

Campaign Posters for East German *Volkskammer* Elections (March 1990)

Abstract

This photograph shows an East Berlin archway that has been placarded with posters for the upcoming *Volkskammer* elections on March 18, 1990. One poster is for the SPD, another is for the PDS, and two are for Alliance 90 [*Bündnis 90*], one of which (on the left) reads “Wer bei Honecker BLOCKflöte gelernt hat, kann in keiner DEMOKRATIE die erste Geige spielen!” [“Anyone who studied recorder (*Blockflöte*) with Honecker can't play first violin in any democracy.”] The slogan, which loses much in translation, is a wordplay alluding to the past of the former block parties CDU and LDPD, both of which had subordinated themselves to SED ideology in the *Volkskammer*. The Alliance 90 poster on the right reads “Art. 23. Kein Anschluss unter dieser Nummer” [“Article 23. No connection under this number”]. This is another essentially untranslatable wordplay: among other meanings, the German word “Anschluss” can mean both telephone connection and accession. This slogan protested the prospect of the GDR’s accession to the Federal Republic under Article 23 of the Basic Law. Instead, Alliance 90 demanded a new constitution and thus a united German state built on an entirely new foundation under Article 146 of the Basic Law. In the end, however, the parties that supported accession under Article 23 won the majority of votes, so the *Volkskammer* elections actually facilitated accession.

Source



Source: Campaign Posters for Volkskammer Elections on March 16, 1990 in East-Berlin. Photo: Dietmar Katz.

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