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**Party Organisation and Party Adaptation:
Western European Communist and Successor
Parties**

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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:.....

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UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

DANIEL JAMES KEITH

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**PARTY ORGANISATION AND PARTY ADAPTATION: WESTERN
EUROPEAN COMMUNIST AND SUCCESSOR PARTIES**

SUMMARY

This study examines the development of Western European Communist parties (WECPs) and their post-Communist successor parties. These parties had always adapted in surprising ways as they struggled in political systems that they sought to overthrow. Following the collapse of Communism in 1989 in central and Eastern Europe (CEE) they continued to amaze. Some reformed themselves dramatically, sacrificing or transforming their policies in search of office and votes. A number of them moved into mainstream politics and became more influential as other parties brought them into governing coalitions or they expanded at elections. Several WECPs disappeared but others resisted compromising their orthodox Marxism-Leninism. These hard-line Stalinist parties managed to remain significant players in their party systems. This in-depth study analyses the reasons behind the divergent trajectories of five WECPs and their post-Communist successor parties in the Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland and Portugal. It does this by importing and refining an analytical framework developed to explain the diverse adaptation of Communist parties in CEE. Extensive primary research based on elite interviews and the analysis of party programmes is used to evaluate the framework's usefulness and its implications for studying the trajectories of Communist parties in Western Europe (and beyond).

There are two main empirical findings from this research. First, it was elites with experience in working with groups and institutions outside their parties that led efforts to reform WECPs, just as in CEE successor parties. Second, mid-level elites in

WECPs were not necessarily hardliners bent on resisting reform. Their leaders could be extremely effective in advocating reforms and convincing members into supporting them, meaning that organisational democratisation could be compatible with reform. This meant that organisational centralisation was not as necessary as it was in the successor parties in CEE. Moreover, reformist party leaders had not, like their counterparts in CEE, learnt to be centralisers through past struggles over reform. When party leaders did pursue elitist strategies to promote programmatic transformation this usually took place through shifting power to the party in public office rather than central office.

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Abbreviations

APK	Workers' Party – The Communists (Sweden)
BE	Left Bloc (Portugal)
CC	Central Committee
CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal (Netherlands)
CDU	Democratic Unity Coalition (Portugal)
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CGTP	General Confederation of the Portuguese Workers
CP	Communist Party
CPN	Communist Party of the Netherlands
DL	Democratic Left (Ireland)
EMC	Executive Management Committee (Workers' Party)
EPC	Executive Political Committee (Workers' Party)
GL	GreenLeft (The Netherlands)
HOC	Horizontal Council of Communists (The Netherlands)
IIR	Irish Industrial Revolution
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JCP	Portuguese Communist Youth
KKE	Greek Communist Party
KPN/ML	Communist Party of the Netherlands/Marxist-Leninist
KSČM	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Czech Republic)

NEC	National Executive Committee (Democratic Left)
MDP	Portuguese Democratic Movement
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MSzP	Hungarian Socialist Party
NSD	Necessity of Social Democracy (Irish Workers' Party)
OIRA	Official Irish Republican Army
OSF	Official Sinn Féin (Ireland)
PCE	Communist Party of Spain
PCF	French Communist Party
PCI	Italian Communist Party
PCP	Portuguese Communist Party
PPR	Political Party of Radicals (The Netherlands)
PRC	Communist Refoundation Party (Italy)
PS	Portuguese Socialist Party
PSP	Pacifist Socialist Party (The Netherlands)
PvdA	Dutch Labour Party
SAP	Swedish Social Democratic Party
SDL	Party of the Democratic Left (Slovakia)
SdRP	Social Democratic Party of Poland
SF	Sinn Féin (Ireland)
SFWP	Sinn Féin the Workers' Party (Ireland)
SKP	Communist Party of Sweden
TD	Parliamentarian (Ireland)
UEC	Union of Communist Students (Portugal)
V	Left Party (Sweden)

VAS	Finnish Left Alliance
VPK	Swedish Left Party – Communists
VV	‘Time Left’ or ‘Crossroads’ (Sweden)
WECP	Western European Communist Party
WP	Irish Workers’ Party

Chapter One: Introduction

‘Good Communists can also change their minds.’ (Elli Izeboud former Chair, Communist Party of the Netherlands, Interview 14.05.09)

1.1 Setting the scene

This is a comparative study of how parties respond to external political changes that trigger internal crises. The central question it asks is why when all Western European Communist Parties (WECPs) faced a plethora of crises; some transformed themselves while others did not. To do this it asks whether organisational changes and strategies pursued by party leaders affected their parties’ ability to respond to their desperate situations. Communism appeared to be finished as popular uprisings brought down regimes in CEE in 1989, students protested in Tiananmen Square, the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed. The problems in Communist regimes were laid bare for all to see including economic misery from strategic planning, corruption, self-enrichment by party officials and oppression (Grzymała-Busse 2002, p. 1). This was a torrid time for their brethren in Western Europe who had historically claimed that such systems were a model for the West and that they were on the side of democracy. Some WECPs scrambled to adjust their views while others disclaimed the relevance of events in CEE.

However, WECPs had long struggled to cope with shocks that resulted in internal crises, ideological divisions and splits. They faced immense pressures to change from Cold War controversies including de-Stalinisation in the 1950s, the Sino-Soviet split, the crushing of the Prague Spring in 1968, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the suppression of workers in Poland in the early 1980s and the need to respond to Perestroika (Bull 1994, p. 204). WECPs’ relationships with Communist regimes, their revolutionary aims and anti-systemic appeals had made them ‘the enemy within’. Other parties regularly tried to exclude them from office and to weaken their influence within society. WECPs also faced regular internal disagreements over the dilemmas involved in moderating to win influence on their social democratic rivals (Hudson 2000, pp. 87–88).

Worse still, WECPs had often found that changes in Western European societies eroded their support base in heavy industry, contributing to electoral and membership decline (see Ramiro 2003, Gapper 2002, pp. 98–100). By the late-1970s it became clear that many WECPs were facing a multifaceted crisis. Several of them suffered huge electoral losses in this period and some practically disappeared, being reduced to just a few thousand members (Botella and Ramiro 2003, p. 240). In short, WECPs had been almost relentlessly bombarded with ‘external’ or ‘exogenous shocks’. These tested their allegiance to orthodox Communism and sparked numerous attempts at reform. Consequently, many WECPs had made inroads to reforming their orthodox Communism before 1989 including the Italian Communist Party (PCI), the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN) and the Finnish Left Alliance (VAS).

The events in the late 1980s and the rejection of Communism presented by the revolutions in CEE significantly added to WECPs’ woes and they increasingly struggled to survive (Bull, 1994, p. 210). For many parties it was the final straw. The already fragmented ‘WECP party family’ became increasingly divided as some parties (including the PCI, CPN, the Swedish Left Party – Communists (VKP), and Communist Party of Great Britain) took steps to abandon Communism. They became parties of the centre-left, green parties and non-Communist radical ‘left-socialist’ parties (Bull 1994, p. 214). Others including the French Communist Party (PCF) sought to reform Communism while some Communists established new parties like Communist Refoundation Party in Italy (PRC), Party of the Italian Communists and the Refounded Communist Party of San Marino in an effort to refound or continue Communism. In contrast, some parties including the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and Greek Communist Party (KKE) remained orthodox and revolutionary (Gapper 2002, pp. 105–107).

This research analyses five parties which adopted very different responses to the multitude of exogenous shocks they encountered and the collapse of Communism in 1989. The outcomes they reached range from attempts to avoid even the slightest deviation from orthodox Marxism-Leninism to an acceptance of social democratic policies, green politics, feminism, a need for austere government spending measures and acknowledging NATO. Four of these parties proved capable of radically transforming themselves. This might seem surprising when they had frequently been

portrayed by outsiders, rivals and the media as being out of touch, dogmatic or uncompromising. At first glance the politicians in these parties seemed unlikely to be capable of advocating alternative ideologies and new ideas so readily. This research sheds light on how this was possible and the puzzle of why these parties adopted such a diverse range of identities.

Several of the successor parties in CEE fully ‘social democratised’ through adopting social democratic symbols, policies and joining the Party of European Socialists and Socialist International. Like the PCI/DS in Italy, these parties repudiated Marxism and non-parliamentary socialism. While these parties wholeheartedly accepted social democracy, social democratisation is used in a broader sense in this research. It is used to include those parties who did not join the Party of European Socialists and Socialist International but did take huge strides in breaking with Marxism-Leninism, abandoning revolutionary and radical politics, accepting the market and campaigning on traditional social democratic policies based on protecting the public sector and the welfare state. Several WECs like V in Sweden and the SP in the Netherlands accepted key parts of social democratic thinking but still in some respects occupy the grey area between social democracy and radical socialism.

1.2 The Literature on WECs

Despite a long tradition of scholarship on WECs (see, for instance, Duverger, 1954) relatively little research exists on them in comparative perspective. The comparative literature that does exist resembles three main strands. First, since the late 1960s scholars sought to describe the Eurocommunist directions taken by some WECs. These studies usually sought to explain how WECs were responding to their troubles by differentiating themselves from the Soviet Union and accepting parliamentary democracy. They also analysed the theoretical basis behind WECs’ newfound polycentrism and their chances of success (for example: Machin, 1983; Lange and Vannichelli, 1981; Childs, 1980; Devlin, 1979, 1977b, 1968; Mortimer et al., 1979; Timmermann, 1979; Urban, 1978; Di Palma, 1977, McInnes, 1975; Einaudi et al., 1971; and Greene, 1968). Second, focus shifted to explaining the reasons for their decline. This body of literature questioned how factors including policy failure, de-industrialisation, their unattractive internal discipline and democratic centralism, partisan de-alignment, and the rise of post-material value-orientations might have

eroded their support (for example: Ramiro, 2003; Bell and Criddle, 1989; Waller, 1989; Waller and Fennema, 1988; and Lazar, 1988). Studies also considered the affects of Perestroika on WECs (Daniels, 1989).

Third, the dramatic events of 1989 prompted authors to analyse the impact of the revolutions in CEE on WECs. The literature grappled with classifying their fast changing identities and to make sense of the continued break-up of the WEC party family (key studies included: Bull, 1995; Bull and Heywood, 1994; Bell, 1993; and Wilson 1992). Scholars tried to show which parties had transformed their appeals becoming 'non-communist parties of the left' and which parties were pretending that nothing was happening (Bull 1994, pp. 210–218).

In later years, Hudson (2000) focused on the electoral fortunes of several WECs and their relationships with social democratic parties whilst Bosco (1998, 2000 and 2001) analysed the roles played by Communist parties in the integration and consolidation of southern European democratic party systems. More recently, Dunphy (2004) made significant advances in assessing the responses of Left parties towards European integration and their attempt to develop policies that contest free market capitalism. This is part of a growing literature on their approaches to European integration (Benedetto and Quaglia, 2007; also see Szczerbiak and Taggart, 2008; Bell, 1998, 1996 (and on globalisation Kopeček, 2005). Further, March and Mudde, (2005) have contributed a pan-European account of the heightened diversity and mutation of what they term the Radical Left and (post-) Communist parties (also see March, 2008; Lazar, 2002; Gapper, 2002; Ramiro, 2004, 2003, 2002; Mair and Mudde, 1998; and Moreau, 1998). These studies describe and map out the different identities that the parties assumed. Scholars have also analysed these parties' roles in forming governing coalitions and the considerations they make in seeking office (Olsen, Koß, and Hough, 2010, – forthcoming; Verge, 2007; Bale and Dunphy, 2006; Olsen and Hough, 2006; and Maor, 1998).

These studies apart, there has been little comparative research on WECs and their post-Communist successor parties. Political scientists still have many gaps to fill in terms of our knowledge about their organisations, programmes and electoral strategies. Perhaps it is not surprising that there is such a lack of literature on

WECPs. With Communism in CEE seemingly consigned to the ‘dust-bin of history’ (Grzymała-Busse 2002, p. 2), it seemed that WECPs faced an equally dismal future. Scholars were not that optimistic about their chances of survival. It seemed they would gradually wither away and that those that tried to adapt would struggle in established party systems (Bull 1994, p. 218).

However, WECPs and their post-Communist successors demand study for several reasons. First, ideally, political scientists should maintain an understanding of the development of all the party families in Europe including what remains of the WECP party family. Second, we need to understand what happened to WECPs because they did matter. They had been significant in international terms, providing legitimacy to the idea that Communism was an international movement and they played a major role in Cold War controversies (Bell 1993, pp. 3–4). The funds they received from the Soviet Union enabled them to make major campaigns and protests (McInnes 1975, p. 128).

At times, WECPs were highly influential in their respective party systems. This was most notable in terms of the historically larger WECPs in France, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain and Finland. In France and Italy WECPs had gained over a million members while others including the PCP had over 200,000 in the early 1980s (von Beyme 1985, pp. 181–185). In Italy fear of the PCI’s strength led to unholy governing alliances between centre-left and centre-right parties (Newell 2000, p. 18). Moreover, the PCF had been France’s largest party following World War Two and had huge political significance (see Bell, 2001, 2004, and Leclercq and Platone, 2003). It also attempted to win policy concessions from the Socialists by allying with them in a ‘union of the left’ (Bell 2003, p. 34, Bell 2006, p. 8). In several countries including Spain, Greece and Portugal WECPs were instrumental in the overthrow of military dictatorships (Mujal-Leon 1977, p. 28). Even smaller WECPs seemed to gain support in the post-war years from emphasising their roles in resistance against Nazism during World War Two (Bell 1993, pp. 2–3). WECPs’ mass party organisations were also highly demanding of their members who were tightly controlled (Duverger, 1954). Furthermore, their ‘cells’ often infiltrated the state and other organisations in civil society (see for instance Groppo, 1990; Santamaria, 1990).

Third, after 1989, political scientists might have thought that they have bigger fish to fry. However, rather than just being relics from a bygone age, several WECPs and post-Communist successor parties retained significant levels of support despite having generally declined. For example the PCF, PCP and PRC each had over 100,000 members at the turn of the millennium and many WECPs remained influential in trade union organisations (Botella and Ramiro 2003, p. 240). WECPs often remain equipped to promote large-scale campaigns. Even smaller parties including the Communist Party of Austria (with only 5000 members in 1996) retained their educative ambitions and all-encompassing roles in the lives of their party members (Ehmer 1998, p. 216). Several WECPs and their radical left successor parties also went on to win over ten per cent share of the vote in parliamentary elections (in Cyprus, Germany, Finland, Sweden and as much as seventeen per cent in Italy) (Bale and Dunphy, 2007).

Fourth, since 1994, several of these parties forged supra-national alliances with counterparts from CEE by joining the Party of the European Left and the Confederal Group of the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) which has a significant presence in the European Parliament. This allows them to maintain formal relations and to share policies (Bell 1998, p. 142). Fifth, other parties also recognised that as WECPs became less revolutionary or orthodox there were new opportunities to bring them and their successors 'in from the cold', as coalition partners (for example in France, Finland, Italy and Sweden (Dunphy 2006, Bale and Dunphy 2006, p. 1; Olsen, Hough and Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). Furthermore, WECPs including the PRC have continued to use their 'blackmail potential' when participating within governing coalitions (Albertazzi et al. 2007, p. 3). WECPs also regularly participate in local or regional government including the PCF which in 2001 held over seventy towns and cities in France (Bell 2004, p. 24). When these parties have shown that they can become parties of government and several reformed themselves to try and gain a foothold a centre- left coalitions (or even with the centre-right) it is astonishing how little is known about them.

The heightened differences between WECPs that kept the Communist label and also between their post-Communist successor parties might make it seem that they are less comparable. In several respects it is now more appropriate to compare some non-

Communist successor parties with other members of their new party families (as done by Voerman, 1992 and 1995). As Gapper notes (2002, p.92), one of the challenges for scholars is in finding meaningful rationales and valid reasons for comparing WECPs and their successor parties. Following the revolutions in CEE some scholars were not sure if this would be possible. As Bull put it, 'In the future it will no longer be possible to generalise about these parties as a 'family', nor fruitful to study them within the same analytical framework' (Bull 1994, p.211).

However, a final reason for studying WECPs is that there are still possibilities to research WECPs and many of their post-Communist successors' under such common frameworks of analysis. Maintaining an understanding of WECPs and their successors is essential if we are to develop knowledge about the parties that are termed the 'Left-Party Family' or the non-social-democratic radical-left as shown by March and Mudde (2005), and Bale and Dunphy (2006). The apparent breakup of the traditional WECP party family does not preclude studying these parties comparatively under 'big tent' frameworks (Botella and Ramiro, 2003). Most of these parties occupy the materialist space to the left of social democracy (Olsen, Hough and Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). As parties of the radical left they face several common dilemmas and frequently promote similar ideas regarding socialism: including a rejection of capitalism, the promotion of alternative economic and power structures, a fairer and classless society, a major redistribution of resources and solidarity with marginalised groups (March and Mudde 2005, p. 25; Bale and Dunphy 2006, p. 6; Gapper 2002, p. 89).

Scholars are beginning to see opportunities to analyse WECPs and most of their successors alongside post-Communist successor parties, Green parties, democratic socialist, social-populist and radical parties that have broken away from social democracy in a pan-European perspective (March and Mudde, 2005; Gapper, 2002). Some studies have begun to draw comparisons with left parties outside of Europe (Bale and Dunphy 2006, p. 6). Studying WECPs and left parties by adapting comparative frameworks used to study the other types of party including the Greens has also been fruitful (Olsen and Hough, 2006; Hough, Koß and Olsen, 2007). Some scholars have also found chances to build WECPs into comparative large-N

quantitative studies to explain how Communist parties adapt (including Ishiyama, 2000).

The literature has remained vibrant on some WECPs including the PCF (Bell, 2001, 2003, 2006). However, general problems run through much of the existing literature. Scholars have often been excessively partisan or biased. However, the type of analysis that studies have used has been more problematic. Studies are typically based around ‘thick description’ in which focus on the intricacies of individual cases leaves little room for comparison, generalisable theory or use of the tools from political science to develop analysis. Studies have rarely asked whether independent variables found to be important elsewhere impacted upon the programmatic development of their cases. They neglected to show which factors seemed to be case specific and failed to generate theoretical propositions that may have wider significance (Keith, 2009). Some including Bosco (2001) seem well placed to provide comparative explanations of parties’ divergent adaptation only to eschew this altogether, because the political circumstances in different countries and histories of individual parties seem to preclude a common basis for comparison or generalisation (see Bale and Dunphy 2006, p. 28; Bosco 2001, p. 387). Comparative analysis has also been made difficult because studies have rarely been published beyond their respective national languages.

In particular, a systematic and theoretically informed comparative analysis to explain WECPs’ diverse adaptation following the collapse of Communism does not exist. Revisiting the literature written in the aftermath of 1989 reveals a failure to explain this puzzle. To experts at the time this did not seem so surprising:

‘Asking why the parties reacted so differently is, to a large extent misguided. Had the parties all reacted in the same way then it would have been pertinent to have asked why. As argued earlier, the differentiation between Communist parties before the revolutions of 1989 was considerable and the movement was undergoing further fragmentation.’ (Bull 1994, pp. 211–12).

Scholars had accepted that important differences existed between WECPs by 1989. However, they seemed to take this for granted and failed to question which

differences were most significant in shaping their diverse responses to prior external shocks and the collapse of Communism. This left it unclear whether differences in variables that were common to all WECPs could account for their different programmatic directions. It became hard to discern the reasons why some WECPs had become better positioned to transform themselves.

Few efforts have been made to analyse the causes of diversity between WECPs. Those that tried suffered from a lack of systematic analysis, empiricism or became overwhelmed by a myriad of different variables. The best attempts to do this (Tannahill, 1976, 1978) concluded that differences between WECPs' leaders meant that some parties were better placed to respond changes in their party systems and the international environment. It also seemed that factors including generational changes in the leadership and rank and file, leaders' backgrounds in terms of: social class, trade union involvement, as well as the promotion of loyal apparatchiks and hardliners from party youth organisations might be significant in shaping WECPs' diversity. Furthermore, some scholars thought that organisational factors could have affected their adaptation (Arter, 2002; Wilson, 1980). However, the theoretical reasoning behind their studies was undeveloped. It was unclear how or why such factors might have mattered and empirical analysis was patchy. This leaves a major gap that this study seeks to fill.

The lack of focus in the literature on WECPs' organisations is surprising considering that they had traditionally operated under the highly controversial structures of democratic centralism. This was the rigid form of organisation set out by Lenin and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (McInnes 1975, p. 96). What Waller (1981) termed as the 'orthodox version of democratic centralism' generally had several common characteristics:

- The application of the elective principle to all leading organs of the party from the highest to the lowest;
- Periodic accountability of party organs to their respective party organisations;
- Strict party discipline and the subordination of the minority to the majority;

- The absolutely binding character of the decisions of the higher organs upon the lower organs and upon party members.

Scholars found that the first two ‘democratic’ principles were frequently lost as elections were rarely held (or fixed) and the latter two centralist principles took over (Waller 1981, p. 12). In practice this meant that policy and decision making power was concentrated in the hands of the party’s top officials and that lower level bodies in the party hierarchy were policed by those above them. The high degree of power vested in the leadership enabled domineering leaders to regularly engage in one-man management and large, bloated leadership bodies, often with over a hundred members became little more than rubber stamps.

What is more, it was common for officials to interfere in the running of local affairs and congresses were rarely forums for debate but simply functioned to praise decisions already taken by the leadership on the basis of ‘scientific socialism’ and its ability to perceive the common good. Furthermore, members of regional assemblies, leadership bodies including Central Committees and daily Politburos were usually nominated by the level above them in the party organisation and remained fully subservient to them. Moreover, congress delegates tended to be obedient ideologues selected by party officials. Under democratic centralism internal opposition or factions were banned, iron discipline was maintained with limited room for debate and reformers were ruthlessly expelled. There were few mechanisms by which to hold the leadership to account. Members were also taught to take pride in upholding unity to make the party effective and were given little access to positions of influence or freedom of expression in party publications (see Waller 1988, p. 14; Waller 1981, pp. 22/117; McInnes 1975, pp. 98–99, Von Beyme 1975, pp. 260–270).

WECPs often faced pressures to reform their organisations and to provide members with increased power in decision-making. However, scholars paid relatively little attention to changes in the way that democratic centralism operated and whether organisational developments might have affected their ability to adapt. In addition to this, political scientists have failed to provide a systematic comparative analysis of how party leaders’ organisational strategies contributed to their divergent programmatic adaptation which is a gap that this study seeks to address.

1.3 Searching for a theoretical framework to analyse WECPs

A cursory glance at the literature on most party families (for example the Greens – see Burchell, 2001, Kitschelt, 1990) shows that debate rages surrounding the factors that affect their members' behaviour and the role of organisational factors in shaping their parties' development. These debates draw upon generalisable theories and examine their usefulness. The literature on WECPs lacks this and is in need of new ideas.

This research looks elsewhere for inspiration to shed light on WECPs' diverse adaptation. There are plenty of explanatory frameworks on offer from the wider literature on party organisation and party change in Western Europe that might help to develop our understanding of WECPs. In particular, Harmel and Janda's (1994) 'Integrated Theory' of party change presents avenues for future research (developed in Harmel et al., 1995; Harmel and Tan, 2003). These studies propose that external shocks and changes in parties' environments such as election defeats can send 'ripples' throughout their organisations (Harmel et al. 1995, p. 257). They argue that a plethora of organisational variables for example changes in the dominant group within the leadership can influence parties' ability to respond to such shocks by questioning their primary goals including vote-, office-, policy-seeking and internal democratic decision making. Such frameworks for analysis should be applied to WECPs and their ideas have been found to improve our understanding of organisational changes within Green parties (Burchill, 2001) and in the study of anti-establishment parties' (Abedi and Schneider, 2004). However, in a field that has already lost sight of the wood for the trees, parsimony is needed to begin developing a clear starting point from which to analyse WECPs.

There are now a number of significant analyses of how the former Communist parties of CEE have successfully adapted to democratic competition since 1989 (Haughton, 2004; Ishiyama and Bozóki, 2001; Kitschelt et al., 1999; Ishiyama 2005, 2000, 1999, 1997, 1995). These studies have been more proactive in using the concepts of political science and comparison to study Communist parties. In particular, Anna Grzymała-Busse's study 'Redeeming the Communist Past' (2002), provides a detailed study of how organisational factors affected the ability of Communist parties to take advantage of the new democratic systems. She developed an analytical framework that enabled her to explain why Communist successor parties in Slovakia (*Strana demokratickej*

l'avici, SDL), Hungary (*Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSzP*) and Poland (*Socjaldemokracja Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej, SdRP*) were able to adapt their policies towards social democracy, regenerate support and return to office while in the Czech Republic the *Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy* (KSČM) remained orthodox and was restricted to protest politics (also see Mareš, 2005; Hough and Handl, 2004).

1.4 Explaining the adaptation of CEE successor parties

Studies of Communist successor parties in CEE have made significant advances in identifying which independent variables shaped differences between their internal organisations, programmes and electoral success (Ishiyama 2000, 1997, 1995; Bozóki and Ishiyama, 2002; Kitschelt, 2002). Many scholars have concluded that legacies inherited from previous regimes shaped party adaptation. However, a debate has emerged as to whether differences between Communist successor parties occurred because of ‘external’ or ‘internal’ factors (see Ishiyama, 2001). The ‘externalist’ perspective emphasises that it was primarily environmental differences that shaped the parties’ diverse adaptation (See Orenstien, 1998; Waller, 1995; Kitschelt, 1995; for an overview see Ishiyama, 1999). The independent variables it emphasises include:

- The degree of competition the successor parties faced from other parties of the left and the structure of competition between parties.
- Factors affecting the ‘political space’ including: the degree of state funding; the institutional features of the electoral system.
- Opportunities provided by the salience of particular issues or the declining standards of living or Gross Domestic Product in the transition period; collective value orientations in wider society and nostalgia for the Communist past. The importance of ethnicity as a political issue could also provide incentives for some successor parties to embrace national chauvinism.
- The existence of particular political constituencies; the age of the electorate; the degree of urbanisation or unionisation of the workforce; the proportion of the workforce employed in manufacturing.
- Successor parties’ electoral fortunes in the first elections after 1989, with a sudden loss prompting them to adapt.

Kitschelt (1995) also emphasises the importance of environmental factors inherited from the previous Communist regime. He identifies three types of regime and explains how they shaped the adaptation of Communist successor parties. First, 'patrimonial systems' like in Russia, Romania and Bulgaria had relied heavily on patronage and chains of dependence of the leaders and followers; had low levels inter-elite competition, interest articulation or professional bureaucracy and had been highly repressive with heavy emphasis on democratic centralism. Kitschelt found that such regimes had Communist successor parties that could entrench themselves and block challenges from poorly organised groups of intellectuals, middle class professionals rival left-wing parties and therefore faced little competition or pressure to adapt. Instead they were able to gain electoral success through hard-line Communist and nationalistic appeals. Second, 'national consensus' regimes in Hungary, Poland, Estonia and Lithuania had been less repressive and provided room for the representation of a range of groups in society in government. This gave rise to strong competitors for Communist successor parties and greater pressure for them to adapt (often towards social democracy). Third, 'authoritarian bureaucratic' systems that were based on bureaucracy rather than clientelism fostered successor parties that were ill-equipped to adapt from orthodox Communism (like in the Czech Republic). High degrees of professionalisation and organised social opposition groups helped strong competitors to emerge but histories of internal repression presented significant obstacles to these successor parties breaking with Communism.

Attempts to discern which independent variables were most important in shaping Communist successor parties' adaptation point to the greater significance of 'internal' or organisational rather than 'external' factors (Ishiyama, 2001). Indeed, Ishiyama concludes that 'The environment does not cause the party to adapt; whether or not the party is able to adapt depends on the willingness of the leadership to adapt' (Ishiyama 1995, p.158). Thus, the key factor shaping party transformation was the leadership's ability to respond to external developments or the opportunity structures that their parties faced and successor parties' survival strategies were largely a function of internal factors. Quantitative analysis has found little link between environmental factors and the adaptation of successor parties (see for example Ishiyama, 2001). The internalist school of thought (Ishiyama, 2001, 1997; Agh, 1995; Welsh, 1994) is based on the idea that successor parties were not reactive institutions that simply responded

to their environments but were essentially 'creative', with their own internal features affecting the way they changed (Bozóki and Ishiyama 2002, p. 7). This approach explains diversity between Communist successor parties as a result of differences between their internal party organisational characteristics which were inherited from the previous regime. Organisational variables used to explain differences between successor parties include:

- 'Organisational density' – the relative size of a party's membership to its electorate and 'organisational complexity' – the size of a party's smallest organisational unit were found to have significant correlations with party adaptation and success (Ishiyama 2001, p. 844).
- The degree of elite level pluralism and elite contestation/competition in the previous regime. In national consensus regimes the range of interests articulated at elite level and bureaucratic professionalisation equipped parties with 'skilled', reformist, pragmatic, entrepreneurial and technocratic leaders who were equipped to adapt to and win competitive elections by embracing social democracy (see Kitschelt, 2002; Bozóki and Ishiyama, 2002 and Chotiner, 2002).
- The outcome of fights between reformists and hard-line leaders (Bozóki and Ishiyama 2002; Bozóki, 2002; Orenstien 1998, p. 487; Ishiyama, 1995).
- The initial overlap between parliamentarians and the party in central office (Ishiyama, 2001).
- Levels of resistance to reform from middle or low ranking apparatchiks who had little to gain from reform (Kitschelt 2002, p. 28).
- Organisational changes made during the transition period (Grzymała-Busse, 2002).
- Parties' financial resources during the transition period, with those party leaderships that had more funds at their disposal or that received greater state funding being less dependent on hard-line party members for material support (Ziblatt and Biziouras, 2002).

Kitschelt also recognises that organisational legacies and resources inherited from the former regime affected the development of successor parties. In bureaucratic

authoritarian systems the history of a lack of pluralism at elite level provided few opportunities for reformers to challenge the system and few technocrats were promoted to the leadership with experience of public administration. In contrast national consensus systems had promoted such leaders and members of the intelligentsia meaning that parties in Hungary, Lithuania and Poland, had leaders better suited to adapt to competitive elections. Indeed, scholars found that national consensus systems provided room for politicians with reformist agendas (See Ishiyama, 1997; Ágh, 1995). Some studies have also noted an interaction between environmental and internal variables. To account for such factors Bozóki and Ishiyama present a comprehensive framework for analysis that combines factors inherited from the Communist past, the nature of the transition process, environmental factors as well as organisational variables which they argue are of primary importance in explaining the development of successor parties. Within this framework the most significant organisational factors were: pluralism under the previous regime which could provide a pool of talented reformers to help reform parties into modern European left parties and parties' organisational resources (in terms of membership and money) (Bozóki 2002, p. 428).

The comparative literature on CEE successor parties, then, points to the importance of party organisational factors in shaping the parties' ability to adapt. However, it presents several problems. First, the aim of developing generalisable theory has prompted scholars to analyse as many cases as possible and in doing so they have largely produced quantitative research. Scholars have analysed the significance of different variables but have taken insufficient effort to speak to the actors involved about the causal process at work inside their parties or the reasons behind their actions. Second, the indicators used in leading studies to measure parties' internal organisational characteristics have been problematic. In particular, measures of party organisation such as 'organisational density' (party membership divided by the size of its electorate) and 'organisational complexity' (the size of its most basic organisational unit) tell us little about parties' organisational characteristics, the power relations within them or the decision making processes at hand. Furthermore, measuring party programmes by coding the use of individual words or the number of party name changes sheds little light on the underlying significance of changes in programmes.

Third, questions remain about how organisational factors affected parties' programmatic adaptation and electoral success. The literature on CEE successor parties has been confused on this issue. Ishiyama (2000) draws on ideas from the canon of literature on West European Parties including arguments that mass parties are less able to adapt their programmes than cadre parties. This is based on the reasoning that cadre parties are built for the primary goal of winning elections and have few internal structures providing influence for ideologues to constrain efforts by the leadership to react to electoral defeats/pressures to change. It seems that more elitist organisational models with high levels of overlap between parliamentary officials and more centralised organisational structures – that make leaders more independent from party members are beneficial to party transformation, with more membership intensive mass parties being unable to adapt or less successful at elections and more decentralised parties retaining orthodox party programmes (Kitschelt 2002, p. 30; Ishiyama and Bozóki 2001, p. 47; Ishiyama, 2001). However, some of Ishiyama's research points to the idea that mass parties were actually suited to programmatic adaptation and electoral success (Ishiyama 2000, pp. 14/19).

Importing Grzymała-Busse's theoretical framework offers a good starting point for investigating the role of organisational variables in shaping WECPs' diverse adaptation for at least four reasons. First, her study brings together several prominent ideas found in the wider literature on successor parties including the ideas that the experiences and skills of party leaders shaped the development of their parties (Kitschelt 2002, p. 14; Bozóki and Ishiyama, 2002) and that there is a relationship between the internal distribution of power (i.e. centralisation) and programmatic adaptation (also found in Ishiyama, 2002 and Kitschelt, 2002). Second, Grzymała-Busse's work goes to greater lengths to explain the reasons why such organisational variables influenced the adaptation of successor parties in CEE. She provides the most detailed account to date of the relationship between leaders' prior experiences and their ability to envisage programmatic and organisational reforms. In particular she explains why some leaders had become pragmatic and better equipped to centralise their parties' organisations. Moreover, Grzymała-Busse offers clear theoretical propositions to test about the relationship between internal party democracy and programmatic change; the need to force through painful changes to overcome resistance from hardline mid-level elites and party members.

A third reason for importing Grzymała-Busse's framework is that it provides a parsimonious account of which organisational variables were the most important in shaping the adaption of successor parties in CEE. Focusing on what can be expected to have been the most important organisational explanatory variables is highly valuable when research on WECPs has failed to provide generalisable theory and has lost sight of the wood for the trees. Fourth, there are methodological reasons for importing Grzymała-Busse's framework for analysis. It provides a way to research WECPs by directly engaging with those involved in the causal processes behind their diverse adaptation and to develop our understanding of the reasons for their actions, the informal workings of organisational procedures and the significance of programmatic changes. This will help to show whether theoretical propositions developed in quantitative studies on successor parties resonate with the experiences of party leaders.

1.5 Redeeming the Communist past

Other studies had found that the ideological views of party leaders affected the ability of Communist parties to break with Communism with the key factor being the struggle between liberal reformers and orthodox 'stand-patters' (Ishiyama 1995, p. 149). Grzymała-Busse took this a stage further by showing that the 'Ideological stance *per se* mattered less than the practical skills and experiences of party elites' in affecting parties' chances of successful transformation (Grzymała-Busse 2002, p. 13). She argued that the reasons for the parties' divergent adaptation were in many respects to be found in developments before 1989 and in particular in differences in their prior elite advancement policies. She found that some parties had systematically promoted elites with greater levels of 'portable' or 'transferable' skills (including expertise in policy innovation and administrative experiences) and usable pasts (their records of previous accomplishments) that were beneficial to adapting their parties to democratic competition in 1989.

The parties' top leaders had been removed in 1989, but the ability and willingness of those remaining in their leadership bodies to break with the Communism past and to transform their parties into non-Communist mainstream office-seekers was shaped by their repertoires of prior experiences. These variables affected elites' ability to envisage a political metamorphosis along social democratic lines and to implement

this through reorganising and centralising their parties' internal structures. Grzymała-Busse found prior elite advancement practices meant that some parties' elites were better prepared to adapt than others and that parties with flexible elite advancement practices before 1989 were better positioned for transformation. These parties gave more room for debate within their leadership bodies and had greater levels of elite turnover. Moreover, they had advanced elites 'horizontally' from across the state apparatus and organisations outside the party (see below) as well as promoting leaders with experience of negotiating with outsiders and other social institutions. These factors fostered elites with experiences that had made them pragmatic and who had ideas that were useful in carrying out reforms.

The leaders of parties including the KSČM were generally ill-equipped to adapt. They had been recruited 'narrowly' as their parties took decisions in the Cold War to install tried and tested, ideologically orthodox and loyal apparatchiks. They had slowly worked their way 'vertically' up the multileveled party hierarchy through years of proving their orthodoxy by working as functionaries. Further, elite advancement was essentially 'closed' – it was usually only those deemed to be 'safe' and loyal who were promoted, leaving little room for functionaries or officials who had tried to innovate and make policy changes. Elites were also recruited in an insular fashion from orthodox party youth organisations while critics were rejected on ideological grounds.

These 'party hacks' were ill-equipped to transform their parties, having spent most of their professional lives operating inside highly orthodox and disciplined party apparatuses. Having worked in roles focused almost exclusively on coordinating the party apparatus rather than working with outside groups and institutions, they had been given little opportunity to experience pressures for moderation and lacked ideas useful for carrying out reforms. These elites were also almost exclusively recruited from poorly educated blue-collar backgrounds rather than a broad range of social groups including the intelligentsia or groups of officials with experience in state sector administration: this ensured that they were not too analytically-minded. Additionally, these parties did little to negotiate with opposition groups in the 1980s or during the popular uprisings in 1989.

In these parties, ideological pluralism in leading bodies had been kept to a minimum before 1989. The parties' top leaders had refused to change in response to earlier crises and failed to debate or respond to Perestroika. Although some of them were removed in 1989, turnover had been kept low within the party leadership bodies for decades. This restricted room for the emergence of younger generations of reformers. Grzymała-Busse showed that such parties struggled to break with Communism or to envisage alternatives and reforms because their leaders had few ideas for transformation. They initiated policy-seeking strategies by appealing to their Communist members with nostalgic appeals regarding the Communist past rather than the wider electorate.

In contrast, in parties in Poland, Hungary and Slovakia it had been less common for orthodox functionaries to be promoted to elite positions before 1989. These parties had more open and flexible elite advancement processes. They promoted more elites 'horizontally' across the party organisation and from other organisations within society rather than the immediate party hierarchy. This meant it was more common for elites to have backgrounds in media institutions, trade unions other social organisations like student unions that were open to believers and non-believers. Highly qualified technical experts, professionals and bureaucrats from outside the party with hands-on experience of public administration and members of the intelligentsia were also advanced to the leadership.

These elites were often selected because they had records in successful administration rather than because they had proved their ideological orthodoxy. Many of them were not orthodox ideologues and if they ever were, they had moderated through encountering a need for practical decision making and through facing the constraints of administration. They had also enjoyed a relative degree of autonomy from the party in their professions or roles in public administration. They had found pressures and room to innovate or experiment with policy during the 1970s and 1980s in response to administrative problems and had become highly pragmatic. Opportunities for local party organisations to hold elections by secret ballot also gave elites experience in competing for the public's favour. There they encountered pressures to make effective and broader public appeals to build coalitions of support.

These elites had greater experience in negotiating with groups and institutions outside of the party before entering the party leadership. Their roles as leaders also exposed them to negotiations with opposition groups in the 1980s and during the 1989 revolutions. Grzymała-Busse found that they saw the need to accommodate the concerns of groups in wider society. The practice they had gained in formulating viable broader appeals stood them in good stead for democratic competition after 1989. The parties' leadership bodies had also exhibited greater ideological pluralism and tolerance of dissent which allowed elites room to develop reformist ideas before 1989 and they had taken greater steps to moderate policies in light of prior crises. Elites with these experiences were better equipped to transform their parties and to return to power under social democracy.

Table 1.1: Prior elite experience and programmatic transformation in CEE

	Programmatic direction	
Leadership experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions	Social Democratisation	Communism
High	MSzP SdRP (electoral success)	
Moderate	SDL (electoral failure)	
Low		KSČM

Grzymała-Busse argued that these elites were better predisposed to reform. They had greater desire for reform but more importantly, their experiences had shown them the need to innovate and respond to the preferences of groups outside the party (see Table 1.1). They had also gained practice in doing this. With skills including pragmatism and being able to read the electorate's desires they were better equipped to formulate successful appeals that resonated beyond the confines of their parties' Communist rank and file. Their pragmatism meant that they were not sentimental about members' views but prioritised winning votes. These party leaders were willing to make painful policy sacrifices and to rapidly break with Communism to ensure that their parties became competitive. These elites also possessed demonstrable records of success from carrying out prior reforms. They could point to these for credibility making them better positioned than reformers in other parties to win support for their proposals.

Grzymała-Busse argues that elites with experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions and professional backgrounds were also better placed to see the need for centralising their parties' organisations (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Prior elite experience and organisational transformation in CEE

	Organisational strategy	
Elite experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions and professional backgrounds	Centralisation	Democratisation
High	SDL MSzP SdRP	
Low		KSČM

Grzymała-Busse's research found that in Poland and Hungary, where elites had these experiences and skills in abundance they made appeals that resonated with voters. In contrast, in Slovakia reformist elites had autonomy to make innovative policies in party research institutes, but lacked experience in negotiating with outsiders or practice in campaigning to win support. They had not seen the need to make consistent campaign appeals; their messages lacked distinctiveness and sometimes undermined their social democratic credentials. As a result they were less able to develop appeals that were popular with voters and performed poorly at elections compared to their counterparts in Poland and Hungary. In contrast, the Czech KSČM's elite advancement practices had meant that electoralist goals figured little in elites' thinking. They lacked the ability or vision to orchestrate party transformation.

Grzymała-Busse's second main argument was that parties whose elites rapidly replaced democratic centralism with a new highly centralistic organisational model in 1989 were best positioned for programmatic transformation. She found that reformist elites needed to seize policy making powers and ensure that they controlled candidate lists for the leadership and parliamentary groups. Control over elite advancement meant that they could push aside elderly statesmen or orthodox elites and ensure that reformers gained key positions. Grzymała-Busse found it was also essential that reformers 'streamlined' their parties' organisations to limit the number of decision making points that could derail their plans or from too many cooks from spoiling the

broth. This process involved cutting out intermediate organisational layers, multiple sources of decisions and overlapping authorities within the party including regional organisations. These were replaced with a new vertical hierarchy of control that was dominated by the leadership.

These centralised parties only paid lip service to inner-party democracy as they replaced democratic centralism. They gave little room to orthodox members and mid-level elites like regional leaders to interfere with party transformation. There was little role for these groups in decision-making as opportunities for internal debate were limited (or even reduced) and local party organisations given less autonomy. The leadership encouraged orthodox members to leave, kicked them out, or made them reapply for membership on the condition that they had left Communism behind. Elites were able to force through vote-seeking policy changes and new centralistic statutes with minimal room for discussion. The reformist elites' power over policy making allowed them to quickly break with Communism and old ditch old symbols, appeal to educated and white-collar groups and to social democratise.

A high degree of overlap between members of the leadership bodies and the parliamentary group meant that policy sacrifices were possible while maintaining discipline and unity in parliament. Grzymała-Busse found that this was needed to ensure that the parties could reposition themselves as reliable coalition partners. They could also make effective and consistent campaigns while being able to prevent meddling by orthodox elites or from competing views from distorting their messages. Grzymała-Busse accepted that no single organisation model guaranteed successful programmatic reform and stops short of making the deterministic claim that failure to centralise made reform impossible but does portray it as being vital and argued that centralised parties had considerably higher chances of transformation. To Grzymała-Busse the irony of adapting to democracy was that if parties were to take advantage of the window of opportunity presented by the collapse of Communism then they required an undemocratic internal ethos. Reformers needed leeway from the rank and file to carve out a new direction.

In comparison, parties whose leaders democratised and decentralised in 1989 failed to break with Communism. This occurred as orthodox mid-level elites slowed and

sabotaged reformers' proposals. Leaders who did not believe in programmatic transformation also pursued policy seeking strategies. They prioritised retaining as many members as possible rather making changes needed to win votes. Accordingly, members and regional leaders were empowered to choose candidates and policy decisions were made through internal referendums, congresses or party meetings. This allowed an army of Communist stalwarts in the rank and file and mid-level elite to crowd out any reformist elites and to defeat their proposals. Highly orthodox regional leaders were strengthened by decentralisation and used their influence to promote hard-line appeals. These officials had risen through the ranks, had little experience of negotiating with outside groups and depended on the party for their livelihoods. They dominated local discussions, and ruined attempts to moderate or to give Communism a more 'human face'. When reformists made belated attempts to centralise democratisation meant that these were easily blocked.

Table 1.3: Elite experience of carrying out reforms and organisational transformation in CEE

	Organisational strategy	
	Centralisation	Democratisation
Elite experience of programmatic reform		
High	SDĽ MSzP SdRP	
Low		KSČM

Grzymała-Busse found that the degree of centralisation within parties immediately after the revolutions of 1989 shaped the nature and viability of programmatic adaptation. However, elites' ability to centralise was based on their involvement in carrying out reform before 1989. Elite advancement practices equipped elites with 'skills' beneficial to centralising their organisations. While Grzymała-Busse found that professional backgrounds affected this, more important was prior experience in carrying out reforms and attempts to broaden appeal which had turned elites into centralisers. Grzymała-Busse remains sketchy on the precise reasoning behind this process. However, she appears to be arguing that elites whose earlier reforms had encountered resistance from hardliners will have seen the need for organisational centralisation to make quick and painful changes in 1989:

‘The more a party promoted policy innovation prior to 1989, the more it fostered pragmatism and flexibility in policy making. The more it had subsequently implemented innovation, the more experience that party elites received in overcoming administrative reluctance, organisational entrenchment, and other institutional and political barriers to party regeneration.’ (Grzymała-Busse 2002, p. 28).

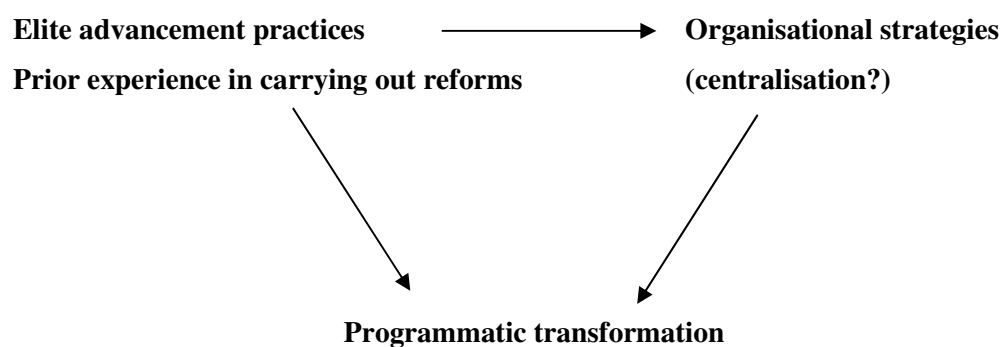
In contrast, those elites that were inexperienced in carrying out prior reforms did not see the need to centralise (see Table 1.3). Consequently, some reformists promoted democratisation in 1989 which was self-defeating and reform became an uphill task as reformers lost control over strategy to hardliners (see Table 1.4). The reformers’ lack of experience in implementing earlier reforms seemed to mean that they underestimated the strength of the orthodox-wing in their parties and the need to shift power away from them. Thus, elites’ prior experiences and skills were highly important if transformation was going to be successfully implemented. Desire for programmatic reform alone was insufficient. To Grzymała-Busse, being a skilled reformer was almost synonymous with having learnt to become a centraliser.

The lack of such elites and centralisation in the Czech KSČM meant that orthodox members seized control of policy making and by 1993 packed leadership bodies with orthodox figures. Soon enough reformers were ostracised, congress agendas were manipulated, splits occurred in the parliamentary group and orthodox Communism, Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism were reasserted. As internal democracy became increasingly constrained, little room was given to debate attempts at reform. Furthermore, old discredited leaders returned, initial reforms were undone, Communist symbolism was retained and the Communist past was praised. The party also maintained solidarity with regimes in North Korea and Cuba. Parties like the KSČM failed to take advantage of their competitors’ weakness in 1989 by rapidly breaking with the past or seeking a wider audience. It restricted appeals to the losers of transition and the discontent.

Table 1.4: Organisational strategies and programmatic transformation in CEE

	Programmatic transformation	
	High	Low
Organisational strategy		
Centralisation	SDĽ MSzP SdRP	
Demcoratisation		KSČM

The relationship between elite advancement policies organisational strategies and party transformation in parties in CEE is illustrated in Figure 1.1. This is based on a simplified interpretation of Grzymała-Busse's findings that elites' professional backgrounds and prior experience in negotiating with outside groups affected their ability to i) centralise and ii) to meet the preferences of the electorate by envisaging changes to programmes and electoral strategy to regenerate their support. Elites' prior experience in reform also determined their ability to centralise. In turn, centralisation affected their power to transform their parties by implementing changes like breaking with Communism and adapting policies in aim of achieving electoral success.

Figure 1.1: Party transformation in CEE

1.6 Importing and adapting Grzymała-Busse's framework for use in the West

There are significant advantages to be gained from importing Grzymała-Busse's framework for analysing WECPs. First, it is parsimonious in showing how two (organisational) independent variables in particular influenced the adaptation of Communist parties and this gives us a clear starting point for analysing WECPs. It

reaches the places that other frameworks can not by telling us why elite advancement processes and organisational changes might have affected WECs' adaptation. It fleshes out theoretical reasoning to explain many of the ideas that earlier theorists including Tannahill (1978) stumbled upon. In doing so, it addresses the gap scholars have left by overlooking the role elite advancement processes or elites organisational strategies upon WECs' development. Attempts to analyse developments at elite level in WECs have generally been restricted to biographical research on their top leaders rather than providing systematic analysis of cohorts of elites (for example Westlake, 2000; Narkiewicz, 1990).

Second, it presents an opportunity to look in-depth at the process of change to see how organisational variables within WECs affected their development rather than simply just looking to the outcomes of their adaptation. The framework enables in-depth tracing of the causal chains and mechanisms through which organisational variables affected programmatic change. Third, the framework provides an opportunity to boil down some of the 'thick description' of WECs' organisations in the literature and to incorporate it in a more structured analysis.

However, this explanatory framework was not designed or intended to be used to study parties in Western European party systems – although Grzymała-Busse does draw fleeting comparisons with some WECs to support her findings. WECs were obviously very different to their counterparts in CEE. Even though WECs sometimes became effective at infiltrating the state, they did not have monopolies over it. This meant that WECs generally had smaller party apparatuses. Arguably this presented them with less of a need to centralise or 'streamline' and meant that they had smaller ancillary organisations through which they could 'horizontally' advance elites. Nonetheless, WECs still had plenty of opportunities to do this, being able to place elected politicians and officials from party publications, think tanks, Communist student and trade unions and direct action organisations into their leadership bodies. Elites could also have been parachuted in from outside organisations. On the other hand, WECs could have promoted functionaries from central office, or elites who had worked largely on matters of internal coordination and who had little opportunity to work with outsiders.

Grzymała-Busse also applied a particularly narrow view of what counted as successful adaptation for parties in CEE. She restricted this to becoming a social democratic, mainstream party that returned to government and performed well at the polls. However, for WECPs success often involved actually managing to survive or achieving more modest electoral expansion. Ideas about what counted as successful adaptation must be adapted to their situation. This study focuses largely on their ability to transform their programmes rather than their ability to conjure increased electoral support. Moreover, it is worth noting that in a long term perspective the Czech KSČM did fare better at elections than one might first think and seemed to use its protest strategy as an effective means by which to win votes.

WECPs also had to contend with established party systems in 1989. This made it harder for them to assume new identities than for CPs in CEE where these were more 'up for grabs'. For WECPs social democratic space was usually occupied by long-established competitors (Wilson 1992, p. 99). In addition, the presence of Green parties or other left parties often curtailed the availability of non-Communist radical identities. Similarly, Grzymała-Busse recognised that in the Czech Republic the historical legacy of having a strong social democratic party made it easier for social democratic competitors to establish themselves. However, she argues that it was ultimately the KSČM's failure to reform that allowed the Czech Social Democratic Party to re-establish itself rather than the pre-existing strength of historical social democracy actually preventing the KSČM from social democratising. Accordingly the framework is adapted to see if WECPs' leaders were still able to envisage alternative identities, despite the greater barriers they faced in this and the research questions whether elites were able to take advantage of the numerous opportunities that still occurred in their respective party systems to move into other parties' terrain. This approach rejects the idea that WECPs' adaptation was an inevitable consequence of changes in other parties. Instead, it looks to how elites' perceptions of their party systems and prior experiences influenced their strategies.

One of the main lessons found in the literature on WECPs is that they adapted much more than parties in CEE before the collapse of Communism. Almost relentless pressures to change triggered numerous internal crises in these 'non ruling Communist parties' and many reforms before 1989 (Greene 1973, p. 345). They had

long struggled to cope in competitive parliamentary systems in which they needed to win votes. Some took huge steps towards reforming themselves as early as the 1960s and earlier exogenous shocks including election defeats sometimes seemed to play an even more significant role in shaping WECPs' adaptation than the collapse of Communism. This does not preclude analysing WECPs' responses to the collapse of Communism under a common analytical framework. However, failing to analyse these earlier crises would leave our understanding of the key turning points in WECPs' histories and the reasons for their divergent adaptation incomplete.

Therefore, the core ideas in Grzymała-Busse's framework are applied in a longer-term perspective by analysing several different stages in WECPs' development. This shows how elite advancement practices, dismantling democratic centralism and organisational reforms affected their ability to respond to a range of exogenous shocks. This seeks to build a comparative analysis that helps to show why differences emerged between WECPs both before and in response to the collapse of Communism. The research also extends the framework to analyse WECPs and their post-Communist successor parties' reactions to exogenous shocks following 1989.

1.7 Research questions and hypotheses

The research uses Grzymała-Busse's explanation of party adaptation in CEE to investigate two main research questions. The first examines the affects of elite advancement practices. It seeks to determine if party leaders' portable skills and useable pasts influenced their ability to transform their parties following the collapse of Communism in 1989 (or exogenous shocks). It asks whether WECPs' leaders had prior expertise that helped them put organisational or programmatic changes into effect. The following hypotheses focus on the independent variables of elites' prior experience in negotiation with groups and institutions outside the party, 'horizontal' elite advancement practices, the degree of prior pluralism in leadership bodies and levels of elite turnover. The hypotheses below are designed to test for a relationship between these factors and elites' ability to envisage and their parties' ability to enact: vote-seeking reforms aimed at broadening appeal, office-seeking, social democratisation, breaking with Communism/democratic centralism, and organisational centralisation (all of which are treated as dependent variables).

H1a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with greater prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside of the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————▶ Electorally-driven reforms
Horizontal elite advancement

H1b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Prior elite pluralism —————▶ Electorally-driven reforms

H1c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————▶ Electorally-driven reforms

H1d. Those parties exhibiting greater levels of elite turnover will be more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms or breaking with Communism after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Elite turnover —————▶ Electorally- driven reforms
Breaking with Communism

H2a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of elite horizontal advancement were more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————→ Office-driven reforms
Horizontal elite advancement

H2b. Those parties that had leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Prior elite pluralism —————→ Office-driven reforms

H2c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have be more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————→ Office-driven reforms

H3a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————→ Social Democratisation
Horizontal elite advancement

H3b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Prior elite pluralism —————→ Social Democratisation

H3c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————→ Social Democratisation

H4a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement, were more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders —————→ Breaking with Communism
Horizontal elite advancement

H4b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Prior elite pluralism —————→ Breaking with Communism

H4c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders \longrightarrow Breaking with Communism

H5a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in organisational centralisation after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders \longrightarrow Centralisation
Horizontal elite advancement

H5b. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with groups and institutions outside the party or with professional backgrounds will have been more engaged in organisational centralisation after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

Negotiation with outsiders \longrightarrow Centralisation
Professional backgrounds

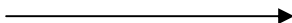
The second major research question examines the relationship between the internal distribution of power (independent variable) and policy change (dependent variable) following exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism in 1989. In particular, the research focuses on the effect processes of organisational change had on policy change. It asks questions including whether WECPs' leaders carried out reforms that democratised their parties as they abolished democratic centralism, or if they found new ways to reinforce top-down control over their parties? Have WECP leaders been able to initiate organisational reforms that consolidate their strategic and political control, whilst seeming to democratise their parties? If so, have they made the kind of

transitions to party models which are typical of modern vote- and office-seeking parties (Panebianco, 1988)? Have the adaptation strategies of WECPs given precedence to ‘policy, office or votes’ (Müller and Strøm, 1999)? Have parties been able to replace democratic centralism with new highly centralised structures that enabled their leaders to force through policy reforms and social democratisation?

The hypotheses below apply Grzymała-Busse’s idea that democratisation was counterproductive to transformation because it resulted in reformist elites losing control of strategic matters. In addressing this issue, the research questions the implications of Bull’s early observation that party leaders including the PCI’s Achille Occhetto could lose control after dismantling the organising principle of democratic centralism (Bull 1995, p. 89). It also asks if retaining democratic centralism allowed orthodox leaders to resist pressure to reform. Finally, it seeks to determine if elites equipped with experience in carrying out prior reforms aimed at broadening appeal are more likely to recognise a need for organisational centralisation.

Specifically, the research tests these hypotheses:

H6a. Following events in 1989 (or exogenous shocks) parties that replaced democratic centralism with new highly centralised party organisations were more able to adopt radical reforming policies (electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking) than less centralised parties.

Centralisation  Transformation

H6b. Following events in 1989 (or exogenous shocks), parties that abolished democratic centralism by democratising themselves were more likely to fail to adopt radical reforming policies (electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking) than less democratic parties.

Democratisation \longrightarrow Failed transformation

H6c. Parties that kept democratic centralism will not have significantly sought to transform themselves (with electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking).

Democratic centralism \longrightarrow Failed transformation

H7. Elites equipped with greater prior experience in carrying out reforms aimed at broadening appeal, will have been more engaged in pursuing organisational centralisation in aim of reform following the collapse of Communism (or exogenous shocks).

Prior reform \longrightarrow Centralisation

1.8 Methodology and operationalisation

The research primarily involved semi-structured elite interviews and analysis of party documents from five case studies. Interviews were conducted with politicians and bureaucrats from a wide range of positions including: party officials, functionaries, Members of the European Parliament, (MEPs) civil servants, party leaders, members of executive committees, local councillors, and parliamentarians. Interviews were also conducted with mid-level elites including members of party councils, congress delegates, activists and dissidents from the parties. Interviews with party experts and journalists helped to triangulate the findings. Snowball sampling was used, beginning with the parties' (or their successor parties') international secretaries and MEPs. Their help was enlisted to identify politicians who were instrumental within the parties' organisational and programmatic development.

The research is based on the idea that talking to elites about party adaptation is one of the best resources we have to find out about the internal processes at work within their parties and the motives behind their actions. It prioritised gathering in-depth data

about the decisions and actions of those involved at first hand in the causal processes of party change (Tansey 2006, p. 7). Only rarely was their evidence from subsequent interviews found to question or undermine the information that elites supplied. Some of the case studies – the Communist Party of the Netherlands and Democratic Left – ceased to exist in the 1990s. Nonetheless, it was the orthodox Portuguese Communist Party that proved the hardest party to research. Its politicians often struggled to speak freely about internal affairs or to discern basic changes in policy seemingly out of fear of misrepresenting the party line and being punished. Unlike other parties studied here, the PCP provided little access to its politicians. However, high ranking dissidents from the PCP provided valuable insight into the party's affairs. While some of these politicians may have had axes to grind, they provided useful insight into the party's secretive workings that were largely corroborated by expert surveys.

The interviews gathered data concerning:

- the experiences of party leaders before 1989 in terms of their role in prior organisational and policy reform;
- the parties' elite advancement processes;
- the internal conditions in the parties both before and after 1989, whether they acted to promote or restrain the development of a leadership experienced in carrying out reforms and that was equipped with the portable skills that might help to pursue reform;
- leadership strategies regarding major party rule changes after 1989 and the lasting impact of these upon their ability to influence policy and decision making within the parties;
- details of the internal distribution of decision-making power within the parties in relation to the formulation of policy positions, electoral strategies and candidate selection processes;
- the nature of decision-making bodies; conference procedures, formal statutes and the informal rules that the parties operate under;
- whether party leaders have pursued changes that distance party members from policy making or empower them;
- the reasons that elites had for centralising or democratising;

- whether organisational changes succeeded in steering the parties' programmes and electoral strategies in the directions that were originally desired or whether they resulted in unintended consequences.

The use of elite interviews was consistent with the methods used by Grzymała-Busse. However, the project was largely interested in uncovering the factors shaping WECPs' ability to reform their programmes and to make broader appeals rather than their ability to shadow the desires of the electorate. It did not use opinion polls to examine this as she did. With few WECPs having (entirely) moved to contest the political centre-ground, there is less of a need to studying them in this way. Due to the lack of existing literature on the case studies a large part of the analysis in this research is based on interview material.¹

The second part of the research's methodology consisted of the analysis of party documents. These were located through the parties' websites, contacts with interviewees, party officials or with experts and archives including the Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties in Groningen and the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

Documents were analysed that:

- related to the internal balance of power within the parties, organisational reforms, including party statutes and documents which justify or explain new procedures (or those that ruled out reform);
- focused on policy change, its direction and the justifications for it; including party papers, journals and programmes and speeches.

The documents were assessed in order to develop a qualitative understanding of the organisational and programmatic development of the parties. This was done by comparing the language they invoked and by analysing differences and shifts in their discourses. It is recognised that party documents represent an 'Official Story' rather

¹ The list of interviewees is presented at the end of the thesis, however, direct references to the interviews have generally been omitted to preserve readability.

than the 'Real Story' of party organisational development (Katz and Mair 1992, p. 7) and that both the implications of rule changes in party organisations and the strategies behind them can be ambiguously recorded (Lawson 1990, p. 107). Therefore, the elite interviews were used to shed light on the significance of changes, the underlying strategies behind them as well as the informal codes of behaviour and procedures within the parties to see how these shaped their adaptation.

Sometimes the research drew on data from the comparative manifestos project to assess programmatic change (Budge et al. 2001, 2006) however, generally this was found to be out of line with assessments of the parties' programmatic development from interviews and the existing literature on the case studies (see page 61 for analysis of this in the PCP). One of the major barriers to comparative research on WECPs has been the practical constraint of language barriers. It was possible to conduct most of the interviews in English. However, some used translators, who also helped to translate party documents.

The research works on the ontological position that parties encounter similar dilemmas and that the presence or absence of certain independent variables can contribute to shaping patterned variations in the outcomes of their adaptation. The ontological underpinnings of the research are in some respects 'foundationalist' (Marsh and Furlong 2002, p. 18). However, the research rejects the foundationalist idea that the presence of particular independent variables or similar dilemmas will necessarily shape party adaptation in a predictable way at all times and in all contexts. Accordingly, parties' responses to common independent variables and dilemmas are seen to be in part shaped by actors' (and elites') own subjective interpretations, ideas and agency. This research shows that such factors could mean that party adaptation sometimes took surprising tangents. The epistemological foundations of the research are essentially 'post-positivist' (Grix 2004, p. 84). It seeks to develop generalisable theory about these processes by subjecting them to systematic empirical tests (Marsh and Furlong 2002, p. 25). However, this appreciates that theoretical relationships will only work on a probabilistic basis rather than parties crudely conforming to deterministic laws. It is appreciated that too many studies using similar systems comparative designs are guilty of assuming deterministic casual relationships (see Takayasu 2004, p. 1373).

1.9 Indicators and measures

A range of indicators were used to investigate the key concepts employed in the research. To assess the extent to which democratic centralism operated in the case studies, indicators similar to those outlined by Waller and McInnes (see above) were used. In addition, the formal use of the term democratic centralism within party documents was taken into account. Finding indicators to tap into the level of centralisation within political parties is more complicated. Scholars have approached this in a range of ways. For example Janda (1980, p. 108) provides a range of indicators including the:

- Nationalisation of party structure
- Selection processes for parliamentary candidates
- Selection processes for party leaders
- Allocation of party funds
- Policy formulation
- Intra-party communication
- Degree of administrative discipline
- Concentration (authority) of party leaders

Janda proposed measuring these factors with a set of descriptors which classified parties on a scale of one to ten depending on whether power rested with the rank and file or party leaders. In comparison, Grzymała-Busse used a wider range of indicators. Indeed, this research found that to appreciate the distribution of power within the case studies and the extent of centralisation a far more comprehensive set of indicators was necessary. These included: candidate selection processes, the selection of party leaders, the development of shortlists of candidates, responsibility for policy making and organisational reforms, the extent to which party leaders can force changes like policy sacrifices through and the ability of opposition groups to contest the leadership's authority. Others included: opportunities for local party organisations to veto decisions, the role of central office and administration in running campaigns, the formulation of manifestos and programmes, room for debate within party meetings, the accessibility of party publications, the ability of local party organisations to make coalition agreements and decisions, the relationship between the parliamentary group/elected officials and the national leadership, the ability to set

the agenda for party congresses and meetings, the procedures at congresses and the ability to vote on competing programmes or candidates lists or to override the leadership's proposals.

Moreover the study also looked to the use of outside professional public relations specialists or opinion pollsters in devising party strategy, the distribution of party finance; changes made by the leadership to local party organisations, the outcome of controversial decisions and the level of debate that was allowed on them. Similar indicators were used to assess the level of inner party democracy and processes of democratisation to discern if parties became more participatory or decentralised.

Indicators used to assess elites' prior experiences included: the extent to which parties advanced members of national leadership bodies from student organisations, trade unions, party papers, or functionaries who had solely worked within the party organisation and from orthodox youth organisations. The research looked to elite's prior experiences in making autonomous political decisions, the turnover within the elite and the extent of prior competition between elites or for debate or pluralism (and tolerance) in leadership bodies. Expulsions or attempts to sideline reformers were also taken into account. The research considered the extent to which elites had backgrounds in working or making compromises with outside groups and institutions or in state sector administration and outside professions. It also identified the extent to which elites' roles in their parties provided opportunities for working with other parties, outside organisations and in public office as well as the degree to which they had experience in carrying out prior reforms. Furthermore, the research analysed the prior experiences of mid-level elites at party congresses or in regional party positions to discern whether they had experiences that might have benefited party transformation.

Above all else the research examined whether elites with these experiences developed 'skills' that were beneficial to party transformation as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. In doing this it analysed whether elites had found new ideas, a willingness to centralise and to sacrifice old commitments, pragmatism or whether they remained rigidly orthodox in ideological terms. These outcomes were measured by the assessments provided from the interviewees. Indicators that were used to ascertain

the degree of programmatic transformation included the evidence of changes in party documents, the sacrifice of key programmatic commitments and emergence of new ideas.

The study did not use a set of generic benchmarks to rank the parties for each of the above indicators. It was found that classificatory schemes like Janda's were too crude to capture the complexities of the parties' organisational structures. It was often unclear as to which classification (e.g. on a 1–10 scale) that the parties should be awarded. Instead, the evidence found through the interviews and analysis of party programmes was used to make an overall qualitative judgement that ranked the parties into ordinal categories based on whether they exhibited a high, moderate or low degree of these variables (for example in terms of how centralised they were or how experienced their elites were in carrying out prior reforms). These interpretations were based on how compelling the available evidence was across the range of indicators that were used. The substantive part of the evidence informing this is presented in the following chapters.

1.10 Case Selection

The research works on the basis of a most similar systems comparative design. This looks to see if the presence or absence of particular elite advancement policies and organisational strategies affected the cases development. Five cases were selected that were broadly similar in the sense that they were WECPs that operated under democratic centralism and upheld orthodox Marxism-Leninism, revolutionary politics and the vision of a Communist society. They were similar in most of the important factors and faced similar dilemmas and crises. However, to a certain degree WECPs' have always been a broad church. Some were larger than others terms of parliamentary representation and membership in 1989, some had experience in clandestine action, some had backgrounds in the Comintern, others emerged as Maoists or orthodox groups broke way from existing parties or other social movements. There is good reason to expect that such factors might have shaped their elite advancement policies and internal balance of power in different ways.

Grzymała-Busse found that similar historical contextual factors had influenced the ability of parties in CEE to adapt in 1989. They had mattered because they

contributed to differences in elite advancement policies and the ability of elites to make prior reforms in CEE. Therefore this research deliberately looked to WECPs in which we might have expected elite advancement processes and elites' levels of experience in carrying out prior reform to have differed. This allows it to analyse whether or not these factors had impacted on their divergent programmatic adaptation and ability to respond to prior exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. The research also asks whether factors that were case specific account for the cases divergent adaptation. The five case studies were also selected to both incorporate into analysis parties that have resisted change and those that have embraced different strategies of adaptation. In this way, variation on the dependent variable(s) was assured in order to test the hypotheses. Scholars have tended to limit comparisons between WECPs to sub-regions within Europe (Arter, 2002; Bosco, 1998, Gildberg 1980) or to focus excessively on larger WECPs from France and Italy. The research seeks to break with this trend by building less studied parties into analysis.

The Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) is analysed in chapter two. This party resisted changing its orthodox programmes. Its leadership maintained insular elite advancement processes, prevented pluralism in leadership bodies and restricted elite turnover. This fostered an elite ill-equipped to break with Communism in 1989 and other exogenous shocks. Its elites lacked skills and prior experiences that could have been beneficial to transformation, having little opportunity for negotiation with other parties and a low level of administrative experience. Despite being 75 years old in 1989, the party's orthodox leader Álvaro Cunhal who had led it since the 1940s, remained in charge until 1993, when he was eventually replaced by other orthodox leaders (Cunha 2003, p. 121). The chapter details how the maintenance of democratic centralism enabled orthodox elites to continually expel critics and to crush four major attempts at reform. The PCP declined dramatically in electoral terms during the 1980s and this continued after 1989. Its exclusion from governing coalitions also continued and its leaders even lacked the pragmatism to participate regularly in local governing coalitions. The chapter shows that in recent years the PCP has become increasingly hostile to the compromises this requires and has preferred to focus almost exclusively on protest politics.

The Dutch Socialist Party (SP) is analysed in chapter three. The SP broke with Marxism-Leninism to embrace socialism in an effort to broaden its appeal after 1989. As its vote-seeking strategy paid off, it continued to abandon radical ideological commitments: it accepted social democratic policies, increased responsibility in local office and attempted to gain inclusion in a national government coalition. The SP's genesis saw it grow from below one per cent of the vote in 1989 to almost seventeen percent in 2006. Analysis of the SP shows that organisational centralisation could prove highly beneficial to breaking with the Communist past. It also supports the idea that elites with a high degree of negotiation with outside groups and institutions are more predisposed to seeking reform and breaking with Communism.

Grzymała-Busse found that centralisation was vital for party transformation in CEE. This study analyses three WECPs that found other routes to transformation through democratisation. Chapter four assesses the development of Swedish Left-Party Communists (VPK) and its successor the Left Party (V). Despite changing its name in 1990, V initially struggled to adapt to events in CEE. Its ideology and electoral strategy appeared largely unaltered until 1993 when Marxism-Leninism was removed from its programmes. Thereafter, V transformed itself by pursuing more social democratic and left-liberal policies as its leaders sought to gain electoral expansion and inclusion in a governing coalition. This did not happen, but they gained greater influence through institutionalising relations with their governing social democratic rivals in return for V's parliamentary support.

Electoral losses and the compromises made by V's leadership in support of the government led to a backlash from its rank and file after 2000 and attempts to re-radicalise programmatic commitments and to reassert Communist symbolism. However, this did not last long and V continued to make policy sacrifices and won acceptance from the social democrats who seek to include it in a governing coalition should this be possible after Sweden's 2010 parliamentary election. Analysis of V shows that while democratisation was an unsteady path to party transformation, in many respects it helped party leaders to make changes aimed at moderating policy or achieving broader appeal. It also shows how reformist elites could shift power to the party in public office rather than centralising in order to promote reform.

Chapter five assesses the Irish Workers' Party (WP) and its breakaway successor party Democratic Left. The WP managed to expand its electoral support during the 1980s. However, Perestroika and events in CEE triggered internal turmoil as reformers attempted to protect these gains and to break with Communism to further broaden appeal. Divisions mounted as reformers called for the abolition of the party's paramilitary-wing the Official IRA and for the party to commit to parliamentary politics. Again democratisation and a shift of power to the parliamentary group fuelled reform and the WP took major steps towards breaking with Communism. However, the reformers were frustrated by the pace of change and most of them split to form their own party non-Communist radical left party Democratic Left (DL). This left the WP as a tiny orthodox Communist party. DL subsequently entered a government coalition. This sapped its resources and it adapted towards a centre-left platform. Electoral defeat soon meant that DL's leaders saw little option but to merge into the social democratic Labour Party.

The Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN) is analysed in Chapter six. The CPN struggled to maintain its electoral appeal in the 1980s and lost its three remaining parliamentary seats in 1986. It responded by forming an electoral alliance named GroenLinks with other Dutch small left parties. This received just over four per cent of the vote in parliamentary elections in 1989 giving it six parliamentary seats and returning the CPN's leader Ina Brouwer to parliament. Following the collapse of Communism in CEE, the CPN dissolved itself to fully merge into GroenLinks in 1991 – thereby abandoning Communism. GroenLinks pursued both 'red' (socialist) and 'green' (environmentalist) policies but soon became increasingly left liberal and dispensed with radical appeals to double its number of parliamentary seats and to seek office (see Keith, 2010). Analysis shows how huge changes in the CPN's recruitment strategies and elite advancement practices helped to promote its transformation in response to election defeats. Democratisation and decentralisation enabled its leaders to break with key parts of its Communist ideology and to seek broader appeal.

Chapter seven provides detailed comparative analysis of the case studies and tests the hypotheses set out above. This establishes a basis for Chapter eight which sets out the general findings about the development of WECPs. These include the finding that prior experience in negotiating with outsiders proved highly instrumental in shaping

attempts for reform in the case studies just as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. However, in contrast to parties in CEE, WECPs are shown to have managed to make massive steps towards transforming themselves through democratisation (as shown in analysis of the CPN, V and WP/DL). The cases also show that shifting power to parliamentary groups was also another strategy that elites used to promote reform. While this was in many respects detrimental to internal party democracy, it was more nuanced and subtle than centralisation. However, the research found this to be a less stable route to adaptation than that enjoyed by the SP's leaders. Its highly centralised organisation allowed them to adapt their party in response to exogenous shocks with almost complete control.

The case studies also show that reformist elites in WECPs seemed more hesitant to seeking office and social democratising in 1989 than reformists in parties in CEE. This questions key ideas in the hypotheses set out above. In particular, the research concludes that elites with professional backgrounds and prior experience in carrying out reforms in WECPs were not significantly more likely to try to centralise their organisations. This was partly because the changes they sought were often not as controversial or as rapid as the social democratisation pursued in CEE in 1989. However, it was also because they were strongly opposed to centralisation and they found that they had other options. In V and the WP/DL reformers with moderate (and later a high) level of experience in carrying out prior reforms did not centralise.

Furthermore, in the CPN a high degree of such experience did not turn elites into centralisers. Actually, the prior experiences and portable skills available to these elites because of elite advancement processes and their prior experience in implementing reforms promoted democratisation. The three parties analysed here that democratised present a large amount of evidence to demonstrate this finding. When reformist elites did engage in limited processes of centralisation this was because of factors contingent on a party merger or other factors that are not accounted for in the explanatory framework set out above. Chapter eight concludes that Grzymała-Busse's framework is generally useful in analysing WECPs although some of the dynamics within it need adjusting to account for their adaptation. Accordingly, the framework is refined in Chapter eight to provide a better account of why some WECPs were able to adapt while others maintained Communist programmes.

1.11 Contributions of the research

This study makes several main contributions. First, it uses a theoretical framework to analyse WECPs. This is rare and doing so helps to re-orientate the field in a comparative direction. This study helps to fill large gaps in our knowledge about WECPs and the reasons behind their divergent adaptation. Very little is known about them and there are only a handful of scholarly works on the case studies analysed here. In particular, this study provides advances in analysing the centralistic organisations and their secretive internal workings of some of the case studies which scholars have found difficult to study. Over twenty years after the collapse of Communism in CEE, this study provides an opportunity to explain WECPs' development and that of their successor parties with the advantage of greater certainty about their long-term trajectory than studies had in the early 1990s. It is an opportunity to go back and talk to those who were involved at the time and presents data that was often not available to researchers in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of Communism. This research presents a challenge to experts on WECPs to use their expertise to test the propositions in the framework provided in Chapter eight to see if it has wider relevance and to develop other comparative frameworks to analyse WECPs.

Second, by drawing upon Grzymała-Busse's work, this research provides an opportunity to apply concepts developed in the study of CEE Communist successor parties to WECPs. This ensures that the research places itself at the forefront of introducing ideas formulated from outside of the comparative study of Western European parties into the field. Importing such a framework is justified in light of the increasingly pan-European focus of the literature on parties (see Lewis and Webb, 2003) and presents added value because few (if any) studies have sought to test or refine frameworks developed in studying CEE parties by applying them elsewhere.

As an endeavour in importing ideas from CEE this research allows us to test how well theoretical frameworks developed in the study of CEE are able to travel to other contexts. Therefore it has important implications for the wider literature on political parties and the role of party organisational factors in party change. Moreover, this study provides an opportunity to identify similarities and differences in the factors that shaped the development of Communist parties and their successors in CEE and

Western Europe which can contribute to the development of a pan-European understanding of the left. It also develops explanations regarding the development of Communist parties that may have relevance beyond a European context. Scholars have explained the social democratisation of CPs in CEE in comparative perspective. This research provides an opportunity to develop such an analysis of WECPs that social democratised (also see Arter, 2002, Waller, 1995).

Third, this analysis contributes to our general understanding of party organisational and strategic adaptation. It adds to the wider literature on institutional change and critical junctures in the development of institutions (Mahoney, 2000) and the effects of reforming organisational practises such as candidate selection methods (Barnea and Rhat, 2007). It also contributes to our understanding of the role of organisational variables in affecting parties' ability to adapt in response to changes in the electoral marketplace or to learn from external shocks like election defeats (Mair et al., 2004, Norris and Lovenduski, 2004). Further, it adds to the study of elites' organisational strategies. This helps to develop our knowledge of how party leaders make organisational changes by democratising, centralising, changing the role of party members or pursuing electorally-driven professionalisation in aim of changing their parties' programmes. These debates have so far largely focused upon larger vote- and office-seeking, mainstream parties (Ramiro, 2005; Lundell, 2004; Pettitt, 2004, Faucher-King and Treille, 2003; Webb and Fisher, 2001; Farrell and Webb, 2000; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Panebianco, 1988; Katz and Mair, 1992, 1995; Scarrow, 1994). This research shows that these ideas have relevance to WECPs and their successors. It helps to establish that political scientists can study WECPs using similar tools of analysis to those that they draw on to understand mainstream parties.

1.12 Main findings of the Research

There are two main findings of this research. First, that, just as in the successor parties in CEE, efforts to reform WECPs came from party leaders who had greater experience in working with groups and institutions outside of the immediate party hierarchy. It was leaders with experiences in the student movement, trade unions, new social movements and elected office, or who had risen rapidly to leadership positions, who were at the forefront of reforming WECPs. Furthermore, those leaders who rose gradually up the party hierarchy by proving their loyalty through working

on internal party affairs were far more hesitant about breaking with Communism. These leaders lacked ideas and pragmatism that would have helped to transform their parties. While outsiders sponsored party change, it was elected officials who were most prone to breaking with radical left-wing politics altogether in pursuit of social democracy.

Second, in contrast to what happened in the successor parties of CEE, organisational centralisation was not needed in WECPs to achieve programmatic transformation or in order to force through office and vote seeking strategies. Internal democratisation could be effective in promoting these goals. This was because in several WECPs the mid-level elite was not dominated by hardliners who would stubbornly resist reform but by activists who drew on the moderating experience of working with groups and institutions outside of their parties. Moreover, in several cases reformist party leaders were highly successful in convincing party members of the need for programmatic changes following the revolutions in CEE in 1989 and electoral defeats. Shifting power to the party in public office also provided WECPs' leaders with alternatives to organisational centralisation. While reformers in successor parties in CEE had encountered a need for organisational centralisation from previous struggles to broaden their party's appeal, their counterparts in WECPs are shown to have become more committed to democratisation through such experiences.

Chapter 2

The Portuguese Communist Party – Lessons in Resisting Change

2.1 Introduction

This chapter extends Grzymała-Busse's framework to analyse the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) which kept democratic centralism – a scenario Grzymała-Busse tells us little about because it broke down in the cases that she analysed. The PCP played a leading role in clandestine resistance against the Salazar and Caetano dictatorships (1932–74). It grew rapidly during the 1974 Carnation Revolution in which it played a central role. Its cells infiltrated the armed forces, the media, emerging public assemblies, trade unions and state institutions (Hottinger, 1975). Flush with financial backing from the Soviet Union and infiltration of the state it became one of the most influential WECPs (De Sousa 2001, p. 157, Narciso 2007, p. 17). The PCP participated in provisional national governments in 1975–1976 and made significant inroads in 'socialising' Portuguese society (Patricio 1990, p. 45). Its links to the armed forces allowed it to gain significant influence and a legal monopoly over trade unions during the revolutionary period (Middlemass, 1980, p. 191; Cabral, 1983, p. 194). In 1975 its revolutionary tone and armed protesters caused headaches for governments throughout Western Europe as a failed left-wing coup brought Portugal to the brink of civil war (FCO, 1975, Mugal-Leon 1977, p. 32, Varela 2008, p. 6).

Thereafter, the PCP pursued a threefold strategy. First, it participated in elections while waiting for another chance to overthrow capitalism (Cunha 2008, p. 3, Fryatt 1997, p. 6). Second, it sought to protect gains from the revolutionary period including nationalisations and collectivisation in agriculture (Cunhal 1988, p. 121). This involved staunch opposition to European integration for promoting American capitalism (Dunphy 2004, p. 115). Third, the PCP pursued a hegemonic electoral strategy. It sought credibility by contesting elections in coalition with its own front parties, the Portuguese Democratic Movement (MDP) and later the Greens. Despite demanding coalitions with the social democratic Socialist Party (PS), this aim was rendered unrealistic by ferocious attacks on it, meddling in its internal affairs and a refusal to moderate or compromise (Cunha 1992, p. 300). The PCP's pariah status divided the Portuguese left and prompted the PS to form weak minority governments

or to look to the centre-right for coalition partners (Gallagher 1988, p. 293, Lisi 2007, p. 51 also see Bosco, 1998).

The PCP's policy seeking strategy was largely unsuccessful. In 1979 it won almost nineteen per cent of the vote in parliamentary elections. However, it has encountered a sustained crisis and numerous pressures to change since the 1980s including steady electoral and organisational decline (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). Its support bases in industry and collective agriculture shrank and mainstream parties revised Portugal's Constitution to dismantle its influence through privatisations (Gaspar 1991, p. 3, Patricio 1989, p. 45). The PCP's leaders also made disastrous tactical mistakes including the refusal to support their 'Number one enemy', PS leader Mario Soares's Presidential bid in 1986, only to make a spectacular volte-face because in comparison to the centre-right alternative, he was the lesser of two evils (Gallagher 1986, p. 294). The PCP lost control over its front party MDP which added to its woes and it struggled to reconcile its orthodoxy with Perestroika.

Most southern European parties have undergone wide-ranging changes in the last twenty years (Bosco and Morlino 2007, p. 351). Puzzlingly, the PCP's leaders refused to change, even though scholars have long expected it to moderate following electoral defeats (Mujal-Leon, 1977; Patricio and Stoleroff, 1994; Cunha, 2008). Instead of adapting, the PCP's leaders preferred ideological purity and gradual decline (Raby 1989, p. 222). Even after the death of its orthodox, and domineering former Secretary-General Álvaro Cunhal in 2005 (who led the party from 1941–1992), PCP programmes show remarkable continuity with those following the Carnation Revolution (PCP, 2008a, 2008b). While reduced in stature, it remains one of the strongest WECPs, one of the last bastions of Stalinism and its orthodoxy continues to divide the Portuguese left.

Table 2.1: Electoral results of the PCP in parliamentary elections*

Year	1975	1976	1979	1980	1983	1985	1987
Votes (per cent)	12.5	14.6	19	16.9	18.07	15.49	12.18

Year	1991	1995	1999	2002	2005	2009
Votes (per cent)	8.8	8.6	8.93	6.97	7.7	7.88

*Includes vote for the PCP's front parties.

(Magone, 2006; Botella and Ramiro, 2003; Cunha 2003; Staar 1989, 1985).

This chapter has three sections. The first shows that the PCP developed a rigid form of democratic centralism that positioned its leaders in good stead to retain control following exogenous shocks. Second, it shows that restrictive elite advancement practices fostered an unresponsive leadership that was ill-equipped to break with Communism following events in CEE in 1989. A third section analyses how the leadership used its power under democratic centralism to crush four major episodes of dissidence rather than to initiate reform.

Table 2.2: Membership figures of the PCP

Year	1946	1973	1974	1975	1976	1978	1981
Members	4,800	3,000	14,593	30,000	100,000	142,000	164,713

Year	1983	1986	1989	1990	1996	1999	2005
Members	200,753	200,000	199,275	120,000	140,000	131,504	80,000

(Lisi, 2009; Cunha, 2003; Botella and Ramiro, 2003; Pereira, 1988; Staar, 1989, 1986).

2.2 The PCP's rigid democratic centralism

The PCP has formally committed to democratic centralism since the 1920s. After being banned in 1926, it faced brutal repression and a clandestine existence. This provided little opportunity for debates or congresses and required military discipline that insulated the PCP from Cold War controversies like the Prague Spring that divided some other WECPs (Cabral 1983, p. 181). Cunhal Stalinised the PCP in the 1940s by introducing the cult of personality and tightening discipline. With Cunhal imprisoned in 1949–61, the party became more pluralistic. However, following his dramatic escape deviant anarcho-syndicalists, Maoists and ultra-leftists were banished and democratic centralism was reasserted to curtail heterogeneity (Mullen, 2005; Patricio and Stoleroff 1993, p. 82).

The PCP portrays itself as the most democratic Portuguese party. Supposedly, a deep debate occurs at every level of its pyramid shaped organisational structures. This begins in local meetings that elect delegates to powerful national congresses (usually with over 1000 delegates). These subsequently elect a Central Committee (CC) to govern the party and to nominate executive institutions (a Secretariat, Political Commission and a Secretary-General) (Cunha 1992, p. 328). Centralism is intended to preserve effectiveness in face of a hostile environment (PCP 1974, p. 94). Therefore officials speak with 'one voice'; avoid washing dirty linen in public and congress decisions are binding. Those publicly deviating from the party line are disciplined and lower party organs are accountable to the level above them. Horizontal discussion between local organisations is prohibited to prevent the formation of factions that might contest the leadership's authority which leaves little room for expression by minority groups (PCP, 2008a, Raby 1989, p. 222).

The PCP's highly centralistic organisation has changed little since the Carnation Revolution. In practice it has been more centralistic than its statutes admit and this allowed the leadership or more specifically, Cunhal to control policy making and elite advancement. Even now agendas for pre-Congress meetings are determined by the leadership and debates are policed by party officials. Critics are routinely blocked from speaking and when genuine debate is allowed this is used to track dissidents rather to provide input (Cunha 1992, p. 337). Files monitoring members' views and self-criticisms enable the leadership to root out bad apples while regional officials tightly control the selection of congress delegates by pressuring local party leaders not to select troublemakers.

The leadership's control is reinforced through the appointment of functionaries on the party payroll as congress delegates. This group have made up over half of delegates at most congresses since 1974 and those undermining the leadership risk the sack. Institutional procedures have also kept congresses weak. Conducting congress votes by a show of hands long enabled the leadership to identify any rebels. Furthermore, congresses have only been allowed to vote on a single programme and a single list for the CC and these are proposed by the leadership. The latter can not be amended by congress. With dissidents always being overwhelmingly outvoted, amendments to the

leadership's programmes have only ever been superficial at congresses and they have never rejected the leadership's proposed list for the CC.

As Secretary-General, Cunhal sat on all the leadership institutions. His personality cult and role in Portuguese history gave him great authority (Narciso 2007, p. 21). He dominated CC meetings and overruled them at a whim (*Publico*, 05.10.2004, Cunha 1991, p. 6). Under Cunhal, the Secretariat (between five to seven members) handled the party's finances, ran communications and directed its organisation; the Political Commission (around 20 members) made policy documents while tightly controlling ancillary organisations and elected officials (Cunha 1992, p. 328). Parliamentarians were generally weak vis-à-vis the party leadership and paid most of their salary to the party which contributes a high proportion of its income (van Biezen 2000a, p. 400; 2000b, p. 333). Researchers found that parliamentarians signed blank resignation letters to keep them subservient (Cunha Interview, 15.07.08).

The PCP expanded rapidly following the Carnation Revolution as young radicals flocked to its revolutionary appeals (see Table 2.2). The introduction of undisciplined newcomers presented new pressures to reform. The PCP's leaders, however, were wary of the 'New Member Factor' that hollowed out other WECPs that expanded on the back of new protest movements (Waller 1989, p. 45). In response, they established mid-level regional committees to discipline and integrate the rank and file (Cunha 1992, p. 221). In 1979 they also crushed ideological pluralism amongst its student members by merging the pluralistic Union of Communist Students (UEC) with the orthodox Union of Communist Youth to form Portuguese Communist Youth (JCP).

The flow of internal information has also been strictly controlled. Before 1989 the party paper *Avante* lacked any critically minded discussion or room for rival analyses including Eurocommunism or environmentalism. Cunhal also overruled elites calling for theoretical debate in the intellectual journal *O Militante* (Narciso 2007, p. 21). Scholars found that party archives were closed, even to historians within the party and that it held files on those researching it. Moreover, the PCP's leaders falsified, destroyed or hid documents and pressured witnesses to keep silent to obstruct analysis of party history (Cunha 1992, p. 93).

2.3 Elite Advancement in the PCP

The PCP's leaders had the power to force through programmatic reforms. However, Cunhal's restrictive and insular elite advancement practices constrained reform. They fostered an elite generally lacking in experiences that could have helped them to envisage transformation or to question the party's orthodox ideology in the late 1980s. Moreover, the leadership deliberately constrained elite advancement to resist moderation. This was no easy feat considering the PCP's growth but was possible because of several factors.

First, CC members were handpicked to be ideologically orthodox. In 1974, the CC was expanded but packed with experienced, orthodox clandestine elites with proven loyalty. Between them, the CC's 36 members shared 755 years of clandestine struggle and 308 years in prison (see Cunha, 1992). In 1976, the CC expanded to 90 members, incorporating more veteran militants (Gaspar 1990, p. 48). When younger newcomers were promoted as the CC grew to 165 members by 1983, ideological orthodoxy remained a prerequisite for advancement.

Second, it became the norm for as many as ninety per cent of CC members to work as functionaries in the PCP's apparatus (Gaspar 1990, p. 52, Raby 1989, p. 221). Funding from the Soviet Union enabled the PCP to employ an army of full-time apparatchiks. CC members had proven obedience from slowly rising up the hierarchy and spent their lives working exclusively in the party machine at central office, running campaigns or coordinating local organisations. These elites had usually been given party jobs before they could attend university to prevent them from developing analytical skills or entering professional occupations. Most had little experience in carrying out prior reform. Dissenting CC members risked losing their jobs and excommunication from their social networks. The leadership also ensured a 'Working Majority' under which around 70 per cent of the CC had working class backgrounds to marginalise the influence of intellectuals who Cunhal argued were more susceptible to bourgeois influences (Cunha 1992, p. 356). Infiltration of the state apparatus, the wages of elected officials and corruption in local politics enabled the PCP to employ a large army of functionaries (De Sousa 2001, p. 163).

Third, officials working on the edge of the PCP's apparatus were rarely 'horizontally advanced' to the CC in case their thinking was contaminated by experiences in negotiating with outsiders. Only a handful of CC members had experience of elected office and few had been 'Unitarian' workers who infiltrated social and political organisations including trade unions or the health and education sectors. Even leaders of the Communist dominated trade union the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CTGP) were underrepresented in the elite (Gaspar 1990, p. 48). Cunhal wanted to control them rather than succumb to their influence. By the late 1980s, it became common for around 20–30 CC members to have trade union backgrounds but even then they remained greatly outnumbered by functionaries and prominent unionists were still excluded. A fourth reason for the lack of reformers in the CC was that in a handful of cases those who managed to find a limited degree of autonomy, including parliamentarian Vital Moreira, rejected invitations to join it, for fear that Cunhal might monitor their activities more closely.

Fifth, the more powerful leadership bodies the Political Commission and Secretariat, were dominated by veteran orthodox clandestine militants (see Bosco, 2000). Cunhal handpicked their members and none were removed from 1963–83. In practice the Secretariat ran the party. When this expanded in 1976, it included more of the old guard including Cunhal's aid Domingos Abrantes (Gaspar 1990, p. 48). Generational turnover in the Political Commission was delayed until the late 1980s. Even then, as younger elites who joined the party after 1960 including Carlos Carvalhas, gradually began to replace those who joined in the 1940s, the PCP's funnel shaped advancement policies meant only the orthodox and obedient advanced (Bosco 2001, p. 357). A new Executive Political Commission was also introduced to preserve the old guard's dominance (Cunha 1991, p. 160). Before 1989 few members of the Secretariat and Political Commission had experience of working in other organisations or in carrying out prior reforms.

In 1988, the pack was also shuffled to ensure that only Cunhal and Abrantes sat on all the main leadership bodies, dealing a blow to aspiring successors. The ruthless removal of Cunhal's rivals left a 'desert' in the leadership (Cunha 1991, p. 161). Most decisions had gone through Cunhal, constraining opportunities for reform and preventing elites from gaining the stature needed to contest his authority. Cunhal

delayed a change of leadership for as long as possible. When he retired as Secretary-General aged 79 in 1992, he chose his successor Carlos Carvalhas. Following this Cunhal still managed the PCP as President of a new 'National Council' until 1996 and remained a CC member until his death in 2005 (aged 91) (Cunha 2008, p. 4).

Cunhal had several of the characteristics that Grzymala-Busse argues are beneficial to reform. He was recruited from outside the PCP's traditional support base, being middle class, a lawyer and an academic and had worked as Minister without Portfolio following the Carnation Revolution. He sought to broaden the party's revolutionary appeal to a wide spectrum of the electorate by toning down Marxist-Leninist rhetoric in election campaigns that emphasised 'national and democratic revolution' (Pereira 1988, p. 91). Cunhal managed to take a cautious approach during most of the revolutionary period and opportunistically accepted an electoral coalition with the PS in the Lisbon Mayoral election in 1989 to hide the PCP's losses. However, Cunhal consciously tried to keep his ideas pure because he believed any deviation from Leninism would leave its historical mission unfulfilled (Mujal-Leon 1977, p. 22). This shows that there is a risk in overstating the extent to which orthodox elites will draw on prior experiences that seem beneficial to reform. A majority of such elites in the PCP still ignored their experiences due to a high degree of ideological conviction and fear of being punished.

2.4.1 Cushing the reformers

Reformers were in short supply in the PCP and it failed to break with the past as Grzymala-Busse found of parties with restrictive elite advancement practices. However, there have been four major episodes of dissidence aimed at instigating reform. Each reformist faction had strong links with groups and institutions outside the PCP. These engendered pressures for change and support Grzymala-Busse's idea that elites negotiating with outsiders are those best positioned to embrace programmatic transformation.

2.4.2.1 The Group of Six

The PCP's monolithic image was first dented when the 'Group of Six' (Veiga de Oliveira, Vital Moreira, Silva Graça, Vitor Louro, Sousa Marques and Dulce Martins) broke ranks in the late 1980s (Cunha 1991, p. 6). The 'Six' had been

parliamentarians, with the exception of Martinez (a secretary in parliament), or worked in the 1974–75 provisional governments. The experience of working in parliament was the decisive factor shaping their gradual moderation and dissidence. There they found pressures to negotiate, compromise with other parties and to respond to media criticisms of party ideology. Furthermore, they moderated from working with outsiders in parliamentary committees including those that drafted and revised Portugal's Constitution. This convinced them of the need for less radical policies on state ownership; removing Marxist rhetoric from the constitution and ending the political role of the armed forces to the chagrin of the leadership.

Most members of 'the Six' (and their supporters) also drew on experiences from professional backgrounds, involvement in other social organisations and engagement with theoretical debates from university education. Most of them had little clandestine experience. While elite advancement was generally restrictive, Cunhal occasionally promoted outsiders to the parliamentary group if they could help the party gain influence. This allowed Vital Moreira to advance unusually rapidly from outside the party hierarchy. He had not been an orthodox Communist but a prestigious Marxist academic and lawyer with much needed expertise.

The PCP's parliamentarians were generally tightly controlled; however, the head of the parliamentary group, Carlos Brito took a tolerant approach to handling 'the Six'. He accepted their refusal to entertain Soviet officials and let them abstain from parliamentary votes. Nonetheless, some of 'the Six' resigned in 1982, while others were soon dropped from the PCP's electoral list. Most of them were excluded from the leadership by the time of their dissidence. However, they remained highly regarded figures (Narciso 2007, p. 49). Further, Cunhal reluctantly allowed Moreira to represent the PCP as a judge in Portugal's Constitutional Court after the PS threatened to include him as one of their judges. Moreira continued to moderate from working there.

2.4.2.2 The Group of Six and democratic centralism

In March 1987, 'the Six' handed Cunhal a document detailing their criticisms of party ideology. They anticipated that reforms would be blocked without Cunhal's support and asked to discuss the party's decline with Cunhal in an effort to persuade him to

allow reforms. Simultaneously, Moreira began publishing critical articles under a pseudonym to stimulate debate. The 'Six' promoted Eurocommunism, a market-based economy and commitment to parliamentary democracy. They also demanded cooperation with the PS; dropping Euroscepticism and criticised the Soviet model (Gaspar 1990, p. 59). However, they stopped short of advocating dropping the goal of a 'Communist society' or embracing social democracy believing this would be easy for Cunhal to dismiss.

Despite their professional backgrounds and experience in making broader appeals in parliament and the Constitutional Court, 'the Six' did not envisage new centralised organisational structures or streamlining. They argued that under Perestroika rapid democratisation should be used to evoke ideological renewal (Cunha 1991, p. 6). The 'Six' demanded reforms that would allow congress (not the CC) to choose the Secretary-General; an organisational committee to manage the party to reduce the power of the Secretariat, secret-balloting in elections for congress delegates and the CC; competitive elections for the CC and generational turnover in the elite (Gaspar, 1991). The 'Six' saw themselves as 'brain-stormers' starting a debate. They wanted Cunhal to sponsor democratisation to help it succeed. However, they did not want him to use democratic centralism to force through programmatic reforms.

The 'Six' stood little chance of success when Cunhal refused to budge. He agreed to only meet them individually in a failed effort to divide them. Cunhal kept the discussions and their proposals secret from the CC thereby ignoring their requests and the principle of collective leadership (Cunha 1991, p. 6). In response, 'the Six' went public in newspaper articles criticising democratic centralism from 1987–1989 (Raby 1989, p. 220). Cunhal subsequently delayed the upcoming Twelfth Congress to gain time to shore up support (Cunha 1991, p. 160). He threatened to expel 'the Six', portrayed them as enemies of the party and warned of the dangers of factionalism in *O Militante* as well as his speech at the party festival *Avante* (Raby 1989, p. 220). Cunhal also used 'the Six's' backgrounds against them by portraying them as troublesome intellectuals who were out of touch with the PCP's proletarian rank and file. The 'Six' were sidelined but not expelled (Gaspar, 1991). When the CC finally discussed their dissidence in 1988, it condemned them as counter-revolutionaries (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 100).

The 'Six' had prior experiences that Grzymala-Busse argues will be beneficial to party transformation and also received support from activists with broader experiences from trade unions, municipal politics and as intellectuals. Even still, 'the Six' could not overcome the power relations inside the PCP and only a small minority of the elite supported them. All 'the Six' could do was to publish their criticisms. This was unsuccessful because few party members were avid readers and fellow reformers disliked the damage it caused to the party (Cunha 1991, p. 159). The 'Six' won only small concessions. Cells were temporarily allowed to hold secret votes for electing congress delegates if they first agreed to do this by a show of hands, which few did and a letters page was established in the party paper *Avante* (Cunha 1991, p. 160). The 'Six' boycotted the Twelfth Congress when it was finally held in December 1988 to prevent the leadership from gaining authority by crushing them. Several of them left the party after the Congress when democratic centralism was used to reassert an orthodox line.

2.4.3.1 The case of Zita Seabra

Few of the PCP's high ranking elites embraced reform during the late 1980s. Zita Seabra, its rising star, leading female politician and potential leader bucks the trend (Raby 1989, p. 220). Her dissidence in 1987–1988 supports Grzymala-Busse's idea that those working with groups outside the party will face pressures to reform. Seabra's role in leading the student organisation UEC following the Carnation Revolution involved working with radical feminist groups. This helped her to question the party line in the Political Commission as she worked to reform the PCP's conservative approach on women's rights, leading the campaign for the legalisation of abortion in Portugal (Guardiola, 1984).

However, Seabra's uncompromising approach meant that she generally resisted pressures to moderate from contact with outsiders. She rarely built bridges with them and did not gradually accept the need for reforms like most reformers. UEC remained a disciplined, orthodox and militaristic organisation under Seabra's leadership during the Carnation Revolution; she saw herself as a Bolshevik and complained that the Communists held back from civil war (Cancio and Almeida, 2007; *Avante*, 26.07.07). Seabra's rapid promotion was possible precisely because she was an uncompromising Stalinist who devoted her time to internal party administrative tasks. Seabra's

eventual dissidence was shaped more strongly by two factors that are not accounted for by Grzymała-Busse's framework. First, she was disillusioned by visits to CEE and second, her obedience to the Soviet Union prompted her to question Cunhal's failure to follow Perestroika.

Few of the PCP's highly orthodox elites changed their ideas in response to the crises of the late 1980s. Those that did generally struggled to offer another left identity or a realistic process of ideological renewal. Their dissidence shocked colleagues who questioned their legitimacy as reformers. Moreover, having hidden their heads in the sand and failed to negotiate with outsiders or to gradually adapt their beliefs, orthodox elites including Seabra, found that their ideas collapsed altogether. Most were devastated that Communism was finished and dropped out from politics altogether. However, Seabra moved from one extreme to another and embraced right-wing politics.

2.4.3.2 Zita Seabra and democratic centralism

In 1988 Seabra criticised the leadership in CC meetings. Cunhal responded more forcefully than with the 'Six' by putting her on 'trial'. She was expelled from the Political Commission and subsequently the CC (Cancio and Almeida, 2007). In January 1990 she was expelled from the party for publishing newspaper articles that attacked its approach to Perestroika, democratic centralism and Marxism-Leninism (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 99). Cunhal ruthlessly made Seabra's ex-husband Carlos Brito announce her expulsion and she was threatened, intimidated and spied on (see Narciso, 2007).

2.4.4.1 The Third Way

Inspired by 'the Six' and Seabra, another group of reformers the 'Third Way' developed around a handful of party officials and CC members in 1988 (Narciso 2007, p. 60). It was not as organised as 'the Six', or as esteemed, but proved more troubling for Cunhal and drew support from around 3000 activists. The Third Way organised loosely and did not have a leader to avoid being punished as a faction. Its members mostly came from a younger generation to the leadership that had joined the party during the Carnation Revolution. Around ninety per cent of prominent Third Wayers moderated through working outside the party in other professions or political

organisations (Moreira Interview 13.09.09). Many drew on backgrounds in local government, professional bodies and most were involved in the PCP's intellectual sector including artists, journalists, academics, civil servants and teachers (Gaspar 1991, p. 18).² Outside the party they had learnt to compromise to get results, seen the need for practical decision making and encountered criticisms of Marxism-Leninism. The Third Way also included officials and CC members involved in liaising and negotiating with party cells inside the state, the armed forces, judges and the police who had also gradually moderated.

Prominent Communist trade unionists including J6se Judas from the CGTP and Ant6nio Teodoro head of the Federation of Teachers Unions joined the Third Way. Criticism of the party had mounted in the trade unions in the 1980s (Gaspar 1991, p. 18). Unlike the party leadership, Communist trade unionists could not ignore changes in industry, working patterns and Portuguese society (Patricio and Stoleroff 1993, p. 78). The leaders of the CGTP clashed with the leadership as they accepted the need to work with rivals including the social democratic unions that challenged its hegemony over the labour movement and to enter corporatist negotiations in 1987 on wage agreements and labour laws (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 95). The PCP's leaders initially blocked these decisions but the CGTP's leaders had a limited degree of autonomy and forced their hand. Thereafter, they craved greater independence. Negotiating with workers and trade union members also showed CGTP leaders the need for practical policies to train workers to meet the demands of more highly skilled production; that European integration was a force for modernising Portugal and that the PCP's dogmatic appeals were losing resonance (Cunha 1991, p. 12, Dunphy 2004, p. 118). Although trade unionists were underrepresented at elite level, there were enough of them in the CC for this to cause problems.

Almost all Third Wayers had multifaceted links to other social organisations. Many had been prominent student activists at Coimbra University during the late 1960s where actions involved dialogue and compromise with a wide spectrum of political groups. Others were members of UEC under the leadership of Joaquim Pina Moura

² Prominent Third Way members included: Jos6 Saramago (Nobel prize winning novelist), Baptista Bastos (writer), Mario de Carvalho (writer), Gomes Canotilho (constitutional expert), Ant6nio Manuel Hespanha (historian) and M6rio Vieira de Carvalho (Musician).

(later a leading Third Wayer) in the late 1970s. In this period, rapid membership growth transformed UEC from being a small sectarian organisation into an inclusive venue for debate that was powerful in national student organisations and its leaders became more responsive to student's aspirations. Elites with backgrounds in UEC had experience in making compromises from forging broad alliances with other political groups to run university student unions. In contrast, they found the PCP's democratic centralism too constraining. Politicians from UEC also exchanged grandiose ideological goals for pragmatism as they encountered practical problems like buying cheap books for students or providing basic services. Some prominent Third Wayers became dissidents after the party leadership seized control of UEC in 1979. Other Third Wayers living in exile under fascism also became critically minded as they encountered Eurocommunism in Italy or disappointing realities in the Eastern bloc.

2.4.4.2 The Third Way and democratic centralism

The Third Way wanted a gradual process of reform and criticised the public outbursts of the Six. They initially sought reform by mobilising activists and distributing documents at party meetings but claimed they were not a faction and were only contributing to debate for the Twelfth Congress. It was hoped that a less confrontational approach would make them acceptable to the leadership and harder for it to discipline them (Gaspar 1991, p. 5). Analysts were dismayed that they clung to a culture that avoided public criticism and that this divided reformers (Gaspar 1990, p. 5). In 1988, the Third Way presented their manifesto, with 300 signatures to the CC (Cunha 2003, p. 8). This proposed an end to officials being nominated from above; fair elections; secret votes; reduced leadership control over lists for the CC; meaningful participation for members in decision-making; less militaristic discipline; rights to horizontal discussion between branches and to form factions; abandoning the cult of personality; a body to protect members' rights and more powerful congresses.

The Third Way demanded reforms to break with Stalinism and to update Marxism-Leninism in light of Perestroika, developments in other WECPs and social change in Portugal. The Third Way did not advocate abandoning Communism but focused on freeing up debate in aim of renewal. Central to their concerns were ideological pluralism, a more favourable approach to European integration and less sectarian relations with other left-wing parties (see Narciso, 2007). Cunhal appeared to be

receptive to the Third Way. He overruled calls to punish them and included two of them in a fifteen member committee to revise party statutes and programmes. This toned down the policy of Portugal leaving the European Community which even orthodox elites recognised was becoming unrealistic. However, the committee ignored the Third Wayers' proposed reforms. Their attempts to promote recognition of the benefits from European integration failed and the party's Euroscepticism deepened.

Cunhal easily out-manoeuvred the Third Way. Being reluctant to promote an open schism they had few options when the leadership enforced the ban on horizontal lines of discussion to stop them from forming a movement, speaking at meetings or campaigning within the party. This meant that reformers rarely knew of any like-minded activists and they fragmented into different groups (Cunha 1991, p. 4). Before the Twelfth Congress Cunhal and leading orthodox elites called Third Way members to meetings to demand an end to their dissidence and tried to buy them off with promotions (Narciso 2007, p. 52). Simultaneously, their calls for democratic debate in the CC were crushed and leading reformers were spied on (Narciso 2007, pp. 85–109).

The leadership's control over the selection of congress delegates meant that the Third Way only gained around 50 of 2090 congress delegates at the Twelfth Congress in 1988. In some regions activists were not invited to vote, as the leadership packed the congress with loyal functionaries (Raby 1989, p. 221). Leading Third Wayers made it to the congress, however, their speeches and accusations of rigged delegate elections were ignored. When trade unionist José Judas demanded secret votes for selecting the CC, Cunhal grabbed the microphone and claimed the congress was being sabotaged. The PCP's official congress report overlooked this incident and the congress was closed to the media while the dissidents were routinely blocked from speaking at subsequent congresses (see Narciso, 2007).

Cunhal took measures to reinforce his power in response to the dissidence. A new 'Control Commission' elected by the CC and run by old orthodox elites was established to police the party. Its formal role is to 'fiscalise the party's accounts' (PCP, 2006) but it assumed powers to monitor dissidents, to recommend punishments

and operated to prevent reformers from gaining elite positions. At the Twelfth Congress leading Third Wayers and those thought to be close to them were almost completely purged from the CC as 46 of its members were replaced by orthodox functionaries (Gaspar 1990, p. 60).

The Third Way broke the tradition of unanimous congress votes but could not challenge the leadership's power (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 102). Cunhal claimed that the 1988 Programme made significant changes in recognising that there was no universal model for socialism, a need for freedom of the press and the right to form political parties (Raby 1989, p. 222). Some scholars viewed this as an acceptance of pluralist democracy (see Bosco, 2001). However, the changes were merely cosmetic as Cunhal shrouded the party's most vulnerable positions in ambiguous rhetoric (Gaspar, 1991). Revolutionary aims were seen as 'unfinished', leaving it unclear if they had been abandoned (Gaper, 1991). Cunhal's new theory of 'advanced democracy' did not mention whether governments alternate following elections, rule out armed uprising, or abandon Marxism-Leninism (Gaspar, 1991). The 1988 congress reaffirmed traditional positions (Raby 1989, p. 221).

The Third Way and reformers lost influence before the collapse of Communism in CEE. Thereafter, they increasingly made public statements and in 1989 cooperated with 'the Six' and Seabra to form a think-tank the National Institute of Social Studies to lobby for change. The leadership continued to ignore them at the Thirteenth-Extraordinary Congress in 1990 which analysed events in CEE. It reasserted an orthodox line; revolutionary politics; demanded internal discipline and called for critics to resign (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 109). Third Wayers including José Judas were deselected as congress delegates and fewer intellectuals became delegates than at previous congresses (Gaspar, 1991). Judas proceeded to present an alternative programme, criticising the Soviet model and democratic centralism in a press conference outside the congress (Patricio and Stoleroff 1994, p. 103).

The leadership explained events in CEE as the result of mistakes and deviations from Leninism that the PCP would have avoided through a more democratic model based on collective leadership rather than the cult of personality (Cunha 1991, p. 160). It praised the social and cultural achievements of state socialism and maintained alliances with

regimes in Libya, Cuba, China and North Korea (Gaspar 1991, p. 19). The Political Commission's support for the failed *coup d'état* in the Soviet Union in August 1991 brought things to a head (Patricio and Stoleroff 1993, p. 78). Prominent Third Way members held a public meeting supporting Perestroika and called for the CC to renounce the decision (Calder 1992, p. 168). The leadership responded by expelling several of them after consultation with the Control Commission. Support for the coup contributed to another electoral defeat in the 1991 election as the party fell from over twelve per cent in 1987 to below nine per cent (Cabral 1983, p. 170).

The collapse of Communism did little to dent the party's Stalinist organisational workings, Euroscepticism, hostile approach to the PS or its Leninist view of revolution (Cunha 1992, p. 314).³ There was an exodus as the Third Way left. In 1992 many of them formed an organisation called the Left-Platform. This soon split and some elites (mostly high ranking former elected officials) joined the PS while others formed a new left party the Left Bloc (BE) in 1999 (Cunha 2008, p. 4). This highlights the ideological divisions within the Third Way. Its members had not united around social democratisation as Grzymala-Busse found reformers experienced in negotiating with outside groups in CEE had done. Its programmatic aims remained vague. Most Third Wayers advocated broader socialist appeals, or more flexible forms of Communism. They also called for democratisation although leading figures had professional backgrounds and prior experiences in broadening appeals that Grzymala-Busse found bred centralisation in CEE.

2.4.5.1 The Renovadores

When Cunhal retired as Secretary-General in 1992 it looked like the struggle to reform the PCP was over. However, a fourth group of hesitant reformers the 'Renovadores' waited in the background (Gaspar, 1991). They included several high-ranking Political Commission members and (temporarily) Cunhal's successor Carlos Carvalhas. Most Renovadores quietly sympathised with the Third Way's strategy of gradual reform by working through party institutions. However, some had even built

³ The consistency of the PCP's ideology in its programmes politicians' speeches and findings from elite interviews contradicts Manifesto Research Group data which shows that Marxist-analysis in party programmes declined from 8.2 in 1975 to 0.11 in 1991 (Budge et al., 2001, 2006).

their own careers from persecuting them. The Renovadores gained influence as they silently won a slim majority in the Political Commission. Influence at the top gave them a better chance of success than previous dissidents and they used their positions to forge support amongst elites and to develop a movement within the party from 1992–2000. They aimed to reform the party in response to its continued decline.

Grzymała-Busse's framework helps to explain the conundrum of how reformist Political Commission members emerged when Cunhal picked them to be orthodox and obedient. It shows that he had been unable to fully exclude elites with prior experiences that were beneficial to envisaging reform. Generational turnover in the Political Commission had been delayed for as long as possible. At the Twelfth Congress in 1988, Cunhal retired nine of its fourteen members. Most of them were replaced with younger elites who were relative newcomers including Luis Sá, Luís Figueira and Carlos Carvalhas who had joined the CC after 1974 (Bosco 2000, p. 241). This process continued in the 1990s. Many new Political Commission members were highly orthodox. Nonetheless, the changing of the guard provided some opportunities for reformers.

As Gaspar (1991) noted, despite their apparent orthodoxy, these new faces were the PCP's best hope for reform. Unlike their predecessors, they had little experience of clandestine struggle; were highly educated and had become pragmatic through working in professional occupations outside the party. Sá for example encountered pressures for moderation and compromise as a student activist, a lawyer and an elected official in municipal politics. He was comfortable with theoretical debate and socialised with third wayers, with whom he discussed Eurocommunism and Perestroika (Narciso 2007, p. 30). It is surprising that such elites advanced so high. However, they had toed the orthodox-line despite having long harboured criticisms and these 'newcomers' had been tested by around twenty years of experience at elite level. With the orthodox-wing firmly in control, Cunhal had little to fear and they had skills that made them useful; Sá for example had proven ability on TV and expertise in local politics. Cunhal had overestimated their obedience and by the early 1990s the Renovadores questioned the failure to broaden appeal to attract middle class supporters (Bosco 2001, p. 365).

Institutional factors also provided pressures for moderation. A group of veteran orthodox elites including parliamentary leader Carlos Brito, and the high ranking clandestine militant Edgar Correia became leading Renovadores. Most of this group had slowly risen up the hierarchy, worked as functionaries from a young age, had experienced imprisonment under dictatorship and lacked professional experience outside the party. However, being in the leadership exposed these orthodox elites to critical ideas at international Communist seminars and they had disappointing experiences of visiting the Soviet Union. Their responsibilities in the Political Commission also involved coordinating the PCP's ancillary organisations, negotiating with outside groups and elected officials in municipal politics who expressed criticisms of the party's decline, dogmatism and loss of influence.

This process of moderation continued after the collapse of Communism. Political Commission members including Brito were tasked with forging a rare municipal alliance with the PS to control the Lisbon executive from 1989–2001. This showed them the benefits of cooperation and breaking with Marxism-Leninism. Similarly, Correia (who had opposed previous reformers) and elites responsible for health and social policy in the Political Commission moderated through working with trade unionists, professional organisations, civil servants and PS health ministers who sought the PCP's support in the mid-1990s. This convinced them that opportunities existed to gain influence in public sector reform through compromising with the PS and triggered conflict with orthodox colleagues. Working in roles as parliamentarians and municipal officials also placed pressures on some Political Commission members to moderate and to work with outsiders. Parliamentarian Carlos Carvalhas succeeded Cunhal. He was selected as a compromise. Carvalhas was orthodox but had friendships with less hard-line elites. His appointment as leader was seen as an opportunity to unite them around an orthodox direction (Gaspar, 1991). This did not go to plan. Being from the younger generation and feeling pressures to compromise with the PS in parliament, Carvalhas aligned with the Renovadores in the Political Commission.

Renovadores also emerged in the CC. Most of this group of Renovadores had moderated through working with outsiders in Unitarian work, municipal office or in professional occupations. The highest ranking Renovadores also used their influence

to increase generational turnover and to promote moderate functionaries with outside political experiences to the CC. The PCP's hard-line Control Commission failed to block all of them and overestimated the orthodoxy of several functionaries promoted to the Political Commission and CC which strengthened the Renovadores. By the mid-1990s they had solid support from around 30 (of 170) CC members and at times could muster a majority there.

During the late 1990s, the Renovadores built a factional movement by connecting mid-level elites and members to debate and campaign for reforms. Those involved were often in their fifties and generally younger than the leadership. Most of them worked outside the party bubble as professionals, trade unionists, 'Unitarian' workers (working for organisations/professions outside the party) and around half of them were doctors. These groups had become pragmatic through encountering the practical constraints of administration and favoured exchanging dogmatic ideology for practical policy goals. Many were also from the party's intellectual sector organisations which provided some room for ideological debate in the 1990s and officials in municipal government confronting local electoral realities were also strongly represented. However, the most common characteristic between the Renovadores was the pluralistic environment they encountered in UEC during the 1970s.

2.4.5.2 The Renovadores and democratic centralism

Leading Renovadores tried to gradually introduce democratisation and ideological moderation. They did not seek social democracy and initially, shied away from advocating the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism or democratic centralism to avoid overplaying their hand. Unlike previous reformers they made small inroads to reform. They revised party statutes in 1992 to emphasise the 'creative development' of democratic centralism which gave more room for their factional activities. The Renovadores's flagship policy 'The New Impulse' was approved by the CC in 1998. This asserted that officials should be elected not appointed (Cunha 2003, p. 119); it promoted cooperation with other political forces, freedom for the party's intellectual sector and debates with previous dissidents.

In the mid-1990s Carvalhas's congress speeches emphasised renovating Communism, distance from Stalinism, cooperation with the PS and creative input from members

(Cunha 2003, pp. 115–117). In 1996 the leadership withdrew its presidential candidate to promote left-unity with the PS. Meanwhile, Renovadores advocated alternative ideological inspirations in CC meetings and used their influence to tone down references to Marxism-Leninism in policy documents and campaigns. As editor of *Avante*, Brito published articles that debated reform in other WECPs. However, there were only modest changes to statutes and programmes. The Renovadores were unable to curtail the party's ritualistic PS-bashing or Euroscepticism and Marxism-Leninism was not abandoned as some scholars reported (Dunphy 2004, p. 119).

The Renovadores struggled to work through existing party structures to instigate reform. Most of the elite still lacked the outside experiences that Grzymała-Busse argues will promote reform and stood in their way. A majority of those with such experiences failed to support them. Carvalhas was unable to dominate the PCP's daily executive the Secretariat as Cunhal had done and was forced to share power with it under collective decision making (*Publico*, 26.11.04a/b). This informal empowerment of the Secretariat was the PCP's major organisational change in the 1990s. Turnover there remained low and its members had little political experience beyond internal administrative tasks. Only two Renovadores were in the Secretariat which was dominated by former clandestine, orthodox elites loyal to Cunhal. They included Cunhal's henchman Abrantes who was the only Secretariat member other than Carvalhas who sat also in the Political Commission. In practice Abrantes was the real Secretary-General while Carvalhas was only a public figurehead (*Publico*, 26.11.04).

The PCP's pyramid shaped institutional structure meant that the reformers had numerous obstacles in their way and could not transform the party unless they had control at the very top. Even with majorities in the Political Commission and occasionally in the CC the Renovadores failed to secure reform, being outflanked by their superiors in the Secretariat. They prevented cooperation with the minority PS government in 1995, instructed their parliamentarians to vote against PS budget proposals and fiercely criticised it for shifting rightwards. This left Carvalhas's strategy in tatters and prompted the Renovadores to redouble their efforts. However, in 1998, Brito was replaced as editor of *Avante* which fell back in line. The Secretariat also empowered the orthodox Control Commission with executive powers

to punish dissidents and gave it more influence in compiling candidate lists for the CC.

Before the PCP's Sixteenth Congress in 2000 Cunhal led a rearguard action by orthodox elites. He publicly criticised Carvalhas's deviation from Marxism-Leninism, the possibility of allying with the PS and social democratisation under the New Impulse (see Dunphy 2004, p. 119). Cunhal returned to personally instruct the Secretariat and seized control of key organisations in Lisbon and Setúbal. He used his influence to break the Renovadores' majority in the Political Commission where votes became deadlocked and they were weakened by Sá's untimely death in 1999 which deprived the PCP of its leading face of change (Cunha 2003, p. 117). Carvalhas and his supporters failed to resist the takeover and could not compete with Cunhal's authority. They suddenly abandoned the Renovadores and destroyed their majority in the CC. The Renovadores had helped Carvalhas to rise to power and saw him as one of their own but were taken by surprise as he tried to save his own position (*Público*, 05.10.2004).

The Renovadores forged a larger movement than previous dissidents and posed a bigger challenge to Cunhal. However, following a year of internecine struggle, Carvalhas worked with the orthodox Secretariat to crush them at the Sixteenth Congress in 2000 (Cunha 2003, p. 119). He shifted the Political Commission's policy making powers to the Secretariat which deleted the reforms from the New Impulse in draft congress programmes and Abrantes designed orthodox alternatives (*Público*, 26.11.04a). The Political Commission's input into the list for the CC was assumed by the Control Commission.

The Renovadores openly criticised party strategy and were condemned in *Avante* for factionalism. They found that congress delegate elections were controlled by the Secretariat and they were given little space to express themselves making the congress a *fait accompli*. Carvalhas's congress speech called for a less abstract form of Marxism-Leninism than in CEE (Carvalhas, 2000). However, this was not a sign of moderation as some interpreted it (Dunphy 2004, p. 119) but rhetoric borrowed from Cunhal's earlier attempts to disclaim the relevance of events in the Soviet bloc (Cunhal, 1995). Cunhal was too ill to attend the congress but wrote a letter

instructing it remain ideologically pure (Cunha, 2003). The party line became more orthodox as Carvalhas reasserted Marxism-Leninism, castigated the Renovadores's public criticisms and denounced their attempts to 'de-characterise' the party (Carvalhas, 2000; PCP, 2000a).

Most Renovadores including Political Commission members were dropped *en masse* from the CC. They were replaced with 44 new CC members, most being young highly orthodox functionaries from the Stalinist youth organisation the JCP (PCP, 2000a). High ranking Renovadores that survived the purge often left in frustration, including Henrique de Silva who resigned from the Secretariat. The CC was approved with the highest ever number of opposing votes but still only 121 of 1700 delegates voted against or abstained (Cunha 2003, p. 119). Decline at the 2001 local election fuelled further dissidence from Renovadores. Those in Lisbon's intellectual sector called for an extraordinary-congress, but the leadership ignored them, sacked their leaders and installed orthodox replacements (Cunha 2003, p. 120).

The PCP fell from nine per cent of the vote in 1999 to seven per cent at the 2002 parliamentary elections prompting further dissidence (Cunha 2003, p. 120). The leadership responded by expelling several former Political Commission members (PCP, 2002). Reformist Parliamentarian João Amaral was also deselected (Mullan, 2002). Expulsions continued during 2002 prompting resignations from high ranking Unitarian workers and CC members (*Radio Noticias*, 14.04.02). Most Renovadores wanted to stay in the PCP but found themselves excluded from positions of responsibility and left from 2000–02. When a small Committee for the Promotion of Renewal with around 200 members started in 2003 further expulsions took place (Magone 2004, p. 1119).

The Renovadores had prior experience at broadening appeals from working in trade unions, in elected office, as professionals outside the party and in the Lisbon municipal alliance with the PS. However, they did not envisage shifting power to themselves or new centralistic organisational structures and streamlining. They used their positions to encourage moderation from above but few believed a major ideological transformation should be forced through or envisaged a centralistic process of change. Instead they aimed to initiate democratisation and debate to spur ideological renewal.

The Renovadores also had other attributes beneficial to this strategy. Experience of running clandestine operations, intricate knowledge of party procedures and contacts throughout the party helped them build a strong movement.

The Renovadores believed that the Secretariat would block any effort to centralise, distort elite advancement processes or to redirect power to the Political Commission and that the rank and file needed to be empowered to break its grip on the party. Without control over the Secretariat, they were unable to use discipline under democratic centralism to their advantage or centralise party structures. Ultimately, the Renovadores 'portable skills' mattered little to the final outcome because they lacked influence at the very top, making their attempt at reform an uphill struggle.

In the 1990s, scholars saw signs that the PCP was breaking with Marxism-Leninism or gaining 'inclusion' in the party system through its municipal coalition with the PS in Lisbon (Bosco 2001, p. 351). However, the Renovadores failed to consolidate these changes. Their attempt at reform was too little too late. When they broke ranks they found it hard to justify their complicity in crushing previous dissidents and why they had stayed quiet for so long. The Renovadores had experiences that Grzymała-Busse found to be beneficial to reform in parties in CEE but did not unite around an alternative ideology. While most Renovadores accepted the need for compromises with the PS and European integration only a few of them sought to re-cast the party along social democratic lines. Most of them refused to break with Communism, preferring to renovate it in a more pluralistic form. The Renovadores fragmented as several hundred of them formed the Associação da Renovação Comunista to campaign for the renovation of the PCP from outside its structures (Renovação Comunista, 2007, 2003). Others joined radical left rivals the BE or the PS.

The PCP became increasingly orthodox following the Renovadores's defeat. Carvalhas was no longer needed to unite the party. He was weakened without the Renovadores's support, enabling hard-line elites to replace him. Although the party claimed that decided to Carvalhas step down in 2004, Abrantes forced his hand (*Publico*, 05.10.04, 20.08.05). Abrantes played kingmaker and his extremely orthodox protégé Jerónimo De Sousa was accepted by the CC as Secretary-General after being the only candidate (*Publico*, 26.11.04, 17.11.04). Both Carvalhas and De

Sousa reasserted an orthodox line at congresses in 2004 and 2008 (PCP, 2008a; De Sousa 2008, 2004; *Publico*, 26.11.04b; Carvalhas, 2004). Cunhal died having ensured that party programmes changed little since 1965 (PCP, 2009; Cunha 1992, p. 162). Revolutionary rhetoric, praise of Stalin and solidarity with North Korea continue to dominate appeals devoid of budgeted proposals (PCP, 2008a, 2005, 2004a; *Avante*, 16.10.08). The leadership continues to prevent municipal alliances other than concealed agreements with right-wing parties to block the PS from controlling local executives.

De Sousa has made the party even more orthodox. It increasingly campaigns on his working-class roots and identifies mounting dangers from trans-national capitalism and of capitalist imperialism by NATO (PCP, 2008a; De Sousa, 2006). Unencumbered by the Renovadores, the leadership employs technical Marxist-Leninist terminology in campaigns and in 2008 approved the policy of leaving the Euro. The PCP has rejected joining the Party of the European Left – not over ideological differences – but because it now rejects ‘supra-national’ institutions *per se* (PCP, 2008a, 2008b; *Avante*, 27.10.05; Magone 2004, p. 1119). It has also broken its alliance with the PS and BE in Lisbon (Cunha 2008, p. 18). De Sousa argues that the PS have become too right-wing and the BE are bourgeois and favours street-protests above compromising to attain political power (*Marao*, 01.12.08; De Sousa, 2008; Freire and Costa Lobo 2008, p. 584). In contrast, Cunhal sometimes accepted unholy alliances or electoral campaigns with broader appeal if they could help the party to gain influence.

Democratic centralism remained intact in the PCP even after parliament passed laws in 2003 banning it from holding congress votes for appointing officials by show of hands and CC members from being in the Control Commission (*Publico*, 20.10.04; PCP, 2004b). Secret balloting did little to increase the number of dissenting congress votes (Cunha 2008, p. 9). Only eight of 1402 delegates voted against the list for the CC at the 2008 congress. Little seems likely to change until the leadership’s control over the selection of congress delegates is broken or congresses vote on a plurality of candidates. Like Carvalhas, De Sousa lacks full control over the Secretariat as collective responsibility now minimises the risk of future Secretary-Generals implementing reforms (Cunha 2008, p. 16). Democratic centralism is more rigid than ever. Critics find less toleration than under Cunhal and there is less room for

ideological pluralism in the elite. Senior politicians continue to struggle to speak about party history for fear of misrepresenting the party line and believe that the party is under attack in a hostile environment.

When De Sousa became Secretary-General critical CC and Political Commission members were removed; leading ‘Carvalhistas’ fell on their swords and older elites retired (*Diario de Noticias*, 24.11.04). In response, the leadership increased the insular promotion of young highly orthodox functionaries from the JCP that began in 2000 (Carvalhas, 2000). The number of CC members under forty years old increased from thirty-nine in 2000, forty-eight in 2004 and fifty-six in 2008; nearly all of them came from the JCP (PCP, 2008b, 2004b, 2000b, 1996). Concomitantly, Unitarian workers and intellectuals become more underrepresented in the elite as orthodox elites curtailed the advancement of middle class intellectuals which they blamed for triggering Perestroika in the Soviet Union. Most CC members (113 of 176 in 2004) also remained party functionaries (Cunha 2008, p. 8).

The JCP became increasingly orthodox and sectarian during the 1980s and lost influence in student union politics. It now attracts few students. The apparatchiks promoted from it seem unlikely to be a source for reform from the perspective of Grzymała-Busse’s framework. They lack political or professional experience outside the party. These elites are being promoted because they are ‘yes men’ rather than because they have impressive political reputations and have little stature in the leadership. Their language of struggle lacks resonance with their peers who increasingly join the more pluralistic BE and the PCP struggles to recruit young members (Cunha 2003, p. 20).

Sporadic calls for democratisation, reforms and inquiries into the party’s troubles still occur but are ignored or shouted down by congress officials (*Publico*, 26.11.04, 27.11.04, *Diario de Noticias*, 24.11.04). The PCP staved off further electoral decline in recent parliamentary elections and marginally increased its share of the vote (see Table 2.1). De Sousa’s leadership seemed to slightly boost the PCP’s support (Magone 2005, p. 1164; Freire and Costa Lobo 2008, p. 584). It might be a while before the next shock. However, scholars predict it is only a matter of time before PCP is forced to change (Cunha 2008, p. 18). In 2009 it fell from being the third to

fifth largest party in Portugal and was overtaken by left-wing rivals the BE. It is unclear where the next episode of dissidence will come from with only a handful of moderates remaining in prominent positions. Intellectuals and Unitarian workers including the leader of the CGTP trade union Carvalho da Silva still harbour criticisms of the leadership but are declining in influence (*Publico*, 19.11.04).

2.5 Conclusion

The PCP's leaders resisted pressures to change from electoral defeats and the collapse of Communism in CEE. Its programmes and electoral strategy show remarkable continuity since 1974 and have even become more orthodox. Analysis using Grzymała-Busse's framework reveals eight main lessons about WECPs. First, it shows that they could maintain rigid forms of democratic centralism. This allowed the PCP's orthodox Secretary-General Cunhal and later the Secretariat to dominate the levers of power. A second lesson is that while the cases Grzymała-Busse analysed had their old heads lopped off, this was not always the case for WECPs in which some leaders resisted calls for their resignation. Having retired in 1992, Cunhal controlled the party even a decade later and blocked reforms. The PCP's mid-level elites posed a barrier to reform. However, this was not because their mid-level roles promoted orthodoxy *per se* but because they were tightly controlled by the old guard in the leadership which posed a larger obstacle to ideological transformation.

Third, the PCP supports Grzymała-Busse's idea that prior experiences in negotiating with outsiders can shape elites' ability to adapt following exogenous shocks. Her framework helps to explain why so few reformers emerged in the PCP. Gradual and insular elite advancement practices insulated the PCP's orthodoxy from expansion following the Carnation Revolution and multiple crises since the late 1980s. When elites hardened by clandestine struggle were replaced this was with obedient fulltime functionaries and zealots from the party's youth organisation. Phony electoral alliances with front parties rather than meaningful negotiations with the PS also limited opportunities for negotiation with outsiders. The lack of reformist elites made it much harder to push Cunhal and old orthodox elites aside.

Fourth, analysis shows that Grzymała-Busse's framework can be used to study why some elites change, even when their parties do not. It supports her argument that

elites with experiences of negotiating with outsiders (prior to and following their advancement to the elite) are better equipped to respond to pressures to reform than those without. The PCP's leaders recognised this and pursued advancement policies that not only rooted out heretics but underrepresented groups that might be predisposed to seeking reform or had greater potential for dissidence. Most leading reformers responded to pressures for reform including the collapse of Communism and electoral defeats because they had moderated gradually through connections with outside groups and institutions. Scholars have noted that horizontal discussion between branches would help the PCP to reform itself (Cunha 2008, p. 17). Analysis informed by Grzymała-Busse's framework shows that reformers would be advised to begin by relaxing elite advancement practices.

Cunhal's strategy of infiltrating all aspects of Portuguese society made those with influence in outside political organisations, professions or Unitarian valuable. It was impractical to filter them out from the elite altogether. What is more, the party could not avoid having elites whose party roles directly involved negotiation with outside groups and institutions. Even visiting the eastern bloc gave opportunities for mediating with outsiders. Rigid elite advancement practices meant that the latter factors proved more influential on dissidents at the top of the party causing even highly orthodox functionaries to gradually moderate. In contrast, the former played a greater influence on the minority of CC members, mid-level elites and members who joined their factions. Grzymała-Busse's framework helps us to understand the dissidence of reformers outside the elite as well.

Fifth, analysis supports Grzymała-Busse's argument that the relationship between outside experience and reform only works on a 'probabilistic level'. That Cunhal consciously tried to maintain his ideological purity in light of the moderating effects of outside experiences had a profound impact on the PCP. Further, only a minority of those negotiating with outside groups became dissidents – in no small part – because of countervailing pressures from party culture and fear of being punished. Experience in negotiating with outsiders could be sufficient for elites to embrace reform but was not a necessary factor. Surprisingly, some orthodox elites with little prior background in negotiating with outside political forces or who ignored such experiences responded suddenly to the pressures to change. However, in accordance with

Grzymała-Busse's argument that elites' 'portable skills' mattered more than the desire for reform *per se*; they struggled to envisage a new ideological direction or took peculiar directions like Zita Seabra. Further research is needed to investigate whether it was a general trend for such elites to simply give up on left-wing politics or politics altogether.

A sixth lesson is that WECs could fail to adapt even when some of their elites were highly equipped with experience in negotiating with outsiders and in carrying out prior reforms. Grzymała-Busse's framework is useful in telling us that parties with restrictive elite advancement policies will struggle to break with Communism. However, it does not tell us whether the presence of highly-equipped elites alone is enough to bring about reform; how many 'skilled' reformists are necessary for reform (e.g. whether they have to be a majority in the elite) or the factors that may block these 'organisational Supermen'.

The PCP shows that a powerful old guard could use democratic centralism highly effectively against them. The 'Six', Zita Seabra, the Third Way and the Renovadores employed a range of strategies. All their attempts to use organisational change to stimulate programmatic transformation were crushed as Cunhal resisted change. He blocked their internal attempts to reform and disciplined them for factionalism when they resorted to public criticisms. During the late 1990s, the Renovadores's positions at the top of the party enabled them make greater inroads to implementing reforms but they still encountered this no win situation.

An eighth lesson from the PCP is that there have been significant opportunities for reformers to gain experience in carrying out reforms prior to (and following) the collapse of Communism in 1989 in even the most hard-line WECs. In contrast, Grzymała-Busse found that the most hard-line parties in CEE had elites with minimal prior experience in implementing reforms. If this is a general trend then according to her arguments about the link between prior reform and centralisation then we have reason to expect that elites equipped to centralise should be more prevalent in WECs. However, this relationship between carrying out prior reforms and organisational centralisation is not borne out by the reformers in the PCP. They had encountered resistance to prior reforms but rejected centralising in favour of

democratisation and a participative process to bring about ideological renewal. They shared this belief with those who lacked prior experience in implementing reforms and these experiences actually made them even more committed to democratisation. Moreover, negotiation with outsiders prompted them to seek reforms but they did not unite around social democratisation and most of them rejected this option.

Chapter Three

The Dutch Socialist Party – the Centralisers

3.1 Introduction

Anna Grzymała-Busse identifies how several Communist Parties in CEE thoroughly reformed themselves and became both social democratic and coalitionable. This was possible not only because their leaders abandoned democratic centralism but also because rather just ‘democratise’, they established new highly centralised organisations. The power these leaders enjoyed enabled them to overcome internal resistance from radical mid-level elites and to force through painful changes. Similar cases are harder to find amongst WECPs. The existing literature on WECPs shows little evidence of similar developments (see for example Bull, 1994). It seems that most WECPs that transformed themselves dismantled democratic centralism and democratised their organisations.

This chapter shows that the Dutch Socialistische Partij (SP), formed in 1972 out of a Maoist splinter group of the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN), bucks the trend. Although the SP did not adhere to the instructions of the Soviet Union it still faced many of the same dilemmas as its Communist counterparts in other countries in 1989 and it needed both to renew itself and to find a new purpose. The SP’s vote-seeking leaders successfully abandoned Marxism-Leninism for a moderate brand of socialism in 1991 before ‘social democratising’ in the late 1990s, and pursuing an office seeking strategy after 2002. As they embraced mainstream politics the SP achieved remarkable electoral expansion. It went from a being tiny sect of around 500 members with a handful of local councillors to becoming the third largest party in the Netherlands by 2006 with over 50,000 members and 25 MPs (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Scholars have pointed to the SP’s highly adaptive, chameleon-like characteristics (Voerman 2004, p. 48; 2007, p. 1). This chapter shows that the SP had a highly centralised organisation as Grzymała-Busse’s framework leads us to expect of parties that managed to break with Communism. This allowed its leaders to radically change its programmes and electoral strategy. The SP appears to be Western Europe’s best example of a Communist party that reformed into a social democratic party through

centralised processes. Although it did not join the socialist International or the Party of European Socialists its leaders accepted a large number of social democratic policies and abandoned revolutionary politics. While successors of the Italian PCI faced a turbulent path, the Swedish Left Party's leaders encountered an internal backlash and in Ireland Democratic Left's parliamentarians were absorbed by the Labour party, the SP's leaders have, thus far, maintained firm control over strategy. This analysis of the SP's development supports Grzymała-Busse's idea that flexible elite advancement processes that promote elites experienced in negotiating with outside groups are beneficial to reform. It also seems to support her argument that such elites pursue organisational centralisation and that this is beneficial to transformation.

Table 3.1: Electoral results of the SP in parliamentary elections

Year	1977	1981	1982	1986	1989	1994	1998	2002	2003	2006
Votes (per cent)	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	1.3	3.5	5.9	6.3	16.6

(Voerman, 2008).

The chapter is structured in four sections. The first analyses the SP's development in the 1970s and identifies the emergence of a new pragmatic elite that prioritised electoral expansion. The second section shows how the leadership used democratic centralism to build up the SP's central office in order to repack the party and that this helped it to break with Marxism-Leninism in 1991. The third section shows that, while the SP appeared to democratise in 1991, it actually established a new highly centralised organisational model that helped its leaders to make (and consolidate) further transformations in party strategy and to crush resistance from mid-level elites. This process meant that in several respects the SP became more centralised than it had been under democratic centralism in the 1980s. It analyses how a small clique or 'inner circle' of elites dominated the SP's leadership bodies. The final section analyses the SP's social democratisation and office-seeking. It shows that the expansion this delivered presented new challenges but its centralised organisation has, thus far, helped its leaders to retain control, even at times of remarkable growth.

Table 3.2: Membership figures of the SP

Year	1975	1992	1995	1998	2002	2006	2007	2010
Members	500	15,000	17,000	22,000	27,291	44,853	50,238	46,507

(Voerman, 2008; DNPP, 2010).

3.2 Breaking with Mao

The Communist Party of the Netherlands/Marxist-Leninist (KPN/ML) renamed itself as the Socialist Party in 1972.⁴ To the Socialist Party, the CPN had strayed from orthodox Communism (Voerman 2008, p. 28). It emphasised revolution and defended Stalin, Mao and Marxism-Leninism while rejecting Khrushchev's justifications of parliamentary socialism. The SP was the vanguard for a violent revolution. It saw parliament as a façade for the rule of the capitalist elite and doubted that parliamentary reforms could break the power of the ruling class (Voerman 1994a, p. 7).

The SP forged links with the Communist Party of China and revelled in extra-parliamentary activism. It embraced Mao's method of the 'mass line'. SP activists maintained daily contact with the masses, speaking with people in local neighbourhoods and factories. They became known as the 'Red Jehovahs' for their energetic canvassing and attempts to rally the poor around local concerns, housing shortages and low wages in an effort to form class consciousness (Voerman 1986, p. 124). The SP began providing its own doctors and legal services for workers, tenants and consumers in those cities where it was strongest including Oss. SP activists were visible in marketplaces each week to speak with people about local problems. They sought to differentiate themselves from other politicians who tended to only do this at election time. The SP claimed to be the 'voice of the people', interpreting the desires of the 'ordinary people' and made populist criticisms of the political elite for being self serving and out of touch (Voerman 1994b, p. 4). Participation in parliament (or governing) was simply a propaganda tool used to publicise grass roots activism and a revolution by the masses (SP 1987, 1974). The SP was hostile to feminism and made

⁴ KPN/ML emerged as a split in the Dutch Maoist movement. It broke from *Kommunistiese Eenheidsbeweging Nederland* (expelled from the CPN in 1964), believing it to be too intellectual and not proletarian enough (see Voerman and van Schuur, 1995).

nationalistic appeals about the dangers of migrants failing to integrate and dividing the poor in their struggle against capitalism (Voerman 1986, p. 16).

The SP operated under democratic centralism. Branches expelled those who did not uphold strict discipline, including several activists who pursued a social democratic line during the early 1980s. Members had to study Communist theory, practice self-criticism and face probationary periods before being granted membership status. They had to work up to seven days a week handing out leaflets, selling the party paper, knocking on doors and/or operating in factories to recruit workers. The SP's statutes established that the rank and file were subordinate to the decisions made by congresses and the leadership (SP, 1976). Divisions were kept inside the SP to ensure it spoke with one voice. Daan Monjé, its founding leader, a blue-collar worker from Rotterdam harbour who was expelled from the CPN in 1956 during the Sino-Soviet split, dominated its executive Board.

The SP developed in the largely Catholic South of the Netherlands, in rural areas but soon grew in small towns (most notably in the Brabant Province) where the Labour Party (PvdA) was weak. It broke with Mao and China in the late 1970s. The leadership developed doubts about Maoism's relevance to Dutch society. Their experience of local activism showed them that it was unpopular, not practical enough, and they observed the problems that emerged in China. Maoism was dropped silently in a top-down fashion by the executive Committee and the Maoist phrase 'Dare to struggle, Dare to Win' was removed from the party paper *Tribune*. Rigid application of democratic centralism ensured there was little discussion or room for resistance. The party retained ideas associated with Mao's 'mass line'. Being in touch with 'ordinary people' meant the SP's leaders could justify enormous changes in policy as being what the people wanted (Voerman 2007b, p. 3). This would help the leadership to mastermind the party's transformation. Even the SP's own theoretical inspirations could not get in the way. The SP's populism and contacts with outside groups and institutions increasingly began to trump its theory.

As the SP struggled to gain support, its leaders sought to tailor its theory to Dutch conditions. The idea of violent revolution was dropped and opposition to parliamentary democracy was moderated. This was accepted as the best form of

government possible under capitalism, and supporting membership was introduced for less committed activists (Voerman 1994a, p. 7). Grass roots activism held the SP together as it abandoned Mao. The SP fell back on Marxism-Leninism, local activism and the idea of the mass line. The SP's proposals remained committed to withdrawal from NATO, disarmament, nationalisation of the means of production, abolishing the free-market and massive reductions in unemployment (SP 1974, 1987).

During the early 1970s the SP gained five councillors and by the early 1980s it expanded to around twenty, many being in the province of Brabant (van der Steen 1994, p. 173). Working in local councils had a moderating influence on the SP's elite who encountered the constraints of elected office. They became more practically minded, less attached to abstract theoretical ideas and more concerned with making concrete practical proposals on issues including housing problems and streetlamps. Moreover, they became committed to gaining political power to make changes. Expansion in local councils meant that Monjé lost influence in some local branches. Leading activists came to be increasingly focused on making practical changes and less concerned with radical theory through dealing with everyday local problems.

The SP's elite advancement policies were strict. Only loyal activists could rise up the chain of command. This runs contrary to what Grzymała-Busse found in those parties that dramatically transformed themselves in CEE. Most of the SP's founders were students and more joined it during the 1970s. The newcomers were increasingly less hard-line than Monjé and the parties' founders and had not been in the CPN (including future party chair Tiny Kox). Monjé was sceptical of promoting intellectuals, believing that workers should be at the forefront of the vanguard party. However, loyalty remained the major criteria for promotion and the students worked in factories to proletarianise themselves and to recruit workers. There was generally little turnover in the SP's leadership; however, Monjé let some of the new students and the councillors gain important positions. As the SP expanded in local politics, more of the elite, including Kox, became councillors. Monjé was warned that pragmatists would gain influence by his orthodox allies in Rotterdam, who lacked experience in councils. However, he was generally enthusiastic toward the increased influence the councillors provided the party and allowed them into the leadership.

What happened next supports Grzymała-Busse's argument that elites with experience of negotiating with groups outside their parties are predisposed to seeking reform. In the mid-1980s, the councillors and younger generation of activists came into conflict with Monjé and his supporters in the Party Board. They were frustrated that the SP was unable to gain parliamentary representation, despite the low threshold for this in the Netherlands. In particular, they questioned Monjé's strategy of sending weekly lorry loads of aid to the British miners even after their strike had collapsed. Monjé believed that local activism would eventually bring success in parliamentary elections while older cadres were not interested in ideological renewal or electoral politics. The councillors rejected this, and found that SP voters in local elections were not voting SP in parliamentary elections because it lacked national visibility. They argued for a redirection of resources to raise the SP's national profile and to prioritise electoral success and winning seats in parliament.

The councillors' calls for a strategic reassessment resonated in the SP's Board. Monjé had grown ill and was unable to maintain a full-time presence at Board meetings. This allowed Kox to arrange for the charismatic Jan Marijnissen, a former sausage factory worker and an influential local councillor from Oss, who was hitherto excluded from the leadership, to enter the Board. Monjé occasionally attended Board meetings to assert his control but his influence waned and he was ousted from power. Marijnissen, became the new face of the SP. He was once a hardliner who would quote Mao in council meetings, but had become pragmatic. The new leadership consolidated their power after Monjé died in 1986.

3.3 The Great leap forward

The SP's new leaders set about remaking the SP into a force in national elections. Marijnissen and Kox, (or 'The Rat' as he became known within the party elite) obtained extensive control over the SP's internal structures. Democratic centralism enabled the leadership to retain firm control over elite advancement and policy-making. Symbolically, the only speakers from the SP at Monjé's funeral were from the minority opposition to the new leadership. They were expelled soon after, as were those Monjé chose to succeed him. Some branches loyal to Monjé left. Jan Carter, a Monjé supporter, tried to take over central office but was unable to muster support. The Board chose Marijnissen as chair in 1988. He replaced Hans van Hooft, who was

seen as too Stalinist by the reformers and who left the Board in 1991. The SP increased its number of councillors to over 40 in 1986. The councillors continued to replace the old guard and were promoted to influential posts including on the Board.

The SP's leaders had previously carried out reforms to broaden the party's appeal. They had done this in local councils and had supported the break with Mao. Just like Grzymała-Busse's cases of successful transformation in CEE, they also centralised during the late-1980s. The leaders recognised a lack of coordination between branches and that local party leaders/activists were running campaigns that were radical and failed to engage with national political debates. The SP's central office in Rotterdam was staffed by only a handful of activists and was less well equipped than local offices. It did not even know how many members the SP had. Marijnissen redirected power and resources to refurbish central office, increasing its staff from three to sixteen functionaries and it took control of administrative tasks. Central office increasingly intervened in the affairs of local branches and gained power to coordinate campaigns. It distributed centrally made material to replace that made by radical activists in local branches. The SP's small size meant that there was little need for them to streamline the party apparatus as in Grzymała-Busse's cases in CEE.

The leadership retained tight control over the party paper *Tribune* and Marijnissen centralised its production. Previously its writers lived across the Netherlands. They were moved to Rotterdam. Central office focused on promoting the profile of candidates for parliamentary elections and running nation-wide campaigns. The aim was to criticise government policies and to set out the SP's national level goals to provide reasons to vote SP in parliamentary elections. The SP's leaders made themselves increasingly available to journalists. Loyal activists were also forced to move across the Netherlands to establish new branches and to take control of unreliable districts. This process of centralisation before the collapse of Communism ensured that the SP was well positioned to react after 1989 and to be effective in promoting vote-seeking policy reforms.

The SP's leaders initially focused on building up a campaign machine more than ideological change. They managed to convince the Board to hold a congress in 1987 (the first in ten years). However, they reaffirmed their commitment to Marxism-

Leninism, historical materialism, and democratic centralism while committing to the formulation of a new party programme and statutes in the future. Although the SP continued to expand in local elections, centralisation was not enough to secure entry into parliament in the 1989 election. The leadership's attempts to induce change doubled following this failure and the collapse of Communism in CEE (Voerman 1994a, p. 3). The latter provided an opportunity to break with Marxism-Leninism and Communist symbolism which the leadership believed were impractical and lacking in electoral appeal.

The dynamics of the party system also shaped the leadership's priorities. The PvdA broke tradition by pursuing allegedly neo-liberal policies, including privatisations and welfare cuts, under Lubbers' (1989–1994) and Wim Kok's 'Purple-Governments' (1994–2002) (see Hillebrand and Irwin 1999, p. 123). This provided the SP with an opportune moment to moderate (Voerman 2008, p. 38). Its pragmatic leaders seized the initiative, re-positioning themselves as a credible alternative for disaffected PvdA supporters (Voerman 2008, p. 35). GroenLinks, a merger between the CPN and the other main Dutch left parties, took a Left-Libertarian direction making the SP the clearest 'left' alternative to the PvdA and the main beneficiary of the PvdA's electoral difficulties.

The new programme, Charter 2000, was formulated during 1989–1991 (SP, 1991a). It recognised the need for freedom of expression while jettisoning Marxism-Leninism and the nationalisation of the means of production. Marijnissen argued that taking Marxism-Leninism out of the programme was like removing a 'millstone around our necks' (Voerman 2007b, p. 3). Instead, a vague notion of 'socialism' (not Communism) became the SP's ideology: 'Socialism' was a 'guiding set of morals' rather than an objective blueprint for society. It involved preventing privatisations, implementing economic planning, full-employment, establishing workers' councils and 'socialising' the economy under democratic control (SP, 1991a). The SP remained a 'weapon of the working class' that would contest capitalist profit motives (SP, 1991a). Its vision remained Marxist in several respects but this was toned down. The moderation continued in 1993 with a subtle name change from Socialistiese Partij, to the apparently less reactionary, Socialistische Partij.

The leadership appeared to democratise in 1991 in an attempt to broaden appeal and to make the SP an acceptable mainstream party (Voerman 2008, p. 31). Restrictions on membership were relaxed to provide additional funding, and the 12,000 subscribers of Tribune were invited to join its 500 activists as full members; members now needed just a three month probationary period to prove their reliability. The size of the leadership was expanded as the executive Board grew from between three–five members to seven and a general Board of 40 members was introduced; nineteen being elected by congress and 21 being regional leaders selected by regional conferences. Regular party congresses were scheduled, providing opportunities to update programmes. A monthly party Council was also introduced in which chairs of local branches had 96 per cent of the votes, allowing them to monitor the leadership (see Voerman, 2007). Transparent budget statements were also introduced in 1992 to show where the SP spent its money (van der Steen 1994, p. 178).

The party leadership argued that the formulation of ‘Charter 2000’ democratised policy-making and was highly participative (see Kox, 2009). Kox and Marijnissen drafted the basis for the programme, a document called ‘A Society for People’. This was distributed by activists in a mass campaign, that talking with ‘the people’ to find out what a modern socialist party should be like after the collapse of Communism. The SP argued that the new programme was made from ‘half a million pieces’ as its activists presented feedback to central office. However, democratic centralism gave the leadership immense scope to interpret what ‘the people’ thought. The leadership went in the direction it wanted, as it had always done under the method of the mass line (Voerman Interview, 09.07.09). Those involved report that there was little critically minded discussion about the leadership’s proposals and that the process was more of a campaign to publicise the SP’s moderation than an open instrument of policy formulation. The campaign successfully gained media coverage for the SP, which for the first time bought advertising space in national newspapers. The policy changes were driven by the leadership which wrote the programme.

The SP had been a party devoid of debate in the 1980s. Political education and debate was further scaled back after the break with Maoism. The leadership did little to encourage members to critique its proposals or to begin thinking critically about the SP’s direction as in other parties like the CPN. Most activists simply deferred to the

wisdom of the leadership and were unskilled or inexperienced in debate. Grzymała-Busse's finding that radical mid-level elites tried to sabotage reform in CEE, misses how in some WECPs they could be so used to following their leaders that they accepted changes and were too unprepared to assert themselves.

The leadership got all of its changes passed by congress. The SP's leaders argue that there was little dissidence in response to their reforms because members shared a moderate perspective from their experience of activism. However, it was also highly significant that the leadership used democratic centralism to provide little room for internal criticism. Feminists tried to organise as a faction to promote an alternative ideological direction before the 1991 congress and called for equal representation in the Board. The leadership opposed this, portrayed them as trying to organise a coup and ensured that the congress overwhelmingly rejected their proposals.

Because the structures of democratic centralism were not relinquished minority groups of hardliners had to uphold internal discipline and follow the leadership's line. When the Communist leadership in Zwolle opposed the professionalisation and opening up of membership for fear that the newcomers would downgrade the SP's revolutionary status, the whole branch was shut down and its members were expelled other than a handful of loyalists. Branches in Enschede and Hengelo were also expelled. Small groups that opposed the changes in Rotterdam and Amsterdam were constrained and unable to organise because of the block on factions. They also left frustrated or were expelled during 1986–1992. There was little discussion permitted on the new direction and orthodox members of the old guard were unable to organise and could gain only a few votes at congresses.

3.4 A new centralised organisation 1991–

The leadership created an organisational structure that, at first glance, was not worlds apart from that of the other Dutch parties (SP 2003, 1991b). However, the democratisation of the SP remained limited. The 'inner-circle', a close network of around 25 elites that had dominated the SP since the mid-1980s, continued to control the levers of power and implemented policy changes in a top-down fashion. As former MEP Eric Meijer argues they 'organised the SP in a way in which they can focus on the leadership of the party' (Meijer Interview, 10.09.08). Democratic

centralism undermined the image of modernisation that the SP wanted to portray and had to be removed; however, the SP's leaders did not have an intrinsic concern with democratic debate like their New Left counterparts in the CPN.

The organisation established after 1991 retained traits of democratic centralism/Maoism and it further reinforced the centralisation of power. The SP's leaders sought to avoid the image that they dictate party affairs. They claimed that the SP was thoroughly democratic and that there were open debates at branch, regional and national levels, providing plenty of opportunities for the membership to exert influence. However, elites in the SP, experts on Dutch parties, elites in other parties and dissidents nonetheless believed that the leadership's centralisation of power was highly instrumental in its transformation. It provided the leadership with almost complete control over elite advancement and policy formulation, making it easy for them to consolidate enormous changes and to break with past commitments. This was possible because of several factors.

First, the SP's leaders continued to work under the method of the mass line and interpreted 'the people's' desires with little discussion. This gave them considerable space to control policy-making through the 1990s and to sacrifice radical or theoretical policies because they were not in line with the aims of 'the common man' (Voerman 2007b, 2002, p. 3). Second, increased resources at central office were used to forge a personality cult around Marijnissen. During the 1990s books were reportedly ghost-written for Marijnissen that glorified his leadership and the SP's activism in Oss (Interview former Board member).

In 1993, the leadership formed a group of ten outside media professionals and advertising experts called the 'V-Team'. This answered directly to Kox and Marijnissen and they ensured it understood the direction the leadership wanted. There was little democratic accountability over their work for the rank and file and they had immense influence over policy-making as they were trusted to mastermind the SP's transformation. They subsequently built up a powerful centralised campaign machine. The introduction of professional marketing experts such as Nico Koffeman played a key role in revamping the SP's image and in practice they designed its policies. They overhauled campaigns to remove long speeches and ideological

slogans. The 'V-Team' also used the SP's activists to distribute over three million leaflets to target voters and they invested large amounts of money in campaign material (van der Steen 1994, p. 182). The SP's leaders increasingly briefed journalists to signal their moderation. Campaign material was also standardised and the PR professionals abbreviated the name Socialist Party to SP, again with the aim of moderating its image.

The V-Team decided that voters did not believe that the SP's radical policies would be possible with just a handful of MPs. In response, Koffeman's campaigns emphasised that even with only a small number of MPs the party could offer effective opposition to neo-liberal policies and defend the welfare state. Koffeman introduced a 'Vote Against!' slogan and the image of a tomato to symbolise the SP's oppositional role (a tomato being something that could be thrown at dishonest politicians, replacing its 'Honest and Active' theme and its grandiose proposals (van der Steen 1994, p. 182). Koffeman realised that the PvdA's rightwards shift created new opportunities. The SP's policies were moderated to offer a credible alternative to disaffected left-wing, middle class social democrats. Simultaneously, it offered them a clear-cut protest vote by providing a more overtly oppositional line to the PvdA. Campaign banners stressed that 'Voting against is better than staying at home'.

Third, the SP's internal culture was not liberalised. An informal ban on internal factions prevented the formation of opposition groups. Unlike the CPN it did not institutionalise separate groups for women or ethnic minorities, providing little room for opposition. Most opposition has been given by individuals who were easily crushed. A highly disciplined culture persisted in which engagement with activism left little room for internal discussion at party meetings and commitment to working for a common purpose provided a substitute for critically minded debate. As Voerman argues, the SP's internal culture is not beneficial to democratic decision-making when it is left to veteran leaders behind closed doors (Voerman, 2007c).

The party elite are still notoriously reluctant to speak about internal affairs or to provide a critical assessment of party history. They remain attached to notions of democratic centralism, strong leadership, quick decision-making and take pride in the way that SP officials speak with one voice. Loyalty is highly valued in the SP.

Members are taught that this and self-discipline are paramount. Dissent is frowned upon as it undermines effectiveness. Decisions made by the leadership and congress are binding, providing little room for dissidence when the SP's leaders decide to jettison old ideas. As one elite argued, the principle of unanimity ensures that unlike their rivals 'our enemies are outside, not inside the party'. Furthermore, in the early 1990s few SP congresses or conferences were open to the public (Van der Steen 1994, p. 177). SP communications are tightly controlled and the party's official history makes no mention of its founding leader Monjé (SP, 2009a).

Fourth, new formal structures that might have been democratic – had they been implemented differently – were used to protect the leadership's dominance over the levers of power. Troublemakers continued to be sidelined or expelled, usually at the local level, and the leadership continued to cut out obstinate local-branches – a power given to it by party statutes (SP, 1991b). Infrequent attempts to revert to a radical identity did not get far. The new organisation has been policed by the SP's twelve regional leaders. Typically they are on the party payroll (eight were in 2009) or have other influential roles such as being MPs. Nearly all of them are long-trusted apparatchiks who have spent most of their working lives in the party or were close friends with members of the inner circle. Younger regional leaders tend to come through 'master class' training sessions where they are instructed by the leadership. Regional leaders work closely with members of the inner circle, recruit activists, run campaigns and make sure local departments follow the party line. They link the leadership to the local level and do its bidding by identifying and rooting out troublemakers through organising support against them. This new structure gave the leadership additional control over the mid-level elite.

Elite advancement and policy-making are firmly controlled by the leadership. Critics note that many elections in the SP are 'pre-cooked' by the leadership and that it is difficult to become a regional leader without the blessing of the inner circle at regional conferences. Formally, programme and candidates' committees (to propose candidates for the national Board and parliamentary list) are chosen by the party

Council and make proposals for congress to vote on.⁵ However, these committees have routinely been dominated by leading members of the inner circle or have deferred to it behind the scenes. The candidates committees are far from independent. Those opposing the leadership are rarely included on candidate lists.

The SP's leadership bodies have been devoid of critics. In 1991 the expanded Board was packed with established, trusted elites as was the party's daily executive Board. It included Kox as party Secretary (SP leader in Tilberg, campaign manager, candidate for the second chamber, candidate for elections to the European Parliament and editor of the party paper (1974-95)); Marijnissen as Chair (leader in Oss, top of the list for parliamentary elections), and long established elites such as Ger Wouters (leader in Schijndel and candidate for second chamber) and Theo Cornelissen (Treasurer, candidate as councillor in Rotterdam and for parliament) (van der Steen 1994, p. 177). There has been little turnover within the daily Board (Voerman, 2007c). In 2009, four of its six members were long established members of the inner circle.

Formally the leadership has little control over the composition of the 40 member Board established in 1991. However, the inclusion of the regional leaders consolidated the inner circle's dominance. Moreover, Board members elected by congress have been loyalists elected from lists chosen by candidates' committees (that are themselves dominated by the inner circle). Board members have rarely been a source of criticism or independent thinking. Voerman estimates that at least half of the Board are usually on the payroll, blunting their autonomy and blurring their personal and political interests. Many Board members (and elites) also have family members working within the party apparatus who are dependent on the leadership (Voerman, 2007c). As the leadership bodies expanded, trusted allies from Brabant were advanced while hard-line critics were left behind. Few of Monjé's allies from Rotterdam remained in top positions. Turnover on the Board has been constrained. Usually around five new members enter at each congress, and they are normally young loyal apparatchiks. Outsiders were rarely suddenly parachuted into the elite.

⁵ Initially, leading members of the Board were chosen to write programmes before the Party Council was tasked with forming committees.

The SP's leaders are masters at getting loyal followers to the top. Members of the elite regularly attend internal training courses to shape their loyalty.

There have been no ideological divisions or factions in the Board or leadership bodies and there is an almost complete lack of debate in any of these fora. As Party Chair (1988–) Marijnissen has dominated the Board's proceedings and is notorious for his aggressive management style and fierce criticism of Board members when they question the leadership. Former Board members note how their colleagues were too scared to speak out against the leadership for fear of losing their jobs. Board members who are critical usually leave after becoming isolated. There has also been little room for discussion on ideological matters in Board meetings that focus on maintaining levels of activism and expanding membership.

Furthermore, local branch meetings have little time for resistance or soul-searching, being thoroughly focused on activism. Troublesome questions are usually ignored as chairs base discussion around local issues such as traffic regulations, expanding into nearby areas, council work and membership drives rather than engaging in ideological debate. Local branches spend little time preparing for regional meetings to challenge the party leadership and often do not even decide on what their branches' views are on important issues: representatives of local branches usually speak as individuals. Moreover, regional meetings are organised by Board members. They provide little room for debate and it is rare for discussion to go beyond a simple answer from the party elites. The agenda is set from above, as the Board feeds down its instructions, and communication is rarely two-way.

Congresses are formally the SP's main source of democratic decision-making. Branches receive one congress delegate for every 50 members. The leadership believes that this is more democratic than allowing all members to attend congresses because it prevents congresses being distorted by more delegates being from the region where the congress is held. However, most Dutch parties now empower all their members at congresses (Voerman, 2007d). The internal lines of power and monitoring in the SP mean that the way the local delegate congress model functions in the SP provides little room for critically minded congress delegates. The SP's locally elected congress delegate system is dominated by local party chairs who are kept

loyal by the work of regional leaders or their dependence on the leadership. They often nominate loyal activists as delegates and rarely choose dissidents. Minority groups in local branches are afforded little representation. The chairs of large local branches are often loyalists or on the payroll and can deliver many congress votes for the leadership.

The leadership's block on cross-branch communication also means that critics struggle to coordinate and do not even know who has been nominated as delegates in other branches. Local branches also struggle to prepare for congress debates, having only a few days to prepare positions on the 800 or so congress motions leaving little time too organise opposition and many defer to the leadership's recommended positions. Many branches do not debate the motions at all, being focused on activism. These factors mean that congress votes are in effect pre-determined and simply follow the leadership's proposals. Spontaneous attempts to change things at congresses are strongly opposed. As Rudie Kagie's research (2004) found, in practice the policy changes at congress have often been made in advance in the leadership's campaigns anyway.

Procedures at congresses also give the leadership the upper hand. Those presenting motions get only one minute to explain themselves. Members of the leadership then respond to several motions at a time and speak at length. On controversial motions as many as ten to twelve members of the leadership speak to shore up support. Those proposing motions then have another minute to respond. Congress delegates can not ask questions about motions or develop discussion. Outsiders have no opportunity to ask questions about congress motions. While most Dutch parties take several days for congresses the SP wraps them up in one. It has a highly efficient form of decision-making but is not, some argue, democratic.

The leadership has not been defeated on a major policy issue at congress. Its lists for parliamentary candidates are always accepted and there has only been one change to its lists for the Board. Alternative candidates struggle to compete as the leadership sends out information and photos of its preferred candidates to delegates who receive no information on independent candidates other than a list of names. Most independent candidates struggle to make their case and resort to standing outside the

congress hall to hand out their information. There is no time for delegates to ask them questions and they lack the publicity afforded to the leadership's preferred candidates who are profiled in the party magazine. Herman Beekers, one of the few remaining elites to have openly disagreed with Marijnissen, has been the only independent candidate to successfully stand but he was a well known, long-established activist. Furthermore, while votes on candidates are conducted by secret ballot, votes on policy are held by a show of hands, enabling the leadership to identify rebels. Every major reform in the SP has seemed democratic, having been passed by congress, but there was little chance of resistance.

Local branches are tightly controlled. They send the Party Secretary monthly progress reports on their daily activities, the number of new members recruited and local problems and are visited regularly by regional leaders. This provides the leadership with awareness of any troublemakers within the organisation. The Party Council is supposed to scrutinise the leadership; however it is reduced to a forum in which the leadership simply provides feedback on the decisions it has taken. A high proportion of local chairs in the Council also have paid jobs to defend or are allies of the leadership. The leadership sits at the front of Council meetings and with voting by hand can identify recalcitrant officials. It has been rare for the Council to contest the leadership's ideas even after it grew from 40 people to 200 members as the SP expanded. Council meeting notes show little attempt to scrutinise the leadership (SP, 2009b).

Policy-making has been a collective project for a few members of the inner circle. Kox in particular has enjoyed great power in writing documents and in programme committees. There is no important SP document that is not edited or critiqued by him and he usually writes the final draft of programmes presented to congress. Most elites accept this is the way things are done. Marijnissen's hands-on management style as Chairman and willingness to personally intervene to solve local problems led Kagie to conclude that he has been 'like a spider in the middle of a web'. Verhey goes further, arguing that 'Nothing takes place in the SP without Marijnissen's approval' (Verhey Interview).

3.5 Social democratisation

The SP's protest vote strategy was successful in attracting those disaffected with the PvdA's austere policies and enthusiasm for European integration (Voerman 2008, p. 33). This delivered parliamentary representation, with two seats in 1994 (as well as 126 councillors, up from 70 in 1990). The SP's attempt to give a 'red answer to the purple government' worked again in 1998 which commentators called 'the year of the tomato' as the SP's parliamentary party grew to five MPs (alongside their 188 councillors) (De Boer et al. 1998, p. 65). The SP's membership rapidly expanded from 15,000 in 1994 to 26,000 by 2000. Contrary to Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that a protest strategy limited parties to the margins of politics, this brought expansion. It also contributed to further shifts in strategy as the SP grew to a position where office-seeking was realistic. Moreover, the SP's leaders continued to moderate through parliamentary politics and as its presence in councils grew the number of pragmatic councillors in the Board increased, bringing greater pressures for moderation.

After 1994 the SP exchanged socialism for vaguer concepts of human dignity, equality and solidarity (Voerman and Lucardie, 2007). Its new programme 'Heel de Mens' (roughly meaning 'All of Mankind') abandoned ideas of socialising and the planned economy and replaced criticisms of Dutch capitalism with attacks on neo-liberalism imported from Britain and the United States (SP, 1999). As the SP's leaders tried to broaden its appeal they accepted social democratic principles; coupling social democracy with activism, radical left credentials and opposition to European integration to provide 'social democracy plus' (Voerman 2008, p. 34). Programmes remained critical of the political establishment but opposition to the capitalist system made in 'Charter 2000' disappeared. The leadership saw these as too theoretical and idealistic. Now the focus was criticising the 'unrestrained capitalism' of the Kok and Balkenende governments. The SP focused on criticising the free market, welfare cuts and privatisations (SP, 1999). There was little organised opposition to the change and only around ten per cent of congress delegates opposed dropping the socialisation of the means of production in 1999.

The SP's programmatic ideals came to resemble den Uyl's social democratic policies of the 1970s and elites praised his investment in education and social security. SP

policies came to focus on limiting working-hours, maintaining full-employment, capping salaries for company executives and politicians, limiting cheap migrant-labour to defend the position of Dutch workers while increasing social provision for migrants; and bringing about a 'fairer distribution of wealth'. It also aimed to end segregation in education, tackle child poverty, strengthen social services and to reverse the marketisation of public transport (SP 2006, 2002). Those who sought a far-reaching, theoretical analysis of capitalism or a vision of an alternative socialist economic system would have been disappointed.

The SP's leadership switched to an office-seeking strategy in 2002, changing its slogan to 'Vote For, Vote SP'. This change came about when PR experts found that focus groups and poll data suggested potential SP supporters were not voting for it as doing so would be a wasted vote when it could not govern nationally. In response the leadership sought to show that it could govern and fulfil more moderate goals. New pressures also came from expansion. More local councillors with experience of the constraints of elected office and the need to make administrative compromises entered the SP's elite, providing additional pressures to downplay policy-goals. The SP also attracted more PvdA voters and members (Voerman 2008, p. 33, Voerman and Lucardie 2007, p. 140). The SP's leaders also gained confidence in governing with the party entering the executives of three municipalities including Oss in 1998. Growth in the polls made future participation in coalitions seem possible presenting new dilemmas. These factors convinced the leadership that governing at a national level was feasible and it argued that people were demanding the SP take more responsibility.

Expansion had strengthened the leadership. Marijnissen countered his few critics on the Board by pointing out his record of success. Having MPs and new members also brought additional funds for campaigns and helped to place more elites on the party payroll. It was the members of the inner circle who became the SP's MPs and Marijnissen became his own boss, gaining a dual role as parliamentary leader and Chair of the Board, a practice that is uncommon in Dutch parties. This led to some dissent from MP Harry van Bommel who publicly criticised Marijnissen's dual role for giving too much power to one man (Ed.nl, 03.07.07). However, criticism of this remained limited.

Had the parliamentarians been independent of the Board they could have been scrutinised, however the inner circle dominated both institutions. Marxist-Leninists argued the SP had become susceptible to the moderating effects of parliament. The parliamentarians gained employees who were included on lists for the Board, increasing the leadership's control. The MPs were, for the most part, tightly controlled. Most were members of the inner circle, being trusted allies or were completely dependent on the leadership for their positions. A few established MPs were replaced but more loyal apparatchiks were advanced as the SP expanded. There have been very few divisions within the parliamentary group and the MPs do not break the party line in parliament. The leaders of the SP's parliamentary groups were also automatically made Board members. Unlike most Dutch parties which have independent Boards, it is common for MPs to sit in the Board.

The SP's parliamentarians are responsible for particular policy issues and hold weekly meetings with their advisors and assistants. These meetings are monitored through party functionaries who sit in on the meetings, making notes. These go to Marijnissen, as Chair, who subsequently reads them, intervening when he does not agree. MPs have been prevented from making their own initiatives. Some tried to organise a meeting with NGOs to investigate possibilities for co-operation in an open discussion meeting. The leadership did not agree with this and hijacked the meeting, with Party Secretary Paulus Johnson speaking at length about the SP's expansion leaving little possibility for discussion. Having spoken to each member of the parliamentary group, Kagie concluded that Marijnissen does indeed control everything in the SP (Kagie Interview).

The SP's office-seeking strategy worked and it expanded to win nine parliamentary seats in 2002. After the election the SP's leaders sought to find out why many PvdA voters had still not joined it. Pollster Maurice de Hond's research showed that most PvdA supporters disagreed with the SP's commitments to withdrawal from NATO and to abolish the monarchy. The leadership concluded such policies were barriers to inclusion in a governing coalition and they were dropped from the SP's 2006 election manifesto and at its 2006 congress. The SP still criticises NATO and the monarchy, but argues that defending the welfare state is its immediate priority.

The leadership moderated its proposals on tax-rates for high earners and for egalitarian tax-relief reforms to attract middle class voters (SP 2006, 1998). It also watered down the commitment to maximum salaries being no more than three times the minimum wage. It increased this to five times the minimum wage before the policy disappeared from programmes completely. Even criticism of neo-liberalism now appears only intermittently (SP, 2006). PR experts played a key role in this process. They pursued a 'vampire strategy' that criticised the PvdA but adopted its policies to suck it dry of left/centrist supporters. Furthermore, from 2002–06, the leadership increasingly called for a left-wing coalition with PvdA and GroenLinks.

Marxist-Leninists could not prevent the leadership's strategies of social democratisation and office-seeking. There was little room for debate about the changes in the Board or on a local level. The moderate 1999 programme was easily passed by congress. Founding member Willem de Vroomen criticised the changes in the Board. He rejected the drift to parliamentary priorities, the downgrading of class struggle and criticised the lack of internal debate, seminars or discussion in party publications. De Vroomen found little support in the Board and left it in 2002. Regional leader Rick Denkers supported de Vroomen but found colleagues were scared that if they opposed the leadership this would lead to them losing their own positions, even if they privately expressed their opposition. Tight discipline prevented opposition from gaining a foothold in leading institutions and the Party Council offered little opposition. When de Vroomen wrote secret letters to local branches from 2003–05 to organise resistance, he received no response. However, after he did this, regional leaders had to put down dissidence at regional gatherings to prevent a backlash. The leadership continued to win congress decisions and staggeringly, only around ten per cent of congress delegates opposed the change of policy on NATO in 2006. This is staggering for a left party and only seems possible because of the party's highly centralised organisational structures.

Having led the successful 'no' campaign in the 2005 referendum on the European Constitution the SP's electoral rise continued at the 2006 national election (Vollaard and Boer 2006, p. 11; Harmsen 2005, p. 5). The SP won almost seventeen per cent of the vote, up from six per cent in 2003, making it one of Europe's largest left parties. It won over a large number of PvdA supporters and with 25 seats in the parliament it

became the third largest party in the Netherlands (Lucardie et al. 2006, pp. 79–84). Experts estimate that around a quarter of those voting SP had voted PvdA in 2003 (van Holsteyn 2007, p. 1146). Scholars anticipated that the SP's leaders might lose control, like the CPN's leaders had after recruiting a generation of white-collar, public sector workers, social democrats and radicals who were unused to strict discipline (Voerman, 1998). Expansion and increased social heterogeneity presented new dilemmas for the SP's leaders; however, thus far, its centralised organisation has helped them maintain control over newcomers who have been integrated into activism.

The SP's greatest challenge has been to retain its direct action and 'social-populist' contacts with 'the common man' that legitimise its criticisms of the elite or outsider status (March 2008, p. 126; March and Mudde 2005, p. 35). For as long as this continues, it will occupy a space that other parties cannot fill (Voerman, 2008, p. 34). The SP's leaders have had considerable success at combining parliamentary activity with extra-parliamentary activism. They recognised the risk of becoming part of the establishment and used MPs' allowances to establish a free phone-line in parliament in 1994 to keep in touch with people's concerns under the motto 'Join in Den Haag' (Voerman and van Schuur 1995, p. 8).

Stringent rules compel the SP's elected representatives to give most of their salary to the party to show that they are not self-serving and to maintain levels of activism. Local sections are closely monitored and must re-apply each election to run under the SP's name. They must prove that they have an acceptable list of candidates who have been successful activists. Those losing touch with the 'common man' are abandoned. Potential councillors must also attend weekend courses so the leadership can gauge their obedience and train them. Moreover, local branches are closely supervised by the Party Secretary in making local coalitions to make sure their alliances respect the leadership's goals.

As the SP expanded, other small leftist organisations orientated themselves to it including Offensief, the Trotskyist International Socialism and Socialist Workers' Party (see Voerman, 2008). However, attempts to form opposition factions within the SP continue to fail. Offensief's Marxists joined SP in 1998 and began to work as an

internal pressure group. They were tolerated on a local level but became more assertive and tried to use SP events and the youth organisation to sell their paper. Offensief began to criticise the SP's moderation, the lack of internal debate and its municipal coalition alliances with the centre-right Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and the PvdA on their website. In 2009 Offensief's members were given an ultimatum to choose between Offensief or the SP and some were expelled. International Socialism began co-operating with SP campaigns and Marijnissen invited them to join SP. When it became apparent that they believed in workers' councils and they criticised the SP's programmatic moderation they were, however, then blocked from joining. The Socialist Workers' Party's activists have criticised the SP's centralised organisation and advocate closer links with radical social movements but have thus far avoided strong criticism. Most Marxist-Leninist activists withdrew from the SP being unable to gain influence.

Expansion posed risks that newcomers would rock the boat, being unused to tight discipline and seeking careers (Voerman 1998, p. 2). The SP's leaders recognised this and the 1999 congress decided to pay more attention to training and integration into activism. As the SP expanded, its leaders maintained strict control over its youth-wing Rood. Formed in 2003, Rood has its own paper but does not criticise the leadership or the party line and it is not allowed to use symbols or forms of branding other than those imposed on it by the party. Rood's members hand out flyers and learn about the SP's ideology but there is little time for them to debate. Rood is becoming an important source for elite advancement. It took a long time for the SP to construct a youth organisation that it could control. Rood is like a local branch and its founding chairman was appointed by the party leadership, before rising to become an MP. Dutch parties' youth groups are usually much more independent.

As the SP expanded in the polls, the leadership realised that it lacked the intellectual power needed to be in government. There was increased space for outsiders as the leadership scouted and rapidly promoted young talent to broaden its appeal and to bring in much needed expertise on the SP's list of parliamentary candidates. This is now a source of regret for elites. Most of the MPs remained loyal to the leadership; however some newcomers, including Piet de Ruiter and Ali Lazrak soon became critical. Lazrak opposed the leadership's policies on immigration and paying his

salary to the party (Hippe et al. 2003, p. 108). He had previously been a journalist and was unused to the discipline of the SP and left, taking his seat with him, in 2006. Likewise, MEP Eric Meijer, who was the former Vice-Chair of the left-libertarian party GroenLinks, was rapidly advanced to give the SP much needed expertise in the European Parliament. Meijer was used to open debate and began to criticise Marijnissen's dominance in the Board.

Problems also emerged with new untested councillors and provincial representatives. Councillor Johan Luijendijk rebelled over paying his wages to the party when his state-welfare payments were cut and his income fell, claiming that working for the party was akin to slavery. Following the 2006 election over 55 of the SP's 350 councillors left or were expelled, many finding the demands of activism and paying their wages to the party too onerous. Usually they were newcomers who had outside professional experiences or were wage earners. This supports an understanding of the development of WECPs' post-Communist successors based on Grzymała-Busse's idea that elites and officials advanced rapidly, from outside, who have not been long established functionaries but have broader experiences, are likely to seek change.

Expansion brought increased competition for places in elected office that demonstrated the leadership's control over elite advancement. When critically minded Board member and provincial representative Düzgün Yildirim was not included on the candidate committee's parliamentary list, he stood at congress as an alternative candidate. His supporters tried to rally support but central office would not give them email addresses for all of the SP's branches. Yildirim was criticised by the leadership at the congress and failed to gain inclusion on the list. Instead he was placed in an un-winnable position for the list for the Senate. The system whereby provisional councillors select the members of the Senate made it possible for a handful of SP provincial representatives to elect Yildirim to the Senate against the leadership's wishes. It also allowed Yildirim to vote for himself. The SP's provincial representatives believed that they were free to vote for any of the SP's candidates because the leadership had apparently forgotten to tell them to follow the order of its list of candidates. They chose Yildirim above those placed higher on the leadership's list. The leadership was horrified and when Yildirim refused to give up his seat, he was expelled.

The leadership maintained control over elite advancement but at a cost. Around thirty members of Yildirim's supporters formed 'Committee to Democratise the SP'. They campaigned at the 2007 congress for cross branch discussion, an internet forum to facilitate this and for more powerful congresses. This was ineffective but served to show the lack of debate within the SP. The Yildirim affair had further ramifications (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, p. 55). In 2005 Marijnissen recruited social democrat Elma Verhey, editor of the weekly *Fri Netherlands*, to edit *Tribune*. The leadership aimed to make *Tribune* into a more general left-wing paper to broaden the SP's appeal and Verhey was granted editorial independence. Verhey tried to transform *Tribune* into a source of critical debate. Verhey managed to cover International Socialism conferences, to the leadership's dissatisfaction, but she was sacked after attempting to publish an article by Yildirim's supporters. This fuelled media coverage on the SP's lack of democracy (*NRC*, 26.06.07) and a spoof of the SP's website 'SP Transparant'. Rick Denkers, a former social democrat, promoted rapidly as regional leader because of his close relations with members of the inner circle, also disagreed with the leadership over expelling Yildirim and having been isolated he left the SP.

Before the 2006 election an unprecedented left-majority coalition with the PvdA and GroenLinks seemed possible and the SP participated in talks with its potential allies. However, the larger PvdA would not commit to an alliance. Ultimately, the PvdA and GroenLinks lost seats at the 2006 election, preventing a left-majority in parliament. However, the SP's success led to calls to include it in an oversized coalition with the other two largest parties, who had both lost seats, the PvdA and the CDA. The SP entered coalition talks but the centre-right CDA enjoyed a position of strength in negotiations being the largest party. It blocked the SP's inclusion to avoid being outnumbered (in terms of seats) by left-wing coalition partners (Lucardie 2007, p. 1046).

3.6 New challenges

The SP did not encounter a major internal backlash over failing to enter government in 2006. Its incompatibility with the CDA appeared to be largely accepted by the rank and file who were not enthused by inclusion in a centre-right coalition. However, the tight grip of the inner circle prevented critical discussion of coalition negotiations. Failure to enter government did not trigger the organisational time-bomb that exists

inside the SP from its lack of democracy and influx of new members unfamiliar with rigid discipline (Voerman, 1998). The main problem that the SP encountered from failing to enter government came from the electorate. In the 2009 election to the European Parliament it received only just over seven per cent of the vote. This was a marginal increase on its 2004 performance but a massive reverse after the 2006 national election result.

However, the SP's problems go beyond European elections. It is no longer the fastest growing party in the Netherlands. Its approval ratings even fell below those of a resurgent GroenLinks in the polls, suggesting that the SP may be heading for a massive electoral shock and might lose as many as half of its MPs (Politieke Barometer, 2010; Peil, 2009). When a sudden election was called for summer 2010 the party's support in the polls failed to improve. Part of this decline is due to the replacement of parliamentary leader Marijnissen, who stepped-down for health reasons. Marijnissen's successor Agnes Kant lacked his appeal and received more negative media coverage. SP politicians lay the blame for the party's dwindling support on the disillusionment on those who voted SP in 2006 believing it could reach power and initiate social change, only to be let down when it failed to deliver the goods. The SP's leaders have failed to counter claims that they had a chance of entering government and turned it down. The SP also seems to be losing support to Geert Wilders' anti-immigration Partij voor de Vrijheid. Wilders' demand for withdrawal from the EU outflanks the SP's Euroscepticism (see Van Kessel and Crum 2009, p. 10). The SP's leaders recognise this and are contemplating a more positive alternative model of European integration in response to this dilemma.

The SP also faces a challenge of maintaining its high level of activism. Membership now appears to be falling and die-hard veteran activists have left following recent policy sacrifices. The PvdA supporters it recruited are less active. Even when membership was increasing in 2006 the Board found that new social democratic members were not integrating and were leaving. Chief spin doctor Koffeman and leading environmental activist Harry Vos also joined the Party for the Animals. Vos reportedly fell out with the leadership after they disciplined him for being late to a meeting and downgraded his job. He won a costly settlement for his eventual dismissal, as have other leading activists.

The inner circle continues to run the SP. In 2008 Kant, a trusted functionary who slowly worked her way up the party hierarchy (working for Marijnissen in parliament and having little experience of political work outside the SP) was the only candidate to succeed him (de Witt, 1998). Marijnissen remained in the parliamentary group and party Chair. This preserved a managerial sandwich, in which Marijnissen was Kant's boss out of parliament and she was his inside it. Kant was seen as subservient to Marijnissen, who remained in control of the SP twenty years after becoming its leader. Kant resigned as parliamentary leader and MP during the 2010 parliamentary election campaign following large losses in municipal elections. The party's decline in the polls has not yet fed into strong calls for democratisation. However, the SP is used to electoral success. Former Member of the European Parliament Eric Meijer argues that defeat is all that could bring about democratisation and break the inner circle's control (Meijer Interview, 10.09.08).

The SP did not re-radicalise in response to its failure to enter government. Having abandoned its most radical policies, there is little in the SP's programme that could not be put up for discussion in coalition negotiations. However, a left-wing coalition following the next parliamentary election looks unlikely because of the parties' standing in the polls. Nonetheless, the SP's astonishing adaptability persists. It has begun to soften hostility to the CDA and Marijnissen has signalled a willingness to talk with it about coalition formation. In recent years leading SP politicians have rediscovered Christianity – even though the SP was historically secular – providing room to attract CDA supporters and to converge with it (Voerman 2007a, p. 3). The SP's moderation also continued in 2009 its leaders agreed to sit in the parliamentary committee controlling the Dutch secret service which the SP had long opposed.

3.6 Conclusion

Following the collapse of Communism the SP went from being a tiny vanguard party to a genuine force in Dutch Politics. It did this by dropping ideological commitments. It became a social democratic party with radical credentials. Thus far, it has made remarkable achievements in coupling activism with electoral expansion and integrating new groups. Its expansion surpassed all expectations (Voerman, 1998, 2002, p. 5). It is not surprising that the SP changed as many of the students advanced into the elite by the late 1980s who had not been in the CPN (as founding leader

Monjé had been) and were less experienced in labourist tradition. Restrictive elite advancement practices meant only the loyal advanced. However, the 'horizontal' advancement of councillors and activists to elite positions was highly significant. Their experiences in working outside of the SP gave them pragmatism and they called for reforms. The SP shows that reformers can advance even if there is tight control over elite advancement and a lack of debate.

The new leadership used Mao's concept of the mass line and democratic centralism to make inroads into breaking with Marxism-Leninism and to make a new organisational model. In relation to the Grzymała-Busse framework it shows that rapid centralisation was not necessary if WECPs were to transform themselves in response to the events in 1989. The process was more gradual as the SP had already begun to build up its central organisation before 1989. Furthermore, delaying organisational reorganisation by maintaining discipline and democratic centralism, until 1991, gave the leadership strategic space to control adaptation. The case of the SP supports the idea that centralisation was possible in WECPs. The new organisation it constructed did not significantly democratise but was highly centralistic. That the SP had such a small organisation gave new opportunities for the leadership to craft new centralistic structures and to handpick officials as it expanded; there was little need to streamline the party apparatus.

The SP's leaders implemented practically minded reforms in local politics and supported the break with Mao. As Grzymała-Busse says we should expect of elites with experience in carrying out prior reforms, the SP's elite centralised. One complicating factor that the SP presents for applying Grzymała-Busse's framework is in terms of whether experience of prior reform was really the reason why the elite centralised. The SP's top leaders acknowledge that they increased the power of central office to prevent radicals in local branches running campaigns, to provide greater coordination between local branches and to respond to election losses. Their experiences in local councils fuelled this process.

Problematically though, members of the inner circle maintain that they democratised. This makes it harder to discern why they created such a restrictive organisation. However, they do not accept that they had a systematic strategy of centralisation

forged out of experiences of resistance to their earlier reforms or from their professional backgrounds. They point to experience in carrying out reforms promoting a need for greater internal democracy. Moreover, elite interviews and expert surveys point to other explanations for centralisation in the SP. They show that its elite were used to a highly centralised organisation which became ingrained in their way of working, even after they abolished democratic centralism.

This chapter has shown that in several respects the SP retained aspects of democratic centralism. As Voerman (2006, p. 5) argues, the party's internal culture was a major factor behind this. However, analysis also showed that new institutional mechanisms and informal procedures also consolidated the power of the leadership and with it a strict hierarchy. These mechanisms and procedures helped the leadership to repeatedly reposition the SP. The case of the SP strongly supports Grzymała-Busse's argument that centralisation can enable pragmatic elites to carry out programmatic reforms, to social democratise and pursue office. The SP dropped ideological baggage easily in comparison to their left-libertarian and more democratic rivals, GroenLinks (see Keith, 2010). The SP rapidly broke with Marxism-Leninism. Its former hostility to the Soviet bloc also made it easy for it to critique the regimes in CEE, but the leadership's power also meant it was easy for it to ditch old ideas. The SP's centralised organisation enabled the leadership to constrain attempts to re-radicalise the party, to consolidate moderate positions and to maintain its control even as the SP expanded.

Nonetheless, exchanging socialism for social democracy and policy-seeking for office-seeking took place in several stages. The SP shows that such a process did not have to be rapid as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. When the SP's leaders wanted changes they could make them quickly, but despite their negotiation with outside groups and institutions, they did not seek these changes in 1989. However, the SP shows how post-Communist parties could win votes from a protest strategy in the aftermath of 1989. Success in this yielded subsequent opportunities for social democratisation and office-seeking. Tight internal discipline helped the leadership to maintain control. This was coupled with emphasis on direct action which allowed the party to retain activists and members despite controversial policy changes. The SP did this well enough to question the PvdA's status as the major left-wing force in

Dutch politics. European left parties and socialists have looked to the SP for inspiration (McGiffen, 2007). However, it is questionable whether they could (or would want to) copy its centralised model of activism and campaigning. Even so, the SP's elite have so far not yet made significant inroads to democratising. Indeed, as one of them said of internal democracy 'if we are successful, does it really matter?'.

Chapter Four

The Swedish Left Party – the Democratisers

4.1 Introduction

The Swedish Left Party – Communists (VPK) re-branded themselves Vänsterpartiet (Left Party (V)) in 1990 and became both socialist and feminist in 1996. Despite these changes, radical mid-level elites, empowered by a high-level of internal democracy, prevented V from fully breaking with Communism. This analysis of Vänsterpartiet supports Grzymała-Busse's ideas that flexible patterns of elite advancement stimulate reform/ideological 'social democratisation' and that democracy is an uncertain route to adaptation. These two factors combined led to a high level of internal turmoil. This chapter, however, throws doubt on the idea that elites with prior experience of reform or professional backgrounds are predisposed to centralising. It also shows that while internal democratisation made attempts at reform difficult, on the whole it was compatible with party transformation.

Vänsterpartiet's leaders have traditionally been held captive, supporting Social Democratic Party (SAP) minority governments for fear of a centre-right alternative. Following the collapse of Communism in CEE, reformists sought greater influence on SAP by generating realistic policies. Changes in the Swedish political system also presented new opportunities for Vänsterpartiet's leaders to redefine its role. New budget procedures made it harder for minority governments to remain in power after being defeated in parliament in votes on the budget, prompting SAP to formalise relations and to negotiate 'contracts' for Vänsterpartiet's support between 1998–2006 (see Koß, 2010). After a right-wing coalition came to power in 2006, SAP became more enthusiastic about bringing V into government and made a pre-electoral coalition agreement with them in 2009.

This chapter shows how resistance and internal democratic structures often stifled reformers' responses to such exogenous shocks. However, it also shows that they still managed to make considerable changes and that their reforms were rarely undone altogether. It has four sections. The first analyses C.H. Hermansson's pursuit of Eurocommunism in response to electoral defeat during the 1960s. Hermansson made considerable achievements in breaking with orthodox Communism. Nevertheless it is

shown that the effects of democratisation and dismantling democratic centralism significantly hampered his strategy and constrained his options.

Table 4.1: Electoral results of SKP, VPK and V in parliamentary elections

Year	1944	1948	1952	1956	1958	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976
Vote (per cent)	10.3	6.3	4.3	5	3.4	4.5	5.2	3	4.8	5.3	4.8

Year	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	1999	2002	2006
Vote (per cent)	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.8	4.5	6.2	12	10.9	8.3	5.9

(Möller, 2007; Arter, 2003; Botella and Ramiro, 2003; Errson, 1998; Staar, 1990; Staar, 1989; von Beyme, 1985; Tannahill, 1978).

The second section shows that Lars Werner's leadership balanced competing traditionalist and reformist groups through Vänsterpartiet's democratic structures leading to ideological stagnation in the late 1980s. A third section analyses Gudrun Schyman's reforms (1993–2003) when pragmatic elites equipped with experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions moved to 'social democratise' and feminise in order to win votes and to make Vänsterpartiet coalitionable. This made V Sweden's first feminist party and feminism played a central role in party programmes. Analysis shows that Schyman's organisational strategy consisted largely of 'parliamentarisation' rather than centralisation. This achieved considerable expansion (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2) but proved unsustainable as mid-level elites used internal democratic structures to re-radicalise programmes. The final section analyses V since 2004 when the party was led by a more narrowly recruited traditionalist leadership, headed by Lars Ohly. It outlines an initial period of radicalisation but shows that leading traditionalists moderated in ideological terms because of their newfound responsibilities, including those in parliament. Ohly's leadership now pursues a 'Janus-faced' strategy combining pragmatic office-seeking with radical internal appeals that appease traditionalists.

Table 4.2: Membership figures for SKP, VPK and V

Year	1944	1951	1957	1963	1970	1979	1980	1986	1989	1990
Members	58,000	34,256	28,000	22,900	14,000	16,000	18,157	17,500	17,800	13,000

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1998	1999	2001	2005	2010
Members	11,821	11,104	10,649	10,700	11,313	13,097	13,589	13,868	11,000	12,000

(Möller, 2007; Ersson, 2004; Botella and Ramiro 2003, Mair and van Biezen, 2001; Errson, 1998; Staar, 1990; Tannahill, 1978).

4.2 Battling the old guard

In the 1960s the Communist Party of Sweden (SKP), became Eurocommunist and broke with the Soviet Union when Hermansson led reformists to change its name to VPK. This was when the effects of dismantling democratic centralism and democratisation were felt most strongly. The SKP's leaders were originally a diverse group of leftists (see Sparring 1973). This ended when Leninists took control in 1929. Elite advancement became narrow and insular, based on the promotion of working-class, low-educated, orthodox apparatchiks and the gradual turnover resulted in an aging leadership (Sparring 1964, p. 168). The elite were thoroughly Stalinised as intellectual MPs left or were expelled (Sparring 1964, p. 293). The SKP was an orthodox Marxist-Leninist party that strictly applied democratic centralism. In the early 1960s it was dominated by these orthodox 'men of 1929' and Chair, Hilding Hagberg. The old guard blindly followed the Kremlin and in an effort to reconcile international allegiances with domestic realities supported or 'hid' behind SAP minority governments while waiting for the Russians to invade.

Members with experience of negotiation with outside groups and institutions led criticisms of this strategy and calls for renewal, supporting a cornerstone of Grzymała-Busse's framework. However, these younger activists were excluded from the elite. SKP's MPs, whose work involved a high degree of communication with groups outside the party, were also more responsive to exogenous shocks including the Cuban missile crisis and electoral losses in 1962. Narrow patterns of elite advancement and leadership bodies lacking in debate made the leadership seem an improbable place to find reformists. However, this did not make regeneration impossible, as a crude interpretation of Grzymała-Busse's framework would predict.

Hermansson, who was recruited from outside the party's industrial working class base, slipped through the net. Against the odds he presented a new vision, dethroned the old guard and transformed the SKP into one of the most progressive WECPs. This came largely in response to electoral decline. The quality, not just the quantity, of reformers and their agency mattered.

This period supports Grzymała-Busse's arguments that elites recruited with experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions have prior experiences, ideas and skills beneficial to reform and are more prone to seeking moderation than narrowly recruited elites. Hermansson was middle-class, a postgraduate student, a trained economist who was active in other leftist organisations including the Social Democratic Youth League and the socialist student organisation Clarté. He drew on wider debates and analytical skills to envisage reform. In particular, Hermansson's experience of democratic debate gave a basis for democratisation. Experience of theoretical debates on Marxism and economics helped him recognise the problems in the Soviet model early on and working as assistant to liberal political scientist Herbert Tingsten Hagberg shaped his views. Hermansson was also close to intellectuals and mid-level elites seeking a 'modernist' (Eurocommunist) direction.

In accordance with Grzymała-Busse's framework, Hermansson was 'horizontally' advanced – being recruited to work for SKP's paper *Ny Dag* in 1941 then rapidly rising to the Politburo. Working at *Ny Dag* shaped Hermansson's reformism and he encountered criticisms of the lack of debate on sensitive issues from reformers, including trade unionist Sven Landin MP and maverick intellectual Anton Strand (Sparring 1964, p. 303). On becoming editor Hermansson created a forum of debate and democratic centralism broke down as *Ny Dag* criticised SKP's losses in the 1962 local election, developments in the Soviet-bloc and advocated generational turnover in leadership bodies (Sparring 1964, pp. 303–7). The leadership responded by removing dissidents and advancing young orthodox functionaries to the CC. When Hagberg stepped down from ill-health, Hermansson was chosen as a compromise candidate at the 1964 congress, his record of criticising Stalinism and the Soviet-bloc gave him legitimacy with reformists. The old guard (mistakenly) saw him as a trusted member of the leadership because he had stayed clear of dissidence preceding the congress and made his criticisms internally, following party rules (Jorgenson 2002, p.

64). Democratic centralism ensured that loyal delegates were elected to the congress, enabling Hermansson's uncontested election (Tarschys 1974, p. 38).

Hermansson's first speech as Chair revealed his election as a victory for the modernists. He rejected Hagberg's calls to reassert democratic centralism, pleaded for ongoing debate, and abandoned the Bolshevik model. Hermansson also asserted independence from Moscow and SAP to gain credibility and force more concessions from the Social Democrats. SKP boycotted international Communist conferences and criticised the regimes in CEE. Hermansson did not social democratise but found inspiration from Scandinavian left-socialist parties and Italian Eurocommunism (Devlin, 1969). There was a noticeable moderation in campaign rhetoric (Jorgenson 2002, pp. 66–9). Hermansson opened elite advancement to 'modernist' reformers, New Left feminist and environmentalist activists and left-wing social democrats. He tried to make the party more attractive to them with books emphasising broader leftist appeals. Turnover in leading organs was gradual, but New Leftists advanced to important positions and the social composition of SKP's rank and file and electorate changed as academics and white-collar workers began to displace trade unionists and the working-class (Arter 2002, p. 50, 1993, p. 34).

Hermansson dismantled democratic centralism between 1964–5. Communications between central and district bodies became increasingly two-way, providing room for debate and local-level decision-making (Devlin, 1982a). Congresses were held more regularly and secret ballots were introduced for delegate elections. Moreover, the Central Committee/Politburo were renamed as the Party Board/Executive Committee and restrictions on members were relaxed allowing 'supporting members' who were not activists to enter debates at meetings (Devlin, 1982a). The size of the Board was reduced to make it stronger *vis-à-vis* the Executive Committee, deliberately weakening the leadership's power. Debate was encouraged at Board meetings which were also opened to guests. Alongside this more independent programme commissions were established (see Jorgenson, 2002). Hermansson's successor at *Ny Dag* was chosen from its own staff rather than a Board member as usual (Sparring 1964, p. 318).

As the rank and file were empowered they pursued Eurocommunist and New Left policies. The changes were consolidated in new programmes and statutes in 1967. These portrayed socialism as an ethical principle rather than a scientific prescription, removed the phrase democratic centralism and embraced an ultra-democratic organisation (Hermansson 1988, p. 137). Hermansson did not substantially centralise as Grzymala-Busse found that experienced reformers had done in CEE. Only some processes of centralisation took place including Hermansson's publications like *Vansterns Vag* (1965) which repositioned the SKP while circumventing internal decision-making channels and the appointment of a fourteen member committee dominated by reformists that drafted proposals for the 1967 congress (Sparring 1964, p. 319). Democratic debate was used to make most of the changes.

Electoral expansion helped Hermansson to achieve his key programmatic goals at the 1967 congress and references to Lenin were dropped (Taryschys 1974, p. 39). Hermansson encouraged respect for liberal rights, acceptance of the parliamentary system and exchanged dogmatism for practical policies such as tax reform. However, democratisation opened a can of worms. Resistance tarnished the credibility and distance from Communism that Hermansson sought. The old guard retained a majority in the Board and key positions throughout the party apparatus (Sparring 1964, p. 292). A new generation of elites selected by open procedures did not emerge until 1967. As the old guard's obedience waned they sabotaged reform, blocking several changes to the 1967 programme including the removal of radical phrases and criticism of regimes in CEE (Tarschys 1974, p. 41).

Hermansson failed to fully consolidate his broadly pitched brand of socialism, being forced to compromise on symbolic changes including dropping the word Communism from SKP's name. Instead it became Left Party – Communists (VPK) at the 1967 congress (Devlin, 1969). The leadership's inability to control competing factions became visible as Maoists publicly criticised the leadership before splitting in 1967. Modernists and renewers dissatisfied at the lack of decisive reform followed suit. Hagberg and the pro-Soviet wing based around working-class cadres from the North distrusted the new intellectual elite. They began using internal democracy to organise against Hermansson's reforms and clashed with pragmatic, middle-class, locally elected officials. The hardliners formed a faction called the 'Flamman-Group' around

local Communist paper *Norrskensflamman*, using it to criticise the leadership and preserve VPK's Communist heritage, undermining Hermansson's attempts at broadening the party's appeal. Hermansson aimed for a common electoral platform with SAP in 1966 but the VPK's continued association with orthodox Communism meant that it remained beyond the pale (Koß 2010, – forthcoming).

Hermansson's appeals for a restoration of discipline were ignored (Devlin 1969). The leadership's commitment to democratisation made it hard to expel, silence or discipline the Flamman Group as traditionally happened to dissidents. Although Hermansson had the support of a majority of the rank and file, the hard-line activists were effective organisers and fought a long battle for control of the party. The Flamman Group understood the party's institutions better than the young reformers, continued to win concessions and tried to take control of district organisations (Tarschys 1974, p. 40). The leadership was also confronted by a new fiery leadership in the Youth Communists that criticised Hermansson's strategy. Its leaders restored democratic centralism in 1969 and asserted their independence from the party, undermining Hermansson's reforms and contributing to disunity at congresses.

Hermansson was soon on the defensive. He appeased the hardliners by ending aid to New Left publication *Tidssignal* which they saw as bourgeois (Jorgenson 2002, p. 68). Reformist Kjell Johansson complained of a retreat to pre-1964 positions (Devlin, 1969). A further pressure was the pending constitutional change that established a four per cent threshold for representation in the Riksdag which forced Hermansson to avoid a split (Tarschys 1974, p. 43). As a result the 1969 programme made concessions that replaced commitments to gradual reform with criticisms of 'Swedish class society' and a readiness to contemplate use of force if imperialists blocked social change. In May 1969, *Ny Dag* conceded that parliamentary activity should remain subordinate to extra-parliamentary action (Devlin, 1969).

The hardliners also won a large number of places in the Board and Executive Committee in 1969 (Devlin, 1969). Throughout the 1970s they blocked the leadership's reforms. By 1972 programmes made no criticisms of developments in CEE and there was a noticeable shift back to the left (Olsen 1986, p. 368). Hermansson stepped down in 1975, partly because he grew tired of fighting the

hardliners. When the Flamman-Group eventually split, forming the Workers' Party – The Communists (APK) in 1977, it took 3,000 members and seized buildings/resources leading to chaotic legal disputes and fighting. After the split VPK's leaders felt compelled to stress radicalism to compete with the APK. Hermansson's attempts to break with the regimes of CEE also proved ineffective as leading officials continued to travel there (Josefsson, 2004a).

Hermansson's open elite advancement policies also caused problems. Elites from the New Left '1968 generation' included protesters from the anti-Vietnam war movement, Maoists, Socialists, Marxists, feminists and left-wing social democrats (Gilberg 1980, p. 249). The newcomers were often female, highly-educated, middle-class professionals working in social work, health and education. Their advancement to elite positions helped to break with pro-Soviet hardliners, changed a male dominated party and many of them sought reforms. However, some of them brought militancy and newfound radicalism incompatible with Hermansson's pragmatic Eurocommunism. A 'neo-Leninist' tendency formed that, although critical of the Soviet Union, was committed to Marxism-Leninism and opposed co-operation with SAP.

Neo-Leninist elites soon dominated and several leading Eurocommunists left while others converted (Tarschys 1974, p. 41). Flexible elite advancement did not necessarily foster moderation. The neo-Leninists radicalised programmes at congresses. These emphasised ideas avoided during by the 'modernists' including proletarian internationalism, violent revolution by the working-classes to overthrow capitalism, extra-parliamentary activism above parliamentary reform, the scientific nature of Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism (Olsen 1986, p. 368; VPK, 1987, 1972). Unsurprisingly, SAP maintained little contact with the VPK (or Hermansson) and it remained captive, failing to gain sufficient reward for its support.

4.3 Democratic stagnation

Lars Werner succeeded Hermansson in 1975. He had been one of 29 modernists who wrote to the CC demanding an independent and moderate course in the early 1960s. He supported Hermansson, fought against the hardliners/neo-Leninists and encountered the pragmatism experiences of working in trade unions and elected

office. However, in Grzymała-Busse's terms, Werner lacked the complete 'set' of experiences beneficial to centralising or social democratising. Unlike most reformers he was narrowly recruited, spending most of his political life in VPK, slowly rising up the ranks. Werner was strongly connected to VPK's past – his father was a leading Communist. He was also a construction worker, with little formal education giving him support from traditionalists. His attachment to them made breaking with Communism agonising.

Werner took a more traditionalist approach than Hermansson. He appeased the Flamman Group by improving relations with the Soviet Union and removing restrictions on VPK politicians holidaying there. Declassified documents show Werner maintained secret contacts with the Soviet-bloc seeking resources and even 'booze and fags'; he regularly met officials from the German Democratic Republic and praised North Korea's socialism as late as 1987 (SVT, 2004b). Werner sought few reforms in the 1980s, supporting the idea in Grzymała-Busse's framework that narrowly recruited elites struggle to adapt. Needing the traditionalists' support, Werner avoided rocking the boat or seeking inclusion in a governing coalition (Devlin, 1982a). Instead, Werner balanced VPK's competing groups to hold it together and protect his position. He ensured that Board and parliamentary group meetings made vague decisions and provided little room for critical discussion on conditions in CEE. If Board decisions deviated from Eurocommunism or support for SAP he would ignore them, which dismayed reformers.

VPK's organisation in many respects resembled that of other Swedish parties by 1989. This left little demand for organisational change, room for a backlash from democratisation, or a restructuring in which to centralise following the collapse of Communism. However, the small changes that were made continued to push the party towards democratisation. Members no longer required nomination from existing members and organisational committees of old elites regulating internal affairs were abolished. Internal democracy continued to hamper reform. Traditionalists, favouring Marxism-Leninism, Communist symbolism and who were sceptical of co-operation with SAP held a majority in the Board and were strongly represented in the mid-level elite. Werner supported the advancement of some reformists to counter the neo-Leninists in the Board, but reformers lacked influence

and were unable to seize the initiative with Werner as leader. Werner would not support the advancement of extreme reformers aiming to break with Communism and rarely led or supported reforms; instead stalemate and ideological stagnation occurred as reformists fought a losing battle within VPK's internal structures. Several leading reformist Executive Committee members left frustrated.

Werner did not substantially centralise to sidetrack traditionalists, as the framework expects of experienced reformers. The leadership reduced the size of the Board from 35 to 25 members strengthening its managerial role vis-à-vis the Executive Committee and internal accountability (V, 2001). VPK's organisation remained extremely open and pluralistic with few expulsions (Hermansson 1988, p. 152). When Werner did grab power, by creating policies in interviews without prior discussion, it was to the detriment of reform. When the leadership tried to make policy more realistic by enabling parliamentarians to be elected to the Party Board in 1990, this had little impact on the Board's composition until the late-1990s. Reformist elites' New Left backgrounds meant they were strongly attached to democratisation, contrary to Grzymała-Busse's findings in CEE that elites with professional backgrounds or prior experience in seeking broader appeals and reforms centralise. They also lacked power to make organisational changes and centralisation would have faced serious resistance.

Elite turnover was slow but by the late 1980s a significant part of the leadership came from the '1968 generation' and were experienced in negotiating with outside groups and institutions. Most were traditionalist and not pragmatic enough to support reform. However, (like under Hermansson) the reformists generally had the characteristics identified by Grzymała-Busse. Most had encountered problems with VPK's appeals through engaging with other political organisations or wider debates and were professionals working as teachers, academics and health workers. Flexible recruitment practices continued to be the strongest influence on V's reformers. These new leftists were attracted by Hermansson's pluralistic brand of socialism but believed VPK's Communism left his project incomplete. Open recruitment and advancement practices supplied new ideas but the reformists were not ideologically cohesive. They advocated a range of approaches to socialism rather than social democracy. Conversely, elites emerging 'narrowly' from the Youth League were

usually traditionalist. Most narrowly recruited hardliners who became reformist changed gradually, having gained more responsible roles in elected office, or through witnessing life in CEE at first hand. Few changed suddenly in 1989.

Some reformers were moderate when they joined VPK and relatively open elite advancement practices provided opportunities to careerists and opportunists. These reformers were usually driven to elected positions, while traditionalists tended to seek positions as functionaries, regional apparatchiks and at central office. However, working in parliament (or for parliamentarians) also exposed radical New Leftists to the constraints of office and they moderated, becoming so called 'softies' on programmatic issues and compromises with SAP. This included Lars Bäckström who became a realist through designing budget proposals in parliament. SAP was generally reluctant to include VPK in municipal government, but its support role involved direct negotiations, meaning that VPK's locally elected officials also encountered the realities of budgetary decisions, the benefits of moderation and became hungry for government. These locally elected officials promoted reform in Board and regional meetings and were able to point to their increased influence on SAP. Where VPK was strongest it was also usually more hard-line, resulting in regular clashes between pragmatic politicians and the traditionalist rank and file/mid-level elite at meetings and congresses. Similarly, (ongoing) tensions developed between VPK's practically-minded parliamentarians and the Party Board in the 1980s because of their different roles.

Democratic procedures allowed traditionalist functionaries in the mid-level elite to block reform. This group had little experience in negotiating with groups and institutions outside the party. The former social democratic, local councillor Johan Lönnroth, led reformists presenting motions to the 1985 congress expressing the merits of Swedish capitalism over Soviet Communism. Werner did not support them and they were roundly defeated. Reformers tried again in 1987, when reformers including feminists Tora Freeba and academic Göran Therborn were elected to the Programme Commission. The reformers clashed with neo-Leninist Jörn Svensson in the Commission and drafted a programme that broke with Communism and demanded free elections in CEE. This encountered stiff resistance at the 1987 congress and neo-Leninist Vice-Chair Kenneth Kvist controversially revised the

programme overnight reintroducing traditional concepts including democratic centralism while emphasising some new themes to avoid a split (VPK, 1987). This was possible because of Svensson's influence with the Board's traditionalist majority and procedures whereby the Programme Commission submitted draft programmes to the Board for amendments.

Freeba's feminist reforms were also rejected by the majority of working-class, congress delegates who remained more traditionalist than most members. For them green policies and feminism played second fiddle to Marxism-Leninism. Traditionalists took control of reformers' districts and organised against them in elections for the Board. Reformers were also less engaged with local meetings than traditionalist functionaries who enjoyed the upper-hand in nominating congress delegates and choosing the Board. After failing in 1987, leading reformists left VPK. Electoral success in 1988, however, seemed to vindicate Werner's strategy (Arter 1988, p. 97). Nonetheless, the collapse of Communism in CEE plunged VPK into crisis and intensified fighting. Criticising the Soviet-bloc was no longer a taboo and reformers achieved several victories through VPK's democratic structures. However, these occurred more through accident than design and their efforts remained constrained. The traditionalist programme in 1987 had seemingly settled debate in the Programme Commission. The new Commission was expected to make few changes, freeing up the nomination process to more outsiders, trade unionists, feminists and academics. Events in CEE meant it was suddenly tasked with updating the programme.

The Commission replaced the programme's traditionalist terminology with a minimalist set of eleven points that were accepted at the 1990 congress (V, 1990). The Commission wanted a practical document that avoided theory but Werner intervened, inserting direct references to socialism and traditionalist rhetoric undermining the intended break with the past. The programme continued to aspire to a Communist society. The reformists in the Commission, however, suggested dropping the word Communism from VPK's name. This was accepted with a majority of three votes after a hard-fought debate and VPK was renamed Vänsterpartiet (Arter 1991, p. 66). The decision was strongly opposed by traditionalist mid-level elites and district organisations. Werner originally opposed

the change but switched sides during the congress like many leading Communists who sought to disassociate Swedish Communism from the Soviet Union and to protect its electoral appeal. However, it was not the comprehensive break with Communism the reformers sought, doing little to repudiate V's Communist history. In 1991 V declined from 5.8 per cent to 4.5 per cent of the vote (see Table 4.1).

Modernisation was protracted and divisive (Arter 2002, p. 10). Events in CEE were not enough to dethrone Werner. A spontaneous challenge from Vice-Chair Gudrun Schyman, considered a traditionalist, won only a third of votes at the 1990 congress. Even reformers including Johan Lönnroth voted for Werner and they lacked a credible candidate. Traditionalists retained a majority in the Board and undermined reformers' efforts by closing *Ny Dag*. They also removed some of Werner's reformist advisors who favoured closer ties with SAP including Bo Hammar and placed social democratic parliamentarians in unelectable positions on V's parliamentary-list (Arter 2002, p. 10). Congresses continued to elect traditionalist Party Secretaries (responsible for the party's organisational functioning) to put 'overcoats' on Werner in case he sided with the reformists. Before the 1993 congress leading reformists, including several MPs, demanded renewal based on commitments to individual freedom, moderate Socialism with regulated markets instead of state-ownership and economic planning. The modernisers were rebuked by Vice-Chair Kvist for attempting a split (*ibid.*, p. 10). The lack of programmatic change meant that more frustrated reformers left V including parliamentarians who were possible successors to Werner which weakened the remaining reformist elites.

Werner failed to direct V and did not denounce Communism. Alcoholism meant that he increasingly paid less attention to reform and Board meetings (Interview former Party Board member). With Werner incapacitated in 1993 and the Board divided, the Programme Commission set the precedent of sending proposals directly to congress and worked more independently. Its 1993 programme accepted several of Lönnroth's proposals and left behind references to Communism and descriptions of the capitalist nature of Swedish society. This avoided theories or philosophies in favour of concrete policy proposals and was based on three principles: feminism, environmentalism and socialism. Marxism was now just one of V's inspirations and the concept of democratic centralism had been left behind (V, 1993). This time

congress accepted some programmatic reforms with resistance alleviated by the Commission's consultation with district organisations. However, tensions remained and debate ran out of control, so that the whole congress agenda was not discussed. This left it unclear how Marxist, Communist or radical V would be and traditionalists retained their majority in the Board.

4.4 Parliamentarisation

When Werner finally resigned, the 1993 Congress chose Schyman as Party Chair, above leading reformist Annika Ohlabe whose enthusiasm for European integration angered traditionalists. Schyman pledged adaptation on leftist lines – championing extra-parliamentary activism. She had been a peripheral, traditionalist figure. To her colleagues' surprise, Schyman became a leading member of V's reformist right-wing. Schyman broke with Werner's strategy, aggressively pursuing electoral and governmentally driven strategies, endeavouring to win acceptance from SAP and promoting a socialist-market economy above public ownership (Arter 2002, p. 11). As Vice-Chair Schyman promoted the agendas of new social movements, supported the name change and she stood against Werner to inject competition into leadership selection. However, she lacked great experience in carrying out prior reforms that Grzymała-Busse's framework expects of leaders that overhaul their parties. Based on these criteria, Werner was a more likely reformer but a high level of experience in carrying out prior-reforms was not a pre-requisite for elites' to seek or implement adaptation.

Like many reformists, Schyman's background gave her ideas, pragmatism and experience in negotiating with outsiders that proved beneficial to reform. She had an outsiders' perspective. Working as a social worker formed Schyman's concern with equality. She had not become Communist through family tradition or ideological conviction but the influence of friends and VPK's connections to anti-nuclear and peace movements. Schyman was not extremely ideological or theoretical until she embraced feminism in the 1990s and was promoted as VPK sought female candidates rather than through loyalty, making it easy for her to adapt. As a parliamentarian she encountered the need for moderate appeals that resonated with voters. She drew on her broad experiences to reach out to people she encountered in her career and people like herself – women, single mothers, the low-paid and public sector workers. She

was able to talk ‘in their language’; about every day, non-political situations, unlike Werner. She also drew on experiences in new social movements and debates on the EU to change the topics covered by board meetings and to broaden V’s profile.

Second, Schyman was active in the Maoist Marxist-Leninist Struggle League. Although Schyman downplays the importance of her past, leading elites see Maoist traits in her hands on style of working closely with voters. Politicians with Maoist backgrounds have been amongst V’s most pragmatic reformers having exchanged theoretical dogma and broadened appeals through speaking to ‘ordinary people’ about local, everyday concerns. Third, Schyman’s experience as a journalist benefited her media-led strategy for repackaging V. She, unlike Werner, was very successful at communicating with outsiders in television appearances. Schyman astonished colleagues with her ability to make sound-bites from complex briefing papers.

Under Schyman elite turnover increased as reform-minded new leftists gained important positions in the Executive Committee and parliamentary group. Schyman chose Lönnroth as Vice-Chair, a non-Communist, left-libertarian, who criticised state intervention in welfare and labour markets and looked to the voluntary sector to promote socialism. This legitimised the leadership with reformers. Leading reformists were not ideologically homogenous but shared many of the attributes that Grzymała-Busse found reformists exhibited in CEE. Most joined because of Hermansson’s reforms and shared broader experience from professional backgrounds, outside organisations and elected roles that prompted them to moderate their ideas. These characteristics systematically gave them a fresh outlook and desire to show that V could be pragmatic, could compromise and could govern. Critics complained that the executive committee was dominated by middle-class professionals and outsiders unfamiliar with V’s traditions (Bottwyk, 1998).

Contrary to the ideas in Grzymała-Busse’s framework, the reformist elites did not centralise. They retained an ideological aversion to centralism and did not envisage it as a viable instrument for reform. Leading reformers were generally satisfied with V’s local delegate congress system for voting on programmes/candidates presented by independent committees. The absence of centralisers could be explained by the lack of experience in carrying out prior programmatic reforms. Only a minority of the new

elite had hands-on experience in proposing these. However, many had sought to make broader appeals on a local level or promoted them at party meetings and within the Party Board.

Nevertheless, even experienced reformers, including Lönnroth, opposed centralising. Leading reformists were well aware of resistance from mid-level elites. A minority encountered it at first hand and the others had observed reformers' proposals being sabotaged throughout the 1980s but still did not see centralisation as the solution. Many reformers had little truck with centralisation because they were committed to liberal conceptions of democracy, minority rights and local decision making. The lack of centralisation shows that Grzymała-Busse's reasoning of why reformers with professional occupations or prior experience of reform should be predisposed reformers to centralisation does not travel well to V.

The framework captures how traditionalist elites often advanced narrowly as functionaries. Working largely inside the party apparatus they lived in a parallel universe to V's elected officials, avoiding pressures to justify Communism to outsiders and rarely needing to moderate. This process meant that centralisation was not the silver bullet Grzymała-Busse imagines. Central office was a stronghold for traditionalists. A major shake-up of personnel was needed before centralisation would have benefited reform. The leadership introduced some new faces at central office. However, turnover there remained low and new employees were often traditionalists seeking somewhere to hibernate through the winter of reform, prompting reformers to call central office 'the mausoleum'. The traditionalist functionaries used their roles to control internal affairs and block reform. They enjoyed substantial influence over internal communications and campaign material, regularly drafting radical policy documents that reformist parliamentarians were too busy or not strong enough to alter. The leadership had little motivation or power to remove traditionalist functionaries. V has rarely expelled officials, and expulsions have not been connected to left-radicalism but rather to illegal acts or allying with right-wing parties.

The reformers were largely disinterested in organisational issues or institutional changes and did not prioritise comprehensive organisational re-structuring. However,

they envisaged some alternative strategies to centralisation and drew on their New Left backgrounds to promote further, informal, democratisation to overcome resistance and broaden appeal. The reformers brought in greater representation for women and established working groups to shed-light on VPK's secretive contacts with the Soviet-bloc. Congresses were also scheduled every two rather than four years, to renew traditionalist policies. Most importantly, Schyman opened meetings to non-members and activists from peace and environmental NGOs to dethrone traditionalists. Schyman also instructed members to attend trade union and NGO meetings to broaden appeal. Party meetings were instructed to be like 'kitchen table' conversations and held in cafes rather than party offices to engage with everyday issues rather than insular theoretical debates. The traditionalists thought Schyman's changes were crass and many local meetings continued as normal. Although new members joined, democratisation failed to completely overrun traditionalists and their ways of doing things.

The leadership made some use of streamlining, selling V's own newspaper because it was detached from voters and the mainstream press. The reformers did not see a need to centralise power. Instead they informally made more of their institutional resources available and rhetorical skills by making more speeches, public appearances and media briefings to promote a broader image and to cultivate co-operation with SAP. Schyman in particular made greater use of her role as Chair than her predecessors. She spent most of her time travelling around Sweden, attending events, talking to voters and would not attend party meetings closed to the public. She redefined and softened V's image in numerous interviews and appearances, going to film-premiers, Nobel-prize dinners and befriending the leader of the employers' federation.

The reformer's other main organisational change involved shifting power to the parliamentary group. V's reformist MPs worked more closely with the small Executive Committee. It placed the parliamentarians at the forefront of campaigns, giving them increased freedom to make policy statements and re-define the party line, thereby marginalising the Party Board. Schyman and the parliamentarians downgraded formal policy making structures in interviews by inventing/changing policies and distancing V from Communism. The parliamentary group also gained

powers to employ staff, a role previously controlled by the Board. In 1987, V's statutes committed the parliamentarians to following programmes and congress decisions (V, 2001). This was watered down to treating congress decisions and programmes as 'guidelines'. The MPs increasingly made policy documents that conflicted with those of the Board and Programme Commission and controversially joined the defence committee in parliament, even after the Board opposed doing so because it worked with NATO, threatening Swedish neutrality.

Little formal centralisation took place. However, some informal top-down processes were brought in. Most significantly, Schyman led the professionalisation of V's campaign machine. The leadership was mindful that introverted activists were formulating dogmatic appeals lacking resonance with the electorate. In 1994 external PR professionals were introduced to make messages more attractive. V began distributing centrally made campaign material to district organisations and tried to co-ordinate them through email. The leadership attempted only limited centralisation as the executive committee played a leading role in election campaign committees in 1998/2002. The changes encountered stiff resistance from traditionalists who believed using marketing experts was too capitalist and many districts refused to use centrally made material. The leadership was unable to force them to standardise campaigns and in response ran its own adverts in local newspapers. The leadership also worked increasingly hard behind the scenes to ensure reformers advanced as spokespeople and parliamentary candidates while blocking traditionalists.

The leadership achieved significant changes. Publications including 'Skeletons in the Wardrobe' in 1993 made inroads towards ditching old ideas and a revised edition by historians in 1996 investigated VPK's relations with the Soviet-bloc. In 1993, it looked as though V might disappear from parliament but in 1994 less class conscious, less theoretical campaigns successfully targeted female, young, green, intellectual, public sector voters and delivered seven per cent of the vote (Arter 2002, p. 11). V reprised its support role with SAP and managed to persuade the Social Democrats to enter ground-breaking formal negotiations. The parliamentary leadership sought more influence by abandoning excessive demands that SAP could easily dismiss and adopted Bäckström's (hitherto blocked) realist economic policies. Schyman wanted an arrangement with SAP covering the whole of the parliamentary term. She did not

get this, but secured a series of tax rises (Koß 2010, forthcoming). However, overall V won few concessions and had to accept low-inflation targets, a budget surplus, and the Central bank's independence for EMU negotiations (*Socialism Today*, 01.11.1998). Schyman saw this as a basis for future negotiations but support for SAP's austere budget triggered huge pressures from traditionalists to break co-operation. SAP also cut child benefit to reduce the budget deficit worsening the situation. Reformers including Lönnroth were prepared to support this but SAP abandoned V in 1995 for the Centre Party.

SAP's dominance made it harder for V to adopt a social democratic platform than was the case for Communist parties in CEE. However, as Arter (2002, p. 3) argues, SAP's neo-liberalisation and enthusiasm for European integration presented opportunities for 'social democratisation'. SAP's cuts in public services caused disaffection at a time of economic crisis, long-term unemployment and when out-migration was devastating some regions. V's pragmatic leaders shifted appeals to the right to fill the space made available, promoting traditional 'social democratic policies' from the 1970s. Opposition to the EU was no longer based on it being a 'capitalist plot' but as a threat to the welfare state. V sought to protect this protecting against neo-liberalism (see Dunphy, 2004). It became the only party explicitly to defend the Swedish welfare model (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). The parliamentary leadership ran the 1998 election campaign on increased corporate taxes, redistribution of wealth, protection of workers' rights, full-employment, expansions in public services and welfare provision.

Being in opposition freed V from SAP's unpopular policies and boosted its appeal (Arter 2002, p. 12). It allowed Schyman to be more critical of SAP than her predecessors. As intended, V attracted swathes of disgruntled SAP supporters, trade unionists and white-collar workers, who saw it as the 'old social democrats' (see Moller, 1998). A third of V's new voters came from SAP and most of them opposed EU membership (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming; Arter, 2002). This strategy combined with Schyman's broad appeal and excellent communication skills enabled V to win twelve per cent of the vote in 1998, almost doubling its number of MPs to 43, making it Sweden's third largest party. It also expanded rapidly across local councils. The growth of the parliamentary group increased the resources at the reformers' disposal

and introduced new allies into the elite. Moderation and growth delivered unprecedented acceptance from SAP which broke tradition by bringing V into more municipal executives. Schyman secured pioneering institutionalised relations and binding agreements with SAP (and the Greens) in exchange for V's parliamentary support in 1998 and 2002 – which scholars have termed 'Contract Parliamentarism' (Bale and Bergman, 2006a, 2006b).

Most of the reformers' policy changes took place in dealing with SAP rather than in party programmes. Institutionalised negotiations expanded the reformists' autonomy from the board. Reformist parliamentarians and Executive Committee members, Lönnroth, Bäckström and Hans Andersson gained key positions in dealing with SAP. The negotiators were given freedom to make decisions quickly and flexibly. The parliamentarians' increased number of employees conducting research resulted in a growing knowledge gap with the Board's part-time members, who deferred to their expertise and inside knowledge of negotiations. As the parliamentary group negotiated with SAP they drifted further rightwards. Gaining acceptance from SAP increasingly took precedence over V's programmatic goals or activism.

Parliamentarisation could not sustain all the reforms made by the parliamentary leadership. The lack of centralisation returned to haunt the Schyman leadership, highlighting the relevance of the ideas in Grzymała-Busse's framework to WECs. The reformers lacked influence in key positions. In 1993 congress elected a traditionalist majority to the Board. The reformists grew stronger there in 1996 as they gained influence in candidate committees. Reformers were also strengthened by increasing overlap between members of the Board and the parliamentary group. However, even though parliamentarians made up almost half the Board, the reformist leadership always lacked a solid majority there. While hard-line employees from central office were rarely Board members it was also uncommon for those whose jobs depended on the parliamentary leadership to enter the Board. Instead, Board members usually worked outside the party making them relatively independent. Others were often in locally elected office, or were important local party officials.

V won some concessions from SAP in 1998 and more in 2002, including an advisory role in important ministries and regular meetings with SAP's leaders (Christiansen

and Damgaard 2008, p. 57). However, accepting SAP's spending limits, privatisations and moves towards European integration proved traumatic (Dunphy 2004, p. 153). The leadership's strategy placed immense strains on V. It struggled to reconcile different electorates; socialism with social democracy; working-class labourism with New Left ecology; and a policy seeking mid-level elite with office-seeking (Koß 2010 – forthcoming). Opposition within the Board grew and parliamentary discipline was strained as traditionalist MPs criticised the privatisation of telecoms and abstained from votes. Expansion in local councils added to tensions as pragmatic councillors were increasingly brought into red-green municipal coalitions and they made painful compromises on closing hospitals and public sector job cuts (*Socialism Today*, 01.11.98). The councillors regularly clashed with traditionalist activists unconvinced of the benefits from governing and dissent became paralysing.

The reformers' parliamentary priorities distracted them from engaging with the growing internal opposition. The leadership was soon constrained as the Board increasingly blocked their plans. It rejected Lönnroth's proposal to demand posts in government in 1998 and voted down Schyman's attempts to control V's communications. While the media traditionally chose who they would speak with, she proposed the parliamentary leadership handpicked reformist parliamentarians, Board members and parliamentary secretaries for a brochure presenting a young leadership with responsibilities for specific policy areas. This aimed to place reformists including future Member of the European Parliament Jonas Sjöstedt in the media while side-tracking traditionalists. Schyman initially listened to the Board more than Werner had done. However, she tired of resistance and instead of leading discussion grew disinterested in Board meetings. Likewise, she had split her time between V's central and parliamentary offices but frustrated with traditionalists at central office she stopped consulting it. Eventually, Schyman spent little time on internal issues or even parliamentary negotiations, focusing on making public appearances.

Schyman's speeches did little to resolve the growing divisions within Vänsterpartiet. Calls for refraining from excessive demands and briefing against traditionalists were ignored. Failure to streamline or reign in V's independent Youth League (Ung

Vänsterr) meant that reformists lost control of elite advancement and policy making. In the early 1990s, reformists led the Youth League, but after a period of infighting, it radicalised and elected Jenny Lindahl as Chair and Kalle Larsson as Organisational Secretary who introduced a traditionalist programme in 1996. In contrast to Vänsterpartiet's direction, it reasserted radical concepts, extra-parliamentary activism and differences from SAP. It argued that government should not ride roughshod over Vänsterpartiet's anti-systemic, anti-establishment commitments. The Youth League's leaders claimed not to interfere in V's affairs but this became a hollow commitment and serious tensions emerged between the organisations.

In Grzymała-Busse's terms of 'transferrable skills' the Youth Leaguers were highly equipped to radicalise Vänsterpartiet when its support began to shrink. Its leaders became experienced activists, having built up the Youth League, written documents, built a central organisation and run campaigns. These activists were better trained than most of V's mid-level elite. The Youth Leaguers shared a common traditionalist perspective, having worked in programme and statute committees. They had run education courses and published books on campaigning, coalition-building, making congress motions and institutional changes; internal democratic procedures; and communication skills. The Youth Leaguers followed a conception of democratic centralism in which a strong organisation strictly follows democratically made decisions. They practiced a delegate/congress model similar to V's and every member received publications on internal democracy. The Youth League's leaders had also defended their organisation against anarchist groups looking to downgrade its formal structures. These factors made them sensitive to the growing gap between V's activists/formal policy commitments and the leadership. They believed Schyman's use of the media contravened democratic decision making and that her celebrity status was detached from the disadvantaged groups that V represents.

Procedures ensured that V's candidates' committees work at arm's length from the leadership. In the mid-1990s they were controlled by reformers and systematically blocked the advancement of accomplished Youth Leaguers, promoting non-members from NGOs instead. The parliamentary leadership also gave few opportunities to the Youth Leaguers. Frustrated, the Youth League's leaders encouraged members to stay and built up their organisation while protesting against the situation. The lack of

centralised control allowed them to change the composition and priorities of the candidates' committees. From 2000–09 they gave little room to reformist, right-wing candidates. Excluding the Youth Leaguers meant that Vänsterpartiet failed to internalise their ideas or blunt their radicalism by burdening them with responsibility. Instead, V shut them out until they had an informal network strong enough to take control.

The Youth Leaguers were strategically minded about gaining influence in powerful positions in the Board, Programme Commission, local selection committees for parliamentary candidates and as congress delegates. In the late-1990s a cohort of Youth Leaguers advanced with over 25 leading Youth Leaguers winning national positions in V including Kalle Larsson and Jenny Lindahl, and many more taking mid-level roles. The Youth Leaguers drew on their training to engineer a leftwards shift by connecting with V's dissatisfied traditionalist activists at party meetings. While the Youth Leaguers helped one another (and traditionalists) gain important positions, the reformists' alliances were looser. The traditionalists began removing reformers from the Board including Bäckström (leader of V's parliamentary group). He and Lönnroth were also almost de-selected from the parliamentary group at district meetings. Several reformers withdrew from prominent roles and congresses being frustrated by increasing glamorisation of the Soviet Union.

Prominent Youth Leaguers including Jenny Lindahl and Ali Esbati advanced to the Programme Commission deepening the gap between it and the parliamentary group. Esbati played a leading role in radicalising V's economic policies setting out a Socialist vision very different from modern Swedish capitalism. Programmes became more detailed to hold the leadership to account and attached more conditions on co-operation with SAP through rejecting privatisations, welfare cuts and reductions in union rights. Convention meant that parliamentarians rarely sat on the Programme Commission, limiting the reformer's influence there.

Congresses were always unreliable for the leadership. In 1994 hundreds of alternative/critical motions and debates altered the leadership's proposals. Schyman was successful in promoting the feminisation of V's programme making it Sweden's first feminist party at the 1996 congress (V 1997, 1996). However, several of her

motions were rejected by traditionalists, as were ten motions made by Lönnroth aiming to broaden appeal by rejecting scientific-socialism/Marxism, promoting syndicalism and strengthening liberal freedoms. The leadership was more successful at the 1998 Congress, boosted by rising opinion polls and Schyman's triumphant return from alcoholism but delegates still caused mayhem by criticising the centralisation of election campaigning. Despite Schyman's attempts to moderate the mid-level elite, they remained considerably more radical than the parliamentary leadership.

The 2000 Congress was a major turning point when Youth Leaguers led a majority of traditionalist delegates to reject the leadership's general strategy. It dismissed a proposed pre-electoral programme with SAP, poured scorn on the leadership's aspirations for government, committed to abolishing spending ceilings and passed motions criticising agreements with SAP on privatisations in telecoms and healthcare. Some members of the leadership criticised the final 2000 programme for being too detailed, strategically naïve, a slide back to Communism and an electoral liability. But they could not postpone it. Meanwhile, Schyman talked down the programme's significance in interviews, portraying it as a discussion document rather than V's blueprint for office. Most embarrassing for the leadership was Congress's reaction to Schyman's speech which denounced Communism and argued that Communists had no place within V. The speech drew silence from shocked delegates and Schyman was usurped by Jenny Lindahl, whose fiery traditionalist speech received a jubilant standing ovation. Schyman was V's first leader to denounce Communism but the radical mid-level elite roundly rejected her vision.

Schyman's attempt to break with Communism was easily countered. Communist members rebelled, presenting a petition in *Flamman* for the right to call themselves Communist. Subsequently, the leadership pursued a tolerant line, fearing a split. At the 2002 congress Youth Leaguers campaigned to reassert Communism as part of V's identity, unravelling Schyman's efforts. Indeed, Youth Leaguers continue to adhere to Communism (Fraurud, 2004). The reformers contemplated introducing a regional system for electing congress delegates to displace traditionalists, but did not support the idea of empowering all members at congresses. They were left to lament that a small number activists had radicalised Vänsterpartiet at its congresses.

Since, 2000 reformists have overwhelmingly lost every congress. The Programme Commission strengthened commitments to public ownership and congress approved its motions to limit market forces in energy and healthcare. This led commentators in the media to conclude that Vänsterpartiet wanted to renationalise industries, sabotaging the leadership's quest for moderation and its broad appeal. The 2002 Congress also committed to an expensive pensions system and major expansions in public services and V's 2002 manifesto emphasised class conflict. The leadership criticised – to little effect – the radicalisation as being irresponsible. Schyman wrote joint newspaper articles on raising social security payments with SAP Prime Minister Göran Persson (Arter 2002, p. 13). However, SAP refused to give V a cabinet position because it remained too radical, too unreliable and its foreign policy (Euro-scepticism and anti-NATO stances, which reformers were willing to compromise on) made it unacceptable (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming).

The Youth Leaguers had another weapon. The paper *Flamman* re-affiliated with V in 1990 when several Communists returned from the APK. *Flamman* needed assistance being in debt and understaffed and Youth Leaguers including Larsson and Aron Etzler entered its editorial board. The Youth Leaguers had been trained to build institutions, lacked a publishing house and aimed to forge a left-wing alternative having criticised the corporate ownership of the media. The reformist leadership did not believe V needed to own paper(s) and prioritised coverage in mainstream outlets so as to reach a broader audience. It did little to prevent *Flamman* falling into disarray, being hesitant to support a paper historically connected to Stalinism and having experienced financial crises with *Ny Dag*. The leadership failed to streamline by closing *Flamman* or to block the Youth League's actions. *Flamman* again became a powerful mouthpiece to criticise reform.

Traditionalist Board members were shocked that Schyman broke convention by not sending her 2000 Congress speech to the Board and Executive Committee for scrutiny. Whilst the Board accepted the 2002 'contract' with SAP, traditionalists won a large majority in the Board at the 2002 congress. When opinion polls fell the leadership became vulnerable in Board meetings which increasingly blocked left-libertarian proposals and compromises with SAP, including policies on reforming the

welfare state through private insurance. The parliamentary group remained a stronghold for reformers but their work became heavily scrutinised. The parliamentary leadership's media-led strategy of talking down or ignoring unwanted policies was unsustainable given V's democratic culture and Board meetings became an attempt to bind Schyman to radical policy commitments. As Jonas Sjöstedt (Interview, 18.06.08) puts it: 'Compare it to two sides of the brain one being rational, one more irrational, when those two sides work together it is brilliant but when they do not co-ordinate it becomes chaos.'

Schyman continued her own initiatives regardless but lost the support of the Board as centrists backed the traditionalists. Ultimately a tax-scandal forced Schyman's resignation before things came to a head (Widfelt 2004, p. 1148). By this point V had fallen to six and a half per cent in the polls (*The Local*, 08.12.2004). The reformists could not direct Schyman's succession. As Vice-Chair, Lönnroth should have taken charge but he was ill. Instead, two temporary 'Presidents', the leftist Ulla Hoffman, who was a critic of Schyman and in favour of breaking co-operation with SAP in 1995, and centrist Ingrid Burman were chosen by the candidates' committee. Hoffman, like many parliamentarians, had become pragmatic in elected office. She continued co-operation with SAP but took a harder line, threatening to break co-operation if SAP did not reverse cuts in sick-leave pay, which Hoffman promised to restore in 1998 after fierce criticism from V's local chairmen. She got her concession. Having changed party programmes and elite advancement processes, the traditionalists tried to elect one of their own, Lars Ohly, as Chair. Reformists lacked a credible candidate given that Sjöstedt left the Board when centrists and traditionalists in central office campaigned against him, in a bitter period of infighting for the temporary leadership.

The reformers finally saw a need for organisational centralisation to safeguard reform. Before the 2004 Congress, prominent reformers including Karin Svensson-Smith and Dan Gahnström formed a left-libertarian think-tank *Vägval Vänster* (VV) with Lönnroth becoming its Chair. VV was a belated effort to counter a lack of representation in the Board by the reformist elite including twelve MPs. This time they were writing petitions but VV could not compete with the traditionalists and gained few members. The reformers were also ideologically fragmented. Schyman

did not join VV and instead started a new party 'Feminist Initiative'. V's convention of not having formalised factions meant leading reformers saw operating a separate organisation within V as undemocratic and subsequently did not join VV.

Leading members of VV wrote a secret strategy document for the 2004 Congress called 'Plan B'. This identified power centres to influence, suggested merging the central and parliamentary offices and planned media briefings to attack the traditionalist leadership's radicalism (*Flamman*, 03.04.04). Plan B was leaked and published in *Flamman*. The Board, Congress and traditionalists criticised VV for dangerous factionalism and Werner compared them to the APK (*Flamman*, 11.03.04, 03.06.04, 04.11.04). V's culture of democratic debate meant the traditionalist leadership could do little to curtail the reformers' devastating media criticisms. Although Hoffman favoured expelling those involved and leading traditionalists hinted at this they did were not worried about appearing authoritarian. Hoffman temporarily left the Board in protest. However, the game was up and many reformers left before the Congress began. Svensson-Smith and Gahnström subsequently joined the Greens. The reformers could do little as Ohly was elected, garnering 195 of the 225 delegate votes (Ersson 2008, p. 7). Schyman struggled to rid V of Communist baggage but was therefore ultimately succeeded by a Communist.

4.5 Lars Ohly's leadership: democratisation and parliamentarisation

Ohly was narrowly recruited from the Youth League. He was a leading traditionalist. Whereas Schyman deflected her past as a youthful adventure and Hoffman avoided calling herself Communist, Ohly accepted his Communism (Josefsson, 2004a). It was not long before the media seized on his background and Communism in TV programmes including *Uppdrag Granskning* (September 2004). Ohly was attacked for portraying himself as a defender of human rights while previously defending regimes in CEE and for not apologising to relatives of Swedish Communists executed in the Soviet Union (Josefsson 2004a, 2004b, *The Local*, 08.12.2004). This presented the image that V had failed to break with Communism, competitors argued that Communists had seized back power and the radical tone of the 2004 Congress was interpreted as evidence that the party opposed co-operation with SAP (Josefsson, 2004a). So, having been forced on to the defensive, Ohly changed track and stated that he was no longer Communist (Widfelt 2005, p. 1199).

Ohly's victory was part of a leftwards shift. His support came from a coalition of traditionalists, Youth Leaguers, central office and centrist elites. The traditionalists (temporarily) reaped the spoils of victory. On becoming leader, Ohly heavily criticised the libertarian-reformists and Communists were no longer denounced. Ohly initially asserted that he did not strive for ministerial office (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). Youth Leaguers and traditionalist functionaries with little experience of negotiating with outside groups and institutions continued to advance. Leading reformers left parliament and V's MPs moved closer to the traditionalist-led majority in the board. The right-wing grew weak, becoming largely absent from congresses while fewer academics or outsiders joined the Programme Commission. Lönnroth stayed but his alternative left-liberal draft programmes were roundly rejected by the Commission and Congresses.

V's campaigns radicalised, becoming increasingly Marxist and much more theoretical. Commitments to withdraw from the EU and to socialise the banks were strengthened at the 2004 Congress (Eriksson, 2004). Party programmes became more anti-capitalist, emphasising revolutionary, scientific-socialism (V, 2008, 2004). Reformers including Bäckström, were horrified when new economic policies committed to large expansions of the public sector, undoing the previous decade's moderation in parliament (Jonsson, 2005). This included Ohly's 2006 pledge to expand the public sector by 200,000 jobs, which became a major campaign theme. The radicalisation made inclusion in government unthinkable before the 2006 election (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). In 2008 V asked for tax increases of €5.4B (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming) and the congress formed a working group on reversing privatisations. Traditionalists have also marginalised feminism and environmentalism with their socialist policies. Hoffman led feminists in a rearguard action at the 2006 Congress to stop traditionalists placing class above gender. However, the Board scrapped V's women's committee made from district representatives, making itself responsible for feminism, partially weakening feminism's role within V.

The Youth Leaguers made inroads to changing V's tactics by strengthening extra-parliamentary activism, drawing inspiration from the Dutch Socialist Party (SP). Larsson headed an organisational committee emphasising the need for increased

contact with voters on the streets, knocking on doors, working on a local level and reconnecting the leadership with district organisations. *Flamman* also reported on the SP's stunning electoral success and activism. V trialled door-knocking in eleven local branches to speak with people about local concerns and worked with the homeless in Stockholm. The leadership views this as a success and V's new 'Information Plan' is heavily influenced by the SP. While campaign funding tripled in the 1990s, state funding declined following electoral losses (2002 and 2006) providing less wherewithal for employing outside PR experts. Instead campaigns are now designed in house by traditionalists and Youth Leaguers, becoming more ideological, theoretical and decentralised with greater local input to campaign material.

V's support role proved electorally damaging in 2006, despite its programmatic radicalisation (Koß, 2010 – forthcoming). Traditionalists were dumfounded by losses at the 2006 election, with SAP also losing support as disaffected SAP voters broke tradition and went to the right. V returned to opposition and lost positions in local government. Decline continued in opposition, as V fell below the four per cent parliamentary threshold in polls (*The Local*, 11.06.07) and it lost support at the 2009 election to the European Parliament. Ohly is an effective debater but Schyman's proficiency with the media was hard to replace. The losses prompted reformers to criticise the lack of policy innovation and the narrowing of appeals to protests against neo-liberalism and global capitalism. The lack of change is not surprising given that many elites were recruited in an insular fashion and have little experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions. Ohly's role as Party Secretary was focused on organisational rather than programmatic issues and the Youth Leaguers' backgrounds drew them to traditionalist ideology. The elite had few new ideas from which to broaden appeal.

The conventional wisdom portrays Ohly as extremist, but, as Koß (2010 – forthcoming) notes, Ohly's oscillating appeals have caused confusion. Grzymała-Busse's framework helps explain this by drawing attention to how Ohly is more pragmatic than first meets the eye. This was recognised by the Schyman leadership which included him in a working-group that published 'New Times, New Left', an attempt to break with Communism and broaden the party's appeal in 1993 and then made him Party Secretary. The leadership saw that Ohly recognised the need for

painful changes and that his traditionalist identity helped sell reform to the rank and file. His pragmatism enabled him to combine loyalty to Schyman, working with SAP and radical internal appeals popular with traditionalists. Ohly remains proud of the funding for the welfare state that V's support role delivered and recognises budget deficits and SAP's larger size made compromises unavoidable. He only sees two of V's compromises as mistakes – the weakening of taxes on inheritance and privatising telecoms (Ohly Interview). The reformists did not fear that Ohly would break co-operation with SAP but believed his policies would be electorally unsuccessful and that realistic proposals would deliver more concessions.

Like many traditionalists, Ohly opposed co-operation with SAP in the early 1990s, but moderated during his time in parliament. He encountered the realities of elected office, became open to compromise and saw the advantages of having ministers. Likewise, leading traditionalists and Youth Leaguers, elected to the parliamentary group and Executive Committee out of opposition to Schyman, changed through their responsible roles in parliamentary committees/institutionalised negotiations with SAP. By 2006 many favoured entering government. V's locally elected politicians also maintained pressure for participation in government, having become confident with municipal coalitions under Schyman and they remain more flexible than the mid-level elite. The traditionalists encountered similar pressures to earlier reformers once they controlled Vänsterpartiet. They now aim to break Vänsterpartiet's captive role. Internal factors meant that V's leaders became more pragmatic and better positioned to respond to exogenous shocks.

In response to V's electoral decline, Ohly made the pioneering commitment to entering government (Widflet 2006, p. 1271; Bale and Blomgren, 2008, p. 101). V's pragmatic, centrist MPs (who remained stronger than traditionalists in the parliamentary group), and traditionalists who had grown pragmatic in parliament led the shift in strategy which gained momentum after the 2006 election loss. The 2008 Congress supported this, something Schyman could not deliver. While the rank and file now accept participation in municipal government they remain sceptical about the concessions needed at the national level. Ohly is better placed than Schyman to sell co-operation with SAP to them but this remains his biggest challenge. The leadership's engagement with V's democratic structures helped position it for

government. The traditionalists were appeased by Congress's decision to refuse a pre-election agreement with SAP to retain ideological distinctiveness. In their view this would provide fewer reasons to vote for V, weakening its influence on SAP. Leading traditionalists thought a pre-electoral agreement would never be possible.

Ohly's plans for negotiating after the 2010 election were fractured when SAP leader Mona Sahlin called for talks in autumn 2008 on a pre-election agreement. The right-wing parties' successful pre-election coalition agreement in 2006 prompted SAP to reassess its hesitancy to bringing V (and the Greens) into government. V's leaders frustrated their allies by refusing to commit to a budget surplus, spending-ceilings or entering pre-electoral agreements and talks collapsed (*The Local*, 08.10.08). Reformers were dismayed, having craved such acceptance during the 1990s. SAP threatened to exclude V from government if it did not return to talks and make the necessary concessions by Christmas 2008. Vänsterpartiet's centrist and increasingly pragmatic (former traditionalist) parliamentarians supported the pre-electoral agreement but this was blocked by the Board's traditionalist led majority.

Ohly and the increasingly pragmatic leadership had experience of carrying out prior-reforms and faced exogenous shocks but did not centralise as Grzymala-Busse found elites with such experiences had done in CEE. Instead, they looked inwards, to ensure that radical socialist policies produced by V's internal structures were respected. Attempts to quantitatively measure internal democracy in Swedish parties still show V as the most internally democratic (Bäck 2008, p. 81). However, greater overlap had unintentionally developed between the Board and parliamentary group (nine of the twenty Board members being MPs), further weakening the Board's authority. The pragmatic parliamentarians eventually won support from centrist Board members. After stalling as long as possible, V's leaders broke their commitments and made the necessary compromises (*The Local*, 07.12.08). Despite increased commitment to internal democracy and radical socialism, in practice Vänsterpartiet's gradual parliamentarisation and social democratisation continue – under narrowly recruited elites seeking to capitalise on Vänsterpartiet's first realistic chance of governing. Ohly's trade unionist background has also helped to strengthen co-operation with the social democratic unions.

The pragmatists in the leadership attempted to water down some radical policies at the 2008 Congress with office- and vote-seeking in mind. The leadership aimed to signal that it was open to compromise and attempted to replace V's widely-criticised commitment to a six-hour working day with one of 'lowering working-hours'. However, mid-level traditionalists resisted this and the commitment remained a long-term goal, alongside the immediate goal of shorter working-hours. The leadership also criticised the Cuban government over issues of democracy and opposed traditionalist congress motions praising Cuban politics. Ohly works through V's internal democratic structures more than Schyman had done but the majority of radical mid-level elites continue to constrain the leadership and dominate congresses. The leadership made deliberately vague motions at the 2008 Congress to avoid divisions and debate continues about V's Communist affiliations. Failure at the 2009 election to the European Parliament prompted Ohly to speak of reconsidering V's Euroscepticism. Withdrawal from the EU may be the next sacred cow to be sacrificed. It is unlikely V would accept a federal Europe but more moderate opposition, providing an alternative vision of EU integration is being formulated to remove an excuse for excluding V from government. This is likely to encounter stern resistance.

Traditionalists were weakened further by the orthodox figurehead Camilla Sköld Jansson's resignation as Vice-Chair, after she became marginalised in the Executive Committee. The traditionalists' majority in the Board was not stable and they lost influence in candidates committees. This signals that V is choosing a centrist, pragmatic, socialist direction between the extreme left-libertarians and traditionalists. In 2009, the leadership and candidates committees promoted centrists and initiated a rapprochement with reformers, including Jonas Sjöstedt, placing them on lists for the 2010 parliamentary election. Several former traditionalists welcomed this realising that once they gained power, they struggled to use it and needed practical politics to gain credibility and broader appeal. This shift in elite advancement will bring greater realism and experience if V enters government.

Some traditionalists feel secure now V has more detailed socialist policies and the leadership are more trusted to promote V's programmes. Their radical credentials help activists accept major compromises, making it possible to combine radical

policies with office-seeking. As reformers argue, Ohly's leadership is 'an alibi for going to the right' (Tännsjö Interview, 15.08.07). Ohly attempts to drive a harder bargain than Schyman and hopes SAP's agenda will be more socialist than liberal. Some things stand in Ohly's favour; he is more involved in negotiations and has better personal relations with SAP's leaders than Schyman. However, V is smaller than in 1998 and major differences from previous negotiations are unlikely. V is now formally left-socialist rather than left-libertarian but in parliament it finds little alternative to social democracy.

Traditionalists did not strengthen controls over V's parliamentarians, believing that congress decisions would gain more respect under the new leadership. However, the momentous changes in 2008 suggest this is wishful thinking. Ohly is more prepared to admit that agreements with SAP are not V's 'preferred policies' but necessary compromises. Whether this can sustain support for painful compromises remains to be seen. V's internal democratic procedures provide plenty of opportunities for traditionalist mid-level elites to unravel the contradictions in Ohly's leadership. Support from traditionalist mid-level elites may make Ohly a hostage to fortune.

4.6 Conclusion

Scholars have noted V's parliamentarians sought self-preservation through social democratising in a similar fashion to some Communist parties in CEE. They thought that organisational issues were involved, but struggled to explain how or why (Arter, 2002). Applying Grzymala-Busse's framework fills this gap, shedding light on the ways in which elite advancement and changes in distribution of power affected V's social democratisation but left it unable to fully break with Communism.

This chapter analysed four stages in V's development. It showed that applying Grzymala-Busse's framework captures how reformist elites drew on wider experiences for inspiration in attempting to break with Communism (or key aspects of it) in response to exogenous shocks. Hermansson did this to pursue a form of left socialism with broader appeal and Eurocommunism. Schyman attempted to finish the job. Under Werner reformist elites with experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions tried their best to promote reforms in response to Cold War controversies and turmoil in CEE in the 1980s. Flexible recruitment and elite

advancement practices played the central role in shaping reform and provided important ideas for new policies. Elected officials were exposed to exogenous shocks more than functionaries.

Conversely, those elites lacking experience in negotiation with outside groups and institutions and those who had not been 'horizontally advanced' usually resisted reform. However, Ohly's leadership shows how even narrowly recruited Communists from the Youth League have ended up pursuing policies that converge with social democracy because of the affects of elected office. Without rigid democratic centralism, Communist Parliamentarians struggled to avoid moderation. This analysis of V supports Grzymała-Busse's idea that roles involving negotiation with outside organisations blunt radicalism. As Grzymała-Busse suggests, even capable reformers can be stumped by traditionalist mid-level elites empowered by the removal of democratic centralism (or within existing democratic structures). Analysis supports the idea that radical mid-level elites will try to sabotage reform in the absence of organisational centralisation.

Democratisation was used in response to exogenous shocks by Hermansson and Schyman to fuel reform. Following electoral defeat in the 1960s Hermansson used his role to initiate democratisation to empower reformers within the party with experience at negotiating with outsiders. Increasingly flexible elite advancement practices allowed them and newcomers attracted by Hermansson's less dogmatic appeals, to rise to the leadership. These processes brought about additional reforms to party programmes. However, this attempt at reform empowered mid-level elites who eventually expressed fierce opposition to reform and constrained it. Hermansson found it increasingly hard to carry out reforms and was confronted by neo-Leninists and orthodox Communists. Under Lars Werner internal democratic structures meant that hardliners and Leninists (including elites and mid-level elites) were able to block most reforms.

Schyman's attempts to further democratise the party in the 1990s aimed to dethrone traditionalists and radical mid-level elites entrenched within the party apparatus. This had some success but eventually radical mid-level elites were able to mobilise within V's democratic internal structures to oppose her reforms and gain control of the party.

Young Communists began to contest the model of democracy that Schyman had in mind preferring strict lines of accountability rather than loose networks, open party meetings and the increasing power of the parliamentary group. The Youth League set out to resurrect the party's formal organisational structures and emphasised the supremacy of party congresses as well as the primary role of party activists and congress delegates in decision-making.

Democratisation, parliamentarisation and media-led strategies helped the leadership to make major inroads to reform but were insufficient to fully break with Communism. Schyman's attempts to do this remain incomplete. However, reforms were not entirely undone by the 'democratic backlashes' they encountered. Hermansson established democratic credibility and Schyman swapped V's 'blackmail potential' for real 'coalition potential' (Arter 2002, p. 13). V has not fully broken with Communism, but Communist rhetoric has little role in party programmes these days and the party has largely consolidated broadly based socialist and feminist perspectives in its appeals. Moreover, Schyman's efforts put the issue of government firmly on the agenda. For Ohly, V's democratic structures provide an unstable path to seeking office. Thus far, his radical background and appeals have meant that many traditionalists have trusted him to push as far as possible in winning concessions from SAP. It remains unclear how far V can compromise to enter government for the first time. However it looks increasingly possible that Ohly can pull it off.

Chapter 5

The Irish Workers' Party and Democratic Left – the Democratisers

5.1 Introduction

Following the collapse of state-socialism, the leaders of the Irish Workers' Party (WP) struggled to reform their party. By democratising the WP they managed to carry out significant programmatic reforms, had almost entirely rejected Communism and positioned the party as a democratic socialist party. However, they grew frustrated with the pace of change and left the party before they had managed to fully rid it of Marxism-Leninism and connections with paramilitarism. The history of the WP supports Anna Grzymała-Busse's argument that democratisation is an unsteady path to reform but shows that it was still a viable strategy to breaking with Communism. This almost worked as the reformists won on most issues, were firmly in charge of the party and almost managed to transform it. They eventually left the WP to preserve their own credibility rather than because they were forced out. The reasons for their ultimate failure to transform the WP were very different from the Czech KSČM where orthodox mid-level elites seized control.

This chapter shows that Grzymała-Busse's findings in CEE help to explain the attempts for reform in the WP. Most reformists saw the need for reform through their experiences in negotiating with groups and institutions outside of the WP, professional backgrounds or because they were advanced 'horizontally' to elite positions. These factors played a key role in shaping calls for ideological transformation. Reformist elites in the WP had a moderate level of experience in carrying out prior reforms and broadening appeal, having played significant roles in the WP's genesis following a split in the republican movement in during the 1960s. This chapter, however, casts doubt on an understanding of WECPs based on Grzymała-Busse's argument that elites with professional backgrounds and experience in implementing reforms will be predisposed to organisational centralisation. Furthermore, it questions the idea that elites experienced in negotiation with groups outside the party would seek to reposition themselves as social democrats in 1989.

The WP was born as the leadership of the republican paramilitary organisation the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its political party Sinn Féin embraced Marxism.

With the IRA's 'Border Campaign' failing to muster public support in the mid-1960s, a new generation of republican leaders, promoted by Chief of Staff Cathal Goulding, turned to Marxism as a way to promote republican objectives (Dunphy 1997, p. 118). This triggered a violent split between their 'Official' IRA (OIRA) and Official Sinn Féin (OSF) and rival 'Provisional' organisations in 1969–70 (Hanley and Millar 2009, p. 149). The Officials emphasised forging unity between workers in both nationalist/Catholic and unionist/Protestant communities to overthrow capitalism. They initially saw a need for an armed Marxist liberation movement but increasingly argued that paramilitarism against British rule in Northern Ireland divided the working classes and questioned the merits of abstaining from parliaments in Dublin, Belfast and London. Irish unity became a long term goal that would be achieved through a revolution by the working classes. In contrast, the provisionals prioritised achieving a united Ireland through armed struggle against the British state. The leadership subsequently changed OSF's name to Sinn Féin the Workers' Party (SFWP) in 1977 and the Workers' Party in 1982.

The WP's republican origins make it different from other WECPs. Unlike the smaller and older Communist Party of Ireland it did not overtly call itself Communist or have historical links to the Comintern, but its leaders did indeed accept the Soviet model and Marxism-Leninism (Bell 1998, p. 135). The WP allied with the Soviet Union, accepted its funds and sought to become Moscow's favourite party in Ireland, despite reservations about Soviet support for the Provisional IRA (Dunphy 1992, p. 26). Unlike most WECPs the WP also enjoyed modest electoral growth in the 1980s (see Table 5.1). It peaked by winning seven seats in the Dáil Éireann, with five per cent of the vote and one seat in the European Parliament in 1989 (Hanley 2009, p. 1). Nevertheless, it faced pressure to reform itself from Cold War controversies, the demise of Communism in CEE as well as its failure to expand beyond 2,000 members (see Table 5.2) and from losing support in the 1991 local election amidst renewed allegations of connections to the Official IRA.

Table 5.1: Electoral results of OSF, SFWP and WP 1973–1989 in parliamentary elections (in the Republic of Ireland)

Year	1973	1977	1981	1982 Feb	1982 Nov	1987	1989
Vote (per cent)	1.1	1.7	1.7	2.2	3.3	3.7	5
Seats	0	0	1	3	2	4	7

(Dunphy, 1998, 1992; Gillan 1997; Holmes, 1994; Mackie and Rose, 1974).

This chapter has three main sections. The first traces the development of the WP from the time it split from the republican movement. It shows that a highly centralised organisation and latter the discipline of democratic centralism enabled the leadership to force through painful policy changes. The second section outlines how expansion in the 1980s meant that new members and parliamentarisation shaped the formation of a reformist-wing. It also shows that democratisation, coupled with a shift of power to its parliamentarians (*Teachta Dála*) (TDs) in the Dáil, proved insufficient to entirely overcome resistance to reform and to break with paramilitarism. As a result, party President Proinsias De Rossa led frustrated reformists to split from the WP to form a new radical left party, the Democratic Left (DL).

A final section demonstrates that despite possessing prior experience in reform, DL's elite avoided centralising. Grzymała-Busse argued that Communist successor parties in CEE could best regenerate themselves by rapidly pursuing mainstream politics and office-seeking after 1989. Analysis of DL shows that WECPs' post-Communist successor parties managed to do this by gradually accepting social democracy. This occurred as DL participated in government in 1994–97. This chapter also provides evidence with which we might doubt whether prioritising office-seeking and social democratisation were necessarily beneficial for post-Communist successor parties. DL shows that these could be a poisoned chalice. Having become de-radicalised it was soon assimilated into the social democratic Labour Party.

Table 5.2 Membership figures for SFWP and WP

Year	1980	1991
Members	2000	1000

(Hanley, 2009; Dunphy, 1997).

5.2 Building a vanguard party through centralism

Historically the IRA's army council had tightly controlled Sinn Féin. The dominance of paramilitary structures over political ones continued in SFWP and the WP. OIRA leaders, including Cathal Goulding, were highly influential behind the scenes in the parties even if they rarely attended formal meetings (Dunphy Interview, 25.08.08). However, during the 1980s the role of the Official IRA was reduced and its existence was publicly denied as the WP pursued parliamentary politics. It used this as a platform through which it could promote revolutionary class consciousness (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 93). The OIRA continued to run drinking clubs and funded the WP through protection rackets and bank robberies (Dunphy 1997, p. 129). It kept weapons for protection from unionists and their provisional rivals, even after declaring a ceasefire in 1972 (Swan 2008, p. 356). Irish businesses wanting licences to trade with the Soviet Union also had to go through a company managed by elites called Repsol and commission from this provided the party with large sums of money (Dunphy Interview, 25.08.08).

OSF's strict command and control structures made it easy for its leaders to impose reforms. In 1974 the OSF Vice-President Seamus Costello was expelled after questioning the abandonment of militarism and rejecting orthodox Communism. The leadership were not confident in producing ideology or policy documents but commissioned Stalinist intellectuals from OSF's Research Section including journalist Eoghan Harris and industrial activist Eamon Smullen to perform this role (Patterson 1989, p. 152). Elites advanced from the Research Section played an unaccountable role in shaping ideology, working as a 'vanguard within a vanguard', spearheading reforms and rooting out opposition (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 95). In the 1970s the Research Section purged the WP of 'bourgeois' nationalism, Eurocommunism and Trotskyism because they risked diminishing the revolutionary role of the industrial working class (Hanley and Miller 2009, p. 305).

A Research Section document called the 'Irish Industrial Revolution' (IIR) (1976), promoted transition from a military structure to a class conscious, revolutionary party. It established allegiance with the international Communist movement as well as a highly statist economic vision, abandoned republicanism and tempered the role of the OIRA (Dunphy 1997, p. 130). The IIR blamed the underdevelopment of the Irish

economy on the Irish bourgeoisie rather than British imperialism. It broke support for the agricultural sector and farmers by calling for rapid industrialisation and multinational investment to build an urban working class and class consciousness. Poland and Stalinism were now the example for the industrialisation of Ireland. OSF's opposition to European integration for building a 'rich man's club' was replaced with the deterministic view that this was a necessary part of capitalist development (Dunphy 1992, p. 24).

The IIR's attempts to almost entirely break with republicanism shocked elites who remained attached to nationalism. The leadership would most likely have lost a debate on the document but forced it through as party policy almost overnight, giving no space for debate. Tight discipline from OSF's roots helped this process (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 97). The leadership continued to re-brand the party, renaming its newspaper the *United Irishman*, as *Workers' Life* in 1980. Dissent was suppressed and those speaking out about the crushing of Solidarity in Poland in 1982 were sacked from positions of responsibility or denounced for 'electoral opportunism' (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992 p. 103). Young moderate elites were easily outmanoeuvred. The leadership ensured that decisions were made before party meetings and controlled their agendas. It forced congress motions condemning the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six off the agenda for jeopardising cross community appeal as well as those made by Eurocommunists (Gillan 1997, p. 143, Woodworth 1991, p. 10). Adopting the Soviet model was never even debated internally but was imposed from above (Dooney 1991, p. 5). A high degree of centralisation helped the leadership to force through painful reforms.

Democratic centralism's authoritarian, disciplined command structures mirrored those of the IRA (Gillan 1997, p. 152). Adopting this in 1983 helped the leadership to consolidate reforms and to fend off attempts to question its decisions (Woodworth 1991, p. 10). Democratic centralism enabled the leadership to make strictly binding decisions. Members played a subservient role and factions were banned within the rank and file (Dunphy 1997, p. 140). There was space for some debate at elite level in the 1980s but questioning the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism remained off limits. The leadership's decisions were reported back to party branches in a top-down

fashion with little room for debate on a local level. Covert workplace cells also operated to gain influence in institutions including state broadcaster RTÉ.

Whereas SF had a loose form of membership, the WP's leaders prioritised the quality not the quantity of members. The conditions of membership were formalised and members had to carry membership cards. They were also now compelled to pay membership fees, work for the party, canvass and sell the party paper up to five nights a week, to build up its support (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 98). New members attended compulsory education courses by Stalinists at the Research Section and needed to be approved by congress or the party executive. Some applicants including Trotskyites were refused membership. Loyalty was prioritised.

In OSF and the WP, elite advancement processes were tightly controlled. Only those who were ideologically pure were advanced (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 98). The WP's leaders did not propose a list of candidates for the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of around 40 members. In contrast to most WECs, it seemed that there were competing candidates. The party leader – the Party President and most (26) CEC members were elected by congress while the other thirteen CEC members were regional officials. However, behind the scenes, OIRA members rigged congress votes (Dunphy 1997, p. 137). This ensued that loyal, former republican elites filled leadership positions and potential dissidents were rooted out.

The IRA's representatives had traditionally read out orders at SF's congresses. This continued in SFWP and subsequently the WP. The leadership engaged in moderate levels of briefing at a local level to ensure that their delegates to party congresses were loyal. There was also a convention whereby delegates understood that they should wait for and defer to the positions of the WP's real leaders, the Official IRA, and in particular Seán Garland and Cathal Goulding (Dunphy Interview, 25.08.08). When congress supported changing the party's name from SFWP to WP in 1982, delegates who were overwhelmingly mandated to vote against the unpopular change by local branches followed their orders and suddenly switched positions.

In 1977 the CEC elected Garland as General Secretary. This role was supposed to be limited to organisational responsibilities, but he dominated CEC meetings. The

leadership bodies were reformed in 1983 as Garland prioritised expansion. A powerful Executive Political Committee (EPC) akin to a Politburo was introduced to make manifestos and programmes as well as an Executive Management Committee (EMC) to run organisational matters. Filled with loyal elites, they were intended to protect the WP's ideological purity from the dangers of electoralism and de-radicalisation (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 104).

5.3 Reforming the WP: Pressure to reform

The WP's historical leaders sought to resist abandoning Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism in 1989. They gave half-hearted support to Gorbachev's reforms to preserve relations with the Soviet Union and some believed events in CEE to be a temporary blip. Prior elite turnover contributed to calls for reform but was only moderate. By 1989, five of thirteen chairs on leading party committees had been in place since 1983, as had ten of fourteen regular EPC members (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 104). The WP's leadership bodies lacked critical debate about Marxism-Leninism. When elites including Paddy Gallagher returned from trips to the Soviet Union and criticised developments there, they were strongly reprimanded. However, there was some room for ideological pluralism and competition at elite level before the late-1980s as Grzymała-Busse's framework found in parties whose leaders attempt to carry out reform in CEE.

Pressures for reform developed within the elite. Most significant was the moderating experience of working in parliament and local councils. The WP expanded from two to four TDs in 1987 and then seven in 1989. Working in parliament posed new pressures. Several TDs became reluctant to pay their salaries to the party as was planned. Expansion raised new questions about participation in governing coalitions and the TDs favoured moderation to gain political influence. They grew pragmatic through mediating between the party, voters and the Dáil. Unlike the old guard, they became responsive to pressures to change from communicating with the public (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 101). The TD's prioritised parliamentary work, protecting their seats and vote-seeking rather than revolution. Even longstanding, former republican elites including Proinsias De Rossa and Tony Heffernan changed their priorities through the experience of elected politics.

The WP developed unevenly as its structure and ideology lagged behind its elected representatives. Most of them knew that the OIRA provided the WP with funding and that fellow elites were involved in this but they publicly denied its existence (Breathnach Interview). They were usually kept at arm's length from its activities and turned a blind eye to those carrying arms out of sympathy with their need for protection from other paramilitaries in Northern Ireland. In the early 1980s police raided the WP's print office in connection with printing counterfeit bank notes. By the late 1980s such activities were a liability to the elected officials.

The expansion of the parliamentary group in the late 1980s meant that it became a rival power centre to the traditionalist leadership and central office. The TDs became independent and gained control over internal communications and campaigns as the WP took advantage of free postage and facilities in the Dáil. Having qualified as an official parliamentary group the TDs received additional funding, allowances for research and staff in 1989. Simultaneously, funding from the Soviet Union dried up for traditionalist elites. Influential functionaries including Tony Heffernan moved to the Dáil from central office and were now paid by the state. The theoretical magazine *Making Sense* also moved to the Dáil and it increasingly became a forum of debate. The traditionalist leadership struggled to monitor the parliamentary office. Policy making was increasingly run by parliamentary staff while the TDs' speeches and campaigns pre-empted initiatives by the CEC. Councillors also worked closely with the TDs. Being dependent on their constituency based campaign machines they largely supported their calls for reform. The traditionalist leadership had anticipated the risks of parliamentarisation but failed to devise mechanisms to keep the TDs in check (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 108).

The WP's leaders tried to recruit members from different walks of life, from as many constituencies as possible and across the religious divide out of a desire for expansion. It had sought to garner influence in civil society in the 1970s and early 1980s by promoting radicals from organisations like the National Union of Journalists and academics who began writing in party publications (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 106). In accordance with the ideas in Grzymała-Busse's framework, the WP had advanced elites with experience of negotiation with outside groups and institutions. They were at the forefront of criticisms of democratic centralism. Furthermore, trade

unionists advanced to elite positions and several leading reformers had become pragmatic through working in union politics or found their union policies more moderate than party policy. They offered a more pragmatic outsiders' perspective and reacted quickly to the collapse of Communism by urging people to shift positions to salvage a political future. These advancement processes meant that the WP was an example of how not to build a revolutionary party (Yeates, 2009).

Younger elites also had broader conceptions of social change than those offered by Marxism-Leninism. They included student leaders including Pat Rabbitte and Eamon Gilmore who became TDs. They were pragmatic in ideological terms from the beginning and were uneasy with democratic centralism. Their experiences of open debate and they lacked the traditionalists' roots in the republican movement. To traditionalists they were careerists who 'piggybacked' on the WP (Mannion Interview). The Research Section had long chastised these 'student princes' for being out of touch with ordinary workers and lacking revolutionary zeal. In comparison, those with few links to institutions outside the party found it relatively hard to adapt to the collapse of Communism. The party's historic leaders were also inexperienced in elected office, because of the lack of a functioning parliament in Northern Ireland. They saw the TDs electoralism as a betrayal of class politics (see WP, 1992; Gillan, 1992).

In accordance with Grzymała-Busse's framework, horizontal elite advancement processes were a major factor shaping calls for regeneration. When Joe Sherlock became the WP's first TD in 1981 he had not been included in the CEC. However, by 1989 the TDs and councillors were well represented and highly influential in leadership bodies where they called for reforms. All but one of the TDs sat in the CEC. Some TDs were members of the EPC and others including Rabbitte were included in its ranks in an effort to stop them leaving the party (Garland 1992, p. 33). Elected officials developed a third faction within the elite alongside the Research Section and the traditionalist old guard. Moreover, OSF established Citizens Advice Bureaus in the 1970s, to become more like other Irish parties. These sought to engage with people's concerns as a launching pad for radical mass campaigns. However, they became increasingly focused on everyday problems with state bureaucracy. Elites advanced from these bureaus (and the Research Section) had encountered additional pressures for

pragmatism. Having worked with groups outside the party and in disadvantaged areas, some found a need for more realistic policies.

Changes that the WP experienced on the ground made attempts for reform viable. The Research Section and parliamentary group ran more moderate campaigns aimed at expansion during the 1980s. These struck a chord with the urban working class, on issues like housing, unemployment and tax reform (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 106). Many new members came from the Labour Party, disillusioned with its compromises in coalition government during the 1980s (Breathnach Interview). Marxism-Leninism was emphasised less and local branches seeking to expand relaxed restrictions on membership and debate. In 1988 the rigging of elections to the CEC ended because it would not wash with the new members, providing additional room for reformists to enter the elite. The focus on electoral campaigning also shifted resources from party education and co-ordination at central office making local branches more autonomous and in some democratic centralism ceased to function (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 106). Newcomers were at the forefront of calls for reform, lacking attachment to the discipline of democratic centralism, Marxism-Leninism, republicanism or paramilitarism. Many genuinely believed military activity had been abandoned. They were less deferential to the traditionalist leadership and provided a pool of support for reformist elites.

The contradictions between the old republican leadership and the parliamentary group developed throughout the 1980s. The TDs and newcomers, however, did not make serious moves for breaking with Communism before the late-1980s. The first major attempt at this came from the secretive policy making unit the Research Section led by Harris and Smullen. To the reformers' surprise Harris saw a need for social democratisation in 1987 and called for it at a party summer school in Belfast in 1988, pre-empting the collapse of the Soviet-bloc and subsequently penned his thoughts in a document titled 'The Necessity of Social Democracy' (NSD) (1988).

5.4 The process of reform

Just as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE, these party ideologues had gradually moderated through their wider links to society, Harris being a controller at state broadcaster RTE and his colleagues in the Research Section having trade union backgrounds. They

became increasingly responsive to pressures to change from these experiences and were keen to expand support through keeping in touch with voters' preferences, even if it meant forcing through painful compromises. Harris worked also this way at RTE (see Barry, 1987). The Research Section's policy wonks saw Marxism and social class as constantly changing were prepared to reassess old commitments. Its members encountered diminishing support for the Soviet model from workers in trade unions and horror with the suppression of workers in CEE. Through analysing the economic situation in CEE Harris foresaw the collapse of state socialism. The Research section increasingly sought to make moderate election campaigns to attract middle class, white-collar voters in the 1980s (McCarthy, 2009). But now Harris argued that it should radically reposition itself because people preferred social democracy (Harris 1990, p. 26).

These seasoned reformers, tried to social democratise in a centralistic fashion like Grzymała-Busse found of similar elites in CEE. They were experienced in policy innovation and broadening appeal having had autonomy to devise policies and implement previous reforms. They tried to force through social democratisation in a top-down fashion by presenting the NSD in the CEC and distributing it to influential members without permission. To a limited extent, prior experience in carrying out reforms had shown them that resistance emerged from holding debates at elite level that slowed down decision making. This encouraged them to publish their document first to cajole the leadership into using its influence to promote social democratisation. Anticipating that the situation in CEE might destroy the party, they believed an open democratic debate at congress would also be too slow.

At first glance the Research Section seems to resemble the centralistic elites Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. On closer inspection it is apparent that despite their experiences in undertaking earlier reforms they did not develop a comprehensive plan of organisational centralisation. The Research Section worked in a centralistic way primarily because as the party's policy gurus, they had always been highly centralistic and empowered by the leadership to work in such a way. They had published documents that were later approved by congress as a *fait accompli*. It is not surprising to find centralistic attempts at reform in what was a highly centralistic party. The Research Section's coup was a desperate attempt to retake the initiative as they lost power to the

parliamentary group. While their ideas changed, their methods remained the same. In fact they thought very little in organisational terms, being focused largely on programmatic issues. They believed that once the leadership had used its standing to promote social democracy, democratic internal structures would follow. They recognised that in the end there would be little chance of success without democratic discussion. Carrying out previous reforms in a centralistic way had made them aware that debate was needed to legitimise reforms and gave them ‘bitter experience that with no discussion we had little grip’ (Harris Interview).

De Rossa, a trusted member of the leadership replaced the aging Tomás MacGiolla, as Party President in 1988. However, he had grown pragmatic and began working closely with Harris. De Rossa’s first speech as President at the 1989 congress was written by Harris. This speech, (taking place before the revolutions in CEE), argued for sacrificing the sacred cows of subservience to the Soviet Union, criticised North Korea and state ownership, called for a ‘march at the head of social democracy’ and advocated office-seeking (De Rossa, 1989). De Rossa also tried to broaden appeal by emphasising environmental issues and women’s rights in keeping with the less rigid vision the TDs had been working on since the mid-1980s (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 109).

Harris believed that fighting the 1989 election on more social democratic territory was central to its success and De Rossa’s successful campaign to become a Member of the European Parliament in 1989 – was organised by Harris and echoed these earlier themes under the slogan ‘A breath of Fresh air’ (Harris, 2009). However, elites equipped with experience in negotiating with outsiders had not united around social democracy. The electoralism in De Rossa’s 1989 congress speech drew criticism from radical socialist reformers including Ellen Hazelkorn. While these reformers saw a need to moderate, to them social democratising was like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Other radical socialist reformers also criticised their colleagues drift to parliamentary politics (Breathnach and Ross 1990, p. 12). After De Rossa’s speech divisions became apparent as traditionalists including Garland briefed colleagues that De Rossa had ‘gone mad’ (Gallagher Interview). Most reformists including De Rossa soon rejected social democratisation in favour of a broader, less dogmatic form of socialism that broke with Marxism-Leninism, leading to confrontation with traditionalist elites. De

Rossa's contacts with other European left parties at the European Parliament also helped him to envisage a broader radical left strategy.

Reformers and traditionalists soon allied to block Harris's attempt at social democratisation from above, suppressing distribution of NSD and expelling Smullen from the CEC for breaking decision making procedures (Hanley and Millar, 2009b; Cedar Lounge, 2008). Harris was eventually allowed to publish his views in *Making Sense*, but he and elites from the Research Section resigned at the 1990 congress following criticism from the TDs for elitism. Unprecedented debate tore away the façade of unanimity and shattered democratic centralism as controversies including the crushing of Solidarity in Poland were re-visited (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 110).

The 'Harris saga' shows that using Grzymala-Busse's framework to understand WECPs can overstate the ease with which elites can centralise or social democratise. Here they overwhelmingly failed to win support from fellow reformers who were experienced in negotiation with outside groups and institutions. Harris's proposals were even rejected by those favouring social democracy including Rabbittee and Gilmore who criticised Harris's authoritarian style. Personal rivalries also precluded their support for the NSD. TDs favouring moderation had already calculated that there was insufficient support for a sudden social democratisation. Moreover, they saw that jumping ship to Labour or Fine Gael would severely weaken their constituency based support (Breathnach Interview).

The Research Section had a demonstrable record of undertaking reforms that broadened appeal and impressive rhetorical skills. However, while the framework posits that this would strengthen their chances of success, the Research Section's historic attachment to Stalinism meant that reformers saw their sudden adoption of social democracy as opportunistic and inauthentic. Harris's argument that the party should be the Marxist fist inside the social democratic glove was seen as an attempt to hoodwink people into believing they had changed (Breathnach Interview). After leaving the party Harris became a 'freelance ideologue' (Power 1997, p. 24). He eventually shifted to rightwing politics, becoming a Senator for the centre-right Fianna Fáil which reformers saw as being in keeping with his authoritarian style.

Harris's unaccountable attempt at reform ironically fuelled debate on democratisation in the pages of *Making Sense*. Instead of centralisation, most reformers demanded increased debate for ideological renewal and to come to terms with the past. They argued that people would not believe the WP was Stalinist yesterday and social democratic today if it was always authoritarian and forcing change upon members (Woodworth 1991, p. 11). To them democratic centralism was now incompatible with democratic socialism. Traditionalists including John Lowry replied that democratic centralism guarded against Harris's opportunism and that binding decisions were necessary to ensure accountability (Lowry, 1991, p. 24, 1992, p. 63; O'Hagen, 1992 p. 51).

Before De Rossa's 1989 congress speech few elites had called for abandoning Communism or promoted formal reforms that directly questioned Marxism-Leninism. Reformers had little power to make such changes. When Councillor Colm Breathnach advocated breaking links with North Korea in the late 1980s he was subsequently dropped from the WP's International Committee and few reformers supported him. However, the reformists were moderately equipped with the characteristics that Grzymała-Busse argues promote centralisation. Engagement in prior reform, professional backgrounds, and some experience of trying to make changes had not turned them into centralisers. They did not promote democratisation because of a lack of know-how or out of naivety.

The WP's history had been one of on-going reform and innovation. Most leading reformers had extensive experience of designing painful changes in policy and organisational committees during SF's genesis into a Marxist-Leninist party. Some helped design the 1982 constitution which was a watershed for the political side of the party taking over from the OIRA. Others had carried out reforms working in the Research Section or had made unsuccessful attempts to criticise the Soviet Union or to promote Eurocommunism and feminism. Reformers had also developed new priorities through Citizen Advice Bureaus through which the WP involved itself in housing action committees and this led them to call for political campaigns to supplant the OIRA. Many also had professional backgrounds.

Although the TDs implemented few formal policy reforms during the 1980s they had begun to run less theoretical and called for a softening of the party's image in campaigns before the collapse of the Soviet-bloc as they sought a broader appeal. The TDs wanted to recognise NATO and accepted the Single European Act – both things that were opposed by the traditionalists (Garland 1992, p. 33). Their autonomy in voting at the Dáil caused friction with the traditionalist leadership before 1989. The elected officials had also complained that restrictions on members, probationary membership periods, education classes and democratic centralism were discouraging potential members (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 106). The TDs tried to moderate the WP's image through focusing on issues including housing provision, unemployment and social welfare rather than ideological and revolutionary campaigns. Having become responsive to the need to broaden the party's appeal, they promoted new policy issues including women's rights, environmentalism and less dogmatic policies on European integration.

5.5 Resistance to reform

Historically the WP's executive bodies simply accepted decisions made by the party's top leaders. The reformers had the initiative with De Rossa being Party President (TD and Member of the European Parliament) and sitting on all the important committees. His fellow reformist Des Geraghty also replaced the aging Garland, as General Secretary in 1991. However, they had good reason to avoid centralising. First, central office was dominated by the traditionalist functionaries employed by the WP's historical leaders. Shifting power there would not have benefited reform. Second, the reformers lacked support in most branches in Northern Ireland which retained closer links to the Official IRA and where the preservation of democratic centralism strengthened the traditionalists' influence. Consequently, reformers believed that centralisation was not viable and would have precipitated a split which most reformers initially sought to avoid at all costs.

Third, while traditionalists had lost the power to expel the reformers, the latter lacked sufficient control over the leadership bodies to use democratic centralism to force changes through or to centralise. The reformers could usually rely on a majority in the CEC by 1992. However, traditionalist elites and functionaries from central office were entrenched in the WP's thirteen elite level committees and had majorities in the

fourteen member EPC and the eight member EMC. De Rossa, could not rely on their support. Every meeting of the EPC became a battle between the factions. Hard-line functionaries had more time to dedicate to committee work than the elected officials. Moreover, these traditionalists were an obstacle at elite as well as mid-level positions. This is a situation Grzymała-Busse's framework tells us little about, suggesting that using it to understand WECPs would overstate the ease with which reformists can centralise their parties' organisations.

Fourth, the reformers also had instrumental reasons for favouring democratisation above centralisation. They saw that their attempts to differentiate themselves as democrats in contrast from the traditionalists would have been undermined by trying to force changes through. Fifth, reformers including De Rossa had intrinsic attachments to democracy, seeing participative decision-making as an ideal. They genuinely wanted to win open debates and did not find authoritarian behaviour appealing – there were subjective barriers to centralising. This was not something the reformers wanted to do, despite their prior experiences.

Traditionalists criticised De Rossa's 1989 congress speech for breaching protocol because it had not been sent to the CEC for approval (WP 1992, p. 78). However, this was an attempt to start a debate rather than to make policy. The reformers did not systematically centralise to sideline resistance from the traditionalists. When they did fight dirty, this was an ad hoc process as they struggled to find solutions in response to, rather than pre-empting, resistance. Their organisational strategy largely consisted of twin processes of democratisation and parliamentarisation. This was insufficient to fully dethrone the traditionalist elite but ensured that the reformers won on most of their attempts to transform the party. The TDs continued to empower themselves by making more statements calling for ideological change and democratisation. By the time such decisions in the Dáil were considered by the CEC or EPC they had in effect already been taken. When traditionalists at central office blocked reform, the reformers responded by continuing to shift administrative tasks to the Dáil.

When the reformers' did try to streamline they were largely defeated by resistance. They tried to use funding problems as a ploy to cut the number of traditionalist functionaries at central office and attempted to close the party bookshop which they saw

as a front for illegal activities. However, De Rossa's proposals were rejected by the EPC where traditionalists argued he was exaggerating the severity of the financial crisis. They responded by making his sister, Marie Brady, redundant, who they claimed was employed to allow De Rossa to take over the running of the central office (WP 1992, p. 8). De Rossa stopped calling EPC meetings in 1992 and increasingly referred decisions to the CEC, without a recommendation from the EPC. The reformers did little to abolish mid-level structures. However, traditionalists argued that reformist Councillors' refusal to hand over their salaries to the party undermined the traditionalist led regional party executive in Dublin in 1992 and that before this the reformers had deliberately tried to run its organisation down (WP 1992, p.6).

The reformers' main strategy was democratisation. De Rossa began listening to those hitherto ignored by the leadership, seeking advice from academics, trade unionists, and activists from NGOs. Congress delegate elections were increasingly open and their subservience to the leadership at congresses was evaporating by the late-1980s (Heffernan Interview, 25.08.08). The TDs endorsed open debate, believing that they would be empowered by continued democratisation. Being from large constituencies, they could rely on the support of a high number of members and delegates helping them to win majorities at congresses.

Democracy remained an unreliable path to reform. Reformers struggled to extend democratisation to all areas of the party. They complained that covert power centres based around the traditionalist leaders and the OIRA made decisions contrary to congress decisions (WP 1992, p. 42). Freeing up debate helped deliver programmatic transformation but struggled to remove a secret army group who tried to run things (Dunphy Interview, 04.09.08). Democratisation failed to reign in decision-making points including the company Repsol which reformers saw as a front for criminal activities, central office, the OIRA and party publications (Dunphy Interview, 04.09.08). Although some of the reformers were active in the OIRA they lacked influence. Moreover, streamlining was made difficult because some OIRA members were not even card carrying members but loosely associated with party drinking clubs in Belfast (Byrne Interview).

The reformers in the CEC tried to hasten democratisation and policy change by establishing organisational and programmatic committees in 1990, offering an alternative route to reform to the EPC and MPC. A Constitutional Review Committee, chaired by TD Eamon Gilmore was established by the CEC and only two of its seven members were from the traditionalist-wing. The traditionalists feared this would be used to reinforce the TD's power, to centralise, or to expel them. However, the reformers intended to use the Committee to democratise the party through a process of open debate. It gave room for all sides to propose new organisational structures including radical reformers who wanted greater local activism and supported the traditionalists' calls for the TDs to be more accountable to the CEC (Breathnach et al., 1992). The Committee proposed relaxing membership restrictions and dropping democratic centralism. This was increasingly ceasing to function and was not included in the 1991 programme. A special congress was scheduled to decide on new normalised organisational structures (Dunphy 1992, p. 33).

Democratisation ensured most of the changes that the reformers wanted. The 1990 programme committee presented a draft programme 'Freedom Democracy and Equality' at the 1991 congress. This toned down Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, positioned the WP as a 'democratic socialist party', asserted members' rights to 'open and free debate' and emphasised that democracy was central to the WP's organisation. Moreover, it committed to a range of standpoints including feminism. Traditionalist delegates proposed a host of amendments to the programme. They managed to insert ideas about class struggle and revolution into the programme by a slim majority but were largely defeated on most of their motions including those criticising the market and capitalist property relations (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 111). However, some leading traditionalists were re-elected to the CEC and EPC. Their historical role in the party meant they retained appeal to the rank and file and their strength in Northern Ireland proved hard to break.

Progress was being made towards reform but internal democracy made this a gradual process. In 1991 De Rossa joined the hard-line Left Unity group in the EP even though reformers were ideologically closer to other groups. They soon overruled the traditionalists and left the group (Dunphy 1992, p. 34). However, frustration with the resistance was building. In the summer of 1991 De Rossa convened secret factional

meetings outside official party channels to discuss modernisation and democratisation. Fresh media allegations of paramilitary activities and that Garland was receiving money from the Soviet Union were subsequently blamed for the WP's 1991 local election loss (Gillan 1997, p. 147). Reformers feared losing new members who were genuinely shocked by the revelations. This convinced reformers that the ship would sink if they did not break with paramilitarism and they tried to bring things to a head.

In January 1992 the CEC endorsed a motion supporting De Rossa's leadership and condemning the OIRA and criminal activities, by 40 votes to nil, with four abstentions including Garland and three functionaries (Gillan 1997, p. 144). Leading reformers set the agenda by disingenuously claiming to be shocked by the continued existence of the OIRA in media interviews. Traditionalists could not criticise their hypocrisy without admitting to the existence of the OIRA (Breathnach Interview). Frustrated by the pace of change, some reformers wanted to expel the traditionalists or to form a new party. However, most, including De Rossa, rejected this fearing a disastrous split, being aware of the risks involved in starting a new party and recognising that the WP's organisation was a valuable asset. Further media allegations of OIRA activity forced their hand. The reformers gave up on seeking gradual change through democratisation. Instead they sought to reconstitute the WP by standing down its members and asking them to reapply for membership, like the PCI had done in Italy.

Reconstitution was a belated attempt to sideline the traditionalists. However, the reformers even tried to streamline the party in a democratic way. The CEC accepted De Rossa's call for a special congress to vote on reconstitution. This would enable a caretaker eleven member CEC to elect a new party President, arrange a congress in May 1992 as well as to organise the re-registration of members (De Rossa and Lynch, 1992a). It would re-establish the WP according to its 1991 programme as a democratic socialist party. It would also reject violent, criminal or revolutionary tactics and democratic centralism (De Rossa and Lynch, 1992b, De Rossa, 1992a). This was a winner takes all scenario in which the caretaker CEC would be chosen by the winning side. The reformers hoped it would let them root out traditionalist members once and for all. The CEC appointed a committee of reformists to oversee the congress.

The Special Congress was more democratic and competitive than previous congresses. The traditionalist faction vigorously campaigned against reconstitution. Both sides were allowed to publish articles on reconstitution and to speak openly (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 113). Garland condemned the 'liquidators' for seeking social democratisation and giving up on revolutionary struggle or nationalising the means of production. He denied that traditionalists had connections to the OIRA or that it operated a kitchen cabinet within the WP (Garland 1992, p. 42). The traditionalists criticised the media for conspiring with the TDs and the meddling of the American Central Intelligence Agency (Dunphy 1997, p. 134).

Traditionalists had little intention of giving up, having spent a large part of their working lives within the WP. Many of them saw little chance of making alternative careers. Those from Northern Ireland often depended on party drinking clubs for protection and their livelihoods. The traditionalists' control over central office enabled them to distribute their publications, access the membership and to mobilise functionaries against reconstitution. Furthermore, traditionalists in the EPC enjoyed strong contacts with local branches that proved useful for lobbying for support. Democratic centralism had ceased to function on a national level preventing either side from controlling the Special Congress. However, branches from both sides inflated membership figures to gain additional congress delegates. Reformers were horrified as the traditionalists sent a large number of delegates from Northern Ireland, where democratic centralism continued to function and links between the party and army were stronger. As many as 80 per cent of delegates from Northern Ireland voted against reconstitution while a similar proportion of those from the Republic voted in favour (Wilson 1992, p. 6). The result was that the reformers failed to gain the two-thirds majority needed to change the party constitution by just nine votes (with 241 to 133 votes in favour of reconstitution) (Gillan 1997, p. 151; Holmes 1994, p. 148).

Traditionalists including John Lowry argue that the reformers made a strategic error by seeking reconstitution (Lowry Interview). They could have transformed the party with a simple majority by waiting for the congress that was scheduled under the party's Constitutional Review. If anything, the reformers tried to work too democratically. The vote was chaotic as some traditionalists voted for reconstitution to preserve unity. Likewise, reformers voted against, out of personal admiration for

Garland and Goulding, or, like Paddy Gallagher, followed decisions made at local branches that they subsequently regretted (WP 1992, p. 13). Democracy was an unstable root to reform as Grzymała-Busse's framework envisages.

Nevertheless, losing the vote on reconstitution was not a forgone conclusion. That the reformers almost won a two thirds majority shows that a democratic vote could have reformed the WP. While democracy is an uncertain path to reform it was not incompatible with transformation as Grzymała-Busse seemed to find in the Czech KSČM. The reformers had made considerable advances in breaking with Communism and transforming party programmes. Democratisation helped them to do this because of changes in the party's rank and file. However, they found that democratisation struggled to remove paramilitarism from the party which was specific to the Irish scene.

5.6 The WP 1992–

Following the Special Congress the traditionalists refused to step aside. In response, De Rossa, six of the WP's seven TDs, 70 per cent of the WP's members (including Communists) and most of its elected officials subsequently left to form a new party (De Rossa 1992b, p. 1). The following sections analyse the WP following the split and the reformers' new party Democratic Left. This shows that reformist elites continued to democratise and further empowered the party in public office to make policy changes. They still did not see a need for centralisation to sideline radical mid-level elites. This analysis shows that reformers could opt to leave their parties to form new ones following their collapse of Communism. Doing this could enable them to pursue office and programmatic transformation, but involved several dangers.

Table 5.3 Electoral results for WP after 1992 in parliamentary elections (in the Republic of Ireland)

Year	1992	1997*	2002	2007
Vote (per cent)	0.6	0.44	< 0.7	<0.2

*Less than 8000 votes in 1997

(Suiter, 2007; Kennedy, 2002; Murphy, 1997; Holmes, 1994).

The traditionalists retained the WP's name, symbols and national headquarters, and few a hundred members (Dunphy and Hopkins 1992, p. 113). The WP fared poorly in elections, being reduced to a handful of local councillors and lost its one parliamentary seat in 1992 (see Table 5.3). It reasserted Marxism-Leninism/democratic centralism in statutes and programmes in 1993 and solidarity with Communist parties in Portugal and Greece and regimes in Cuba and North Korea. Commentators note that it reverted to positions adopted in SFWP with greater emphasis on republicanism (Dunphy Interview, 04.09.08) and Euroscepticism (WP, 2008). Democratic centralism preserved ideological purity but could not prevent further splits during the 1990s as socialists left to form a small Irish Socialist Network having been blocked from organising meetings on ideological renewal. Pragmatic elected officials including Councillor John Halligan in Waterford also left (Keys, 2008). Halligan refused to vote against local rate increases when the leadership tried to impose centrally made decisions on him.

The traditionalist elite consolidated their dominance through democratic centralism. The aging Garland and O'Hagen remained in the WP's executive in 2009, Garland being Party Treasurer. Media reports continued to claim that Garland was a leader of the OIRA (*The Sunday Times*, 09.10.05, BBC, 20.06.04). He was arrested in 2004 during the WP's annual conference and skipped bail (*The Times*, 05.02.09). American authorities have long tried to extradite and prosecute Garland for distributing counterfeit \$100 'super dollars' from North Korea. The OIRA decommissioned its weapons in February 2010 but the organisations have generally struggled to break with their past and Communism.

5.7 Democratic Left: wandering in the wilderness

Some reformers, including Pat Rabbitte were relieved that the 1992 vote on reconstitution was lost, fearing an ongoing battle to weed out traditionalists. However, building a party from scratch was equally painstaking. The reformists rejected Garland's accusations that they wanted social democratisation, were searching in vain for a new ideology and would be swallowed up by the Labour Party (WP 1992, p. 4). However, his predictions were in many respects vindicated. The reformers struggled from the beginning. Traditionalist Tomás MacGiolla TD stayed with the WP and refused to 'buy a pig in a poke' by joining a party with no

established policies (MacGiolla, 1992). The reformers also failed to convince Emmet Stagg TD to defect from Labour. This meant that Democratic Left was too small to form an official parliamentary group, which deprived it of vital state funding (Holmes 1994, p. 150). The reformers' new party was also severely weakened in Northern Ireland where the majority of members stayed with the WP.

DL claimed to have 2000 members, more than the WP before the split. However, it shows the problems reformers faced in making new parties. DL had little breathing space to build itself up. Its rank and file were soon exhausted by referendums on the Maastricht Treaty and abortion laws before being thrust into an election in November 1992 at which Labour's popularity contributed to it losing two of its TDs (Gillan 1997, p. 152). DL's broadly pitched brand of socialism failed to bring electoral or organisational expansion (see Tables 5.4 and 5.5). Many activists lacked the heart to struggle to build up DL having been attached to the symbolism of the WP. New members often left, leaving around 1000 members in 1992, most being former members of the WP (Dunphy 1998, p. 56). Had the reformers reconstituted under the WP name, it is likely that more activists would have stayed.

DL's intellectual elites drafted radical documents that were accepted by its founding congresses. These positioned it as a radical red-green party and drew inspiration from Scandinavian left parties. DL was placed to Labour's left. Its elites sought to root Labour to the left but had become willing to compromise as a junior coalition partner (Holmes 1994, p. 151). DL committed to transforming capitalism but not through nationalising the means of production or revolution. Its socialism emphasised an equitable distribution of wealth, extra-parliamentary activism, pluralism and feminism (Dunphy 1998, p. 55). Nonetheless, DL struggled to distinguish itself from Labour and its policy committees failed to present a comprehensive programme until 1994, following extensive discussion by members and local branches (Holmes 1994, p. 151).

Democratic decision making fostered a broader radical left identity. Empowering radical mid-level elites did not foster social democracy in keeping with Grzymała-Busse's findings in CEE. However, a deeper radicalisation of policy or a reassertion of Marxism-Leninism did not occur as we might expect for her framework. Elites

were also able to use their standing to appeal for programme commitments that were not so radical as to obstruct DL's possible inclusion in government. They also sought broad appeal and avoided over identifying with the working class. Moreover, pragmatic TDs did not take radical programmatic commitments too seriously. However, after Fine Gael rejected coalescing with DL in 1992, Labour allied with the centre-right Fianna Fáil.

Most of DL's elite came from the WP and there was little doubt De Rossa would be the new leader. He was seen as a catalyst for reform and had a record in carrying out reforms. However, that did not mean that the media would be sympathetic to his attempt to break with the past. De Rossa became embroiled in a libel trial over newspaper claims that he had accepted funding from the Soviet Union (Dunphy 1998, p. 54). This sapped resources and De Rossa's attention during the formative years of DL.

Table 5.4: Electoral results for DL in parliamentary elections (in the Republic of Ireland)

Year	1992	1997
Vote (per cent)	2.8	2.5
Seats	4	4

(Dunphy 1998; Holmes, 1994).

Contrary to Grzymala-Busse's findings about elites with experience in implementing prior reforms in CEE, DL's elite did not try to build highly centralised organisational structures. De Rossa never sought to direct DL, but to establish debate. Reformers did still not favour, or see any possibility of forcing policies through centralised policy making structures. It was extremely unlikely that activists would have allowed them to force social democratisation through by centralising in 1992 in any event. DL struggled to build a central organisation as the WP kept most party documents and lists of supporters and because of financial constraints. The elite were largely focused on parliamentary work and failed to develop an effective central office or to recruit members. General Secretary John Gallagher believed that instead resources should be focused on local branches and that 200 members would be enough to keep DL going (Dunphy 1998, p. 53). Activists saw this as an attempt to run down the party to

precipitate a merger with Labour by Gallagher and some of the TDs. Grzymała-Busse's argument that a lack of centralisation is harmful to transformation gains some support from DL, but due to a lack of coordination rather than resistance from radicals.

Table 5.5: Membership figures for DL

Year	1992	1997
Members	2000	approx 500

(Dunphy, 1997; Holmes 1994).

DL was founded on an ideal of participatory internal decision-making (Dunphy 1998, p. 52). Election candidates were chosen by local branches. Whereas the WP demanded disciplined activism, DL demanded little from members and branches were not coordinated rigidly by central office (Dunphy 1998, p. 52). Congress delegates were freely elected to annual congresses and voted freely for a nineteen member National Executive Committee (NEC) (Holmes 1994, p. 151). Even activists disappointed with DL's ideological direction argue that there were opportunities to campaign for their ideological goals and that these could influence policy formulation and decision-making (Breathnach Interview).

In practice, goals of participatory decision making were unfulfilled (Dunphy 1998, p. 54). The parliamentarisation present in the WP continued as parliamentary staff ran central office while most activists deferred to the TDs who repositioned the party at congresses. The leadership was defeated on few issues although radical activists had initially defeated it over choosing the party's name, by selecting 'Democratic Left' above 'New Agenda' at its 1992 founding congress. The NEC was larger than the leadership of the WP in an effort to make it more representative. However, 'horizontal elite advancement' practices meant that several TDs were included on it. NEC members felt that the TDs had become dominant and that it played little of an independent role in policy making (Dunphy 1998, p. 63). The state funding the TDs received was financing DL and its campaign machine focused on supporting them rather than running radical campaigns. They carried huge personal influence.

When DL was reduced to four TDs in 1992 all of them had to be kept on board to stop DL from unravelling, effectively giving them a veto in decision-making. Activists feared that Rabbitte would defect to Labour, placing him in a powerful position to call for moderation and closer relations with Labour. Two bi-election victories in 1994 and a change of heart by Fine Gael made it possible for DL to enter a 'Rainbow coalition' government. There were heated debates on this but only around sixteen of 100 congress delegates voted against entering government as most deferred to the parliamentarians' wishes. Consequently, several radical elites and activists including Colm Breathnach left DL.

In the early 1990s, most of DL's elite still did not embrace social democracy despite being experienced in dealing with outside groups and institutions. In this respect they were different from the elites in CEE that Grzymała-Busse studied. Leading figures including De Rossa believed that the WP's rise showed that a strong radical left party was feasible in Ireland. Problematically, new programmes and flexible organisational structures lacked resonance with many of DL's working class activists who were used to the discipline of the WP (see Dunphy, 1998). De Rossa's calls for informal democratic 'Coffee shop meetings' to debate policy were unpopular with seasoned activists for being like middle class dinner parties. After two years, most of its members and a large proportion of radical activists had dropped out.

Governing placed immense burdens on DL. Four of its six TDs had ministerial roles and resources were dedicated to support them. This left little time building up the party or differentiating it from its coalition partners. Policy committees and the NECs 'Strategy 2000' established to define DL's radical left identity were put on hold (Dunphy 1998, p. 58). The NEC failed to develop a party building role and activism was downgraded (Dunphy 1998, p. 56). DL's ministers delivered some changes in government policy including increases in child benefit, a referendum on divorce and the introduction of an anti-poverty strategy. However, members felt that too many unsatisfactory compromises were made and activists left frustrated by moderation and social democratisation (Dunphy 1998, p. 60). Being the junior coalition partner, DL's ministers picked their fights carefully and ended up accepting their allies' less radical and more social democratic policies.

In the end, it took years not weeks as Garland predicted (1992, p. 33) for the reformists to 'sell out' to social democracy. The TDs continued to moderate in office, became social democratic and grew reluctant to chase Green-Left protest votes (see Dunphy, 1998). The TDs developed trust in their Labour colleagues. As Tony Heffernan argues, those working in parliament realised 'that they were not that different from Labour, who were not the shits that we thought they were' (Heffernan Interview, 26.08.08). When DL left government in 1997, having lost two of its six seats, surviving in parliament had become the TDs' priority. There was little that the NEC could do to stop the TDs defecting to Labour. Rabbitte responded warmly to Labour's secret proposal for a merger and seized the initiative. The TDs were overwhelmingly in favour of a merger, viewing it as the only way to salvage something from DL. With the rank and file in tatters there was little standing in their way or to counter the moderating effects of office.

Activists including Breathnach argued that DL suffered from a lack of time in opposition to consolidate a radical identity and that this left voters unable to notice differences between it and Labour. Indeed, there was little reason to vote for it as an alternative. It failed to either provide criticism of social democracy by offering a protest vote, or to stake a claim for a more radical brand of social democratic policies than those pursued by Labour which in office with the conservative Fianna Fáil had accepted controversial tax amnesties. It was not Eurosceptic like many other left parties and it lacked radical appeal or class consciousness needed to bind its members together (Dunphy 1998, p. 66). Moderation, social democracy and office-seeking could become a poisoned chalice for WECPs' successor parties. DL did not rapidly social democratise, but growing too close to Labour and office-seeking became an electoral disaster. It enjoyed short-term gain but failed to develop a sustainable long-term strategy.

Secret unaccountable talks between some TDs and their Labour counterparts initiated the merger. However, DL's leaders did little to centralise following the election defeat. The leadership believed that any decision on merging required consent from DL's members. Dunphy had found in 1997 that 54 per cent of mid-level elites opposed merging with Labour (Dunphy 1998, p. 69). Yet, election defeat and the leadership's appeals convinced them to do this within a democratic debate. Congress delegates voted by 89 per cent to support the merger (O'Neill 1998, p. 5).

DL's leaders portrayed the merger as being between two equal partners and as an opportunity to form a new party or to root Labour to the left. Such claims were a gross distortion. DL's members were assimilated into Labour, which eliminated the threat to its left while keeping its programme and most of its organisational structures intact. That DL's elected officials did not become a left-wing faction within Labour showed just how much they had moderated it elected office. While Rabbitt and Gilmore went on to lead Labour and Liz McManus, became deputy leader, leading to claims it was a 'reverse takeover' this did little to shift Labour to the left.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that organisational strategies pursued by elites long played a highly influential role in the WP's evolution. The first section demonstrated that centralistic structures and democratic centralism enabled party leaders to make sweeping changes in ideology and party culture. Paramilitarism meant that the WP found reasons for rigid elite advancement processes and a centralistic internal basis of power. The second showed that the esoteric nature of policy formulation was contested as a reformist faction formed around the WP's parliamentary group. Their attempts at reform were often successful but as Grzymała-Busse's framework posits, democratisation was not always a reliable path to reform. This meant that the reformers eventually gave up on reforming the WP and left to start anew. The WP also supports the idea in Grzymała-Busse's framework that elites experienced in negotiating with outside groups and organisations or advanced horizontally are predisposed to seeking reform. Despite the WP's paramilitary features, these factors still affected its adaptation. In contrast, elites without such influences often resisted the break with Marxism-Leninism. Loyalty was emphasised in elite advancement and discipline was cherished but could not ameliorate the effects of expansion.

The WP and DL, nevertheless highlight that several qualifications are needed if we are to use Grzymała-Busse's framework to explain the development of WECP's and their post-Communist successors' following the collapse of Communism. This chapter supports her argument that democratisation may empower traditionalists to resist reform. However, it shows this does not mean that reformists were unable to take considerable steps to breaking with Communism or to implement electorally

driven policy reforms. Centralisation might seem an obvious way to overcome this. However, the case of the WP questions whether reforms aimed at centralising, office-seeking or social democratising were actually viable in 1989. While reformist elites were powerful and had drawn on experiences in negotiating with outsiders most had not accepted the need for such measures. Analysis also showed that radical mid-level elites could present obstacles to transformation just as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. Mid-level activists were a bulwark against social democratisation (and centralisation) in 1989. However, a majority of them did support breaking with Communism and broadening appeals unlike Grzymała-Busse's findings in CEE.

However, the role of traditionalists at elite level was more troubling for reformers. Viewing the WP's development through the lens of Grzymała-Busse's framework fails to account for how resistance from the WP's historic leaders also blocked reforms and social democratisation. Reformists argue that the WP could have been transformed if it were a typical orthodox Marxist-Leninist party, rather than one with a paramilitary organisation. However the historic leaders' confidence, refusal to abandon Marxism-Leninism or to step aside, and prestige in Northern Ireland also posed significant barriers to reform or centralisation. In this was the challenge facing reformist elites is comparable with those in other WECPs. This also shows how under democratic structures, a small group of elites who refuse to change can cause major problems for reformers in terms of undermining their programmatic reforms and damaging their public image.

This chapter also questions an understanding of WECPs based on Grzymała-Busse's ideas about centralisation. Analysis of the WP also demonstrates that this risks viewing experience in reform as a prerequisite to centralisation. Some ad hoc processes of centralisation took place, which elites do not associate with experiences gained from carrying out previous reforms but instead simply associate with trying to find solutions to resistance when it arose. They did not have a comprehensive plan to centralise. The reformists in the WP and the leadership of DL were not as convinced of the need to centralise as they should have done if the ideas in Grzymała-Busse's framework were capable of explaining their behaviour. They had professional backgrounds, experience in implementing reforms and in trying to broaden appeal but remained committed to internal democracy.

Paramilitarism and ideological change were burning issues. Paramilitarism certainly made it harder to transform the WP (and there were additional obstacles to transformation than in other WECPs), but democratisation almost achieved this feat. The slow pace of change convinced reformers that they were better off leaving the WP. It took time and the de-radicalising experience of government to break down opposition from elites and mid-level elites to social democratisation and before a decision on merging with Labour was possible through DL's internal democratic structures. The WP's reaction to the collapse of Communism and DL's initial positioning seem to add some relevance to Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that democracy was incompatible with social democratisation. However, DL got there eventually by accepting social democratic policies in coalition with Labour.

Parliamentarisation gave alternative sources of power by which reformers could bring about transformation. DL shows that Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that parties needed to centralise, social democratise and seek to office to regenerate is too simplistic for understanding WECPs' paths of transformation. This was not always feasible and they had other alternatives. However, DL failed to play a guessing game over coalition formation or to find ways to define itself in opposition to Labour. Having grown too close to Labour it was assimilated. DL's radical activists were also exhausted and disillusioned to the extent that they would no longer block a merger. A lack of centralisation and effort to build DL rather than streamlining or centralisation meant that activists did not stand in the way. Democratic Left was over within a decade.

Chapter 6:

The Communist Party of the Netherlands – the Democratisers

6.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the development of the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN). It demonstrates that drawing on Grzymala-Busse's ideas about elite advancement and organisational reform can help to explain how WECPs like the CPN gradually broke with key parts of their Communist identity before 1989. The chapter shows that the CPN's elite advancement processes promoted a leadership with an extremely high degree of experience in negotiating with outside groups/institutions and at carrying out reforms. Moreover, analysis here shows that such processes helped them to envisage and implement programmatic and organisational transformation. These elites pursued organisational reforms aimed at (and effective in) generating ideological renewal. Nonetheless, using the ideas in the framework to understand the development of the CPN is found to be problematic in several respects. Most significantly, this analysis shows that these elites avoided social democratisation and centralisation in response to exogenous shocks. It also shows that their experiences led them to gradually democratise the CPN. This was a successful route to breaking with Communism and programmatic reform.

The CPN's support swelled following World War Two in no small part because of its role in resisting Nazi occupation (van der Linden and Wormer 1989, p. 81, Voerman, 1989, p. 2). In 1946, it won over ten percent of the vote and its membership peaked at over 50,000 (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2). However, the CPN struggled to maintain its appeal as Cold War hostilities prompted mainstream parties to constrain its influence.

⁶ The CPN's supporters also became disillusioned by the actions of the Soviet Union while a decline in the number of industrial manual workers reduced its core support (Lucardie et al. 1995, p. 92, Voerman 1991, p. 460). The CPN's vote share fell to below four percent by 1967 and its membership to 11,000 (van der Linden and

⁶ In the post-war period CPN members were barred from posts in the civil service, access to public broadcasting and parliamentary committees on foreign affairs (see Lucardie 1991, p. 122).

Wormer 1989, p. 81). Its radicalism led to exclusion from progressive governments in the 1970s and it gained little experience in local government.

In the 1970s, the CPN's decline threatened its existence altogether and presented significant pressures for reform. It became a case of 'premature Perestroika' as it began transforming its programmes and electoral strategy before events unfolded in the Soviet-bloc (Voerman 1993, p. 157). However, greater ideological pluralism in the 1980s did not avert further decline and the CPN lost its three remaining seats in parliament in 1986 (see Table 6.1). This prompted an electoral alliance under the banner 'GroenLinks' with other small left parties the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP) and Political Party of the Radicals (PPR) in May 1989. The CPN subsequently dissolved itself in 1991 and fully amalgamated into GroenLinks.

Table 6.1: Electoral results of the CPN in parliamentary elections

Year	1946	1948	1952	1956	1959	1963	1967
Vote (per cent)	10.6	7.7	6.2	4.8	2.4	2.8	3.6

Year	1971	1972	1977	1981	1982	1986	1989*
Vote (per cent)	3.9	4.5	1.7	2.1	1.8	0.6	4.1

*Under the GroenLinks electoral alliance

(Staar 1990, 1985, 1981; Fenemma, 1988).

This chapter applies Grzymała-Busse's framework to four stages in the CPN's development. The first shows how the Stalinist Paul de Groot (one of the CPN's wartime leaders) manipulated elite advancement processes and used hierarchical institutional structures under democratic centralism to dominate the party from 1945–1977. This analysis traces how from the late 1960s the CPN's leaders sought to reverse its decline by relaxing recruitment processes and enrolling student activists (see Table 6.2). The second section analyses how a younger generation of orthodox leaders broke with de Groot and initiated democratisation to abandon Stalinism from 1977–1982. These leaders seemed an unlikely source of change. However, they had prior experiences that helped them to envisage reforms following electoral defeat in 1977. These elites drew on backgrounds that involved negotiation with outside groups and institutions, dialogue with the CPN's new student members and

experience in working with outsiders available to them because they had been ‘horizontally advanced’ from across a range of party institutions.

The third section begins by analysing how the CPN’s ‘old guard’ elite was replaced by a reformist leadership of (former-) student activists. It demonstrates that these new leaders were highly experienced in negotiating with outside groups and in undertaking prior reforms to broaden appeal. However, contrary to what Grzymała-Busse found in parties in CEE, they continued to democratise and did not seek social democratisation. This chapter then shows how democratisation was an effective instrument for reform which helped the leadership to replace Leninist ideology with feminism and other radical goals from 1982–1986. A final section analyses how the leadership continued to democratise the CPN with the aim of further programmatic reform from 1986–1989. They did this even after gaining additional experience in carrying out prior reforms. Democratisation helped to facilitate the formation of GroenLinks and to breaking with Communism. The leadership did not seek to overhaul institutional structures with the aim of centralising. However, with the PSP and PPR struggling to form an alliance it pursued a limited informal process of ‘centralisation’ or more specifically ‘elitist behaviour’ in holding secret elite level meetings that helped to move the CPN into GroenLinks.

Table 6.2: Membership figures of the CPN

Year	1948	1950	1957	1962	1972	1977
Members	53,000	27,392	12,858	11,000	10,000	15,300

Year	1980	1981	1982	1986	1989	1991
Members	15,510	14,400	13,900	8,500	5,700	3,400

(Lucardie and Voerman, 2003; Voerman and Wormer, 1997; Voerman, 1995; Voerman, 1989a; Staar, 1990, 1988, 1985, 1981; van der Linden and Wormer, 1989).

6.2 Dutch Stalinism

Under De Groot the CPN promoted the Stalinist model for the Netherlands. It advocated a dictatorship of the proletariat and proclaimed Stalin to be ‘the greatest social reformer, scholar and statesman of mankind’ (CPN 1952, p. 10). De Groot established a personality cult and statutes upheld democratic centralism (CPN 1952,

1958). Discipline was ensured through control committees appointed by the party executive and latter by regional level organisations to expel dissidents and to regulate local organisations (Voerman 1989b, p. 21). Consequently, a large number of delegates at party congresses were either party functionaries or ideologues picked by highly disciplined local party leaders. Little room existed for internal debate at local meetings that were policed by party officials. Furthermore, minimal debate was allowed at congresses which simply supported the leadership's proposals, and factions were banned. Membership was restricted to the ideologically pure and members were required to spend much of the week canvassing or selling the party paper. The Party Board (executive) included obedient functionaries and nominated a small Daily Board to run the party which De Groot dominated.

Democratic centralism allowed the leadership to weed out internal opposition and ideological pluralism inherited from the fragmented Communist wartime resistance movement. De Groot broke with the Soviet Union and Khrushchev over de-Stalinisation making the CPN a Stalinist party in isolation (Devlin, 1972a, 1972b). Thereafter, the leadership stamped out criticism from younger elites and the parliamentary group who demanded freedom of discussion and de-Stalinisation (Voerman 1989b, p. 6). These critics had been recruited at a young age and were once loyal to De Groot but became increasingly independent as they grew older and worked in parliament. Opposition in the Communist Unity Trade Union Federation was also purged before it was liquidated in 1959 (Kool, 1960, p. 22). Likewise, Maoists were expelled.

The critics in the Party Board and parliamentary group were replaced by even younger apparatchiks (many having been teenagers in the wartime resistance) who were loyal to De Groot and dependent on him for their positions (Stratton, 2000). Most of them had little professional or political experience of working outside the party. New rules also blocked them from gaining influence in several party functions, which limited their influence. This also helped to remove dissidents who had combined parliamentary and trade union work with other activities in the Board (Voerman 1989b, p. 6). By the late 1960s, health problems forced De Groot to relinquish some control to this younger generation. He left Parliament in 1967, being replaced by his loyal foot soldiers. These included Marcus Bakker who became parliamentary leader

and Henk Hoekstra who became Party Chair. Turnover in the elite remained limited, insular and based on ideological conformity. Those apparatchiks who were promoted to top positions worked in De Groot's shadow since he remained an honorary lifelong member of the leadership.

Remarkably, however, the CPN became one of the leading WECPs in terms of programmatic reform. A major factor shaping this development was the decision to relax recruitment regulations in response to changes in Dutch society. Increased levels of student activism and the emergence of new peace, environmentalist and feminist social movements led young left-wing radicals to show increased interest in the CPN's revolutionary politics. It also appealed to them because it offered a critical realist critique of positivism in the social sciences and social democracy that dominated Dutch universities (Fennema 1988, p. 166).

The CPN's leaders (including De Groot) opportunistically tailored appeals to students and forged links with their protests in a bid to bolster support. They tried to exert influence on the student movement by infiltrating student union debates in the late 1960s. In 1968, the CPN's journal *Politics and Culture* claimed that students were not simply young members of the bourgeoisie but allies of workers who faced similar forms of oppression (Fennema 1988, p. 160). In 1969, Communist workers supported students occupying Amsterdam University by constructing bridges between buildings that enabled students to get supplies and break police blockades.

The CPN's leaders had reservations that students were too anarchic and liberal. Some student leaders were refused membership while others had to write self-criticisms denouncing their bourgeois pasts. However, this was soon relaxed and from 1972–1977 approximately 5,000 students joined, boosting the CPN's membership, which reached 15,000 by 1980 (Linden and Wormer 1989, p. 81, Fennema 1988, p. 164). The composition of the CPN's membership and congress delegates changed dramatically as the students displaced the CPN's traditional recruiting ground, the orthodox Communist Youth Organisation.⁷ Before 1977 the effects were small. The

⁷ The increase in the number of students is reflected in survey data on the characteristics of CPN congress delegates that reports only 4.2% (18 of 432) delegates were students at the 1972 congress, rising to 12.7% (69 of 545 delegates) in 1975 and this continued thereafter; the number of teachers and

students generally upheld the CPN's rigid party culture and refrained from public criticisms of its Stalinist programmes. The students were excluded from the party leadership and few were engaged for their intellectual abilities in theoretical work at the research bureau. Instead they were encouraged to stay active at universities and to sell the party paper *De Waarheid* (Fennema 1988, p. 164).

6.3 Breaking with Stalinism

Losses at the 1977 national parliamentary election reduced the CPN's share of the vote from four and a half per cent to below two per cent and it lost five of its seven parliamentary seats (Voerman 1992, p. 23). The CPN had expected to grow and the defeat turned the students' latent criticisms of Stalinism into open dissent (Fennema 1988, pp. 169–72). The leadership had wrongly believed that the students could be controlled. However, the old guard in the leadership carried out the first major reforms. De Groot blamed their lack of revolutionary spirit, accommodation of Eurocommunism, and the influence of students and civil servants for the party's weakening appeal to manual workers (Fennema 1988, p. 169). The old guard broke ranks and blocked his attempt to introduce new rules for expelling members who were not subservient to him in the wartime resistance. The Party Board stripped De Groot of lifelong membership of the leadership and restored relations with the Soviet Union (Fennema 1988, p. 170).

The CPN's formal leaders now came to the fore (Devlin, 1977a). The leadership was dominated by a clique in the party's small daily leadership the Executive Board including Bakker, Hoekstra, Joop Wolff (editor of *De Waarheid* and MP) and his brother Jaap Wolff – head of the research bureau. This old guard had done De Groot's bidding. Joop Wolff designed his theoretical propaganda and Bakker wrote the 'Red Book' (1958) which persecuted former resistance leaders and dissidents in the Communist Unity Trade Union Federation as traitors and British spies leading to their expulsion (Kool 1961, p. 22).

academic professionals also increased while the number with manual industrial jobs declined significantly (Voerman 1991, p. 469, 1989a, p. 8; Fennema 1988, pp. 160-1).

To those outside the party it was surprising that seemingly highly orthodox elites, with little experience in carrying out (or desire for) reform, broke with De Groot (De Roo Interview). It was a desperate situation and they realised that the party could implode or vanish altogether if it did not respond to the election defeat. However, Grzymała-Busse's arguments about the factors that can equip elites with experiences beneficial to reform help us to explain (and re-examine) their actions. These leaders joined the CPN through the wartime resistance movement rather than because of revolutionary zeal. Had it not been for the wartime situation they might well have joined the social democrats instead, and to activists they had always seemed more like social democrats with Stalinist techniques (Izeboud Interview, 14.05.09, van der Pilj Interview). The Wolff brothers had links to groups outside the party including artists, and intellectuals that helped them develop a critical approach to Stalinism and to engage in theoretical debate. This group largely followed the orthodox line out of loyalty to (and dependence on) De Groot rather than ideological conviction. When this loyalty declined there was little holding them back from seeking reform.

The break with De Groot was also more gradual than met the eye. The old guard had long encountered pressures to moderate. This included negotiation with outsiders in parliament that made them more pragmatic. Some members of the party's daily Executive Board worked as parliamentarians allowing this pressure to feed back into the leadership. Cold War paranoia and the CPN's distinctive sub-culture made it easy for some of the old guard to socialise almost exclusively with fellow orthodox Communists. However, during the 1970s they also held internal talks with student members on issues including the Soviet Union, and student politics. The students had plenty of experience in negotiating with outside groups and called (within the confines of party meetings) for them to adapt. They questioned the leadership's demand that criticisms of the party line remain inside party meetings and opposed the expulsion of those who 'went public'. Contact with the students affected the old guard (and Hoekstra in particular) and they become responsive to accommodating their demands for greater discussion and ideological renewal. These demands grew in intensity following the 1977 election defeat (Voerman 1993, p. 161).

The old guard had wanted to break with De Groot before the 1977 election but feared triggering a split. However, electoral defeat weakened his support enough to get rid

of him. The old guard's longstanding public defence of Stalinism also overshadowed their limited but not insignificant record in proposing and carrying out prior reforms to broaden appeal. De Groot had constrained them but they found some opportunities to modify the party line. They had made some gradual inroads to reproaching the Soviet Union in the early 1970s and Hoekstra signed, against De Groot's wishes, international Communist resolutions with the aim of breaking the party's isolation, (Devlin, 1977a, 1977b). Moreover, they had tried to broaden appeal by embracing the peace movement, emphasising issues appealing to feminists including abortion policy and had been at the forefront of tailoring policy to students. De Groot spent little time with the students. Indeed, without the efforts of other members of the old guard, their recruitment would have been blocked.

Bakker had taken great strides in accepting parliamentary democracy. He had some room for manoeuvre in this as De Groot advocated something similar in the 1950s before slipping back into revolutionary appeals. Even so, De Groot constrained the leadership and regularly re-drafted Bakker's speeches in parliament. At the 1975 congress he also blocked their programmatic reforms that aimed to moderate social policies to appeal to new groups including public sector workers in health and education. De Groot also blocked their attempts to open up elite advancement to the CPN's students and prevented this by using his influence to reduce the size of the Board.

But reforming the CPN did not come easy to the old guard. Initially, they continued the rapprochement with the Soviet Union. In 1978, Joop Wolff visited Czechoslovakian hardliner Vasil Bilak on holiday and the CPN supported the Soviet treatment of dissidents Orlov and Sakharov, triggering internal dissent (Fennema 1988, p. 170). The old guard's experience in negotiating with outsiders exposed them to pressures to reform but they still lacked ideas in terms of how to reform the party in 1977. Their thinking remained rooted to the past and they still struggled to question the fundamentals of Communism.⁸ However, the leadership initiated a phase of ideological renewal at the 1978 congress and began drafting a new programme

⁸ In 1986 Bakker still argued that and Communism would once again become an ideal (Voerman 1993, p. 168). In 1991 Joop Wolff declared that the collapse of the Soviet Union was catastrophic (Abrahams, 1991).

(Voerman 1991, p. 465). They also used their power at the congress to advance trusted prominent student activists into the board and jeopardised rapprochement with the Soviet Union by condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Party Chair Henk Hoekstra led the committee to draft a new programme and he himself wrote most of it. Hoekstra searched far and wide for ideas, analysing party history and purges. Having accepted that he did not understand how to democratise the party, he even asked counterparts in the PSP how the CPN could democratise and studied their internal rules. The leadership had some experience in carrying out reforms and encountered resistance to previous attempts to broaden appeal but this had not convinced them of a need to replace democratic centralism with new centralised structures. However, they did lack professional backgrounds which Grzymała-Busse found had predisposed elites to centralise in CPs in CEE.

Hoekstra's proposed draft programme, the 'Dutch Road to Socialism' (1981), advocated democratisation, broader appeals and breaking with Stalinism. This criticised the CPN's 'dogmatic rigidity' and ideological 'codifying and disciplining' and renounced Stalinism (Voerman 1991, p. 465, CPN 1981, p. 18). The leadership did not force the programme through but distributed it for discussion throughout the party and allowed local level debate with the aim of freeing-up criticism of Stalinism. The leadership's tolerance of dissidence ensured that the days of prefabricated congress decisions with almost unanimous votes in support of the leadership ended. The 1982 congress endorsed the proposals for ideological renewal and a break with Stalin amid an outpouring of criticism of Stalinism (Devlin, 1982b). The congress also expressed support for Charter 77 and Solidarność movements in CEE rather than the regimes there. In line with the leadership's proposals it asserted that the party should not write history, its opposition to a one-party state and recognised the need for differences of opinion within the party.

The old guard failed to anticipate that democratisation was a double-edged sword. The leadership lost control as groups (such as feminists) were empowered in a spirit of openness to question the CPN's Leninist and Communist identity and demanded further reform (Fennema 1988, p. 191). The result was a congress decision to draft another new more detailed and reformist programme. Discussions also saw feminists

criticise the abuse of women by Russian soldiers during the World War Two, which evoked fierce debate. The leadership's moves to increase elite turnover in the Board and publications (and to open up elite advancement processes) from 1978–1982 enabled a cohort of (former-) students, feminists, public sector professionals and newcomers to rapidly advance to elite positions.⁹ The new elites also demanded further changes and persuaded the old guard to agree to withdraw Bakker's 'Red Book', renounce the CPN's Stalinist purges of the 1950s and call for those who were expelled to re-join at the 1982 congress. These made a symbolic break with the past and dealt a blow to the old guard.

6.4.1 A student leadership

The old guard realised that a younger generation with more authentic and spontaneous ideas for reform was waiting in the wings. With these students, public sector workers and members of new social movements calling for reforms, they decided to gradually handed power over to them. Following the 1982 congress elites with student and feminist backgrounds were firmly in control of the parliamentary leadership and the Board. A new dominant group in the small Daily Board emerged to informally run the party including Ina Brouwer (parliamentary leader), Ton van Hoek, Boe Thio and Elli Izeboud (Party Chair). Since 1978 this group had gained experience of working in the Board and were promoted because they were mildly reformist. The old guard trusted them not to go too far in implementing reforms. The new leaders responded to the CPN's decline by continuing to democratise in pursuit of more flexible programmes and electoral strategy. They took this further than the old guard foresaw.

The new leaders' experiences in academia, student politics and new social movements were more conducive to reform than those available to the old guard and the generally more orthodox elites advanced from the CPN's youth organisation. Their discussions and the scope for autonomous action were tightly constrained. The new leaders' greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions meant they were more exposed to pressures to respond to electoral decline and to broaden appeal.

⁹ Prominent elites including Ton van Hoek, Marius Ernsting, Elsbeth Etty, Elli Izeboud and Harry van der Berg came from the student movement.

Working with other groups and brokering compromises in the student movement had also made the new leaders to be more pragmatic than their predecessors, making it easier for them to sacrifice elements of orthodox Communism. Moreover, their backgrounds gave them a plethora of new ideas and ideological inspiration with which to envisage broadening the CPN's programmes. Many were social scientists who had encountered Eurocommunist theories and debates surrounding social change in the Netherlands including the decline of the industrial working class which gave them ideas for reform. All of these influences were unavailable to the old guard.

Nobody could have foreseen such newcomers rapidly rising to top positions in a party hitherto dominated by long-established elites. The new party leader (in 1981) Ina Brouwer only joined the CPN in 1973, and had been in the Board for just a year. She has also come from a middle class a centre-right background. Brouwer joined the CPN through encountering it in working for organisations providing legal services for low income workers rather than because of theoretical or philosophical motivations. However, it became easier for members like Brouwer to gain elite positions as the old guard sought to promote both younger and female candidates with links to other social organisations to broaden appeal. Furthermore, the new leaders called for further elite turnover and Izeboud only accepted being Party Chair in 1982 on the basis that at least a third of Board members were women. During the 1970s it was normal for candidate committees to propose lists of candidates for the Board which let congresses choose from a range of candidates. However, few students were put forward as lists were dominated by orthodox candidates. After 1978 the leadership made candidate committees more open and pluralistic and congress delegates were increasingly free to choose critically minded Board members.

The cohort of new leaders found that portable skills and experiences gained from prior activism helped them to reform the CPN. These included practice in debating, practical organisational skills, designing successful policy appeals and reforms, an awareness of the institutional structures, developing campaigns, formulating strategies to overcome entrenched opposition within institutions; working and compromising with other movements, political parties and trade unions; organising activists and protests, and public speaking. Several of the CPN's new leaders had held senior positions in university and national student union organisations as well as new social

movements. These positions gave them prior opportunities to work together and arenas in which to discuss reforming the party. They also developed a group identity and supported one another's rise up the party hierarchy.

The new leaders had a high degree of experience in negotiating with outsiders and responding to their demands. They had seen a need to broaden appeal to feminists, public sector and white-collar workers rather than just the industrial working classes. They had also developed more pragmatism than their predecessors and encountered the need for compromising excessive demands to win broader appeal. However, while they sought to broaden appeal in response to electoral decline they did not show relentless pragmatism or a desire to enter mainstream politics. Instead they used their radical New Left ideas to renew the CPN's Communist ideology. These leaders believed in a range of New Left perspectives alongside Marxism and accepted the need for ideological pluralism which gave them more options than simply accepting social democracy.

These politicians had moved closer to social democracy in ideological terms but did not wish to join the social democratic PvdA and sought more radical alternatives. Negotiation with outside groups benefited reform without requiring social democratisation. The leadership were by no means ideological wheeler-dealers who would opportunistically seek to meet the preferences of the mainstream voters. They were very different from elites with similar experiences of negotiating with outsiders and state administration that Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. They show that pragmatism was just one type of skill that could be beneficial to party change alongside expertise in other ideas and philosophies. These different skills need to be separated if Grzymała-Busse's framework is to be useful in explaining the development of WECPs like the CPN.

In the early 1980s the CPN's leaders rapidly broke with key aspects of Communism. However, they cautiously encouraged fellow reformers to keep criticisms under wraps until after the 1981 election to avoid damaging the party. Subsequently, they still sought to avoid breaking with Communism altogether. They preferred a gradual approach to reforming and renewing Communism contrary to what Grzymała-Busse tells us about how elites equipped in societal negotiation are likely to behave. The

leadership still valued the CPN's radical heritage and only eventually abandoned Communism only when they saw that their programmatic reforms had failed to regenerate support. This process demonstrates that even party leaders equipped with prior experiences and skills beneficial to change might still see reasons to avoid making full use of them.

The CPN's new leaders had a high degree of experience in carrying out reforms and broadening appeal. They had done this in the student movement. There they worked to change student organisations by building appeals beyond the confines of particular student groups and to ally both extreme and moderate student organisations. They also worked to adjust appeals to talk to a wider audience and they reformed the internal workings of university administration. Further, they had advocated reforms at internal party meetings during the 1970s and some worked with the old guard to propose earlier reforms at the 1975 congress and to break with Stalinism after the 1977 election defeat. The leaders had encountered resistance to prior reforms and many had professional backgrounds. However, they did not envisage centralisation as a way to transform the CPN as Grzymała-Busse found elites did in CEE.

The leadership pursued democratisation as a means by which to carry out reform for several reasons. First they believed democratisation could secure a broader radical left appeal. Second, they believed centralisation would have encountered overwhelming opposition from new members who were increasingly anarchistic and were demanding democratic accountability and for power to be decentralised to local branches. Third, undertaking earlier reforms had not shown them that significant advantages were to be gained from centralising. Instead, they developed a consensual and inclusive style of leadership in the student movement in which they mediated between rival groups to connect them and broker alliances and compromises. In doing this they encouraged competing groups to talk to one another and 'led from the back rather than the front' (Izeboud Interview, 14.05.09). Their success in this convinced them of the advantages in such a style of leadership. This was reinforced by their experiences in pursuing prior reforms within the party. These showed them the benefits of working intensively with mid-level elites to build support for reform rather than sidestepping them.

Fourth, these leaders were averse to centralising because they held deep seated belief in participatory democracy which was of intrinsic value for them and they passionately believed that the CPN should thoroughly democratise. They had developed this commitment to democracy within the student movement. Dutch student protests initially addressed materialist issues like improving student income but soon evolved into post-materialist struggles over values and defending the rights of others. The students' campaigns addressed a lack of democratic decision-making. They focused on enhancing accountability in university research policies, representative decision-making, rights for university employees, the content of course syllabuses, epistemological pluralism in the social sciences, expanding higher education to lower social classes; criticism of the Vietnam War, cruise missiles, apartheid, and the neutron bomb. Some elites with student backgrounds including Geert Lameris in Groningen remained committed to democratic centralism (Lucardie Interview, 10.04.08). However, centralism and centralisation were an anathema to most of the new elites who were generally hesitant to streamlining or expelling hardliners.

Fifth, the students also saw democratisation as a force for change. Their protests were moderately effective as Dutch universities established representative bodies that increased their influence in decision-making. This gave them a demonstrable record of success in showing that democratisation could be instrumental in generating reform. The students had reformed universities to ensure that marginalised voices were taken seriously and saw reforming the CPN as a similar process. The leadership saw that their own calls for change had been ignored under democratic centralism and the CPN's centralistic culture. They were sceptical that building new centralistic organisational structures or forcing through changes would avoid similar mistakes. Moreover, they believed that such unresponsive structures needed to be replaced to increase the party's appeal to both activists, other groups in society and voters. The leadership sought to tap into views within the party and wider society which had been suppressed for too long, to break with old dogma, and to renew programmes by democratising.

Grzymała-Busse's framework portrays leaders who do not centralise their organisations as exhibiting a lack of skills in organisational reform or being naïve out

of a lack of experience in carrying out reform. This was not the case in the CPN. Its leaders were effective organisers who understood the risks and opportunities democratisation involved. However, they pursued a conscious strategy of continuing to democratise because they realised that their party's configuration of members and mid-level elites meant that democratisation could help to provide support for abandoning vulnerable ideas including Leninism and orthodox Communism.

The CPN's leaders also believed that democratic debate offered a way to help them bridge the gap between orthodox Communists and a minority of ultra-reformists who would expel Communists, break with Communism, abolish the party or establish looser social movements. The leadership aimed to keep everyone on board and to reconcile differences while renewing the party and breaking with Leninism. In doing this they used their inclusive style of leadership developed in the student movement. They believed that a patient and democratic process of change had advantages in averting a damaging split between the party's rival wings. The leadership also believed that reforming Communism would be easier with the support of the old guard who had useful experience in activism and parliamentary politics. Several of them remained on the Board until the mid-1980s including Marcus Bakker and Jaap Wolff and were consulted on reforms and helped to build support for them.

6.4.2 Breaking with Leninism

In parliamentary elections in 1981 and 1982 the CPN only marginally increased its share of the vote compared with that which it polled in 1977. The new leadership continued to feel the pressure to change and in response deepened democratisation in several respects. First, the leadership spoke out for a less rigid and more decentralised party culture and encouraged debate at all levels. They organised more meetings than their predecessors had on marginalised issues including feminism and the environment and they increasingly sponsored open debate. This sped up the informal erosion of democratic centralism in the first half of the 1980s – although there was little change in the CPN's statutes. Democratising the party was relatively easy as their efforts linked in well with the demands for reform and greater discussion that the rank and file were making. A more permissive approach was enough to enable this to begin changing programmes.

Second, the new leaders relaxed membership criteria in 1982 by reducing restrictions on Christians joining the party to make it more pluralistic. Third, the leadership decentralised the powers of the national Board by establishing working groups to devise policy on major issues. Their work influenced the Board's draft programmes for congresses. While the Board chose the committee's chairs, reformist mid-level elites were encouraged to sit on them. The committees became a venue of open debate and a driving force for reform.

Fourth, the leadership's permissive approach enabled party publications including the daily paper *De Waarheid* to become editorially autonomous. This soon caused tensions as 'ultra-reformists' at *De Waarheid* criticised the leadership's gradual strategy of compromise with the orthodox-wing, ongoing relations with the Soviet Union and lobbied for co-operation with other small left parties (Fennema 1988, pp. 172–3). Some of them also advocated social democratisation. Internal democratisation did not only empower the orthodox-wing, the ultra-reformists campaigned for radical reforms in the Board and at congresses. This group included students and activists struggling to come to terms with their families' Communist backgrounds or to justify Cold War controversies to their peers. However, their proposals to break with Communism were rejected at the 1982 congress (Devlin, 1972a). *De Waarheid's* criticisms strengthened the case for reform but were damaging and unwanted by the leadership. Frustrated by the slow pace of change several leading ultra-reformists left the party.

The leadership took a major step towards democratising the party by introducing a new intellectual journal called *Komma* in 1982. It published a wide range of perspectives on issues such as women's rights, political power, pornography, racism, rights for foreign workers, Eurocommunism and feminism. Even ultra-reformists at *De Waarheid* criticised *Komma's* pluralism for going too far. Its content was in stark contrast to *Politics and Culture*, another publication run by the national board and Marcus Bakker. In 1984, *Komma* also began publishing articles in collaboration with politicians from the PPR and PSP, which broke party discipline (*Komma* 1984, 1985). Almost every issue of *Komma* became problematic for the leadership. Its editors were summoned to central office to explain themselves but the party's leaders soon resigned themselves to *Komma's* autonomy. The leadership had not streamlined

decision-making points but created a new one and had lost control of it. However, this did not serve the interests of orthodox activists as Grzymała-Busse's arguments anticipate, but rather those seeking reform.

Fifth, the leadership gave greater freedom to local party organisations. Reformist local branches like those in Nijmegen had questioned the authority of central office and the national leadership to impose candidates on them since 1977. The old guard had increasingly struggled to control such branches. Several branches had sought to democratise themselves and to appoint students, feminists and environmentalists as congress delegates, and local party chairs in competitive elections instead of the party hacks being nominated from above. Young local councillors with student backgrounds had also become increasingly pragmatic through working in local councils and demanded increased inter-party co-operation in the search for greater influence. The new leadership was concerned about losing the CPN's distinctive identity through a national level electoral alliance with its small left rivals. However, it endorsed co-operation on a local level and gave greater room for local branches to make their own local coalitions and to run their own affairs.

Local councillors were also granted an increased role in the national Board's working groups where they pointed to the increased influence they had gained from local electoral alliances. They also formed a network to lobby the leadership for a national level alliance with the PSP and PPR. The CPN's decline meant that its only realistic chance of gaining a seat in the European Parliamentary election in 1984 was in coalition with the PPR and PSP. The leadership agreed to an alliance termed the Green Progressive Accord. This also decentralised power as the CPN's Member of the European Parliament, Nel van Dijk, worked closely with the other parties in Brussels which became an arena for continued programmatic convergence between the parties. There they wrote joint documents and trust emerged between elites in a joint decision-making board giving rise to further pressure for closer relations.

Sixth, the new leadership took a massive step toward democratising the CPN by introducing 'Horizontal groups' or factions in 1982. The CPN had traditionally deflected calls for increasing women's representation by referring feminists to its women's organisation which dismissed their concerns as bourgeois and elitist

(Fennema 1988, p. 191). Feminists increasingly demanded rights to organise autonomously from the leadership in order to debate issues without fear of being punished and to campaign within the party for equal representation at congresses and in the leadership (Fennema 1988, p. 191). Feminists within the leadership including Party Chair Elli Izeboud had become convinced of the need for factions through debates in feminist organisations. They promoted their demands and convinced the leadership to sanction the formation of factions.

The formation of horizontal groups broke the CPN's vertical hierarchical lines of authority and adherence to a single party line. Minority groups of activists in local branches were able to mobilise and organise meetings on a national level with several hundred members that channelled their demands for reform. The leadership endorsed these meetings and offered assistance in organising them. Members of the leadership also participated actively in horizontal groups to campaign for reform and the horizontal groups were allowed to present motions at party congresses.

The feminists' success encouraged other groups to organise factions including black communists and homosexuals. Increased demand for reform meant that even foreign workers were guaranteed representation on the CPN's national Board. This broke with the party's traditional fears that they threatened the livelihoods of Dutch workers and were foreign spies (Fennema 1988, p. 191). However, orthodox communists also formed a horizontal group 'Horizontal Overlag van Communisten' (HOC) which was largely focused around Amsterdam and Groningen. This began publishing its own journal *Manifest* to criticise the leadership's reforms and the erosion of democratic centralism. Empowered by democratisation and decentralisation they opposed the leadership's reforms and campaigned to retain an orthodox Communist identity at congresses and party meetings while the leadership had little power to rein them in. Orthodox figures made symbolic appeals that portrayed the young reformers' proposals as a betrayal of the party's role in the wartime resistance and post-war labour movement.

HOC wreaked chaos in Groningen. There, the orthodox figurehead Geert Lameris maintained democratic centralism to dominate local party affairs during the 1980s (Voerman Interview, 10.04.08). HOC refused to sell *De Waarheid* in Groningen,

which brought it to the brink of financial collapse (Fennema 1988, p. 173). It also blocked calls for co-operation with the PSP and PPR in local politics which would weaken ideological purity and during the 1986 election its members cut party leader Ina Brouwer's name off campaign posters in rejection of her reforms. However, even in the orthodox wing's bastion of Groningen it could not use democratic centralism to fully stifle debate as student reformists began organising their own cross-branch discussions.

Although HOC were a minority group, they punched above their weight in debates. They were formidable opponents and highly effective organisers. The reformers initially struggled to counter them at party meetings and conferences. While reformist branches regularly nominated congress delegates reflecting the diversity among their members, HOC fought dirty and tried to pack congresses with orthodox delegates. It campaigned behind the scenes in an attempt to block reformist candidates and to promote orthodox ones. HOC's older activists had detailed knowledge of internal party regulations and institutions and gained a disproportionate amount of speaking time at party meetings. They were also prolific in holding meetings to draft policy proposals making them strong in the 'paper fight' at congresses. The reformers had plenty of skills and experiences beneficial to reform but still found that the orthodox-wing were powerful opponents who in many respects out-skilled them. Even when reformists occupied most elite positions it took them time to fully learn how the party's institutions worked and to outmanoeuvre the orthodox groups.

However, the changing composition of the CPN's membership meant that students and public sector workers increasingly entered the mid-level elite – a group that was detached from the traditions of orthodox Communism (Voerman 1995, p. 122). Therefore, HOC became outnumbered and was comprehensively defeated in democratic votes. Because membership change made its struggle to sabotage reform futile, streamlining by the leadership was not necessary. The democratisation of congresses meant that HOC's representatives in the mid-level elite were unable to block reform. The CPN shows that WECPs' local leaders and mid-level elites were not necessarily hard-liners. Unlike Grzymała-Busse's findings in CEE, most of the mid-level elite were not predisposed to stalling reforms that broadened appeal. Democratisation empowered orthodox mid-level elites to oppose reform but they

could not prevent it. HOC gradually lost influence and suffered a series of defeats as it lost at the 1982 congress on breaking with Stalinism, programmatic reforms at the 1984 congress and failed to block co-operation with the PSP and PPR in the election for the European parliament in 1984.

Several hardliners also accepted the need for reform following the suppression of Polish workers (Fennema 1988, p. 173). Democratisation also presented the orthodox-wing with a strategic dilemma which Grzymała-Busse's framework fails to recognise. While the orthodox mid-level of the party had incentives to engage in factionalism and criticism of the leadership, many of them had deep ideological reservations about organising as an internal opposition. This meant that some refrained from joining HOC or eventually fell in line out of misplaced loyalty.

The leadership used the 1984 party congress as a launch pad for reform and developed unprecedented debate. It introduced new procedures that allowed each member to propose amendments. It also organised a series of regional and national conferences at which it encouraged activists to propose amendments on highly pluralistic draft party programmes (drafted by the leadership) without fear of being punished. This process brought more activists into the policy making process and involved an open climate of debate.

The result was chaos. As the leadership had intended there was an outburst of tension and new ideas for reform. So many amendments were proposed (around 3,500) that the congress was spread out over a month rather than lasting for one weekend as planned (Koeneman et al. 1984, p. 27). The leadership had correctly anticipated that it would struggle to control policy making at the congress and time constraints meant that not all of its proposals were discussed. Congress proceedings were also opened to journalists for the first time and media coverage of the intense debates helped to illustrate that the party was reforming. The CPN's newfound confidence with internal debate did not go unnoticed by the leaders of its potential allies the PSP and PPR.

At the congress the leadership suffered defeats on some issues like immigration and wage policies and was surprised that the congress moderated party policy on the monarchy by accepting that it could remain in place. However, the congress largely

moved the party in the direction that the reformist leadership wanted. Reform minded horizontal groups played a strong influence on the new programme (Fennema 1988, p. 191). The orthodox wing was defeated as the programme replaced the notion of class struggle as the engine of history with multiple ideas about social conflict – between man and nature, man and woman, North and South, hetero- and homosexuality (Lucardie et al. 1993, p. 43, Voerman 1992, p. 24). The party broke with Marxism-Leninism replacing it with Marxism-Feminism (Voerman 1995, p. 115). It sought to ally different radical forces rather than act as the vanguard of the working class (Lucardie 1984, p. 30).

HOC divided over how to respond to defeat at the 1984 congress and its Amsterdam contingent left to form the Association of Dutch Communists (Lucardie et al. 1995, p. 96). The leadership's faith that democracy could keep everyone on board whilst renewing the party with aims of electoral expansion failed. However, the streamlining that did occur is better seen as a process of voluntary rather than institutional streamlining. The orthodox-wing was weakened by the split but rather than break with Communism altogether the leadership continued its attempts to accommodate it.

Informal organisational democratisation preceded the changes in the CPN's policies and pushed democratic centralism aside in the early 1980s. This meant that the leadership's authority was continually contested. Even when the CPN's leaders encountered attempts to sabotage their gradual reforms they refrained from centralisation. Nevertheless, democratisation drove reform and gave the party a makeover. It can seemingly be just as effective as centralisation in stimulating reform or sweeping aside orthodox Communist ideology. However, the CPN echoes Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that democratisation rooted parties to protest politics. The CPN moved closer to social democracy in this period but remained a niche radical left party committed to revolutionary and systemic change (CPN, 1984). Congress decisions and debates indicated that mid-level elites wanted to remain a radical alternative. If the leadership had desired to transform the CPN into a mainstream social democratic office-seeker then democratic debate was unlikely to support this and in all likelihood centralisation would have been required. However, the leadership did not think it had the power to centralise in any event.

The leadership continued to democratise after the congress. In 1985 it recommended statutes that emphasised optimum room for the formation of opinions and contributions of members, democratic decision-making, more autonomous districts and branches, a larger role for internal groups, rights protecting members from punishment and publishing rights for minority opinions (Voerman 1991, p. 466). The leadership also had other resources by which it could promote programmatic reforms rather than simply doing so through organisational changes. Brouwer used her role as the public face of the party to make stands against HOC. She made symbolic protests with Christian democrat and liberal politicians at the Polish Embassy in support of dissidents from the Soviet Union and used speeches in parliament to promote a reformist agenda.

6.5 Breaking with Communism and forming GroenLinks

The electoral rewards of breaking with Stalinism and Leninism were nil. The CPN lost its remaining three seats at the 1986 parliamentary election which was a hard lesson for the CPN's leaders who hoped that their reforms would bring electoral expansion success. The CPN's leaders who were equipped with experiences in negotiating with outside groups and institutions were unable to develop appeals that resonated with voters. This failure could be blamed on the democratic process that underpinned the development of their policies and subsequently helped to produce multifaceted, inconsistent and complex appeals. However, this 'highly skilled' leadership had also strongly supported the programmatic reforms. Loosening the bonds of democratic centralism had also posed new problems. This made it harder to co-ordinate campaigns and mass rallies, and intensive canvassing was replaced with internal debate. Even parliamentarians had stopped donating their salaries to the party in the early 1980s.

The CPN, PSP and PPR lost six of their nine seats in 1986 which seemed to confirm arguments that a national electoral alliance was necessary and that they could not survive alone. Attempts to build such an alliance had stalled in 1985 as the PSP's party congress voted against co-operation but reformers had also criticised the CPN's leaders' hesitancy to endorsing such initiatives. Following the election defeat the leadership became convinced that an alliance with the PSP and PPR was necessary (van Hoek Interview, 08.04.08). This could provide a basis for further programmatic

reforms and electoral expansion. Their pragmatism, pluralism, acceptance of deeper ties at local level/European co-operation and internal reforms made an alliance more viable and more favourable to the PSP and PPR.

However, it was not until this electoral alliance had been formed and Communism had collapsed in CEE that the leadership fully accepted the need for a merger as a route to breaking with Communist symbolism. The CPN's leaders did not rapidly break with Communism following the 1986 election as Grzymała-Busse's framework would lead us to expect of an elite so experienced in negotiation with outside social groups. Instead they continued to tread cautiously, being well aware that any merger (and end of Dutch Communism) would depend on events in the other parties (Lucardie et al. 1995, p. 96). They could also bide their time with the next election not scheduled until 1990. The CPN's leaders proposed conferences with the other parties to discuss closer co-operation in 1987 but Browuer did not publicly endorse an electoral alliance until 1988 (Voerman 1990, p. 2).

By 1986 the CPN's leaders had an exceptionally high degree of experience in implementing programmatic and institutional reforms. They had continued to reform policies after the election defeat and took steps to replace blanket opposition to European integration with more progressive alternative visions for it. They also met Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union with approval having made similar changes themselves already (Voerman 1990, p. 1). However, they still did not attempt to centralise or streamline the CPN's organisational structures to force through programmatic change or a new electoral strategy in response to the CPN's electoral oblivion. The democratic internal organisation that they had developed during the early 1980s made this an even more unrealistic option. The aim of closer co-operation with the PSP and PPR posed additional barriers to centralising because their New Left partners would have strongly opposed such measures. Continued democratisation also empowered mid-level elites to campaign in favour of co-operation and to outnumber the orthodox wing (who opposed making compromises with other parties) in debates.

New statutes at the CPN's 1989 congress formally replaced democratic centralism with more open procedures and brought formal rules up to date with changes that had

already occurred in practice. The statutes no longer protected the party against a volatile membership but the rights of the membership against the leadership (Voerman 1991, p. 466). Changes included the abolition of regional level control committees, elaborate procedures of appeal for members who felt that they had been treated unfairly by the leadership and removal of the leadership's power to initiate expulsions. Other changes included formal rights for marginalised groups to organise within the party, rules compelling the leadership to report on minority opinions and an opening up of leadership meetings to members to avoid elitist behaviour (Lucardie and Voerman 1989, p. 24, Voerman 1989b, p. 22, Koeneman et al. 1988, p. 30).

As criticism of the leadership's cautious approach to inter-party co-operation mounted, the CPN's Member of the European Parliament, Nel van Dijk, and her colleague in Brussels Alexander de Roo from the PSP took the initiative. In spring 1988 Van Dijk invited influential people known to favour co-operation from within Groenlinks's founder parties including Brouwer and van Hoek for informal talks at her home in Sittard (Lucardie et al. 1999, p. 76). These secret social meetings took place outside of the parties' formal channels of democratic decision-making. They provided an opportunity to discuss the possibilities for an electoral alliance or merger and excluded the PPR's parliamentary leaders who were known to oppose deeper co-operation.

The participants in the Sittard meetings developed strategies to direct their parties towards formal talks and to overcome opposition. The participants devised 'the trick' which kick-started co-operation. This was a referendum which gained support from PSP members for closer co-operation and bypassed the PSP's congress delegates who were seen as more radical and autonomist. Following the referendum the PSP invited the CPN and PPR for formal talks in spring 1989. The CPN's 1989 congress mandated representatives to explore negotiations (Voerman 1990, p. 2). Secret informal talks continued and functioned as a 'shadow board' that allowed the participants to overcome difficulties that emerged (see Lees et al., 2010).

The CPN's leaders held a long-standing commitment to internal democracy. However, they engaged in this limited but not insignificant informal process of 'centralising power' – or, put more specifically, 'elitist behaviour' – to set the agenda

and direct the CPN into the GroenLinks alliance. Such undemocratic behaviour was useful in changing party strategy even though it involved no formal change to the CPN's institutional structures or procedures for making party programmes which were simultaneously being democratised. The CPN's daily Executive Board had deep reservations about such a secretive approach but believed it was justified considering their parties' desperate position. This process seems to resemble Grzymała-Busse's findings regarding experience of carrying out prior reforms promoting centralisation. The CPN's leaders had accepted a limited process of centralisation to co-ordinate a merger between the parties because they had seen prior attempts at forging inter-party co-operation flounder. The CPN's leaders tried to organise conferences with the other parties from 1987–1988 but at these their proposals for co-operation had been unsuccessful. They had also witnessed the rejection of co-operation by the PSP's congress in 1986. As a result, the leadership accepted a need for informal centralisation rather than relying on unpredictable internal democracy and party congress decisions.

Nevertheless, with CPN congresses having expressed speculative support for increasing co-operation in the 1980s, the leadership was confident that it could win a democratic congress vote in support of an electoral alliance or merger. It was not resistance from the CPN's orthodox-wing that convinced them of the need for a limited degree of informal centralisation. Instead, they accepted this because they had seen the PPR and PSP's reformist elites struggle with resistance from both elites and mid-level elites. What is more, their belief in centralisation as a mechanism to aid reform did not extend to implementing internal organisational or programmatic reforms or forcing policy changes through. However, the CPN's leaders believed that making a new party was a much bigger task than reforming the CPN, in which more things could go wrong. Previous failed attempts at national level co-operation had shown them a need for the parties' elites to take a lead setting the agenda for a merger, the need for them to build trust in one another and to work closely to insure against unwanted surprises and resistance. The leadership also saw a need for a risk free environment out of the media spotlight, in which they could find common ground with their counterparts and work with them to envisage ways that an alliance could continue the parties' key goals.

Formal talks between the parties were far from straightforward and initially broke down. However, the collapse of a governing coalition in April 1989 triggered a surprise election and the talks hastily resumed. Their negotiators were placed in pressure cooker conditions and the CPN's negotiators made concessions over their demands for candidates on the GroenLinks electoral list. Leading CPN politicians including Brouwer were involved in the negotiations. They were monitored informally by the daily Executive Board, mandated by a conference to conclude the talks and reported to the party's larger national Board throughout the process. However, the agreement they made to participate in the GroenLinks electoral alliance gave little room for involvement from the CPN's rank and file. It was publicly announced at a press conference, precluding detailed debate and making ratification by a party congress a *fait accompli*.

The alliance was made before the revolutions in CEE. It was not portrayed as a break with Communism but as a way to get a Communist (Brouwer) back into parliament. The reality was quite different. Leading negotiators realised that once the parties had a joint parliamentary group then GroenLinks's organisational development was likely to continue. Before the election a provisional GroenLinks executive Board was also established to support the parliamentary candidates. This became a driving force for organisational co-operation and an outright merger. The CPN's national Board monitored its representatives in the GroenLinks provisional executive Board regularly but this gained power as trust emerged soon between GroenLinks's elected officials.

The CPN's leaders' took a gradual approach to the merger as they sought to bring as much of the CPN into GroenLinks as possible and proceeded with caution in case GroenLinks failed. This frustrated their counterparts in the PSP and PPR. However, the CPN's leadership advised members to join GroenLinks in June 1990 (Lucardie et al. 1990, p. 15). The CPN's 1990 congress also delegated more power to the GroenLinks board and brought forward a vote on dissolving the CPN from 1992 to 1991. The leadership's calls to merge into GroenLinks were strengthened by the collapse of Communism in CEE and the fall of the Berlin Wall. They convinced congress delegates to dissolve the CPN in a democratic debate at its 1991 Congress – thereby abandoning Communism. By this time most of HOC had left in protest at mounting co-operation and subsequently formed the New CPN (Voerman 2008, p.

21). Transparent congresses made it hard for HOC to stop the merger. Only two of 167 congress delegates opposed merging into GroenLinks (Voerman 1991, p. 472). GroenLinks soon became a radical left-libertarian party and a member of the European Green Party rather than a member of the international European left. During the 1990s GroenLinks became increasingly moderate.

The CPN's leaders who broke with Communism in 1991 were highly equipped with experiences of negotiation with social groups adding support to Grzymała-Busse's arguments that this helps elites to transform their parties. By this time most of the old guard had retired. The leadership increasingly prioritised regaining representation in parliament above ideological purity and accepted compromises to form GroenLinks. Moreover, the members of the CPN's daily Executive Board were aware of mounting demand for a merger from party officials and elites already working closely with the PSP and PPR at the European Parliament and in local councils. These politicians had become increasingly pragmatic in office called for policy moderation to increase the party's influence.

6.6 Conclusion

The first section of this chapter analysed how the authoritarian Paul De Groot dominated the CPN and made it a Stalinist party following the Second World War. In the late 1960s the CPN began opportunistically recruiting students. This process had unforeseen consequences and subsequently led to a break with Stalinism, Leninism and Communism. The second section showed how the CPN's old guard leaders responded to electoral decline by breaking with De Groot and Stalinism. These leaders were highly obedient apparatchiks with limited professional or political experience outside of the party. Grzymała-Busse's framework helps to explain how even they had experiences of negotiating with outsiders that were beneficial to reform by pointing us to their recruitment and roles working for the party.

The CPN also demonstrates the risks that WECPs faced in recruiting outsiders. They boosted membership but soon demanded places in the elite as well as reform. Analysis showed that the old guard responded to election defeat in 1977 by relaxing elite advancement practises and increasing generational turnover to promote the

students. The third section examined how these younger reformist elites were well equipped with ideas and skills conducive to envisaging reform and how they proceeded to democratise the party to break with Leninism. The final section showed that they pursued the formation of GroenLinks after the CPN lost its remaining parliamentary seats in 1986.

The CPN's student elites drew on their experiences from student activism and new social movements to renew party programmes. This was the major factor driving the reform of the CPN. Their ideological pluralism and pragmatism were beneficial in working with the PSP and PPR and breaking with Communism in 1991. Moreover, a moderate level of 'horizontal advancement' of MEPs, parliamentarians, local councillors and employees in party publications to the national Board and elite positions also exposed the CPN's leaders to outside pressures to reform.

The CPN's leaders deliberately changed the party's internal organisational structures to shape reform. Democratisation helped them to break with Stalinism, Leninism and Communism. Informal changes in the way the CPN worked preceded programmatic changes and were also more important than formal changes to statutes. The old guard had limited – but not insignificant – prior experience of carrying out reform and their successors had significantly higher experience in this and professional backgrounds. There was little to suggest that these factors gave rise to organisational centralisation or streamlining.

The CPN's student leaders highlight a need to separate the concept of 'centralisation' from that of a 'skilled leadership' in using Grzymała-Busse's framework to understand WECPs. The CPN's student leaders did not fail to centralise because of a lack of skill but because they had other skills to draw on. When the leadership did seek to bypass formal decision-making structures this was limited and because of the complex nature of trying to broker inter-party co-operation not from its experience of carrying out reforms per se. In the end both democratisation and 'informal centralisation' – in other words elitist behaviour – were used to move the CPN into GroenLinks. The CPN's leaders democratised with the aim of generating reform and found that it laid a basis for the merger into GroenLinks. All the critical decisions involved support from democratic congress votes while secret meetings played more

of a role in co-ordinating the process. GroenLinks would not have been viable for the PSP and PPR's leaders without the CPN's democratisation. However, democratisation also saw the old guard lose control and in 1984 the younger leaders could only stand back and watch as their proposals for pluralistic programmes were intensely debated and modified with some unwanted and surprising results.

Analysis also shows that elites experienced in negotiating with other social organisations and institutions are not necessarily predisposed to social democratising their parties. The CPN's leaders still wanted to distinguish themselves from the social democrats and a merger with their small left competitors gave them another alternative. Nonetheless, analysis supports the idea that such elites will be predisposed to reform, having both useful ideas and encountering stronger pressures to change. Moreover, the CPN shows that WECPs' mid-level elites could be a source for reform if they were recruited with experience of societal negotiation or gained it through working for the party. Ironically, this process was strongest on a local level where the CPN had less support giving rise to pressures for its councillors and activists to build bridges with other parties.

The collapse of Communism in the Soviet bloc made it easier for the CPN's leaders to dissolve the party in 1991 but electoral defeat, open elite advancement processes, democratisation and to a lesser extent informal centralisation had already set it on this path. Comprehensive centralisation of the CPN's internal institutions was not required to break with Communism by the time it collapsed in Central and Eastern Europe. Instead, it merged into GroenLinks's participative organisational structures and the CPN's elite did not seek a highly centralistic organisational model for GroenLinks.

The CPN's leaders believed Communism was no longer electorally viable in the Netherlands in face of international events and social changes. They attempted to salvage something from the CPN by continuing some of its goals and socialism through GroenLinks. Their gradual process of reform was successful at moving most of the party into GroenLinks. Nevertheless, the CPN's leaders were soon disappointed by GroenLinks's left-libertarian direction (see Voerman, 2008, Keith, 2010). GroenLinks failed to unify the Dutch radical left. The CPN's leaders' gradual

approach to interparty co-operation meant that by the time GroenLinks formed, the CPN entered negotiations from a position of weakness having lost its parliamentary seats. Brouwer briefly led GroenLinks but within a few years only a small number of Communists remained in its ranks (Lucardie and Voerman 2003, pp. 162–3). The CPN's leaders lacked the influence to root GroenLinks to socialist politics.

Chapter 7

Testing the hypotheses

7.1 Introduction

Western European Communist parties faced a considerable challenge following the collapse of Communism in 1989. It had seemed that they had been discredited, like Communist parties in CEE. However, in a similar way to their counterparts in CEE several WECPs successfully regenerated themselves. Seemingly against the odds, some managed to position themselves as social democrats or to transform themselves into other non-communist radical left parties. These parties were also capable of pursuing what were often successful vote- and office- seeking strategies just like parties in CEE. In contrast, some WECPs stubbornly resisted reform. Where attempts at transformation failed or were unable to deliver success leading reformers often split to form their own parties or merged with non-Communist rivals to accomplish these goals. In all the cases analysed in this research, Communists showed they were often highly capable of reinventing themselves.

This research used a theoretical framework developed in Anna Grzymała-Busse's study of Communist parties in CEE, 'Redeeming the Communist Past', to examine WECPs' diverse adaptation. To do this it analysed five cases to explain how organisational factors affected WECPs' ability to transform themselves. Although the framework was not originally intended to analyse Western European parties, it has helped to fill some of the considerable gaps in our knowledge of WECPs' organisations and how these shaped their programmatic development. This research rejects an understanding of WECPs based on Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that elites learned to centralise through carrying out prior reforms and that centralisation was necessary for them to transform decisively. However, elite interviews found that the framework has several strengths in helping to explain why some WECPs reformed and broke with Communism and others failed. In particular it helps to bring our attention to the two broader independent variables of elite advancement processes and changes in the internal distribution of power which could include both democratisation and/or centralisation.

This research supports Grzymała-Busse's argument that the seeds for transformation were planted before 1989. Almost relentless exposure to previous exogenous shocks including electoral defeats and events in the Cold War meant that most WECPs had made earlier efforts to reform or break with Communism. WECPs had been forced to make greater changes than parties in CEE by 1989. The decisions taken following these exogenous shocks shaped their ability to respond to the collapse of Communism. Sometimes earlier shocks seemed to be the defining moments in their histories. Consequently, the framework was applied to explain WECPs' reactions to earlier exogenous shocks as well as events following 1989 to provide additional tests for the ideas in the framework.

This chapter begins by restating the hypotheses tested in this research. It then summarises the five case studies before providing an in-depth test of the hypotheses in comparative terms. This establishes a basis for Chapter eight which assesses the main findings of the research and ends by pointing to a revised model to explain WECPs' divergent adaptation as well as examining how this can be used in future research.

7.2 Restating the hypotheses

The research used Grzymała-Busse's explanation of party adaptation in CEE to investigate two main research questions. The first focused on the affects of elite advancement. It sought to determine if party leaders' portable skills and 'useable pasts' affected their ability to transform their parties following the collapse of Communism and/or other exogenous shocks which included: numerous election defeats, Cold War controversies including the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, the Prague Spring in 1968, the Sino-Soviet split, de-Stalinisation in the Soviet Union, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the crushing of worker movements in Poland in the early 1980s, the arms race, and Perestroika to name but a few. Some of these external shocks presented WECPs with bigger problems than others. However, each led to debates that questioned fundamental parts of party strategy and ideology.

Hypotheses focused on the independent variables of elites' prior experience in negotiation with groups and institutions outside the party, 'horizontal' elite advancement practices, the degree of prior pluralism in leadership bodies and levels of

elite turnover. The hypotheses below proposed a relationship between these factors and elites' ability to envisage change and their parties' ability to enact the following: vote-seeking reforms aimed at broadening appeal, office-seeking, social democratisation, breaking with Communism/democratic centralism, and organisational centralisation.

H1a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with greater prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside of the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H1b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H1c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H1d. Those parties exhibiting greater levels of elite turnover will be more engaged in carrying out electorally-driven reforms or breaking with Communism after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H2a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of elite horizontal advancement were more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H2b. Those parties that had leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H2c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have be more engaged in implementing office-driven reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H3a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H3b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H3c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in social democratising after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H4a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement, were more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H4b. Those parties with leadership bodies that gave more room for ideological pluralism and debate before 1989 (or exogenous shocks), were more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H4c. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions will have been more engaged in breaking with Communism (and democratic centralism) after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H5a. Those parties that advanced leaderships with more prior experience in working with groups and institutions outside the party and with greater levels of horizontal elite advancement were more engaged in organisational centralisation after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

H5b. Elites equipped with greater experience in negotiating with groups and institutions outside the party or with professional backgrounds will have been more engaged in organisational centralisation after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks).

The second major research question examines the relationship between the internal distribution of power (independent variable) and policy change (dependent variable) following exogenous shocks or the collapse of Communism in 1989. It questions whether there is evidence to suggest that parties could replace democratic centralism with new highly centralised structures that enabled their leaders to force through policy reforms and social democratisation. In doing so it also applied Grzymała-Busse's idea that democratisation was counterproductive to transformation because it resulted in reformist elites losing control of strategic matters. It also asked if retaining democratic centralism allowed orthodox leaders to resist pressure to reform. Last, it sought to determine if elites equipped with experience in carrying out prior reforms aimed at broadening appeal are more likely to recognise a need for organisational centralisation.

Specifically, the second research question generated these hypotheses:

H6a. Following events in 1989 (or exogenous shocks) parties that replaced democratic centralism with new highly centralised party organisations were more able to adopt radical reforming policies (electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking) than less centralised parties.

H6b. Following events in 1989 (or exogenous shocks), parties that abolished democratic centralism by democratising themselves were more

likely to fail to adopt radical reforming policies (electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking) than less democratic parties.

H6c. Parties that kept democratic centralism will not have significantly sought to transform themselves (with electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism and office-seeking).

H7. Elites equipped with greater prior experience in carrying out reforms aimed at broadening appeal, will have been more engaged in pursuing organisational centralisation in aim of reform following the collapse of Communism (or exogenous shocks).

7.3 Summary of the case studies

Chapter two analysed the Portuguese Communist Party. It showed that the PCP's narrow elite advancement processes systematically promoted poorly educated, loyal and orthodox functionaries. These apparatchiks had little political experience other than working at central office or coordinating local party organisations. Critics were systematically excluded from elite positions and those with experiences in working with outside institutions or organisations including elected officials were intentionally underrepresented in leadership bodies. The advancement of intellectuals was also constrained in case they started thinking for themselves or stirred up trouble. Aging elites purposely kept elite turnover low and gradual to avoid calls for change. Those newcomers who did gain elite positions in the 1980s and 1990s were usually handpicked by orthodox leader Álvaro Cunhal or his sidekicks leaving little room for reformers. The PCP's top leaders could have used their power to carry out reforms but chose a strategy of resistance. They refused to moderate Stalinist programmes or a hostile approach to their social democratic rivals. Cold War controversies, the collapse of Communism and disastrous election results, were all taken on the chin. Rigid adherence to democratic centralism gave them almost complete control over policy making and elite advancement.

The leadership made easy work of dissident reformers following election defeats, Perestroika and the collapse of Communism. Continued decline in the 1990s did not

persuade the leadership to initiate reform. Recently, it introduced a new generation of elites from the PCP's highly orthodox youth organisation. Analysing the PCP shows the merits in using Grzymała-Busse's framework to studying parties which maintained democratic centralism. It helps to shed light on precisely how the PCP's leaders used restrictive elite advancement processes and established rigid internal organisational procedures to preserve ideological purity. Because the PCP's top leaders opposed programmatic reform democratic centralism was consistently used to block proposals for moderation by elites and mid-level elites. In the PCP significant numbers of mid-level elite supported reform (unlike Grzymała-Busse found in the Czech KSČM). Whereas the Czech KSČM failed to adapt because hard-line mid-level elites succeeded in blocking reforms, reform minded mid-level elites in PCP were continually crushed by the leadership and prevented from organising themselves. Just as Grzymała-Busse found in the Czech KSČM, the PCP's failure to adapt meant that it faced parliamentary isolation.

Chapter three showed how the Dutch Socialist Party (SP) developed as a small Maoist party that emphasised direct action to help workers. Its leaders dropped association with Mao finding it to be out of touch with their in local activism. Democratic centralism made this change possible with minimal debate and the leadership continued to work in the style of the 'mass line' justifying its actions through its relationship with 'the people'. Elite advancement was tightly controlled with little place for debate. The SP's dogmatic founding leader Daan Monjé dominated decision-making. However, local councillors and functionaries experienced in running direct action projects were 'horizontally' advanced to the leadership. These politicians grew increasingly pragmatic and overthrew Monjé for failing to take electoral campaigning seriously. They set out to achieve representation in parliament by developing the SP's central infrastructure after 1986 and to break with Marxism-Leninism in 1991. Democratic centralism helped them to make these major changes and to promote new elites loyal to them.

The leadership dropped democratic centralism but introduced a new highly centralised organisation that allowed it to replace ideologically driven campaigns with ones that focused on opposition to the 'neo-liberalisation' of their social democratic rivals. The

strategy of opposition along moderate lines and the move onto traditional social democratic terrain was highly successful. The SP's leaders used their power to continually reposition their party by sacrificing radical policy commitments and eventually replaced their oppositional message with office-seeking.

Chapter four analysed the Swedish Left Party. It showed that attempts to reform Swedish Communism began during the 1960s. Despite rigid elite advancement processes C.H. Hermansson – who was 'horizontally advanced' and had extensive experience at working with outside groups and institutions slipped through the net. After becoming party leader he (rather than a cohort of reformist elites) initiated reform in 1964. Hermansson promoted democratisation in aim of ideological renewal and opened up elite advancement processes. Subsequently, this allowed more elites experienced in negotiation with outside groups and institutions to advance and they made further reforms. Hermansson used democratisation to foster broader appeals, to gain distance from Soviet Communism and sought greater influence on the social democrats. However, democratisation allowed mid-level elites to re-radicalise programmes leaving his strategy incomplete. Later, internal democratic structures combined with a lack of direction from leader Lars Werner to heavily constrain attempts at reform in response to Perestroika, international events and the collapse of Communism.

When Werner ceded power and elite turnover occurred at the top of the party, reform gained momentum. Reformers led by Gudrun Schyman sought to break its captive support role to minority social democratic governments. They had the prior experiences that the framework tells us will promote reform. The leadership moderated campaigns to provide opposition to the neo-liberal direction of the social democrats. Power was also shifted to the parliamentary group giving it increased room to promote traditional social democratic policies. This strategy delivered electoral expansion and the leadership forged closer cooperation with the social democrats and greater influence on them during the 1990s through signing contracts for V's support. Most reformist elites had not favoured social democratisation in 1989, contrary to the framework's ideas about elites equipped in social negotiation. However, the leadership's pragmatism meant that vote- and office-seeking strategies were increasingly prioritised. Parliamentary negotiations with the social democrats

allowed further power to be shifted to the parliamentary group, enabling it to move ever closer to social democracy.

Radical mid-level elites and a failure to streamline the increasingly orthodox Communist Youth League caught up with V's leadership and infighting intensified following electoral loss in 2002. The party's traditionalist-wing began organising at congresses, secured important positions and re-radicalised programmes. After Schyman resigned in 2003 traditionalists gained control of leadership bodies and installed Lars Ohly as leader. Programmatic radicalisation continued and Ohly's Communist beliefs proved a public relations disaster. The party suffered another electoral defeat in 2006. Recently, parliamentarisation has continued as parliamentarians increasingly became members of the national leadership. Although V's leaders are highly experienced in implementing reforms to broaden appeal they have not sought organisational centralisation in response to electoral defeat. Ohly has thus far successfully combined pragmatism in negotiations with the social democrats with radical internal appeals to reinvigorate V's office-seeking. Decisions made through V's internal democratic structures combined with the greater influence of parliamentarians in its national Board have helped V to make the policy sacrifices needed to provide it with its first realistic chance of gaining office in the 2010 parliamentary elections. The trust the leadership enjoys among radical mid-level elites made this possible.

The Irish Workers' Party (WP), its main successor Democratic Left (DL) and the remnants of the WP after 1992– were analysed in Chapter five. This showed how highly centralistic organisational structures and subsequently democratic centralism helped the leadership of Official Sinn Féin to break with republicanism and to build a Communist party in the 1960s. Centralism enabled the leadership to make painful policy changes with minimal debate. Tight control over elite advancement meant that loyalty and ideological conformity were prioritised. However, this did not prevent members of the parliamentary group, intellectuals and social activists from advancing to elite positions as the WP sought to acquire greater influence in society. These elites led calls for reform following Perestroika and the collapse of Communism lending support to the idea in the framework that prior experiences and negotiation

with outsiders were beneficial to reform. However, few of them sought social democratisation in 1989.

The WP's reformist elites had moderate experience in carrying out earlier reforms but did not centralise. Instead, they democratised and also continued to increase the power of the parliamentary group. This enabled them to make significant programmatic reforms but they remained constrained by orthodox historic leaders. These elites retained enough support from mid-level elites, mostly from Northern Ireland, to block the leadership's attempt to reconstitute the WP as a non-Communist party and to sideline or streamline those it believed were involved in paramilitarism. The leadership won support from over a majority of mid-level elites but not the two thirds support required for reconstitution. While many mid-level elites had grown sceptical about the growing power of the parliamentary group, most of them broadly supported the leadership's reforms and subsequently left with it to establish Democratic Left.

Contrary to the framework, the reformists did still not pursue a centralised organisational model in DL, even after subsequent election defeats. DL initially committed to a broadly pitched radical left platform rather than social democracy. Calls for DL to enter government were resisted by radical mid-level elites. However, this was insufficient to stop it from entering office in 1994. Thereafter, DL's parliamentarians increasingly accepted social democratic policies. By the time DL left office its resources were exhausted. The lack of centralisation was apparent. It had failed to build a central apparatus and many mid-level elites had left in frustration with its social democratisation making it easy for DL's parliamentarians to lead a merger with the social democratic Labour Party. In contrast, the traditionalist leaders in the WP used democratic centralism to control elite advancement, re-establish orthodox programmes and to block attempts at policy moderation. It was consigned to the margins of Irish politics.

Chapter six analysed the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN). Its post-war leader Paul de Groot ruthlessly used democratic centralism to control elite advancement and to stalinise the CPN. It declined heavily during the post-war period and the opportunistic recruitment of students fuelled calls for reform. Following election defeat in 1977 De Groot was overthrown by his hitherto loyal lieutenants.

They took tentative steps toward democratising in aim of breaking with Stalinism and they advanced some of the newcomers to elite positions. The old guard lost control of democratisation as younger elites broke with Leninism and democratic centralism. The party's new leadership under did not centralise from 1982–1986, despite having a high degree of experience in carrying out prior reform. Nor did they social democratise as the framework would expect from their backgrounds and the moderate processes of horizontal elite advancement that took place.

Democratisation brought about most the changes that the leadership desired because the CPN's mid-level elite had changed so dramatically. Most mid-level elites had little attachment to Marxism-Leninism and plenty of ideas for programmatic reforms. Democratisation also made the CPN more attractive as a partner for other left parties and decentralisation made it easier to form local alliances. This process paved the way for the formation of GroenLinks in 1989. A low but significant level of informal centralisation through secret elite-level talks helped to coordinate the formation of GroenLinks. However, the leadership did not seek to significantly centralise the CPN's organisation and internal democratic procedures supported the CPN's dissolution and its merger into GroenLinks. Furthermore, only a handful of reformist elites were involved in the secret meetings that took place.

7.4 Comparative Analysis: Research question one

The first research question addressed how elite advancement practices affected WECPs' ability to make electorally-driven policy reforms, social democratise, pursue office-seeking strategies, to break with Communism or to centralise following the collapse of Communism and exogenous shocks. The results are presented in Table 7.21.

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions, horizontal advancement and electorally-driven policy reforms

The idea in H1a that WECPs with elite advancement processes that fostered elites with greater prior experience in working with outside groups and institutions or had greater levels of horizontal advancement were more engaged in making electorally-

driven policy reforms is generally supported by this research, with some qualifications. In general terms, the ideas about experience in negotiation with outside groups and institutions are supported by the reforms made by the SP, VPK, V, WP, DL, and the CPN. Where parties lacked such elite advancement processes they made few policy reforms following exogenous shocks like the PCP and SKP (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions and electorally-driven policy reform

	Electorally-driven Policy Reform		
Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964	VPK 1964–1975	
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 V 2003–2006 CPN 1950–1977	VPK 1975–1993	CPN 1977–1982 V2006–
High			SP 1986–1998 SP 1998– V 1993–2003 WP 1977–1992 DL 1992–1998 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991

An increase in the number of elites equipped with these experiences in the late 1980s in the PCP 1992–1998 also led to a limited process of reform in response to the collapse of Communism and subsequent electoral defeats (see Table 7.21). On the other hand when the presence of such elites declined (V 2003–2006, PCP 2002–2006) we find a decline in electorally-driven policy making. In general terms in parties where elites had greater experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions or higher levels of horizontal advancement before exogenous shocks, we find a higher degree of electorally-driven policy reform (See Tables 7.1 and 7.2). Focusing on the parties' responses to the collapse of Communism shows that the PCP failed to reform

while parties with elites with such characteristics made electorally-driven policy changes: SP, V, WP and CPN.

However, two qualifications are necessary. First, this research suggests that exogenous shocks could trigger changes in elite advancement that subsequently benefited reform. Consequently, while electorally-driven policy reforms were more likely in parties where elites already had prior experiences beneficial to reform, sometimes this was not necessary. It was possible for exogenous shocks to result in a rapid opening up of elite advancement and elites with prior experiences that were beneficial to reform emerging. For example in the SKP in 1964 new party leader Hermansson entered the elite after the exogenous shock of election defeat and initiated reforms. Before this the party had operated highly restrictive elite advancement processes providing less room for horizontal advancement or for elites with experience in working with outside groups and institutions. Hermansson's advancement took place post-shock rather than prior to it contrary to H1a. Following his initial calls for greater ideological flexibility elite advancement processes were relaxed, allowing elites equipped in negotiation with outsiders and who had been horizontally advanced to play a stronger role in carrying out further reforms in response to the election defeat.

Similarly, the CPN's elite advancement processes were relaxed following the 1977 election loss by established leaders who had only moderate experience of negotiating with outsiders and levels of horizontal elite advancement (CPN 1977–1982). This group brought younger reformers who were better equipped to implement reforms into the elite. The younger leaders then made more comprehensive changes in response to the 1977 election defeat after 1982. When elites who were moderately equipped with experiences of negotiating with outside groups and institutions were joined or replaced by new elites who were equally or more equipped in this respect, following exogenous shocks, there was evidence to suggest that more far reaching reforms resulted: CPN (1982–1986, compared to 1977–1992) V (1993–2000 compared to 1975–1993), and the SP (1986–1998 compared to 1971–1986, SP 1998–compared to 1986–1998).

A second qualification is that advancing elites with prior experiences that were beneficial to reform did not guarantee electorally-driven policy change following exogenous shocks. The CPN's elites before 1977 had such experiences and desired reforms following exogenous shocks but had long been constrained by their loyalty to leader Paul De Groot and his authoritarian behaviour. Similarly, the SP's leader Daan Monjé (1971–1986) gave little room for reformers to make attempts to broaden appeal.

Table 7.2: Horizontal elite advancement practices and electorally-driven policy reforms

	Electorally-driven Policy Reform		
Horizontal Elite Advancement	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 SKP 1950–1964 CPN 1950–1977 V 2003–2006	VPK 1964–1975 VPK 1975–1993	SP 1986–1998 WP 1977–1992 CPN 1977–1982 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991
High			SP 1998– V 1993–2003 V 2006– DL 1992–1998

Prior ideological pluralism and electorally-driven policy reform

The idea (in H1b) that prior pluralism and debate in leadership bodies was conducive to electorally-driven policy reform in response to exogenous shocks, gains some support from the case studies (see Table 7.3). Most of the parties that made such reforms had these characteristics. In comparison, the lack of prior pluralism in the PCP, SP (1971–1986) and SKP constrained such changes. In these cases reformers had been unable to air their grievances or to build earlier support for reform. With little precedent for debate in leadership bodies they struggled; it was harder for them to their message across following exogenous shocks.

The effects of prior pluralistic debate could, however, be contained. In the Swedish SKP prior pluralism was not allowed to shape reform in response to electoral losses

and Cold War tensions in the 1950s as the party Stalinised and tried to remove its culture of dissent (1950–1964). This meant that when Hermansson became leader the party had been Stalinised and had become devoid of pluralism. Likewise, the CPN’s experiences of pluralism from the wartime resistance movement were erased during the 1950s (CPN 1950–1977). The lack of pluralism in these last two examples constrained reform but did not rule it out. Further, in V (2003–2006) prior experience in pluralistic debate did not prevent a radicalising response to the 2002 electoral defeat.

Table 7.3: Prior pluralism in leadership bodies and electorally-driven policy reforms

	Electorally-driven Policy Reforms		
Prior Pluralism in leadership bodies	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SP 1971–1986 SKP 1950–1964	VPK 1964–1975	SP 1986–1998 SP 1998– CPN 1977–1982
Moderate	V 2003–2006 CPN 1950–1977	V1975–1993	WP 1977–1992 CPN 1982–1986
High			V 1993–2003 V 2006– DL 1992–1998 CPN 1986–1991

Following the collapse of Communism, the PCP which lacked prior pluralistic leadership bodies failed to change, while reforms in V, WP and the CPN were aided by prior pluralism. The chances of electorally minded reform were lower in cases with low prior pluralism in leadership bodies. There reformers usually struggled to be heard. However, contrary to H1b, a lack of prior pluralism in the SP proved (paradoxically) beneficial to such reforms. There was little precedent for debate on alternative views to those of the party’s top leaders. When they decided in favour of electorally-driven policy reforms that was the end of the matter. The research found that greater pluralism in leadership bodies before an exogenous shock made reform more likely, in support of H1b, but this was far from a pre-requisite for reform. This is shown by the SP (1986–1998 and 1998–) and CPN 1977–1982 where such conditions did not necessarily preclude electorally-driven policy reforms.

Experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions and electorally-driven reforms

H1c gains very strong support from this research. In each case study it was found that elites (and mid-level elites) equipped with greater experience in working with outside political or social groups and institutions were more likely to seek electorally-driven policy reforms after the revolutions of 1989 (or exogenous shocks). Those with little or no experience in this struggled to envisage reforms aimed at broadening appeal. In what may be unwanted news for orthodox Communists, those parties that advanced elites who worked in professional employment, students, activists from new social movements, trade unionists or other social organisations were at the forefront of calling for electorally-driven reforms following exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. In the CPN, V the WP and the SP elites with these broader experiences played a massive role in the process of reform. In the PCP they led calls for reform but rigid discipline and party culture meant that most of them still refrained from criticism.

Electoral politics posed considerable challenges to WECPs and had internal ramifications that shaped their programmatic adaptation following exogenous shocks. Parliamentarians, Members of the European Parliament local office holders and those whose party responsibilities involved working with outsiders were generally more likely to become pragmatic and seek electorally-driven policy changes. This echoes Grzymała-Busse's finding that parliamentarians in the Czech KSČM tended to seek reform. Not even the PCP's Stalinistic internal discipline could filter out such influences.

Elite turnover, electorally-driven reforms and breaking with Communism

The idea in H1d that parties with greater elite turnover before the collapse of Communism (or exogenous shocks) were more likely to break with Communism or to pursue electorally-driven policy reforms gains qualified support from the case studies. When prior turnover was low, policy reform following exogenous shocks was also generally low (see table 7.4). However, prior levels of turnover did not always seem

to matter. This had been low in the CPN 1977–1982 and VPK 1964–1975 where electorally-driven reforms occurred. Here, established leaders or a handful of newcomers carried out important reforms and tried to break with Communism after exogenous shocks. Post-shock increases in turnover also resulted in additional programmatic reforms and inroads to breaking with Communism. For example, a high degree of turnover in the CPN after the 1977 election defeat had a profound affect on reform.

Table 7.4: Prior elite turnover and electorally-driven reforms

	Electorally-driven policy reforms		
Prior elite turnover	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SP 1971–1986 SKP 1950–1964 CPN 1950–1977	VPK 1964–1975	CPN 1977–1982
Moderate	V 2003–2006	VPK 1975–1993	V 1975–1993 SP 1986–1998 SP 1998– V2006– WP 1977–1992 DL 1992–1998
High			CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1980–1991

A high degree of prior elite turnover promoted reform in the CPN. Most of the time, however, moderate turnover was enough to provide a high or moderate degree of reform. Generally, elite turnover before 1989 (or other exogenous shocks) in the CPN, WP, SP and V was conducive to policy reform and breaking with Communism (see Tables 7.4 and 7.5). New leaders led these changes. Even though turnover was low in the PCP, a slight increase in this before the collapse of Communism gave rise to some reform following 1989. Turnover prior to exogenous shocks usually gave opportunities for reformers to advance. However, sometimes an increase in turnover was detrimental to reform – for example in the PCP after 2000, V 2003–2006 which radicalised in response to electoral losses. Increased turnover also constrained reform in VPK in the 1970s (VPK 1975–1993).

7.5: Prior elite turnover and breaking with Communism

	Breaking with Communism		
Prior elite turnover	Low	Moderate	High
Low	CPN 1950–1977 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986	VPK 1964–1975	CPN 1977–1982
Moderate	V 2003–2006	VPK 1975–1993	DL 1992–1998 SP 1986–1998 SP 1998– V 1993–2003 V 2006– WP 1977–1992
High			CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions, horizontal advancement and office-seeking

Only the SP 1998–, DL 1992–1998 and V 1993–2003, 2006– pursued office-seeking strategies following the collapse of Communism (or other exogenous shocks). These cases support the idea in H2a that parties whose leaderships had significant levels of horizontal elite advancement and negotiation with outside social groups and institutions were more likely to respond to exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism by seeking office. Where elites had a low level of such experiences they failed to pursue an office-seeking strategy (see Tables 7.6 and 7.7). Moreover, when elites with more experience in negotiating with outsiders advanced in the PCP in the late 1980s they went on to take marginal steps toward an office-seeking strategy.

It is noticeable that in those parties where office-seeking did occur it took several years to take shape. These parties had pragmatic elites by 1989, but most of them had not become office-seekers immediately in reaction to the collapse of the Soviet bloc. At this time office-seeking was still very much a strategy that was unavailable to them because of their small size and because they were treated as pariahs by mainstream parties. In V it required more elites to emerge with useful experiences of negotiating

with outsiders and horizontal advancement and for them to reach the very top leadership positions before office-seeking took off. Office-seeking did not have to be rapid following the collapse of Communism as Grzymała-Busse found in CEE. High levels of elite experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions featured strongly in each of the cases that became office-seekers. However, the relationship does not appear to be that strong. In the CPN, where elites also had high levels of experience in negotiating with outsiders, they did not seek office. Nor, most of the time, did parties whose leaderships had significant records of negotiation with outsiders or had been horizontally advanced (see Tables 7.6 and 7.7). Few stages in WECPs' development analysed here show that such elites responded to exogenous shocks or the collapse of Communism by immediately pursuing office. Thus, the research provides only limited support to the idea that parties whose elites have a greater degree of negotiation with outsiders or horizontal advancement will be more inclined to accepting an office-seeking strategy.

Table 7.6: Elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions and office-seeking

	Office-seeking		
Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975		
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1982–1986		V 2006–
High	SP 1986–1998 WP 1977–1992 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991		SP 1998– DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003

Office-seeking took hold as elected officials in V, DL and the SP became increasingly pragmatic and powerful after 1989.¹⁰ This process also depended on the parties' social democratic rivals. Their leaders saw opportunities for office-seeking because

¹⁰ Please note – although the SP is analysed here from 1998 onwards, its office seeking strategy begins in 2002 – see Chapter Three.

of more flexible approaches from the social democrats, as did reformers in the PCP. Both V and the SP also found that electoral expansion in the 1990s gained from more moderate forms of opposition to the social democrats provided electoral growth that was necessary before office-seeking could be realistic. The SP's leaders also saw from market research that they would win more votes if they could convince voters that there was a realistic chance of the SP participating in government. Here vote-seeking was complemented by office-seeking and they responded by making further policy sacrifices to portray the SP as a credible alternative.

In DL, and V the increased horizontal advancement of parliamentarians into leadership bodies resulted in an office-seeking strategy following the collapse of Communism and election defeats. Similarly in the SP, as the party's leaders became parliamentarians or local councillors in the 1990s, they became increasingly in favour of governing. In the CPN horizontal elite advancement was lower. There some parliamentarians were included in the national leadership but their role was limited in comparison to the other parties. The CPN's national Board remained powerful vis-à-vis its elected officials and office-seeking did not take hold (even when it still had members of parliament) following exogenous shocks in the early 1980s. Such developments were also prevented in the PCP. Its low levels of horizontal elite advancement, the under-representation of parliamentarians in its leadership bodies seem to have shaped a failure to seek office and add support to H2a.

Table 7.7: Horizontal elite advancement practices and office-seeking

	Office-seeking		
Horizontal elite advancement	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 SP 1986–1998 SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992 CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991		
High			SP 1998– V 1993–2003 V 2006– DL 1992–1998

Prior ideological pluralism and office-seeking

The idea that parties with pluralistic leadership bodies before an exogenous shock or the collapse of Communism were better placed to pursue an office-seeking strategy gains only limited support from the case studies. A lack of pluralism constrained attempts to build an office-seeking strategy in several cases (see Table 7.8). Moreover, DL: 1992–98, and V: 1993–2003, 2006– found previous pluralism beneficial to office-seeking. It provided plenty of room for pragmatic politicians to advocate such strategies before the collapse of Communism. However, the SP 1998– shows that parties that adopted office-seeking did not always require histories of pluralistic leadership bodies. Those parties that did not pursue office-seeking strategies also often had prior pluralistic leadership bodies. This research found that prior pluralism in leading party institutions helped shape office-seeking strategies in some cases but the relationship appears to be fairly weak.

Table 7.8: Prior pluralism in leadership bodies and office-seeking

	Office-Seeking		
Prior pluralism in leadership bodies	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975 CPN 1977–1982 SP 1971–1986 SP 1986–1998		SP 1998–
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1982–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992		
High	CPN 1986–1991		DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003 V 2006–

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions and office-seeking

The case studies lend limited support to the idea in H2c that elites with greater experience in negotiation with outside groups and institutions were more likely to pursue office-seeking strategies (see Table 7.6). In each of the case studies those elites who prompted office-seeking usually had a high degree of these experiences. This was most noticeable in the SP, V and DL. These factors even shaped some calls for office-seeking in the PCP. The CPN's local councillors who had a high degree of experience of social negotiation also became office-seekers. However, the CPN's leaders show that such experiences in social negotiation did not always bring commitment to office-seeking. This points to the need to look to the type of outside social negotiation that elites had experienced. The CPN's leaders in the mid-1980s were more pragmatic than their predecessors, but their radical backgrounds in student and new social movements still led them to oppose office-seeking. These factors also led many elites in V, DL and to a lesser extent the SP to oppose office seeking.

Office-seeking also proved to be a riskier strategy for WECPs than their counterparts in CEE following 1989. Unlike the parties that Grzymała-Busse studied, the WECPs analysed here lost votes or suffered huge organisational problems because of their

office-seeking strategies. This is shown by the problems that DL faced in government and the loss of votes that V encountered in 2002. This helped radical mid-level elites to radicalise policy. The SP's elites believe that its failure to enter government in 2006 after participating in coalition talks and campaigning on the idea that it could govern contributed to its loss of support.

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions, horizontal elite advancement and social democratisation

Where social democratisation occurred it was more gradual than in parties in CEE and not a reflex reaction to events in 1989. The relationship in H3a between social negotiation, horizontal elite advancement and social democratisation was found to gain only limited support. Most of the time parties whose elites had these characteristics did not respond to exogenous shocks by social democratising. Moreover, most reformist elites in the PCP with these characteristics also rejected the idea of social democratising; although those with experience of elected office were more likely to promote it. None of the parties significantly social democratised following exogenous shocks before 1989, even when they had a high degree of prior experience in social negotiation and horizontal elite advancement.

The relationship in H3a was only found in a minority of cases. However, when social democratisation did occur in the SP 1998–, V 1993–2003, V2006–, DL 1992–1998 (see Tables 7.9 and 7.10), this was led by elites that were highly equipped with the above experiences. What is more in the PCP, where negotiation with outside groups and horizontal advancement were limited, social democratisation did not occur following the collapse of Communism and exogenous shocks.

Table 7.9: Elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions and social democratisation

	Social Democratisation		
Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964	VPK 1964–1975	
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982		V 2006–
High	SP 1986–1998 WP 1977–1992 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991		SP 1998– V 1993–2003 DL 1992–1998

In the CPN, high levels of negotiation with outsiders did not prompt elites to seek social democratisation. They still preferred a radical left identity. This suggests that any relationship only works on a probabilistic level and might not be that strong. Negotiation with outside groups fostered reform more than social democratisation. The CPN's leaders had developed pragmatism but just having such skills did not ensure that they would necessarily want to use them to their full extent. It is noticeable that the CPN's lower levels of horizontal elite advancement left less room for social democratisation. For the most part it had fewer MPs in its leadership bodies than V, the SP and DL. This factor appeared to play a more significant role than negotiation with outside groups and institutions. Furthermore, in V: 1975–1993, SP: 1971–1986, 1986–1998, WP: 1989–1992 calls for social democratisation were much weaker following exogenous shocks than when more elected officials and parliamentarians were in their leadership bodies. They led the push for social democratic policies.

Table 7.10: Horizontal elite advancement practices and social democratisation

	Social Democratisation		
Horizontal Elite Advancement	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991 SP 1971–1986 SP 1986–1998 SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992	VPK 1964–1975	
High			DL 1992–1998 SP 1998– V 1993–2003 V 2006–

Prior pluralism and social democratisation

The idea in H3b that prior pluralism in leadership bodies made social democratisation more likely gains limited support from the case studies. This helped to shape social democratisation in V and DL. It gave plenty of opportunities for politicians to advocate policies that were closer to social democracy following the collapse of Communism. However, when this happened in the WP and V in 1989, these calls were quickly rejected and those advocating it lost influence among fellow reformers. It soon became apparent social democratisation lacked support immediately following the collapse of Communism despite evidence of prior pluralism. Reformers who were social democratic in all but name were however, generally tolerated at elite level in the WP and V. This pluralism gave room for calls for ideological moderation and laid a basis for subsequent social democratisation but it did not come rapidly as in parties in CEE. In comparison, a lack of prior pluralism left little room in several cases (see Table 7.11). Even so, prior pluralism did not ensure social democratisation in several cases including VPK: 1975–1993, WP: 1977–1992 and CPN: 1986–1991. Nor was a high degree of prior pluralism required for social democratisation in the SP (1998 onwards).

Table 7.11: Prior pluralism in leadership bodies and social democratisation

	Social democratisation		
Prior pluralism in leadership bodies	Low	Moderate	High
Low	CPN 1977–1982 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986 SP 1986–1998	VPK 1964–1975	SP 1998–
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1982–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992		
High	CPN 1986–1991		DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003 V 2006–

Negotiating with outside groups and institutions and social democratising

Elites that favoured social democratisation generally had a higher degree of experience in negotiation with outsiders and had often been advanced ‘horizontally’ to elite positions, which adds limited support to the ideas in H3c. In contrast, few elites who had low levels of these experiences accepted social democracy. However, this did not mean that most of those with these experiences favoured social democratisation. In the CPN most of the leadership still opposed social democratisation despite moderate levels of horizontal advancement and experience in negotiating with outsiders. Only a majority of the dissidents in the PCP accepted social democracy. Even so, elite interviews suggest that generally, elites who did accept social democracy (even when their parties did not) had been gradually influenced by experiences from social negotiation and in particular horizontal advancement. A classic example of this was the WP’s Research Section (1977–1989) where elites negotiating with outsiders and horizontally advanced from the party’s policy making unit saw a need for social democracy. This group had drawn on their experiences negotiating with outsiders in trade unions and media institutions. They tried respond to what they saw as workers’ and voters’ preference for social democracy as they struggled to devise new policies in reaction to Perestroika.

Grzymała-Busse found that the legacy of having a powerful social democratic party presented additional obstacles to the social democratisation of the Czech KSČM. Existing social democratic competitors presented an even larger barrier to social democratisation in WECPs. None of the cases enjoyed the opportunity available to the PCI in Italy in the early 1990s, where party system change and the break-up of their social democratic rivals left a gaping hole. Social democratisation was in many respects shaped by party systemic factors. The strength of existing social democratic parties, their presence in office, their internal divisions and ideological direction all affected the case studies' strategic choices.

However, these factors did not rule out social democratisation in any of the parties studied here. All were presented with realistic chances to social democratise themselves or to make inroads in encroaching on traditional social democratic territory to win votes. The case studies suggest that WECPs usually had more gradual possibilities for social democratisation than the PCI. Nonetheless, only some of them took this route. This research found that this depended to a large extent on the experiences available to elites. Opportunity structures mattered; but these were mediated through elites' perceptions of the party system and the need for change, which had been shaped by elite advancement processes.

The CPN's leaders could have sought moderation and a shift to traditional social democratic politics following the 1977 election defeat since space was opened up by the social democratic PvdA's decision to ally itself with the centre-right in government – something that also happened in 1989. However, the CPN's reformist leadership remained radical and there was little room for parliamentarians to dictate affairs. Instead, they pursued opportunities to ally with other radical left parties with whom they forged closer relations throughout the 1980s. This allowed it to retain a radical left identity in the immediate aftermath of 1989.

The actions of social democratic rivals also provided pressure for social democratisation for WECPs' successor parties in Sweden and Ireland. V and DL found possibilities for social democratisation through forging coalition relationships or parliamentary contracts following the collapse of Communism. Having lost all its

parliamentary seats before 1989, the CPN had fewer options. V: 1993–2000 and the SP: 1986–98, 1998– were also offered possibilities for social democratisation by the neo-liberal direction of governing social democratic rivals. In the 1990s the SP's pragmatic leaders saw opportunities for social democratisation as a vote seeking strategy in response to Wim Kok's 'Purple Governments'. Their experiences in negotiating with outsiders and horizontal elite advancement helped them to make the sacrifices needed to moderate and contest traditional social democratic politics in opposition to their rivals' privatisations and spending cuts. Such vote-seeking policy reforms helped V and the SP to grow rapidly.

In comparison, the PCP's leaders spurned opportunities for social democratisation. In the 1980s they relentlessly criticised the social democrats' rightward direction but did little to stake a claim for social democracy. They failed to moderate to win over disaffected social democratic voters in the early 1980s when the social democrats allied with the centre-right. When opportunities emerged for closer relations with the social democratic Socialist Party under António Guterres's minority governments in the mid-1990s the PCP's leaders ignored them. Its leaders generally had little experience of negotiating with outsiders and horizontal advancement was kept to a minimum. Those elites with these experiences were more in favour of moderation to stake a claim for social democratic voters and to root the social democrats to left-wing policies. Sometimes they even accepted social democracy wholeheartedly. The PCP's leaders also failed to respond as their counterparts had in V and the SP had when the social democrats did pursue neo-liberal privatisation campaigns in the late 1990s.

Events in V also illustrate the importance of leaders' prior experiences in mediating changes in the party system. Opportunities for vote-seeking policy reforms and social democratisation presented themselves in 1989 as Ingvar Carlsson's social democratic government pursued proposed wage freezes, strike bans and cutting the Swedish model (Madeley 1993, p. 118). V opposed such changes (VPK 1975–1993) but failed to moderate to take advantage and win over disillusioned social democrats. Reformers calling for this were ignored. It was not until a leadership with greater experience in social negotiation and horizontal advancement emerged that V provided more moderate and social democratic forms of opposition to the social democrats'

record in office and tried to win more influence on them (1993–2003). In V and the SP it also took time for reformist elites to recognise just how much potential they had to win over disaffected social democratic voters.

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions, horizontal elite advancement and breaking with Communism

H4a gains some support from this research. Where parties made significant inroads to breaking with Communism and democratic centralism this was fuelled by experience of social negotiation and horizontal elite advancement (see Tables 7.12 and 7.13).¹¹ This helped the CPN: 1986–1991, SP: 1986–1998, and DL: 1992–1998 to break with Communism following events in 1989 (and even the SP: 1971–1986 to break with Mao). All the parties that fully broke with Communism had elites with these experiences. However, V's leaders (1993–2002 and thereafter) had a high degree of horizontal advancement and prior negotiation with society but despite their efforts Communist symbolism still remains important even though it was removed from party programmes. V has not entirely broken with Communism because of internal resistance.

Elites moderately equipped with such experiences were also prevented from breaking with Stalinism in parties including the CPN: 1950–1977. There was more support for H4c than H4a. In all the cases, even the PCP, elites with greater levels of these experiences were more engaged in breaking with Communism in response to exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. The PCP's lack of such elites helps to explain its failure to even break with Stalin, much like the lack of change in SKP 1950–64.

¹¹ The VPK's break with the Soviet Union and orthodox Communism 1964–1975 can also be included here (such reformist elites advanced after 1964 so their experiences are not well illustrated by Tables 7.21 and 7.22).

Table 7.12: Elite experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions and breaking with Communism

	Breaking with Communism		
Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975		
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 SP 1971–1986 V 2003–2006 V 2006–	CPN 1975–1993 V 1975–1993	
High		CPN 1982–1986 V 1993–2003 WP 1977–1992	CPN 1986–1991 DL 1992–1998 SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–

Table 7.13: Horizontal elite advancement practices and breaking with Communism

	Breaking with Communism		
Horizontal elite advancement	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1992 VPK 1964–1975 V 2003–2006	CPN 1977–1982 CPN 1982–1986 V 1975–1993 WP 1977–1992	CPN 1986–1991 SP 1986–1998
High	V 2006–	V 1993–2003	DL 1992–1998 SP 1998–

Prior pluralism in leadership bodies and breaking with Communism

The research supports the idea in H4b that pluralism in leading bodies before exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism made it more likely that parties would break with Communism and democratic centralism. This helps to explain why the CPN, V and WP/DL largely broke with Communism following the collapse of Communism while the PCP did not (see Table 7.14). Attempts to root out pluralism

in VPK: 1950–64, CPN: 1950–1977 also made it harder to question Communism. Low levels of prior pluralism in the PCP had prevented elites from formulating alternative policies or challenging key concepts like Marxism-Leninism. Where parties had pluralistic leadership bodies they were generally better prepared to respond to exogenous shocks or the collapse of the Soviet bloc by breaking with Communism. However, this was not a prerequisite for breaking with Communism and democratic centralism as shown by the efforts of the CPN’s leaders to break with Stalinism 1977–1982 and the SP’s transformation 1986–1998.

7.14: Prior pluralism in leadership bodies and breaking with Communism

	Breaking with Communism		
Prior pluralism in leadership bodies	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986 VPK 1964–1975	CPN 1977–1982	SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 V 2003–2006	CPN 1982–1986 VPK 1975–1993 WP 1977–1992	
High	V 2006–	V 1993–2003	CPN 1986–1991 DL 1992–1998

Negotiation with outside groups and institutions; horizontal advancement, professional backgrounds and organisational centralisation

The case studies gave little support to a link between elite advancement processes and organisational centralisation contrary to H5a and H5b. It does not appear that parties would be predisposed to replace democratic centralism with new centralised structures if they had horizontal processes of elite advancement or elites experienced in negotiation with outside groups and institutions. The SP was the main ‘centraliser’ out of the five cases. It was the only one to replace democratic centralism with new highly centralised structures following the collapse of Communism. Its elite advancement processes seem to fit the bill. However, elite interviews found that these

were not the reason for its centralisation. It was not experience in negotiation with outsiders or prior professional backgrounds that promoted centralisation but lessons learnt from prior election failures which showed a need for greater coordination and also a failure to break with the SP's highly centralistic internal party culture. The hangover from Maoism was more important than the factors that Grzymała-Busse found to promote centralisation in CEE. While the horizontal advancement of local councillors who had seen a need for greater internal coordination and vote-seeking strategies promoted centralisation, the elites' did not draw on their professional backgrounds outside the party in centralising.

Table 7.15: Horizontal elite advancement practices and electorally-driven organisational centralisation¹²

	Electorally-driven organisational centralisation		
Horizontal elite advancement	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982 CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991 SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986 VPK 1964–1975 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992		SP 1986–1998
High	DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003 V 2006–		SP 1998–

No elites surveyed in the course of this research associated attempts to centralise with having professional backgrounds or from public sector backgrounds in administration. Ideologues at the WP's Research Section had professional backgrounds and tried to social democratise in a centralistic fashion (1977–1989). However, they did this primarily because they had always operated this way, having been tasked with such

¹² Please note that processes of electorally driven organisational centralisation are defined here as organisational changes that seek to centralise or streamline the party apparatus in aim of forcing through programmatic reforms. While the PCP is classified as low on these criteria in Table 7.15 it is also classified as being highly centralised in Table 7.22 because it operated under democratic centralism. The crucial point here is that while it was highly centralistic its leaders were not building a new top down hierarchy like in the SP.

responsibilities by the leadership. They did not seek to install new centralised organisational structures as we might expect from the hypotheses but simply to cajole the party leadership into action. Their attempt to social democratise in a centralistic fashion was also blocked – to a large extent by fellow reformers with a high level of experience in social negotiation, professional backgrounds and who had been advanced ‘horizontally’ to elite positions.

The CPN’s leaders (1986–1991) had the prior experiences and backgrounds in H5a and H5b and initiated a limited process of centralisation in response to election defeat. Again, however, elite interviews show that they did not draw on these experiences to centralise. They worked this way due to experience in the problems coordinating a merger with other parties. In fact we find that most cases that had advanced such elites democratised in response to exogenous shocks or the collapse of Communism rather than centralising (see Tables 7.15, 7.16 and 7.17). In contrast to H5b, few elites interviewed in this project explained a need to centralise from having professional backgrounds or observed this thinking among colleagues. Furthermore, flexible advancement processes allowed the promotion of professionals, public sector administration and activists from student and new social movements who were highly opposed to centralisation in V, CPN and the WP.

Table 7.16: Elite professional backgrounds and electorally-driven organisational centralisation

	Electorally-driven organisational centralisation		
Elite professional backgrounds	Low	Moderate	High
Low	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975		
Moderate	DL 1992–1998 SP 1971–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 WP 1977–1992		SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–
High	CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991 V 1993–2003 V 2006–		

Table 7.17: Elite experience in negotiation with outside groups and institutions and electorally-driven organisational centralisation

	Electorally-driven organisational centralisation		
Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Low	Moderate	High
Low	PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 VPK 1964–1975		
Moderate	CPN 1950–1977 CPN 1977–1982 SP 1971–1986 VPK 1975–1993 V 2003–2006 V 2006–		
High	CPN 1986–1991 CPN 1982–1986 DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003 WP 1977–1992		SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–

7.5 Comparative Analysis: Research Question Two

The second research question investigated the relationship between organisational change and party transformation. The results are presented in Table 7.22.

‘The Centralisers’

This study found some evidence to support the idea in H6a that replacing democratic centralism with new, highly centralised organisational structures could be beneficial to transformation following the collapse of Communism or exogenous shocks. This was most evident in the SP: 1986–1998, 1998– (see Table 7.18). There, new top down organisational structures after 1991 allowed the leadership to implement electorally-driven policy changes, exchange socialism for social democratic policies and pursue office-seeking. They did this in response to successive electoral defeats, the collapse of Communism, the Labour Party’s neo-liberal direction and rapid expansion. Centralisation allowed the leadership to sacrifice radical policies at a

whim and to overcome resistance from radical mid-level elites. It was easy for them to social democratise.

Analysis of the WP 1977–1989 also showed that the creation of a highly centralised organisation following the split in the republican movement and election defeats allowed the leadership to change policy and to stalinise the party. There centralisation helped the leadership to try to broaden the party's appeal to workers beyond the republican/Catholic community. To a much more limited extent, the CPN's leaders also pursued a process of centralisation in response to electoral defeat in 1986 and the collapse of Communism. Informal elitist meetings set the agenda for the formation of GroenLinks electoral alliance and the CPN's eventual merger into it and break with Communism. This allowed the leadership to coordinate the merger while sidestepping resistance within the parties. However, it was not used in order to social democratise or to pursue office. This process also shows a need for a more nuanced understanding of the ways that elites could use centralisation. It occurred simultaneously with processes of democratisation to empower reformists in the elites and mid-level elite. Both processes contributed to the formation of GroenLinks and democratisation played the leading role.

Highly centralised organisations helped leaders to control strategic affairs, to carry out reforms and painful policy sacrifices. However, this must be qualified in two respects. First the evidence in the following section shows that this did not make it that more likely that parties would undertake reforms, seek office, break with Communism or social democratise. There were alternative paths to this which the case studies pursued more regularly.

Second, centralisation (and streamlining) was rarely a viable strategy for reformist elites. They usually thought it was unlikely to succeed because of entrenched opposition from orthodox elites and mid-level elites in the party apparatus including at central office. In the WP and V centralisation would have been counterproductive to programmatic reform. Further, in V and the CPN prior democratisation made centralisation a huge task by 1989. Power was more dispersed in these parties and reformist elites did not believe that they could easily re-centralise power in 1989.

Even when initial reforms were made in these parties V: 1964–1975, CPN: 1977–1982, 1982–86 in response to exogenous shocks (and in the WP: 1989–92 following the collapse of Communism) – elites believed that opposition to centralistic decision making from reformist elites and mid-level precluded centralisation. Internal discipline had already been sufficiently eroded before their leaders pursued democratisation for these elites to see that centralisation would have had been disastrous. When reformers made small or ad hoc attempts to carve out greater central power for themselves in V and the WP this centralisation this was blocked by traditionalists or even rival reformers.

Table 7.18: Centralised organisational structures and electorally-driven policy reforms

	Electorally-driven policy reforms		
Centralised organisational structures	Low	Moderate	High
Low	V 2003–2006		CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991 DL 1992–1998 V 1993–2003 V 2006– WP 1989–1992
Moderate	SP 1971–1986 WP 1992–	VPK 1964–1975 VPK 1975–1993	CPN 1977–1982 WP 1977–1989
High	CPN 1950–1977 SKP 1950–1964 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002–		SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–

The SP does not present a model that these other WECPs could have easily replicated in 1989. Its transition to a new centralised organisation was made easier because it maintained a disciplined party culture during the late-1980s. Unlike in the other parties, unity, trust in the leadership, preserving effectiveness, and a focus on direct action rather than debate were still at a premium. This suggests that establishing a new centralised organisational model to replace democratic centralism was easier in parties with low levels of internal debate among the rank and file during the 1980s.

The SP's leadership could wield its power under democratic centralism to take the first steps towards transforming the party (see below). Moreover, it succeeded in

expanding the party's central apparatus following the 1986 election defeat helping to increase its power before 1989 (this was in stark contrast to developments in many other WECs). After events in CEE and the abolition of democratic centralism, internal party life changed little despite the introduction of new formal structures. The SP's small size also meant that it had relatively few local branches, making it easier for the leadership to retain its grip. There were fewer decision-making points over which the leadership could lose control. Additionally, being a small sect, the SP's elites worked more closely with one another than in the other parties. It was better positioned for centralisation than other WECs. Centralisation did not provide a one size fits all solution to WECs' problems.

'The Democratisers'

This research studied three cases that democratised (V, the WP and the CPN) and provide only very limited or weak support for H6b. They suggest that WECs that democratised were only marginally more likely to fail to adopt radical reforming policies (electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation, breaking with Communism, and office-seeking) than less democratic parties that centralised. The cases Grzymała-Busse analysed in CEE showed that where parties centralised they managed to transform themselves; where they democratised attempts at reform and breaking with Communism failed as orthodox mid-level elites seized control. In the case studies analysed here, democratisation usually helped reformers to make such changes. Although they democratised, reformist leaders' attempts to carry out radical reforms often still got there in the end – they rarely failed. Further, sometimes unleashing democratisation brought about rapid reform.

Democratisation was generally a more unstable path to transformation. In comparison with the leaders SP's leaders, those that democratised were more likely to lose control over strategic matters. In each party that democratised (or had existing democratic structures for example V: 1975–1993, 1993–2003) reformist party leaders had to make more significant compromises or faced more defeats as they tried to respond to exogenous shocks.

Democratising did empower radical and orthodox mid-level elites. For example in V 1964–75, 1975–1993 neo-Leninists and orthodox Communists managed to undo or block some of C.H. Hermansson's reforms aimed at broadening appeal. Similarly, an internal backlash from radical mid-level elites sabotaged Gudrun Schyman's office-seeking strategy and social democratisation 1993–2003. Democratic structures allowed traditionalists to prevent V from fully breaking with Communism. In the CPN, the old guard lost control of the reform process as younger elites and mid-level elites (1977–1982) demanded more substantial reforms. Their successors also found that internal democratic processes meant that they did not always get their way in policy making (1982–86). In the WP: 1989–1992 orthodox elites and mid-level elites also constrained some programmatic reforms and blocked attempts to reconstitute the party.

However, democratisation or existing democratic structures rarely gave rise to the comprehensive reversal of reforms or a failure to adopt radical reforming policies. Only in the WP 1992– were traditionalists able to re-assert orthodox Communism and rigid democratic centralism. This was only possible after the reformers chose to leave. They had been in the majority and did not lose control but left out of frustration. After the majority split to form DL, democracy continued to constrain the reformist leadership and they were even defeated in choosing the party's name. In V, Hermansson's reforms aimed at broader appeal and Schyman's vote-/office-seeking reforms were not completely undone. From 2003–2006 V radicalised and seemed to rule out participation in coalition government. However, it maintained its contractual parliamentary relationship with the social democrats and the bulk of previous reforms. Nor could orthodox Communists reverse the CPN's break with Stalinism and Leninism. The cases suggest that generally democracy did not promote a re-radicalisation or re-assertion of orthodox communism.

Grzymała-Busse's framework asserts that mid-level elites were more radical or more attached to an orthodox Communist identity than reformist leaders in parties in CEE. These arguments seem to promote a perspective similar to May's (1973) 'Law of curvilinear disparity'. This was not always the case in the case studies analysed here. Their leaders were still often able to win enough support for reforms. The configuration of elites and mid-level elites affected their chances of carrying out

successful reforms. Changes in recruitment structures meant that democratisation had often been beneficial to programmatic transformation.

Where the rank and file or mid-level elites had a high level of experience in negotiating with outside groups and institutions – for example in student organisations, new social movements, public sector employment or professional backgrounds outside the party – they were generally more in favour of reform and closer in experience and goals to the reformist elites. What Waller (1989, p. 44) termed as ‘the new member factor’ – where WECPs expanded on the back of other social movements, provided support for reformist elites. For example Hermansson’s efforts to democratise the VPK freed up support for reform from local level activists and meant that newcomers from new social movements could help to reform the party. New mid-level elites and activists also supported many of Schyman’s reforms. V’s leadership also currently draws on its support from radical mid-level elites as a basis from which to bring V into compromises with the social democrats and for office-seeking. In the CPN mid-level elites and local party officials with backgrounds in student and new social movements gave considerable pressure for reform and played a key role in the merger with GroenLinks. Such groups were also more inclined to supporting reform in the PCP and the WP.

Consequently, at times democratisation fuelled reform or reformers managed to implement reforms through existing democratic structures (see Tables 7.19 and 7.22). In the CPN (1977–1982) democratisation helped the leadership to break with Stalinism, Leninism, merge into GroenLinks and to finally abandon Communism. It enabled the VPK’s reformist leaders to broaden appeal and break with the Soviet Union (1964–1975). Democratic internal structures did not completely constrain V’s reformist elites’ attempts to change the party name or reform programmes in response to Perestroika and the collapse of Communism (1975–1993). During the 1990s reformers initiated electorally-driven programmatic reforms, social democratisation, policies aimed at broader appeal and pursued closer relations with the social democrats. Since 2006– the leadership has made new policy sacrifices and pursued office. These policies were facilitated by democratic processes. The Schyman leadership in particular found that congresses were favourable to its reform proposals

when the party was riding high in the polls. When this declined and the party encountered election defeat in 2002 it was no coincidence that there was more internal opposition. In the WP (1989–1992) mid-level elites supported most of the reformist leadership's proposals for more moderate appeals. In DL they endorsed an office-seeking strategy and more electoralist policies and even later a merger with Labour. In these parties many mid-level elites were close supporters of the parliamentarians.

Reformists had alternative methods to centralisation to re-orientate their parties. They used speeches and media appearances to great effect to denounce Communism. They used their party roles to great affect: CPN chair Henk Hoekstra proposed policy reforms and started a debate while in the WP parliamentary leader Proinsias de Rossa did this with his 1988 congress speech. However, more important was the shifting of power and resources to the party in public office and the increasing role of parliamentarians joining national party leadership bodies. This helped reformists to pursue electorally-driven reforms, social democratisation and office-seeking. A double whammy of processes of internal democratisation and parliamentarisation helped the leadership to make most of the reforms it wanted in V 1993–2003, 2006–, WP 1989–1992 and DL 1992–98. This brought reform. However, in the long-term they struggled from a lack of centralisation. Parliamentarisation, office-seeking and social democratisation were contested by V's Youth League while in DL parliamentarisation crowded out internal room for debate, activism and a healthy central party apparatus. Nonetheless, after 2006– parliamentarisation again came to shape V's office-seeking strategy and social democratisation and in DL it resulted in a merger with Labour.

The distinction between the party in public office and the party in central office mattered, but this division was not as clear cut as political scientists have made out (Katz and Mair 2009, p. 756). These cases generally, then, lend support to Katz and Mair's idea that parties in public office have been gaining ascendancy over the central administration. In the WP, DL and V the parliamentary group took a life of its own, developed a common perspective which differed from that of the national leadership and started to run things. Moreover, parliamentarians who were often not regular members of the national leadership increasingly sat in its bodies and gained increased influence there. This was very different from the process in the SP. There the

dominance of the party in public office took a different route as a small group of local councillors came to dominate the central leadership bodies. This group subsequently became the party's first parliamentarians in the 1990s. They continued to dominate the national leadership and parliamentary group.

Table 7.19: Democratic organisational structures and breaking with Communism

	Breaking with Communism		
Democratic organisational structures	Low	Moderate	High
Low	CPN 1950–1977 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986 VPK 1964–1975 WP 1977–1989 WP 1992–		SP 1986–1998 SP 1998–
Moderate	CPN 1977–1982 V 2006–	VPK 1975–1993 V 1993–2002 WP 1989–1992	DL 1992–1998
High	V 2003–2006	CPN 1982–1986	CPN 1986–1991

While the party's leaders became increasingly pragmatic through working in parliament, and accepted social democratisation and office-seeking, the parliamentary group or party in public office *per se* did not come to control the party. Instead a small inner-circle or dominant coalition came to control both the party in public and central office. The parliamentary group was not able to develop separate goals like in the WP and V. New parliamentarians remained subservient to the inner-circle. The high degree of monitoring and central control prevented significant tensions emerging like in the other parties between the party in public and central office, allowing the inner-circle to control the SP's parliamentary expansion. Its parliamentarians and elected officials were prevented from becoming too independent, failing to pay their salaries to the party or shirking responsibilities in direct action like in the other parties. In contrast, in the PCP parliamentarians were always deliberately limited in influence in national leadership bodies.

Democratisation or adherence to internal democratic structures was not necessarily self-defeating for reformers. The CPN, WP and V, had made prior inroads to democratisation before 1989. They achieved significant programmatic reforms when they first began to democratise and internal democracy did not prevent them from carrying out further reforms in response to the collapse of Communism. Continued democratisation reinforced this process of programmatic transformation. The WP had further to go to democratise itself in the late-1980s but this did not unleash overwhelming opposition that would crush reformers.

The 'resisters' and 'dictators'

Grzymała-Busse said relatively little about what to expect if parties keep democratic centralism following the collapse of Communism. However, her framework implies that a reassertion of democratic centralism following an internal backlash against reform was likely to constrain the latter. This research looked to see what happened in parties that kept democratic centralism and whether it was inherently inimical to carrying out electorally-driven reforms, office-seeking, social democratisation and breaking with Communism. It asked whether democratic centralism was an effective means of resisting reform or, on the other hand, whether reformist elites found opportunities to use its power to dictate and force through reforms following the collapse of Communism or exogenous shocks.

The research rejects H6c in its deterministic form. However, it supports the idea that keeping democratic centralism, while it might sometimes prove useful to reformers, ultimately made reform less likely following exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. True, the power democratic centralism gave to party leaders did sometimes help them to sacrifice sacred cows. This helped the leaders of the Irish WP 1977–1989 to continue to break with Republicanism, build cross community support, enabled its Research Section to mould campaigns to appeal to urban workers in less ideological terms and to emphasise social democratic policies with little accountability. In the PCP it enabled the leadership to run campaigns emphasising broad themes of national and democratic revolution rather than simply a Communist state, with little internal debate. It also found room to pursue a local level alliance with the social democrats in 1989 to hide the party's election losses. The CPN's leaders used democratic centralism to break with the Soviet Union and to temporarily

promote parliamentary democracy (1950–77). They also used it to help to promote younger reformist elites (1977–1982).

The SP's leaders used democratic centralism to break with Mao without debate in the 1970s. Following election defeat in 1986 they used it to build a highly centralised campaign machine and to break with Marxism-Leninism in 1991. But even though democratic centralism helped to initiate the SP's transformation, its leaders realised that it was electorally damaging and replaced it with new top down, centralistic structures. This suggests that reformers could use democratic centralism but found little purpose for it in the long term. Democratic centralism was only likely to be beneficial to reform if those at the very top desired it and were willing to continue undemocratic organisational practices. This also appears to have been the case in Communist successor parties in Cyprus and Moldova where the party leadership used democratic centralism to promote programmatic reform in order to gain electoral success. However, the cases analysed here indicate that we can expect such developments in WECPs to be rare. Unlike the leaders of the SP, reformist elites in V, the CPN and the WP and for the most part the PCP, were generally hesitant to use democratic centralism to push through change (see Table 7.20). They wanted rid of democratic centralism and believed using it or imposing new centralistic structures would de-legitimise their calls for reform. Most of the time when democratic centralism was upheld it prevented reform. It had been used at various points in time to crush calls for reform in all the case studies following exogenous shocks.

Table 7.20: Democratic centralism and electorally-driven policy reforms

	Electorally-driven policy reforms		
Democratic centralism	Low	Moderate	High
Low	V 2003–2006	VPK 1964–1975 VPK 1975–1993	CPN 1982–1986 CPN 1986–1991 DL 1992–1998 SP 1998– V 1993–2003 V 2006– WP 1989–1992
Moderate			CPN 1977–1982
High	CPN 1950–1977 PCP 1974–1992 PCP 1992–2002 PCP 2002– SKP 1950–1964 SP 1971–1986 WP 1992–		SP 1986–1998 WP 1977–1989

Prior experience in reform and organisational centralisation

This research found little evidence to suggest that elites with prior experience in implementing reform were more likely to pursue organisational centralisation in response to exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. H7 is firmly rejected. There were three main examples when elites did something similar to this. In the WP 1977–1989 the Research Section, who were highly equipped with experience in carrying out prior reforms and sought to force through social democratisation in a top down fashion in reaction to Perestroika and anticipation of problems in CEE. They believed they needed to seize the initiative and drive changes through in fear of electoral catastrophe if the WP was not rapidly transformed. From carrying out prior reforms they saw that resistance at elite level had meant that some reforms took several years to implement. However, the main reason for their centralistic approach was that this was simply a continuation of the centralistic way in which they had always operated.

The CPN's leaders drew on previous failures in forging an electoral alliance with other left parties to see a need for a limited informal process of centralisation involving secret elite-level meetings. These set the agenda for a merger. However, it

was not prior experience at carrying out programmatic reforms per se but fear that forging an electoral alliance involved too many actors and stumbling blocks that convinced them of the need for centralisation. Furthermore, they only saw a limited role for this and believed internal democratic procedures would bring the CPN into GroenLinks and could be used to break with Communism. Neither they, nor the Research section in the WP, had seen a need for thorough organisational centralisation.

Any relationship between prior reform and centralisation was also affected by the parties' leaders' other prior experiences. The leaders of the CPN had backgrounds which made them highly committed to internal democratic procedures – like most reformers in V and the WP (and even the PCP). Backgrounds in student movements, new social movements were largely alien to democratic centralism, centralistic structures or streamlining. The experience of carrying out programmatic reforms and trying to broaden appeal had not convinced them of a need to centralise to overcome internal resistance. Further, the CPN's leaders had seen centralistic structures block their previous calls for reform and believed they were largely incompatible.

The SP's pragmatic local councillors saw the need for organisational centralisation because the party ran disastrous, uncoordinated electoral campaigns in the 1980s. They had also seen that local activists were producing excessively ideological material and thought a stronger central apparatus would provide greater control over this and improve the quality of campaign material. However, they did not come to centralisation from the experience of carrying out prior reform but more out of a continuation of top-down party culture. They had moderate experience in reform. This was lower than reformers elsewhere who were less or not engaged in centralisation. Elite interviews suggest that like in the other case studies, having made prior attempts to broaden appeal had actually shown the SP's leaders a need for increased debate, even though this was subsequently ignored. However, the SP's leaders still often reject the idea that their party is highly centralised. Until they accept this the full process behind this will remain hard to fully discern.

The case studies question the idea that experience in carrying out prior reforms will condition party leaders into being centralisers. In V, the CPN, the WP and DL most reformist elites that had experience in implementing or designing prior reforms aimed at broadening appeal were firmly committed to democratisation and averse to centralising. They understood the risks of democratising and that reforms were likely to encounter resistance but did not see centralisation as an easy way out or a magic bullet. Most of the time reformist elites did not seek to replace democratic centralism with new centralised regulations or to significantly centralise following exogenous shocks: when they had experience in carrying out prior reforms, including for the most part the CPN 1986–1991.

Elites from V's Youth League who also had experience in carrying out reforms to radicalise policy proposals and who encountered previous resistance did not seek centralisation to reform party programmes either. The WECPs analysed here had greater possibilities to undertake reforms before 1989 than their counterparts in CEE. Even the PCP's parliamentarians found some opportunities for this in the early 1980s. If H7 were correct then we could expect centralisation to have been much more prevalent in the case studies. In recent years politicians in V have searched to find the secrets to the SP's stunning expansion. However, when they see the source of its chameleon-like powers, they are unlikely to want to copy it.

Table 7.21: Research question one

	Prior horizontal elite advancement	Prior elite negotiation with outside groups and institutions	Prior pluralistic leadership bodies	Prior elite turnover	Prior elite professional backgrounds	Strategy of electorally-driven centralisation	Breaking with democratic centralism	Electorally-driven policy reforms	Social democratisation	Office-seeking	Breaking with Communism
PCP 1974–1992	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	Low
PCP 1992–2002	low (+)	low (+)	low (+)	low (+)	low (+)	low	low (+)	low (+)	low	low (+)	low (+)
PCP 2002–	low (-)	low (-)	low (-)	low (+)	low	low	low	low (-)	low (-)	low (-)	low (-)
SP 1971–1986	moderate	moderate	low	low (+)	moderate	low	low	low (+)	low	low	low (+)
SP 1986–1998	moderate (+)	High	low	moderate	moderate	high	high	high	low	low	High
SP 1998–	high	High	low	moderate	moderate (+)	high	low	high	high	high	High
(Swedish) SKP 1950–1964	moderate	Low	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	low	Low
(Swedish) VPK 1964–1975	moderate	low*	low (+)	low **	low	low	high	moderate	moderate	low	low (+)
VPK 1975–1993	moderate	moderate	moderate	moderate	moderate	low	moderate	moderate	low	low	Moderate
V 1993–2003	high	High	high	moderate	high	low	moderate	high	high	high	Moderate
V 2003–2006	moderate	moderate	moderate	moderate	moderate	low	low	low	low	low	low (+)
V 2006–	high	moderate (+)	high	moderate	high	low	low	high	high	high	low (+)
WP 1977–1992	moderate	High	moderate	moderate	moderate	low	high	high	low	low	Moderate
DL 1992–1998	high	High	high	moderate	moderate	low	high	high	high	high	High
CPN 1950–1977	moderate	moderate	moderate	low	low	low	low	low (+)	low	low	Low
CPN 1977–1982	moderate	moderate	low	low***	low (+)	low	high	high	low	low	moderate

CPN 1982–1986	moderate	high	moderate	high	high	low	high	high	low	low	moderate
CPN 1986–1991	moderate	high	high	high	high	low (+)	high	high	low	low	high

* this increased rapidly after 1964

** this increased rapidly after 1964

*** this increased rapidly after 1977

Table 7.22: Research Question Two

Party	Centralised organisation	Democratised organisation	Use of democratic centralism	Parliamentarisation of the leadership	Electorally-driven policy change	Office-seeking	Social democratisation	Breaking with Communism	Elite organisational strategies	Experience of reform to broaden appeal	Main features of organisational strategy
PCP 1974–1992	high	low	high	low	low	low	low	low	high	low	Democratic centralism
PCP 1992–2002	high	low (+)	high	low	low (+)	low (+)	low	low (+)	high	low	Democratic centralism
PCP 2002–	high	low	high	low	low	low	low	low	high	low	Democratic centralism
SP 1971–1986	moderate	low	high	low	low (+)	low	low	low (+)	high	low	Democratic centralism
SP 1986–1998	high	low	high*	moderate***	high	low	moderate	high	high	moderate	Centralisation
SP 1998–	high	low	low (+)	high	high	high	high	high	high	high	Centralisation
SKP 1950–1964	high	low	high	low	low	low	low	low	high	low	Democratic centralism
VPK 1964–1975	moderate	moderate	low (+)	low	moderate	low	moderate	low (+)	high	moderate	Democratisation
VPK 1975–1993	moderate	moderate	low (+)	low	moderate	low	low	moderate	moderate	moderate	Democratisation
V 1993–2003	low	moderate (+)	low	high	high	high	high	moderate (+)	moderate	moderate	Democratisation and parliamentarisation

V 2003– 2006	low	high	low	moderate	low	low	low	low	high	moderate	Democratisation
V 2006–	low	moderate	low	high	high	high	high	low (+)	low	high	Parliamentarisa- tion and internal democracy
WP 1977– 1989	moderate	low	high**	moderate	high	low	low (+)	low (+)	high	high	Centralisation and democratic centralism
WP 1989– 1992	low	moderate	low	moderate (+)	high	low	low	moderate	high	moderate	Democratisation and parliamentarisa- Tion
DL 1992– 1998	low	moderate	low	high	high	high	high	high	high	high	Democratisation and parliamentarisa- tion
WP 1992–	moderate	low	high	low	low	low	low	low	high	high	Democratic centralism
CPN 1950– 1977	high	low	high	low (+)	low (+)	low	low	low	high	low	Democratic centralism
CPN 1977– 1982	moderate	low (+)	moderate	low (+)	high	low	low	moderate	high	low (+)	Democratisation
CPN 1982– 1986	low	high	low	low (+)	high	low	low	moderate	high	high	Democratisation
CPN 1986– 1991	low (+)	high	low	low (+)	high	low	low	high	high	high (+)	Democratisation and informal centralisation

***high until 1991, ** high until the mid-1980s, ***after 1994**

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Main Empirical Findings

There are two main empirical findings from this research. First, just as in the successor parties in CEE, it was party leaders who had experience in working with groups and institutions outside of their immediate party hierarchy that led efforts to reform WECPs. It was this group of elites who ‘cracked first’ following exogenous shocks and who were better equipped with ideas about how to achieve reforms. Second, organisational centralisation was not needed for WECPs to achieve programmatic transformation. With reform minded mid-level elites and leaders committed to advocating reform, this was often possible through democratic processes. Moreover, shifting power to the party in public office provided reformers with other elitist organisational strategies to organisational centralisation.

8.2 Key Findings: Research Question One

To scholars watching events unfold in the early 1990s, WECPs’ divergent trajectories did not seem that surprising (Bull 1994, p. 211). However, viewed in a longer term perspective these parties can be seen to have taken unexpected directions. The SP became a major force in Dutch politics, much of the WP was assimilated by Labour, V accommodated social democracy and the PCP managed to avoid even small reforms. Using Anna Grzymała-Busse’s framework to analyse WECPs helps to advance our understanding of such developments. It shows in comparative terms how organisational decisions that the parties made before the collapse of Communism and in response to it, played a highly significant role in shaping their directions. This chapter summarises the main findings from this study. It shows how elite advancement practices and changes in the internal distribution of power impacted upon WECPs’ programmatic development. This research has also demonstrated that the framework has considerable merits in helping us to explain the development of WECPs’ post-Communist successor parties.

Most significantly, the research suggests that WECPs’ leaders regularly pursued organisational changes to resist or promote reform following exogenous shocks and

the collapse of Communism in CEE in 1989. They often went to great lengths to use these to influence decision-making or to assert control over strategic matters. In the case studies, party leaders were highly adept to using such measures to promote their programmatic goals. This highlights the need to analyse such strategies in other WECPs. Only one period was analysed when there was little attempt to use organisational changes to influence other aspects of party strategy (V 2006–). Even then, the representation of parliamentarians in national leadership bodies increased in a relatively ad hoc way, which had had profound effects on decision-making. Organisational changes usually preceded other changes. When they shifted power across party institutions this usually fuelled policy change.

This study has ten key findings for research question one that investigated the relationship between elite advancement practices and party transformation. First, elite advancement practices meant that some WECPs were better placed to transform themselves following the collapse of Communism in CEE in 1989. Several parties had advanced leaders with prior experiences and portable skills that were beneficial to carrying out electorally-driven policy changes and breaking with Communism. They had negotiated with outside groups and institutions, making them more responsive to pressures to break with Communism. These elites could draw on ideas and analytical skills, pragmatism, media skills, prior experience of reforming institutions and of mobilising coalitions of support that helped them to change their parties by undertaking both organisational and programmatic reforms. This research anticipates that we can expect to find such elites in other WECPs that transformed themselves.

Some WECPs were more active in advancing elites ‘horizontally’ from ancillary organisations or including their elected officials in leadership bodies. This made it more likely that they would be transformed following the collapse of Communism. Negotiation with outsiders in parliaments, trade unions, media roles and new social movements (or even new groups of new party members) equipped elites with experiences that were beneficial to implementing electorally-driven reforms and organisational changes. Dissent in party publications was often one of the first signs that calls for reform were brewing. The different prior experiences that WECPs elites’ drew on in working with other political and professional organisations or from

being 'horizontally advanced' help to explain the diverse programmatic directions that their parties took.

Advancing these more analytically minded functionaries to elite positions often proved particularly beneficial to reform as did the inclusion of local councillors in leadership bodies. These politicians had often tried to broaden appeals and accepted office-seeking in local politics. Such elites were often relieved by the collapse of Communism in 1989 and saw it as an opportunity to start anew. Reformist politicians also drew on inspiration for reform from contacts with rival parties and colleagues at the European Parliament. This helped them to envisage not just programmatic reforms but organisational changes as well. Some WECPs advanced officials with such experiences to leadership positions making them better positioned to learn from policy and organisational reforms in other parties. WECPs often craved the prestige and influence that having elected officials brought, but found that once they had them they wanted increased influence within leadership bodies.

In contrast, some WECPs pursued elite advancement policies that fostered leaderships that lacked these experiences. They generally struggled to transform their parties. Most of the time having elites who were experienced in negotiating with outsiders increased WECPs' chances of adapting themselves. Nonetheless, it was not always necessary to have a large number or cohort of such elites. Sometimes an individual was enough to spark reform. However, only rarely did having elites with experience of negotiating with outsiders become detrimental to reform. As orthodox WECPs tried to influence society they found it very difficult to avoid feedback. They have long struggled to work within parliamentary democracy. The research warns them that it is risky for them to recruit students and members of other social movements. Moreover, they advance them to elite positions at their peril. Orthodox WECPs seeking to retain ideological purity are well advised to pack their leadership bodies with tested and obedient full-time functionaries, with little experience of working outside the party. Tactics such as filling leadership bodies with functionaries on the party payroll could also be used in post-Communist successor parties to provide tight discipline and support for transformation. However, many WECPs and post-

Communist successor parties lacked the resources this requires. Several WECs sought to solve this problem by controlling the wages of their elected officials.

WECs' leaders' portable skills and prior experiences rather than simply their ideology affected their chances of transforming their parties. Just as Grzymała-Busse found in their counterparts in CEE, these factors helped some elites to envisage and enact programmatic and organisational reforms. Elites who negotiated with outsiders often had ideas that were less rigid to begin with or were the ones whose orthodoxy cracked first. Having established records in broadening appeal helped to provide legitimacy to reformers as it had done in CEE. However, sometimes, records of prior reform were overshadowed by reformers' former orthodoxy. This could be sufficient for those seeking transformation to be shunned by fellow reformers or for the media to question their credibility.

Second, WECs that advanced elites with the above prior experiences were more likely to break with Communism and to pursue electorally-driven reforms rather than to go the whole hog by social democratising or seeking office. Horizontal elite advancement practices promoted social democratisation and office-seeking more than experiences of negotiation with outsiders per se. Elected officials were often constrained by other reformist elites from taking such initiatives. Advancing elected officials into leadership bodies did not ensure that parties would seek social democracy or office; however, those parties that did pursue these strategies had advanced elites this way.

Third, WECs' pursuit of electorally-driven policy reforms, social democratisation and office-seeking did not always work out as planned for example in V, DL and the SP. Depending on the context and the way in which they were implemented, reforms including broader appeals or social democratisation could be lost on voters. Furthermore, office-seeking did not necessarily mean that parties would manage to win inclusion in government. Failing to enter government after having made it appear possible could prove devastating. Being in government also presented additional burdens. It could become a poisoned chalice. Party leaders could often manage backlashes against the programmatic compromises that office-seeking required but found it hard to prevent activists and members tiring or from leaving. Searching for

votes by encroaching on traditional social democratic policies also alienated radical activists. Attempting to preoccupy them with direct activism or to coerce them into hard work through centralistic structures might help to keep them on board. However, this research suggests that even such measures fail in the long-term. Recruiting social democratic supporters offered rapid short-term expansion but they usually returned back to established social democratic parties, were less inclined to meet the commitments demanded of them or found their parties' centralism problematic.

Fourth, all the parties analysed here that transformed themselves took rapid steps to distance themselves from Communism following 1989 for example V and DL made programmatic changes. However, none of them had rapidly accepted social democracy or office-seeking. When this occurred, it generally took place gradually. Sometimes this meant that parties tried to make appeals that reconciled or combined radical socialism with social democracy. Post-Communist successor parties could enjoy periods of electoral expansion through strategies based on ideological moderation, intense opposition to social democratic rivals and Euroscepticism. Parties who had advanced elites with experiences of negotiating with outside groups and institutions or who had advanced them horizontally across the party organisation were more likely to make moderating changes. Sometimes these elites had accepted the need for social democratisation and office-seeking through their experiences in negotiating with outsiders but this usually took place through experiences in parliament or elected office.

Parties with high numbers of such elites were more likely to seize on opportunities that emerged in their respective party systems. This was often when rival social democratic parties were in office, were struggling to please their own supporters or when it was possible to argue that they were pursuing neo-liberal or right-wing policies. Parties whose elites had such experiences were also more likely to advocate social democratisation and office seeking when social democratic rivals made eyes at bringing their parties into government or closer parliamentary relationships. This poses the question of whether possibilities for gradual change emerged for parties in CEE that did not social democratise in 1989 in the long term.

Fifth, elites with experiences of outside negotiation or who had been advanced ‘horizontally’ were generally far more likely to demand reforms in response to external shocks and the collapse of Communism. This is evident even in parties that did not transform. These leaders were generally more likely to seek electorally-driven policy reforms or breaking with Communism than office or social democracy. Negotiation with outside groups and institutions could promote such a move to mainstream politics. These elites were more ready to accept compromises than those with little experience at negotiating with outsiders. However, their experiences usually gave them radical ideas that were not beneficial to seeking office or social democratisation. These experiences did not mean that most reformist elites would seek such changes. Nonetheless, those elites who did embrace mainstream politics had been strongly influenced by such factors and especially experiences available made to them because of horizontal elite advancement practices. Elites with backgrounds in student organisations were often more pragmatic than WECPs’ historic leaders, however they usually favoured broader radical left appeals. In contrast, elites with experience in elected office were more exposed to pressures of appealing to voters and more likely to seek social democratisation.

Sixth, these processes meant that those WECPs seeking to remain orthodox required extremely rigid elite advancement policies. Excluding those with moderate ideas from elite positions was not enough, they also needed to those with prior experiences that could be beneficial to transformation. Some orthodox party leaders knew this all along. However, many unwittingly pursued elite advancement practices that had huge ramifications in promoting reform. Others took the risk in aim of gaining increased influence in other social institutions.

Seventh, this study casts doubt on the idea that attempts to reform WECPs following the collapse of Communism are best understood as being made by elites who simply had a greater degree of an innate ‘adaptive capacity’¹³ – some randomly being more predisposed to adapting and recognising the need to change in response to an external shock. While such factors may well still matter, this research points to there being

¹³ This idea and possibility was proposed by Professor Aleks Szczerbiak at the initial research outline presentation for this study.

more systematic influences on attempts to reform WECPs. If the attempts at reform analysed here could be understood in terms of some elites simply being more capable of changing because of innate attributes, then we would expect reformists to have been more spread out in terms of background characteristics and party roles. Elite interviews showed that most reformers had gradually become more pragmatic through their contact with outsiders rather than simply suddenly seeking reform in reaction to the collapse of Communism. Leading reformist elites saw their own paths to seeking reform this way and those of their colleagues.

Eighth, tolerance of ideological pluralism in elite bodies before exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism helped some WECPs and post-Communist successor parties to adapt. Prior pluralism was by no means essential for this to occur but shaped electorally-driven policy reforms and attempts to break with Communism in several parties. The research found only limited evidence to suggest that prior pluralism would engender office-seeking or social democratisation. Most of the time this did not occur, but it is noteworthy that most parties that pursued these directions did exhibit prior pluralism. Those parties without significant levels of prior pluralism generally struggled to reform themselves. However, occasionally transformation was possible in centralistic parties, without prior pluralism and debate, when the parties' top leaders had accepted the need to change. It was a paradox that with little precedent for debate and discussion, it was easy for leaders to force through reforms.

Ninth, prior turnover in the elite generally made it more likely that reform would take place in WECPs following the collapse of Communism and exogenous shocks. Parties with this were more likely to pursue electorally-driven reforms or to break with Communism. However, this research found that sudden turnover following a shock was also highly likely to contribute to reform – sometimes shocks could spur sudden changes in elite advancement policies which then had subsequent ramifications in terms of policy change. Increased turnover usually gave significant opportunities for reformers to emerge by removing members of WECPs' old guard leaderships who had tended to dominate the parties for decades.

Tenth, the research found little evidence to support the idea that WECPs which advanced elites with experience in negotiating with outsiders, professional backgrounds or 'horizontally' across their organisations, were more likely to pursue organisational centralisation. More pragmatic elites with backgrounds in new social movements or student politics were not more likely to centralise. When parties centralised this appeared to be better explained as a form of continuity with former centralistic organisational practices rather than being due to elite advancement processes. Sometimes reformist elites that centralised in response to difficult situations and resistance, did so in an ad hoc fashion rather than because they were drawing on their prior experiences. They seemed just as likely to do this as elites with lower or greater levels of such experiences. Only a small number of such elites explained centralisation as something they had done through drawing on their prior experiences in these backgrounds. In contrast to what was found in CEE, most elites did not believe that such experiences promoted centralisation and thought they were more beneficial to promoting calls to abolish democratic centralism through democratisation. Horizontal advancement practices seemed to promote centralisation in a slightly stronger way than the other factors. In particular elected officials and employees from think-tanks seemed more inclined to centralise but this relationship again appeared to be relatively weak and did not apply in most cases.

8.3 Key Findings: Research Question Two

Grzymała-Busse identified a very strong relationship between centralisation and programmatic transformation and found that democratisation was unlikely to result in reform. The cases she studied supported this so overwhelmingly that it is easy to assume her claims operated on a deterministic rather than a probabilistic level. This study has found that the internal distribution of power within WECPs played a significant role in shaping their programmatic transformation. It shows that centralisation and streamlining could be used in WECPs to promote reform by riding roughshod over resistance from orthodox mid-level elites. Nevertheless, reformers rarely used such tactics.

What is more, many WECPs still managed to transform themselves. This points to the finding that centralisation was not that significantly more likely to bring transformation than other organisational strategies. It was by no means the only route

for breaking with Communism and programmatic transformation. Party leaders' organisational strategies could also be multifaceted and could combine several different processes. This research found that WECPs could pursue organisational strategies corresponding to five ideal types. These could broadly be classified as 'resisters', 'dictators', 'centralisers', 'democratisers', or being based on 'parliamentarisation'.

Specifically, the research has eight key findings for research question two which investigated the relationship between parties' internal distribution of power and party transformation. First some WECPs managed to use democratic centralism to resist change. In each case study analysed here elites had at some time reacted to their parties' troubles by searching for new ways to control or to punish reformers. Some elites had grown highly adept at doing this and were able to see out pressures to reform from exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism. They rigidly controlled elite advancement practices to prevent reformists gaining influence. Moreover, they established organisational structures that gave them huge control over the internal distribution of power. Factors including experience in clandestine action or a history that involved a thorough Stalinisation of the party apparatus could help to shape these processes.

Second, this study shows that WECPs had a range of possible organisational strategies at their disposal compared with the parties that Grzymała-Busse studied in CEE. Most of the time when democratic centralism functioned this constrained attempts to carry out reforms. However, sometimes it was an effective way to take the first steps to transformation. WECPs' leaders could use democratic centralism to 'dictate' reform, making a rapid centralisation less necessary than in CEE. WECPs' adaptation did not simply depend on a rapid centralisation following 1989.

However, only a few of the cases analysed here that maintained democratic centralism following exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism used it to dictate reforms. When democratic centralism was harnessed this way it was only a short period of time. It was soon left behind when it became too much of an electoral liability. Most reformers were uneasy about such measures. Following exogenous

shocks or the collapse of Communism democratic centralism had also usually broken down anyway. This precluded its use in dictating reforms. Nevertheless, in those parties that maintained rigid structures throughout the late 1980s this was possible.

Third, some WECs replaced democratic centralism with new highly centralistic structures. In these 'centralisers' elites were able to force through programmatic changes, break with Communism or to seek office and social democratise. Sometimes even weak processes of centralisation could help to achieve such goals. They could also operate simultaneously alongside other organisational strategies including democratisation to empower party institutions in which reformists were influential. However, the research found that by 1989 (or the moments when WECs first broke with democratic centralism) WECs' organisations had often changed to such an extent that centralisation was not viable. Calls for internal democratisation were often so fierce that centralisation was not feasible and elites had alternative organisational strategies that they could use to promote programmatic change. Only in those parties that retained highly centralistic organisations was it possible for leaders to centralise in a way similar to parties in CEE. In most WECs we can expect centralisation to have been more modest.

Fourth, this research shows that 'democratisers' could be highly adept at programmatic transformation. Grzymała-Busse found that democratisation enabled hardliners to take over, to reassert orthodox Communism and to force reformers out in CEE. However, this did not happen in the WECs analysed here. Most of the time, democratisation complemented transformation. It helped reformers to make painful breaks with Communism or to move towards electorally-driven programmatic reforms. Prior membership recruitment policies had meant that there were often many reformists within the mid-level elite and rank and file. This meant that democratisation could spur major reforms and in many cases worked to dethrone orthodox activists and elites.

Democratisation did not guarantee that reformist leaders could always manage to get their reforms accepted. This was less certain than in centralised parties. Nonetheless, democratisation could be an effective route to transformation. In WECs that democratised we can expect there to have been backlashes against reforms. These

were usually mild in comparison to those Grzymała-Busse found in parties like the Czech KSČM. Reformers who had democratised generally did not lose control to orthodox Communists bent on reasserting Communism and were rarely forced out of their parties or ostracised.

Orthodox Communists only had mild success at using democratic structures in such ways. Major reforms were possible under democratic structures and only one of the parties analysed here ended up reasserting a rigid form of democratic centralism. This was after the reformist majority decided to leave rather than because they were forced out. Following democratisation orthodox Communists were usually unable to reassert democratic centralism to punish reformers. Having realised that they could not control their parties, they often broke away on their own accord. Sometimes orthodox Communists managed to reassert Communist symbols or concepts into party programmes but on the whole attempts to do this were unsuccessful. Some WECs were able to survive for years under democratic structures without a retreat to orthodoxy or democratic centralism. They could usually maintain the bulk of programmatic reforms, even if they endured ongoing conflicts over ideological matters.

Grzymała-Busse's finding in CEE that letting the rank and file participate in policy making would preclude social democratisation or office seeking following the collapse of Communism, has some relevance to WECs. For several this meant that such options were off the table in 1989. However, democratisation did not mean that party leaders were unable to convince mid-level elites of the need for such strategies after 1989. Assertive leaders achieved such transformations within democratic structures. Democracy did not root WECs' successor parties to protest politics. While backlashes did occur against reforms they were rarely undone entirely. Those parties that centralised did transform themselves; however, those that democratised often managed to make similar changes during the 1990s. Democratisation was only marginally less beneficial to reform. Using Grzymała-Busse's framework to understand WECs would overstate the need for them to centralise to adapt.

Fifth, Grzymała-Busse's findings about mid-level elites in CEE need to be adjusted to understand many WECs. Basing our understanding of them on a perspective similar

to May's 'Law of Curvilinear Disparity' (1973) is problematic. They were often little more radical or attached to orthodox Communism than most reformist elites. Mid-level elites were unlikely to be overwhelmingly in favour of social democratisation or office seeking in 1989 but were often enthusiastic to electorally-driven reforms and sought broader appeal or breaking with Communist dogma. Mid-level elites including regional leaders and congress delegates had often encountered pressures for these at a local level.

Importing theoretical frameworks from CEE to the West helps to provide useful ideas that can expand our knowledge of WECs. There are, however, dangers in importing back assumptions they have drawn on from the West that have long troubled political scientists (Norris, 1995; Kitschelt, 1989). Sometimes mid-level elites were more radical than the leadership and this posed additional obstacles to reform but this was not a hard and fast rule. Mid-level elites could have the same experiences in negotiating with outsiders that had led elites to seek reform. Further, the strength of radical mid-level elites and their impact on reformist elites' chances of enacting reforms could also be contingent on other factors. These included the radicalisation of parties' youth organisations, recruitment practices, as well as the leadership's efforts to consult them, its skill in justifying need for reform or the party's electoral performance and poll-ratings.

Sixth, WECs and their successor parties were also often subject to the general trend that scholars have observed of the increasing role of party in public office that scholars have observed in more mainstream parties. WECs' central offices were often dominated by traditionalists, making centralisation less appealing to reformers. However, parliamentarisation or professionalisation presented reformers with opportunities for alternative organisational strategies than centralisation. In particular, shifting power to the party in public office enabled significant reforms. Members of leadership bodies with roles or backgrounds in elected positions were unsurprisingly at the forefront of implementing such strategies. Envisaging such a strategy did not even require a great deal of experience in elected politics.

Parliamentarisation brought about a decline in participative decision-making and gave reformers increased power to transform their parties. This research shows that when it took place alongside otherwise democratic or decentralised internal structures this

could lead to internal conflicts. Reformist leaders who shifted power to parliament but paid little attention to building centralised structures were more likely to face backlashes or to find that their parties imploded. Despite this, radical mid-level elites seemed unable to block the continued shift of power to parliamentary groups. This was an effective route to transformation and one that reformist elites in WECPs appear to have been more at ease with than organisational centralisation. However, it did correspond with a decline in internal democratic decision-making and role for the rank and file.

Seventh, small centralistic WECPs with few or no MPs in 1989 were also well placed to adapt. Those with a small group of pragmatic leaders or local councillors were able to initiate electorally-driven policy reforms. If these policies worked, then they stood to gain full control over their parties' nascent parliamentary groups. This gave them a high degree of power to steer their parties' adaptation, control its messages and establish parliamentary unity which was useful in helping them to establish credibility as a potential coalition partner.

Eighth, the research found that the idea that carrying out prior reforms provided elites with experiences that were beneficial to organisational centralisation fails to capture the main reasons behind centralisation in WECPs and their successor parties (see above). Elites with extensive experience in implementing reforms rarely made comprehensive efforts or plans to centralise their parties in the way that that Grzymała-Busse found elites had done in CEE. Prior experience in reform was actually likely to lead reformist elites to see a need for democratisation and consultation as a way to undertake reforms. They had found that forcing through reforms was likely to lead to internal dissent that could be defused through democratic and inclusive debate. In this respect experiences from carrying out prior reforms did shape elites' ability to develop strategies to reorganise their parties. This research also suggests when WECPs' leaders democratised they did not necessarily do so out of a lack of 'skill' or experience in implementing prior reforms. Instead they did so precisely because they had prior experience and expertise in such deeds. Many WECPs made significant reforms before 1989. Centralisation should have been more prevalent if a significant relationship existed between it and policy innovation in

WECs. This poses the question of why elites' prior experience in carrying out reforms led them to behave so differently in CEE and Western Europe.

8.4 Revisiting the literature on CEE successor parties

Importing Grzymała-Busse's framework is a useful starting point from which to develop an explanation of WECs' divergent adaptation. However, the empirical findings of this research suggest that it needs several modifications to provide a more comprehensive account of WECs' development. This study has found two important differences between their diverse adaptation and that of the successor parties in CEE and that there are some significant weaknesses in using Grzymała-Busse's framework to study WECs. First, it has highlighted that the mid-level elite and party membership in several WECs were not necessarily hardliners bent on stubbornly resisting reform. This questions a key part of Grzymała-Busse's framework and of several studies of successor parties in CEE (see Kitschelt 2002, Ishiyama 2002).

Second, analysis shows that experienced reformers in WECs were not predisposed to centralising and had not learnt this 'skill' as Grzymała-Busse found that reformers in CEE had done – in stark contrast to this, they had become democratisers. This research shows that there is room for future studies to re-examine the strength of this relationship in successor parties in CEE and to question whether this process took place in those successor parties in CEE that Grzymała-Busse did not study. Furthermore, further research is needed to explain why such differences existed in reformers' 'organisational skills' in WECs compared with the successor parties in CEE. Third, this research shows that while leaders' portable skills helped them to envisage and carry out reforms their 'usable pasts' were less significant. While there was evidence to suggest that leaders who pursued reforms before 1989/external shocks could point to their records of reform sometimes they found it difficult to break with their previous actions and their longstanding commitment to Communism. Moreover, records of reform were not necessary to gain legitimacy as a reformer – sometimes new faces that were less associated with the past were better placed to advocate reforms. This suggests that out of the two skill sets that Grzymała-Busse identified leaders' portable skills had greater impact on their parties' development than their 'useable pasts'.

The empirical findings of this research also show that there are at least five ways in which the explanative and descriptive power of Grzymała-Busse's framework can be improved for analysing WECPs by drawing on ideas found in other frameworks for studying successor parties in CEE. First, as Kitschelt observed in successor parties in CEE agency factors and the decisions of individual elites could be important in shaping party adaptation in WECPs and Grzymała-Busse pays little attention to this factor (Kitschelt 2002, p. 39). Second, his argument that office-seeking strategies could yield disappointing results also resonates with the experience of several WECPs. This is in stark contrast to Grzymała-Busse's tendency to view office seeking as being a successful transformation (Kitschelt 2002, p.14). Further, as Bauer found in successor parties in CEE, strategies of retaining Communism and protest politics could yield electoral success for successor parties in CEE despite Grzymała-Busse's conclusion that this would necessary bring electoral failure (Bauer 2002, p. 366). Indeed, several WECPs also managed to profit from such strategies.

Third, this research has shown that Grzymała-Busse's framework can be improved for analysing WECPs by studying their development after their initial reactions to the revolutions of 1989. In a similar way to one Kitschelt identified in CEE, WECPs' politicians continued to encounter exogenous shocks that they could learn from. For example, electoral failures during the 1990s could convince politicians to change their strategies. Thus, while 1989 was of huge significance for many WECPs, their reactions to it were not necessarily set in stone and the legacies of the past did not entirely prevent politicians from learning in new political circumstances (see Kitschelt, 2002 and Bunce 2002, p. 424).

Fourth, the literature on the adaptation of successor parties in CEE has shown that organisational variables were of primary importance in shaping party adaptation and that, while external or environmental factors could influence party adaptation, they played a secondary role. This research points to the primary significance of organisational variables in shaping the adaptation of WECPs. Nevertheless, a more comprehensive understanding of their adaptation is gained from taking environmental factors into account in a broader theoretical framework than the one provided by

Grzymała-Busse. Therefore, the refined model for explaining WECs' divergent adaptation provided in this chapter is in some respects similar to the theoretical framework provided by Bozóki and Ishiyama (2002) which also accounts for the impact of environmental factors on party adaptation.

Last, our understanding of WECs can be improved by paying more attention to how we classify the outcomes of their adaptation strategies. Mapping WECs development can be improved by drawing on arguments by Ziblatt and Biziouras (2002) that successor parties in CEE could be classified on more than one ideological dimension. There was not a linear relationship between reform and non-reform – instead it was possible for parties to adopt a range of identities. Studies of WECs could better describe the outcomes of WECs adaptation by classifying them not simply on the basis of whether they pursued a strategy of 'leftist-retreat' (based on orthodox Communism, Marxism Leninism and oppositional politics) or social democracy or more pragmatic forms of socialism. Instead they could also classify WECs in terms of whether they embraced internationalism or became rooted to nationalism/patriotism like several parties did in CEE (Bozóki and Ishiyama, 2002). This might help to establish a basis on which to explain why some WECs remained more rooted to nationalism.

8.5 Remodelling the framework

Importing Grzymała-Busse's framework improves our understanding of WECs by bringing our attention to the importance of elite advancement processes and changes to their internal distribution of power. The research found that these institutional variables were important in all five case studies. The cases were generally similar in that they had upheld Marxism-Leninism, revolutionary goals and democratic centralism. However, it was found that their historical backgrounds (for example: membership of the Comintern, paramilitarism and clandestine activities) and previous decisions by party leaders had affected elite advancement practices and organisational procedures. This had shaped the viability of programmatic transformation and meant that the parties adapted in very different ways following the collapse of Communism in 1989.

However, the research found that Grzymała-Busse's framework has several ideas that need to be addressed to make it capable of understanding WECs' development. First, its assumptions about mid-level elites and the reasons elites centralise are problematic. Second, the framework's parsimony is useful for telling us where to start analysing WECs. However, as with previous attempts to understand WECs' divergent adaptation (Arter, 2002, Tannahill, 1978) there is a need for a wider, but not exhaustive framework to account for other variables.

An explanation of WECs' divergent adaptation must appreciate changes in their mid-level elite and what Waller (1994, p.44) termed the 'new member factor'. This idea that recruiting from a range of social groups and new social movements could undermine WECs' orthodoxy gains support from the case studies. However, they have also shown that this mattered in two respects. First, it led to calls for reform at grass roots level in response to exogenous shocks. Second, it impacted upon elite advancement processes. As the newcomers worked their way into leading party bodies, they brought prior experiences that were beneficial to transformation with them (see Figure 8.1). Changes in WECs' mid-level elite before exogenous shocks often helped to promote reform. In addition, other factors including trips to CEE and the Soviet Union also helped to convince elites of the need for reform. This raises the question of whether elites in CEE who visited the west had similar experiences.

Agency factors also need to be built into the framework to explain WECs' development. WECs' top leaders could be highly influential in shaping or blocking reform. In the PCP Cunha's (and lately his henchmen's) refusal to change and manipulative use of democratic centralism to control elite advancement and remove rivals presented significant barriers to transformation. Resistance or hesitance to reform from long-serving historical leaders presented barriers to transformation in all the case studies. Turnover within the elite did not necessarily mean these influential figures would be pushed aside. But reform gained momentum after Werner, Garland, De Groot, and Monjé had been left behind. The ability to remove such figures affected WECs' chances of making a new beginning. In the PCP, where this did not occur, reform became harder. Developments within West European party systems were also shown to have posed opportunities and constraints on WECs' adaptation,

particularly in terms of office-seeking and social democratisation. This research also shows that the chances of reform often depended on elite advancement practises to WECPs' small daily executive committees rather than simply their large but peripheral central committees.

8.6 Further research

This research shows that we can learn more about parties in Western Europe and WECPs by drawing on frameworks developed in CEE. It also poses a challenge to scholars to analyse WECPs in comparative perspective. Through testing and refining a theoretical framework developed to study the adaptation of CPs in CEE against five case studies it proposed a new framework that can be used in studying other WECPs. It can be used to see if factors including elite advancement processes and changes to the internal distribution of power shaped WECPs' programmatic development or transformation. The parties studied here adapted differently because their leaders made different decisions on questions regarding elite advancement processes and organisational structures. These were issues that all WECPs had to address. Their adaptation was not just determined by variables that were case specific.

This research points out that scholars should take a second look at the body of literature that exists on parties in CEE. It has shown that organisational factors were extremely significant in shaping WECPs' diverse adaptation – just as they were in CEE. It demonstrates that such factors were frequently more important than environmental factors because they shaped elites' ability to respond to changes in the political environment. However, this opens up the way for studies like those conducted by Ishiyama on CEE successor parties to see if quantitative analysis of a larger number of WECPs supports such findings. This study opens up a debate as to whether external or internal factors were of primary significance in shaping WECPs' divergent programmatic adaptation. Moreover, it establishes a basis on which to ask which external factors were the most significant or whether some can even be ruled out entirely as having causal significance. This research also raises the question of whether there were similarities in terms of which external factors were significant in shaping the development of WECPs and their counterparts in CEE.

Further research is also needed to develop our classifications of WECPs' adaptation strategies. These could be strengthened by drawing on studies from CEE that offer a four part classification to show whether they pursued nationalist socialist/populist, reformist/social democrats, orthodox Communist/internationalist or national Communist strategies (Bozóki and Ishiyama, 2002). More research is also needed to investigate the relationship between state funding for political parties and WECPs' diverse adaptation. Studies in CEE found that greater funding enabled leaders greater independence from their memberships and more room to pursue programmatic reforms (Ziblatt and Bizziouras 2002, p. 422). This research has shown that the relationship between party funding and programmatic change in WECPs warrants further analysis with changes in the distribution of state funding having been highly significant in shaping the adaptation of several of the cases analysed here.

This study used interview material to analyse how changes in elite advancement practices and party organisation affected WECPs' transformation. It shows that qualitative research can be used to study frameworks like this through systematic analysis. It also demonstrates the benefits from talking to elites about the process of party transformation and the motives behind their organisational strategies. Its findings can be strengthened by future quantitative research regarding the changing composition of party leadership bodies and party organisations. However, it was also found that the documents needed for this are often hard to obtain with orthodox WECPs remaining hesitant to share this or because the data is inaccessible.

Testing the framework against additional cases can help to examine the main propositions from this research. These include the idea that elite advancement processes and elites' experiences in negotiating with outside groups and institutions help to explain attempts to reform WECPs. Scholars can draw on this to analyse the larger WECPs in Italy and France as well. Further research is also necessary to see if the relationship between experience in carrying out reforms and organisational centralisation that Grzymała-Busse's identified in CEE has relevance elsewhere. On the other hand it can see if such experiences promoted democratisation as this study found. This theoretical debate has wider relevance to debates on party change and can

be tested in non-communist parties of the radical left, mainstream parties and in other party families.

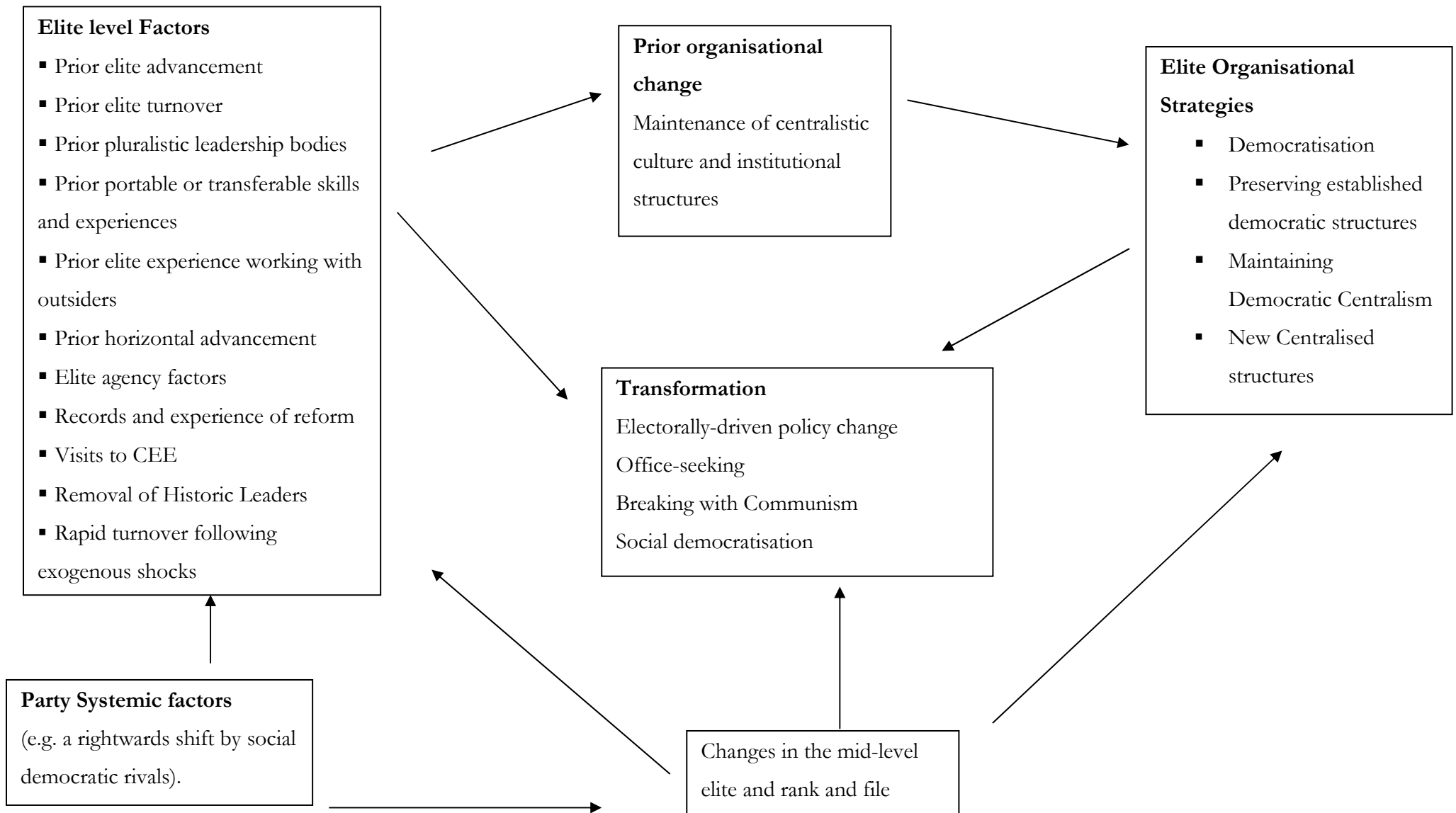
The research also shows that political scientists should be more active in developing explanations of those parties (and those WECPs) that fail to adapt to external shocks like the PCP. Too often they are crowded out by analysis of more successful counterparts. This is problematic when studying the reasons behind their failure lack of responsiveness can tell us a great deal about party change. This study also shows that party leaders are often pivotal in shaping party adaptation. They can do much to stop or promote reform and need to be placed at the forefront of our understanding of party change in WECPs and left parties. This research shows that the attributed and decisions made by party leaders mattered in a similar way to that which scholars have found in radical right-wing parties (Mudde, 2007). All this points to a need to for political scientists to pay greater attention to the 'supply side' in left parties by undertaking more research on their leaders.

Thinking more specifically, additional research is also warranted to see if the SP is unique among WECPs in using a highly centralised organisational model to social democratise itself and whether leaders in other WECPs managed to initiate transformation through using democratic centralism after 1989. Analysis of the SP found that its high levels of direct action created great pressures for moderation. Maoists in other parties analysed here were also at the forefront of calls for programmatic moderation. Greater comparative work, on Maoist parties in Western Europe is therefore warranted to see whether they shared this feature and if they were better placed than other WECPs to break with their Communist past.

Analysis of the PCP also offers scholars a basis from which to comparatively analyse WECPs that retained democratic centralism. This study has provided new information on the PCP's secretive internal workings and established a basis for comparison with other parties that failed to break with orthodox Communism. One such party is the Greek KKE on which there are only a few studies (Kalyvas and Marantzidis, 2005, 2003; Bosco, 2001; Smith, 1993; Verney, 1989). Research is needed to examine whether its leaders pursued similar strategies to resisting reform and if reformers there had similar characteristics or faced similar dilemmas to those in the PCP.

Furthermore, it can tell us whether reformers' attempts to democratise were to blame for the KKE's failure to adapt. This can help to further update our understanding of WECPs that kept democratic centralism and to see if party leaderships other than the PCP's can still maintain rigid control over elite advancement and policy making.

Figure 8.1 WECPs' divergent transformation following exogenous shocks and the collapse of Communism



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- Dunphy, R., political scientist: 25.08.08, 04.09.08.
- Gallagher, P., former parliamentarian: 17.06.08.
- Gillan, P., former Editor of *Making Sense*: 26.06.08.
- Hanley, B., political scientist: 22.12.09.

- Harris, E., former Research Section functionary: 25.01.09.
- Heffernan, T., former WP General Secretary: 25.08.08, 26.08.08.
- Lowry, J., WP General Secretary: 06.07.09.
- Mc Mahon, M., former WP Executive Political Committee member, Councillor: 25.09.09.
- Mannion, P., Research Officer WP: 30.10.08.
- Rabbitte, P., parliamentarian: 20.08.08.

Chapter Six: The CPN

- Brouwer, I., former parliamentary leader: 08.04.08.
- De Boer, A., former Board member: 08.04.08, 12.03.09.
- De Roo, A., former GroenLinks MEP: 21.02.09.
- Ernsting, M., former parliamentarian: 20.03.08, 15.11.08.
- Izeboud, E., former Party Chair: 26.02.09, 14.05.09.
- Lagendijk, J., GroenLinks MEP: 05.07.07.
- Lucardie, P., political scientist: 22.02.08, 10.04.08.
- Lucas, M., former local Councillor: 03.09.08.
- Luccassen, T., former local Councillor: 18.09.08.
- Marloes Weesjes, E., historian: 20.02.08.
- Meijer, H., former Board member: 10.08.05, 06.03.09.
- Nijhof, H., GroenLinks Party Chair: 03.04.08.
- Platvoet, L., former PSP Executive Committee member: 04.03.08, 09.04.08, 13.10.08.
- Thio, B., former daily Executive Board member: 20.02.09.
- Van Dijk, N., former MEP: 27.02.08, 09.04.08, 20.10.08.

- Van Hoek, T., former daily Executive Board member: 10.03.08, 08.04.08, 22.01.09, 08.02.09.
- Van Ojik, B., former PPR Chair: 08.08.08, 13.10.08, 15.10.08, 18.10.08.
- Van der Pijl, K., former CPN functionary: 20.02.08.
- Voerman, G., political scientist: 10.04.08, 09.07.09.