member/activist input regarding the formulating of campaign themes, strategies and organization. What is more, we should find few active and influential local party organizations, groups and associations and but instead a strong national party organization with a central office.

Accordingly, a typical cadre or elite party should have a small, elitist membership and organization. This type of party should rely on personal contacts for its resources and financial support. What is more the cadre party possesses a "skeletal organization" meaning that local party organization is barely existent and invisible except prior and during elections when the party "turns into a well-oiled machine, distributing literature, organizing rallies, and getting voters to the polls"(Wolinetz 2002, p. 136). Furthermore, a cadre party has low membership numbers and usually once elections are over returns to its usual organizational form that has only a small constant office staff. In the absence of elections, a cadre party does not require members, activists and also does not seek their involvement or opinions regarding the party.

Contrary to the cadre party, a mass party requires a large and socially diverse membership with a continuously active and strong local organizations and associations. Organizationally speaking the mass party runs its operations in bureaucratic fashion and increasingly professionalized. As established by the literature, the influence of members and activists is relatively high regarding the parties' daily operations and the campaigns (Grabow 2001,p. 3). Mass parties depend on their large and homogenous membership for resources and rely on the work of its members.

The cartel party has moved away from mass-membership and instead has become part of the state. The specifics of state subsidies, party legislation and media access should illustrate the close state-party relationship should illustrate this cartelization. For example, cartel parties should rely heavily on state subsidies and/or other provisions and privileges to existing parties. Cartel parties run very costly campaigns and heavily use the latest communication technology to win votes. What is more, the campaigns should focus heavily on the candidates over issues or party ideology. We should also expect heavy use of media during the campaign and also on a daily basis. Other than employing the latest technology available, cartel parties should not seek to interact with the citizens and its members/activists. Since become part of the state, cartel parties are no longer agents of the citizens. Instead of providing linkage between the state and its population cartel parties treat citizens like consumers. Accordingly, the cartel parties' work and costly campaign style relies on the services of professionals and experts rather than on volunteers, members or activists. Financially, cartel parties longer need to rely on membership dues and contributions. Instead, state subventions and other state provisions have allowed parties to thrive despite increasing member and voter disillusion with the

parties. Party finances, its sources, i.e. member dues, contributions versus state subsidies and provisions, should confirm this. Party money disbursement, i.e. the way in which parties spend their monies should also illustrate this. Accordingly, cartel parties do not foster direct citizen or member involvement on a daily basis or during the campaigns. We should not find significant grass roots efforts relating to the parties generally and to the campaigns specifically. Cartel parties should contain only inconsequential local party organizations, groups and associations and few efforts of direct communication between voters, members and the party. We should also find this mirrored in internal party statutes and regulations and the parties' adherence of these rules. Furthermore, cartel parties should possess strong national party organizations with one central office.

After describing cartel theory and the key characteristics of the cadre/elite, mass and cartel party type, we need to review political parties of the United States, Germany and Poland in their respective political system. More specifically, we examine two parties in each country that have been in government or have been the most serious contender for government. This includes the Democrats and the Republicans in the U.S., the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Christian Democrats (CDU) in Germany and the Civic Platform (PO) and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) in Poland. We also need to examine each country's type of democracy as well as the specific legal foundations relevant to political parties. This knowledge provides a starting point by allowing us to examine the relationship between parties and the state as laid out by the law in each country. Furthermore, this knowledge provides groundwork for the analysis of party organizational characteristics in the following chapters.

1.6 Chapter Outline

This dissertation has six chapters. The first chapter reviews the relevant existing literature, illustrates the purpose of my study and clarifies the research methods.

Chapter two describes the political systems of the United States, Poland and Germany. In addition to providing such broad overview of the three democracies, this chapter also examines the role of political parties in each of the three systems. The chapter tests whether structurally speaking the three respective political systems create conditions conducive to a close party-state relationship. This includes evaluating the three electoral systems, party systems and the level of party competition. Furthermore, the chapter describes the role political parties play in all branches of government and also assess the level of party patronage in the United States, Germany and Poland. Data originates from expert interviews, existing literature, government documents such as legislature regarding various aspects of political parties as well as government and party web sites.

Chapter three analyzes the relationship between political parties and the state. In particular, chapter three focuses on legislation regulating political parties including constitutions. This analysis shows that legal regulations privilege political parties and create very close party-state relations. In addition to party legislation, this chapter also examines party finance to illustrate the financial ties between political parties and the state. Lastly, the chapter also considers electoral laws concerning political parties in all three systems. Data for this chapter is drawn from party legislation and the three constitutions, financial reports of the parties, existing data as well as from interviews with party staff, party managers and party experts.

Chapter four examines the relationship between political parties and the electorate. More specifically, this chapter explores official membership numbers, internal party statutes regulating the role of members and the actual practices, the role and input of members. In addition, this chapter also looks at local party organizations, their characteristics and relevance to the national party. This chapter also considers the character of party-citizen communication and citizen participation with political parties both during and outside of election campaigns. Data for chapter four was drawn from interviews, internal party publications and statutes as well as existing literature and studies.

Chapter five focuses on political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland during their last two national election campaigns. This chapter focuses on the structure of the campaign organizations for all three cases, on the relationship between the campaign and regular party operations and on the overall qualities of the campaigns. These qualities include: the level of professionalization of the campaigns and organizations and the use of professionals, consultants and volunteers. In addition, I examine the level of grassroots mobilizing for the three cases, the messages and themes of the campaigns and the use of media and communication technology. Data for chapter five stems from interviews with campaign managers and workers and party experts as well as campaign materials, journalistic coverage of the actual campaigns as well as existing studies of these campaigns.

Chapter six is the final and concluding chapter. Chapter six assesses the overall results of this study and evaluates the broader consequences for parties in their specific geographic and political context. At the same time, chapter six explores the larger

question at hand, i.e. the effects of possible party cartelization and campaign modernization on democracy. In particular, I examine the actual state of political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland to determine to what degree their democratic linkage role has been affected.

As an appendix, I add the questions asked during my interviews.

1.7. Argument in Brief

This dissertation challenges the validity of Katz and Mair's argument since the cartel thesis did not apply to political parties in the United States and Germany and only partially to political parties in Poland. Although political parties in Poland appear to fit the cartel model well it is not for reasons suggested by Katz and Mair. Polish parties have cartel characteristics. However, they cannot be explained by the cartel thesis. For example, Polish parties have little linkage to the electorate, rely on the mass media and communications technology and employ the services of professionals and consultants. According to Katz and Mair, all of these characteristics should be the result of the large financial subsidies the parties receive from the state. However, as I found, Polish parties do not exclusively depend on the state for their finances. Instead, the cartel characteristics of Polish parties are the result of several other aspects such as the lack of political participation of Polish voters, a wide-spread anti-party attitude among Poles, the lack of experience with democracy, the instability of the party system as well as the lack of partisan politicians.

The central argument of this dissertation is therefore that Katz and Mair's cartel thesis should not be considered a full-fledged theory since it cannot explain my observations regarding political parties and their organizations in the United States,

Germany and Poland. Instead, I suggest that the cartel thesis best be considered a heuristic tool to learn more about the ways in which political parties organize. In this regard, the cartel party model is a further continuation of prior descriptive party models such as that of the mass party (Duverger 1954) and the catch-all party (Kirchheimer 1957). The cartel model is not very meaningful without prior knowledge of the mass party model and the catch-all party model. A lot of scholarship also rests on the assumption that political parties generally evolve by going through each of these models in chronological order (mass party, catch-all party, cartel party...). However, this is also problematic and as the case of Polish parties illustrates not necessarily true. From this logic alone Polish parties cannot be cartel parties since they never went through these stages, i.e. they did not previously display characteristics of a mass party or a catch-all party. Another important aspect is that neither the mass party nor the catch-all party nor the cartel model provides a comprehensive theory regarding political parties and their development (Krouwel 2006).

Despite its explanatory shortcomings, the cartel thesis has some merit. While the cartel theory cannot explain why parties and their organizations have transformed in certain ways, it describes the various changes pretty accurately. More specifically I argue that the cartel theory serves as a useful means describing the relationship between political parties and the state, the relationship of political parties and the electorate as well as the role and function of political parties within their respective political system. The strength of the cartel thesis therefore does not lie in theorizing regarding political parties but instead in providing assessment of political parties which can then serve as a foundation for the formulation of theories.

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

American, German and Polish parties differ significantly in character and in the role they play in their political environment. As this chapter illustrates American political parties have not been as important to their political system as German parties have been to their political system. Instead, American parties exist mostly for practical reasons, as vehicles for winning elections. German parties, on the other hand, have played a central role. In fact, political parties have been so involved in the political process that the German state has often been referred to as a ‘party state’. In contrast, Poland’s democracy is still consolidating and does not have an established two party system. Whether Polish parties will settle into a two-party system remains to be seen. Based on the outcomes of the last two national elections Polish parties appear to have formed a relatively stable four party system. Despite the fact that Polish parties continue to institutionalize and to evolve it appears that they will play an important role in the political system.

Besides describing the political systems in all three countries, this chapter also evaluates Katz and Mair’s theory (1995, 2009) from a structural point of view. More specifically, this chapter examines whether the political systems of the United States, Germany and Poland are conducive to a party-state cartel. According to Katz and Mair’s cartel theory, we should find that significant parts of the three political systems create conditions that benefit a cartel-like relationship between the state and the parties. For example, we should find that political parties play a central role in most branches of government. We should also find stable party systems with predictable numbers of

parties where there are only a small number of parties that take turns governing. Similarly, we should find high levels of patronage in all three political systems. Although all three political systems differ significantly in character, they promote a close party-state relationship. As this chapter demonstrates, American, German and Polish political parties wield influence in all levels of government in the three systems. We also find that all three systems allow for high levels of patronage, clearly demonstrating the party entrenchment of the state. This is most obvious in Germany but also relevant in Poland and the United States. Regarding the stability of the party system, the United States' party system is the most predictable out of the three systems with either the Democratic or the Republican Party in government. The German party system has also been very stable but a less predictable than the American system. One of the two main parties, the SPD or the CDU usually governs. However, their coalition partners have not always been as predictable including the FDP or the Green party. The Polish party system is the least stable of the three systems. There has been much political turmoil since the first democratic elections in 1991 illustrated best by the fact that no political party or a particular party coalition has governed more than once.

Table 2.1: Political Systems of the United States, Germany and Poland

	United States	Germany	Poland
Political system	Federal	Federal	Unitary
Executive/Legislative	Presidential	Parliamentary	Mixed
Judiciary	Independent	Independent	Independent
Executive Cabinet	President selects from any position	Ministers from legislature	President appoints ministers from 16 counties
Electoral System	SMP	PR	PR
Patronage level	High	High	High
Party influence throughout system	High	High	High
Party system	Predictable	Predictable	Less predictable
Number of parties with a chance of governing	Two	Four	Less predictable
Competition from third and small parties	Low	Higher	Higher

2.1 Political systems

The political systems of the United States and Germany are federal systems while the political system of Poland is a unitary system. Interestingly, the nature of their respective political systems affects political parties in the three countries in different ways. While federalism and a system of checks and balances undermines strong and unified national parties in the United States it actually further strengthens parties in Germany. Similarly, the unitary system also strengthens political parties in Poland. Regarding the cartel theory, it seems that by giving more clout to political parties, German and Polish political systems are better suited for party-state cartelization than the American political system. More specifically, the German political system allows political parties to play a crucial role at all levels of government and thereby facilitates the formation of a cartel between political parties and the state.

The political system of the United States is a presidential democracy. Powers are shared between the national government and the fifty state governments. There is also a

separation of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. The separation of powers has limited the political role of parties in the United States. In particular, it prevents American parties from having strong party organization. The Senate and the House of Representatives operate independently from each other. This then reflects on the parties where each “party has two completely separate organizations and two completely independent sets of leaders...to the (quite limited) extent that the congressional parties as organizations are capable of taking positions or reaching accommodations, the positions of a party in one chamber may well be repudiated by its nominal co-partisans in the other” (Katz and Kolodny 1994, p. 25). Similarly, the separation of powers undermines party unity and thereby prevents parties from becoming more relevant apart from elections. At each government level party organizations are autonomous, causing the individual organizations to ‘sabotage’ one another. Although these various organizations all operate under the label of one of the two parties, they do not feel the need to act in line with the official party platform. There “is no claim that the party platform adopted by the national presidential nominating convention is binding on either of the corresponding congressional parties, let alone on their individual members, nor is the presidential party represented in the caucuses when (and if) they adopt policy positions” (Ibid, pp. 28-29). Therefore, the presidential political system of the United States and the separation of powers within actually counteract coherently strong party influence at the federal level. In fact, the separation of powers particularly prevents the parties from being a united force in the American political system. According to Katz and Mair’s cartel theory we should find very strong and unified political parties that wield influence on all government levels and have become

one with the state (1995, 2009). However, structurally speaking, the checks and balances of the American balance of powers clearly make such unified and nationally strong parties virtually impossible. As a result, these key characteristics of the American political system therefore do not make favorable conditions for a state-party cartel but actually prevent it.

The United States' administrative structure is federalist. Not unlike the separation of powers, the federalist character of the political system has prevented political parties from playing a more central role and again undermines the likelihood of a state-party cartel as suggested by Katz and Mair (*ibid*). In reserving important powers for the states, federalism hinders concentrated party government in the United States (Rae 2006). From the instrumentalist perspective taken by Aldrich, parties at the national, congressional and senatorial levels are nothing but loose alliances of politicians seeking electoral success (Aldrich 1995). They have little to gain from strong European-style party unity since these politicians only deal with their party on their respective level. Furthermore, state parties are too strong to be united under one national organization. As Katz & Kolodny point out, state parties have a status of primacy (1994). Although the parties' representatives can influence and alter the rules and structure of the national party, the national party has no such authority over the state parties and thus has no means of enforcing uniformity in any way (*ibid*).

Accordingly, political parties are defined primarily at the state level and not at the national level. Consequently, the majority of legislation pertaining to parties has been passed at the state level including party electoral conduct and finance. Regarding American political parties, it is thus much more meaningful to speak of a state-party

cartel at the state level and not the federal level. The federal system in the United States has empowered its individual states to a degree which is counterproductive, in particular to strong national parties. According to Katz and Kolodny, “American federalism...has engendered conflicts of interest between the federal government and the governments of the states” (1994, p. 28). This makes national party cohesion and discipline virtually unachievable and there also seems to be little connection among the levels of government from the point of view from the individual party politicians. Those party politicians “in office in the states generally do not expect to move to the national level, and thus are singularly unlikely to be sympathetic to the federal position” of their party (ibid). For example, “as the Reagan and Bush administrations tried to balance the federal budget by shifting responsibilities, but not the revenue to discharge them, to the states, the interests even of Republican state governors diverged significantly from those of the president of their own party” (ibid). American federalism has therefore prevented political parties from becoming powerful national entities but has instead created strong state parties. In fact, it is at the state level that the political parties have institutionalized the current two party system containing Democrats and Republicans exclusively and are most powerful. The two dominant parties have done this by legislating election ballots to list parties “in order of their voting strength at the last election, by requiring that the ‘major’ parties be listed first, or by allowing an elected state official (that is, a Democrat or a Republican) to determine the order of parties on the ballots” (Ibid, p. 30). Another example would be the ways in which the two parties, in the states, have made it extremely difficult for third and minor parties to get onto the ballot in the first place (Katz and Mair 1992, Shock 2008).

This will be discussed in more detail in chapter three which closely examines the the relationship between parties and the state.

The German state's administrative structure is also of federalist nature, containing 16 states, the Bundesländer. Although the Bundesländer frequently act autonomously of the federal government, there is no exact separation between the levels of German government. Power in the German democracy is fragmented vertically between the Chancellor, the Parliament and the President on the one hand, and between federal union and the individual states on the other. However, contrary to American parties, German parties are not weakened by federalism. In fact, the federalist system contributes to the influential role of the parties by providing them further spheres of influence. For example, parties in the state governments act autonomously and can frequently override federal regulations. This has happened regarding "federal traffic laws, federal emission control laws, waste disposal and much EU legislation" (Lees 2005, p. 121). Certain policy areas, such as education for example, lie solely in the domain of the states. This then provides parties with further influence as illustrated by their ability to shape policy making. What is more, the sphere of state politics enables politicians to wield strong party influence on both the local and the national level. In contrast to American parties, German political parties experience high cohesion and national unity (Davidson-Schmich 2006b). The German political system also lacks the American system's checks and balances. As a result, German parties are able to develop a high level of party discipline and can affect government locally and nationally. Since state politics can frequently affect national politics and sometimes even override them, state parties are highly influential in the German political system. Contrary to the United States, the German

federal system actually creates conditions highly conducive to a state-party cartel. As we would expect according to Katz and Mair's cartel theory, the federalist system actually enables German political parties to wield influence at all levels of government and therefore allows the parties to further encroach onto the state.

Poland's political system is also a parliamentary democracy like Germany. However, Polish democracy is still evolving after having emerged from communist rule after 1989. While the early post-communist Polish party landscape was notably unstable, recently parties have become slightly more institutionalized. Nevertheless, Polish democracy does not have an established party system as is the case in Germany and the United States. The current Polish political system is based on the balance of power between the legislative, executive and judicial branches. Furthermore, Poland's political system is a unitary state, containing a three-tier division of power among the municipalities, the 308 counties, and 16 provinces. Each of these tiers is governed by council members who are directly elected. The major duties of these council members lie in appointing and dismissing municipality leaders, the town mayors, the county leaders and the speaker of the provincial councils. Similar to German federalism, Poland's unitary system does not undermine party unity and party strength but in fact encourages it. It appears that Polish parties are on their way of developing according to the German model. Polish parties have recently started to show strong party discipline and cohesion (Kistner 2006). Similarly, local Polish party politicians have learned to work for national party goals and not just their own local goals (ibid). This is a relatively new development for Polish parties after 2001 since "prior to that date, most parties were just bunches of unruly members and sympathizers" (Jasiewicz 2010). Initially, Polish parties did not

matter much at the local level (Kowalczyk 2000). According to Regulski (2003), parties only became gradually stronger after the unitary system had been established and local party politicians began subordinating local interests to national party interests. The new administrative system in Poland thus served to strengthen parties leading to a “clear increase of party influence on local governments...local policy [and]...local authorities” (Regulski 2003, p. 209). Suffering from relatively weak party organizations, Polish parties looked towards local government organization, like the local government councils and gradually managed to make it one of their spheres of influence (Ibid, p. 52). Due to its young age, the Polish political system is still somewhat consolidating and in an earlier developmental stage than the German political system. For example, the short lifespan of many political parties since the end of communism illustrates that Polish democracy does not possess firmly institutionalized parties (Millard 2010, 2010a). Accordingly, Polish parties are strengthened by the nature of the Polish political system similar to the way the German political system strengthens German parties. The Polish unitary state has much in common with German federalism, in that it encourages parties to become more disciplined and to form a cartel with the state.

2.2 Executive/Legislative systems

The characteristics of the executive and legislative branches of American, German and Polish governments also affect the party-state relationship significantly. In the case of the American system, the characteristics of the executive and legislative both serve to undermine political parties and are therefore unfavorable to the creation of a state-party cartel. Generally, the American political system is largely shaped by its executive. The President is directly elected for a four year term by the Electoral College

and is limited to serving two terms. The U.S. Presidency combines the positions of head of state, head of government and commander in chief in one person. The merging of head of state and head of government in one office makes the American President considerably more powerful than the executive of most European democracies where the two functions are separate. This fusion of powers in the Presidency also contributes to the weak standing of American political parties. In many European democracies, the head of government is at the same time the leader of the governing party. This promotes party strength and unity since the party leader requires the backing of the party to stay in government. The governing party has a means to oust the leadership and thus remove it from the government, i.e. the vote of no confidence. In the absence of such structures, there is no room for party government in the United States and parties have been relegated to that of a Presidential electoral vessel (Rae 2006).

The American legislature is bicameral: Congress contains the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives contains 435 members serving two year terms and the Senate contains 100 members, two from each state, who serve six year terms. This division of powers undermines strong national parties. Operating separately and also being elected independently, the two houses are ill-equipped to foster party unity and cohesion. Furthermore, members are elected in single-member districts by simple plurality. This practice causes greater ‘candidate – centeredness’ and again relegates the parties to mere electoral vehicles for the individual candidates (Katz and Kolodny 1994).

The relationship between the president and the legislature is based on the idea of ‘checks and balances’. For example, the Constitution places Congress before the

President. However, Congress cannot simply remove a President from his office but may impeach the President after misconduct by the President has been proven. At the same time, the President cannot dissolve Congress, nor can he call for new elections. The principle of 'checks and balances' affects political parties like the separation of powers. It undermines party cohesion and unity and therefore seriously impedes a state-party cartel. Although members of the two houses, for example, might both be Democrats, they are practically set up 'against' one another. They might frequently find themselves on opposite ends of the rope rather than working together clearly preventing the formation of cohesive party policy.

In the German political system, the executive is separated into the functions of head of state and head of government. As stated earlier, this separation of executive functions into two distinct offices empowers political parties considerably by providing them with additional influence at the national level. More specifically, the political clout of the parties is well illustrated during the election of the President. The office of the German President represents the head of state and holds primarily ceremonial functions. The President serves a five year term and may be elected two times. The President is elected by the federal convention, the Bundesversammlung. However, in reality, the parties wield significant influence in the recruitment and election of the President (Helms 1998). First of all, the Bundesversammlung contains members of the national parliament and members of the state parliaments in equal shares. Both of these groups are usually dominated by members of the major parties. Secondly, candidates for the Presidency are usually seasoned politicians affiliated with one of the major parties. Thus, a candidacy for President is the 'ultimate' reward for decades of service to one of the major parties.

Not surprisingly, in most presidential elections “the party affiliation of the elected President converged with the partisan complexion of federal government” (Schmidt 2003, p. 38). Officially, the President proposes the Chancellor and the federal ministers to the parliament. Another presidential duty is the signing of legislative acts. This means that the President decides whether a law will come into force. Occasionally, this gives the President actual political influence beyond his/her usual more ceremonial role. What is more, this duty of the President also shows the pervasive influence of the German parties. For example, in 2002 President Johannes Rau (SPD) signed a highly controversial immigration law into force. Thereby he not only exercised his powers to the utmost but he also showed his ‘true partisan colors’ by siding with the SPD-Green governing coalition (Schmidt 2003). Other formal duties of the President include certifying the constitutionality of laws, and mediating a parliamentary crisis. In reality, however, Presidents rarely act in these capacities. Generally, the President plays a relatively weak and mostly ceremonial role in the German political order.

The head of the German government is the Chancellor. The Chancellor is usually elected every four years. Officially, the Bundestag elects the Chancellor. In reality, however, the electorate determines the composition of the Bundestag during national elections. Consequently, the Bundestag usually merely confirms the election results. In contrast to American parties, German parties select their Chancellor candidates internally and there are no US-style primaries. Again, this illustrates the contrast in strength between German and American parties and explains why, structurally speaking, the German political system presents more fertile ground for a state-party cartel than does the American political system. American parties were inherently weakened by the

introduction of the primaries that left the candidate selection with the electorate and outside of party control. German parties, on the other hand, continue to enjoy the privilege of internally choosing their candidates.

Once in office, the Chancellor is simultaneously a member of the German parliament, the Bundestag, and leader of the majority party or coalition. Although scholars frequently describe Germany as a “Chancellor democracy” (Mommsen 2007; Helms 2000; Saalfeld 2000), the Chancellor’s power is considerably dependent on the major parties. One might argue that this is another example of the central role of parties in the German political order making the occurrence of a state-party cartel more likely. Constitutionally, the election of the Chancellor is contingent upon sufficient support of the majority in parliament (Schmidt 2003). In fact, it is the distribution of parliamentary seats between the parties that determines the selection of the Chancellor (Ibid). Furthermore, in order to govern effectively, the Chancellor has to rely on close cooperation with his coalition partners as well as his/her own party (Schmidt 2003). Therefore, the major parties, at least one of which is usually part of the governing coalition, have significant influence on the Chancellor. As Jones (1991) shows, the Chancellor needs to be able to mobilize support from his/her own party and the coalition party to govern or more specifically to define policy. This is also affected by the cohesiveness of parties which serves as another impediment to the Chancellor’s power (Schmidt 2003). Party strength may prove detrimental to the Chancellor’s ability to govern. For example, Chancellor Kiesinger (1966-9), found himself usually in the role of a “walking intermediate committee” between the two coalition parties (Rudzio 2000, pp. 285-7).

The German legislature provides another power stronghold for political parties. The German legislature is bicameral and comprises the Bundestag and the Bundesrat. Currently, the Bundestag has 612 members and the Bundesrat has 69 members. The official duties of the Bundestag include the election of the Chancellor, law making and passing of the federal budget. In the legislative, the Bundestag holds the greatest authority and is only subordinate to the Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht). Parliamentarians of the Bundestag are organized in factions (Fraktionen). The parties determine the members to their factions internally and autonomously. The Bundesrat on the other hand “has an absolute veto over all bills that affect the Länder and a suspensive veto over all other bills. The Bundesrat has served traditionally as an institutional means of securing Land rights from intrusion by the federal government.” (Wehling 1989, p. 53).

Not unlike the German political system, the Polish political system also serves to empower political parties and benefits a strong state-party relationship as argued by Katz and Mair’s cartel theory (1995, 2009). Poland’s executive branch of government is separated in to the functions of head of state and head of government. The office of the President of the Republic of Poland holds the head of state function. Presidential elections are direct and take place every five years unless extraordinary circumstances, such as the death of a President, dictate earlier elections. For example, after President Kaczyński died in a plane crash on April 10, 2010 new elections have been called to take place in the following 60 days. The clout of the parties is apparent since Polish parties, like German parties, select their presidential candidates internally. Consequently, Polish parties have more autonomy and influence on the outcome of their campaigns than

American parties have. After the election, the President officially appoints the Prime Minister and is trusted with guarding the constitution and representing Poland internationally. Both the Polish President and the German President formally appoint the head of their respective governments. Officially, the Polish President has a free choice in selecting the Prime Minister. Usually, however, the President gives the task of forming a new government to a politician supported by the political party with the majority of seats in the Sejm. Despite some similarities, the Polish President has more political influence than the mostly ceremonial German President as a result of the mixed nature of the Polish political system. For example, the Polish President has the right to shorten the terms of the legislature in extraordinary situations and can call national referenda in important state matters requiring the decision of the citizens. The Polish President also can directly influence the legislative process by using his veto to stop any bill. In addition, the President can ask that a bill be reviewed for its constitutionality which also affects the legislative process. Recent Polish Presidents have taken keen interest in the legislative arena and actively tried to use their influence there. For instance, President Walesa tried unsuccessfully to further expand the President's legislative influence and thereby directly undermined the role of parties in the political system (Millard 2009). This active role is in sharp contrast to the German President who has a relatively weak role in the German political system. What is more, the Polish President also is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and thus has considerably more power than the German President. Furthermore, the Polish President is directly elected and thus Polish parties do not have the influence here that German parties have when electing the German President in the federal convention.

The office of the Prime Minister represents the head of government. Officially the Prime Minister is appointed by the President. This appointment is usually based on the preceding parliamentary elections. In fact, the politician becoming Prime Minister is usually the leader of the political party having received a majority of votes. While a comparison to German parties would be overdrawn, this nevertheless illustrates the importance of Polish parties in government formation. Furthermore, recent prime ministers have been affiliated with one of the bigger parties. As in other parliamentary democracies, the Polish Prime Minister is head of government and simultaneously a member of the Polish parliament, the Sejm, and the leader of the majority party or coalition. Naturally, the Polish Prime Minister's power is dependent on the major political parties. The Polish Prime Minister governs with his cabinet, also referred to as the Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President and approved by the Parliament. The Prime Minister also manages the work of the Council of Ministers, supervises local government and is officially the head of the government administration. The Prime Minister may also dissolve the Council of Ministers at the first session of a newly elected Sejm and also under special circumstances. These include a vote of no confidence by the Council of Ministers against the Prime Minister and resignation. Just like the German Chancellor, the Polish Prime Minister relies much more on the parties to govern than does the American President as pointed out earlier. In order to govern, the Polish Prime Minister needs to have the backing of his cabinet. This contains members of the Prime minister's party and also that of the coalition party. Without their backing the Prime Minister risks losing his office through the vote of no confidence. Furthermore, in order to govern effectively, the Prime Minister usually needs

to have his party's support and that of the coalition party as well. Both of these facts give Polish parties more influence on the head of state than is the case in the American political system.

Poland's legislature is bicameral and contains the Sejm and the Senate. The Sejm constitutes the lower and the Senate constitutes the upper house of the Polish parliament. The Sejm has 460 members and the Senate has 100 members. Both houses of the Polish parliament are elected every four years based on the principle of proportional representation. The Sejm also contains the Presidium, the Council of Seniors and Parliamentary Commissions. The official duties of the Sejm include law making, directing state activities and supervising all other state activities. The Senate also participates in the legislative process and may propose bills. It further contains the institutions of the Speaker of the Senate, the Presidium and Senate Commissions. Members of the Sejm are organized into parliamentary clubs. As is the case for German parliamentary parties, the Polish clubs determine their members internally and autonomously. The Polish legislature thus represents a party stronghold in the political system which would also be conducive to a cartel-like relationship between the parties and the state as Katz and Mair suggest (1995, 2009).

2.3 Judiciaries

The judicial branches in the three political systems also give insight into the relationship between the state and the political parties. In all three political systems, the courts have been entrusted with the task of regulating political parties. Despite their different judicial systems, courts in all three countries have promoted a closer

relationship between parties and the state. In particular, American courts have established political parties as quasi-state actors. Similarly, the courts in Germany and Poland have included political parties in their constitutions and therefore made them state actors.

The highest institution of the American judiciary is the U.S. Supreme Court created by the U.S. Constitution. There are also 13 federal appeals courts and 95 federal district courts (O'Connor and Sabato 2002). The American judiciary consists of the federal court system and the separate court systems of the fifty individual states. At both levels, there are trial courts and appellate courts hearing cases regarding criminal and civil law (ibid). The federal court system contains constitutional and legislative courts. Federal court judges and in particular judges for the Supreme Court are nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. At the state level, judges can be appointed for several years, appointed for life or selected by a combination of these methods (United States courts website 2010).

The U.S. Supreme Court has frequently ruled against minor parties in favor of the two major political parties. According to Lowenstein, American courts have usually ruled in favor of the two big parties, at the expense of smaller and newer parties (2006). Therefore, we can say that the American judiciary supports a very close relationship between the two major parties and the state. At the same time, the American judiciary has not shown any preference to minor parties. For example, in 1997, the Supreme court in *Timmons et al. v. Twin Cities Area New Party* ruled against fusion and thereby also ruled against minor parties (Dwyre and Kolodny 1997). Fusion “holds some promise for minor parties” because it “allows a candidate to be the nominee of more than one party, thus appearing on multiple party ballot lines...and makes it easier for minor parties to realize

some success because fusion tickets allow citizens to vote for a minor party without feeling they have wasted their vote” (ibid. p. 177). Ruling against fusion, the Supreme Court “confirmed the right of the states to regulate access to the ballot in ways that may discourage minor party participation” which of course benefits the Democrats and the Republicans (ibid). The courts’ rulings usually reflect the view of the major parties as “quasi state agencies subject to legal control” (Lowenstein 2006, p. 454). This understanding of the two big parties by the American courts has led them to frequently rule in favor of the two big parties and against new and minor parties (Lowenstein 2006). Chapter three will illustrate more fully how American courts and legislation usually privilege the two major parties and weaken new and minor parties.

The German judiciary contains ordinary courts, specialized courts and constitutional courts. The ordinary courts hear criminal and civil cases. The specialized courts deal with cases regarding administrative, labor, social, fiscal and patent law. Lastly, constitutional courts undertake judicial review and interpret the constitution. The German basic law (Grundgesetz) establishes the highest German court, the Federal Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht). The German Constitutional Court is also in charge of monitoring the lawfulness and the constitutionality of political parties (Van Biezen 2009). Scholars have expressed concern that giving the Court such powers “undermine fundamental principles of democracy by effectively transferring power from representative to non-representative institutions” (ibid). After all, in Germany Judges are appointed, not elected.

The Constitutional Court has consolidated and strengthened the role of German political parties in the system and made political parties part of the state. The Court

argued that parties alone would guarantee a functioning democracy. “Party competition in modern democracies are a rationalized version of plebiscitary democracy making irrelevant other forms of direct democracy such as referenda or initiatives” (Judge Leibholz as quoted by Richter 1999, p. 74). German constitutional lawyer and former Constitutional Court Justice, Gerhard Leibholz argues that “the constitutionalization of political parties [by the Constitutional Court] effectively legitimizes the existence of party democracy and transforms political parties from socio-political organizations into institutions that form part of the official fabric of the state” (Leibholz quoted by Van Biezen, 2009, p. 24). Accordingly, Article 21 acknowledges the constitutional role of parties and “in effect legalizes the modern democratic party state” (Richter 1999, p. 74). German parties were no longer just parts of the political system but “constitutionally relevant organizations” and as such are “constitutionally necessary instruments for the formation of the political will of the people” (Ibid). Furthermore, the Court “upheld public service laws that encourage the ‘participation of the parties within the system of state institutions’ and the concomitant right of civil servants to be active in parties and to pursue a parliamentary career. The Constitutional Court has thus made the separation between parties and the state irrelevant and effectively gives the parties “an official status as part of the state: by giving them a constitutional status, political parties are granted explicit recognition to the institutional importance of democracy” (Van Biezen 2009, p. 24).

What is more, the German judiciary has often privileged major parties over smaller or new parties. For example, the Federal Constitutional Court has consistently maintained that the goal of elections is ‘not only to assert the political will of voters as

individuals' but also to 'form a government capable of acting'. This requires 'clear parliamentary majorities conscious of their responsibilities to the public will' and these must be formed by the major parties (Richter 1999, pp. 75-76). Accordingly, the Court has often ruled in favor of the major parties, putting the need for stable government over the 'constitutional principle of equal chances for competing parties' (ibid.). Using the principle of 'militant democracy' to ban political groups and parties which violate 'the basic democratic order', the Court has further "reinforced the political and electoral hegemony of the principal founding parties" (ibid). Of course, these restrictions on radical parties have much to do with Germany's Nazi past. The ban of radical right-wing parties is a direct effort to learn from the past and to prevent parties sympathetic to Nazi ideas from gaining power. In addition, though such court rulings have not only limited the number of competitors, but have also forced new opposition or protest parties like the Greens, PDS...to adapt their programs, appeals and tactics to the ground rules set by the Basic Law and the parties which drafted it" (ibid).

There are many similarities among the German and Polish judicial systems (Wasiewski 2007). For example, both systems' constitutional courts share common philosophical background and function in similar fashion (ibid). The highest Polish court is the Supreme Court which serves as an appeals court. The Polish judiciary is established by the constitution. The other lower courts hear cases related to criminal, civil, military labor and family law according to their respective specializations. Similar to German judges, Polish judges are appointed. In Poland their nomination is done for life by the National Judicial Council and by the president. Another important institution of the Polish judicial system is the Constitutional Tribunal (Trybunał Konstytucyjny) which is

the highest authority on legislation and judicial review. Similar to German courts, Polish courts are in charge of monitoring the constitutionality and lawfulness of political parties and their programs and activities. Like many other constitutional courts in post-communist democracies, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal represents a “mechanism...established for monitoring party activity and behavior” and by assigning the Constitutional Tribunal the power to dissolve or ban parties (Van Biezen 2009, p. 21). Therefore, the concept of political parties as public utilities applies to Polish parties and moves them closer to the state. By regulating parties like public utilities, the courts in fact treat Polish parties as part of the state. Polish legislation regarding political parties, including court rulings, have frequently benefited existing parties and undermined small and new parties. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

2.4 Executive Cabinets

A closer look at the executive cabinets in the United States, Germany and Poland gives good insight into the role of parties in the system overall and also whether a state-party cartel is possible. In the American political system, the President’s cabinet is an advisory group helping the President in decision making and governing. The executive cabinet members also implement and execute the programs in the bureaucracy and sometimes also contribute important ideas for new legislation. In European style democracies, organized “and disciplined mass party organizations provide the policies and the personnel for the executive” (Rae 2006, p. 196). While in European democracies such cabinets provide the parties with further political opportunities, i.e. policy making, this does not seem to apply to the U.S. cabinet. While executive cabinets in European democracies can often be considered training ground for Presidential succession, this is

not the case in the American executive cabinet. Here individuals are selected primarily for their expertise and not for familiarizing them with government. The President alone chooses cabinet members and can appoint individuals that are either not aligned with the parties or are aligned with the opposing party. At first sight, this practice seems to undermine parties' strength, unity and any form of party government. The fact that cabinet nominees need to obtain Senate confirmation seems another hurdle standing in the way of a strong executive cabinet. Therefore, one might argue that the American selection process of the executive cabinet is not conducive to party strength and thus also undermines a state-party cartel. Interestingly, however, some have observed increased partisanship of the executive branch in recent years (Skinner 2007). Accordingly, recent Presidents, especially George W. Bush, have centralized cabinet personnel decisions and have favored "ideological loyalists or spinmeisters over career civil servants or nonpartisan experts"(Ibid, p. 331). Such partisan Presidents have even "actively campaigned for their party's candidates and sought to use the national party committees as tools of governance...[and clearly demonstrate strong] interest in their party's long-term fortunes" (Ibid, p. 332).

The executive cabinet to the German Chancellor is a more obvious domain of significant party strength and influence to German parties than the U.S. executive cabinet is to American parties. The German executive cabinet is staffed primarily by high ranking party officials. While this is also somewhat true for the American executive cabinet, it is not so much a natural state as it is in the case of the German cabinet. Past American executive cabinets have included many appointees that were not high ranking party officials but rather area experts from the private sector. For example, Presidents John F.

Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson preferred “technocrats and personal loyalists” over high ranking party officials (Skinner 2007, p. 337). Johnson’s administration in particular was “dominated by academics and ...specialists” rather than party functionaries (ibid, p. 338). Similarly, President Nixon’s cabinet was notoriously diverse including both Democrats and Republicans (Milkis 1993). However, as Skinner argues, the make up of recent U.S. executive cabinets promises to strengthen American parties (2007). In the German political system, the Chancellor has the official authority to select the members of his cabinet. In reality, however, these ministry posts have usually been distributed beforehand by the parties internally. Again, this also happens during the selection of the American executive cabinet but it is not as prevalent as it is in Germany (ibid). Usually, the parties and their prospective coalition party negotiate internally and determine how to staff the cabinet. That this is no easy task has frequently become apparent. For example, after the election in 2005, future Chancellor Merkel found herself in lengthy and tough negotiations not only with her coalition partners from the SPD but also faced a ‘tug of war’ with her own party, the CDU. In particular, Merkel had to pacify several high ranking fellow Christian Democrats in order to receive the full support of her party. She did this in part by delivering her biggest internal competitor, Bavarian Edmund Stoiber the economics ministry. (Deutsche Welle 17/10/2005). Thus the Chancellor’s selection of cabinet ministers is shaped largely by prior interior party workings and negotiations. And as this example illustrates, the parties have significant influence in the composition of the executive cabinet.

Similar to German parties, Polish parties gain more influence thanks to the executive cabinet. The Polish executive cabinet, also called the Council of Ministers,

consists of ministers, heads of departments of ministerial rank, and heads of central institutions. The Prime Minister has authority to determine the composition of the Council of Ministers. In addition to determining the members to the council, the Prime Minister may also reorganize the council's structure by creating, combining or dissolving departments. The Prime Minister may also add ministers to the Council that lack a portfolio. Although these privileges give the Prime Minister considerable clout, he is still subject to the influence of the parties. Furthermore, it is the parties that benefit most from the executive's privileges regarding the composition and staffing of the cabinet. After all, the majority of the ministries are usually staffed by members of the Prime Minister's party and possibly of the coalition parties. For example, the Council of Ministers of 2007 is dominated by Prime Minister Tusk's party, Platforma Obywatelska (PO). Out of the fifteen council members, eleven are PO members, three are members of the Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL) and four lack party affiliation. Post-communist governing parties have frequently gained strength by staffing their cabinets along partisan lines. For example, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Law and Justice party (PiS) have made extensive use of their privileges (Gwiazda 2008). More specifically, the composition and staffing of their respective executive cabinets took place along partisan lines (Ibid). Consequently, the composition of the Polish executive cabinet strengthens the political parties and thus makes a state-party cartel more likely.

2.5. Electoral Systems

In addition to the executive cabinets we also need to examine the electoral systems in the United States, Germany and Poland. It seems that the American electoral

system prevents the formation of strong national parties and at the same time protects the Democratic and the Republican parties from the competition of minor parties. The conditions of the German and the Polish electoral systems on their part leave more room for the formation of newer strong national parties. However, in the case of German parties, the electoral system has actually served to strengthen existing parties while this is not the case for Polish parties. Despite numerous changes to the electoral system since 1991, Polish parties remain weak. Even though the system benefits existing parties more than it does new and smaller parties it has failed to significantly strengthen parties overall.

For American parties, the system includes primary elections which have significantly undermined national cohesion and the strength of political parties. Prior to presidential elections, primary elections in all 50 states take place to determine the presidential nominees for both the Republican and the Democratic parties. Due to Progressive era reforms, the primaries no longer allow parties to wield much political power in naming the candidates for their ballots. After losing control over balloting, voter registration and membership requirements during the primaries, parties have been relegated to providing Presidential candidates with their 'brand name' and providing campaign support once they are nominated. As intended by the Progressive reformers, the introduction of the primaries undermined party organization on a long-term basis (Rae 2006, p. 199). Accordingly, primaries also take place for the legislature and for state level elections. Walter Dean Burnham, for example, traces the beginning of dramatically declining election turnouts and participation to the Progressive era (1982).

However, as Dwyre and Kolodny point out, the American electoral system does not benefit all American parties equally but actually places considerable hurdles before minor and new parties (1997). “By having only one winner in each of several hundred districts, minor parties have to garner a significant amount of support to make even a small dent in the composition of the national legislature. Perhaps more important, only one view (that of the plurality winner) gets represented in the government, often denying a majority (who did not support the winner) its say [...] The anti-minor party effect of single-member plurality elections are compounded by the Electoral College” (ibid, p. 178). Many U.S. states have adopted winner-take-all plurality elections a system which “discourages minor parties from seeking the presidency because they must defeat all others in a state to obtain any electoral votes” (ibid). So even if a “minor party has broad-based national support, even an impressive showing at the polls [... It might not produce any electors as was the case with] Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996” (ibid). These characteristics of the electoral system therefore benefit the two major parties because it effectively prevents any minor party from challenging the big parties successfully.

In contrast to the American electoral system, the German electoral system is system of proportional representation, more specifically a mixed PR system, combining directly elected single member districts with proportional representation (PR). Advocates of the PR system would agree that this system provides even small parties with realistic prospects of getting represented since they would be “represented in parliament in exact (or nearly exact) proportion to the vote they polled” (Blais and Massicotte 2002, p. 41). Therefore, proportional representation makes it a lot easier for minor parties to get

represented (Dwyre and Kolodny 1997.) Not surprisingly, minor parties in the United States have frequently endorsed switching to a PR electoral system (ibid).

On the one hand, the German electoral system contains a threshold for minor parties who need to obtain at least 5% of the national vote in order to be represented in the Bundestag at all. According to Blais and Massicotte, “thresholds send a clear and frank message that marginal parties are not considered suitable players in the parliamentary arena” (2002, p. 51). This 5% threshold presents a major roadblock for new and minor parties.

In addition to being a representative parliamentary, however, the German electoral system is also a mixed system combining single-member districts with proportional representation. This means that in parliamentary elections (Bundestag elections) half of the Bundestag members are directly elected from single-member constituencies and the other half of the members are elected by party lists. More specifically, “PR seats are distributed in a corrective way, so as to compensate weaker parties that did poorly in single-member seats and to produce a parliament where each party gets its fair share of seats” (Blais and Massicotte 2002, p. 55). German voters cast two votes, one for a direct candidate in their district and another vote for a political party. This second vote then determines the share of the vote of the parties and the corresponding amount of Bundestag seats the parties receive.

The fact that German electors cast two votes also implies a preferential treatment of parties versus candidates by the German electoral system. As Wagner points out, candidates for the Bundestag are nominated by the delegates of the Länder which means that only political parties can form the Länder lists (2005). The second vote that electors

cast further illustrates the importance of political parties in the German system. More specifically, the parties have considerable say regarding candidate selection and also show strong party cohesion as a result (ibid). Consequently, German politicians “first and foremost seek to win the support of their party and only then seek to win the support of German voters” (Pfetsch 2001, p. 30). This illustrates that the German electoral system allows the parties to play a key role and some have argued that this further strengthens the party state rather than German democracy (Hennis 1998).

The Polish electoral system is a mixed Presidential system. The President is elected directly by the electorate of Polish voters and in this part of the electoral system is therefore a presidential system. The Sejm, the Polish parliament, on the other hand, is elected in a system of proportional representation and as of 2007 as a single-tier open-list PR electoral system (Millard 2009). When the current political system was introduced in 1991 it “was intentionally permissive in that it included numerous mechanisms favoring smaller or medium-sized parties to ensure the widest possible representation of the electorate” (Millard 2009, p. 164). Another factor that initially benefited smaller parties was the achievement of reasonably sized district magnitudes, in some cases ranging from seven to seventeen seats per district (ibid). This significantly encouraged the success of small parties since the “more seats in a constituency, the more parties have a chance of election, since in small districts votes for smaller parties are ‘wasted’ (ibid, p. 164-165). Initially the electoral system also allowed for so-called *apparentement* “whereby parties standing separately could make prior agreements to pool their votes at the allocation stage (also known as vote linkage or ‘blocking’). Such linking of parties in seat allocation is usually seen as another mechanism designed to assist small parties.

Apparentement is often associated with constituency thresholds (lacking in this election); pooling votes can assist small parties to cross the threshold” (ibid).

Over time, the Polish electoral system has become less generous towards smaller parties since it now also contains a 5% threshold clause for individual parties and an 8% threshold clause for party coalitions. The thresholds effectively prevent any party from representation that does not pass the threshold with the same effects as the German electoral system. According to Millard, this has strengthened and favored the bigger parties (2009). The electoral law of 1993, further favored larger over smaller political parties and this was done intentionally (ibid). More specifically, the law increased the number of districts and thereby reduced the size of all districts with the goal of favoring larger parties over smaller ones and thus reducing fragmentation (ibid). The 1993 law also abolished apparentement and introduced the current 5% threshold and thus reversed most support for smaller parties (ibid). “Now the majority of the constituencies were small...reducing the chances of smaller parties [and the new threshold]... all served to exclude small parties...[and] gave preferential treatment to existing parliamentary parties” (ibid, p. 167). Despite these electoral changes benefiting existing parties, Polish parties have generally not become dramatically stronger in the recent past (Millard 2010).

Another aspect of the Polish electoral system that weakens political parties is the open list system. With the introduction of open versus closed list the parties lose control over recruitment of candidates. Voters now directly express a preference for candidates within the party lists they chose (Blais and Massicotte 2002). As a result, Polish parties have been very prone to experience the displacement of their preferred candidates by

candidates lower on the list which has considerably undermined party strength overall (Millard 2009).

2.6 Patronage levels

The patronage levels in the United States, Germany and Poland indicate that the parties have actually encroached on the state. In varying ways, patronage plays an important role in American, German and Polish politics (Müller 2006, Gwiazda 2008). Party patronage in all three countries creates conditions that are highly favorable to a state-party cartel.

The significance of patronage is much more understood in the context of German and Polish politics. Nevertheless, patronage continues to shape American party politics. Some have argued that patronage politics is a thing of the past, particularly the time of 19th century when big party machines flourished in cities like Chicago under Mayor Daly (Freedman 1994). More recent studies however suggest that patronage is still widespread, particularly among western democracies like the United States (Müller 2006). As Müller points out, there are significant benefits to political parties in employing patronage to their advantage (2006). For example, patronage helps deliver votes, labor, money, strategic flexibility and policy-making capacity to the parties (ibid). In the United States, patronage has often been referred to as the ‘spoils system’. The strength of the U.S. spoils system lies in the fact that the parties can “fill a thick layer of [public/civil service] positions with their adherents...[This type of] party patronage is overt and part of the system’s normal working” (ibid, p. 191).

As historical narratives of American patronage demonstrate, patronage is much prevalent on the state and city level than it is on the federal level (Freedman 1994). For

example, Freedman concludes that on national level, there simply are not “enough jobs for the president to be able to build a nationwide political machine or significantly affect local party organizations” (ibid, p. 22). According to estimates, the “president’s ‘patronage universe’ includes only “5,000 available positions, some 1,500 of which are part-time (many unpaid) on boards and commissions”(ibid, p. 21). Nevertheless, Freedman estimates that “over 99 percent of the approximately three million federal employees are covered by a merit system” greatly benefiting the parties (ibid). Although patronage no longer entails the classical political machines of the 19th century, patronage at the state and city levels is still an important element in American politics and has lived on ever since, particularly regarding civil service jobs (ibid). More specifically, “there are more than 83,000 separate units of governments in the nation ranging from school districts to counties to a host of special districts. Most of these operate in obscurity; many are run by elected boards which have the final say over personnel policies; many have no civil service system and even when they do, the systems are poorly monitored” (ibid, p. 33). It would be “naïve to think that all of the more than 10 million people employed at the local level [of government] got their jobs solely on the basis of merit” thus a perfect scenario of party patronage (ibid, p. 33). Studies of state patronage show that patronage continues to be an important feature of American party politics. For example, the states Indiana, Wisconsin and Illinois are notorious for their entrenched spoils systems giving the parties much say in state politics (Freedman 1994). Freedman estimates that “there are probably thousands of small pockets of patronage lodged in the 80,000 plus units of local government in the United States. [Furthermore and representative of the parties], American legislators and political executives will continue

to have some patronage” (ibid, p. 171). “In addition to cabinet and other high-level administrative positions, mayors, county executives, governors and the like [will continue to] make appointments to various councils and commissions” (ibid).

“Sometimes the ‘little’ jobs [as Alan Rosenthal observes] can count more than big ones since they are the ‘plums legislators want to secure for constituents in their districts and/or contributors to their campaigns...they provide governors with the kind of patronage that helps keep legislators in line” (1990). “Even in California, where Progressivism was supposed to have eliminated patronage more than fifty years ago, there are nearly 4,000 slots on assorted boards and commissions, which governors have used to “secure support from the legislature and key interest groups. For example, the 477 appointments to the District Agricultural Association are typical patronage. Appointments to many minor commissions, councils, and boards are often used to reward the party faithful and the governor’s supporters or to gain support from various organizations and groups” (Bell and Price 1992).

Another way in which the two dominant American political parties have used patronage to their advantage regards the appointment of Supreme Court judges who “in the United States are typically selected on the basis of their party adherence” (ibid, p. 192). This represents a most obvious form of American patronage and shows that American political parties have entrenched themselves in the various parts of the U.S. government, including the Supreme Court.

Although the German legislature was intended to remain non-partisan, it has become dominated by the parties through party-based patronage. According to Dyson, the Bundesrat in particular has become an extension of party politics (1977). For

example, parties of the opposition have frequently used the Bundesrat to block or change policies of the governing party or “else to force them into a quasi grand coalition” (Richter 1999, p. 78). Politicians of the major parties have also notoriously used the Bundesrat as a launch pad for their careers. Thaisen, for example, observed that party politicians who successfully promote their state’s economic and financial interest greatly increase “the chances of their party in the next state or federal elections” (1994). Politicians also frequently use the Bundesrat to raise their national profile and thereby increase their “personal chances of becoming their party’s candidate for the chancellorship” (ibid).

What is more, party-based patronage is not limited to the Bundesrat but takes place on all levels of the German state. Indeed, German political parties hold a monopoly on the recruitment and selection of parliamentary deputies and government officials (Schmidt 2003; Padgett 1993). Local government has also been the focus of patronage where the major parties have managed to control the distribution of “communal jobs, projects, publicly funded activities, paid consultancies, and positions on communal supervisory boards of public and private institutions” (Richter 1999, p. 79). As Scheuch and Scheuch (1992) show, local party leaders divide these positions among themselves using quota agreements unaffected by election results. Some scholars argue that the strong presence of party patronage is unconstitutional. For example, citing the Basic Law, Schmidt states that patronage violates the rule that “every German is equally eligible for any public office according to his aptitude, qualifications, and professional achievements” (2003, p. 48). Reality confirms this since membership and good standing in one of the major parties is usually a prerequisite for civil service jobs. Furthermore,

there is evidence for “targeted appointment of party members for posts in public administration, the judiciary, and radio and [state-owned] TV corporations” (Ibid). Scholars have also demonstrated the frequent appointment of party members for posts in public or semi-public corporations regarding public transportation and savings banks on state and local levels (von Arnim 2001a, 2001b; Huber 1994). Richter (1999) equates German party-based patronage with a politicization of all government institutions. Government institutions on the federal and state levels have been integrated into the party state.

Despite the fact that that the Polish legislature was created to be non-partisan, i.e. run by professionalized staff, it has become increasingly dominated by the parties. The legislature, like most other levels of the Polish state has experienced high levels of party-based patronage. Some scholars even argue that patronage is the key element defining Polish party politics (Gwiazda 2008). In particular, Polish “political parties allocate jobs in public and semi-public spheres, and politicians play a decisive role in running thousands of (...) state agencies, institutions and funds”(Ibid, p. 802). Poland therefore is a “partitocratic polity” where “favours distributed by parties have covered many aspects of public life” (Blondel 2000, p. 251). Earlier studies suggested that the Polish state was less subject to party-based patronage and had established an increasingly independent civil service (Grzymala-Busse 2003). More recent studies, however, contradict this. Scholars have argued convincingly that the current dominance of party patronage is a remnant of the communist political system and especially the one party rule of the communist party (Kochanowicz et al 2005). According to Gwiazda, this was then followed by a “new phenomenon of multiparty nomenklatura..., according to which dominant parties in

government tried to gain as many appointments as possible for their people” (2008, p. 807). Accordingly, in the majority of post-communist governments, the governing parties have dominated civil service appointments. In recent governments, in particular the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) have stood out for their high patronage levels – despite their respective claims during election campaigns to act against patronage (Ibid).

2.7 Party influence throughout the political system

Political parties play a largely practical role in all levels of American politics. Most importantly, parties help candidates get elected. This view of American parties has been proposed, for example, by Aldrich who argues that American parties are mainly service providers to the candidates in their efforts to obtain office (Aldrich 1995). American parties fulfill the essential functions of “structuring electoral choices for which no effective substitute has been devised [and they also] play a crucial role in organizing the legislature” (Rae 2006, p. 202). According to some observers, American parties have been experiencing some signs of strengthening (ibid). For example, the two main parties have developed much more ideologically coherent national parties (ibid). “In Congress this has led to a rise in the power of the party leadership and party voting in both chambers”, indicative of more party strength and cohesion (ibid). According to Sinclair, partisan considerations have come to supersede the seniority rule and committees “are no longer fiefdoms independent of party leadership” (Sinclair 1995, as quoted by Rae 2006). American presidents since Ronald Reagan have also increasingly relied on political parties as congressional support base and as “a source of direction and ideas for their administrations” (Rae 2006, p. 202). Using the example of the George W. Bush

presidency, Skinner even argues for a partisan presidency in which the president is strongly supported by his own party in Congress and relies heavily on his party leadership to deliver votes (2007). Such partisan presidents have put a “stronger partisan imprint upon the executive branch, centralizing personnel decisions and favoring ideological loyalists...over career civil servants or nonpartisan experts” (ibid, p. 331). Partisan presidents further strengthen their political party by “actively campaigning for their party’s candidates” and by seeking to “use the national party committees as tools of governance” (ibid).

Scholars have frequently looked at levels of party patronage to make assessments of party influence throughout their political systems (Freedman 1994, Müller 2006). As will be discussed below, the American political system is subject to significant levels of patronage. However, due to the other factors limiting political parties, including the system of checks and balances and the separation of powers, high patronage levels alone do not suffice in permitting strong party government in the American political system.

Despite these party strengthening developments, however, the concept of party government or the party state, as used below to describe German parties does not apply to American parties. “Party government...is likely to remain an elusive and ephemeral phenomenon due to the constitutional system, American political culture, and the extreme unlikelihood of anything resembling European-style mass parties emerging in the United States” (Rae 2006, p. 202). As pointed out earlier, the American presidential system and in particular the separation of powers clearly stands in the way of party government. Even if “one party controls all three branches of the federal government the shortness of the election cycle – 2 years- entails that the long-term control necessary for party

government is hard to achieve. Moreover, given the nature of the separated system, prolonged single-party control of the three branches of the federal government would likely lead to a weakening of party control on Capitol Hill...to preserve the constitutional prerogatives and institutional power of the House and Senate against the encroachments of the executive” (ibid).

In contrast to the United States, German Democracy is unthinkable without political parties. Parties are so central to the German state that it has frequently been called a “party state”. “The Federal Republic is a functioning, stable party state...German political parties tend to interpret ... the Constitution’s statement, “The parties are to take part in forming the political will of the people”, as their exclusive party privilege... In fact, all political decisions in the Federal Republic are made by the parties and their representatives. There are no political decisions of importance in the German democracy which have not been brought to the parties, prepared by them and finally taken by them. This does not mean that other social groups have no power but that they have to realize their power within the party state” (Sontheimer, p. 95). Similarly, Lees observes that the “Federal Republic is the first fully-fledged party democracy in German history in which parties have been placed at the centre of the state and society – in a manner that was not the case under previous constitutional settlements” (Lees 2005, p. 9).

German political parties play an important role on federal and local level politics and are represented in all political bodies. In the absence of an American-style system of checks and balances, the German political system allows for extensive party cooperation and coordination. Thus, German parties maintain a cohesive party line through party discipline. Strong party discipline in German parties is closely related to the structure of

the political system. Parties vote together to keep the executive branch and thus themselves in office (Davidson-Schmich 2006b). Electorally speaking, German parties also need to have a clear profile to communicate themselves well to the citizens. Research has shown that German voters perceive parties without strong party discipline and unity as insecure and untrustworthy (Patzelt 1998). Desiring to be elected, German parliamentarians thus usually vote with their respective parties. What is more, party discipline has proven to streamline legislative decision making (Davidson-Schmich 2006b). For these reasons, state, local and federal politicians in Germany usually vote en bloc with their parties' official stance. Even though the parties are organized relatively autonomously on state and local bases, they still maintain close ties to the national parties and most efforts are coordinated jointly. This practice is motivated, like party discipline, by the desire of politicians to keep their party's nomination and support, remain in government, to make legislating efficient and to be elected.

In the current political system, Polish parties play a key role in structuring elections and serve as electoral vehicles not unlike American parties. Similarly, Polish parties do not have pervasive strong influence throughout the political system as German parties have. Therefore, we cannot speak of a Polish party state in the sense of the German party state. Polish parties have not been as central to the creation and function of Polish democracy as German parties have been to German democracy. According to Rae, "party government requires that governmental power be concentrated so that it can be totally controlled by a party or coalition and that party or coalition be held accountable in its entirety to the legislature and ultimately to the voters" (2006, p. 196). This is not feasible in the Polish political system due to the weakness and instability of political

parties. For once, there are too many Polish political parties, making it very hard for voters to develop strong party attachments. As of May 2009, there were 293 political parties officially registered (Jasiewicz 2009). There has also been a lack of stability among political parties. Many parties are short-lived and parties merge and dissolve routinely. Jasiewicz calls this the Polish “alphabet soup of political parties” (ibid, p. 86). However, the Polish party landscape appears to slowly stabilize as will be shown in the following discussion of the party system.

Even more so than in the United States, there is a widespread anti-party sentiment which also stands in the way of a German-style party state in Poland. This resentment of parties is in no small part a result of Poland’s communist past. In particular, many Poles today are still haunted by their experience of a repressive political system under the rule of the Communist party (Jasiewicz 2009, 2010). Not surprisingly, Szawiel and Grabowska found that most Poles blame political parties for problems in the state and regard political parties as groups of power-hungry politicians (2001). This is also reflected by the parties themselves, in particular by their names. Most Polish parties, with very few exceptions, do not include the word party in their names but instead prefer “concepts such as union, alliance, movement”, action, bloc, or platform” (Jasiewicz 2009, p. 86). The exceptions here are parties that are the ideological communist successor parties which actually contain the word party in their name such as the PPP (Polish Labor Party) or the the PPS (Polish Socialist Party).

In another similarity to American parties, Polish parties benefit from patronage in the political system. This will be discussed in more detail below. However, due to the lack of

party continuity generally and also in government, it is questionable whether Polish patronage levels significantly strengthen political parties overall.

2.8 Party systems

The party systems of the United States and Germany are far more predictable than the party system of Poland. Out of all three cases, the party system of the United States has been the most predictable with the Democratic and the Republican parties taking turns in forming the government. Ranking next in predictability to the United States, the German party system has usually consisted of one of the two major political parties (CDU and SPD) being in government in coalition with a minor party, either the FDP or the Green party. An exception to this would be the formation of a so-called 'grand coalition' in which CDU and SPD together formed the governing coalition and governed Germany jointly. However, this has only happened twice in the post-war period, in 1966 and in 2005 (Langenbacher 2006).

Scholars have frequently referred to the American party system as a very stable two-party system (Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). In fact, the system has been so stable and predictable with either the Democratic or the Republican party governing the country in either unified or divided government. "The last president who was not either a Democrat or a Republican was elected was 1848, and in only five presidential elections since 1864 have the Democratic and Republican candidates failed between them to receive at least 90 per cent of the vote The last time (and the only time since 1860) that the Democrats and the Republicans did not between them hold at least 95 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives was 1896" (Katz and Kolodny 1994, p. 23).

The same factors that limit party government or a German-style party state also ensure that the current two-party system firmly stays in place. More specifically, these aspects are the winner-take-all nature of the electoral system as well as the separation of powers (Maisel 2007). The United States' electoral system "does not allow for coalition governments or electoral deal-making; therefore coalitions are formed before votes are cast in order to achieve majority status and win the presidency" (ibid, p. 24). Maisel also correctly states "single-member districts with plurality winner for legislative seats have much the same effect. Again, only one winner emerges; votes for minor party candidates are viewed as wasted votes or even counterproductive votes, if the least favored candidate wins because of votes cast for someone with no chance of electoral success" (ibid). Consequently, "the current institutional context leads almost inevitably to [a system dominated ...] by two parties" (ibid, p. 25).

Other important reasons for the stability of the two-party system are the two dominant parties themselves which have found ways to ensure the continued existence of this system and of course their own dominance. As chapter three will illustrate in more detail, both the Democrats and Republicans have passed legislation that favors them and discriminates against new or minor parties. This includes party finance laws and ballot access laws in the individual states. As a result, the two main parties have played a key role in ensuring that the two-party system remains stagnant.

Similarly to the American party system, the German party system has also been remarkably stable and predictable until very recently. Until the 2005 parliamentary election Thomas Saalfeld's assessment is accurate (2005). He finds that "the fundamentals of the Federal Republic's party system...have remained remarkably

stable...Two parties, ideologically compact and centrist minimal-winning coalitions, based on politically moderate center-left and center-right parties, persist” (ibid, p. 76). Until the watershed 2005 election, the German party system compares well to that of the United States in terms of stability. This was particularly apparent in 1979 when the German party system “consolidated around two large parties [the CDU and the SPD and]... increased their combined proportion of the vote from 60 percent to over 90 percent” (Conradt 2006, p. 14). Throughout the years the SPD and the CDU took turns governing in coalition with the FDP (Free Democrats) and in terms of policy differed only marginally (Kitschelt 2003). For example, both major parties equally supported the creation of a welfare state known for its generous child allowance, housing subsidies, pensions and healthcare insurance (ibid).

By the 1980s, the stable two party system experienced the first stages of decline. This was in no small part caused by the appearance of the Green party, “the first new party to surmount the five percent barrier and end the twenty-two year-old reign of the established parties” (Conradt 2006, p. 16). German Unification added another party to the mix, the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism), the successor of the former East German governing communist party. After the fall of the East German Communist regime, East German political movements and political parties were marginalized in new political order in a unified Germany (Kamenitsa 1998). Instead of developing their own indigenous political parties, East German political movements were absorbed by the major Western political parties, the CDU and the SPD (Davidson-Schmich 2006). Accordingly, the Eastern party organizations merged with the existing structures of the Western major parties (ibid). This was beneficial to the inexperienced Eastern politicians

since they could take advantage of the ‘ready-made’ guidelines and party structures provided by the big Western parties. The fact that the CDU and the SPD were able to absorb the Eastern movements and activists into their organizations attests to their strengths. At the same time it shows that the inexperienced East German movements and their activists had very little chance to compete for political say in a system dominated by the major parties. As Davidson-Schmich shows, East German activists benefited from joining the newly established organizations of the major parties in the East since they ‘socialized’ them and taught them the ropes of the West German political system (2006).

In 2005 emerged another new party called the Left Party consisting of “old eastern PDS and dissatisfied, largely SPD western voters” (ibid, p. 17). These events therefore shook up the existing political order considerably and meant that there were more than just three possible governing parties.

The last key element of the likely continued transformation of the German party system was the 2005 parliamentary election. Many scholars regard the 2005 election results as a turning point regarding the stable two-party system in Germany that will make it much harder to predict the characteristics the party landscape in the future (Conradt 2006; Langenbacher 2006; Hough 2006). Dettling was accurate in his predictions that the 2005 vote “could be the beginning of the end of the party system we have known for sixty years” (2005). It seems that the days of obvious SPD or CDU dominance are over especially in light of the 2005 and also 2009 parliamentary election results for both parties. Compared to their peak results from the late 1970s, both SPD and CDU experienced record low results of 34.2 percent (SPD) and 27.8 per cent (CDU) in the 2005 Bundestag elections (Hough 2006). It seems that this downward spiral is

continuing for the two big parties as the 2009 Bundestag election results illustrate. In 2009, the SPD won 23.0 per cent of the vote and the CDU won 27.3 per cent of the vote (www.bundeswahlleiter.de). The results of the 2009 elections are in fact the lowest results both major parties reached in the post-war period and indicate that the German party system is less stable now than it has ever been by clearly moving away from a predictable two party system.

Contrary to the United States and Germany, in the case of Poland, discussions of a party system seem immature due to the weakness and short levity of political parties. Szczerbiak, for example, questions whether the Polish party system is stable and developed enough for any party or groups of parties to become key players in the Polish political system (2001a). Lewis, similarly, argues that the Polish political system, like many other Eastern European systems, lacks a “fixed menu of parties” necessary for a stable party system (1996). As a result of the constant flux within the Polish party scene, we might even state that actually a Polish party system, at this point, does not exist. As Markowski states, there is currently no Polish party system due to several factors preventing its creation (2007). He cites as hindering factors the:

- “Constant changes of the election law in the years 1989–2005.
- In 2007 there was only one party that existed back in 1991 – the Polish Peasants Party (PSL).
- In the years 1991–2007 no government of the same partisan configuration ruled twice.
- Leaders of most of the parties lent their image to promote a number of different parties and electoral coalitions.

- In Poland there is a great electoral changeability, which is a symptom of the lack of social roots of the parties.
- Furthermore, in 2005 as many as 63% of Poles cast their votes for a different party than four years before, and as many as 28% changed their preferences en bloc, that is from left-wing to right-wing parties or vice versa.
- A peculiar trait of Poland was also a very low turnout in previous elections. While in Western Europe the turnout was about 75%, in Poland it oscillated around 40%–50%.” (2007, p. 41).

Another aspect, unique to Poland, is the role of the Catholic Church which acts as a political force and serves to undermine political parties (Burdziej 2008, 2010). The Catholic Church has an immense influence on Polish political life and on Polish voters most of whom are Catholic (ibid). In the recent past, the Polish Catholic Church sought to directly influence the outcome of national elections in Poland. For example, in the course of the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections, the church’s radio station under the direction of Father Tadeusz Rydzyk engaged in active political campaigning against abortion and in favor of the more conservative PiS party (Burdziej 2008). As Burdziej points out, by being a strong political actor in its own right, the Catholic Church directly competes with other political actors such as parties and therefore also stands in the way of a strong and stable party system (Burdziej 2010). As a result of these factors and the considerable weakness of the parties, Markowski justifiably argues that instead of discussing a Polish party system it is currently much more appropriate to discuss “a group of parties fighting for voters” (2007, p. 41).

2.9 Number of Parties with a chance of governing

As pointed out earlier in the discussion of the three party systems, there have usually been only two American parties that have a realistic chance of governing, the Democratic party and the Republican party. Although there have been instances in American electoral history when candidates from new or minor parties were unusually popular such as Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996 or Ralph Nader in 2000. However, due to the structural constraints of the American electoral system, even these two candidates never had a realistic chance of winning the Presidency (Maisel 2007). As a result, it is safe to say that there will be only two parties with a chance of governing in the American political system.

The German party system used to be a fairly stable and predictable party system, as already mentioned above. Until the mid 1970s, scholars usually spoke of a two party system (Conradt 2006). This changed to a three party system with the introduction of the FDP as coalition party to either the SPD or the CDU until the 1980s when the Green party managed to surpass the 5 percent threshold (*ibid*). After the 2005 parliamentary elections, the German party system is now a six party system including the SPD, CDU, FDP, the Left party, the Green party and the CSU. As this indicates, the German party system is therefore much more in flux than the American party system.

Compared to the United States and Germany, the Polish party landscape is the least predictable. There have been so many parties formed, dissolved and merged since 1991 that is very hard to trace any distinct trends and developments (Jasiewicz 2009, Millard 2009). The only observable trend from 1991 until 2007 seems to be that the number of parties represented in the Sejm has been going down continuously. The 1991

parliamentary elections resulted in 29 (!) parties being represented in the Sejm (Millard 2009). Notably this was before the introduction of any thresholds to parliamentary representation. After the introduction of a 3 percent threshold, there were significantly fewer parties represented in the 1993 Sejm (ibid). In particular, there were seven parties that managed to obtain enough national votes to enter parliament in the 1993 and the 1997 parliaments (ibid). In 2001 the current 5 percent threshold was introduced, barring any parties from parliament that did not obtain at least 5 percent of the national vote. In the 2001 parliamentary elections, seven parties managed to supersede the threshold. In the next, the 2005 parliamentary elections six parties gained parliamentary representation (ibid). Notably in the 2007 parliamentary elections, only four parties obtained seats in the Sejm (ibid).

There are signs that the party landscape is stabilizing as parties are getting more firmly institutionalized and develop stronger organizations and stronger internal cohesion (Gwiazda 2009). In terms of stability, there are a few Polish political parties that have been represented in the Sejm numerous times. Seemingly the PSL (Polish Peasant Party) appears to be the most enduring current Polish political party since it has been represented in every Sejm since 1991 (Millard 2009). Both the PiS (Law and Justice) and the PO (Civic Platform) have been represented in every Sejm from the 2001 election on and both of them have subsequently formed governments. As Gwiazda observes, the 2007 election shows an assuring trend towards a more stable Polish party system and its configuration does not change as radically as it used to (2009). Party replacement was practically non-existent since the “parties that won seats in the Sejm in 2001 were the same that competed for votes in the 2005 and 2007 elections. They were political parties

rather than electoral coalitions...parties in government seem to be institutionalizing” significantly (ibid, p. 9).

2.10 Competition from new and small parties

In the political system of the United States, new and small parties have practically no chance of successfully competing with the established two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. Therefore, party competition from new and small parties is very low in the American political system. The factors that virtually prevent small and new parties from successfully challenging the two dominant parties have already been discussed above. They include the presidential system with a first-past-the-post system, the checks and balances of the system and the separation of powers (see Maisel 2007; Dwyre and Kolodny 1997; Katz and Kolodny 1994). In addition to these structural impediments, small and new parties are also handicapped by party legislation. Most of this legislation is effective at the state level and for example prevents small and new parties from ballot access, sufficient campaign finance funds among others. The big parties themselves have also played no small part in ensuring that it stays that way, either by keeping these laws in place or proposing newer ones that further undermine small and new parties. Party legislation and the ways in which the two big parties have used such laws to undermine electoral competition from small and new parties will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. As a result, it seems that the American two-party system will remain impenetrable for small and new parties for the foreseeable future.

Small and new parties have a much more significant chance of competing with established parties in Germany than they do in the United States. On the structural level, the German parliamentary system is much allows for more than two parties to be

represented in parliament, once they pass the 5 percent threshold. As the discussion of the German party system illustrated, after the 1980s smaller parties have actually been fairly successful. The Green party was the first new and small party that accomplished such a feat in the 1980s (Conradt 2006). Subsequently, other new parties gained seats in the Bundestag, the German parliament including the east German PDS and the Left party. Also, other small parties had been represented for many years and fairly respectably so. For example, the FDP (Free Democratic Party) has been represented in the parliament and has in recent elections seen their share of votes rise noticeably. In 1998 the FDP achieved 6.2 percent of the vote, in 2002 7.4 percent, in 2005 9.8 percent and in 2009 a respectable 14.6 percent (Hough 2006; www.bundeswahlleiter.de). If this upward trend of the FDP continues, the party will not remain a ‘junior partner’, as the CDU appears to regard its coalition partner, for long. Although there are also structural components that disadvantage smaller parties such as party financing. For example, state financing is only available for parties after the elections. Parties also have to have competed and won a certain number of seats in order to qualify for subsidies. This of course is in the interest of the main parties that have influenced the creation of such laws to limit the political competition of small and new parties. This will be discussed much more detailed in chapter three. However, these disadvantages do not appear to be as damaging to German minor and new parties as they are to their American counterparts.

The fact that the German party system has transformed from a stable 2 or 3 party system until the 1980s to a less predictable 6 party system as of 2009 also indicates that small parties have a realistic chance of electoral success. The 2009 parliamentary election was a vivid illustration of the importance of minor parties in German politics

contrary to American politics. Four small parties managed to overcome the 5 percent threshold including the FDP, Left Party, Green party and the CSU (Christian Social Union), the small Bavarian sister party of the CDU. Therefore it is accurate to say that the big German parties face significantly greater competition from smaller parties than American parties face from smaller parties.

Although some have argued that the Polish party system has become increasingly institutionalized, it would be hasty to conclude that this implies low competition of smaller and new parties (Gwiazda 2009). Gwiazda states that since the 2007 parliamentary election “the configuration of parties remained unchanged, party fragmentation was low and party strength increased. ...party-replacement was virtually non-existent. The parties that won seats in the Sejm in 2001 were the same that competed for votes in the 2005 and 2007 elections.” (2009, p. 9). However, the structure of the Polish electoral system strengthens smaller parties similar to the German system due to the principle of proportional representation. As already stated, this system gets small parties representation once they have overcome the 5 percent hurdle to the parliament. Structurally speaking, small party competition in Poland compares well to that in Germany. Small and new Polish parties also face the same hurdles that small German parties face, e.g. they have less access to state finances and are not already established as the bigger parties. Nevertheless, due to the parliamentary system and also the continued fluidity of the Polish party system, bigger parties face considerable competition from smaller parties.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the differences and similarities of political parties in their political environments in the United States, Germany and Poland. American parties are far less important players in American democracy than German parties which have formed the infamous ‘party state’. Polish parties appear to have become much stronger and better institutionalized in recent years. However, due to the fact that the Polish system was in great flux until very recently, we cannot speak of a German-style Polish party state either. In addition to laying the groundwork for the study of political parties in the three countries, this chapter also examined whether the political structural conditions would naturally enable a party-state cartel. Accordingly, this chapter found that despite their differences all three political systems would allow a cartel-like relationship between political parties and the states in some way. Although all three political systems differ significantly, they promote a close party-state relationship. Factors that support such assessment are the high patronage levels in the American, German and Polish states. A stable party system would also contribute to a cartel-friendly environment. The party system of the United States is the most stable out of the three cases and therefore would enable a party cartel more readily than the German or the Polish party systems.

CHAPTER 3

POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE STATE

The following chapter examines the relationship between parties and the state in the United States, Germany and Poland to test Katz and Mair's cartel theory. According to Katz and Mair (1995, 2009), parties have become part of the state to preserve their hegemonic status. Katz and Mair's analysis focuses primarily on the financial ties between parties and the state. If Katz and Mair are right, we should find that American, German and Polish political parties receive substantial financial support from the state. This should be true during and in between elections. However, this chapter goes beyond Katz and Mair's analysis which primarily focuses on state party financing as evidence for the cartel argument. Specifically, this chapter examines political parties' legal status and privileges to determine whether political parties and the state have cartelized. Here, I evaluate the relationship of political parties and the state on a number of issues critical to political parties: constitutional status, regulatory laws, ballot access, ballot design, election restrictions, campaign finance, finance systems and subventions. The analysis of this chapter reveals that these issues often benefit and strengthen bigger political parties by protecting them from the threat of competition from smaller or newer parties.

Here, I examine the relationship between the state and political parties in the three country cases. American parties have a very close relationship to the state despite the fact that they do not receive state subventions but merely public campaign funding for only the presidential general election if they choose to accept it. However, state laws have helped secure the Democrats and Republicans as governing parties against new and minor parties. Thus the American two-party system represents a political cartel. The

American party cartel takes on a different form than Katz and Mair predict, i.e. based on financial ties between the parties and the state. However, laws and privileges pertaining to the big American parties actually have the same effect and establish a cartel-like relationship between the state and the American parties as state funding does in other contexts. In the case of German political parties, Katz and Mair's measure of financial ties between parties and state is more meaningful than in the case of American political parties. German political parties receive substantial financial support from the state both directly and indirectly. In addition, major German parties, such as the SPD and the CDU, also have a cartel-like relationship with the state based on German party legislation. Not unlike the big American parties, big German parties enjoy many privileges and protections against the competition of smaller or newer parties thanks to German party laws. Polish parties are still consolidating as is Polish democracy. Still, as Polish party legislation reveals, parties have moved closer to the state illustrating the existence of a strong party-state connection. Similar to German political parties, Polish parties' cartel character is a result of substantial state party subventions and also laws regulating political parties. German and Polish political parties, better fit Katz and Mair's stated cartel model than American political parties. However, this does not mean that American political parties are not cartelized because they are cartelized in terms of state laws and privileges. Therefore, Katz and Mair's original cartel definition must be modified to include laws and privileges as creating cartel-like conditions for political parties as they do for the two big American political parties.

Table 3.1: Chapter 3 overview

	United States	Germany	Poland
Constitution mentions parties	No	Yes	Yes
Laws privilege big parties	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election time frame	Every 4 years	Every 4 years	Every 4 years
By-elections	Death or resignation of individual office holder	Vote of no confidence	Vote of no confidence
Party ballot access	Difficult	Easy	Easy
Ballot design	Individual states	Central government	Central government
Voter qualifications	Citizens need to register	Automatic	Automatic
Party registration	Required	No	No
Finance system	Private/mixed	Mixed	Public
Regular state subventions	No	Yes	Yes
Campaign finance provided by government	Yes	Yes	Yes

3.1 Political parties and Laws

3.1.1 Constitutions and Party legislation

Beyond Katz and Mair's cartel model which primarily focuses on state-party funding, party laws in these three cases also illustrate a party-state cartel. More specifically, party laws in the United States, Germany and Poland have established a privileged party-state relationship and thereby serve to protect the parties from political competition. At first glance, American parties differ from European parties because the United States' Constitution does not specify the role or functions of political parties in American democracy. However, the American system of federalism instead provides for individual sub-national state legislatures to regulate the rights and duties of parties, internal party organization, the nomination of candidates, the conduct of primary elections, the requirements for parties to appear on the ballot, and the design of the ballot

and method of election administration. American parties are well regulated through state specific laws and these state laws establish a close party-state relationship and also secure the two-party system. Laws regulating voting ballots and party finance ‘fix up’ the political system to the advantage of the Democratic and the Republican parties. Privileging these two parties state laws in fact create a cartel-like political system.

Legally speaking, American parties do not exist from a national point of view. For some this confirms the American attitude towards parties and might speak of a clear “non-party conception of politics” (Katz and Kolodny 1994, p. 32). Others point out that the legal status of American parties is nevertheless guaranteed, although indirectly, through the first Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Accordingly, American parties are given legal status by strong constitutional provisions for freedom of expression (Janda, 2005). American parties “fall within the protection of free speech, assembly and petition under the U.S. First Amendment” and are thus firmly established in the American political system (Ibid, p. 9). And of course the American Constitution predates the origin of parties (Ibid). Nevertheless, the absence of national party legislation is startling in comparative perspective considering that both parties have shaped American democracy significantly.

Leon Epstein observed that “little has to be said about national laws since apart from campaigns finance legislation...., the U.S. Congress has so far left parties... ,mainly to state regulation.” (1986, p. 155). Interestingly, until the very end of the nineteenth century “American parties had little to do with any sort of law” (Lowenstein 2006, p. 456). State laws primarily regulate and protect parties and did not, as European-style party laws, lead to the formation or creation of American parties. American parties

emerged first as caucuses to Congress. Then parties became mass organizations helping politicians get elected and also served as great mobilizers on controversies such as the power and scope of government and the issue of slavery (Ibid).

Major parties support the legal barriers that prevent third parties from getting on the ballot and getting elected in the 50 states. Scholars have even argued that Democrats and Republicans created these laws to stay in power and eliminate third party competition. Lewis-Beck and Squire, for example, state that “ruling major parties, exercising their preferences for office and ideology in an imperfect world, act with differential aggressiveness to keep third parties out.”(1995, pp. 424-427). Accordingly, Drometer and Rincke conclude that parties in power “tried to mitigate the effects of electoral competition by subtle adaptations of political institutions under their control” (2007). In the American primary elections, American parties must allow their voters, who are not members in the sense of German or Polish parties, to choose their nominees. This process of candidate selection is unique to the United States. In contrast, like many other democratic systems, German and Polish parties choose their own candidates with little input from their supporters. The American Supreme Court has also increasingly made judgments on party regulations and rights and has thereby made party laws on a federal level. One case leading to such federal party regulation by the Supreme Court was the Case of *Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut* (1986). Regarding this case, Lowenstein describes how Republican state legislators adamantly worked towards keeping the Connecticut closed primary in place (1986, p. 459). The state legislators, “had no desire to change the system under which they had been elected” and thus did everything in their power to undermine electoral competition (Ibid).

In effect, state laws have created a very close state-party relationship establishing the Democratic and the Republican parties as part of the state. For example, Winkler (2000) considers the parties as quasi-state agencies and traces this back to the late 19th century. Accordingly, the courts viewed political parties as state agencies with the purpose of advancing voter interests (Ibid, p. 875). Political “parties were increasingly viewed ... as agents of the state, whose functions were intimately tied up to the machinery of the state” (Ibid, p. 879). By 1904, the Wisconsin Supreme Court had characterized a political party as "a state agency...by law" (as cited by Winkler, p. 879).

Similarly, Persily and Cain examine the state-party relationship and describe it as a ‘managerial paradigm’ (2000). The state seeks to preserve the current political order and its stable two party system (p. 780). The two party system thus becomes a ‘state instrumentality’ subject to state legislation regulating party behavior and organization. This then allows governing parties to undermine other parties and prevent them from getting elected leading to the cartelization of the parties. However, it is not just that the state encroaches on the parties. As Persily and Cain point out, parties and their elected officials also control the state. In fact, “giving the state total authority to set the rules of party organization translates in many circumstances to giving the elected officials of one party the right to set the rules for other parties as well as for their own”(p. 781). Furthermore, in the American party cartel, “governing party office holders...try to prevent competitor parties from organizing themselves” (p. 782).

Prior scholars have also theorized the close party-state relationship. Epstein, for example, described American parties as ‘public utilities’ (1986). He suggests that parties perform “a service in which the public has a special interest sufficient to justify

governmental regulatory control, along with the extension of legal privileges” (Epstein 1986, p. 157). When states began legislating and regulating political parties seriously in the early 20th century, they became closely connected with the state. Furthermore, state party legislation illustrates that “parties were perceived in monopolistic terms; only two parties, so technically duopolies...actually elected public officeholders and exerted control over governmental policymaking” (Ibid, p. 158). Confirming the cartel-like status of the major parties, Epstein notes that “the state’s legal recognition of such duopolies or de facto monopolies...solidif[ies] and perpetuate[s] advantages for existing parties” (Ibid). Democrats and the Republicans have been “guaranteed ballot access....a privilege denied minor or new parties” (Ibid). Being either Democrats or Republicans, “state legislators have not always been entirely unresponsive to the major parties they were regulating. Legislators themselves have been Republicans and Democrats whose interests...were not such as to cause them to legislate in favor of other parties” (Ibid).

Consequently, Katz and Mair’s (1995) term of the ‘cartel party’ applies to major American parties. While the cartel model accurately describes their privileged status, it needs to be modified to fit the American context better. Katz and Mair’s model focuses primarily on party finance and state subsidies to the parties. Since American parties do not receive European-style state subsidies one could argue that this discredits the cartel model in the American context. However, as the analysis of state laws below reveals, states have consistently privileged major parties over new and minor parties and thereby created a party cartel. Thus, when inclusive of state legislation and regulation of parties, Katz and Mair’s cartel model can be applied to American parties.

Germany's political system has been shaped by the parties. From the creation of the current political system after World War II until today, party politicians have firmly established the parties as key actors in the German democracy. Legendary party leaders Adenauer (CDU) and Schumacher (SPD) made sure that the Parliamentary Council, in charge of drafting the Basic Law, was an "assembly of party men" (Otto, 1971: 41). Consequently, German parties have established themselves as the "exclusive representatives of the public will" (Richter 1999, p. 78). The Basic Law is Germany's constitutional law which came into effect after WWII under the guidance of the Allies. The stipulations of the Basic Law created Germany's political system, i.e. a parliamentary democracy with separation of powers of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Although the Basic Law contained several regulations to curb party power it nevertheless made significant concessions to the parties and made their central role as 'representatives of the public will' official (Richter 1999). Legal regulation of parties, such as the Basic Law and the Party Law, have established major German parties as governing parties and given them privileged status in the political system. As was the case for American parties, the two major German parties have a cartel-like status as established by the Basic Law and the Party Law.

Adopted in 1949, the German Basic Law gave parties formal institutional status and established them as central elements of German Democracy. The Basic Law defines the parties' role in the political system. Article 21 (1) states that "Political parties shall participate in the formation of the political will of the people." According to Van Biezen, article 21 "thus constitutionalizes political parties and formally acknowledges that they have a genuine and legitimate function to perform in modern democratic government.

[...] By assigning a key role to parties in the formation of the political will of the people, the German constitution associates on the key principles of democracy with the institution of the political party and invests parties with the status of institutions under constitutional law” (2009, p. 9). As Conradt observes, “it is rare for any democratic constitution to mention political parties in such detail, much less assign them a function” (2001, p. 110). Article 21 also states that parties “must conform to democratic principles” and that parties which “by reason of their aims or the behavior of their adherents seek to undermine or abolish the free democratic basic order to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany shall be unconstitutional.” As others have shown this was motivated by the desire of German post-war democratic party leaders to prevent a comeback of the instable party landscape of the Weimar Republic which ultimately enabled the Nazi take over and totalitarian rule (Ibid, p. 111). This provision of Article 21 served the purpose of safeguarding German democracy from non-democratic forces. It also, however, illustrates the influence of the German parties even from the founding of the current political system. By including these phrases, post-war party leaders established themselves and their own parties as ‘model democratic parties’ and indicates that other parties or political movements might have less of a privileged status in the political system than the CDU and the SPD.

Moreover, the two major German parties, the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Social Democrats (SPD) have taken direct actions to prevent other forms of political organization and participation that might rival the major parties’ power. Accordingly, the big parties have successfully “defeated all forms of direct participation, refused electoral participation to citizen movements, and neutralized such nonparty competitors as local

voter associations or city hall parties” (Guggenberger and Maier, 1994). There were some reform initiatives that argued against the pervasive influence of the big parties on their members and their voting. As Hamm- Brücher shows, these reformist initiatives tried to weaken their control over deputies’ votes and to restore the independence of the deputies in line with Article 38 of the Basic Law (1993). Article 38 states that Bundestag members are first and foremost “representatives of the whole people” and therefore are “not bound by orders or instructions, and responsible only to their own conscience”. Insisting on the validity of article 38, one might even argue that enforced block voting in the Bundestag by the major parties is unconstitutional. Not surprisingly, however, the CDU and SPD worked to undermine this initiative and ultimately succeeded (Ibid).

In addition to the Basic Law, another important law is The Law on Political Parties (“party law” hereafter). This law, last amended in 1994, meticulously regulates and prescribes party organization and activity in the German political system. These detailed provisions have led scholars to argue that Germany is “*the* Western European country where party law has the greatest relevance” (Müller 2002, p. 262). The party law regulates any imaginable aspects of party activities and organizations. For example, it reaffirms the constitutional status of the parties and their main functions in German democracy. The law further addresses the ways in which German parties may organize internally, its statutes and programs, aspects of party membership, and the role and composition of party bodies and assemblies. According to the party law, political parties must adhere to democratic practices and if they fail to do so, they may be abolished by the constitutional court. This stipulation seeks to undermine the creation and possible success of extreme political parties in light of Germany’s Nazi past. For example, in 1952

the constitutional court banned the Socialist Reich Party and in 1956 the Communist Party (Kommers 1997). Also in 2001, the German Bundestag and the Bundesrat requested that the federal constitutional court outlaw the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) (ibid). However, due to procedural improprieties, the federal constitutional court rejected the case (ibid).

In accordance with the Basic Law, the German party law reaffirms the parties' role in shaping "the formation of the will of the people" (Article 1, (1)). The party law further states that German parties "perform a public function" regarding the people's political will formation "in all fields of public life, in particular by exerting influence on the shaping of public opinion" (Article 1 (2)). The parties' duties include "inspiring and furthering political education; promoting active public participation in political life; training capable people to assume public responsibilities; participating in federal, Land and local government elections by nominating candidates; exerting influence on political developments in parliament and government; incorporating their defined political aims into the national decision-making process" (ibid). The party law also states that it is the parties' responsibility to ensure "continuous, vital links between the people and the instruments of state"(Article 1 (2)). This again shows the strong influence of the parties and also their central role in the functioning of the German political system.

What is more, the party law privileges the established parties such as the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Social Democrats (SPD) over newer and smaller parties. This recalls the ways in which the major American parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, are privileged legally. Consequently, the German party law creates a cartel-like system not unlike that of party regulation in the United States. In particular, Article

5 of the party law states that “where a public authority provides facilities or other public services for use by one party, equal treatment must be accorded to all parties”(1). However, “the scale on which such facilities and services are provided may be graduated to conform with the importance of the parties” (ibid). Parties that are considered ‘less important’ are not entitled to the same degree of state support as the major parties are. Furthermore, “the importance of a party shall be judged in particular from the results of previous parliamentary elections” (ibid). This clearly privileges the big established parties and undermines potential new parties and movements that cannot benefit from state resources. Legally speaking, it is therefore accurate to say that the major German parties are cushioned from potential competition in the form of new parties and protest movements.

Although Polish democracy is still quite young, it is clear that political parties will play an important role in ensuring the functioning of the political system. After the end of communism, Poland’s political system took the form of a multi-party democracy. Due to Poland’s democratic past, prior to communism, and intense interest in Western Europe to see new Eastern European democracies succeed, we should expect Polish parties to have close ties to the state. The majority of current Polish parties emerged only after the end of communism and turned to the state for survival following the trend of Western European parties (Kopecky 1995, Lewis & Gortat 1995, Lewis 1996, Mair 1996). Post-communist Polish parties operated “within a political culture where the state is a highly prominent feature of the political landscape and in which it may prove difficult to engender a sense of their being separate” (Szczerbiak 2001, p 216). Just like other post-communist countries, Poland lacks a strong civil society that ideally gives democracy its

vibrancy and ensures parties' continued link with the electorate. Although Polish civil society played a crucial role in bringing down the communist regime, its political relevance has waned (ibid). Furthermore, post-communist Polish parties developed in a very different environment than, for example, German parties. More specifically, Polish parties never took the shape of a mass party supported by large membership numbers. Instead new Polish parties started as electoral - professional parties with small membership numbers. According to Mair, these new parties behave "more as competing teams of leaders" rather than brokers between civil society and the state (Mair 1994). This also has to do with the fact that contemporary Polish parties formed in an era of mass communication and with enormous access to communication technology. This stands in stark contrast to both German and American parties which were founded prior to the advent of such technology and had to rely on mass membership and grassroots organizing for mobilization and campaigning.

Generally, Polish parties play a more central role than do American parties in the political order. The Polish constitution mentions political parties whereas the American constitution does not. As in the German case, this constitutional reference to Polish parties demonstrates the close relationship between the state and the parties. A closer look at the constitution and other laws pertaining to the parties will show that Polish parties do enjoy privileges not unlike German parties. Consequently, the party – state relations in Poland, despite the system's continued flux, also confirm Katz and Mair's theory.

The Polish constitution specifically mentions political parties like the German constitution does. For example, Article 11 of the 1997 constitution states that "The

Republic of Poland shall ensure freedom for the creation and functioning of political parties” (1). Furthermore, “political parties shall be founded on the principle of voluntarism and upon the equality of Polish citizen” (ibid). Not unlike the German constitution, the Polish constitution lays out the role of the parties in the political system. Accordingly, Polish parties’ “purpose shall be to influence the formulation of the policy of the State by democratic means” (ibid).

In another parallel to the German constitution, the Polish constitution limits the parties’ power by the inclusion of Article 13. This article states that “political parties and other organizations whose programmes are based upon totalitarian methods and the modes of activity of nazism, fascism and communism, as well as those whose programmes or activities sanction racial or national hatred, the application of violence for the purpose of obtaining power or to influence the State policy, or provide for the secrecy of their own structure or membership, shall be forbidden”. Furthermore, the constitution stipulates that the parties’ finances are “open to public inspection” (Article 11, 2). This mirrors the constitutional limits regarding German parties which were designed to ensure the parties’ commitment to democracy and commitment to the existing political system.

In addition to the constitution, there are several laws that concern Polish parties. For example, there is the “Law of 28 July 1990” or Political Parties Act of 1997 which further strengthens the role of parties in Polish democracy. Accordingly, this law practically establishes “political pluralism in the form of numerous, competing political parties, defined as “social organizations” (Sanford 2002, p. 192). The law further institutes the parties’ equal rights and their function in democracy. Even more detailed than the constitution, this law defines a political party as “a voluntary organization,

appearing under a specific name, whose objective is participation in public life by influencing State policy by democratic methods or exercising public authority” (Section 1, Greco 2008, p. 3).

Some laws protect existing Polish parties from electoral competition from new parties. More specifically, Polish parties obtain legal status only after listing in the Register of Political Parties which is maintained by the District Court in Warsaw. To register, “a political party has to submit an application specifying the name, abbreviated name, principal address of the party, as well as the names, surnames and addresses of the members of the body which is authorized by the articles of association to represent the party outside and to incur property liabilities.”(Greco 2008, p. 4). Furthermore, the application must include “the articles of association of the party and a list of at least 1000 citizens” who are at least 18 years old in support of the application (ibid). On the one hand, this law has had the effect of reducing the number of post-communist parties, further stabilizing the political system. Prior to the enactment of the 1997 Party Law there were 325 parties in Poland (Ibid). The Law’s introduction, however, brought with it much stricter party registration and signature requirements. Consequently, the number of parties that registered was down to under 80 in December 1999 (Ibid). On the other hand, these strict requirements make party formation more difficult for new and small parties. Creating such hurdles prevents many small and new parties from emerging and thereby protects already existing parties from competition. These Polish registration requirements thus recall the difficulties third parties in the United States face when trying to get on the ballot to challenge the Democrats and Republicans at elections.

Bigger Polish political parties continue to benefit from their assets which are often unattainable for new parties. Especially in the case of communist successor parties, such as the SLD, these assets can be substantial and often include remaining funds and real estate. Unique to post-communist political parties, this real estate is usually the property and buildings that have housed the party since the communist era. In addition to benefiting from assets unattainable to newer parties, the politicians of bigger Polish parties have influenced civil service laws to their advantage. This became obvious in the conflict between politicians of the SLD and one of their major opponent, the PiS in 2001. The conflict arose on the subject of the influence of the governing party on civil service appointments. SLD politicians of the Miller government sought to maximize their ability to make civil service appointments to their advantage. Naturally, politicians of the opposition, including PiS leader Kaczynski, fiercely criticized the SLD government for their support of the legislation. He declared that the “SDL invades the state, the amendments to the law ... are a step closer to state politicization” (as quoted by Gwiazda 2008, p. 818). As it turned out, however, once the PiS was in power, its politicians experienced a sudden change of opinion. Consequently, in March 2006, PiS politicians submitted two laws. Both of these laws privilege the governing party by enabling the governing party to make crucial civil service appointments (Ibid). Not surprisingly, these laws were then passed in the Sejm. Therefore, the bigger parties have used these changes in civil service law to further close the gap between themselves and the state.

Current Polish parties came in existence under circumstances much different from German and American parties. Overall, it is accurate to acknowledge that much is still in flux regarding the Polish party system. Despite these differences to both American and

German parties, however, Polish parties also have some characteristic similarities. For example, the Polish constitution has established political parties as key players in the political system. Furthermore, Polish party laws have privileged bigger and existing parties over smaller and new parties regarding party foundation and party funding. Therefore, bigger Polish parties enjoy a close relationship with the state, not unlike bigger German and American parties. As a result, Polish parties also fit the mold of Katz and Mair’s cartel party.

3.1.2. Election Laws

Table 3.2: election laws

	United States	Germany	Poland
Election time frame	Every 4 years	Every 4 years	Every 4 years
By-elections	Death of office holder	Vote of no confidence	Vote of no confidence
Party ballot access	Difficult	Difficult	Less difficult
Ballot design	Individual states	Central government	Central government
Voter qualifications	Citizens need to register	Automatic	Automatic

3.1.2.1 Election time frame and by-elections

As table 3.2 above illustrates, elections in all three countries usually take place every four years. In the United States, these terms are set by the Constitution. By-elections or special elections only take place at the state level. States hold special elections when a lawmaker dies, resigns or is expelled from office in mid-term (Feigert and Norris 1990). In the United States, by-elections are governed by state laws, called by the state governor and conducted by local officials (ibid). By-elections are less important in the United States than they are in Europe since “the outcome of particular contests cannot affect the timing of national elections [and]...since general congressional

elections are held every two years. Lastly, the dominant two-party system in the United States means that special elections do not serve a critical function as tests for minor-party support”. (Feigert & Norris 1990, p. 185).

In Germany and Poland elections can take place sooner than the usual four years under certain circumstances. In both countries, by-elections can happen at the federal level. In Germany, for example, national elections can be held sooner “if the government loses its majority and requests the federal president to dissolve parliament and call new elections” (Conradt 2001, p. 146). However, this has only occurred three times, in 1972, 1982 and 2005. In Poland, elections can also be held earlier than every four years. According to article 98 of the Polish Constitution, the parliament’s (Sejm) term can be shortened if at least two thirds of its members vote for its shortening (www.sejm.gov.pl/pravo/konst/polski/4.htm). Also, the Polish President can shorten the term of both houses of parliament, the Sejm and the Senat, if a new executive cabinet (Council of Ministers) is not elected, i.e. does not receive the vote of confidence or if the President does not receive the budget proposal on time (Polish Constitution, articles 98 and 255). When the President shortens the terms of the Sejm and the Senat, the law then requires that he call and arrange for new elections not later than 45 days after the end of the term (ibid).

3.1.2.2 Ballot design and ballot access

State laws regulate American parties in many important ways. Most crucial to the legal status of parties and also the privileged status of the Democrats and the Republicans have been state ballot access laws. In the American electoral system state laws dictate the format of election ballots and the requirements for candidates and parties to appear on

the ballot. The majority of the 50 states disadvantage minor and new parties. In particular, many states waive signature requirements for important candidates. In state laws such candidates are “candidates recognized in the news media. In other words, if a candidate is acknowledged by television newsmen and major newspaper reporters as someone worth covering, then that candidate has a much easier time getting on the ballot”(Day 1992). What is more, even in states which do not distinguish between candidates based on their status in the media, candidates of the major parties still get on the ballot much more easily. “For example, in 1988 Republican presidential candidates needed 5,000 signatures to get on the Texas primary ballot. Most of the Republican contenders, including Senator Robert Dole, failed to get these signatures (...) The Texas Secretary of State nevertheless placed the candidates on the ballot anyway, even though most of them did not have enough valid signatures. "Unimportant" candidates never get such royal treatment when they fail to get enough signatures.”(Ibid).

Moreover, state law requirements for ballot access provide further hurdles for minor and new parties. In order for these parties to appear on the ballot they need to have received a certain percentage of the vote at the last election. This percentage ranges from the low end of 1% (Connecticut, Michigan, West Virginia, Wisconsin) to the high end of 20% (Alabama, Georgia) of votes received in the last election (Katz and Mair 1992). The only states that have less stringent requirements in this regard are Delaware which requires 0.05% of voters registered in the new party while Vermont and Mississippi merely require third parties to show that they are organized in the state to get on the ballot (ibid; Shock 2008). By requiring parties to have received a certain percentage of the vote in the previous election these state laws in effect exclude new

parties and minor parties. In effect, state laws bar new and minor parties from ballot access and even states that are more permissive cannot change the policies of other stricter states.

Minor and new parties may file petitions to gain ballot access. For example, in Delaware a third party needs only 241 registered voters to qualify the party for ballot access. Tennessee requires only 25 signatures for the same purpose (Shock 2008). However, these are exceptions and the majority of states make petitioning for ballot access particularly difficult. For example, “California required either 149,692 petition signatures or 86,212 registered party members in order to qualify a candidate for president in 2000... North Carolina required 51,324 petition signatures, Georgia required 39,094 petition signatures, Texas required 37,381 petition signatures, and Oklahoma required 36,200 petition signatures to place a presidential candidate on the ballot in 2000” (Ibid, p. 51). Even worse, the state of Texas sets a May 30th deadline to submit petition signatures while most other states allow until July or August to hand in the petitions (Winger, 2000, p. 5). Since the requirements for ballot petitions are difficult to meet they do not provide new and minor parties with a real alternative. These parties have to collect a set number of signatures, usually set to represent a certain percentage of voters in the last election from 1 – 10%. In lieu of petitions, some states also allow parties to appear on the ballot that can show a certain amount of registered voters, which is hard for new parties that have not previously had ballot access, to convince voters to do. The registration requirement laws vary among the states. For example, Delaware requires 0.05% of registered voters, California requires a 1 % registration of voters, and 5% in Florida (Katz and Mair 1992). While in some cases new and minor parties might be able

to obtain such levels of registration, in reality they usually pose a formidable barrier to ballot access.

State ballot laws also privilege the Democrats and Republicans, by listing them first and the minor and new parties last (ibid). Moreover, state laws usually burden new parties with numerous regulations, further hindering their ballot access. For example, they limit the time to collect petition signatures or to register voters or they require the petition to be in a certain format. Trying to get on the ballot in all 50 states is therefore an “expensive logistical nightmare for any third party” (Shock, 2008, p. 57). As Hazlett points out, states have different filing deadlines, signature requirements, and regulations concerning signature collection (1992). It seems that “[b]allot access is so complex that serious third party presidential campaigns virtually require legal experts specialized in election law.” (Gillespie 1993, p. 35). “In 1980, the John Anderson presidential campaign... “spent more than half of the \$7.3 million it raised between April and September on petition drives and legal fees.”(Shock quoting Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984, p. 24).

Not unlike American laws, German electoral laws also provide a hurdle to small and new parties’ ballot access in German national elections. According to federal election law (Bundeswahlgesetz), automatic ballot access is only possible for parties that achieved at least five parliamentary seats in the immediately preceding election (OSCE/ODIHR 2009). Any other parties trying to get ballot access need to apply for permission to the office of the Bundeswahlleiter (federal elections leader). The office of the Bundeswahlleiter, the Bundeswahlausschuss (federal elections committee) then examines these applications and decides whether to let the parties on the ballot.

Legislation describing the criteria a party must possess to obtain ballot access is vague. For example, in addition to having a ‘considerable’ membership base, parties must show that they ‘permanently strive to participate in the decision making process at both the state (Landesebene) as well as at the federal levels’ (Bundeswahlgesetz). As others have argued, these vague descriptions are intentional, giving the officials at the Bundeswahlamt much authority in deciding on small and new parties’ right to ballot access (OSCE/ODIHR 2009). Furthermore, the officials comprising the Bundeswahlamt and deciding the fate of new and small parties are largely appointees of the large parties (CDU and SPD) (ibid). This then relegates the process of determining ballot access to nothing more than a ‘peer review process’ that automatically presents a conflict of interest for these CDU and SPD appointees (ibid). Not unlike American third parties, small and new German parties also need to collect a certain amount of signatures to be considered for ballot access. According to the Bundeswahlordnung (federal elections order), parties need to submit at minimum the signatures of 0.1 percent of the electorate or 2000 signatures (ibid). In addition, small parties cannot object to the ruling of the Bundeswahlausschuss as there is not any law in place providing such procedure (ibid). These circumstances therefore allow the big German parties to effectively limit their electoral competition by preventing small and new parties from getting ballot access and also by not letting them object to these rulings.

Compared to American and German parties, Polish political parties face fewer obstacles to getting on the ballots. Nevertheless, new parties are still disadvantaged compared to big and existing parties. According to article 70 of the Law on Sejm Elections, parties which have obtained more than 50 000 signatures from their committee

and registered in at least five electoral districts, are automatically placed on the ballot. As stipulated by the Act of April 12, 2001 on Elections to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and to the Senate of the Republic of Poland, any party needs to collect at least 5000 signatures in a given constituency (Article 142).

3.1.2.3 Voter qualifications

Compared to German and Polish Citizens, American citizens face the most obstacles prior to the act of voting. According to the Constitution, all American citizens over the age of 18 years and meeting certain residency requirements can vote in the United States. However, in order to vote in the United States citizens must first register in the state of residence. Some efforts were made to facilitate registration but this has not had a large effect on registration levels. More specifically, the 1993 National Voter Registration Act required state governments to provide standardized registration services through drivers' license registration centers, schools, libraries and also allow for mail-in registration (United States Congress 1993). However, studies show, that the new law has not significantly increased voter turnout in subsequent elections (Martinez & Hill 1999, Brown & Wedeking 2006, Ansolabehere & Konisky 2006). The fact that American parties have not made serious efforts to make voting easier, such as introducing automatic voter registration seems to lend further support to the cartel-like relationship between the parties and the state. Keeping the barriers of voter registration in place might be in the interest of the two major parties that might wish to maintain the status quo of the American political order. In this order, only these two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, have a real chance of being elected and gaining power. What is more, indirectly limiting the size of the electorate also makes conducting election campaigns

and pursuing national office much more predictable for the two parties. If more American citizens voted, this could make it more difficult for the two main parties to predict which voters might and might not vote for them (Schattschneider 1942).

In Germany, the law makes it fairly easy for citizens to vote. The Basic Law gives any German citizen over the age of 18 years the right to vote and to hold public office. Voting is generally made fairly easy for the electorate since voters do not need to take the extra step of registering as is the case for American citizens. According to German law, all citizens must be officially recorded in their place of residency (Conradt 2001). “If a citizen has officially reported his or her residence in the constituency ..., he or she will automatically be placed on the electoral register...Before Election Day, the voter will be notified of registration and polling place” (ibid, p. 146). In addition, Election Day in Germany always falls on a Sunday, further facilitating voting for German citizens.

Polish citizens, like their German counterparts, face few impediments to voting. According to article 62 of the Polish Constitution, any Polish citizen over the age of 18 has the right to vote “unless they are legally incapacitated or deprived of their public or electoral rights by a final court decision” (OSCE/ODIHR 2008, p. 5). Following the Parliamentary Elections Act of 2001, Polish citizens are automatically registered to vote as long as they are registered with their residential municipalities and therefore do not need to go through the trouble of registering to vote as American voters need to do (OSCE/ODIHR 2008).

3.2 Political Party Finance

Table 3.3: finance systems

	United States	Germany	Poland
Finance system	Private/mixed	Mixed	public
Regular state subventions	No	Yes	Yes
State campaign finance	Yes	Yes	Yes

3.2.1 Finance systems

According to table 3.3, the United States has a mixed political party finance system containing mostly private and limited state funds, while Germany and Poland have mixed and mostly public finance systems respectively. There is no state funding for American parties except for campaign finance in the general election for presidential campaigns. Therefore, outside of election time and the presidential campaign (three months every four years), American political parties have to procure their own funds privately. The party finance systems of Germany and Poland are much more obvious indicators for a cartel-like relationship between the parties and the state. Both German and Polish parties, as established by party laws, receive state subventions and campaign financing.

3.2.2 Regular state subventions

Katz and Mair argue that direct state subsidies privilege existing European parties and create a party cartel (1995, 2009). As table 3.3 illustrates, American parties do not receive regular state subventions. However, elected representatives both to the House and to the Senate receive significant amounts for staff and office allowances. Katz and Mair show that representatives receive yearly allowances for administrative, clerical and legislative staff salaries exceeding \$400.000 per year in 1990 (1992, p. 926). More

recently, Brudnick reports that House members receive considerable personnel allowances for the employment of staff in both their Washington, D.C. and their district offices (2007). Each member “was entitled to an annual personnel allowance of \$831,252 in 2007 for no more than 18 permanent employees. As many as four additional employees may be designated by the Member” (ibid, p. 3). Such an employee may receive a yearly salary of up to \$159,828 (ibid). U.S. senators also receive significant financial support, including personnel allowances for administrative and clerical assistance as well as legislative assistance depending on the size of the population of the state they represent (ibid). “Under the 2006 Order of the President pro Tempore, each Senator was authorized [to spend up to] \$160,659” per staff person each year (ibid, p. 7). In 2006, administrative and clerical assistance allowances ranged from \$1,926,936 to \$3,170,602 (ibid). Similarly, in 2006 “each Senator was authorized \$472,677 to appoint up to three legislative assistants, to be paid a maximum of \$157,559 each” (ibid). One could argue that these state funds for the staff allowances constitute indirect subventions to American political parties. This makes sense since the staff work for their representatives and indirectly help them get re-elected, usually as a candidate for either the Democratic or the Republican parties. Therefore, we should consider the job activities of the legislative and administrative staff as partisan activities. As a result, the state funds paying for the staffs’ salaries indirectly fund the two parties. For clarification, this does not apply to the permanent party organizations of either party but instead for the assistance of the parliamentary members.

In contrast to American political parties, German and Polish political parties receive direct regular state subventions. A large part of German and Polish party law is

devoted to party finance, including state subsidies and party handling of finances (Van Biezen 2009, Millard 2009). In Germany and Poland, these finance laws benefit the major parties much more than they do smaller and new parties. Few other democracies can rival Germany in its generous party subsidies. The German state's threshold to qualify for public subsidies at "0.5 per cent of the national vote or 1.0 per cent in a minimum of three state elections is lower than" that of any other liberal democracy" (Nassmacher 2006, p. 448). "German public subsidies to all parties may not exceed a total of €133 million (\$178 million), in due course to be adjusted for inflation. About 40 percent of this subsidy is distributed according to the number of votes" received (ibid, p. 449). According to Gunlick, the remaining 60 per cent of subsidies matches small individual donations and membership payments at the rate of 2:1, subsidies to individual donations (1995, pp. 101-21). The bigger parties that are regularly represented federally "receive more than 95 per cent of the total allocation (of state subsidies) while the rest is distributed among the ...minor parties" (Nassmacher 2006, p. 449). Also, no subsidies are available for local party organizations or individual party candidates (ibid).

Table 3.4: German political parties, percentage of yearly income

Party	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	sf	mf	other	sf	mf	Other	Sf	Mf	Other	Sf	mf	other	sf	Mf	other
CDU	41.04	28.69	30.27	39.53	27.14	33.33	42.7	29.33	27.98	44	29.43	26.58	41.7	28.13	30.2
SPD	40.38	29.73	29.89	38.87	29.11	32.02	38.6	29	32.36	41.5	30.32	28.18	39.2	27.86	32.9
Gruene	57.55	21.26	21.19	56.31	20.58	23.11	58.9	21.31	19.79	59.5	21.38	19.14	57.4	20.7	21.9
CSU	37.89	25.39	36.72	33.26	23.88	42.86	36.5	25.62	37.87	32.1	22.28	45.67	28.9	18.93	52.2
FDP	35.5	20.5	44	35.5	19	45.5	40.2	22.8	36.97	38.4	21.96	39.62	39.1	22.49	38.4
Die Linke	43.62	44.19	12.1	45.05	41.17	13.78	46	40.08	13.91	48.2	40.99	10.8	47.1	39.2	13.7
average	42.66	28.29	29.03	41.42	26.81	31.77	43.8	28.02	28.15	43.9	27.73	28.33	42.2	26.22	31.6

Sf = state funds; mf: membership funds; other: donations, additional earnings

Source: calculated by author from Der Deutsche Bundestag (2010) data, (see yearly finance reports of parties at: <https://www.bundestag.de/bundestag/parteienfinanzierung/fundstellen1968.pdf>).

At first sight it seems that German political parties are not that dependent on the state for financial support since they receive significant amounts of money from membership contributions (table 3.4). Also, according to German party law, “no party may receive its public entitlement unless it has collected an equal amount from membership fees, individual or corporate donations” (Nassmacher 2006, p. 448). Therefore, the law ties state funds directly with membership fees, giving the parties an incentive to recruit members in order to receive their financial support and as a consequence matching state funds. However, as table 3.2 illustrates, the sum of all state support and subsidies is significantly greater than the amount of money the parties collect from membership contributions.

In addition to these direct subsidies, there are also other more indirect ways in which the German state finances political parties. Media access is one of the most important indirect subsidies. German parties receive free air time on television and radio and also free space on street billboards for their campaign posters (ibid). Furthermore, the party-affiliated foundations also receive state subsidies (ibid). For example, the SPD’s foundation is called the Willy-Brandt-Stiftung and the CDU’s foundation is called the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. These foundations perform crucial tasks for the German parties such as training of party workers, candidates and municipal councilors and also conduct political research for the parties (ibid, p. 450). Further indirect state funding includes the fees or so-called ‘party taxes’ German representatives pay to their own parties. Paying these ‘taxes’, the representatives in fact pass on a share of their salaries to their parties. Therefore, as suggested by some scholars, these fees or ‘party taxes’ should also be considered part of the state funding (Szczerbiak 2001a). If the representatives fail

to pay their own party will punish them by not nominating these representatives in the next election (ibid). German parties add significant amounts to their overall finances thanks to these mandatory donations by their elected officials. In 2005, for example, these mandatory donations ranged from € 1,931,322 or 6 percent (FDP) to € 5,430,832,40 or 20.41 percent (Bündnis/Die Grünen) of the parties' total yearly income (Der Deutsche Bundestag online 2010). If we add this to the more obvious direct state subsidies, it is apparent that German political parties have very strong financial ties to the State.

Table 3.5: Polish political parties, percentage of yearly income

Party	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Sf	Mf	other	Sf	mf	other	Sf	Mf	Other	Sf	mf	other	sf	mf	other
Pis	83.76	6.87	9.37	34.46	1.75	63.79	2.93	0.21	96.86	44.98	2.77	52.25	52.26	1.84	45.89
PO	0.00	33.50	66.50	0.00	0.13	99.87	36.37	1.63	62.00	57.22	1.67	41.11	51.10	1.35	47.55
PSL	0.00	31.43	68.57	0.00	0.01	99.99	41.52	0.78	57.69	25.24	0.12	74.64	63.85	0.08	36.07
SLD	68.59	15.13	16.28	77.25	14.16	8.59	40.07	6.20	53.73	47.48	7.91	44.61	50.19	7.79	42.02
average	38.09	21.73	40.18	27.93	4.01	68.06	30.22	2.21	67.57	43.73	3.12	53.15	54.35	2.77	42.88

Sf = state funds; mf: membership funds; other: donations, additional party earnings

Source: calculated by author from the parties' yearly income reports, Polish National Electoral Commission (Monitor Polski - Official Gazette of the Republic Poland) (2010).

Similar to German parties, Polish parties also have strong financial ties to the state. As 3.5 illustrates, due to their low membership numbers, Polish parties receive much less money from their members than German parties. This also means that Polish parties are even more dependent on the state for financial support and survival because they lack the sizeable membership bases of German political parties which are also illustrated by table 3.5. The only outliers here are the PO and the PSL parties both of which declined to accept state funds in 2004 and 2005. The reason for this is that both parties supported a new law that would end state subsidies to the parties (Burdziej 2010).

However, this law never found enough support and thus never materialized (*ibid*). It appears that both PSL and PO changed their minds regarding state subventions after that and have accepted substantial amounts since 2006 (table 3.4).

According to the 1997 Party Law, paragraph 1, “the funding of political parties may consist of membership fees, donations, legacies, bequests, revenues from assets and allocations from the State budget, i.e. subsidies and subventions specified by law” (Greco 2008, p. 7). Polish law regulates the direct public funding of political parties to be covered by the state budget. More specifically, parties and election committees of voters receive direct subsidies. As specified by the Statute on Elections to the Sejm and the Senate of 2001 (SESS), these subsidies are allotted after the parliamentary elections. A specific amount is paid for each seat gained in the Sejm or Senate and becomes part of the parties’ annual appropriation (section 128 SESS). In particular, “parties gaining over three percent of the national vote receive a ...subsidy per vote: €2.7(\$3.6) for each vote from three to five percent, €2.1 (\$2.8) for five to ten percent, €1.9 (\$ 2.5) from ten to 20 percent, €1 (\$1.33) from 20 to 30 percent, and €0.4 (\$0.53) for votes above 30 percent” (Open Society Institute 2002, p. 431).

Similar to German parties, state funding of Polish parties is therefore also based on a party’s performance in the most recent elections. This, of course, privileges existing parties over new parties and also privileges big parties over small parties. Such allocation of state funding in fact protects bigger parties from electoral competition brought on by small and new parties. Even more so than German parties, Polish parties are highly dependent on the state financially (see table 3.4). Not unlike German parties, Polish parties also have less obvious indirect financial ties to the state through their

deputies and members of parliament on all government levels. For example, in addition to their salaries/diets, Polish office holders also receive considerable allowances to pay for their operating costs such as secretarial staff and office space (Szczerbiak 1999, 2001a, Jasiewicz 2007, 2010). For example, a current Sejm deputy receives each month: PLN 2,473.08 (\$ 869.77) as allowance for personal expenses and PLN 11,150.00 (\$3921.40) as allowance for maintaining an office in addition to a monthly salary of PLN 9, 892.30 (\$ 3479.07) (Jasiewicz 2010). Therefore, Polish parties “have been able to survive to the present as clients of the state, chiefly through indirect subventions and thanks to the budgets provided by the state to parties’ parliamentary caucuses. The bureaucratic staff employed to work for the party’s parliamentary caucus also caters to the needs of party national leadership, since usually top party leaders have been elected to the Sejm or the Senate. Furthermore, since each deputy and senator receives, in addition to a salary, an allowance to maintain an office in his constituency, this relationship carries over to the local level” (Jasiewicz 2007, p. 105). According to Szczerbiak, local party headquarters usually list the same address and telephone numbers as the party parliamentary office (1999). Therefore, we can assume that “in all likelihood the rent and utility bills are covered from the parliamentarians’ allowances” (Jasiewicz 2007, p. 105). In addition, most Polish parties require their elected officials, from the local city council member to the national deputy to the Member of the European Parliament, to pay certain ‘taxes’ per month to the party (Jasiewicz 2010). For instance, a PO (Platforma Obywatelska – Civic Platform) member of the European parliament must pay the PO PLN 200 (\$69.03) per month, a national deputy must pay PLN 150 (\$51.77) per month and presidents of regional city councils must pay PLN 100 (\$34.51) per month to the PO

party (Kacprzak 2010). SLD and PiS require their elected officials to pay even more, i.e. national deputies must pay PLN 700 (\$241.59) to their party per month and members to the European parliament must pay PLN 1600 (\$552.20) to their party per month (ibid). Given that national deputies earn PLN 9900 (\$3416.76) per month this is a significant portion (Jasiewicz 2010). These taxes are mandatory and are directly taken from the officials' salaries in a fashion that seems a lot like racketeering. According to an SLD parliamentarian, it is understood that if an office holder does not pay these monthly party taxes he/she will not be put on the party's list come the next election cycle (as cited by Kacprzak 2010). A look at the sum of the direct party subventions, deputy allowances and the unofficial 'party taxes' reveals that Polish governing parties are financially dependent on the state. Consequently, some scholars estimate that eligible parties received from 54 – 90% of their revenues through state funding (Greco 2008, p.8). Polish party representatives also confirmed that in 2007, 80-90% of their parties' income stemmed from public funds (ibid).

Many Polish parties have a close relationship with the state as a result of the Polish parties' efforts to influence legislation in their favor. Thus Polish party legislation has helped create a close party-state relationship. For example, immediately after the end of communism, politicians of the communist successor party SDL (Alliance of the Democratic Left) worked tirelessly towards holding on to the party's inherited material assets (Lewis 1998). Thanks to their efforts, later legal measures to curb the SDL's ability to profit from the past were initiated too late and had practically no effect. As a result, the SDL "began life with a valuable nationwide infrastructure of buildings, office equipment, phone lines, and cars – not to mention bank accounts and income-producing

enterprises” (Castle and Taras 2002, p. 126). Politicians of the major parties were also crucial in bringing about the legal changes that established state funding of the parties and their campaigns. As pointed out earlier, these laws all privilege big parties over small and new parties. For example, politicians of the PSL (Polish People’s Party) and the UP (Labor Union Party), strongly supported the introduction and expansion of state funding for the parties (Szczerbiak 2001, p. 225). In fact, in 1993, all parties represented in parliament believed that “the state should play a continuing or greater role in funding them” (ibid). At the same time, the larger parties also strongly lobbied for and succeeded in tying future state party subsidies to parliamentary seats gained. This of course, guaranteed them better access to state monies than it did smaller and new parties. Along the same lines, PSL vice-president Dobrosz argued in 1997 that political “parties are currently one of the basic elements of public life, an essential cell in the process of representing state interests as well as performing in the government of the state. Political parties have their specific functions and tasks, which they are not in a position to realize effectively without subventions” (as quoted by Szczerbiak 2001, p. 226). Ironically, the parties argued that increased state funding would free them of the burden of fundraising and thereby ensure their service and connection to civil society (Ibid). As it turns out, these state-party provisions have moved the parties closer to the state rather than closer to the electorate, financially speaking.

3.2.3 Party campaign finance

Table 3.6: Percentage of total campaign funds for Democratic and Republican Presidential Candidates

year	party	federal funds	individual contributions	Other
2004				
	Republicans	20.30%	74.01%	5.66%
	Democrats	22.70%	69.10%	8.18%
2008				
	Republicans	22.85%	54.14%	23.01%
	Democrats	0%	88.10%	11.87%

Other funds: any other funds excluding federal funds and individual contributions.

Source: calculated by author based on data from www.opensecrets.org

American, German and Polish campaign finance laws all privilege bigger and established parties. Although American parties do not receive direct state subsidies, their candidates can receive considerable state funding for presidential election campaigns. These financial campaign provisions tie major parties closer to the state and privilege Democrats and Republicans. American campaign finance laws fund and guarantee the two-party system while disadvantaging new and minor parties and thus lend support to the cartel thesis. Consequently, campaign finance laws create a political cartel favoring the major parties. American parties have not been regulated much at a national level, except regarding party finance because ballot access laws and thus the definition of a political party, are found only at the subnational level in each of the 50 US states.

U.S. campaign finance laws typically favor ‘major parties’, i.e. Democrats and Republicans, over third parties. Since 1976, American parties have received state funding for their presidential election campaigns (Maisel and Brewer 2010). More specifically, “during the prenomination phase of the presidential election, after reaching a qualifying plateau, candidates for the two parties’ nominations can receive matching

funds for all contributions of \$250 or less received from individuals” (ibid, p. 189). Both Democratic and Republican parties receive state funds for their nominating conventions (ibid). Then, “each party’s nominee is granted public funds for running a general election campaign; other candidates for the presidency qualify for public funding according to the success they achieve” but this funding is only applied retroactively after the election has taken place and the new or minor party has achieved a national vote threshold of 5% (ibid). This regulation puts smaller and new parties at a financial disadvantage and they cannot benefit as much as the two established parties do. For example, “H. Ross Perot received \$29 million in 1996, which is just under half of what the major party nominees received; the amount was determined because he had received just under half of the average major party vote in 1992” (ibid, p. 462). What is more, we need to acknowledge that all election funds are distributed only after the election. This of course further burdens smaller and new parties with the onus of having to lay out money to run their campaigns. Therefore, American federal laws regarding campaign finance in effect privilege the two big parties and disadvantage minor and new parties. U.S. federal campaign finance laws then establish a political cartel to the benefit of the Republican and Democratic parties.

Besides federal campaign financing, some American parties also receive public campaign financing at the state level. Most of these funds are initially disbursed to the state office candidates and reach the parties indirectly through their candidates (www.commoncause.org). Some states also specify that the funds go directly to the parties (ibid). Fifteen US states provide direct campaign funding to the parties and their candidates (ibid). Similar to federal campaign funding regulations, local state funding

laws tend to disadvantage smaller and new parties in favor of the Democrats and the Republicans. For instance, several of the state laws require that in order to receive any public state funds, a party's candidate must have raised a threshold amount of money first (ibid). Only after having surpassed the threshold amount will these candidates and their parties receive matching funds (ibid). For example, to receive campaign funding in the state of Maine, a "gubernatorial candidate [must have] collected at least \$40,000 in seed money contributions from registered voters in the State" (The Maine Clean Election Act 1995). Similarly, in New Mexico, to receive state funds, candidates must have obtained at least 30 per cent of votes cast the preceding four general elections for public regulation commissioner" (New Mexico 2003 Voter Action Act). Consequently, state laws may even further strengthen the privileged relationship between the two established parties and the state.

Table 3.7: Percentage of total campaign funds of German political parties

year	Party	state funds	individual contributions	Other
2005	CDU	39.53%	12.92%	47.55%
	SPD	38.87%	5.44%	55.69%
	Gruene	56.31%	13.09%	30.60%
	CSU	33.26%	12.28%	54.46%
	FDP	35.50%	24.10%	40.40%
	Die Linke/PDS	45.05%	9.76%	45.19%
2002	CDU	30.79%	14.72%	54.49%
	SPD	30.78%	8.75%	60.47%
	Gruene	33.06%	16.05%	50.89%
	CSU	25.86%	25.15%	48.99%
	FDP	26.31%	33.62%	40.07%
	PDS	32.72%	16.88%	50.40%

State funds: includes direct state subsidies and indirect subsidies such as regular contributions by elected party officials to the party and state funds for office allowances, etc.

Other: includes any party funds excluding state funds and individual contributions such as membership fees, income from property, income from interest, income earned by the party and any other donations.

Source: calculated by author based on the political parties' yearly financial reports (<https://www.bundestag.de/bundestag/parteienfinanzierung/fundstellen1968.pdf>)

German political parties finance their campaigns out of their yearly income. Accordingly, German party law does not distinguish between the campaigns and the regular year and parties just receive their yearly direct and indirect state subventions. The parties then finance their campaigns out of all their regular yearly budgets and do not receive additional special state subventions in election years. Therefore, the sources of campaign monies are subject to the same breakdown as are regular party finances. As table 3.7 illustrates, a significant source of financing for the parties' election campaigns is the state. All six parties receive significantly more money from the state than they receive from individual contributions. However, we should not forget that the 'other' category of campaign funds to a large part includes resources directly derived from membership fees. As table 3.3 above illustrates membership fees are a sizeable part of the parties' total financial resources and are usually much more substantial than are, for example, individual contributions. So although state financial resources make up the larger part of the parties' financial resources, the parties still need their members' finances.

Regarding their finances, German parties are subject to the same caveat as American parties although German party funding by the state is much more generous than American state party funding. Both American and German parties' state funding is based upon their electoral performance in the last preceding election. This puts new and minor parties at a clear disadvantage compared to the established bigger parties and thereby illustrates the cartel-like relationship between big German parties and the state.

Accordingly, German party law states that the "basis for fixing the volume of state funds is the number of valid votes obtained by the eligible parties....in the latest European, Bundestag or Landtag elections" (Article 19 a (2)). Consequently, state

funding privileges the big parties, keeps them financially afloat and also protects them from electoral competition. Although the smaller parties also receive state funds, their state funds are much smaller than that of the big parties. Even more disadvantaged are new parties that are ineligible for state funds and thus are no match in resources for the big parties. For the big parties, these state funds are significant and they have been shown to make up about half of their total financial assets (e.g. Schmidt 2003; Conrardt 2001). The maximum amount of total state funds to parties is set at €133 million (\$178 million) (Section IV, Article 18 (2)). Each year parties are entitled to receive “0.70 euro (\$ 0.94) for each valid vote cast for its list...[and] 0.38 euro (\$0.51) for each euro which it has obtained as bestowals (membership fees, deputy fee or rightfully obtained donation)”(Article 18 (3)). This shows that major German parties hold a privileged position in the political system and have a cartel-like relationship to the state (ibid).

Table 3. 8: Percentage of total campaign funds of Polish parties

Year	party	state funds	individual contributions	Other
2005	PiS	0%	29.80%	70.20%
	PO	0%	51.22%	48.78%
	PSL	0%	41.74%	58.26%
	SLD	53.73%	35.37%	10.90%
2007	PiS	6.91%	21.75%	71.34%
	PO	10.73%	39.15%	50.12%
	PSL	5.19%	12.19%	82.62%
	SLD	11.64%	34.94%	53.42%

Other: any other funds excluding state funds and individual contributions, such as earnings from property, real estate, interest, monies from the parties’ regular bank account.

Source: calculated by the author based on the parties’ yearly financial reports (Polish National Electoral Commission (Monitor Polski - Official Gazette of the Republic Poland) (2010).

Polish political parties also receive state financing for their election campaigns in addition to regular subventions. State funding for campaigns is separate from the regular

state subsidies that parties receive. For their campaigns and their campaign finances, Polish parties are required to operate so-called electoral funds (*fundusz wyborczy*). In their yearly finance reports Polish parties must state their normal finances and the finances related to their electoral funds. At first sight it seems that state funds do not play a large role in the financing of their national campaigns. However, there is a special reason why in 2005 the PiS, PO and PSL did not receive any direct state funds for their campaigns. All three parties were adamantly campaigning against state funding of political parties and had proposed an electoral law change (Burdziej 2010). However, in the next national election in 2007, these three parties apparently changed their minds and also accepted state funds (table 3.8).

As table 3.8 above illustrates state funds make up the smallest part of Polish parties' financial funds in 2005 and 2007. Individual contributions make up a majority of the campaigns finances. However, the biggest part of campaign finances seems to be 'other income'. This includes interest payments, non-specified income and most importantly monies transferred to the electoral funds from the parties' regular bank accounts. The parties' regular finances are not completely separate from their campaign finances as the parties transfer substantial amounts of money from their regular accounts to their electoral funds. The transfer of the money from regular accounts makes it difficult to distinguish campaign funds from regular party funds. It also makes it more difficult to assess to what degree the campaigns are financed by the state and/or other sources. As pointed out above, Polish political parties are financially dependent on the state due to direct and indirect subsidies they receive. Therefore, when the parties transfer money from their regular accounts to their electoral funds, this in effect means

that the electoral funds rely on state funds on two levels. First, the parties receive official direct subventions for their campaigns. Secondly, the transfer of regular party money to the electoral funds means that the parties' normal subventions do not just finance them during the normal year but also fund their electoral funds and therefore their campaigns indirectly. Consequently, it is accurate to say that state monies do play a much larger role in Polish parties' campaign chests than a first look suggests.

Not unlike American and German parties, Polish campaign finance reforms also disadvantage small parties in contrast to big and established parties. Accordingly, "individuals or organizations not registered as candidates or election committees are not allowed to incur electoral expenses over specific limits. Third parties are prohibited from spending more than PLN 5.000 (\$1,707.15) during presidential elections and PLN 1.000 (\$341.43) during parliamentary elections" (Walecki 2003, p. 73).

Generally, parties emerged from the old communist regime "unequally endowed" (ibid, p. 77). In Poland, as in other post-communist countries, the successor parties could take advantage of the communist parties' financial assets that the law had not touched (Holmes and Roszkowski 1997). Considerable "care was taken during the reconstruction of the communist part[y] in ...Poland to place the new, post-communist part[y] in as advantageous a financial position as possible" (Lewis 1998, p. 150). As Walecki notes, this "financial imbalance between parties has influenced the process of political competition and party consolidation" (2003, p. 77). Financially speaking, the bigger parties, such as the communist successor parties, were thus privileged over new and smaller parties.

3.3 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to evaluate the relationship between American, German and Polish political parties and the state. This examination comprised another test of Katz and Mair's cartel theory (1995, 2009). Describing a political party model, the cartel party, Katz and Mair argue that such parties have come to form very close bonds with the state. In fact, due to the parties' financial dependence on the state, Katz and Mair argue that political parties have become part of the state rather than an intermediary between the electorate and the state. As part of the state, parties' ties to the electorate are weakened since the parties do not see any need for closer linkage with the electorate. This chapter tested whether this scenario does indeed apply to political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland. If American, German and Polish political parties fit the mold of Katz and Mair's cartel theory they should be significantly dependent on the state for financial support. As this chapter has shown, neither American, German or Polish parties are exclusively funded by state monies. Receiving state funds only in context of election campaigns, American parties least depend on the state for financial support. Although the frequent occurrence of elections in the American political system might suggest otherwise, state funds flowing to American parties do not compare to the scale of state funding German and Polish parties receive. However, Katz and Mair's predictions apply to German and Polish political parties and their financing. As demonstrated, German parties receive regular yearly subventions relative to their previous electoral performance. In addition to these direct subventions, German and Polish parties also receive significant indirect subventions. These indirect subventions further add to the financial reliance on the state by the parties and include state monies

allotted to the parties' elected officials. These politicians receive their salaries and also allowances to pay for their offices, staff and administrative needs. As was pointed out, a portion of these monies then flow back to the parties in the form of mandatory party taxes or contributions the politicians are forced to pay to their own parties. Also, the allowances, offices and administrative staff for the politicians benefit the party organizations and thus represent an indirect state funding of the parties. We noted that Polish and German parties also receive considerable funds from other sources such as membership fees (Germany) and individual donations (Poland). However, adding up direct and indirect sources of state funding shows that these monies make up the biggest part of German and Polish parties' treasure chests. State funding plays an important role, for German parties slightly less for Polish parties and the least important for American parties. As this chapter illustrated, public funds make up the largest part of German parties' campaign finances. While American parties certainly benefit from state campaign and convention funding, the actual monies received from the state pale in comparison to the monies raised privately. Financially speaking, we therefore cannot say that American parties fit the cartel model well. One could even argue that by relying predominately on private contributions strengthens American parties' linkage with at least some of the electorate. In order to guarantee their financial and political survival, American parties have a strong incentive to maintain this linkage. Therefore, financially speaking the cartel model applies less to American parties and more fittingly to German and Polish political parties.

Besides evaluating the financial ties between parties and the state, this chapter also argued that examining party laws and regulations would also reveal a cartel based on

the privileged political status enjoyed by established parties. Evaluating laws concerning political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland revealed that parties do in fact constitute a political cartel with the state. This was particularly apparent for German and Polish parties where each country's constitution specifically mentions political parties and gives them special status in the political system. In addition, other party laws and regulations ranging from the founding to the financing of parties generally privileged bigger and established political parties over new and smaller political parties. Thereby, laws strengthened the bigger parties and at the same time protected them from the competition of smaller newer parties. In the absence of specific federal party laws it might seem that American parties are not as cartelized as German and Polish parties. A closer look at party laws at the state level, however demonstrated that the two big parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, enjoy a privileged legal status and benefits that in fact constitute a cartel with the state. In the next chapter, I examine the relationship between political parties and the electorate. More specifically, this chapter explores the linkage between political parties and their voters.

CHAPTER 4

PARTIES AND THE ELECTORATE

A large part of the classic political party literature has described parties in terms of their relationship with civil society (Ostrogorski 1902, Duverger 1954, Neumann 1954, Panebianco 1988). This includes the parties' involvement with regular voters and with party members or party activists. There is immense opportunity at the local level for citizen participation. Already in 1942 E. E. Schattschneider observed that once "party organizations become active in the electorate, a vast field of extension and intensification of efforts is opened up, the extension of the franchise to new social classes, for example" (p. 47). Similarly, others have observed that "parties help to integrate citizens into the political system and mobilize both public support and civic participation in the political process, from the relatively straightforward act of voting to more active forms of engagement" (Szczerbiak 2001, p. 1).

The character of the party-electorate link is useful in describing different party types. For instance, the ideal mass party incorporates voters, members and activists into their organizing, decision-making and work. On the other extreme, a party of the elite type does not rely on the citizens' input in these aspects very much. Like elite type parties, cartel parties have little interaction with the electorate. In this context, the concept of linkage makes sense. This term refers to the parties' function as an intermediary between the electorate and the state. Political parties "are thought to provide the mechanism that links the formal structures of political power to the various components of civil society, by placing their representatives in positions where they can exercise that power on their behalf. Parties are thus a conduit of communication, informing citizens

and allowing their opinions to be expressed through institutional channels” (Szczerbiak 2001, p. 2). As Lawson puts it, a political party is the “one agency that can claim to have as its very *raison d’être* the creation of an entire linkage chain, a chain of connections that runs from the voters through the candidates and the electoral process to the officials of government” (Lawson 1988, p. 16). This chapter considers the linkage aspect of party life by testing the cartel model. According to Katz and Mair (1995, 2009), cartel parties have lost this linkage to civil society and are mostly oriented towards the state. Relying on state funds, cartel parties do not need to mobilize the electorate to have a functioning organization. Instead, cartel parties treat the electorate more like consumers rather than active participants. Katz and Mair argue that their cartel model should widely apply to contemporary political parties. If American, German and Polish parties were cartel parties, we should find the following regarding their party organization: No reliance on mass membership and voters for survival and very few local party clubs and associations; most of a cartel party’s operations should be organized by the national party headquarters; cartel parties should also make few efforts to communicate with and involve the electorate and have low or declining member and activist numbers.

The linkage between parties and the electorate in the three cases do not fully fit the cartel party descriptions as predicted by Katz and Mair (1995). American parties certainly lack a more continuous party-activist relationship outside of elections and could offer their activists more participatory opportunities. Nevertheless, American parties are fairly well organized and also rely considerably on the active involvement of American citizens in the context of elections. German parties have indeed experienced declining membership numbers. However, German parties also continue to involve their members

during and in between campaigns. Of the three, Polish parties have the least organized operations and do not interact too much with the electorate. Furthermore, Polish parties do not actively seek to enlarge their small membership bases. The remainder of this chapter evaluates the linkage between political parties and the electorate in the United States, Germany and Poland. This linkage is assessed based on the following dimensions: local party organization, dominant national party headquarters, party-citizen communication, low or declining member or activist numbers, citizen participation in election campaigns as well as citizen participation outside of campaigns.

Table 4.1: Chapter four overview

	Cartel predictions	USA	Germany	Poland
Local party organization	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dominant national party headquarters	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Party-citizen communication	No	Little	Some	Very little
Low/declining member/activist numbers	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Citizen participation in election campaigns	No	Yes	Yes	No
Citizen participation outside of campaigns	No	Little	Some	Very little

4.1. Local party organization

Scholars have pointed out that American parties organize as ‘empty vessels’ with the sole purpose of getting candidates elected (Katz & Kolodny 1994). Parties have become tools that help get politicians elected efficiently. Therefore we should regard contemporary American parties as service providers to the candidates in their efforts to obtain office (Aldrich 1995). This is illustrated in terms of party organization from the local to the national level up and it explains why there is little permanent party organization at the smallest precinct level. Both the Democratic and the Republican parties are organized down to the local level, the precinct level. According to Maisel and

Brewer, there are about 190,000 precincts in the United States (2008). However, neither Democrats and nor Republicans, however, have committees in all of these precincts. Thus, we cannot speak of a comprehensive party structure at the most local level which in fact is the closest connection between the parties and the electorate.

However, the parties are much more organized locally at the county level which is the next highest level above the precinct in most places. Both the Democrats and the Republicans are organized in most of the 3000 counties throughout the United States (Maisel & Brewer 2008). County committees “have formal rules and officers and are often much more politically active than precinct committees. County committees (and their chairs) are usually elected by meetings of the party faithful...Elected county committee members are ...mostly volunteers” (Ibid, p. 58). What is more, the most active county party organizations even “work year-round, building local party organizations, recruiting desirable candidates...and raising money” (Ibid).

State party chairs have also become more influential in leading their state committees and acting “as the linchpin between the grassroots party and the national party” (Maisel & Brewer 2008, p. 60). State party chairs are the “engine of success or failure of the state party organization” (Ibid). They coordinate “state, county, and local organizations, directing an increasingly complex and electorally involved state headquarters” (Ibid). Illustrating their increased strength, over the last decades “virtually all state committees are [now] housed in permanent headquarters” (Ibid). This is a significant increase from 1994 when only about 40% of the parties had year-round offices (Shea & Green 1994).

The permanent state party headquarters are of tremendous value to all organizational levels below the state level. Candidates of both parties at all levels of politics receive some kind of assistance from the state party headquarters. They provide the candidates with funds, recruit candidates, help mobilize voters on election day, and provide campaign materials (Maisel & Brewer 2008). Furthermore, the majority of state parties have permanent websites and permanent staff year round both of which help get local candidates elected. The state parties' increased strength is also apparent financially. For example, while state parties raised nearly \$300,000 annually between 1961 and 1979, they raised almost \$300 million in 2004 (Ibid).

Contrary to the definition of American parties as "empty vessels", the major German parties, the CDU and the SPD, are described as mass membership parties. These parties, in particular the SPD, continue to refer to themselves as "Volksparteien" (people's parties or parties of the people). Scholars have frequently declared that the German mass party model is no longer accurate in describing the organization of the major parties (Kitschelt 1988, Katz & Mair 1995, Dalton and Wattenberg 2002, Luther and Müller-Rommel 2002, Walter 2009, von Arnim 2009). However, looking at factors such as local organization, activities and participation and even paid membership numbers German parties remain membership-oriented organizations. German party members remain extremely important to the parties at the electoral level.

German parties are organized down to the very local level, the neighborhood or village level. Both the SPD and CDU enroll and organize members this way. These local level organizations are called Ortsverbände for the CDU and Ortsvereine for the SPD. The SPD currently maintains about 12,500 Ortsvereine all of which hold membership

meetings regularly and dispatch delegates to county level meetings and elections (Spiegel online). The CDU operates approximately 11, 700 Ortsverbände (CDU Rheinland-Pfalz 2010). For politicians of both parties, the local party organizations continue to be of utmost importance as getting elected and staying in office cannot be accomplished without the local party organizations (Walter 2006). In particular, these politicians need to devote considerable time and resources to the local party organizations, hold meetings with local activists and members and attend most of events organized by the local party organizations because, as Walter explains, politicians cannot succeed without the resources and networks established and maintained by the local party organizations (ibid).

The next highest organizational level is the county level, or the county parties “whose boundaries sometimes coincide with those of parliamentary districts” (Scarrow 1996, p. 55). Above the county level comes the state level. There are 16 state parties of both the CDU and the SPD corresponding to the 16 states (Länder). For both parties, “state- or regional-level sub units play important roles, including compiling lists of candidates for federal elections. In addition, party organizations and government offices at the state level provide regional party elites with important power-bases” (Ibid).

Unlike American and German parties, Polish parties are not organized too well at the local level. At most, their organization at the local level can be called “skeletal” and does “not actually function in the bureaucratic sense” (Szczurbiak 2001, p. 84). Studying county branches of Polish parties, Nalewajko concluded that Polish parties were of “ephemeral nature...becoming active only during electoral campaigns and disappearing for the remaining time” (2009, p. 124). In the words of one Polish local party

functionary, parties “all are very loud but only just before elections. After it’s all done you don’t hear them anymore” (ibid). Although the parties have numerous offices even at the local level, they lack the resources to be much of a presence. Several studies found that many local party clubs, for example, were conducted out of a single room without any access to modern communication technology, not even a telephone (Szczerbiak 2001, Siellawa-Kolbowska 1996). According to Siellawa-Kolbowska, Polish parties are at best described as still “in the preorganizational stage” (1996). After interviewing local party activists, Pankowski found that local party organizations were significantly hindered in carrying out day-to-day operations by their lack of sufficient financial resources (1996). Similarly, Szczerbiak found that “local party organizations received little direct administrative help and no financial or material assistance from their national central offices” and were expected to finance themselves (2001, p. 86).

More recent studies show that not much has changed regarding the local organizations of Polish political parties. For example, Nalewajko finds that the local parties still lack the necessary professional organization (2009). According to Nalewajko we still cannot call the local parties fully organized nor well connected to the electorate at the local level (ibid). Nalewajko believes that there are two reasons for this lack of local party organization. On the one hand she argues that there is a perception among Poles that any party organizations are “artificial, created and enforced for the objectives of some outside forces” (p. 125). Perceived as foreign, Polish parties thus have a very hard time building genuine local organizational roots. Secondly, Nalewajko argues that local party organizations fail to function properly because they are too elite-centered (2009). Instead of integrating local communities and consolidating them, the local party

organizations are too occupied with internal elite power struggles or of struggles between the membership and the elite leadership (ibid). In the words of one local party activist, “political parties are at war. In about 80% of the cases fighting against their own elites” (ibid, p. 125). The elite character of local Polish party organizations is mostly a result of the smallness of the parties. Jasiewicz appropriately calls Polish parties “couch parties” (2009). This means that the parties are so small that all its members fit on a couch (ibid). The term not only refers to the parties’ small membership numbers but also to their very weak organizational structures. At the local level, many Polish parties “seldom employ (even if only on a part-time basis), a secretary or accountant” (ibid, p. 102). According to Millard the parties are beginning to develop their local organizations more (2009). Many Polish parties learned from their negative electoral experiences which made them realize the benefits of developing local structures (2009). The parties realized that they “needed candidates and office-holders at national, provincial and local level. They needed volunteers on the ground to put up election posters and otherwise display their presence” (ibid, p. 207). Similarly, Majcherkiewicz found that local Polish parties and local party government have been getting stronger by gradually improving their linkage to civil society (2005). We will have to see whether Polish parties develop stronger local party organizations on a long-term basis.

Generally, most Polish parties have at least two levels of local organization (Szczurbiak 2001). The State is “divided at the provincial level into 49 administrative units” (ibid, p. 172). As was the case for American and German parties, the organization of Polish parties mirrors the structures of the Polish state. The UW (Freedom Union), for example, refers to this level as ‘regions’ whereas the UP (Labor Union) and ROP

(Movement for the reconstruction of Poland) refer to it as ‘districts’ (ibid). As already mentioned, Polish parties overall lack appropriate resources to be fully effective to have a significant local presence. Some parties maintain a small local presence. For example, in the 1990s, the PSL (Polish People’s Party) had around 11000 units, the SdRP (Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland) 2500, the ROP had up to 950, the UW had 400 and the UP around 200 units (Szczurbiak 2001). The data also confirm the view that communist successor parties are privileged, organizationally speaking. The PSL as a successor of the Polish communist party, “was the only party with a well-developed organizational network in rural areas, with local implantation in 79 % of the communes across the four provinces” (ibid, p. 173). However, the PSL is no longer doing so well both electorally and organizationally speaking. According to Nalewajko, the PSL and the SLD should be considered decomposing parties (2009). These two parties have experienced a decline in support and have also failed to maintain their organizational structures. Consequently, these two post-communist parties have lost their organizational edge compared to the newer parties, such as the PiS (Law and Justice) and the PO (Civic Platform) which could not benefit from any material remainders of the communist period. The PiS and the PO have less established local level organizations than the PSL (Jasiewicz 2010). Matching their respective electoral strongholds, the PiS is far better locally organized in more rural areas while the PO has a stronger organizational presence in larger cities (ibid). However, as Millard concludes, Polish parties have consistently failed to establish a durable relationship with the electorate by failing to maintain their members, win more members and to organize effectively (2009). Surveying local party activists, Nalewajko similarly found that Polish parties at the local level “do not work at

all (or work poorly) for the strengthening and popularization of their ...organizations in the area...top party leadership is not really interested in gaining lasting influence locally and they fail to utilized local resources on a systematic basis” (2009, p. 124).

In addition to their lack of a significant organizational presence at the local level, Polish parties do not involve their local members much on a regular basis. It appears that a majority of Polish local party organizations are more “informal and discursive bodies, whose main function [is] to fulfill certain basic organizational tasks such as registering members” but not much more than that (ibid, p. 184). Szczerbiak even described some of the local organizations no more than “loosely organized bodies that did not require a quorum for decision making, and their activities were open to all party supporters not just members...[with a] sporadic pattern of activity” (ibid). Similar to American parties, Polish parties appear much more active during election campaigns. As PSL program director Jan Wypych points out: “A sizeable number of our members become personally involved in the course of local and national elections...these people are the arms and legs of our campaign and I think (the local structures) operate to such a rhythm of life” (as quoted by Szczerbiak 2001, p. 185). Tomasz Nałęcz similarly likens Polish local party organizations to American parties as “empty bottles that are filled up during the period of election campaigns” (ibid).

Therefore, not unlike American local party activists, Polish party members are used primarily for electoral work. For example, Polish party members collect signatures supporting particular candidates, nominate other members for local commission positions and distribute campaign literature (ibid). Since there are a considerable number of elections in Poland on all government levels there is “hardly a year without elections”

(ibid). As a result, “elections are almost the permanent activity of...local [party organizations]... and members (ibid). Even more telling, a local PSL official argued that the local party organizations “activate themselves at election time”. He also stated that “the level of our members’ activism is measured through the prism of elections and how, in a given area, they succeed in encouraging voters to support the PSL”. (ibid).

However, we must keep in mind that Polish election campaigns do not measure up to the American campaigns in terms of visibility. As most Polish party experts would argue, Polish campaigns do not really take place door-to-door as American parties do (Millard 2009, 2010; Tworzecki 2010; Jasiewicz 2009, 2010). Instead, Polish parties wage their campaigns largely through the mass media, in particular the television (ibid). Describing the 2007 parliamentary campaign, Millard, for example, argues that “this was predominantly a television campaign, in which PiS maintained a decided advantage in the early stages” (2009, p. 151). Therefore, the electoral use of party members and volunteers in carrying out campaign-related work for the parties happens rarely, especially when compared to American and German parties. A further issue of such typical Polish media-oriented campaign is the question of bias. Accordingly, several studies have revealed that the incumbent PiS effectively used the public television as its mouthpiece in the 2007 campaign (Millard 2009, Musiałowska 2007, Tworzecki & Semetko 2009). More specifically, the broadcast of public television channels during the 2007 campaign clearly favored the PiS party while at the same time reporting very critical regarding the competing parties, especially the major rival PO (ibid). Another aspect typical in Polish campaigns is that most of the volunteers that work for the parties during election campaigns are actually candidates themselves, particularly local candidates (Millard

2010; Tworzecki 2010). In fact, campaigning is often done solely by the candidates, especially at the more local level, and at the most by a handful of loyal supporters (ibid). Tworzecki also calls party volunteers the “gravy-trainers” who hope that as a result of their work for campaigns, they will obtain either a job with the party and/or will become candidates in the long-run (2010). It therefore appears that Polish parties lack a core of activists who are ambitious for their parties, unlike American and German parties. In the case of Polish party activists it is difficult to assess whether they are truly volunteers in the American or German sense. If a majority of the campaign activists work for a campaign only to advance their own career then we cannot call them actual volunteers.

4.2 Dominant national party headquarters

If Katz & Mair’s cartel theory applies to American parties we should find that the national party headquarters are dominant and have much influence on the lower levels of party organization, i.e. the state and local levels. However, this is not the case with American parties which are quite autonomous at these levels. As pointed out above, the precinct party organization does receive significant support and resources from the state level party organizations, but virtually nothing from the national party organization. For example in 2003, Democratic and Republican local party organizations received only 12.8% of their resources from the national party and 52.6% of their resources from the state party (Shea & Green (2003).

In Germany, the national party and its headquarters have played an important role in local politics. Campaigns have been centralized since the 1960s with the set up of permanent party headquarters and permanent staff that have organized election campaigns ever since (Scarrow 1996). Since 1987 “teleprinters, fax machines, and

computer networks [have] linked many SPD and CDU local offices with federal headquarters, and both central parties continued to invest in improving local parties' communications equipment" (Scarrow 1996, p. 93). The central parties also control almost all local events and their organization as well as the production and provision of almost all local campaign materials (ibid). Although the parties appear quite autonomous in their organizing of local state campaigns they continue to rely heavily on the national party headquarters for resources during campaigns (Rohwer & Schuster in Melchert et al. 2006). The dominant role of German parties' central organizations has also helped the parties after Reunification. As Davidson-Smich illustrates, the established national parties of western Germany absorbed political movements and new parties from Eastern Germany after reunification (2006). The western parties relied on their existing resources, including their funds, their organizational structures and their expertise to set up party organizations in eastern Germany in the same mold (ibid). The new party structures in eastern Germany became permanent shortly after in the early 1990s (ibid). Eastern German politicians soon became socialized by their new party organizations and have become virtually indistinguishable from their western colleagues in terms of party loyalty, discipline and involvement in party life (ibid). Thanks to the western party structures, the eastern politicians have learned the benefits of running under the 'brand name' of an established political party and have become party politicians according to Davidson-Schmich (2006a). This means that they have become more involved in their party organizations, have voted with the party line and as a result have improved their chances of nomination and re-election due to these activities as well as their access to the well-funded party organizations and resources (ibid).

Both CDU and SPD usually organize in a top-down hierarchical fashion as was apparent in recent federal campaigns such as those of 1998 and 2002 (Wagner 2005). For example, all grassroots and volunteer activities that took place at the local level in the 2005 federal election campaign were orchestrated from the CDU national headquarters in Berlin (Magerl 2006). As Magerl shows, the CDU national headquarters, in particular the department for strategic planning, made all key decisions regarding the mobilization and utilization of volunteers (ibid). Although the strategic planning department allowed for some flexibility in the course of these grassroots activities to accommodate local differences, it nevertheless always had the last word (ibid). For example, the CDU national headquarters saw to it that all of the local grassroots organizations were adequately staffed with its own loyal personnel (ibid). In between campaigns, the local parties also depend on the national party headquarters in their decision making. The CDU state party of Berlin is in fact run much more from the national party than from its local representatives (Lau 2009). Internal party reports of both CDU and SPD demonstrate that both parties rely heavily on their national party headquarters for financial and organizational support (Scarow 1996). While stressing the importance of members and volunteers, both parties insisted in these reports that professionally staffed national headquarters were necessary to provide the technological skills for the parties to function effectively (ibid). For example, the national headquarters educates the local parties in terms of party strategy or the use of communications technology such as the party website among other things.

The level of autonomy among local level party organizations varies among the parties. For example, Szczerbiak found that the provincial councils of several Polish

parties, “were all formally responsible for determining and implementing their parties’ daily policies and activities in their given provinces” (2001, p. 55). These parties included the Polish People’s Party (PSL), Freedom Union (UW), Labor Union (UP), and the Movement for Poland’s Reconstruction (ROP). Similarly, according to Maciej Poreba, local organizer for the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic party (SdRP) “the autonomy of the local units...is very considerable ... the national structures deal only with the strategic matters” and the local organizations run the daily operations of the parties as well as the local election campaigns (Ibid). Nalewajko found that the newer parties have more autonomy (PiS, PO), while the older post-communist parties (SLD, PSL) have less autonomy from the national party organization (2009). The more autonomous local party organizations manage their own events without much direction from the national office. For example, a PO activist states that the national PO office does not have a clear policy regarding the local branches and that “everyone simply does what they feel like” (ibid, p. 143). In the case of the PSL on the other hand, Nalewajko reports that the national headquarters maintain direct contact with the local organizations to all but dictate programs and strategies to be implemented dutifully (ibid).

Based on their formal party statutes, most local Polish parties are established as autonomous organizations with little interference from the national party headquarters in the daily business of running the local parties. For some local parties this attests to their autonomy from the national headquarters. As one SdRP official explains “as a provincial council...we deal with the issues according to our view of these matters. I don’t see some kind of centralism here” (Ibid, p. 56). An UW official felt that his local party organization had the trust of the national office since “there are many responsible people

here who know better in Płock what is best for the Płock area than the national leadership” (ibid). An UP official similarly states that “there were never any directives [from the national office] that you had to do it like this and not differently” (ibid).

Nevertheless, most parties’ statutes contain clauses that allow for the direct interference of the national headquarters into the actions of the local offices at any time. In particular, the national parties reserved the right to intervene in local matters “when it was felt that the party program or statute was being violated or when the party was suffering damage nationally” (ibid, p. 57). In particular, the statutes of the PSL, UW and the ROP empowered their national offices to intervene in all matters affecting the local parties (ibid). However, at least in the case of the PSL, studies find that the national party office regularly interferes in local matters (Nalewajko 2009).

The national party headquarters are most dominant in the course of election campaigns. A PO (Civic Platform) local politician explained that during campaigns, the national headquarters would provide his office with the most specific directions on the waging of the campaign and would also provide him with necessary resources to carry out the work (interview with the author 8/2009). Accordingly, the national headquarters also ultimately select local candidates or at the very least eliminated candidates not deemed a good fit. Szczerbiak’s findings confirm that the national headquarters have the last word regarding the selection of candidates and the organizing and running of the campaigns (2001). Jasiewicz’s concept of Polish parties as ‘couch parties’ also suggests that the national headquarters are where the power and decision-making is located (2009). Consisting of a very small group of people, the couch party’s type of campaigns would be run in a top-down fashion with a few elite leaders making all necessary

decisions without much outside input or input from the lower echelons of the party organization (2009).

4.3 Party-citizen communication

American political parties make efforts at communicating with the electorate, but usually only in the context of an election campaign. This includes direct contact with party workers or volunteers in the context of door-to-door canvassing which has been used increasingly in recent election campaigns by both Democrats and Republicans (Dowd 2005, Bergan et al. 2005, Masket 2009). This also includes phone calls both by actual people working for a campaign as well as the pre-recorded ‘robocalls’ (Dowd 2005). Studies also show that both parties have dramatically stepped up their efforts and directly contacted more and more American voters since 2000 (Bergan et al. 2005). New communications technology has increased the number of communication channels between the parties and the electorate. For example, all parties now use the internet as a communication tool. All the parties and their candidates, especially the 2008 Obama campaign, used their websites, emails and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to connect with voters (Germany 2009, Fenn 2009). The internet in particular has played a strong role in party/candidate – voter communication. Even prior to Obama’s 2008 campaign, Howard Dean’s 2004 campaign had been considered ground-breaking for communicating directly and intensely with its largely youthful volunteers and activists through the internet (Shapiro 2003). Although the contact between American political parties remains largely reduced to the context of election campaigns, there are some signs that this might be changing. For example, as National chairman of the Democratic Party, Howard Dean devoted much time and energy towards

building more permanent party organizations throughout the United States, even in Republican strongholds such as the state of Alaska. This was called the 50-state-strategy (www.democrats.org). Furthermore, President Obama and the Democratic party also continue to use the internet to communicate with voters even after winning the election, during the ‘off season’. Even when there is no campaign in progress, the parties are using their websites to raise money for future campaigns continuously. This fits very well with the idea that American parties are now in a state of the ‘permanent campaign’ (Norris 2000). In addition to fundraising, American parties use their websites in other more innovative ways. For example, the campaign website of Barrack Obama is also being used to drum up support for new policies of the Obama administration, such as healthcare reform (www.barrackobama.com). However, whether this is an actual move in the direction of a more permanent communication and involvement effort between American parties and voters remains to be seen. For now, the bulk of the party-electorate communication remains within the electoral context.

German political parties have frequently made efforts to expand their membership and give the existing members more input in the party organization. The CDU compiled a central file of members in the mid 1960s and by the 1970s the SPD also compiled a central database of membership records in its national headquarters (*ibid.*) Furthermore, the SPD held a special conference and appointed a “Commission on the Reform of Party Organization” with the goal of improving intra-party communication and party electioneering (Scarrow 1996). This included the distribution of a magazine to all members, hoping to reach members also outside of membership meetings (*ibid.*). The CDU also transformed its monthly member newspaper into an “attractive magazine

featuring policy discussions and suggestions for members' political activities" (ibid, p. 68). Faced with declining membership numbers, the SPD has sought to find ways to recruit new members and has held national recruitment drives since the 1980s (ibid). Another significant organizational reform effort was made in the early 1990s when the SPD party "executive asked local parties to discuss a major new report...[hoping to make party work] more interesting, that local parties should be more open to non-members, and that membership should be made more attractive by giving members new privileges" (ibid, pp. 63-64). Most importantly, this initiative resulted in the "party's use of a membership ballot to help a 1993 party conference select the party's new leader" (ibid). This de facto 'primary' was well received among party members and leaders. Similarly, during the Kohl era, the CDU underwent organizational reforms including the expansion of the party's federal organization which, "improved publicity work at all levels, expansion and activation of party membership, and a greater decision-making role for members" (ibid, p. 67).

German parties thus appear quite committed to reaching out to the electorate and utilizing their members for this purpose. Organizers for both parties have continuously argued for the value of using members as tools of 'oral propaganda'. For example, SPD organizers stressed that "people's political opinions are most deeply shaped by conversations with those around them, whether in the family, at work, in the neighborhood, or among friends. This is where the large capital of the social-democratic movement should be brought in: the members who are convinced of the correctness of the social-democratic program" (Becker and Hombach 1983, p. 3). Compared to American parties, we can thus say that German political parties appear more engaged

with the electorate as their efforts to improve communication and organizational structures illustrate.

In contrast to German political parties, Polish parties do not readily communicate with their electorate. In the rare event that they do, the parties usually prefer using the mass media rather than personal party-voter contacts (Millard 2010, Tworzecki 2010). According to Jasiewicz, “personal contact between the electorate and Polish parties is just not natural” (2010). Most Polish parties do not maintain regular channels of communication with their members but rely “almost exclusively on a combination of the independent print media...and the electronic broadcast media” (Szczcerbiak 2001, p. 214). At first sight, this seems to contradict the facts. For example, the ROP has organized activities such as mass petitions and distributing party programs on a weekly basis in order to connect with and involve the voters (Szczcerbiak 2001). However, the ROP was in large part motivated to take such an interactive route only because they lacked access to mass media (2001). If they can afford it, most Polish parties rely heavily on the mass media instead of direct contact with the electorate. For example, studies show that both the UW and UP use mass media to communicate their party’s message (ibid). As UW national spokesman Andrzej Potocki puts it: “eighty percent of [the party’s] success was based on the mass media and maybe twenty percent on local activities. What you find out about political activities you find out through the TV, radio, and newspapers; all our activities are geared toward the notion of existing in every communications medium” (ibid, p. 192). Similarly, UP’s Tomasz Nałęcz states that “in practical terms, we don’t have the means to set up our own channels of

communication...so, in practice, when it comes to communication with society we are confined to what appears and is said about UP in the mass media” (ibid, p. 193).

In 2001, Szczerciak found that after surveying several Polish parties that none of them had “undertaken a centrally organized membership-recruitment campaign or even any explicit national party-development strategy” including more extensive party-electorate communication (2001). Polish parties’ failure to reach out to the electorate more, for example, to recruit new members, might have roots in the communist one party rule. In particular, political parties desire to distance themselves from the communist regime. As SdRP head of organization, Maciej Poręba states, “there is no such thing as...building the party at any price. If someone doesn’t want to join then there is no attempt to try and convince him or her that if they don’t sign up there will be problems, as once was the case. This doesn’t exist anymore” (ibid). Along similar lines, PSL program director Jan Wypych points out that “there is no great pressure to broaden the ranks of our membership at any cost. We don’t go around saying to people ‘sign up with the party’, and we are not particularly pushing anyone” (ibid). This particular attitude continues to be present among Polish parties today. What is more, some parties like the PiS (Law and Justice) do not even find anything odd at declaring that they are an elite party by design. According to Jarosław Kaczyński, PiS leader and twin brother of the late Polish President Lech Kaczyński, with the PiS “we wanted to form an exclusive party, resistant to the disease afflicting the political class” (as quoted by Millard 2009, p. 122). Party entry in the PiS was then “made dependent on a long period of probation and the requirement to fill out extensive questionnaires revealing the applicant’s political past” (Millard 2009, p. 122). Not surprisingly, this has contributed to the acute shortage

of local party cadres and candidates for the PiS as well as its low membership numbers (ibid).

Polish parties and their candidates made some efforts to reach out to voters recently. However, this was largely done to inform the voters of the various campaign platforms and not to actively involve Polish citizens with the parties or seek new party members. For example, SLD's 2000 presidential candidate Kwaśniewski sent a direct letter to the majority of Polish households, informing Poles of his accomplishments and his plans for Poland (Burdziej 2010). In 2007, PiS' presidential candidate Kazciński sent a similar letter to Polish households which was nicely styled and also stressed the candidates multiple past achievements and suitability for the presidency (ibid). Nevertheless, it would be too soon to make any projections regarding the meaning of these letters. Millard also observed the parties' increased efforts at interacting with the electorate in the 2007 campaign. However, these efforts were largely reduced to the candidates themselves campaigning rather than a broader initiative by the political parties to interact more with the electorate (2009). The PO hired a British communication firm to carry out pre-recorded 'robocalls' during the 2007 campaign (InverOak 2010). Currently it appears that these were extraordinary, and therefore memorable, efforts of the Polish parties which normally do not maintain direct channels of communication with the electorate.

4.4 Low/declining member/activist numbers

American parties do not have party members in the sense of many European parties. While several state party websites are actively recruiting citizens to become 'members' this does not entail rights or privileges in the style of European parties but is

just another way of procuring party funding. A more accurate term for such American party members in this context would be ‘donors’ or ‘party benefactors’. What is more, there is very little substantive interaction of these donors and the parties. These donors do not normally receive any rights or privileges with their financial support of the party. “Party membership is [thus] not a meaningful concept in the American context” (Katz & Mair 1992, p. 888). Instead scholars have suggested that “the closest approximation to party membership is partisan registration.” (ibid). However, since not all states require partisan registration, this is not helpful in assessing citizen interaction with the parties on a national level either. Vis-à-vis European style party members the analysis of American party activists is most useful in comparison. These activists fulfill the same role regarding party organization. For example, like European party members, American party activists “contribute funds, mobilize others, and perform numerous roles essential to the success of campaigns and party organizations.” (Stone et al. 2004, p. 446). The literature on American parties seems to agree with this and has recognized the importance of party activists or ‘amateur Democrats’, ‘party purists’ or ‘volunteers’ (Wilson 1962, Wildavsky 1965, Abramowitz et al. 1983, Stone & Abramowitz 1984, Aldrich 1995, Stone et al. 2004).

Since it is impossible to measure membership of American political parties some scholars suggest looking at party activists in lieu of party members. For example, Green suggests gauging “attendance at political meetings and rallies, many of which are sponsored by the major parties. Such ‘attenders’ accounted for about one-twelfth of the population in 1960 and declined steadily to one-sixteenth in 1996. Similarly, the numbers engaged in campaign work for a party or candidate declined even more sharply over the

period, from about one-sixteenth to one-thirtieth of the adult population. Overall, membership...has fallen since 1960. For instance, NES data suggest that membership of single-issue groups was twice as high as that of party groups in 1996, whereas the contrary was true in 1964.” (2002, p. 326). Putnam also shows that there has been a sharp decline in attending party meetings and volunteering for a party in the last 30 years (2000). He thus argues that regular Americans volunteering for political parties have been replaced by political professionals including, marketers, strategists, pollsters, etc (Ibid). A Roper survey similarly found that “Americans were half as likely to work for a political party or attend a political rally or speech in the 1990s as in the 1970s” (Ibid, p. 41).

However, it appears that these observers were too hasty in writing off American citizen involvement with the parties. More recent presidential election campaigns for both Republicans and Democrats relied significantly on the labor of volunteers, particularly regarding voter registration and getting-out-the vote initiatives such as door-to-door canvassing. As will be illustrated more fully in chapter five, both parties used volunteers extensively in the 2004 campaign (Weiser 2004; Bergan et al. 2005, Blumberg et al. 2005). What is more, the 2008 campaign of Democratic candidate Barack Obama recruited record numbers of volunteers to register voters and carry out campaign work (MacGillis 2008; Exley 2008).

American party activists are engaged at all levels of party politics and include local activists and delegates to campaign conventions. Despite the fact that these activists contribute greatly to the electoral success of the parties, however, they are rarely included in decision-making and agenda-setting of the party leadership or elite in government.

Studies show that party activists are mainly employed carrying out campaign-related activities (Gibson et al. 1985, Law et al. 1986, Gibson et al. 1989, Stone et al. 2004). In a survey of local American party activists, Lawson et al show that the parties mostly use their activists to “carry out the chores of organizational maintenance and electoral campaigning” (1986, p. 347). Accordingly, the majority of party activists work for the parties primarily during campaigns and much less during nonelection periods (ibid).

More than half of the interviewed activists stated that they “often engage in [electoral] functions such as telephoning voters, and... getting out the vote. In contrast, only one-fifth as frequently organized social activities or district meetings” (ibid, p. 352). Although the surveyed activists seemed largely satisfied with their exclusively electoral role, they desired stronger participatory linkage with the party between elections. More than half of the respondents answered that they would wish the party to stay in contact between elections (Ibid, p. 355). Furthermore, a few activists were even directly critical of their superiors, party chairmen and party leaders, saying that the leadership did not solicit the opinions of the activists and “seldom [saw] the committee-people as of any value except as workers, not partners” (ibid, p. 358). Furthermore, local party meetings, the potential venues for greater activist participation, only took place on a monthly basis or less often. In addition, the scheduling and agenda setting of the meetings was determined almost entirely by the chairmen without the consultation of other activists. (Ibid). Lawson et al.’s findings also suggest that these party meetings are rarely a place of “intense deliberation and collective decision making” but more likely a place for “socializing” (p. 360). It also appears that party members do not feel welcome to press for “a greater say in the party’s important decisions” (p. 362). “That” one respondent

said “is strictly taboo” (ibid). As this study illustrates, American party organizations are mostly “nonparticipatory, not open and democratic” (p. 367). “Intraparty decision making is still concentrated in the hands of the leaders...and local politics is still personal politics.” (ibid).

Generally, American party activists are pragmatic and engage with the parties to help them get elected. They “desire to see the party realize its goals; they want to support the party not change it” (Aldrich 1983: 976). This is also confirmed by various studies. For example, a convention delegate study found that the majority of delegates were actively supporting the parties because they wanted to help their candidates get elected (Herrera 1999). Similarly, Gibson et al (1989) and Bibby et al (1983) have shown that party activists participate in fundraising, mobilization and GOTV initiatives. There are some indications that the major parties are making efforts to be more accessible to the electorate. For example, scholars have shown that the Democratic party has undertaken various reforms to “broaden it’s participatory base and permit greater "grass roots" access to its decision-making processes” and be more representative of the electorate (Constantini & Valenty 1996, Ranney, 1975; Crotty, 1983; Shafer, 1983; Shafer, 1988) For example, in 1972, “the Democratic Party's McGovern-Fraser Commission ... changed the party's delegate selection process so that those elected as delegates would represent the mass base of the party in terms of sex, race, and other demographic characteristics” (Brozius 1990, p. 582). The 2008 Obama campaign also points towards a positive trend of more involvement of party activists in terms of decision making. For example, Exley reports that volunteers for the Obama campaign were given considerable say and could organize events without much direction from the campaign headquarters

(2008). Instead of simply following orders from the campaign leadership, volunteer leaders were trusted with mobilizing other volunteers and campaigning independently (ibid).

Membership numbers have fallen and risen over the years for German political parties. The SPD and the CDU however did not follow the same trend until the early 1990s (Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung 2009). For example, in 1978 the SPD had significantly more members than the CDU (997,000 vs. 675,000) (Ibid). In 1984, the CDU experienced an increase in membership to 730,000 members while the SPD had lost more than 80,000 members since 1984 (ibid). Again, in 1990 the CDU lost memberships but gained new members in 1993 while the SPD gained members in 1990 but lost members in 1993 (ibid). Since 1996, however, both parties have lost members gradually and in 2008 had practically identical membership numbers around 530,000 (ibid). However, as Scarrow points out declining “figures for membership are not, by themselves, proof that” German parties have ceased to be mass membership oriented organizations (1996, p. 85). As well, scholars have shown that this does not necessarily represent an end to the mass party model but rather larger socio-economic and generational changes in German society (e.g. Detterbeck 2005, Dalton & Wattenberg 2000, Ware 1996, Dalton & Kuchler 1990).

In fact, both SPD and CDU have continuously sought to utilize their members in both local and national election campaigns. In particular, party pamphlets have urged party leaders to activate members in the campaigns both for canvassing and organizing local party events (Scarrow 1996). Campaign analyses of both parties have emphasized “the electoral utility of members’ informal contacts” with voters and have portrayed

“members as valuable opinion carriers and multipliers” (ibid, p. 97). Accordingly, the CDU leadership stated that “the primary task of the ‘base organization’ must be...to get party supporters to carry out...propaganda work in the many local social organizations, and in neighborhood and professional groups” (Falke 1973). Similarly, a SPD campaign handbook declares that every “party member must become a campaigner. For this to happen there needs to be information and mobilization long before the election. Every party member must know that even the most beautiful billboard does not have anything like the same power to convince as a personal conversation. The SPD in particular achieves its successes through the engaged activity of its members” (SPD, Wahlkampf ’90). As Scarrow has shown, both SPD and CDU have continuously viewed their members as assets and have employed them heavily in election campaigns (1996). Even when faced with declining membership numbers, the parties have sought to utilize the remaining members to the utmost especially in local campaigns and have done so effectively. Studies of party member activists of at the most local level shows that despite dwindling numbers, members remain committed and work actively for the party (Becker 1998, Grabow 2000). Similarly, in both the 2005 and the 2009 parliamentary campaigns the major parties relied considerably on members and activists to carry out campaign work. For example, members were used to staff the Infostände (infobooths), to hand out leaflets and also during GOTV actions (Melchert et al 2006). As chapter five will discuss in more detail, both CDU and SPD also mobilized thousands of members to work in the 2009 campaign, to help their party get elected to the Bundestag. Therefore, the parties continue to value and utilize their members as an integral campaign and party resource.

According to Katz and Mair's prediction, German parties should not value members and their financial contributions much due to the generous German party-state subventions (1995). As cartel parties in Katz and Mair's sense, German parties should rely mostly on these state subventions for their financial survival. However, as Wiesendahl points out, the parties continue to rely on membership contributions as an integral part of their financing much more than on state subsidies (2006). A look at recent finance reports for both parties supports this view. From 2005-2006, only 28% of the CDU's income stemmed from state subventions versus 42% coming from membership contributions (Wettig-Danielmeier 2007). During the same time period, only 25% of the SPD's income came from state subventions while 38% of party income was gained through membership contributions (ibid).

In fact, the parties' financial dependence on their members has steadily increased since 1994. After a landmark decision by the federal constitutional court, all future party state financing is tied to membership numbers (Wiesendahl 2006). State monies now flow to parties based on the number of members and on their total dues paid (ibid). For each Euro a member gives to a party, the state pays 0.38 Euros with the upper limit of 3300 Euros per member (Ibid). German parties are thus forced to focus on their members as their financial foundation and can only expect financial support by the state as a consequence of their party membership commitment and strength. To survive financially and overall, German parties are compelled to try to gain as many members as possible. However, we also need to acknowledge the indirect state funding that makes its way into the parties' coffers. As illustrated in chapter three, this includes allowances that parliamentarians receive to run their offices and hire staff which can also be considered a

party resource since the staff works also to the benefit of the party. In addition, as also pointed out earlier, all German parties make their deputies return a part of their salaries to their parties, as a quasi mandatory party-tax. These are substantial funds ranging from 5-20 percent of the deputies' salaries (Der Deutsche Bundestag online 2010). The combined state funding of direct and indirect monies flowing to the parties indicates a significant financial dependence of the parties on the state. Nevertheless, the funds procured through membership fees and contributions also continue to be a sizeable part of the parties' overall budget. Therefore, it is not quite clear how much the parties are in fact dependent on state finances.

The parties' numerous efforts to gain more members throughout the years also illustrates that both SPD and CDU remain committed to the idea of the membership party. The CDU has tried to gain new members increasingly since Helmut Kohl's CDU leadership in the 1970s. Between 1970 -80 alone, the CDU held more than 23 national membership drives (Wiesendahl 2006). More recently, the CDU tried to use its existing members to gain new members with the campaign titled "100,000 conversation" in 1995/96 (Ibid). Members were encouraged to become very active as messengers for the party and to win over new members in informal personal conversations with interested citizens. A more recent campaign in 2003 followed the same strategy and has proven somewhat successful since in 2004 the CDU had 30,000 new members (ibid). Again, new membership drive campaigns began in 2004 and most recently several drives were conducted under the leadership of Angela Merkel (Lau 2009).

Generally speaking, Polish citizens are not very active politically. According to Szczerbiak (2001), only about 1.4% of Polish citizens are members of political parties.

Recently, party membership has risen to 2.2% among Polish citizens (Letki 2004). In this regard, Polish party memberships are in the process of reaching German levels. While in the late 1990s 4.2 % of German citizens were members of political parties this shrank to about 2.6% in 2005 (Mair 1996; Pötzsch 2005). Nevertheless, Polish citizens degree of political activity is significantly below the average level of political involvement in Eastern and Central Europe (Letki 2004). Accordingly, only 42.1% of Polish citizens regularly engage in political discussion and 24% engage in partisanship, i.e. are actively involved with a political party (ibid).

In accordance with these low levels of citizen political engagement, membership numbers in Polish parties are also low, particularly when compared to membership numbers in German parties. In 2004, for example, the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) had the highest level of membership with about 120,000 members (Szczcerbiak 2006). Before losing their representation in 2007, the Samoobrona (Self-Defense) Party had about 100,000 members in 2004 (ibid). The Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) had about 80,000 members (ibid). Interestingly, despite the fact that they were governing parties, both the Civic Platform (PO) and the Law and Justice Party (PiS) had very low membership levels with 15,000 (PO) and 6,000 (PiS) respectively (ibid). Similarly, the Social Democracy of Poland Party (SDLP) had approximately 6000 members as of 2004 (SDLP website). What is more, there is reason to believe that actual member numbers are considerably lower and that the parties have deliberately increased them to give the appearance of a stronger support base. As some studies indicate, parties have lied regarding their membership numbers in the past (Szczcerbiak 2001, Jasiewicz 2007). Most Polish parties are highly secretive about their membership numbers to avoid revealing the actual size of

their organizations. Quite fittingly, Jasiewicz has coined the term of the ‘couch party’ as a good description of contemporary Polish parties (2007). As the term implies, the parties have very small organizations so that ‘everyone in the party fits onto one couch’ (ibid).

Despite the low membership numbers Polish parties consider their members valuable and have tried to increase their membership numbers. As PSL program director Jan Wypych argues there are “no costs, only advantages” to increasing the number of members since “the party grows and, to some extent, the intellectual and popular potential increases and, therefore, the actual organizational potential increases” (Szczerciak 2001, p. 190). Not unlike the PSL, the UW (Freedom Union Party) has made efforts to build a “growing network of active and committed members” (ibid). In the words of UW general secretary Czech, “if it comes to building our party’s structures, developing the membership base and the structural base of our party so that we have as many ...members as possible, then this is a priority, absolutely yes. There is no such thing as a party without members and the more members a party has the more effectively it can endeavor to realize its objectives and gain wider support. The role of members... is of absolute basic importance for the UW” (ibid). ROP national secretary Włodarczyk similarly states that “the participation of ROP members in the party’s activities...is very important...these are people who have declared themselves to be our supporters...the greater the number of members...then the less likely the party is to be affected by various conflicts...the more people there are at the base who support the party’s platform and leadership, the stronger the party’s structure” (ibid). Whether Polish parties will undergo a development parallel to German parties remains to be seen. Unlike German parties,

Polish parties have yet to undertake any sustained efforts of mobilizing the existing members and of winning new members.

4.5 Citizen participation in and outside of campaigns

Generally, American parties do not reach out to the electorate very much other than during election campaigns. In the course of an election campaign, the parties engage in canvassing. Canvassing includes the use of phone banks and door-to-door visits (Endersby et al 2006). Despite dedicating resources to canvassing efforts, only a very small part of the funds has been invested in direct contact with the electorate. For example, for a state legislative campaign in the state of Missouri, “less than 10 percent of campaign expenditures [were] invested in GOTV” efforts (Endersby et al 2006). Instead of engaging with the voters directly and more personally, both Democrats and Republicans have focused more on other ways in which to ‘get the message out’. These include direct mail, signs, media appearances and of course advertising in the mass media (ibid). Parties also do not try to mobilize voters randomly but contact only those segments of the population who they think will vote for them (Usher 2000). For example, well-educated and affluent people as well as previous voters are much more likely to be contacted by the parties than less-educated and poor people (ibid).

Despite this overall bleak outlook on the party-electorate linkage in the United States, it appears that the parties have made efforts to increase political participation of the electorate. For example, when comparing data from the National Election Studies from 1964, 1980 and 1996 it becomes apparent that direct party contact has increased from 22.6% in 1964, to 24.4% in 1980 and then to 29.3% in 1996 (Green, 2002). Furthermore, as the next chapter will show, recent election campaigns have significantly

increased the parties' efforts to involve more citizens into the grassroots organizing of the campaigns. The 2000 and 2004 Bush campaigns focused intensely on direct voter contact and grassroots strategies (Bergen et al 2005, Conley 2005). Most recently, the 2008 Obama campaign built a very strong local grassroots campaign and also devoted more resources to these efforts than had been done in previous campaigns (Masket 2009, Arterton & Greener 2009).

German political parties have frequently relied on members and volunteers in election campaigns. Recent campaigns have used party members as spokespersons in public places, to staff the so-called Infostände (info booths). Studies show that the major parties have mobilized volunteers and members noticeably in the past and even more in current election campaigns (Scarrow 1996, Margerl 2006). Both CDU and SPD took grassroots organizing seriously and employed thousands of volunteers in the 2005 campaigns (Wasserhövel 2008, Koschnicke 2008). This continued in the 2009 Bundestag election campaign (Jucknat 2009). However, during election campaigns, volunteers and party members mostly carry out party work and are not involved in the decision-making process of the campaign. According to Teerhorst, volunteers with the parties send emails, write letters to the editor, work at the Infostände, take part in door-to-door canvassing and worked at party events (2006). In the electoral context, German parties involve their members and volunteers similar to how American parties involve their volunteers and activists.

During elections, American and German parties take similar strategies in involving the electorate, although German parties have not quite caught up to the level of American parties at this point. Outside of election campaigns, German parties involve

their members and activists far more than American parties. For example, both CDU and SPD use their members to “maintain the local parties”, participate “in local government” and to reach out “to the broader community” (Scarrow 1996, p. 113). Party members feel similarly about their role. Recent surveys of SPD members show that most of them joined their party to ‘participate politically’, ‘to have a voice’, and ‘to make sure that the values of the SPD will be fought for in the future’ (Polis 2000, 2004). This confirms the view that German party members are active for ideological reasons (Wiesendahl 2006). Party elites have recognized this. SPD party leader Franz Müntefering, for example, compared modern-day parties to churches because their members are bound to action by their shared beliefs (Frankfurter Rundschau 4/30/2004, p. VII). What is more, an ideologically driven and otherwise assertive membership base forces the parties to take measures to keep this base satisfied and involved. Otherwise, if the party leadership fails to draw on the members and does not remain true ideologically, it risks massive loss of even more members. And this, in particular regarding the parties’ finances, would not be wise.

The two biggest German parties, the CDU and SPD seek to gain new members in the ‘off season’ and utilize their members in membership drives. In particular, the parties’ strategy for such membership operations involves “targeted personal contacts” between their members and the electorate (Scarrow 1996). What is more, both major parties encourage their members to participate in local government as much as possible representing themselves and the interest of their party (ibid). More recent findings confirm Scarrow’s argument that although there were fewer members, the remaining members were increasingly active in the parties. For example, a member survey by the

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in 2007 found that the members' willingness to work for the CDU had increased significantly from previous studies (Neu 2007). Similarly, Lau reports that current and new CDU members are much more engaged, more ideologically committed and overall more willing to work for the achievements of party goals (2009). According to Lau, current members are eager to distribute party leaflets, wear t-shirts with the party logo, actively campaign for new members and to organize events (ibid). Furthermore, Neu reports that current members are particularly involved in local party organizations and actively seek more participatory roles (2007). A third of current members are strongly involved in the daily operations of party organization such as attending meetings, leading discussions, formulate future party policy (ibid). These positive trends in membership engagement for the parties, led Neu to conclude that declining membership numbers as those of the CDU in recent years do not necessarily mean that membership parties are in a 'deep crisis'. Instead, she argues, this represents merely transformation of membership parties where the more passive and inactive members leave the parties and only more active and politically engaged citizens join and remain in the parties (Neu 2007).

Like American parties, Polish parties do not interact with the electorate much outside of election campaigns. Even during election campaigns Polish parties remain largely invisible (Millard 2009, 2010). In fact, typical elements of American and German election campaigns cannot easily be found in a Polish election campaign. This includes any campaign tool that involves direct voter-party interaction, such as GOTV efforts or door-to-door canvassing. Visibility of Polish campaigns and the parties is typically reduced to the mass media, especially the television advertising (Millard 2009, 2010). In

the public sphere, the most visible aspect of Polish campaigns are billboard posters (ibid). In comparison, German parties also rely heavily on poster billboards in streets and public places which, at the height of a campaign, appear virtually plastered with party campaign posters and signs. In recent election campaigns, such as the 2007 parliamentary election campaign, Polish parties tried to become more visible. For example, in 2007 “the parties’ leaders expended great energy in touring the country” (Millard 2009, p. 151). However, scholars confirm that the campaigns of Polish parties are almost exclusively fought in the media and not on the grassroots (Millard 2010, Jasiewicz 2009, 2010, Tworzecki 2010). In addition to television, Polish parties have also started exploring the use of the internet as a mobilizing tool (Millard 2009). However, it does not seem that the internet will radically alter the fact that there is very little interaction and direct contact between political parties and Polish citizens in the near future. In particular, the websites of parties such as PO and PiS are only slowly becoming more sophisticated and have yet to utilize the internet effectively. In addition to not engaging more with their electorate, Polish parties are also undermined by widespread anti-party sentiments among Polish people. According to Jasiewicz, study after study confirms that Poles view parties as corrupt and inefficient (2007). Put most positively, Poles view political parties as ‘necessary evil’ to a functioning democracy (ibid). Such a hostile environment naturally makes it even harder for parties to connect with the electorate, save mobilize voters.

Nevertheless there is some evidence, that the PSL has relied more on its members to communicate with the electorate than other parties. For example, PSL national spokesman Bentkowski argues that the PSL “always had to depend...on its organizational structure and direct access to its electorate” (ibid, p. 192). This illustrates

that some Polish parties initially developed a growing bond with the electorate. For example, the SDL established an ever growing following among the electorate until 2001 (Grabowski & Szawiel 2001, p. 196). What is more, some see indications for a similar trend among the PO and PiS, i.e. that they are starting to establish stronger links with the electorate (Jasiewicz 2007).

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this examination of the link between parties and their electorate in the United States, Germany and Poland has revealed that there are some similarities and some differences among the parties in the three countries. Parties in all countries have at least a rudimentary organizational presence from the most local to the state level. American and German parties, however, maintain more extensive and better equipped operations than contemporary Polish parties. It also appears that while American and Polish parties' interactions with the electorate are largely reduced to the context of election campaigns. German parties, despite their shrinking membership size, continue to interact with the electorate (via their memberships) on a more regular basis that is not limited to election campaigns. Regarding their members or party activists, in the American case, there is a similar pattern. American and German parties have made significant efforts to win new party activists or members. Polish parties have not undertaken significant efforts and do not seem likely to start in the near future. Not surprisingly, of all three cases, Polish parties have the lowest numbers of members and activists. Although there has been a decline in German party members, the parties have tried to counteract this by involving the remaining members more directly. For example, German parties have used their members extensively during the last two election

campaigns to carry out campaign work and also to mobilize voters generally. Recent American campaigns also reveal a renewed interest in citizen volunteer involvement, at least during campaigns but also some efforts to build more sustained party organizations allowing for more continuous party-electorate interaction.

As a result of these findings, Polish parties fit the mold of Katz and Mair's cartel party the most and American parties fit it somewhat (1995). American parties indeed take the form of the 'empty vessel' organization, only fully operating during election campaigns but not much outside of that (Katz and Kolodny 1994). Consequently, American parties do not maintain direct linkage to the electorate on a more regular basis. Still, recent American national election campaigns have relied extensively on citizen volunteering and mobilizing. Also, as previously mentioned, the parties, especially the Democrats under Howard Dean's leadership have made efforts to build a more comprehensive country-wide organization. However, it is too early to assess whether these efforts will continue and also whether they will in fact improve the linkage between American voters and the political parties. Polish parties, on the other hand, have the weakest link to the electorate out of the three cases. What is more, Polish parties do not appear to make serious efforts to change this, i.e. to build stronger organizations, communicate more directly with the electorate and also involve them more in their daily operations as well as during the campaigns.

Regarding the party-electorate relationship in the United States, it seems that Katz and Mair's cartel model is not an ideal fit (1995, 2009). Relying heavily on volunteers and activists during campaigns, American parties experience strong electoral linkage with the American people. As already stated, in-between election campaigns, the parties do

not interact with the electorate as much as they do during elections. Nevertheless, it would be exaggerated to consider this as supporting the cartel theory. At first sight, German parties seem to be moving towards the cartel type due to their rapidly declining membership numbers. However, a closer look reveals that the parties have consistently tried to win new members and also to involve the remaining members more in and outside of election campaigns. Therefore, it is not clear that we can speak of a cartel based on the party-electorate linkage in the context of German political parties. Out of the three countries, parties in Poland have the weakest linkage to their electorate, both during and outside of elections. Considering the weak general party-electorate linkage, the idea of a cartel does not seem impossible. However, the concept also fails to be a perfect fit in the Polish context. As illustrated above, even the small and weak Polish parties continue to maintain a level of local party organization and appear to be making more efforts to engage volunteers during campaigns.

CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Election campaigns are crucial for political parties as they determine the parties' role in the political order. The campaigns also reveal much about the political parties themselves. For example, the campaigns shed light on the state of party organizations, the parties' overall strength and also on the party-electorate relationship. Election campaigns also offer another opportunity to test the cartel theory, i.e. to examine whether the parties have moved from a party-electorate relationship to a party-state relationship. This chapter will examine to what extent the cartel theory applies to political parties and their organizations during election campaigns.

According to Katz and Mair's theory, cartelized contemporary parties should be organized in a streamlined professional fashion. This professionalization means that political parties should have centralized campaign headquarters with their own staff and hierarchy, separate from regular party governing operations. The separation of campaign from regular governing operations is intentional to limit the input of the party, including functionaries, staff and members from interfering with the campaign. Campaign workers should be paid professionals and noticeably consultants such as media and marketing experts. There should be no citizen involvement during the campaigns. For example, we should see little direct personal contact between party workers and voters, and little volunteer or grass-roots organizing during the campaigns. As Katz and Mair point out, cartel parties gain power largely through their close relationship with the state and therefore do not need nor seek much linkage with the electorate. Furthermore, the

campaigns should be very media-oriented and rely heavily on the latest communication technologies.

If the cartel theory applies, and political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland fit the cartel party model we should find all these aspects present during recent election campaign. The two most recent national election campaigns were examined in all three countries. In the United States, this includes the Presidential campaigns in 2004 and 2008. In Germany, this includes the 2005 and 2009 campaigns and in Poland the 2005 and 2007 campaigns. Examining each of these campaigns' organization, work force, grassroots efforts and media use American and German parties behave much more oriented towards the electorate than expected. Contrary to the cartel model, American and German parties rely considerably on their electorates for party work and also capitalize on grassroots organizing. What is more, the use of the latest communication technologies actually helped American and German political parties mobilize citizens for their campaigns. Polish political parties fit the cartel model better than American or German parties. Specifically, Polish parties do not involve citizens very much in the campaigns. Polish parties utilize the latest communication technologies in lieu of direct face-to-face interaction with the electorate. This chapter finds that regarding political parties and their campaigns, the cartel theory applies more to Polish political parties and less to German and American political parties.

As table 5.1 shows, we examine the following eight criteria implied by the cartel model for election campaigns: separate campaign headquarters, professional organization, professional campaign workers, use of consultants, reliance on volunteers,

reliance on grassroots efforts, personal party-electorate contact and heavy use of media and advertising.

Table 5.1: Chapter five overview

	Cartel predictions	USA	Germany	Poland
Separate campaign headquarters	Yes	Yes	No	No
Professional organization	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Professional campaign workers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Use of consultants	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Reliance on volunteers	No	Yes	Yes	No
Reliance on grassroots efforts	No	Yes	Yes	No
Personal party-electorate contact	No	Yes	Yes	No
Heavy use of media, advertising	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5.1 Separate campaign headquarters

American political parties typically operate their Presidential campaigns, separately from party headquarters and regular party operations. Democratic and Republican parties and their candidates had their headquarters set up in or near Washington, D.C in 2004. Despite their proximity to Washington, D.C. however, both campaign headquarters were set up separately from regular Republican and Democratic party operations. In 2008, the Obama campaign had their headquarters in Chicago, Illinois and the McCain campaign had their headquarters near Washington in Arlington, VA. As it has been the practice with these last two American presidential campaigns, the campaign headquarters are set up by the individual candidates and their staff and not by

the parties. Therefore, there is hardly any overlap regarding the regular staff and normal party resources and the presidential campaign operations. In the United States, many other offices are also selected on Election Day separately from the presidential candidate. More specifically, American voters choose candidates and not parties on the ballot.

Unlike the American parties, major German parties (CDU and SPD) both ran recent national election campaigns out of their party headquarters' buildings integrated with regular party operations. Both parties' headquarters, the CDU's Konrad-Adenauer-Haus and the SPD's Willy-Brandt-Haus, are in Berlin. This is a new development since the 2005 election. Previously, the SPD's campaign headquarters called "Kampa" had been modeled after campaign headquarters of Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. This included a location separate from normal party operation, a "war room" and heavy reliance on communications technology and media instead of direct voter contact. Until 2005, Kampa operated independently from party operations and did not seek the input of party officials and members. However, in 2005, Kampa was relocated to the Willy-Brandt-Haus, the SPD's headquarters in Berlin (Schütz 2009). This is a significant move away from the independent top-down run Kampa of past campaigns. Instead, the 2005 and 2009 Kampa organizations sought to capitalize on the resources of the party, its staff and its members. This allows for more cooperation within the parties and all their component parts during the campaign.

Similar to the German parties and their campaign organizations, Polish political parties did not have separate locations for their campaign headquarters in recent election campaigns. In the 2005 and the 2007 parliamentary election campaigns the PO and the PiS housed their campaign headquarters in their Warsaw party headquarters (Millard

2010). Similarly, the SLD also ran their campaign from their regular Warsaw party headquarters (Burdziej 2010). What is more, the campaigns were well-integrated with regular party operations taking advantage of existing party resources and regular party staff (ibid). Polish political parties must manage their campaigns using existing party resources as much as possible due to their limited funds (Millard 2010). Furthermore, the parties' small size is also a key factor preventing the setup of complex campaign operations (ibid). For example, the parties simply lack the man-power to staff extensive campaign organizations. Even in the case of bigger parties like the PO or the PiS Polish parties were struggling to find enough candidates to run for office (ibid). Consequently, in the 2007 election campaign some parties, especially the PO, were in such need of candidates that they ended up recruiting well-known academics to run for office for the PO without actually having joined the party (ibid).

Although there is no clear distinction between the campaign and the regular party operations of Polish parties, campaign decision-making does not involve party members or regular party staff very much (Anonymous PO politician 2009; anonymous PiS politician 2009). Instead, the organization of the campaign is set up around a small circle of individuals. These individuals include the party leadership, the candidates and a few advisors and strategists, mostly also from within the party (Millard 2010). This small circle of people makes all important decisions concerning the campaign. Politicians from the PO and the PiS party also confirmed that in recent national election campaigns, all important campaign decisions were made by the parties' national leadership and the campaigns were in fact run in a top-down fashion (Anonymous PO politician 2009; anonymous PiS politician 2009). Therefore, organizationally speaking, recent Polish

election campaigns were managed largely by a small elite of leaders and candidates without much input of regular party members, activists and staff (Millard 2010; Tworzecki 2010).

5.2. Professional organization

Regarding their organization, parties in all three countries run professional campaigns. When I use the term professional campaign organization I mean two things. Firstly, the individuals employed there do campaign work exclusively, fulltime and are paid for their labor (Webb and Kolodny 2006). Secondly, I mean that a professional campaign organization is organized systematically and can include an organization in subunits or subdivisions such as those of campaign management, political advisors, field operations, voter contact operations, communications, e-campaign and internet operations, research, policy, and finance. Based on Gibson and Römmele I would also argue that a professionalized campaign relies heavily on new high-tech and computerized tactics, opinion polls and focus groups and is capital-intensive (2009). They also suggested that a professionalized campaign is operated like a business where voters are seen as consumers of political advertising (Gibson and Römmele 2001).

American parties should be considered the most professionalized compared to German and Polish parties. The 2004 and 2008 American presidential campaigns were run professionally and organized into different operations, including: campaign management, political advisors, field operations, voter contact operations, communications, e-campaign and internet operations, research, policy, and finance. Usually the campaign headquarters house the so-called war rooms as was the case for both parties' campaigns in 2004 and 2008 (Franke-Ruta 2004; Rutenberg 2008). These

offices are staffed with campaign strategists and media specialists observing their candidate's media coverage and the messages of the opposition.

Organizationally speaking, in the 2004 and 2008 campaigns parties focused intensely on the so-called 'ground war', a trend that had been apparent particularly since the 2000 presidential election campaign. This ground war included extensive efforts to contact voters, get them registered and ultimately to the polls on Election Day. According to Ralph Reed, regional coordinator for the Bush campaign the strategy was: "We're going to find every Bush voter, we're going to call them, we're going to write them, we're going to knock on their doors, and when they come, we're going to physically take them to the polls" (Purnick 2004).

From 2004 to 2008 this focus on the ground war increased dramatically. Barack Obama's campaign for the Democratic Party had a particularly strong emphasis on voter contact, voter registration and in-person canvassing. Organizationally the Obama campaign also had a remarkably strong physical presence in almost all states, not just in battleground states. Some believed that the success of the Obama campaign was based on "building an unprecedented ground game" unlike any recent American presidential campaign (Jarmin 2008). Comparing the 2004 and 2008 Democratic ground efforts, the Obama campaign clearly outdid the Kerry campaign. A study of democratic field offices found that Kerry maintained 125 county-level offices whereas Obama maintained an astounding 377 offices in eleven battleground states (Masket 2009, p. 9).

Not unlike American parties, German parties have run highly professionalized campaigns which are reflected in the campaign organizations of the SPD and the CDU. The SPD's campaign organization, the Kampa, contains two departments: political

campaign management and technical campaign management. The department of technical campaign management is subdivided into the departments of agencies/production, coordination and finance. The coordination department is responsible for all campaign events and congresses. Further subdivisions of the technical campaign management include the departments of analysis/research/technology, online campaign, press, topics, mobilization/regionalization, supporters, new states (neue Bundesländer) and telephone campaigning (SPD Parteivorstand 2005). The 2009 SPD campaign was organized in similar fashion with the addition of the department of strategic coordination that should help the campaign leadership manage public relations and also better integrate the party and the campaign (Rosigkeit 2008).

Like the SPD, the CDU organized both its 2005 and 2009 campaigns from its Berlin party headquarters. Although the campaigns were set up under a special name (e.g. “arena 05”), they remained situated in the Konrad-Adenauer-Haus. As intended, the choice of this location kept the campaigns largely integrated with regular party operations. The 2005 department of strategic planning, for example, made most decisions regarding the managing of the campaign yet remained linked to the CDU both at the leadership and the grassroots levels (Magerl, von Seldenek and Pahls 2006). The CDU maintained this interconnection of the campaign with regular party operations to take advantage of existing internal party resources such as location, staff and party members. In addition, the campaign itself was organized horizontally with several departments such as the party leadership, strategic planning and grassroots efforts all having considerable input (ibid). This is starkly different from previous campaigns that functioned in a top-down fashion without giving other levels of the party any say in the campaign (ibid).

According to Magerl, the 2005 CDU campaign was also very project-oriented in the daily operations which gave the various campaign levels considerable autonomy in their decision-making and implementation of their tasks (2006).

The organizational change from the 2005 campaign continued in 2009. For both parties, the party headquarters and not external campaign offices managed the 2009 campaigns. The campaign headquarters, particularly for the SPD, was of utmost importance in connecting the various parts of the campaign, including the campaign leadership and management, the party apparatus, as well as the membership and activist base (Jucknat 2009). Integrating all these elements was key to the campaign strategy to take advantage of all the resources available to the party and to minimize outsourcing (ibid).

Although Polish political parties have become more professionalized they have not reached the levels of professionalization of German or American parties. For example, the 2005 PO campaign of Donald Tusk seemed to be organized in a professional manner similar to American campaigns. Tusk's campaign had a team of media advisors as well as public relations specialists (Araloff 2005). However, due to the limited financial resources and the lack of candidates, staff and members, Polish parties' operations cannot reach the scale and the specialization of American election campaigns. Therefore, the only similarity between Polish and American campaigns is the fact that both have a media team on their campaigns. What is more, due to their limited financial resources, Polish parties' campaign media departments do not measure up to their American counterparts (Millard 2010). In fact, it seems exaggerated to even refer to the small group of media and public relations specialists working for Polish parties during

campaigns as ‘media departments’ (ibid). To run election campaigns, Polish parties typically create so-called electoral committees. Polish political parties form these electoral committees as a prerequisite to receive state funds for their campaigns, in addition to the yearly subsidies they receive. Polish party law requires that political parties reveal all of their finances at the end of each year which in an election year also includes their campaign finances. Parties need to specifically submit an account of their campaign finances, including spending, donations received and state monies received. Consequently, it makes sense for Polish parties to separate campaign and regular party finances from the beginning if they are required to report them independently at the end of each year. The electoral committees typically comprise the parties’ important decision makers. For example, the PO’s national party board appoints key politicians, the candidate and party functionaries to its electoral committees (Klimiuk 2010). The electoral committee and its members then run the campaigns, including media and advertising, under the leadership of the head of the electoral committee (ibid).

Comparing the campaign organizations of American, German and Polish political parties we can say that parties in all three countries operate sufficiently professionalized campaigns. This means that in all three countries, political parties have professionally staffed campaign operations and campaign organizations that include various subdivisions according to various campaign activities such as campaign strategy, media operations and fundraising. Due to their larger financial resources we can say that American parties have the most professional organizations followed by German parties. Although Polish political parties have professional campaign organizations to some degree, their limited financial resources as well as their small sizes imply that they are not

up to par with American and German parties in terms of professional campaign organizations.

5.3 Professional campaign workers and the use of consultants

Professional campaign workers are employed fulltime and are paid for their labor by the political parties (Webb & Kolodny 2006). According to Webb and Kolodny, there are five key elements to professional party workers: expertise, autonomy, mobility, self-regulation and commitment (2006). The term expertise implies that the professionals working for a political party have the appropriate skills and training needed for this line of work. These professionals also possess a considerable degree of autonomy, i.e. compared to a “mere bureaucrat” supervised by a manager, a professional is not “dictated to by a line manager” due to her “specialist knowledge”(ibid, p. 339). The professionals are also highly mobile. This means that their professional expertise allows them to gain employment apart from working for a political party. According to Webb and Kolodny, the professionals working for the parties regulate themselves and their profession (2006). Lastly, the professionals “display a special level of devotion to the tasks undertaken” when working for a political party (ibid, p. 339).

American political parties typically rely largely on professional campaign workers and consultants during presidential election campaigns. The Democratic and the Republican campaigns in 2004 and 2008 were both run in professional fashion, with key decisions being made by campaign specialists and consultants in the respective campaign headquarters. All of the campaign managers for both parties were experienced political consultants (Appleman 2005, Cillizza 2007, Broder 2008). Therefore, campaign leadership and decision-making was largely in the hands of professionals, experts and

consultants. For example, in 2004 key decision makers in most sub-divisions of the campaigns were predominately professional consultants including the management, field operations, voter contact initiatives, communications, e-campaign and internet, as well as the strategic and the media divisions (Appleman 2005). Similarly, the October/November 2004 issue of *Campaigns & Elections* reveals that the Kerry campaign employed a long list of consultancy firms to carry out fund-raising, polling, voter-contact, research and accounting (*Campaigns & Elections* 10/11:2004). Not unlike previous election campaigns, decision-makers in the 2008 campaign were also largely professional political consultants. For example, key strategists in the Obama campaign were political media specialists David Axelrod, David Plouffe and Robert Gibbs as well as pollster Paul Hasted (Cillizza 2007). The McCain campaign on their part significantly relied on experienced political consultants Steve Schmidt and Rick Davis as well as pollster Bill McInturff (Broder 2008).

German parties operate their campaigns professionally but do not rely on consultants as much as American parties. In recent campaigns, both the SPD and the CDU have relied on a mix of professionals and volunteers to carry out their work. Regarding the professionals, both the SPD and the CDU heavily used their permanent staff that is part of the regular party structure and operate 'on loan' from their usual positions to the campaign. This applies at all levels such as the secretarial staff to the management and leadership level of the parties. In both campaign years the parties designated regular party functionaries and politicians to the campaigns. For example, in 2005 the SPD designated veteran SPD strategist Kajo Wasserhoevel as lead campaign manager and the CDU relied on former Berlin senator for science Peter Radunski to

direct their campaign. In 2009, the SPD again relied on Wasserhoevel and the CDU relied on politician Roland Pofalla (Kullmann & Nelles 2008, Deutsche Welle 4/18/2008).

Like American parties, German parties rely on the services of external consultants. These consultants include media and marketing experts, advertisement agencies as well as pollsters. In the 2005 campaign the SPD relied on the services of the renowned German advertisement agency Butter for their TV, newspaper and street poster advertisements in addition to other commercial advertisers (Wasserhoevel interview 2008). In 2005 the SPD hired two political consultants, Karl Ruf and Matthias Machnig (ibid). Still, German parties rely much less on consultants than American parties due to the fact that they have much less money available. Current party operatives explain that due to their high cost consultants and their services were not too attractive to German parties (Wasserhoevel 2008; Koschnicke 2008). Moreover, German parties rely mostly on domestic, German consultants and not foreign consultants (ibid). As a result, German parties do not outsource campaign work as much as American parties but try to use internal party resources as much as possible. The CDU campaigns relied significantly on the expertise of its internal marketing department (Koschnicke 2008). What is more, the few consultants that are hired do not play a big role and do not dominate the decision making of the campaigns. The parties themselves through their leadership and candidates are much more crucial in this regard (Wasserhoevel 2008; Koschnicke 2008).

Unfortunately, Polish parties and their politicians are very secretive about their operations, finances and staff (Szczerbiak 2001; Jasiewicz 2007). Nevertheless, it seems that most decisions regarding the election campaigns in both 2005 and 2007 were made at the national party leadership level (Jasiewicz 2007; Anonymous PO politician 2009;

anonymous PiS politician 2009; Millard 2010). Politicians from the PO and the PiS party also confirmed that in recent national election campaigns, all important campaign decisions were made by the parties' national leadership and the candidates and the campaigns were in fact run in a top-down fashion without much input from the 'bottom', i.e. the members and activists (Anonymous PO politician 2009; anonymous PiS politician 2009). Generally, the majority of campaign workers in Polish parties are the politicians themselves (Millard 2010).

Polish political parties have relied on professionals and consultants during their election campaigns, not unlike American parties. For example, Alexander Kwaśniewski's 1995 campaign drew considerable attention for being highly professional. In fact, Kwaśniewski's campaign had been designed in greatest detail by a renowned French public relations firm and "pioneered the use of political campaign professionals in Poland" (Jasiewicz 2008, p. 433). Also Polish political parties have utilized political consultants from other European parties of similar political orientation. For example, the socialist party SDL received campaign advice from Spanish socialists (ibid, p. 439, Millard 2010). Nevertheless, political consultants are not as important to Polish election campaigns as they are to American election campaigns. Millard found that external political consultants did not play a large role in the 2005 and 2007 election campaigns (2010). The few consultants employed were mostly media and image specialists and they were only used by the big parties due to the limited financial resources of smaller Polish parties (ibid; Burdziej 2010).

Polish parties have tried to learn from other European parties of similar political orientation about the latest campaigning tools and techniques. In the parliamentary

election campaigns in 2005 and 2007, the SDL consulted with German campaign professionals and strategists of the equally social-democratic SPD party (Porkert 2008). Similarly, the PO used consultants from Germany and the United States in 2005 and 2007 (Anonymous PO politician 2009). In 2005, the PO directly cooperated with Germany's CDU party and their campaign specialists. In fact, German Chancellor Angela Merkel appeared in a PO election ad together with Donald Tusk (Heuser 2005). Raabe also reports that in 2007, the PO sought advice from professionals of Germany's CDU party (2007). The PiS party, on their part, consulted with professionals from Germany, Hungary, France and the Czech Republic (Anonymous PiS politician 2009). This inter-European dialogue of political parties continues. In May of 2009 a group of Polish politicians and political advisors traveled to Germany where they were received at the CDU headquarters, the Konrad-Adenauer-Haus (Bölling 2009). There the Polish politicians learned about the campaign strategies and techniques used by the CDU in the 2009 German parliamentary elections campaign, including organization and finance of the campaign (ibid). Polish parties also look the United States for electioneering ideas. All Polish parties sent some of their young politicians to the United States to observe the 2008 presidential election campaign and learn about the latest strategies and tools of the Obama campaign (Burdziej 2010).

According to political scientist Hubert Tworzecki, Polish parties are increasingly relying more on Polish experts (interview 2010). Such experts include "independent experts [such as] Piotr Tymochowicz", i.e. individuals without party affiliation (ibid). What is more, "these days the consultants are home-grown" including "internal experts on media and communications", e.g. the "PiS has used the duo of spin doctors called

Adam Bielan and Michal Kaminski” (ibid). The main reason the parties use homegrown Polish media specialists is that they cannot afford international campaign consultants (Burdziej 2010; Millard 2010; Tworzecki 2010). What is more, smaller parties often cannot afford to hire any media consultants at all due to their limited financial resources (ibid).

Regarding professional campaign workers we can summarize that political parties in all three countries relied on professional workers, i.e. workers that were employed full-time and received pay for their labor. The three countries varied regarding the use of political consultants by the political parties. As a result of their more abundant campaign resources, American political parties relied most heavily on consultants. Polish parties also hired political consultants during their campaigns. However, this cannot be explained by abundant campaign finances since Polish parties clearly do not have the campaign resources that American parties have. Instead, Polish parties often rely on consultants because they are so small in size and thus lack the manpower to carry out their campaigns without the help of the consultants. Furthermore, most Polish parties came into existence in recent years necessitating that they immediately adapt to the modern style of campaigning, including the use of mass media and communications technology. In order to wage modern campaigns, Polish parties need to rely on the knowledge and expertise of consultants. Out of the three cases, German parties relied least on political consultants. Instead of employing costly external consultants, German parties used their own internal staff as much as possible to carry out campaign work.

5.4 Reliance on volunteers

In addition to professionals and consultants, the campaigns of American parties in 2004 and 2008 significantly relied on volunteers, especially in carrying out getting-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts. Some GOTV workers for both campaigns were paid (Apple 2004; Bergan et al. 2005; Blumberg et al. 2005). Nevertheless, a large part of the workers for both campaigns' GOTV were unpaid volunteers (Weiser 2004; Bergan et al. 2005, Blumberg et al. 2005). Volunteers in both the Bush and Kerry campaigns were crucial in both door-to-door canvassing and phone banks (Bergan et al. 2004). At the end of the campaign, in Ohio, Bush "drew upon an army of 85,000 in-state volunteers to make the bulk of its carefully coordinated GOTV calls in Ohio" (Nickerson 2007). The Bush campaign also benefited from pro-Republican allied interest groups such as the Christian right which also provided many volunteers (Green et al. 2006). The Kerry campaign, on the other hand, relied on allied organizations and groups such as ACT, unions and the "Kerry Travelers", out of state volunteers traveling to work for the campaign elsewhere (Blumberg et al. 2005).

The reliance on volunteers increased from 2004 to 2008. In particular, the Obama campaign stood out for its volunteer ground efforts. These efforts were structured around the so-called "neighborhood team leaders". "These leaders controlled 8-12 precincts around their neighborhoods, buttressed by four 'coordinators' who help oversee team members, usually numbering in the dozens." (MacGillis 2008). These volunteers were usually trained and supervised at first by paid Obama campaign staff (ibid). After these volunteers were deemed reliable the Obama campaign relied extensively on them to register voters and recruit more volunteers (ibid). What is more, the Obama volunteers

were given considerably say and could organize events without much direction from the campaign headquarters. For example, volunteer leaders were given lots of freedom choosing and organizing events to mobilize more volunteers (Exley 2008).

Similar to American political parties, the campaigns of German parties have significantly rediscovered volunteers as a campaign resource. As a result, in 2005 and 2009 the major German parties made considerable efforts to recruit more volunteers to carry out campaign work. In particular, the parties have sought to take advantage of their membership bases and mobilize them as a workforce for the campaigns. While they considered their membership bases more of a burden in the past, this has changed and the increased level of mobilization illustrates that the parties have come to regard their members as campaign assets (Jucknat 2009). Both parties have organized members and volunteers with considerable success. For example, the CDU considered its more than 32,000 volunteers the cornerstone of its 2005 campaign (Magerl 2006). According to chief campaign strategist Joachim Koschnicke, the CDU relied heavily on these volunteers to mobilize others and recruit more volunteers (interview 2008). These volunteers also wrote emails and letters on behalf of the campaign and actively campaigned on the ground by handing out leaflets and engaging others at party events (ibid). In addition, the volunteers also staffed party info stands that are typically part of German election campaigns. For example, in 2005 the SPD relied on more than 15,000 activists in the month prior to Election Day (Wasserhoevel interview 2008). The SPD strongly considers itself a membership party and values its members, their time and dedication, particularly during election campaigns. In the words of SPD campaign strategist Wasserhoevel, “members and volunteers are extremely important to the

campaign” (ibid). More specifically, SPD members are crucial in mobilizing others, recruiting new members and new volunteers for the campaigns (ibid). The SPD also particularly appreciates its members in their role as passionate spokespersons for the party on the ground as well as on the internet (ibid). For example, according to Wasserhoevel, more than 10,000 SPD members volunteered their time to ‘activate’ other members for the 2005 campaign (ibid). He also believes that these efforts in the 2005 campaign were crucial in convincing numerous volunteers to become party members (ibid). Similarly, in the 2005 campaign, the CDU was able to increase the number of its volunteers and to use them effectively in the campaign (Koschnicke 2008). According to Koschnicke, the CDU membership base was crucial to the implementation and execution of the 2005 campaign strategies and were very active in mobilizing, door-to-door campaigning, telephone campaigning, letter writing and event organizing (2008). The parties’ campaigns in 2009 were staffed by a variety of people just like they had been in the 2005 campaign. The SPD’s 2009 campaign was run by regular party employees, politicians, a few consultants and external agencies as well as party members and volunteer activists (Jucknat 2009).

Compared to American and German parties, Polish parties make the least use of volunteers during campaigns. A visit to the websites of several Polish parties gives the impression that the parties seek to recruit more volunteers to participate in campaigns. The PO website claims to be asking members and volunteers “for help during the election campaign to collect signatures, hang posters, make phone calls and canvass” (Platforma Obywatelska 2010). The PO also asked sympathizers to text message for them during the campaigns, to support the PO financially and also to participate in PO events (Platforma

Obywatelska 2010). There are also some reports stating that in 2005 the PO used more than 3000 volunteers during the parliamentary campaign (de Barbaro 2005). The PiS website, in the subsection of its Youth Forum, also encourages Poles to join and ‘act’, however, does not specify what such action would entail (Prawo I Sprawiedliwość 2010). According to Niesłuchowska, the PiS has tried to use more volunteers in the 2007 campaign (2006). The PiS’ youth organization claimed that it had mobilized up to 100 people daily and also had a team of 17 key youth organizers to help with campaign efforts (Niesłuchowska 2006).

Despite this appearance, however, neither the PO nor the PiS relied too much on the work of volunteers or members in the last two national election campaigns (Millard 2010). According to Millard, all Polish parties, even the bigger PO and PiS suffer from a real shortage of members and activists that they could use during election campaigns (2010). While the parties have “tried to pay volunteers to carry out campaign work such as handing out leaflets” these efforts have not been very successful (ibid). Therefore, generally speaking, Polish parties cannot rely much on their members and volunteers during campaigns. The few volunteers and members working on campaigns “are either elected office holders from national and local levels who want to stay on the gravy train or activists and volunteers who one day hope to get on it” (Tworzecki 2010). In addition to these ‘hopefuls’, a large number of the campaign workers are the candidates themselves. The candidates carry out their campaigning on their own, creating and distributing their own leaflets, for example (Millard 2010).

In conclusion, American and German political parties have recognized the advantages of using volunteers and have consequently relied on volunteers increasingly

in recent national election campaigns. This cannot be stated for Polish parties which failed to recruit and utilize volunteer workers substantially. The lack of volunteers with Polish parties can be attributed to the small size of Polish political parties, the low visibility of Polish campaigns (Millard 2010). Furthermore, the widespread political apathy among Polish citizens might not only result in the lowest voter turnout rates in Europe but could also explain why Polish political parties do not possess a large pool of volunteer labor (Jasiewicz 2010, Millard 2010).

5.5 Reliance on grassroots efforts

In recent national campaigns, American parties have relied extensively on their grassroots. Both the Bush and the Kerry organizations relied extensively on grassroots efforts to mobilize voters in the 2004 campaign (Bergan et al. 2005). Kerry declared in April 2004 that the Democratic party and his campaign were “going to build the strongest grass-roots movement in the history of our party and the history of this country” (Johnson 2004, p. C1). The Bush campaign relied on its so-called 72-Hour Task Force, instituted in 2002. This program effectively organized the GOP grassroots in an effort to contact voters three days prior to Election Day to increase Republican turnout. “Volunteers were recruited at national, state, local, and collegiate party organizations at rallies, at meetings, and through the internet. The new recruits were assigned to localities in which they would network. All such volunteers reported to an RNC marshal who would organize them into units of two to three individuals. Each unit was assigned a specific task: operating phone banks, canvassing precincts, or assisting with campaign rallies. The training involved in this approach was rigorous, often occurring over a period of months

and often targeted at specific goals of expanding the GOP coalition and registering new voters” (Ubertaccio 2007, p. 176).

In 2008, the Republican Party continued its practice of the 72 hour strategy in similar fashion. Financially speaking the Obama campaign devoted more resources to their field operations and grass-roots mobilizing than had usually been the case for past Republican and Democratic campaigns in 2008. Obama’s chief campaign manager David Plouffe revealed that the campaign had funded its field operations first rather than focusing mostly on media spending (Grove 2008). In addition, the Democratic Party not only caught up but even surpassed the Republican party regarding its grass roots efforts. The Obama campaign established an elaborate grass roots network particularly in the battleground states but also in states that were traditionally considered Republican territory. Furthermore, the grassroots emphasis constituted the core of the campaign. As an Obama campaign official confirms, “you wanted as many of your local people carrying your message as possible, as opposed to paid field organizers, or even imported volunteers from different parts of the country...the more offices we had, the easier it was to empower your local organizers and your local volunteers to be part of that effort...It was more efficient to have more offices” (quoted by Masket 2009, p 5).

Accordingly, Obama’s national field director Jon Carson remarked that although “campaigns have always to wanted to have a grass-roots, volunteer-driven effort” the Obama campaign was remarkable for “the sheer volume of people who wanted to get involved” and the campaign’s smart organization and ability to effectively utilize these huge numbers or volunteers (quoted by McGillis 2008). As Obama chief strategist Plouffe put it, “this was such a grassroots campaign, our partners in this were these millions of

Americans who participated in the campaign, who were never seen before...they were a really powerful, important part of the campaign” (Grove 2008). Another notable aspect is the degree of freedom that the volunteers were given by the Obama campaign. Accordingly, Obama “volunteers [were] encouraged to take more initiative” than was the case in previous campaigns “to come up with their own ways to recruit others and approach voters” (McGillis 2008). These more recent developments suggest that modern election campaigns are becoming more participatory in the U.S. This is a significant change from campaigns of previous election years where there was very little emphasis on voter mobilization and voter-party linkage.

Similar to American political parties, German parties have re-discovered grassroots campaigning and direct voter mobilization. Especially since the 2005 elections, German parties have relied increasingly on this strategy. Some have observed that German parties have stepped up their grassroots efforts to counteract declining membership numbers and increases in ‘up-for-grabs’ unaligned voters (Terhorst 2006, p. 65). Either way, the CDU and the SPD have come to view grassroots mobilizing as an effective way to utilize and energize their membership bases. In particular, the parties have realized that their otherwise often passive members are an extremely useful resource during election campaigns (Terhorst 2006). Activating members for campaigns makes sense for the parties since they can easily contact them. Party members are also ideal campaign workers in that they are passionate about the party and winning the election and do not have to be paid for their efforts.

The CDU, for example, has tried hard to mobilize more members as well as non-members to volunteer for campaigns. The CDU’s grassroots focus began in 2005 and

was also in place for the 2009 elections. The CDU's "teAM Zukunft" grassroots campaign sought to mobilize anyone interested in working for the campaign with emphasis on giving volunteers decision-making input and letting them decide more freely how to go about organizing and contributing to the campaign (Terhorst 2006). CDU volunteers sent emails, wrote letters to the editor, worked at information booths, took part in door-to-door canvassing and organized party events (ibid). To reward and retain volunteers, the CDU leadership developed an 'appreciation system' and went to great lengths to publicly honor hard working volunteers for their dedication and effort. For example, after having spent a certain number of hours working for the campaigns, volunteers were presented with a special certificate on stage during major campaign events or were treated to a long boat trip with their local parliamentary candidate (Ibid, p. 68).

The SPD also ran grassroots campaigns in 2005 and 2009. The SPD's grassroots campaigners referred to themselves as "rote Wahlmannschaften", the red campaign force. According to chief SPD campaign strategist Wasserhoevel, grassroots mobilizing of the party members, activists and voters in general was one of the main foci in the 2005 SPD campaign (2008). This strategy included the typical information booths (Infostaende) in public places, personal house visits, telephone calls, handing out leaflets and participating in campaign events (ibid). The rote Wahlmannschaften coordinated more than 15,000 volunteer activists in the 2005 campaign (SPD-Parteivorstand 2005). In addition to the already mentioned activities, SPD grassroots campaigners staffed the popular campaign hotline where voters could ask questions and voice their opinions, conducted more than 500,000 telephone calls and also manned the 'red busses', a fleet of minivans that served

as mobile info boxes during the campaign (ibid). Another important component of the SPD grassroots campaign were the “Junge Teams”, largely young party members and activists who ran numerous demonstrations and events during the campaign (ibid).

Similar to their 2005 campaign, the parties ran grass-roots campaigns in 2009. The CDU ran an intensive grassroots campaign in the last 72 and 24 hours before Election Day. Specifically focusing their efforts on the capital of Berlin, team 2009 members organized and talked with voters in bars, restaurants, in front of cinemas, at airports and train stations. In addition, these volunteers independently organized parties, live chats, talk-show parties and visited big corporations and their offices. Furthermore, CDU volunteers drove people to the polls and also went door-to-door canvassing in CDU friendly districts and made many phone calls (team2009 website 2009).

Similarly, the 2009 SPD campaign had much in common with the 2005 campaign. For example, the “Junge Teams” and the “Jusos”, groups of young SPD supporters and members, were crucial in carrying out much of the SPD grassroots campaign. According to Juso chairwoman Franziska Drohsel, the 2009 SPD campaign specifically focused on the mobilization of volunteers and the dialogue with the citizens, both online and on the streets (Drohsel 2009). Another example of the SPD 2009 grassroots campaign was the so-called ‘Rote Würfel’ (the red dice). The Rote Würfel was an info stand in the shape of a 6.5 meters (ca. 21 feet) high red dice, equipped campaign posters and a news ticker. The Rote Würfel contained two touch screens and printers for citizens to learn about the SPD and their candidate Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Here citizens could compare the SPD program with that of the CDU as well as compose their own SPD program and print it out (Fischer 2009). After its introduction in Berlin the SPD sent the Rote Würfel travelling

across Germany until Election Day to encourage citizens to inform themselves and to vote (ibid).

Compared to American and even German parties, the grassroots of Polish parties are practically non-existent. As previous chapters have illustrated, Polish political parties are mostly “poor in organizational boots on the ground” and rely greatly on the media for any of their campaign activities and voter mobilization (Tworzecki and Semetko 2009). Due to the lack of genuine bottom-up grassroots efforts of Polish parties, the campaigns are not as visible as American or German campaigns (Millard 2010). There were very few street rallies and practically no door-to-door mobilization efforts by the parties in 2005 and 2007 (Millard 2010). American-style grassroots efforts are simply not feasible for Polish parties since they lack the membership and activists to carry out this work (ibid). In the 2005 and 2007 campaigns any mobilizing efforts were carried out in a “top-down fashion” that were largely “Warsaw-centered and concentrated largely on cities and urban areas and party strong holds while virtually ignoring the Polish country side” (ibid). What is more, even a big party like the PO actually lacks any serious party organization in rural areas which also prevents them from physically campaigning in the country side (ibid).

Apart from the fact that Polish parties have failed to organize, the lack of American-style grassroots efforts can also be attributed to the political apathy among Poles. Generally, Polish citizens are very reluctant to participate politically as the low voter turnout in recent years indicates. However, lately Poles appear to take voting more seriously. Voter turnout has increased from an abysmally low 40.5% in 2005 to 53.88% in 2007 (Millard 2007; National Electoral Commission 2007). In fact, the volume of

voters so surprised polling stations that they ran out of ballot cards and also had to extend their opening hours to handle the demand (Raabe 2007).

In addition, one might argue that Polish campaigns lack grassroots efforts not only because Poles are politically passive but actually because the parties have failed to mobilize them. Therefore, the Polish electorate does not merely refuse to become politically active but are not given sufficient opportunities for participation by the parties. For example, as was apparent especially in the 2007 election campaign, Polish citizens were engaging in some grassroots, getting-out-the-vote activities. The parties, however, were notably not involved in these efforts. Instead these efforts were largely organized by non-government organizations, prominent Polish academics and young activists, most of which were not aligned with any political party (Burdziej 2010; Kulish 2007). One such example was the campaign “Zmień kraj. Idź na wybory!”(Change your country. Vote!). Supported by more than 150 non-governmental Polish organizations, the campaign advertised through the usual media channels such as TV, radio, newspapers and street billboards and also the internet to encourage Poles to vote (www.21pazdernika.org.pl). According to the campaign, its website alone was visited by more than 310,000 internet users (ibid). In addition, the campaign provided materials for distribution on its website such as banners, posters, stickers and t-shirts. Volunteers could either obtain them directly from the website or have them mailed to them. The website also provided concrete instructions for campaigning in the streets and there was a strong emphasis on campaigning in public places and holding rallies (ibid). The campaign also specifically targeted young Polish voters in the “Youth Vote” initiative during which lots of information materials were sent to more than 700 schools across

Poland (www.for.org.pl/pl/ziemien-kraj). The group estimates that around 230,000 students attended the youth events (ibid).

During the 2007 parliamentary elections, young political activists set up websites and campaigned in the streets to encourage people to vote (Kulich 2007). Younger politicians, such as PO parliamentarian Krzysztof Tyszkiewicz, tried to take advantage of this apparent new interest in politics among young Poles. He notes that he had several “young people help ... with the campaign” handing out leaflets and talking to people in the streets of Warsaw in the 2007 campaign (Kulich 2007). Polish parties and their candidates should follow suit and take advantage in young Poles’ new interest in politics. “There are lots of people trying to start up [grassroots] initiatives...there’s this movement, especially among young people” observes Andrzej Bobinski of the Center for International Relations” (quoted by Kulich 2007). Another grassroots mobilization effort was undertaken by “a politicized religious group with its own media outlet, Radio Maryja” (Tworzecki 2010). While not formally part of any political party, Radio Maryja has strongly campaigned for the PiS party in recent election campaigns (Burdziej 2008, 2010; Tworzecki 2009).

Reliance on grassroots efforts varied among political parties in all three countries. American parties relied most heavily on their grassroots operations during the last two national election campaigns. Although they did not measure up to the Americans, German political parties also stepped up their grassroots efforts in the two most recent national election campaigns. Out of the three cases, Polish political parties were the weakest regarding grassroots efforts. In fact, we can say that in the Polish context, grassroots campaign initiatives are virtually non-existent. Although there were some

grassroots activities in recent campaigns, none of them were actually organized by a political party. Similar to the lack of volunteers, the lack of grassroots efforts of Polish parties might also be explained by the traditional invisible character of Polish election campaigns and the lack of political engagement of the population (Jasiewicz 2010, Millard 2010). One might even make the argument that grassroots campaign efforts do not currently have a place in Poland’s political culture.

Table 5.2: Voter turnout

Country	election year	turnout
USA	2008	63.60%
	2004	63.08%
Germany	2009	70.80%
	2005	77.70%
Poland	2007	53.80%
	2005	40.50%

Sources: USA: U.S. Census Bureau 2008
 Germany: German Bundestag 2009
 Poland: Millard 2010a

5.6 Personal party-electorate contact

Compared to German and Polish parties, American political parties seek the most personal contact with their electorate. For example, according to the 2005 Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), 47.4% of the American respondents reported to have been in direct contact with the parties. In comparison, only 13% of German respondents and only 5.9% of Polish respondents reported such contact with political parties (ibid).

In the course of their grassroots efforts, both Democratic and Republican parties focused on dramatically increasing direct voter contact in 2004. Bush Campaign manager, Ken Mehlman observed that “people are into participatory activities...they

want to have influence over a decision that's made. They don't want to just sit and passively absorb. They want to be involved, and a political program ought to recognize that" (Bai 2004, 45-46). Accordingly, Bush's chief campaign strategist Matthew Dowd explained, Republicans focused immensely on "person-to-person contact and ...people to motivate folks ...in their neighborhoods"(Dowd 2005). Consequently, in 2004 there was:

"much more person-on-person contact in individual communities. So much more building it up, having an infrastructure where somebody could call into a neighborhood or precinct, to call up voters that they knew...More actual, real phone calls, as opposed to what they call robo-phone calls, which are sort of robotic phone calls where you say, "Go vote, go vote". These were more people in a community that might know a list of 100 people that they could call – things like that" (Dowd 2005).

The Democrats also increased their direct voter contact. "Working through allied organizations such as America Coming Together, Democrats sought to register and mobilize large numbers of people" (Bergan et al. 2005). Steven Rosenthal, CEO of America Coming Together, confidently declared in 2003 that "if we can talk to people in as personal a way as we can and as many times as we can, we will win them over" (Malone 2003, p. A27). The 2004 campaign continued the trend of increased party-voter contact from earlier campaigns since "1998 and 1992, approximately one-quarter of adults reported contact with a caller or canvasser. In 2000 this figure rose to 40 percent. In 2004, slightly more than half of the population reported receiving some form of direct campaign communication." (Bergan et al. 2005, p. 763). Both parties' volume of direct contact in 2004 was comparable with some variations. For example, "the Kerry/Edwards

campaign knocked on more than eight million doors, as compared to over nine million for the Bush/Cheney campaign.” (Ibid, p. 764). At the same time, “the Bush/Cheney campaign held a slight edge in terms of phone calls from volunteer phone banks, completing 27.2 million, as compared to the Kerry/Edwards figure of 23.5 million” (Ibid).

The parties’ focus on personal contact further intensified during the 2008 campaign. According to Seth Masket, the parties’ continued focus on grass roots campaigning and more personal voter contact suggests more party-electorate linkage (2009). The parties have re-dedicated themselves to “greater individual involvement in politics, increased neighbor-to-neighbor contact, the education of volunteers and contacted citizens about the issues of the day, and the increased feelings of efficacy among participants” (ibid). The Obama campaign was built on as much personal contact with the voters as possible. As David Plouffe, chief campaign strategist for the Obama campaign states, the Obama campaign from the outset believed that “a human being talking to a human being...is the most effective communication” tool and the campaign then created “an organization that was able to facilitate that” (Grove 2008).

According to Pomper, in 2008 the Democrats made over 68 million personal contacts and the Republicans made around 30 million personal contacts (2009). These numbers suggest relatively high party-electorate linkage in the context of election campaigns in the United States.

Past studies have shown that German political parties do not contact their voters as much as American parties do. For example, according to a CSES 2005 study, only 13% of German respondents reported to have had direct contact with political parties.

According to Peter Radunski, former CDU politician and veteran campaign manager, German parties have recognized that they need to interact with their voters more directly in their campaigns (Melchert et al 2006). Consequently, the parties tried to increase direct party-voter contact and interaction. For example, in 2005 and 2009, the SPD set up a telephone hotline where citizens could ask questions and also voice their opinions. In 2005, staff and volunteers at the hotline center in the SPD party headquarters also addressed around 45,000 citizen letters (SPD-Parteivorstand 2005). At the same time, the SPD campaign sent out more than 700,000 emails to their registered members and volunteers and also answered questions arising from these emails (ibid). SPD staff, members and volunteers also called and talked with more than 500,000 citizens (ibid). At the SPD headquarters, the Willy-Brandt-Haus, SPD staff also set up the so-called Wahlcafe (election café) where citizens could personally talk with SPD staff and functionaries while being served espresso (ibid). On the road, the campaign utilized its fleet of red minivans, the Rote Busse, to transport campaign activists to events such as setting up information stands all around Germany to facilitate more party-voter interaction across the country (ibid). Another innovative SPD idea was the so-called Rote Box (red box), a red mobile recording studio the size of a telephone booth. In this booth, citizens could record statements regarding the campaign, many of which were later broadcast on the SPD campaign web site (ibid). Overall, the 2005 SPD campaign focused more on the direct contact with the voters. For example, according to direct SPD candidate Katja Mast, the campaign focused less on big events but more on “hard back-breaking work in an effort to reach potential voters” (Hilt 2005). As Mast states: “We’ll

go to the swimming pools, to street festivals and beach volleyball tournaments and really talk to the people” (ibid).

For the 2009 campaign, the SPD leadership echoes this sentiment. For example, SPD leadership’s Carsten Stender stresses that for the 2009 campaign the SPD learned its lesson and insists that the party will continue to interact with citizens as much as possible (Wedell 2008). In his words, for the 2009 campaign, the SPD “needs to stay in close contact with the people...needs to listen to the people and remain authentic” (ibid, p. 28). Furthermore, Stender points out that a key element for 2009 was the mobilization of party members and SPD sympathizers (Wedell 2008). Similarly, veteran German political consultant Langguth adds that for the SPD any future campaign is unthinkable without the mobilization of its members (ibid). In particular, the SPD membership and activist base are best used in the GOTV street campaigns talking to citizens (ibid).

The CDU also devoted themselves to increasing direct interaction with the voters. In 2005, the CDU campaign interacted more with voters than had been the case in past election campaigns. Using the internet and a compiled data base of party members and volunteers, in the process of which the party contacted and won “about 100 new members daily” for some time (Terhorst 2006). After recruiting volunteers and making some of them team leaders the CDU actively encouraged cooperation between the volunteers and the professional staff from party headquarters by sending the professional staff all around Germany during the campaign (ibid). In both 2005 and 2009, the CDU’s campaign website, its email functions and social networking capabilities greatly facilitated communication among voters, volunteers, members and party staff (ibid). Furthermore, the CDU had set up very respectable ground efforts that maintained at least one team of

party activists in each of the 254 electoral districts (Magerl et al. 2006). In each of the districts, members of these volunteer teams, in coordination with the party headquarters, sought to interact with citizens at info stands in public places, by handing out leaflets and even by knocking on doors in the style of American door-to-door canvassing. In addition, the CDU campaign's main aim in their ground efforts was to directly communicate with as many voters as possible. As pointed out previously, the 2005 CDU campaign had 32,000 activists who were very engaged in contacting voters by writing letters and emails, organizing events and parties as well as street campaigning (ibid). In 2009, the CDU stuck with this strategy sending campaign teams out to bars and restaurants, cinemas, theaters, big companies and factories to talk with voters. Just like in the 2005 campaign, in 2009 the CDU organized celebrations for voters and even went door-to-door canvassing. The 2009 campaign included a telephone campaign during which many citizens were personally reached by CDU campaign workers, volunteers and activists (ibid).

Polish parties generally have very low levels of direct contact with voters (Tworzecki 2010, 2008). This is to be expected of parties in new democracies, particularly in post-communist systems. According to Karp and Banducci, parties in new democracies are particularly challenged in mobilizing voters (2007). Low direct party-electorate interaction is a result of the parties' poor organization, lack of resources and their relative inexperience in mobilization efforts (Birch 2005). Furthermore, the "lack of widespread and stable party membership is likely to make canvassing efforts more difficult" for the parties which "also lack the organizational expertise and material resources to hire political consultants to coordinate a canvassing campaign" (Karp &

Banducci 2007, p. 218). Furthermore, voter “participation in activities other than voting remains at miniscule levels [and] the [Polish] parties don’t do very much to change this state of affairs” (Tworzecki 2010). Actual direct party-voter interaction including “phone bank operations, door-to-door canvassing...are very rare” (ibid). Instead of direct personal contact, Polish parties’ “primary means of communicating with the electorate are billboards, posters, leaflets (sent out with commercial junk mail. TV and radio are used as well” (ibid). Another popular form of party-voter contact is that of a public speech and Polish candidates continue to give many public speeches (Borowik-Dabrowska, 2005). However, instead of attracting voters it seems that the candidates mostly try to win media coverage when giving such speeches instead of seeking direct interaction with the voters.

In comparison to parties in other countries, Poland fares particularly badly regarding party-electorate contact. According to the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) which investigated party-voter contact in old and new democracies between 2001 and 2004, in Poland only about 5.9 % of respondents reported to have been contacted by a political party in Poland. In Germany, about 13% of the respondents had contact with the parties and in the United States 47.4 % had contact with the parties (CSES 2005). Similarly, data compiled by Karp and Banducci shows that Polish citizens are much less politically active than German or American citizens (2007). Only 7.1 % of the Polish respondents claimed to have tried to persuade others and only 4.1% reported participating in any sort of campaign activity (ibid). In comparison, 27.7% of German respondents reported to have tried to persuade others and 6.5% reported campaign activity (ibid). American respondents fared the best with 44.1% having tried to persuade

others and 29.9% having engaged in campaign activity (ibid). This is not unexpected, due to the fact that Polish citizens do not have much recent experience with democracy as do American and German citizens.

Polish political parties have recently made some efforts to contact voters in election campaigns. Szostak, for example believes that Polish parties are trying to increase their contact with voters in the campaigns through organizing public events, electoral meetings and visiting public places in the hope of interacting with voters there as well as visiting voters in their homes (2005). However, party-voter contact usually takes place in an impersonal way either through the media or by hired communications companies rather than by party employees, members or activists. In 2005, the PO employed the Polish telecom company MNI SA, a Polish multimedia group providing telephone service in central and eastern Poland (InverOak 2010). MNI SA then hired InverOak, a British telecommunications company to carry out a phone campaign targeting approximately 12 million Polish voters to “raise awareness of the [PO] party by broadcasting their manifesto [in an automated message] and obtain votes” (ibid). Interestingly, these automated calls were not even made in Poland but were made from the UK since this was “much cheaper than making the calls from within Poland” (ibid).

Out of the three countries, political parties in engage in personal contact with their electorates to varying degrees. Based on the last two election campaigns, we can say that American political parties have the most personal contact with their voters. German political parties have also made efforts to contact more voters in recent elections. In comparison, Polish political parties had the least contact with their electorate. These results mirror the three countries’ political cultures quite well. American election

campaigns are typically most visible out of the three cases, with recent campaigns focusing intensely on personal voter contact. German election campaigns are not as visible as American campaigns but still have some visibility. German election campaigns typically involve direct party-voter contact in public places, including market places and the parties' information booths during campaigns. As previously stated, Polish political culture is very different from American and German political culture in that Poles are not very active politically. Also, election campaigns in Poland are usually not very visible and therefore do not include significant party-voter contact.

5.7 Heavy use of media and advertising

Unlike German and Polish political parties, American political parties do not receive free access to television air time during election campaigns. American parties have to buy airtime from the television networks so that the amount of airtime the parties receive determines the amount of money they are able to spend. Both the Democratic and the Republican parties have usually spent millions of dollars on television advertising during election campaigns.

Table 5.3: USA campaign spending

Year	Candidate/party	Total spending in million \$	Population (in millions)	Spending per voter in \$
2004	Bush/Republicans	345	197.006	1.75
	Kerry/Democrats	310	197.006	1.57
2008	McCain/Republicans	333	225.499	1.48
	Obama/Democrats	730	225.499	3.24

Source: www.opensecrets.org, www.idea.int

As usual in contemporary U.S. presidential election campaigns, the 2004 Kerry and the Bush campaigns spend large sums of money on advertising, mostly on television.

According to CNN, the Kerry campaign spent \$4,924,851 and the Bush campaign spent \$4,564,586 on advertising (see table 5.1). In addition to the official campaigns, interest groups for both parties spend similar amounts for their preferred candidate. For example, Republican leaning interest groups spent \$5,646,335 on ads in support of George W. Bush's campaign (ibid). Democratic leaning interest groups spent \$6,870,518 supporting John Kerry's campaign (ibid). In 2008, both parties spent extremely large sums of money on advertising. For example, the Obama campaign spent \$310,144,381 while the McCain campaign spent \$ 134,792,298 (see table 5.1). Although these sums are shockingly high some reports indicate that the parties' overall campaign spending habits are changing and moving away from devoting most resources to advertisements. Chief Obama strategist David Plouffe revealed that the campaign spent much less of its budget on media than previous campaigns (Grover 2008). While 'normal campaigns' spend up to 75% of their budgets on media, the Obama campaign claims to have spent less than 50% on media (ibid). Instead, as Plouffe indicates, the Obama campaign devoted much more money to building up the ground operations and field offices all around the United States (ibid).

Both parties in the 2004 and the 2008 campaigns employed large communications teams including spokespeople, advertising and marketing experts. For example, the Bush campaign had a network of "five regional spokesmen, all based at campaign headquarters [near Washington, DC], who handle[d] media inquiries; a rapid response team charged with countering negative attacks; and a 'surrogate' team that [found] guests to appear on the President's behalf on television shows, radio programs, and internet chats" (SourceWatch 2009). Similarly, a CBS campaign special with Katie Couric gave insight

into the inner workings of the Obama and McCain campaigns and showed that both campaigns ran war rooms staffed with numerous media specialists engaging in rapid response and image control (Couric 2008a, 2008b).

In 2004 and even more in 2008, the internet was an important tool for both parties' campaigns. The candidates had their own websites and used them heavily. The websites functioned similar to television spots by broadcasting attacks on the opposition while praising the respective candidate's program and strengths. However, the websites were much more than an updated version of the television ads. George W. Bush's website, for example, "explained how to become a Bush volunteer, make a contribution, register to vote, write a supporting letter to a newspaper, and host a party for the president" (West 2010, p. 62). Similarly, John Kerry's campaign website "explained how to volunteer, recruit fellow voters, and organize local campaign events" (ibid). Kerry's website also hosted a web blog where visitors could learn about Kerry's various positions and voice their opinions. Kerry's website also included a "Rapid Response Center...that provided answers to GOP criticisms and attacks on Kerry" (ibid, p. 63).

The GOP campaign recruited activists "from social and political networks and the Bush web site, which generated six different kinds of "team leaders" (Mockabee et al 2005). Communications technology was used to mobilize voters. Some commentators even felt reminded of the days of urban machine politics. The Los Angeles Times reported, that after "decades of less efficient direct mail and cold calls, the technology has evolved to the point that millions of residents living in battleground states are getting as much personal attention as a 1940s Democrat did in Chicago" (Menn 2004).

In 2008, both the Obama and the McCain campaigns used their websites extensively, particularly to raise funds but also to organize and mobilize supporters. Commentators have called the 2008 campaign the “first truly digital campaign in the United States” (West 2010 p. 63). Accordingly, the candidates, especially Obama, “used the internet to raise record amounts of money and to place speeches, ads and video “Q and A”s on YouTube, MySpace and Facebook. Both nominees also placed nearly all their advertisements on their web sites, allowing voters to see the spots either on television or over the Internet.” (Ibid).

The 2008 Obama campaign facilitated voter and activist mobilization where supporters “receive campaign updates via text message and e-mail and can easily sign up online for Obama groups or any of the dozens of daily volunteer events on each state’s campaign web site. With the organization’s ‘Neighbor to Neighbor’ computer program, volunteers can pull up an online list of neighbors to call from home, a particularly useful option for rural supporters” (MacGillis 2008). Regarding the direct contact between the parties and the citizens, it appears that the internet in particular has provided the parties with novel channels of communication and that the parties have used these channels strategically. Utilizing the latest communications technology, American political parties seek more rather than less interaction with the electorate indicating stronger party-electorate linkage.

Table 5.4: Germany campaign spending¹

Year	party	total spending in million \$	population (in millions)	spending per voter in \$
2002	CDU	55.7	66.136352	0.84
	SPD	78.7	66.136352	1.19
	Gruene	13.9	66.136352	0.21
	FDP	19	66.136352	0.29
2005	CDU	56.1	66.738702	0.84
	SPD	63.8	66.738702	0.96
	Gruene	11.5	66.738702	0.17
	FDP	13.4	66.738702	0.20

Source: political parties' yearly financial reports, Deutscher Bundestag, www.idea.int

Overall, German political parties devote less effort and resources to television advertisements than American parties. German parties receive free air time on the public television channels prior to Election Day in proportion to their last election performance. This significantly reduces their need to buy airtime. In addition, German election campaigns are much shorter than American campaigns, lasting at most 6 weeks. German parties' media campaigns rely less on TV advertisements, using instead street billboards, ads in newspapers and magazines and increasingly ads on the internet. Despite commissioning these rather old-fashioned physical advertisements, both parties are very media savvy and follow their media coverage closely, especially during the campaigns. Both the CDU and the SPD followed the media coverage of their campaigns closely and also tried to respond to their coverage quickly (Wasserhoevel 2008, Koschnicke 2008). Both German parties also employed pollsters and conducted surveys and public opinion studies before and during the campaigns (ibid). These strategies, however, do not quite measure up to the 'war rooms' and 'rapid response' systems of American campaigns.

¹ Data for 2009 was not available.

German parties also employ a team of media and communications specialists. However, they are less likely to use outside consultants for these areas than American parties. In past campaigns, both parties had hired one or two external media advisors, though most of them were previously politicians themselves so should not be fully considered ‘outsiders’. The CDU used the services of Peter Radunski for several years, a CDU politician who then started his own political consulting firm. While both parties hired commercial advertisement agencies for their 2005 and 2009 campaigns, they also relied on their internal communications and public relations departments (Wassherhoevel 2008, Koschnicke 2008). Neither of the two parties hired foreign consultants or experts (ibid). These findings support the argument by Kolodny and Logan (1998) and Kolodny (2000) which states that political consultants help political parties reach their goals of running and winning election campaigns. Political parties and the consultants should be regarded as allies and not as enemies since they both work for the same goal, i.e. getting the candidate elected. As the example of the CDU and their consultant Peter Radunski illustrates, the lines between consultants and parties can become blurred.

In 2005 both the SPD and the CDU ran campaign websites and sought to expand their use of the internet for the campaign. The SPD ran the rather successful online grassroots campaign ‘wirkaempfen.de’ (we fight.de). The website was set up by a small group of younger SPD parliamentarians, members and non-affiliated SPD activists. The website was initially set up rather spontaneously and without any coordination with the SPD leadership or the campaign management (Rohwer and Schuster 2006). After its positive reception in the media and with SPD members and activists the website became integral part of the 2005 online campaign and was linked to all the other SPD websites

(ibid). The main purpose of the website was to mobilize party members, activists, sympathizers as well as the general electorate for the SPD campaign. The website encouraged users to provide one's contact information and pledge to support the SPD's campaign. This online pledge campaign was quite successful. More than 1,500 people signed up within the first two weeks, increasing to about 4,000 people by election day (ibid). On the website, users could download and print out campaign materials, and participate in one of the four online forums (ibid). Users could also compose campaign topics, positions and slogans and report from their direct campaign experience in a blog section (ibid). Some of the slogans and arguments provided by users on the website became actual campaign leaflets which were then distributed among all users via the website's email list (ibid). In addition, wirkaempfen.de, also served the SPD greatly as a recruiting tool for volunteers, activists and even new members who then became part of the street campaign in addition to their online efforts (ibid). Thanks to the website's large mailing list, the SPD was able to reach thousands of activists instantly via email, inform them about events in their region and encourage them to participate further (ibid). Volunteers were encouraged to 'find five more volunteers' who can pledge their support and work for the campaign (ibid). After attending events and participating, volunteers gave feedback and posted pictures on the website (ibid). This was not only rewarding for the volunteers themselves but also maintained a connection to the overall SPD campaign. Although wirkaempfe.de started on an exclusively online basis it quickly got linked to the grassroots ground level of the 2005 campaign and eventually served as a link between the online campaign, the grassroots campaign and the overall 2005 SPD campaign. Another

significant aspect of this website was its ability to mobilize not only party members and activists but also new, non-member party sympathizers.

The CDU also ran a respectable online campaign in 2005. The CDU website, team-zukunft.net, had features similar to the SPD wirkaempfen.de site. The CDU website (www.teamzukunft.de) sought to inform voters, mobilize members and activists and to provide a link between the party base and the campaign. The teAM Zukunft website informed by constantly providing short articles on the activities of the campaign as well as important dates, events and grassroots efforts (www.teamzukunft.de). There were numerous podcasts from the party headquarters, the Konrad-Adenauer-Haus to further underline the connection between the regular party operations and the campaign (Herold 2006). The SPD also used the website to honor its most active members and volunteers (ibid). CDU users of teAM Zukunft.de signed up for an email list which was then used to mobilize activists for the campaign. With the help of this list, the CDU campaign was able to email up to 32000 activists (ibid). The activists themselves, in particular team leaders and coordinators could look up activist contact information for particular users or groups, greatly facilitating the volunteer organizing (ibid). The website also provided leaflets, logos, t-shirts and posters to be used in campaign events by the activists. Furthermore, the website let the registered activists organize themselves and run campaign events independently, such as viewing parties of the televised debates (ibid). The CDU website encouraged users to “do 10 things for the change” of government, such as writing letters to the editor, calling a radio station and declaring support for the CDU and also to become active on the internet by participating in online

forum discussions (ibid). Lastly, the website was also used to ask for financial contributions of the campaign (ibid).

The 2009 SPD campaign sought to utilize the latest information technology even more than in the 2005 campaign. The SPD put more resources into its internet campaign which it considered the campaigns “Herzstück” (heart/core) and used it to reach and mobilize voters (Handelsblatt 2008). Both the SPD and the CDU ran their own websites in 2005 and 2009 during the campaigns (SPD: meinespd.de, CDU: teAM Deutschland). Users could create their own profiles on these websites and join mailing lists and groups. The groups were organized by the geographic regions of Germany. In addition, several of these groups were run by organizations that were affiliated with the parties. For example, the CDU’s affiliated group of young party members (Junge Union) was very active on the teAM Deutschland website (www.team2009.de). Similarly, young party members (Jusos) were very active on the meinespd.de website (www.meinespd.de).

Polish political parties rely heavily on the media to communicate their campaign messages and ultimately get voters to the polls. A 2005 study illustrates that Polish people rely mostly on the media for political information during campaigns (Tworzecki 2009). While 86% of respondents obtained election-related information from television news only 5% of respondents obtained this information from political meetings or rallies (ibid). This reliance on the media is in no small part caused by the weak linkage between the parties and the electorate and also by the fact that parties are organized very poorly (Tworzecki and Semetko 2009; Szczerbiak 2008). Due to the limited organization of the parties on the ground, the main campaign battleground of recent Polish elections was the media. It is therefore not surprising that Polish parties, instead of focusing on various

aspects of campaigning such as grassroots efforts, focus largely only on the use of media during campaigns. According to Polityka newspaper, PiS, PO and LiD combined spent most of their money on media in the 2007 campaign (www.jaron.salon24.pl). As table 5.5 illustrates, the parties spent the vast majority of their funds on media related expenses.

Table 5.5: Poland campaign spending

Year	party	total spending in million \$	population (in millions)	spending per voter in \$
2005	PiS	12.5	30.00316	0.42
	PO	12.1	30.00316	0.40
	PSL	3.1	30.00316	0.10
	SLD	8.4	30.00316	0.28
2007	PiS	8.5	30.411197	0.28
	PO	9.1	30.411197	0.30
	PSL	8.7	30.411197	0.29
	SLD	6.5	30.411197	0.21

Source: political parties' yearly financial reports, Monitor Polski (official gazette of the Republic of Poland).

In Polish election campaigns the incumbent party has had a tendency to turn the public media into its mouthpiece (Tworzecki and Semetko 2009). In the 2007 parliamentary campaign there was a clear distinction among the public and the private media outlets in Poland. In particular, the publicly owned stations were broadcasting very favorably towards the incumbent PiS party and its candidate Kaczyński while the privately owned stations were extremely critical of the PiS (ibid). Furthermore, it seemed as though the media had been taken hostage by the campaign due to the almost overwhelming amount of coverage devoted to the campaign. Particularly startling was the amount of airtime “devoted to the coverage of PiS campaign events, meetings, press conferences and the like, often resulting in an interruption of regularly-scheduled programming” (ibid). Also talk shows and other public affairs programs were handled

with a heavily pro-PiS line (ibid). The tone of the evening news program “Wiadomości”, shown every evening on the public channel TVP1, was also openly supportive of the PiS party (OSCE 2008). Several journalists admitted afterwards that they were instructed to frame the PiS party positively (Bogucka 2007). This included leaving out information that would reflect unfavorably on the PiS or only showing images of PiS candidate Kaczyński smiling rather than images of him angrily denouncing his opponents (ibid). In addition to the public television channels, PiS also heavily relied on the ultra-conservative and nationalist radio station Radio Maryja to communicate its message and reach potential voters. Prior to the 2007 parliamentary election, experts had expected the Catholic radio station to deliver up to 1.5 million votes for PiS (Kulich 2007a).

Since the 2005 parliamentary election campaign, television has played an even larger role in Polish parliamentary campaigns. Coverage of the political campaigns in Poland takes primarily place on television (Cwalina 2000; Cwalina & Falkowski 2005). Musiałowska demonstrates that Polish parties spend large sums of money to produce and buy airtime for TV commercials (2007). Media expenditures in Polish campaigns have been rising considerably in recent elections. According to the Polish regulatory body National Broadcasting council KRRiT, overall political parties spend more than 5 000 000 PLN (\$1748494.81) on television spots (2001, as cited by Musiałowska 2007). In 2005, this rose to 33 000 000 PLN (\$11540065.78) for party commercials (KRRiT 2005, as cited by Musiałowska 2007). As Musiałowska shows, nearly all Polish parties paid for ads on private stations in 2005 which had not been the case in 2001 (2007). As a result, Polish TV stations profit considerably from election campaigns. In 2005 Polish TV broadcasters earned around 17 million PLN during the parliamentary campaign (TNS

OBOP 2005). Of the major parties, PiS outspent all the others with 7.3 million PLN (ibid). PO, in comparison spent ‘only’ 3.5 million PLN (1.2 million \$). Therefore, the “television campaign paid off given the fact that the Kaczynski brothers, both from PiS, gained both the Presidency and the Prime Minister Office” in 2005 (Musiałowska 2007, p. 13).

The media campaigns of Polish parties also include radio spots and political billboard posters. In 2005, PiS bought 195 radio spots for 324,000 PLN (\$113,302.46) on the stations “Jedynka” and “Trójka” while PO bought 45 spots for 78,000 PLN (\$27,276.52) (Rzeczpospolita 9/23/2005). In 2005, Polish parties also focused intensely on billboard posters. “Posters showing Donald Tusk, PO leaders...were often placed only a few meters from each other” (Musiałowska 2007, p. 14). According to Musiałowska, over forty percent of all advertising billboards were covered with party posters and the “expenditures of the parties on the billboard campaign constituted 10% of the overall yearly income of the outdoor advertising industry with a sum reaching 40 million PLN” (\$13987958.52) (2007, p. 14).

Opinion polls also influence Polish parties and politics greatly (Raciborski 2007). The PO party molded their campaign according to polling results and created their campaign slogans and TV clips on the basis of public opinion (anonymous PO politician 2009). Similarly, the PiS also strongly based their campaign on public opinion surveys. According to a PiS politician, “we composed our electoral platform and program based on public opinion, including banners, slogans and advertising clips” (anonymous PiS politician 2009).

It seems that Polish parties have failed to tap into the many opportunities offered to them by modern communications technology. The parties started using the internet and have established websites. However, Polish parties' use of the internet and their websites are not comparable to that of American or German political parties. In the 2005 parliamentary election campaign, both PiS and PO had websites none of which contained much detailed information on the parties' programs and platforms (Millard 2007). Polish parties have yet to fully utilize the internet, emails and text-messaging for campaign mobilizing. This would be a great opportunity to mobilize particularly young Poles. Polish parties have yet to fully take advantage of this and use the technology for effective campaigning and interacting with the electorate. Poland, after all, has very "vibrant Internet and blogging communities" with lots of young internet-savvy Poles who are eager to get involved in politics (Kulich 2007). This became apparent in 2007 when several young political activists set up websites to encourage voting. One of them was 'Wybieram.pl' ("I choose"), organized by a few young Polish activists, run out of a smoky basement café (Kulich 2007). The group made "I voted" buttons, relying "on donated services for printing flyers or airtime for their advertisements with celebrities asking people to vote" (ibid). The group even managed to get the Polish MTV channel to run their ads. According to Kasia Szajewska, one of the group's founders, "in the [United] States you have Rock the Vote [and MTV are] really happy to have something similar" (ibid). Other activists set up the website 'kandydaci2007.pl', modeled after the American Project Vote smart website and set up to monitor the various candidates' views and programs (ibid).

In addition to websites, text-messaging and email are additional untapped campaign tools for the parties. For example, also in the 2007 parliamentary campaign, several young Polish activists started text-message campaigns, encouraging others to vote and to pass on the messages (ibid). In one text-messaging campaign in 2007, for example, activists encouraged other young people jokingly to steal their grandmothers' ID cards so that they would not presumably be able to vote for the conservative PiS party (ibid). Similarly, young painter Pola Dwurnik, started a get-out-the vote campaign using her artwork and emailed it to about 500 people who continued to forward these images which were then also posted on blogs (ibid). Dwurnik painted posters of various characters "an aloof intellectual, an unmarried pregnant woman and a hip-hop artist, among others – who urge Poles to vote" (ibid).

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter examined American, German and Polish political parties and their organization during recent election campaigns. The purpose of this examination was to determine whether the parties' type of campaign organization confirmed Katz and Mair's cartel theory. Were the cartel to apply, the parties' organization during election campaigns should reflect this. For instance, the parties' campaigns should be of professional rather than of amateur character. The parties' campaign headquarters should be separate from regular party government operations to leave the campaign in the control of a few rather than the larger party and its members. Such campaigns should rely significantly on paid professionals and consultants. Citizens, activist and members should play a very limited role in the campaigns. Cartel parties, for example, would not

seek direct contact with the electorate. Therefore, the campaigns should rely heavily on mass media and the latest communication technology to mobilize voters rather than organize GOTV grassroots efforts.

After examining recent election campaigns in the United States, Germany and Poland it appears that none of the parties fully conform to Katz and Mair's cartel type of party. Overall, Polish political parties were a better fit with the cartel theory but also did not fully meet all the criteria. American and German political parties fit Katz and Mair's cartel theory even less.

In the last two presidential election campaigns in 2004 and 2008, American political parties met some of the criteria of the cartel theory. For example, in both years, the parties operated separate campaign headquarters that were run professionally and did not allow for much interaction between the campaigns and their regular party operations. Also, the leadership and key staff of the campaigns were largely professionals and political consultants. As predicted, the parties also relied heavily on the mass media and the latest communication technology to reach the electorate. At the same time, however, both parties in 2004 and 2008 invested heavily in their grassroots efforts and sought to mobilize as many voters as possible. The parties also noticeably used volunteers to carry out campaign work. In addition, American political parties heavily interacted with voters in 2005 and 2008. This of course starkly contradicts the cartel model which predicts decreasing citizen-party linkage. A typical cartel party should not seek to have a lot of citizen interaction nor should it rest its campaigns largely on the success of its grass-roots mobilization efforts.

Not unlike American political parties, German political parties' organization during the last two election campaigns (2005, 2009) confirms some criteria of the cartel theory. For example, the parties ran professional rather than amateur campaigns, relied on professional campaign staff and experts and also significantly utilized mass media and communication technology. However, German parties also recruited volunteers and organized their grassroots in both campaigns. Similarly, German parties sought to interact with voters by increasing direct party-voter contact in both campaigns. Due to their less abundant financial resources, German parties did not rely on political consultants much. In addition, German parties ran their campaigns from their regular party headquarters. This not only maximized the use of all of the party resources, staff and members but also allowed for greater integration of all these parts into the campaign. According to the cartel theory, parties should avoid this integration and prefer a top-down, autonomous campaign location and operations.

Polish parties appear to conform with the cartel theory much more than American or German political parties do. For example, in both 2005 and 2007, Polish parties had largely professional campaign staff and increasingly relied on political consultants. Moreover, Polish parties did not rely much on volunteers or grassroots efforts. Similarly, instead of investing in direct voter contact Polish parties largely relied on the mass media, in particular television to communicate their campaign messages. The location of the campaigns was the only aspect of the parties' organization that did not confirm the expectations of the cartel theory. Not unlike German parties, the Polish parties operated their campaigns from their typical party headquarters. This helped them make the most out of their resources and also allowed for more integration between the campaign and

the regular party operations. However, this did not automatically speak for greater inner-party cooperation and integration. Instead the location of the campaign headquarters reflects the size of the parties and their elite character. As the cartel model predicts, Polish parties have few members and key decisions are made by small circle of individuals.

As a result of these findings, the examination of party campaign organization in the United States, Germany and Poland only partially confirms the predictions of Katz and Mair's cartel theory. Polish political parties appear to fit the cartel type the most, due their size and lack of campaign linkage with the electorate. American and German political parties, on the other hand, rely too much on grassroots and volunteers to be considered cartel parties in an electoral context.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction and summary

This dissertation studied the organizations of contemporary political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland during national election campaigns and also during regular party operations. As many scholars have found, political parties have dramatically professionalized and modernized their regular operations and especially their campaigns (Swanson & Mancini 1996; Newman 1999; Thurber & Nelson 2000; Thurber, Nelson & Dulio 2000; Norris 2002). The literature suggests that political parties have replaced amateurs with professional party staff. Instead of relying on party members and activists and their volunteer labor to reach voters, political parties have relied increasingly on the latest communication technology and the mass media. According to conventional wisdom, these changes in organization have detrimental effects on political parties. For example, some have suggested that the presence of political consultants has undermined the overall strength and cohesion of party organizations (Sabato 1981).

Similarly, Katz and Mair have argued (1995) that these changes in campaign organization and operation indicate that contemporary political parties represent a new type of party, the cartel party. For Katz and Mair this means that as such political parties have become agents of the state rather than agents of the electorate. Therefore, if Katz and Mair are correct current parties in the cartel mold fail to provide linkage between the state and the electorate. Political parties have become financially dependent on the state and thus do not need to rely on the financial and general support of the electorate.

Accordingly, the heavy reliance on communication technology and media illustrates the missing linkage between the parties and the electorate. This move away from the electorate towards a closer relationship with the state has weakened political parties, especially the party on the ground, i.e. the party organization that links the parties with their electorates.

This dissertation tested whether Katz and Mair's theory applies to political parties in the United States, Germany and Poland. In chapter two, I examined whether party organizations in the three countries met cartel criteria. Specifically, I examined the political systems in the United States, Germany and Poland to determine whether any of these systems would be conducive to a state-party cartel, structurally speaking. I examined the three electoral systems, the number of parties in the three systems, the three respective party systems, the role of the parties in all branches of government as well as the level of patronage in the three systems. Despite structural differences the American, German and Polish political systems all permit the formation of state-party cartel in various ways. For example, I found high patronage levels in the American, German and Polish states indicative of the fact that the three political systems were favorable to a party-state cartel. Regarding three party systems, I found the American party system the most stable and therefore most conducive to a party-cartel. The German and the Polish current party systems appeared less stable and therefore less conducive to a party-state cartel. Among the three electoral systems, the Presidential American system also seems to allow for greater party entrenchment of the state than the PR systems of Germany and Poland. Nevertheless, I also acknowledged that American and Polish parties play a less important role in their political system than German parties do in the German system. So

we can only speak of a 'party state' in the German context. Katz and Mair do not consider structural factors, such as the particular characteristics and institutions of a given political system, as enabling the party-state cartel in their analysis.

Chapter three undertook a second test of the cartel theory by examining the relationship between American, German and Polish political parties and the state. According to Katz and Mair, I should have found very close ties between parties and the state, especially regarding party finance. We should have also found signs for a weakened linkage between the parties and their electorates since true cartel parties have all their needs met by the state and therefore do not need the electorate anymore. However, it appeared that neither American, German nor Polish parties were exclusively funded by the state. Out of the three, American parties receive the least financial support from the federal state. German and Polish parties on the other hand receive substantial state subsidies and also benefit from indirect state funding such as office allowances and party taxes paid by the deputies to their parties. The combined sum of direct and indirect state subventions to Polish and German parties are considerable and indicate a significant financial dependence of the parties on the state. However, Polish and German parties also have other important sources of income, such as membership fees and contributions (Germany) and considerable income from individual donations and property (Poland). These additional financial resources make up a large part of the parties' budgets. As long as these additional incomes for the parties continue to be substantial we cannot say that the parties' financial future rests entirely on the state.

A look at campaign finance revealed that state funding was more important for German and Polish parties. However, again, it was not clear that even in the German and

Polish party context state funds comprised the biggest part of the parties' total campaign chests. Regarding American parties, state campaign funds played a much smaller role. American parties' campaign funds benefit far more from privately raised funds and less from state funds. German and Polish parties on the other hand benefit more from state funds to run their campaigns than on private funds. Regarding party finance overall, I found that American parties could not be considered cartel parties based on their financial resources. In fact, I would argue that relying on private contributions strengthens American parties' linkage with the electorate. However, this would only be true if the majority of donations were made by individual citizens and not by corporations or interest groups. Financially speaking, I concluded that the cartel model applied much more to German and Polish political parties than to American political parties.

In addition to examining state-party financing, in chapter three I also suggested a modification of the cartel model by considering aspects other than party finances to assess their fit with the cartel theory. More specifically, I suggested that there are other ways in which political parties can be privileged within their respective political systems that constitute a political cartel. One mechanism providing such privileges to parties is party laws and regulations. The analysis of party laws and regulations in the United States, Germany and Poland revealed that these laws significantly privilege established parties over new and smaller parties. Therefore, in chapter three I found that on the basis of this law there exist state-party cartels in all three countries, although in varying forms. For German and Polish political parties this privilege was much more obvious than for American parties. Both the German and the Polish constitutions specifically mention and establish parties as an indispensable part of the democratic political process. This is not

true for American parties which do not legally exist from a federal, constitutional perspective since they are not specifically mentioned by the Constitution or federal laws. However, American parties are equally privileged by state laws which benefit the two established parties and undermine minor and new parties. In the American context state laws thus also serve to create a cartel-like relationship between the parties and the state. Evaluating party laws and regulations in the United States, Germany and Poland I found that they generally benefited the bigger and established parties while undermining smaller and new parties. This was particularly true for the regulation of party foundation, party financing and electoral ballot access laws. Laws and regulations thus directly protect bigger parties from the political competition of smaller and new parties and we can say that this constitutes a political cartel between bigger parties and the state.

Another important aspect of the cartel theory is that of linkage. Cartel parties have become so close to the state that they have lost their linkage to the electorate according to Katz and Mair (1995). In chapter four I examined the linkage between political parties and their electorates in the United States, Germany and Poland. In order to assess this linkage I examined local party organizations, their relationships to the national party headquarters, party-citizen communication, the relationship between members, party activists and the parties, citizen participation in election campaigns and citizen interaction with the parties outside of election campaigns. According to Katz and Mair's predictions, I should have found very little linkage between parties and their electorates.

However, my analysis did not confirm this weakened linkage, at least not for the American and the German parties. Regarding Polish political parties, it seems more accurate to consider their linkage to the electorate weak. Regarding their organizations,

all parties, even Polish parties, the most likely cartel candidate in this category, maintain at least rudimentary levels of party organization. The local organizations of German and American parties maintain a more noticeable presence in local politics. Similarly, I observed significant interaction between the parties and their electorates particularly for German and American parties. While American parties' interaction with their electorate is primarily limited to election campaigns, German parties appear to go beyond that by interacting with their members in the 'off season'. Another sign of party-electorate linkage are the recent efforts by both American and German parties to win new party activists or members. Both American and German parties have in recent national election campaigns made many efforts to mobilize their electorates, both to vote for them and also to volunteer for their campaigns. American parties appear also poised to achieve stronger linkage by investing in a more permanent country-wide organization and also by utilizing the already 'activated' volunteers after an election, for example, to campaign for policies. Polish parties on the other hand, have not made such efforts and appear generally uninterested in even expanding their membership bases. Not surprisingly, the linkage between Polish parties and their electorate is noticeably weak. I base this assessment on several findings such as the smallness of Polish parties, their failure to win more members, as well as their failure to interact with voters during and outside of election campaigns and also their failure to establish more extensive local party organizations in recent years.

Chapter five examined American, German and Polish political parties and their organization during recent national election campaigns to determine whether the parties' campaign organizations implied a close state-party relationship and a weak party-

electorate relationship. If parties in all three countries were cartel parties I should have found this reflected in their campaign organizations. For instance, we should have found the organizations highly professionalized both in structure and in personnel. A cartel party would also maintain campaign headquarters separate from regular party organizations. I should have also found that the parties do not involve voters and activists in their campaigns. Communication between the parties and their voters should be done mainly through the mass media and with the help of the latest communication technology.

However, after studying the most two recent national election campaigns in all three countries, I did not find these predictions confirmed in all aspects. Regarding American political parties, I found that they only met some of these cartel criteria such as their level of professional operations and staff, the separation between party and campaign operations as well as their heavy use of mass media and communication technology. Despite this, however, American parties have recently invested significant effort and resources into their grassroots and voter mobilization efforts. Similarly, I showed that American parties' campaigns have relied heavily on volunteers to operate their campaigns and have interacted immensely with voters during campaigns. These findings directly contradict the predictions of the cartel model according to which we should not observe such strong electoral linkage between parties and voters.

My analysis for German political parties revealed some significant similarities to American parties. In recent campaigns, German parties were equally professionalized in structure and personnel of their organizations and they also made considerable use of mass media and communications technology. Like American parties, however, German

parties also increased their efforts at volunteer recruiting and grassroots organizing in the last two national campaigns. German parties also interacted more with their voters. Besides, German parties ran their campaigns out of their regular headquarters and not from separate locations as we expected and did not rely very much on consultants. Instead, German parties appeared determined to make best use of all of their available resources, including permanent staff and their members. The fact that German parties integrated their regular operations with the campaign operations also contradicts the cartel predictions.

Regarding recent campaigns and their campaign organizations, Polish parties conformed more to the cartel theory than American or German political parties. More specifically, during recent campaigns, Polish parties ran professional campaigns and relied somewhat on political consultants. I did not find any evidence that Polish parties relied significantly on the help of volunteers. I also did not find that Polish parties made any serious efforts at grassroots campaigning. Similarly, Polish parties did not interact much with their voters nor did they try to communicate with them other than via mass media, especially television. What is more, the size and elite feel of Polish parties and their campaign organizations demonstrates cartel characteristics.

6.2 Central points of this study

Based on my findings regarding the parties and their campaign organizations, I conclude that American and German parties do not sufficiently confirm the predictions of Katz and Mair's cartel theory. I therefore argue that Katz and Mair's argument, the cartel thesis, does not hold. This is true even for the case of Polish political parties which seem to meet all the cartel criteria. Although political parties in Poland meet cartel criteria it is

not for reasons suggested by Katz and Mair. What is more, the cartel theory cannot explain the cartel appearance of Polish political parties. According to the cartel theory the appearance of Polish parties should be caused primarily by their financial dependence on the state. However, since my data did not confirm this, dependence on state funding cannot serve as an explanation for the parties' cartel appearance. Instead I argue that several underlying various much better explain why Polish parties have cartel characteristics.

One possible explanation is Poland's relative inexperience with democracy and its lack of a culture of political participation among Polish voters. Generally, Polish citizens do not significantly participate politically. A recent study of European voters found that only 7.1 % of the Polish respondents claimed to have tried to persuade others regarding their vote in an upcoming election and only 4.1% reported participating in any sort of campaign activity (CSES 2005).). In comparison, 27.7% of German respondents tried to persuade others regarding their vote in an upcoming election and 6.5% reported campaign activity (ibid). American respondents fared the best with 44.1% having tried to persuade others regarding their vote in an upcoming election and 29.9% having engaged in campaign activity (ibid). Similarly, turnout for Polish national elections are usually very low, illustrating the lack of participation on the part of the electorate. For example, turnout in the last two national elections was 40.5% (2005) and 53.8% (2007) (Millard 2010b). There is also a strong anti-party sentiment among Poles. Nalewajko found that Poles often perceive parties as elite organizations are "artificial, created and enforced for the objectives of some outside forces" (2009, p. 125). This is also confirmed by Jasiewicz, who argued that Poles view parties as corrupt and inefficient (2007). Put most

positively, Poles view political parties as ‘necessary evil’ to a functioning democracy (ibid). Poles’ negative view of political parties is clearly a result of the long communist one-party system (ibid). Poles frequently associate the term “party” with the communist party and thus with the communist system (ibid). It is therefore not surprising to find that many political parties avoid having the word ‘party’ in their name to avoid this negative association. Instead they call themselves ‘movements’, ‘leagues’, ‘bloc’, ‘coalition’. For example, PO is short for Platforma Obywatelska and means “Civic Platform”. Similarly, the PiS is short for Prawo I Sprawiedliwość and means “Law and Justice”. For these two parties it was particularly important to avoid the communist association since both parties historically grew out of the anti-communist Solidarność (solidarity) movement and have always stressed this as one of their underlying values.

There is also a lack of commitment to party politics by the elites, the politicians themselves. From the position of the politicians there are not many reasons to stick with one particular party permanently due to instability of the party system. My argument here is based on the findings regarding politicians and parties in post-communist democracies (Kreuzer 2004). Accordingly, due to the high turnover of political parties and their often short-lived existence in post-communist democracies such as Poland, politicians do not feel that joining a party would necessarily improve their career prospects. This is very different from politicians in the United States and Germany where joining a party holds many benefits for politicians. For example, the party label helps the politicians’ get elected by recognition and also by the electoral support the parties provide. However, in the post-communist and Polish context, a party label has a negative connotation and also the parties are often too small and too poor to help politicians get elected. There is thus

little incentive on the part of the individual politicians to become loyal party politicians to further strengthen political parties.

In addition, contemporary Polish political parties came into existence under conditions very different from those experienced by American and German political parties. Polish parties did not undergo the process of transforming from mass parties to catch-all parties as did German and American parties. Not undergoing the organizational transformations of German or American parties, Polish parties have always been small. In addition, Polish parties were founded in a time when communications technology was already widely available and it was easy for parties to use them for electoral purposes. In contrast to German and American parties, Polish parties could employ this technology rather than mobilize masses of members/activists to communicate their campaign message. In other words, Polish parties have been employing communications technology and the mass media because they had access to it and it proved easier than to mobilize a politically passive electorate to do the campaigning.

In this dissertation, I therefore argue that Katz and Mair's cartel thesis cannot fully explain the organizational characteristics of American, German and Polish political parties. As a result, we cannot consider the cartel argument a theory. In its place, I propose that the cartel thesis should be considered a heuristic tool to enlighten us on the state of party organization. More specifically, as such a tool, the cartel model reveals the current state of political parties, their organizational characteristics, their relationship with the electorate and their relationship with the state. In this regard, the cartel thesis presents another possible party model building on older descriptive party models such as that of the mass party (Duverger 1954) and the catch-all party (Kirchheimer 1957).

However, we need to recognize that the cartel model only makes sense with knowledge of the mass party and the catch-all party models. The cartel model is therefore one of several possible labels with which to explore and describe party systems and party organization. At the same time, however, we need to acknowledge that there is a problem with this inclusion of the two other models. Conventional wisdom suggests that political parties evolve by going through each of these models in chronological order (mass party, catch-all party, cartel party...). As already discussed this is problematic in the case of Polish parties since they clearly did not go through these stages, i.e. never were mass or catch-all parties. Therefore, we need to refrain from putting these party models in chronological sequence and merely consider them different descriptive models of party organization. Furthermore, we need to recognize that none of these models have brought forth a comprehensive theory explaining why political parties organize in a particular way (Krouwel 2006).

Although I generally argue against Katz and Mair's cartel thesis, I find that it is beneficial to scholars of political parties and party organization. In particular, I argue that the cartel thesis' descriptive qualities are very accurate and useful to an understanding of contemporary political parties and their organizations. The cartel thesis greatly aids scholars of political parties by characterizing party systems. More specifically, the cartel thesis' contribution lies in accurately describing the state of political parties and the ways in which they operate and function within their respective political systems and as active organizations in themselves. The cartel thesis' qualities are also useful in describing the parties' relationship with the electorate, and their relationship with the state. The strength of the cartel thesis therefore does not lie in formulating a comprehensive theory regarding

political parties but in assessing the state of political parties and their organizations. It is such assessment that can contribute to the formulation of future theories of party organization.

6.3 Implications

The findings of this study are relevant to general research on political parties, electoral systems and election campaigns. The study of election campaigns is a valuable lens through which we can examine a crucial part of democracies. Elections hold two important functions in a democracy. On the one hand, elections present citizens with the opportunity to participate politically and thereby hold their government accountable. On the other hand, election campaigns are crucial to political parties that seek to win or keep representation. During election campaigns, political parties need to appeal to the electorate and convince voters of their ideas in order to win their votes. The way in which political parties organize during campaigns reveals much about the relationship between parties and their electorates. Party campaign organization also gives us insight into the electoral linkage between parties and voters. Accordingly, my study of party campaign organization in the United States, Germany and Poland permits assessment of the quality of the party-electorate linkage in the three countries. I found that regarding the electoral context American and German political parties possess healthy levels of linkage to their electorates. This was supported by the fact that both American and German parties have noticeably increased their electoral interactions with their voters. American and German parties have made more efforts to contact voters and relied more on volunteer labor and grassroots campaigning. In the case of Polish political parties, I found very little to support a similar assessment. Based on my analysis it appears that the electoral linkage

between Polish parties and their voters is very weak. During recent national election campaigns, Polish parties had very little direct interaction with their voters. Polish parties also noticeably failed to communicate directly with their voters, relying exclusively on the television. Polish parties also failed to mobilize their electorates and did not recruit volunteers to carry out their campaign work.

Conventional wisdom suggests that the tools of modern campaigning undermine party-electorate linkage because political parties rely on modern communication technology and the mass media instead of communicating with voters directly through personal voter contact. I did not find this to be generally true. In fact, as I demonstrated, both American and German political parties used the latest communication technology to interact with the voters more directly. As I showed, party websites and email lists were used to mobilize volunteers and also allowed for greater interaction between the parties and their voters. Maybe we can even say that the latest communication technology, such as the internet and email, have helped to improve the direct party-electorate linkage instead of undermining it as predicted by Katz and Mair's cartel theory. For Polish political parties, however, the conventional wisdom appears to hold true. As my analysis of the two most recent national election campaign showed, Polish parties did in fact rely on mass media and communication technology in lieu of direct contact with the voters.

Outside of election campaigns, political parties should also maintain linkage with the electorate. Parties should do this to enable them to best represent their voters and govern accordingly. Linkage between political parties and voters is less strong outside of election campaigns. In this regard, political parties in all three countries have work to do, especially the Polish parties. Polish parties should invest more resources into building up

local party organizations, increasing their efforts at communicating with voters, increasing their membership numbers and generally involving voters and members more directly. American parties could also improve their linkage by focusing more on the ‘off season’, engaging the electorate more outside of election campaigns. They should also devote more resources to their local party organizations. While German parties have tried to involve existing members both inside and outside of election campaigns, they should make greater efforts to recruit new members to counteract their dwindling membership bases and continue to involve members and voters more regularly.

Electoral linkage is an indicator of the well-being of democracy. Applied to the United States and Germany this means that the electoral linkage between parties and voters attests to the health of the democratic systems in both countries. Applied to Poland the lack of such healthy party-voter linkage points to the fact that the Polish democracy is still not fully matured compared to American and German democracy. Absent healthy party-voter linkage, democracy in Poland cannot be considered fully established and institutionalized. This is of course further exacerbated by the lack of a stable party system and also by the lack of a politically active and engaged electorate. Polish democracy will only fully flourish if the parties interact more with their voters and if the voters become more involved and interested in participating in the political process. It appears that the parties need to do their part and provide the opportunities for citizens to become politically engaged. According to my findings, Polish civil society has become more politically active and interested. For example, during the last parliamentary election campaign in 2007 there were lots of groups and initiatives to mobilize voters. However, they were organized by activists and prominent Poles and not at all by the parties

themselves. Accordingly, Polish parties should seize this opportunity and start seeing volunteers as a campaign resource like American and German parties have done. Mobilizing and engaging volunteers would make Polish campaigns more visible, probably increase turnout, also benefit the cash-strapped organizations that run campaigns and most importantly build linkage between parties and the electorate which is so notably missing from current Polish politics. After the airplane crash that killed Polish president Lech Kaczynski and many other high ranking officials and political leaders on April 10, 2010 we will have to see the effects of this tragedy on the Polish political system. The airplane crash cost several prominent Polish parties some of their political actors. Among them, the PiS lost eight people, the PO lost four people, the PSL and the SLD both lost three people respectively (Warsaw Business Journal 4/10/2010). Several of these individuals were high-ranking politicians, including senators and members of the Sejm (ibid). It will be interesting to observe what will happen in the upcoming presidential elections set for June 20th, 2010.

In addition to evaluating the democratic process, this study also helped illuminate the functioning and operations of contemporary political parties. As many have argued, political parties are an indispensable part of democracy (Schattschneider 1942; Keyssar 2000; Crotty 2006). Contrary to conventional wisdom, I found that contemporary parties were not undermined by changes in electioneering and party organization. German and American parties have used new technologies to communicate more directly and more effectively with members and activists. Party organizations, especially for German parties, have also become more inclusive rather than the elite top-down organizations we would have expected to find. I also found the claim that political consultants would be

detrimental to the parties exaggerated. Although American parties used consultants most intensively during campaigns this did not interfere with grassroots efforts and volunteer involvement, both indicators for good electoral linkage. What is more, for German parties consultants played a less significant role since the parties usually preferred to use in-house staff first before hiring an outside consultant. Polish parties relied on consultants more than German parties. However, Polish parties hire them not just for their expertise but also due to their own smallness and lack of party staff or volunteers to carry out the work. Regarding Polish parties the use of consultants thus indicates the parties' weakness since they have no other option but to 'outsource' particular work to consultants. This very much agrees with scholarship regarding the relationship between American political parties and consultants (Kolodny 2000). I agree with Kolodny that American parties have formed an electoral partnership with political consultants and find that this argument also applies well to Polish political parties (2000). Just like American parties, Polish parties need political consultants to meet the demands of increasingly sophisticated campaigns (2000). Consultants help the parties reach their goals of winning office and staying relevant to the electorate which the parties are no longer able to do all by themselves (ibid).

6.4 Americanization debate

Since this term has become quite popular among scholars of electioneering and political parties it is appropriate to discuss what the findings in this study indicate regarding the Americanization debate. To briefly recapitulate, scholars have argued that there is an increasing Americanization of non-American political parties and electioneering around the world (Scammell 1998, Plasser 2000). This implies that non-

American political parties are imitating American parties by using similar electioneering tools and strategies (ibid). Schulz suggests that Americanization means increased personalization, professionalization and media-orientation of election campaigns. This includes negative advertisements, use of marketing strategies as well as the staging of events and emphasis of certain issues over others (1997).

However, as my findings indicate, this may not be true. Instead it appears that political parties in Germany and Poland, for example, seek inspiration and new ideas from various sources apart from the US. Based on my findings, it is not clear that American influences are most dominant. German and Polish parties admit to closely watching the campaigns of American parties and try to learn the latest about electioneering tools and strategies. At the same time, however, German and Polish parties acknowledged that they follow elections in other European countries much more closely than those of American parties. As stated in chapter five, German and Polish parties frequently communicated with European 'sister parties' of similar political orientation to learn more about new ways of organizing and campaigning. This makes much more sense for German and Polish parties since other European parties exist in similar parliamentary political systems. It appears that the structural differences between the German/ Polish systems and the American system make a direct transfer of American electioneering methods unfeasible. Similarly, American consultants might not be so attractive to European parties since they might not provide the same results for European parties in their respective political systems. Consequently, I would argue that the concept of Americanization does not apply to German and Polish political parties.

6.5 Revisiting the cartel theory

When my research and analysis for this dissertation was already well underway I discovered that Katz and Mair revisited their 1995 cartel party thesis in another article in late 2009. Therefore, it seems appropriate to analyze the new version of the cartel theory here and also to discuss how it relates to the findings of my study. In the 2009 article, Katz and Mair clarify the concept of the cartel party and its implications and also address some of the criticism the theory has faced over the years. In light of my findings, I would argue that this new version of the cartel theory still does not sufficiently address all of the criticism that the older 1995 version faced. The new version does address some of the criticism, considering factors other than party finances, such as laws as creating cartel conditions as well. However, in my opinion, Katz and Mair still fail to sufficiently discuss the concept of party-electorate linkage as an indicator for party cartelization.

Generally, Katz and Mair did not significantly change their original cartel argument at its core. As in the original, they argue that “political parties increasingly function like cartels, employing the resources of the state to limit political competition and ensure their own electoral success” (2009, p. 753). Therefore, Katz and Mair still regard the financial ties between the parties and the state as the key element in creating the party-state cartel. They argue that it is the “large amount of subsidies [parties receive from the state it seems] that ...document” the cartel-like relationship between political parties and the state (p. 754). .

To Katz and Mair’s credit, in this newer version of the cartel theory they recognize factors that have the same effect on parties and their relationship with the state

as state finances do. In particular, Katz and Mair address party laws and regulations that create a party-state cartel similar to state monies. This addition tackles and also confirms one of the main points of criticism of my study towards the cartel theory. As I argued earlier in chapter three, laws and regulations relating to political parties create a cartel in privileging bigger parties by protecting them from the competition of smaller and new parties. My analysis of financial and electoral party laws and regulations revealed the same. I found that party laws in the United States, Germany and Poland give bigger parties much easier access to state finances and to electoral success than they give smaller and new parties. Katz and Mair similarly state that one aspect of the state-party cartel is an effort by the established parties to prevent “the challenge from new entrants” to the electoral arena (p. 759). Political parties have thus used their close relationship to the state to “structure the institutions such as the financial subventions regime, ballot access requirements, and media access in ways that disadvantage challengers from outside” (ibid).

In accordance with my arguments, Katz and Mair have recognized that it is “the various and increasingly common party laws which had often accompanied the introduction of state subventions – the use of substantial amounts of public money to fund party organizations and the parties in parliament...[which] laid down sometimes in quite strict terms what parties could or could not do...[and provided the parties with]...access to the state machinery that parties enjoyed, and that provided a source of patronage and support; and access to government office” (p. 755). Also confirming one of my arguments, Katz and Mair have recognized that the parties themselves have played an active role as legislators in writing these laws that would ultimately benefit them and

their parties. They state that “the laws and rules influencing parties were those that they themselves, as governors, had been centrally involved in devising and writing. Once this is point is recognized, parties are no longer seen simply as objects, but are also subjects. Moreover, they are unique in that they have the ability to devise their own legal (and not only legal) environment and, effectively, to write their own salary checks” (p. 756).

While I find the cartel theory much improved by the recognition of party laws as cartel creating factors, I would still argue that Katz and Mair could devote even more attention to party laws. Specifically, they should acknowledge the fact that party laws are probably the more important enabling factor for the cartel. After all, any privileges to political parties, including state financing, can only benefit the parties after they have been put in place by laws and regulations. State financial support of the parties is therefore just one of the many outcomes of party laws and regulations that create cartel-like conditions for the bigger and more established political parties.

Unfortunately, in their 2009 article Katz and Mair do not address structural conditions that might also provide enabling conditions for a party-state cartel. Based on my own findings, I think this is a serious shortcoming of their analysis. According to my study of the American, German and Polish political systems it seems the three electoral systems, party systems, and party entrenchment in all branches of government and party patronage creates fertile ground for a state-party cartel. For example, I found that the presidential nature of the electoral system could benefit a party-state cartel in the United States. After examining these various structural conditions in the three political systems, I concluded that for all three, structural factors played a role in creating conditions favoring a party-state cartel. Therefore, by not considering political systems and other relevant

structures, Katz and Mair actually missed a great opportunity to strengthen their theory. As my findings regarding the political systems revealed there is evidence that these political structures can enable a cartel-like relationship between the parties and the state.

Katz and Mair also specifically mention another aspect of the cartel theory that deserves further analysis and consideration, the “weakening of ties between parties and civil society” (p. 754). As they state the eroding party-electorate linkage is an important factor that enables the creation of a cartel between parties and the state. They further argue that the parties have been “drawn further away from society” and see this confirmed by “the sharp decline in party membership in the 1990s, by consistently declining levels of party identification, and by the more erratic but nonetheless pronounced falls in turnout”(p. 756).

However, as Scarrow (1996) and I argue, this might be a hasty conclusion and there are other indicators that point to a transformed but still relevant party-electorate connection. For example, Scarrow’s analysis of German parties and their relations to their members revealed that parties continue to recruit and interact with the electorate (1996). Scarrow particularly mentions continuous membership drives and internal organizational reforms that sought to strengthen the party-member communication and relationship. Similarly, my analysis of German parties confirmed this and showed that the parties continue to rely significantly on their members and volunteers in and outside of election campaigns. In my opinion, this indicates that there still are relevant ties between parties and their electorate, as illustrated by current member-party relations. I would also like to point out that electoral turnouts are not decreasing everywhere as Katz and Mair state and therefore turnout might not be such a good measure of weakened party-electorate linkage.

For example, while recent American national elections saw little change in turnout, German elections saw lower and Polish elections saw higher than usual turnout levels (IDEA International 2009).

Another aspect related to that of party-electorate linkage is election campaigns. Fortunately, Katz and Mair address this in their new version of the cartel theory. They clearly spell out that “election campaigns that are conducted by cartel parties are capital-intensive, professionalized and centralized, and are organized on the basis of a strong reliance on the state for financial subventions and for other benefits and privileges” (p. 755). My study of party organization in the United States, Germany and Poland has revealed, however, that this is not necessarily true. Recent campaigns by parties in all three countries have become very expensive and parties have spent larger and larger sums of money on their campaigns. However, as my analysis of party finances and financial resources in chapter three illustrated, the state is not necessarily the most important source of campaign funds. In fact, in regards to recent campaigns in the United States, Germany and Poland, state funds were not the exclusive source of campaign financing. American parties generally have had much more success raising money from private sources such as donations than obtaining fund from the federal government. Also, in the most recent Presidential elections, the candidate for the Democratic party, Barack Obama, raised record amounts of money from the electorate, in the form of small contributions from individual citizens. In fact, this campaign raised such large funds from individual contributions that they declined to accept any state campaign funding whatsoever. Regarding the German parties, Katz and Mair’s argument makes more sense since a crucial part of their funds stems from state monies. However, as my findings

pointed out, German parties still receive considerable funds from their members and also through individual donations so that we cannot clearly say whether state financing is the most important financial resource to German parties and their campaigns. Regarding Polish parties, the revisited cartel argument is probably most appropriate since I found that state funds did indeed constitute the most significant part of the parties' campaign resources both through direct and indirect state funds.

Katz and Mair also correctly recognize that within "the party, the distinctions between party members and non-members become blurred, in that...the parties invite all of their supporters, members or not, to participate in party organizational activities and candidate selection" (p. 755). I found this confirmed, especially by the behavior and strategies of German parties in recent election campaigns. For example, the major parties, the SPD and the CDU both initiated mobilization drives that referred to this and encouraged voters to participate in their campaign regardless of whether they were members or not. As I also pointed out earlier, both parties explicitly stated that membership was not a necessary prerequisite to becoming engaged with their organization and their campaign. The big German parties have also recently entertained the idea to give non-member activists voting rights and privileges not unlike those of members. Similarly, during the two most recent election campaigns, both parties used non-member volunteers just as much as they used members to carry out campaign work. The parties also rewarded member and non-member volunteers equally for their efforts, as I also pointed out in chapter five.

I would add that the blurring of member/non-member distinctions might not necessarily be a sign of weak linkage between parties and the electorate. For instance, the

fact that parties try to engage non- members just as much as members could merely imply that the parties have adapted to the new political reality. This reality includes voters who no longer strongly identify with a party and no longer desire to become party members. From the perspective of the voters, this does not automatically imply that they have become politically uninterested but instead could mean that they merely choose to get politically involved in different ways. For example, instead of becoming card-carrying party activists who attend local meetings, younger generations of voters might be more drawn to donating on the internet, sign up to receive emails and join a social networking website that allows them to get involved in the campaign of a party.

In their new version, Katz and Mair also argue that typical cartel parties rely predominately on the mass media as campaigning tool and also heavily rely on professionals such as “pollsters, advertising consultants, direct-mail fund raisers and marketers” (p. 758). As a result of this particular campaign mode, cartel parties therefore no longer value “the resources that the party on the ground could bring to the table (e.g. volunteer labor for campaigning or knowledge of local opinion)” (ibid). My study, however, did not confirm this aspect of the cartel theory and therefore questions the usefulness of the theory here.

Although parties in all three countries relied to some degree on the services of professionals as mentioned by Katz and Mair, I did not find that they played the most important role in their campaigns. For example, German and Polish parties relied much less on consultants than expected. German parties instead preferred to rely on their own staff and in-house experts first and foremost before hiring outside consultants. Polish parties on their part relied on consultants more than German parties but not as much as

expected. Even the famously professionalized and polished campaigns of American parties did not rely exclusively on consultants of the various specialties. While the parties continue to use consultants they have also rediscovered the talents and contributions of volunteers as a successful campaign resource. Candidates for both big American parties in 2004 and 2008 recruited record numbers of volunteers and relied on them heavily to carry out campaign work.

Along the same lines, I would argue that the parties have moved away somewhat from using the mass media as their only tool of communication. Recent campaigns in the United States as well as in Germany have started communicating much more directly with their voters. This has been done in a face-to-face fashion with the help of the previously mentioned volunteers and a greater focus on grassroots, get-out-the vote type of efforts. American and also German parties have also devoted more resources and attention to their party on the ground. For example, the Obama campaign made the ‘ground war’ and the setup of local campaign offices a priority. Similarly, German parties also came up with unique ways to increase the direct contact between themselves and the voters. This included the typical Infostände (information booths) and many interactive events, such as the SPD’s red box or the the CDU’s Wahlcafé (election café) during the campaigns such as door-to-door canvassing.

Furthermore, Katz and Mair argue that cartel parties’ shift away from the electorate is also illustrated by changes within the party on the ground. For example, they point out that since cartel parties no longer rely on their members and volunteers financially, they also have no need to pay heed to their demands and opinions. This then leads to “the disempowering of the activists on the ground” (p. 759). However, German

parties continue to rely significantly on their members' financial contributions. The fact that American parties have recently raised large sums of money from the electorate, especially from individuals donating small amounts, might also suggest that Katz and Mair's argument is too hasty in writing off the financial ties between the parties and their voters. In addition, I would also argue based on my findings that parties have made efforts to give more authority to their members/activists. For example, the Obama campaign used a unique organizing strategy that left considerable decision-making power in the hands of volunteers. Similarly, German parties left it up to their volunteers to decide how they wanted to organize and operate campaign events. This of course contradicts Katz and Mair's cartel predictions which forecast that parties organize their campaigns and manage their volunteers in a top-down fashion without giving much input and power to the volunteers themselves.

In the 2009 article, Katz and Mair also argue that given their close relationship with the state it "seems unlikely that the parties would...reverse their drift towards the state, or that they could somehow reinvigorate their organizational presence on the ground. For the foreseeable future, this option seems unavailable...the mass party is dead" (p. 760). I would disagree with such assessment and instead argue that there are some signs that may indicate a strengthening of the parties' ground organizations. Both American and German political parties have made considerable efforts to strengthen and build up their party on the ground in recent national election campaigns. I observed this especially in the 2004 and 2008 presidential campaigns of the Democratic and the Republican candidates in the US. Especially remarkable was the Democratic campaign by Barrack Obama which maintained a record number of local field offices to operate

their grassroots volunteer efforts. Furthermore, the Democratic party under the chairmanship of Howard Dean has invested in building up their local party organizations. The intention of the so-called 50 state program has been to establish permanent offices and local party organization throughout the United States, even in regions that have not traditionally voted for Democratic candidates. These developments clearly run counter to Katz and Mair's predictions.

Similarly, I would also argue that even in the European context, illustrated by German parties, Katz and Mair's predictions will not necessarily hold true. The official membership numbers of the big two parties, the SPD and the CDU, are indeed dwindling. However, this does not automatically spell the death of the big mass parties or the death of party-voter linkage. German parties have made serious efforts to engage their members more directly both inside and outside of campaigns. German parties actually value their members for their various contributions. This includes the more obvious financial contributions of members but also increasingly their free labor for the parties during campaigns. The fact that party activists and volunteers no longer officially join parties does not necessarily imply the doom of mass parties. Instead, it might simply mean that people, for whatever reason, find joining parties less attractive these days. Moreover, citizens in Germany and the United States have actually become more politically active as of late. To me this simply means that voters are politically active but just in ways that do not involve officially joining the party they campaign for. Similarly, my impression is that the parties have realized that a passionate volunteer is a much more effective campaign 'tool' than a glossy brochure, an expensive television ad or a prerecorded robotic phone call. The positive side-effect of this discovery is a re-discovered party

electorate interaction that might well lead to further strengthening of party-voter linkage generally. Ideally, I would hope that this will be in the future of American, German and Polish political parties especially for the well-being of democracy. Therefore, I argue that this aspect of recent campaigns, especially in Germany and the United States, contradicts Katz and Mair's predictions and the cartel theory generally.

In conclusion, I disagree with Katz and Mair's arguments and find that their cartel thesis should not be considered a theory since it cannot explain the characteristics of party organization of American, German and Polish parties. Nevertheless, I find that the cartel model is a useful tool to examine political parties and party systems. The cartel model helps examine political parties, their standing in the political order and their functioning. However, the relationship between political parties and the state is not the only aspect of political parties that should be examined. Instead, as I have argued, the two areas of party organization and party-voter linkage are more important in assessing how political parties function and whether they fulfill their role in democracy. The parties' relationship to the state might not be as important as Katz and Mair suggest. For example, German parties have very close ties to the state, financially and legally speaking. At the same time, German political parties remain linked to their voters through strong party organizations, sizeable income from membership fees and through considerable member involvement between elections. In the German context, the party-state relationship is not a good enough lens through which we should examine political parties to assess their status and functioning. We need to learn much more about political parties and their linkage to the electorate, during election campaigns but even more in the off-season. Future scholarship should explore more in which ways political parties engage with their

electorates on a regular basis and in all levels of party organization. In addition, future research should strive to find new ways in which to examine and analyze political parties. Such knowledge will help us understand political parties and their electoral linkage much better and will also shed light on ways to strengthen political parties and the functioning of democracy.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Outline

Thank subject for coming to the interview, explain study and its purpose, read consent form and record whether consent and attribution permitted.

I. Personal information and professional background of subject

- 1) What is your current affiliation with the ____ (name of party)? Which position do you currently hold?
- 2) Have you ever worked as political consultant outside of _____ (Germany/Poland/USA)?
- 3) When were you involved in a national election campaign?
- 4) How are you or were you involved in the national election campaign of the ____ (name of party)?

II. Election Campaigns

- 1) How are campaign issues and themes identified and selected?
- 2) How important is public opinion in the issue/themes selection process?
- 3) How does the ____ (name of party) manage the campaigns? Please describe which posts and individuals make up the leadership in the management of the campaign.
- 4) What does the internal hierarchy of the campaign management look like?
- 5) Who makes final decisions regarding campaign strategies and campaign techniques, i.e. media use, employment of workers and experts?
- 6) How would you describe the role of the candidates in the organization of the campaign?
- 7) Do you feel that campaigns in _____ (Germany/Poland) have changed significantly in the last 10-15 years? If so, please describe how you feel they have changed. What are significant changes and new trends in the campaigns?

- 8) Have you noticed a “personification” of the campaigns, i.e. higher emphasis on the personal qualities of the candidates at the expense of salient issues or party ideology?

III. Party outreach to members and activists

- 1) How does the party communicate with and involve members and citizens? How does the party determine what the wishes and needs of the electorate are?
- 2) Do you feel that the _____ (name of party) is responsive to the wishes and needs of the electorate and its members? Please explain.
- 3) How does the party involve its members and activists in the campaign? Do members or activists carry out important work during the campaign? If yes, what do they do specifically?
- 4) What means of participation does the _____ (name of party) offer to its members and to the electorate?
- 5) Do you feel that party members and activists are central part of the campaign?
- 6) How important are ‘grass-roots’ efforts in the _____ (name of party)? How are the ‘grass-roots’ organized? What role do they play in the campaign?

III. Americanization

- 1) Do you or your party pay close attention to election campaigns in other countries? If so which country are you most interested in?
- 2) Has your party ever consciously adopted campaign methods/techniques/topics that were previously used in other countries? What specifically did your party adopt?
- 3) What motivated your party to adopt foreign campaign methods and techniques?
- 4) Have you been in contact with foreign political consultants or experts?
- 5) Has your party ever hired foreign political consultants or experts?
- 6) If yes, how important were they for the campaign and what was their role in the campaign?
- 7) Please describe the collaboration of the regular party campaign management and the consultants?

- 8) Do you think _____ (German/Polish) parties are Americanized, i.e. run election campaigns similar to those of U.S. parties?

IV. Closing Questions

- 1) Is there any other information you would like to share with me that you think would help me better understand parties and their election campaigns?
- 2) Would you recommend that I speak to someone else in _____ (name of party)? Who should I speak with?

Thank you very much for participating in my study and for answering my questions.