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Bureaucracy and Dissent:
East German Subjectivity and Socialist Realism
in the Context of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Romania

A dissertation presented
by
Nicole Burgoyne
to
the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
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Bureaucracy and Dissent: East German Subjectivity and Socialist Realism in the Context of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Romania

Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the central role of interior monologue and subjectivity in the GDR's discourse of Socialist Realism. It argues that these stylistic elements, often associated with modernism, were central to the bureaucracy's criteria for publication. Censored texts by authors who sought to criticize East German society presented subjective narratives and nonetheless sought to speak to common experiences. In order to properly contextualize these issues within East Bloc cultural policy, four chapters draw on comparative analysis with the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, or Romania. I begin with the intellectual tradition of Socialist Realism established before the Second World War in the Soviet Union and by exiled German-speaking thinkers in my first chapter. I compare theoretical premises to institutional practices in the GDR. Chapter two takes Christa Wolf as a case study of a dogmatic student of the GDR's official culture and budding cultural functionary, who developed her own theory of Socialist Realism in the 1960s. Moving into the tumultuous later years of the GDR, I examine the GDR's widespread political protests of the Soviet invasion of the Prague Spring, and compare the success of marginalized or banned Czechoslovak and East German authors abroad in my third chapter. Elaborating on these themes, chapter four compares novels by Siegmar Faust and Jiří Gruša in order to establish similarities in young people's frustration with Socialist society in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Chapter five addresses the impact of opening the secret police archives to the public on post-Wall literature by contrasting novels by Herta Müller and Wolfgang Hilbig, natives of Romania and East Germany respectively.

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Friends in Chicago, Boston, and Berlin, Ryan Milner, Daniel Pratt, Morena Skalamera, Jillian DeMair, Apratim Sahay, Liz Sefton, and Lili Mundle helped me through it all. Most of all I thank my family, June and Skip, Adam and Charlotte, their daughters Celeste and Sanaa, Aunt Diane and Uncle Lou and all my cousins for their faith and reminders of life outside a dissertation.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents,
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Introduction

Caught as it is in the role of the foreign, politicized, and often downright trivialized half of divided Germany, the German Democratic Republic remains a peculiar chapter of the larger history of German literature coming to terms with the Second World War.[1] And yet the very peculiarity of this corpus makes it a unique opportunity in German studies for a different kind of area studies and, indeed, the study of rather different issues of modern aesthetics.

The area of study to which I refer is that of Central Europe. I propose the integration of the GDR into this contested region between the German and Russian spheres of influence that incorporates cultural elements of both. The German Democratic Republic represents a case study of the long history of intersection of West and East that resulted in the fascinating new configuration of Central Europe in the Cold War Era. Communist regimes across the East Bloc introduced repressive control of their respective cultural spheres under the direction of the Soviet Union. Below I shall examine some of the thematic and formal critieria that was supposed to define Central European literature of the Cold War era, as well as oppositional reactions that challenged these enforced conventions.

The literary aesthetic that arose from the Marxist-Leninist political worldview, Socialist Realism, demands an ideologically motivated form of literature guided by up a telological political vision. The GDR's version of Socialist Realism emphasized communicating the important changes already enacted, in order to win legimitization as the antidote to the preceeding Nazi state. This bureaucratic goal makes comparisons of East German literature with

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[1] For a thoughtful introduction to the GDR as whole, see *Erinnerungsorte der DDR*, edited by Martin Sabrow, München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2009.

[2] Julia Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies: Psychoanalysis, History, and Literature of East Germany,*

many forms of propaganda productive, and indeed a large part of the scholarly discourse on GDR literature has been devoted to its role as support for the Communist regime. Though this political dimension of GDR literature is essential, my work attempts to foreground aesthetic issues, above all focusing on literary history. This perspective highlights different traditions in recapitulating the history of the GDR while also inviting new aesthetic questions that far transcend the Cold War Era.

The Development of a State-Sponsored Cultural Institutions in the Newly Formed GDR

In the wake of the popular protests of the late eighties and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many historians sought to utilize new access to the former German Democratic Republic to document not only the censorship practices of the now defunct SED regime, but also the many methods of dissent. For example, Mary Fulbrook's foundational *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR 1949-1989* (published in 1994) devotes fully half of its chapters to subjects such as the uneasy rapprochement between the Protestant Church and the regime, the fragmented political opposition, and popular dissent. The titles of the two most recent monographs by Stefan Wolle, a key figure in German GDR scholarship, *Der Traum der Revolte: Die DDR 1968* (2008) and *Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR* (2011) demonstrate similar interests in the friction between the rulers and the ruled.

The above-mentioned work insightfully introduces invaluable new sources and provides an eye-opening window into East Germany's closed society, which I shall make further use of in second half of this dissertation. The first half, however, will focus in on the relative *success* of the GDR's bureaucratic institutions, which initiated a process of cultural homogenization. Robert Darnton has productively studied the institution of censorship in East Germany, and especially

the mindset of its censors. In his recent *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature* (2014) Darnton expands on interviews and archival sources first introduced in his 1991 monograph *Berlin Journal.* Darnton's impressive new overview takes advantage of the intervening years to place the GDR in a history of state censorship that also covers eighteenth century France and nineteenth century British India. Such studies are extremely valuable as the historicization of the GDR can only benefit from comparisons with other autocratic systems, as opposed to Western ones and especially West Germany. This brief survey, however, seeks to combine accounts of cultural institutions beyond the censorship bureau of and thereby yields a nuanced picture of the interlocking institutions, including party administration, government culture ministries, universities, and publishing houses that make up the GDR's cultural sphere. As I will demonstrate in this dissertation as a whole, these institutions, together with professional unions like the GDR's writers' union, maintained a conservative official culture, energetically and effectively enforced by the Staatssicherheit (Stasi), usually referred to in English as the secret police.

It is tempting to describe this project as a study of totalitarian society, but Julia Hell has productively delimited the use of that specific concept in *Post-Fascist Fantasies: Psychoanalysis, History, and Literature of East Germany* (1997). Hell writes that the widespread acceptance of the characterization of the GDR as totalitarian is problematic, arguing that the most influential rehearsal of the argument developed by Sigrid Meuschel "collapses transformational *project* and reality, a program and its partially contingent effects. In its emphasis on state repression and control, it cannot account for individual agency, for the intricate

pattern of conformity and resistance which characterized the GDR."[2] As the histories of the GDR named above demonstrate, the daily impact of the Sozialistische Einheitspartei (SED) dictatorship's ideological program did not completely snuff out all resistance. Individuals and even groups disobeyed the dictates of all-pervasive institutions and mass organizations. And yet the bureaucratic project, as Hell calls it, to systematically control the cultural sphere deserves attention. Indeed, Hell rehabilitates the term totalitarian exactly along the lines of the intention of the regime, following Claude Lefort's analysis of East German totalitarianism. She explains,

> In Lefort's view totalitarianism is characterized by the propagation of one-party rule and by a fantasy of social homogeneity, that is, a conception of society as essentially unified. […] Lefort's understanding of totalitarianism thus restricts the term to a specific usage: totalitarian as an ideological project, a project concerning the realm of the symbolic and cultural politics. It does *not* aim at an exhaustive description of the nondiscursive reality of state socialism. And it is certainly not an exhaustive description of this discursive reality *at all times*.[3]

Hell has deployed this particular understanding of totalitarianism to solve the problem of recognizing both the meticulous system of control, as well as the facts of myriad resistance to that system. In the end, the plan for cultural homogeneity, if not the reality of life in East Germany, earns the name totalitarian.

Each of the institutions I examine in this section had its inefficiencies in terms of the sought-after control of literary life. But by drawing together the work of historians on a number of different institutions, as well as adding analysis of the Writers' Union and the Stasi, I hope to give a fuller picture of East Germany's totalitarian project in organizing its cultural sphere. Of

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[2] Julia Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies: Psychoanalysis, History, and Literature of East Germany,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 6. For a broader discussion of recent use of the term "totalitarian" including in the context of "Islamo-Fascism" see Jeffery Brooks, "Totalitarianism Revisited," *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 68, No. 2 (Spring, 2006), 318-328.

[3] Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies*, 6-7.

particular interest is the censorship of undesirable publications and even the exclusion of dissenting opinion from the public discourse of literary professionals.

In his study of higher education in East Germany, Poland, and the Czech lands, John Connelly notes the GDR's comparative success at transforming its student body along the lines of Soviet ideology. He writes that "the SED methodically formed an elite drawn from working-class and peasant milieus, expanding capacity gradually, as worker-peasant students became available. […] In theory the KPČ and PZPR had the same ideal for students as did the SED. But they did less to achieve it."[4] According to Connelly the process of de-Nazification provided early means for radical purges and re-formation during the Soviet occupation and in the years after the founding of the GDR. Furthermore, East Germany successfully implemented courses to prepare students with appropriate social backgrounds (that is, workers and peasants) and who lacked the usual primary and secondary school education for university entrance. Though these preparatory courses were abandoned by the Soviet Union in the thirties, the GDR managed them with great success, as Connelly demonstrates statistically.[5]

Less successful was the implementation of courses in Marxism-Leninism for all students of higher education. Helmut R. Wagner notes that from 1949-1952 all outward displays of a democratic system were abandoned in the newly founded East German state, as administrative control of the universities injected Communist ideology into all courses of study.

> All students except those at the theological faculties had to study Marxist-Leninist "social science." The "Soviet sciences" were put in the center of instruction, and Russian became

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[4] John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 272, 276. Cf.: Ralph Jessen, *Akademische Elite und kommunistische Diktatur: Die ostdeutsche Hochschullehrerschaft in der Ulbricht-Ära*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.

[5] Connelly, *Captive University*, 230.

> the foremost language requirement. In addition, all students had to participate in "social activities," that is, in the work of youth groups, trade unions, and so on.[6]

Connelly notes that teachers qualified to teach the Marxism-Leninism courses were in short supply in the Stalinist era and students resented the subject matter, made obligatory by 1950.[7] Still the GDR's success in recruiting and training students according to their socio-economic background with a strong emphasis on ideology represents a radical break from the Central European tradition of higher education and the first step of synchronizing the cultural sphere. More than just refashioning institutions and admissions policies, General Secretary Walter Ulbricht attempted to recreate the intelligentsia and redefine the role of the author in society, as will be described in more detail in the chapter one.

Beginning in 1955, the first institutional step towards becoming an author was attending the Literaturinstitut "Johannes R. Becher" in Leipzig. Founded in 1955, the institute was modeled after the Gorky Institute in Moscow[8] and in 1959 was named after the GDR's first minister of culture. As David Clarke describes, the leadership of the institute was at first intended for the Writers' Union (Schriftstellerverband), as its role model in the Soviet Union functioned. However, "the Ministry of Culture soon intervened in order to wrest the founding of the institute away from the Verband," a move Clarke identifies as "centralization of cultural

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[6] Helmut Wagner, "The Cultural Sovietization Of East Germany," *Social Research*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Winter 1957), 410.

[7] Connelly, *Captive University*, 211-214.

[8] On the relation between the GDR's literary institute with Moscow's, see *Tauchnitzstrasse-Twerskoi Boulevard: Beiträge aus zwei Literaturinstituten*, edited by Max Walter Schulz and Wladimir Pimenow, Halle: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1975.

policy […] typical of the years immediately following the founding of the GDR."[9] For Clarke, the Literaturinstitut was an inherently contradictory institution because its method of instruction directly counteracted the intentions of the Ulbricht regime's cultural policy, which sought to encourage factory and agricultural workers to describe the new Socialist life of the GDR as they experienced it. Clarke writes:

> among all of the various instruments of Nachwuchsförderung [the Institut für Literatur] was the only one that removed the budding writer from his or her original workplace for an extended period of time and thus from the working class that he or she was supposed to serve; a fact that was particularly problematic given that the institute recruited its students for the most part among those who had completed an apprenticeship rather than going on to higher education. Equally, once his or her studies were complete, the new horizons that had been opened up for the student might undermine his or her identification with his or her former social role. In this sense, as both government officials and the staff of the institute were aware, the Institut für Literatur potentially encouraged the working-class writer to see him or herself as just that, a writer, rather than a cultural functionary in the service of the working class.[10]

Nachwuchsförderung (development of a new generation of protégées) was a positive way to discuss the reformation of the cultural elite according to Socialist ideology. The failure of the worker-writer movement to produce a national literature acknowledged as world class meant that a more traditional institution was necessary to provide the necessary training for authors. The very necessity of such rigorous training, however, undermined the paradigm of literary production proscribed by the regime and led to the creation of a literary elite along the more traditional lines of the much-feared independent intelligentsia. In attempt to counter this tendency and foster solidarity with the working class, university programs assigned work in factories. Ever the model Socialist, Christa Wolf completed a study residency at the VEB wagon

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[9] David Clarke, "Parteischule oder Dichterschmiede? The Institut für Literatur 'Johannes R. Becher' from Its Founding to Its Abwicklung, *German Studies Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Feb., 2006), 89.

[10] Clarke, "Parteischule oder Dichterschmiede?," 91.

factory Ammendorf from 1960 to 1961, the positive details of which are featured prominently in *Der geteilte Himmel*, the novel that lead to her nomination as member of the Central Committee of the SED.[11] By contrast, it was during such an assignment that Siegmar Faust supposedly agitated the working class with his poetry by referring to the workers' uprising of 1953, resulting in his expulsion from the literary institute.[12]

After graduating from the Literaturinstitut the next step toward becoming an institutionally recognized writer in the GDR was to join the Writers' Union (Schriftstellerverband). The process of application required GDR citizenship, the demonstration of quality literary production, and the acceptance of the union's statutes. According to the GDR's *Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch* of 1978,

> das Ziel des Verbandes ist die aktive Teilnahme der Schriftsteller an der Gestaltung der entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft. Seine Mitglieder betrachten als ihre Aufgabe, mit ihrer Kunst das Denken, Fühlen und Handeln der Menschen mitformen zu helfen, die die entwickelte sozialistische Gesellschaft gestalten. Die Mitglieder des Verbandes erkennen die führende Rolle der Arbeiterklasse und ihrer Partei an und bekennen sich zur Schaffensmethode des sozialistischen Realismus.[13]

While describing the union as an independent organization, this entry makes clear its obligation of service to the nation, and by extension the ruling SED. Reverberations of the functional justification of literature in building a Socialist nation in relation to Walter Ulbricht's cultural

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[11] *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf: Zerrspiegelung und Dialog*, edited by Herman Vinke, (Hamburg: Luchterhand Literaturverlag, 1993), 338. This study residence was not related to a degree in higher education, as Wolf had completed her diploma in 1953. Negative observations of her time in the factory are recorded in pertinent entries of Wolf's authorial journal *Ein Tag im Jahr,* though largely lacking in the novel.

[12] "Veranstaltungsrezensionen: Vorstellung von Siegmar Faust in der Gedenkbibliothek zu Ehren der Opfer des Stalinismus am 26.09.1994" available [Online] at http://gedenkbibliothek.de/download/Siegmar_Faust_Der_Provokateur_vom_26_09_1994.pdf. Verified by personal interview with Faust on June 25, 2014 in the Gedenkbibliothek.

[13] "Schriftstellerverband der DDR" in *Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch*, Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1978, 620

revolution are also to be felt in this quotation. This official reference book also hints at the all-important role of the union as financial supporter of authors when it states that "Junge Autoren, die erste Nachweise über literarisch-schöpferische Arbeit erbracht haben, kommen als Kandidaten des Verbandes in den Genuß der Förderungsmöglichkeiten und –maßnahmen des Verbandes."[14] Just as students could be forced out of elite professions by the revocation of scholarships and expulsion from required training programs, the writers' union could punish unorthodox authors by withholding important positions and stipends. For this reason and others David Bathrick has identified the Schriftstellerverband as the primary institutional control of authors in the GDR.[15]

Aside from a salary from the writers' union, an author's other means of income in the GDR was royalties from book sales. East Germany did not generally practice post-production censorship of literature. Rather, in order to be published and then earn royalties, an author submitted a manuscript to a publishing house, and the publishing house, upon deciding to accept it, submitted it in turn to a bureau of the Culture Ministry called the Hauptverwaltung Verlage und Buchhandlung (HV). This bureau was the main means of censorship within the GDR would refuse to provide a *Druckgenehmigung*, or permission for printing, to those texts it found ideologically inconvenient. As Robert Darnton has described, it was also possible for representatives of the bureau to negotiate with high-profile authors over alterations to a text, in order to make it suitable for publication.[16] In general the duties of negotiations with authors fell

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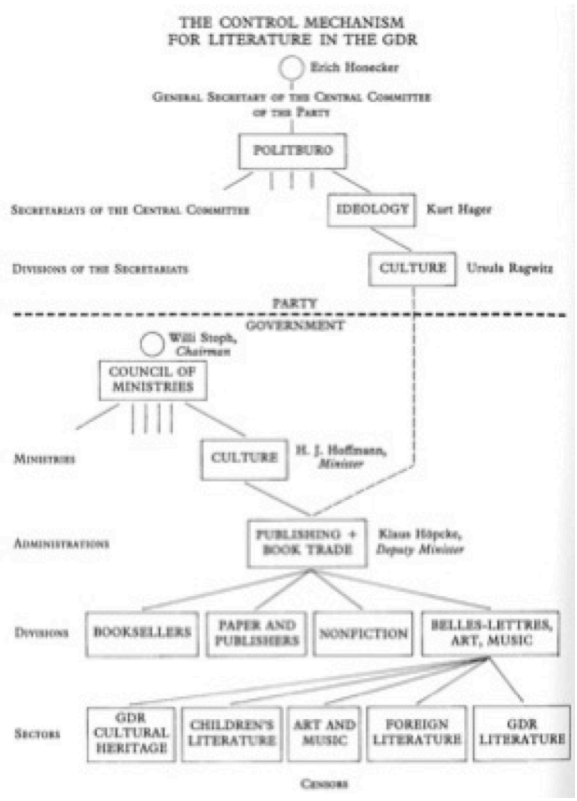
[14] "Schriftstellerverband der DDR" in *Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch*, 620-621.

[15] David Bathrick, "The End of the Wall before the End of the Wall," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (May, 1991), 297-311.

[16] Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014), 205-206.

to representatives within the publishing houses, called Lektor. Darnton has detailed the connections between this central censorship office and the Party leadership, despite the nominal separation between Party and state institutions. As he demonstrates in a diagram, reproduced as Figure 1 below, party officials like the head of the ideology department, Kurt Hager, and the head of culture department, Ursula Ragwitz were leading figures in the creation of the yearly

Figure 1 "The Control Mechanism for Literature in the GDR"
Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature*, (New York: Norton, 2014), 149.



Sekretär des ZK der SED

Politbüro

Abteilung Ideologie

Abteilung Kultur des Zentralkomitees der SED

Ministerrat

Ministerium für Kultur

Hauptverwaltung Verlage und Buchhandel

literary plan.[17] Much like the economic five year plans created throughout the Bloc, the GDR's yearly literature plan was partly meant to organize limited resources, such as paper. Still in

[17] Robert Darnton, *Berlin Journal 1989-1990*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), 207-212.

addition to the needs of a planned economy, the ideological concerns of the regime determined which proposed books of a given genre would be published.

Given the delicate nature of identifying literature and by extension authors that were loyal to the regime, it sometimes happened that a novel accepted for publication was later deemed insufficiently orthodox. Such was the case with Christa Wolf's *Nachdenken über Christa T.* completed in early 1968. Not only did the application process for permission to print take far longer than usual, indicating the ambivalence of the powers that be, but the printing of the novel was actually interrupted and delivery of the incomplete first edition restricted.[18] As I describe in the chapter two, the uncertainties of political events in Prague only exacerbated the crisis of culture in the GDR of the sixties, a crisis characterized by the popularity of blue jeans, long hair, rock and roll and Alan Ginsberg, all signs of "bourgeois decadence." Culture functionaries expressed their horror at the infiltration of their country at the Eleventh Plenary Session of the SED in 1965.[19] Wolf's novel, written in the aftermath of her attendance of that meeting, thematized non-conformity and was written in an experimental literary style that made ample use of inner monologue, both of which stretched the bounds of orthodox Socialist Realism. Even after the mixed messages in terms of the publication process, the regime's negative view of the novel was carried forward in the official literary journals *Sinn und Form* and *Neues Deutschland,* the former of which was the official journal of the Akademie der Künste and the latter of which was the official newspaper of the SED. As Wolf described it, her novel was allowed to be discussed only in these publications. She reports that "Am 15.5.1969 erscheint

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[18] *Dokumentation zu Christa Wolf* Nachdenken über Christa T., edited by Angela Drescher, (Hamburg: Luchterhandverlag, 1991), 26-27.

[19] Cf: *Kahlschlag: Das 11. Plenum des ZK der SED 1965, Studien und Dokument*, (Berlin: Aufbau, 2000).

im *Neuen Deutschland* ein Artikel vom Leiter des Mitteldeutschen Verlags: 'Verleger sein heißt ideologisch kämpfen,' in dem er sich auf Veranlassung übergeordneter Partei- und Ministeriumstellen von *Nachdenken über Christa T.* distanziert."[20] The coordination of party, government, publishing house, writers' union, and official literary publications is implied in Wolf's statement.

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The German Democratic Republic was an economically stunted rump state quickly outpaced by its Western counterpart and indeed slowly dwindled toward financial ruin. To offset these facts, official culture promulgated a triumphalist narrative that emphasized ideological cohesion and a shared sense of purpose. Western scholars have long sought to nuance this official picture offered by the state with hard-to-find details of the chinks in the armor, an investigation that began in earnest in the late sixties, found ample material in the eighties, and has proven especially fruitful after the fall of the Wall, when access to the records from the failed government, and testimony from many who had hitherto been silenced came to light.

Collected efforts to point out the flaws in the GDR's cultural system and its changing policies have led to a state of scholarship where the cultural hegemony against which so many struggled is now less wellknown than those that opposed it, and the changing usage of the term Socialist Realism has obscured its meaning in the German context. With this in mind, in my first chapter I turn to the criteria by which cultural products were judged to be sufficiently aligned with the Party's interest. After outlining the general ideas of pre-World War Two era regarding a Socialist literature that should raise the consciousness of workers, I will demonstrate how, much like the codification of Socialist Realism in the Soviet Union, the leading authorities of the GDR

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[20] Wolf, *Dokumentation zu Christa Wolf* Nachdenken über Christa T, 27.

Politburo took into account economic and political realities while formulated their cultural policy. The GDR's rather different economic and political situation meant that literature was used to try and stimulate greater worker productivity and criticize the Western culture that infiltrated the GDR from the West and indeed threatened to dominate youth culture. As a case study of the new horizons opened during the Honecker era, I use the newly available Druckgenehmigungen (applications for permission to publish) submitted by publishing houses in defense of such paradgmatically modernist authors as William Faulkner and James Joyce to argue that Socialist Realism was reduced from an aesthetic theory which emphasized stylistic and thematic methods of achieving its goal of edifying the reading public to one that cared only for the propagandistic value of literature that conveyed the desired message in a popular style, even if that style were decadently modernist. The changes in stylistic standards for literature that qualified as Socialist in East Germany were certainly not confined to translations of foreign texts. Rather, officially published East German novels demonstrated shifts in the accepted definition of German Socialist Realism, which I illustrate in my second chapter by means of a focus on Christa Wolf.

In fact, as the reader might well gather from the many references to Wolf, this work grew from the study of her novel *Nachdenken über Christa T.* as both the author's autobiography and an allegory of the GDR at a pivotal point in its history. My first chapter reconstructs the official culture of the GDR the better to understand how Wolf's novel criticizes and breaks from it. My second chapter begins with a period in her life that many scholars of Wolf overlook: the time after her flight from her native Pomerania in the final years of World War Two and before her rise to prominence as one of the GDR's foremost authors in the sixties. Wolf's early career as a student and literary critic in the fifties and early sixties make clear her awareness of and

participation in the official culture outlined above. Her position within GDR official culture during this time serves as the context for understanding Wolf's work as an informal informant to the East German secret police, which I describe through an overview of the secret files they kept on her. Wolf's participation in a key meeting of Party cultural functionaries in 1965, called the Eleventh Plenum, marked the beginning of the end of her engagement with the official culture. While acknowledging Wolf's increasingly innovative style of writing, I argue that continuities between her earlier work and her prose and aesthetic manifesto of the late sixties are more significant than their revolutionary character; in this, I differ from those critics, best represented by Dennis Tate, who emphasize her thematic innovation.[21] Addressing Wolf's image as a dissident, I examine the evidence of her involvement in the oppositional cultural movement in neighboring Czechoslovakia, which culminated in the Prague Spring. Wolf's attempts to explain East German literature to the Czech audience were an extension of her work as literary critic in the years before she became a feelance writer. Her articles published in *Literární noviny* foreground her views of a rising generation of authors traumatized by the Second World War, like herself. Additionally, Wolf's influence on a younger generation of authors and activists, including her own daughter, remains an area of research with great promise.

Not only did the Soviet invasion of Prague inspire political protest in the GDR, but it also gave rise to an underground culture that has been overlooked by overly constrained ideas of what such a scene should look like, as I describe in my third and fourth chapters. From an account of political events in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, I move to comparison of the success of marginalized and banned authors in West Germany. In chapter four, I compare autobiographical texts by Siegmar Faust, an aspiring East German writer twice imprisoned for political agitation

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[21] Cf.: Dennis Tate, *Shifting Perspectives: East German Autobiographical Narratives before and after the End of the GDR*, (New York: Camden House, 2007), 2.

with an autobiographical novel by Jiří Gruša, also banned and imprisoned in his homeland of Czechoslovakia. I argue that the comparison of Faust's *Der Freischwimmer* and *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* with Gruša's *Dotazník* (*The Questionnaire*) establishes a similar frustration with Socialist society, a generational experience of those who came of age with hopes of reforming Socialism brought by the Prague Spring.

In the post-Wall era, varying situations have obtained across the former East Bloc in terms of the archives of secret police files. Public use of the files has proven one of the most controversial points of interaction in the post-Wall reckoning with the Communist era. Revelations from the files of those who had been placed under surveillance, including reports provided to the secret police by close friends and family members, have rocked the political establishment. Among those revelations were new facts about Berlin's underground cultural scene in the Prenzlauer Berg district during the nineteen eighties: some of the central figures of this supposedly apolitical collective turned out to have been secret police informers. In light of this new picture of the Communist era offered by the files, I contrast fictionalized accounts of dissident activities during the eighties in Herta Müller *Herztier* and Wolfgang Hilbig "*Ich*," arguing that though both question the efficacy of their oppositional activities, Hilbig ultimately criticizes the Berlin scene as essentially a fabrication by the secret police. While Hilbig destabilizes the authenticity of underground, shattering the romanticized story created by the West, Müller, who has not had access to her complete file, describes the ambiguities apparent to all in the uncertainty of the last years of the Communist regime. Contrary to existing scholarship, which has focused on Müller's ethnic identity as a German-Romanian, my analysis takes note of the ambiguous allegiances of the narrator's female peers, as opposed to the diametrical identities of her male acquaintances in reference to the Communist regime.

Chapter One
Subjectivity and the Official Culture of Communism

Soviet hegemony over the East Bloc meant not only political leadership in terms of international cooperation, but also the replication of social and cultural institutions and the criteria by which they functioned. The Communist leadership of each of the East Bloc countries looked to the Soviet model to realize a new society, though each nation appropriated the ideology of Communism that guided its institutions in different ways. Communism was hardly a new transplant to Europe, as the ideas of Fourier, Taylor, Marx, and Engels had been widely discussed even before the revolutions that brought down the czarist regime of Russia. The roots of literary Realism as a nineteenth-century medium for criticizing social and economic inequality, as well as exploitation of the poor, are visible from England to Russia. After the First World War, as empires across Europe fell and the new Soviet state took shape, even those members of the intelligentsia who were not necessarily Communist discussed the need for a new culture that reflected on the new world order around them. After the Second World War, under the leadership of the Soviet Union, selections of these native politicians, authors, and artists were canonized to constitute the Communist and Socialist traditions in each of the East Bloc countries.

This chapter focuses on the early years of the German Democratic Republic in order to describe the intellectual rationale that guided the state's apparatus for producing literature. By contrasting the codification of Socialist Realism in the Soviet Union and contemporary commentary from the Germanophone sphere with developments after the founding of the GDR, I demonstrate that the rather different political and economic situation of post-World War Two East Germany meant a different flavor of official Socialist Realism emerged there. Official East German Socialist Realism built on the Soviet discourse, but added selectively chosen elements

from a distinctly German cultural heritage to meet the contemporary needs of a German identity that was still different from the West and especially West Germany. I conclude the chapter by showing that for the officials of East Germany's ruling Communist party, the need to criticize the West and distinguish East Germany from its western neighbors overcame the aesthetic arguments of what had earlier defined Socialist culture. In other words, the international politics of the Cold War bloc conflict outweighed aesthetic arguments regarding how best to educate the domestic population through literature. More specifically, literature that employed stream-of-consciousness techniques, which had been excluded as a Western style incompatible with Socialist values, was eventually officially allowed if the political message was sufficiently amenable to the regime's political agenda.

The Development of Socialist Realism in the Soviet Union

As Katerina Clark describes in her reappraisal of the Soviet novel, the term "Socialist Realism" was introduced in 1932 and its theoretical foundation was codified shortly thereafter. She writes:

> The theory of Socialist Realism was not formulated until after the term had been coined. [Maxim] Gorky (the First Secretary of the Writers' Union) and other authoritative literary figures began to clarify the term in articles and speeches in 1932-34, and the first plenum of the Organizational Committee, in October, 1932, was devoted to that topic; but it was not until 1934, when the First Writers' Union Congress was held, that Socialist Realism acquired a canonical formulation. Ever since then, *the* official sources of the doctrine have been Lenin's 1905 article "Party Organization and Party literature" (*locus classicus* for the doctrine of mandatory "party-mindedness"), Gorky's articles in his book *On Literature*, published in 1933 (and in later redactions of the same book), and the speeches made to the congress itself by Gorky and A. A. Zhdanov (chief representative of the Party's Central Committee).[22]

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[22] Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, Third Edition, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 27.

Clark's point here is that it took some fifteen years after the Bolsheviks gained power for a cohesive cultural policy to emerge. She partly attributes the newly focused activity of the early thirties to Gorky's return from exile in 1932 and his role in organizing the cultural sphere.[23] As I shall demonstrate below, the speeches given at the 1934 congress define Socialist Realism with reference to the needs of a rising new world power. While some of the issues that dominated the German discourse fifteen years later, such as the heritage of nineteenth-century Realism, are addressed, important comtemporary issues such as an international quality of Socialist literature and even intellectual approaches were not part of the discussion in the GDR. Myth and folklore informed Gorky's idea of Socialist Realism and even Clark's approach to analyzing the resulting body of Stalinist era Soviet literature. Folklore, though a part of an older German Socialist tradition, was not a part of the discourse in the GDR, and the underlying concept of a literature built on generalization was significantly undermined after the fifties.

The first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers took place in August of 1934. For the purposes of defining Socialist Realism at this early point, the following focuses of the Congress are relevant: bureaucratically speaking, the aim of the congress was to provide direction for creating a literature that matched the economic success of the newly modernized Soviet Union. The historical context of the recent civil war and the attempt to include minority nationalities also meant that "internationality" was a resolution of the First Congress. However, remarks by key speakers hint at the violence of suppression of ethnic identity and the intent to subsume it under the Soviet one. The new Soviet literature was to draw on the world literary heritage of romanticism and critical realism, but of course to improve upon it. Gorky emphasized folklore as a related tradition from which Soviet culture might draw formal inspiration.

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[23] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 33.

Serving as the representative of the Politburo, Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov opened the congress with some words on the historic moment in which they were participating. He said:

> Your congress is convening at a time when under the leadership of the Communist Party, under the guiding genius of our great leader and teacher, Comrade Stalin, the socialist system has finally and irrevocable triumphed in our country. Consistently advancing from one stage to the next, from victory to victory, from the inferno of the Civil War to the period of restoration and from the period of restoration to the socialist reconstruction of the entire national economy, our Party has led the country to victory over the capitalist elements, ousting them from all spheres of life.
> The U.S.S.R. has become an advanced industrial country whose socialist agriculture is organized on the largest scale in the world. The U.S.S.R. has become a country in which our Soviet culture is growing and developing in exuberant splendor.[24]

While perhaps bombastic, Zhdanov's statement reflects the end of a long economic struggle. As Hiroaki Kuromiya describes in *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932*, the forceful implementation of the first five-year plan's Socialist practices led to unforeseen consequences such as a notable decline in the standard of living in 1927-1928 and increasing animosity between older, skilled factory workers and younger workers newly arrived to play their part in Stalin's massive industrialization drive.[25] According to Kuromiya, by mid-1933 a decline in private market prices, "which was a clear sign of economic improvement," signaled the end of a crisis and led to the kind of elation demonstrated in the above quotation from Zhdanov. According to Soviet statistics, the output of products like coal, oil, and pig iron for 1934 were indeed historic and inaugurated a solid couple of years economically speaking.[26] The

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[24] A. A. Zhdanov, "Soviet Literature- The Richest in Ideas, the Most Advanced Literature," in *Problems of Soviet Literature: Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers' Congress*, edited by H. G. Scott, (New York: International Publishers, 1935), 15.

[25] Cf. chapter four, "The crisis of proletarian identity" in Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 78-107.

[26] Cf. Roger A. Clarke, *Soviet Economic Facts 1917-1970*, (Bristol: Macmillian Press, 1972) for a compendium of official statistics, the reliability of which are of course debated.

desire to take a place amongst the world leaders meant for the Soviets demonstrating not only economic success, but also "splendor" of a cultural variety.

Both Zhdanov and Maxim Gorky state that the Soviet Union's new literature should reflect the diversity of its population. Zhdanov does so in passing reference to overcoming the inner divisions in the nation in the quotation above. His vocabulary of triumph, victory, and ousting of enemy elements reflect the physical reality of warfare. Gorky reads aloud a letter he received from a Tatar author, who complains of being treated by publishing houses as an annoying quota to fulfill.[27] Gorky insists that "Armenians, Georgians, Tatars, Ukrainians, and other peoples" are fully capable of producing high quality literature under the instruction of the new Socialist society and emphasizes the need to make such citizens feel a part of the new Soviet state.[28] Clearly the international aspect of the Communist movement meant that the Soviet Union should attempt to create a literature with room for many national cultures, but the assumption is one that conforms to established forms of Soviet literature.

As we shall see below, the international quality of Socialist literature was hardly emphasized in the German community, especially in the fifties as the GDR cultural sphere took shape. Given the recent relocation of many ethnic Germans from areas of Poland or the Czech lands, the population of East Germany was appreciably diverse. However, establishing that the new system was not a foreign invasion of culture, but instead grew out of a German tradition, was of the essence.

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[27] Maxim Gorky, "Soviet Literature," in *Problems of Soviet Literature: Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers' Congress*, edited by H. G. Scott, (New York: International Publishers, 1935), 60.

[28] Gorky, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 61.

Emphasizing that the new Socialist literature should by no means be a mere ornament of the nation, Zhdanov sets out the pedagogical role he envisioned, which would become the standard explanation of the practical use of literature in a Socialist society. Zhdanov proclaims:

> Comrade Stalin has called our writers engineers of human souls. What does this mean? What duties does the title confer upon you?
> In the first place, it means knowing life so as to be able to depict it truthfully in works of art, not to depict it in a dead, scholarly way, not simply as "objective reality," but to depict reality in its revolutionary development.
> In addition to this, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic portrayal should be combined with the ideological remoulding and education of the toiling people in the spirit of socialism. This method in *belles lettres* and literary criticism is what we call the method of socialist realism.[29]

This description of the author sets out the classic paradox of Socialist Realism: a literature that is not only documentary, but also ideological. Gorky also commented at length on the need for such a combination, though he more specifically criticized earlier forms of literary Realism as ineffectual because they lacked the revolutionary point of view, which in his opinion offers the solution to the problems such authors criticized. For example, he says:

> Without in any way denying the broad, immense work of critical realism, and while highly appreciating its formal achievements in the art of word painting, we should understand that this realism is necessary to us only for throwing light on the survivals of the past, for fighting them, and extirpating them.
> This form of realism did not and cannot serve to educate socialist individuality, for in criticizing everything, it asserted nothing, or else, at the worst, reverted to an assertion of what it has itself repudiated.[30]

At several points in his speech, Gorky returns to an idea that bourgeois literature most prominently features what he terms "superfluous individuals" who are at odds with their society.[31] These protagonists epitomize social criticism that does not offer a solution, to which

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[29] Zhdanov, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 21.

[30] Gorky, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 65.

[31] Gorky, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 40, 55.

the insistence on positive heroes of Socialist Realism may be juxtaposed. The eerie violence that permeates Gorky's speech in terms of eliminating superfluous individuals speaks to the remnants of the bloody civil war and the dangerous atmosphere of suspected treason, which by no means abated during the Second World War.

Zhdanov's comment on critical realism, quoted above, provides further evidence for Clark's claim that the Soviet novel's "modal schizophrenia, its proclivity for making sudden, unmotivated transitions from realistic discourse to the mythic or utopian,"[32] was intentionally cultivated from this early point. Indeed Gorky described it in precisely the terms of a combination of Realism and Romanticism in his speech:

> Myth is invention. To invent means to extract from the sum of a given reality its cardinal idea and to embody it in imagery–that is how we got realism. But if to the idea extracted we add–completing the idea, by the logic of hypothesis–the desired, the possible, and thus supplement the image, we obtain that romanticism which is at the basis of myth and is highly beneficial in that it tends to provoke the revolutionary attitude to reality, an attitude that changes the world in a practical way.[33]

Essentially rephrasing Zhdanov's statement that the new literature must educate the working class, Gorky argues that Socialist Realism does so by combining the literary practices of two previous literary traditions, Realism and Romanticism. He sees this, furthermore, as a logical development of the two movements.

If it seems odd that Gorky associates myth with Realism, his view on the proper interpretation of fantasy explains much:

> The historians of primitive culture have completely waived the clear evidence of materialist thought, to which the processes of labour and the sum total of phenomena in the social life of ancient man inevitably gave rise. […] I do not doubt that you are familiar with ancient legends, tales and myths, but I should like their fundamental meaning to be more deeply comprehended. And their meaning is the aspiration of the

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[32] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 37.

[33] Gorky, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 44.

> ancient working people to lighten their toil, to increase its productiveness, to arm against four-footed and two-footed foes, and also by the power of words, by the device of "exorcism" and "incantation," to gain an influence over the elemental phenomena of nature, which are hostile to man.[34]

Thus, for Gorky, fantastic inventions such as seven-league boots and magic carpets are precursors to Socialist Realism, because they reflect the reality of toiling people and imagine innovative technology that would benefit those people in their work.[35]

In the German context, folklore and mythology had been heavily tainted because of their use by the Nazis and played no role in the development of official Socialist Realism immediately after the Second World War.[36] However, as David Bathrick describes, after initial rejection in the early fifties, the stories of the Brothers Grimm were released in a heavily edited version meant to convey Socialist morals to children. Moreover, beginning in the sixties, authors such as Imtraud Morgner, Franz Fühmann, Anna Seghers, Günther Kunert, Christa Wolf, Peter Hacks and many others wrote their own fairytales "or looked to the fairytale to write about contemporary

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[34] Gorky, "Soviet Literature," *Problems of Soviet Literature*, 28-29.

[35] It is worth noting that though the nearly contemporaneous work of Vladimir Propp brought new attention to folklore with systematic analysis, his work was condemned as Formalism and not as influential in the Soviet Union as in the West following the publication of his work in translation. Cf. the introduction in Vladimir Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1984 and also Vladimir Propp, *The Morphology of the Folktale*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

[36] Cf: *The Nazification of an Academic Discipline: Folklore in the Third Reich*, Edited and Translated by James R. Dow and Hannjost Lixfeld, **(**Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). In terms of German Socialist engagement with the genre of folklore before the rise of the Nazis, see Jack Zipes, *Fairy Tales and Fables from Weimar Days*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997). One exception to the relative lack of engagement is Lukács' appraisal of Joseph von Eichendorff written while in the Soviet Union. Lukács praises Eichendorff for his simplicity and authenticity in *Deutsche Realisten des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, (Berlin: Aufbau, 1951), 55-56.

concerns."[37] As Bathrick describes, the fairytale was associated with the Romantic era, which was sharply excluded by Lukács as antithetical to the spirit of Enlightenment rationality that should characterize the newly founded GDR.[38]

Returning to Clark's idea of the "modal schizophrenia" at the heart of Socialist Realism, she elsewhere describes it as "the demand that Socialist Realism produce a literature that would be internationally acclaimed as literature yet remain accessible to the masses, and, second, that it endow a secular literature with the power of myth."[39] Her self-described structuralist analysis of Soviet novels suggests that Stalinist literature did indeed develop "symbolic forms" and "formulaic signs," a "grammar" and even "master plot" comparable to folklore motifs and Vladimir Propp's structural order of Russian fairy tales.

Clark acknowledges the prescriptive role of such figures as Zhdanov and Gorky in setting the message to disseminate, yet she claims that Socialist Realism per se is best described not by the dictates of authorities, but by examining the master plot deduced from the body of Soviet literature, much like structuralists who analyze folklore. She writes:

> Ever since 1932, when the Writers' Union was formed and Socialist Realism was declared the sole method appropriate, most official pronouncements on literature, and especially the addresses that open every Writers' Congress, have contained a short list of exemplars (*obrazy*) that are to guide the writers in their future work […] The Soviet writer did not merely copy isolated tropes, characters, and incidents from the exemplars;

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[37] David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 265 n.49. Cf: Bathrick, "Little Red Riding Hood in the GDR: Folklore, Mass Culture, and the Avant-Garde," *The Powers of Speech*, 167-191.

[38] Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech*, 173-174. Bathrick identifies Lukács' "magnum opus" *Zerstörung der Vernunft* as the key text to valorize Classicism and disparage Romanticism. Cf: Georg Lukács, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft*, Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1953. Also available as volume nine in Lukács, *Werke.* Brecht's essay "Volkstümlichkeit und Realismus," though written in 1938 to counter Lukács' narrow idea of Realism, was first published in the GDR in 1958.

[39] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 42.

> he organized the entire plot structure of his novel on the basis of patterns present in the exemplars. From the mid-thirties on, most novels were, *de facto*, written to a single master plot, which itself represents a synthesis of the plots of several of the official models (primarily Gorky's *Mother* and Gladkov's *Cement*).[40]

The concept of a master plot suggests a method of measuring the fidelity of a given novel to an official template, and seen in that critical light, the degree to which it might be called propagandistic. With thematic types like "the production novel," "the novel about a worthy intellectual or invention," "the novel of revolution," and "the novel about the West," the potential for extensive effort at legitimizing the dominance of the Communist Party is clear. Yet key motifs that Clark observes in Socialist Realism such as the positive hero, martyrdom for the cause of Socialism, building a new family on ideological grounds, and the blessings of technology, suggest values for the new society rather than shallow propaganda for the regime.

Part 1 Building a German Socialist Tradition

However appropriate for an analysis of the Soviet novel, Clark's choice to all but ignore debates about the aesthetics of Socialist Realism would leave a serious gap if carried over to the East German context. As I will show below, the extensively discussed form of Socialist literature set out by an elder generation of German Communists in the interwar era constituted a near-mythical foundation for the GDR, offering basic ideas that were nearly impossible to root out, even after their progenitors were no longer tolerated politically. These basic ideas as well as the symbolism of certain thinkers are apparent in the bureaucratic documentation of censorship in the GDR. Clark's claim that "it is an illusion to think that the two parties– the 'regime' versus 'the intellectuals'–could in any circumstance be completely autonomous and free systems. They

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[40] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 3-5.

are implicated with each other more closely than in most other cultures"[41] is a truth that is applicable to the GDR as well. However, as I shall elaborate below and in the next chapter, the aesthetic concerns of the intellectuals and the cultural-political aims of the regime grew to be increasingly different and given its control of all literary institutions the regime's political aims took precedence. The use of literature in the confrontation between East and West blocs would eventually prove a crucial motivation in the decisions of the censorship apparatus.

German-Language Engagement with the Codification of Socialist Realism Before the GDR

Johannes R. Becher (1891-1958), Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), Willi Bredel (1901-1964), and Anna Seghers (1900-1983) were the most visible representatives of the elder generation of Communists, who would later take up institutional positions within the GDR. Still, their concrete influence on the culture of the GDR remains a matter of serious debate in ways incomparable to Clarke's discussion of Gorky above. Speaking of prose writers specifically, Wolfgang Emmerich writes:

> Hinzu kam, daß den ältergewordenen, zumeist für zwölf Jahre und länger von der Erfahrung deutscher Verhältnisse abgeschnittenen Heroen der antifaschistischen Literatur (Renn, Seghers, Arnold Zweig, Friedrich Wolf, Weinert, Becher) kaum noch wegweisende, epochemachende Werke gelangen, die stimulierend gewirkt hätten. Sie waren die respektheischenden Repräsentanten einer nachfaschistischen deutschen Literatur (aus der ab 1949 die DDR-Literatur wurde) – und hatten doch ihre schöpferischen Zeiten zumeist schon hinter sich.[42]

For the most part, these heroes of Communist culture took on administrative roles from which they supported the Politburo. The relatively early deaths of Becher and Brecht, before the GDR's cultural policy coalesced in 1959 in the formulation of the Bitterfelder Weg, meant that at best

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[41] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 6-7.

[42] Wolfgang Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, (Berlin: Aufbau, 2009), 82-83.

their work could serve as repurposed examples once the GDR cultural sphere took its form. One exception to Emmerich's statement, which he himself refers to in this context, was Anna Seghers' influence on Christa Wolf. As I shall argue in the next chapter it was not only Seghers' exile work that influenced Wolf, but also her work written in and about the GDR.

The greatest strength of Stephen Brockmann's new book *The Writers' State: Constructing East German Literature, 1945-1959* (2016) is its analysis of Anna Seghers' fiction of those years, most notably *Die Toten bleiben jung*. Given her role as president of the Writers' Union and undoctrinaire views and novels, just how Seghers fit into the GDR's early official culture remains an under-explored theme. Towards examining the diversity of opinion among the leading officials of the GDR, one might have hoped for a more detailed overview of the first six congresses of the GDR's Writers' Union. Brockmann details the first in 1950 and the fourth in 1956 but does not give Seghers the same treatment in terms of describing political maneuvering as Johannes R. Becher. Brockmann's rather controversial assertion in his introduction that the first decade of GDR literature addressed the Holocaust is the most problematic. Though the focus on the plight and struggle of Communists during the Second World War is acknowledged, Brockmann allows himself to speculate that Seghers thought of her mother when speaking of victims that deserved remembering.

As I have suggested above, the GDR was not a state in which exemplars were of central importance to the official culture, in the manner that Clarke outlined in describing the Soviet novel. Rather, the theory of writing debated, not only by authors, but also by cultural functionaries in public forums like meetings of the Writers' Union and in private correspondence such as the office memos of the Ministry of Culture, was of central importance to the GDR's official culture.

One cornerstone of the first generation of Marxist-Leninist literary critics missing from Emmerich's account of the foundation of German Socialist Realism was György (Georg) Lukács (1885-1971). This prolific Marxist philosopher had a fascinating political career in his own native Hungary, though his exile years in Vienna, Berlin, and the Soviet Union represent distinctive periods of exchange in the political climates of each.[43] In terms of his reception in divided Germany of the post-World War Two Era, as can be seen in Appendix 1.1, Lukács was at first solidly associated with the GDR due to his criticism of Western modernism and engagement with defining the German heritage of Socialist Realism and prescribing a new form of Realism in some twenty publications.

After the Hungarian uprising of 1956, during which Lukács was a minister in Imre Nagy's anti-Soviet government, he became a persona non grata in the GDR. His friend and colleague Walter Janka of Aubau Verlag was subjected to a show trial in connection with an attempt to extricate Lukács from Hungary in the midst of the uprising. The change in official opinion was signaled with a collection of essays entitled *Lukács und der Revisionismus* published in 1960, which sought to point out what were regarded as decadent flaws in Lukács

[43] Introducing Lukács to a British audience in 1972, István Mészáros wrote that: "The major influences on Lukács can be characterized with the following names: Georg Simmel, Wilhelm Dilthey, Emil Lask, Ervin Szabó, Georges Sorel, Heinrich Rickert (and other representatives of the Freiburg school of neo-Kantianism), Max Weber, Hegel, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin. This list itself shows that the lion's share was taken by German culture, especially in the years of his intellectual formation. And yet, Lukács turned out to be the most radical critic of the internal contradictions of German thought and literature. A vast amount of his massive production is dedicated to the problems of German history and culture, but even the smallest article is written from a distance." István Mészáros, *Lukács' Concept of Dialectic*, (London: Merlin Press, 1972), 21-22.

work.[44] Just a few years late, the West German publishing house Luchterhand began to produce his collected works, which further complicated his reception in the GDR.

Lukács a polarizing figure not only in the two Germanys, but within the East Bloc as a whole. Writing from Bonn in 1977, Edward Możejko opined:

> Unter den marxistischen Theoretikern Mittel- und Osteuropas nimmt G. Lukács zweifellos den bedeutendsten Platz ein, und seine Anschauungen gelten in diesen Ländern entweder als ein Beispiel der schöpferischen Anwendung oder der Weiterentwicklung des Marxismus auf dem Gebiet der Philosophie und der Literaturtheorie; man schreibt Lukács also eine *inspirierende* Wirkung zu – oder seine Ansichten werden als Manifestation des zeitgenössischen Revisionismus verworfen und verdammt. Positive Reaktionen auf Lukács' theoretischen Arbeiten finden wir in Polen, der Tschechoslowakei, Ungarn und Jugoslawien; negative dagegen in der Sowjetunion, in Bulgarien und in der DDR.[45]

Mozejko is quite correct to point out that Lukács' contributions to the issues of Socialist Realism were strictly theoretical. Indeed, it was Lukács' reliance on Hegelian aesthetics to criticize literature that lent his contribution to the aesthetic of Socialist Realism its distinctly German flavor. One of Lukács' many publications in GDR in the fifties was a new edition of Hegel's *Aesthetics* with a foreword in which he offered the proper Socialist reading of the foundational German thinker. Lukács infusion of Marxism with Hegelian aesthetics was tremendously important to Western Marxism as well, as Frank Benseler describes:

> Der Einfluß des Frühwerks von Lukács auf die linke Intelligenz in Deutschland der Weimarer Zeit ist bekannt: auf den literarischen Aufsätzen „Die Seele und die Formen" (1911) und „Die Theorie des Romans" (1916), dessen Untertitel „ein geschichtsphilosophischer Versuch über die Formen der großen Epik", den Inhalt

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[44] *Georg Lukács und der Revisionismus: Eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen*. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1960.

[45] Edward Mozejko, *Der sozialistische Realismus: Theorie, Entwicklung und Versagen einer Literaturmethode*, (Bonn: Bouvier, 1977), 183.

> charakterisiert, bauend, wird in „Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein“ (1923) eine hegelianische Rekonstitution des Marxismus erreicht.[46]

Writing here in a 1981 introduction to Lukács' *Moskauer Schriften*, a self-described supplement to the collected works undertaken but never completed by the West German Luchterhand publishing house, Benseler emphasizes what is most important to the Marxist criticism canonized in West Germany including the work of Bloch, Benjamin, Adorno and Horkheimer, and Marcuse.[47] Specifically, Lukács built on an extensive education in Hegelian philosophy, and, after his conversion to Marxism, continued to employ key concepts such as "Innerlichkeit," "Totalität," "Sein und Sollen," and "Erscheinung und Wesen," even in his later essays, which draw heavily on Lenin, Marx, and Gorky.

Though these early works are important to Western Marxism, Lukács later explicitly criticized many of them, including his popular *Theorie des Romans* and even *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*, as decadent. He did so even in his essays of the late thirties, published in Moscow in German-language literary journals. After the Second World War, some commentators from the East Bloc followed suit in a trend that greatly accelerated after Lukács' fall from grace in 1956. For an example of this tendency, consider the rather sharp criticism mounted by Werner Mittenzwei in his introductory essay in the 1975 *Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács*:

> Zusammenfassend läßt sich sagen, daß bis in die Jahren des ersten Weltkriegs hinein von einem wirklichen Einfluß des marxistischen Gedankenwelt im Werk Georg Lukács' kaum etwas zu spüren ist. In seiner Studie „Mein Weg zu Marx“ akzentuiert Lukács seine frühen Marx-Eindrücke deutlicher, als sie im Werk selbst zum Ausdruck kamen. Wirklich tiefgreifenden Einfluß auf sein Frühwerk gewannen verschiedene

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[46] Frank Benseler, "Einleitung," in Georg Lukács, *Moskauer Schriften: Zur Literaturtheorie und Literaturpolitik 1934-1940*, (Frankfurt am Main: Sendler Verlag, 1981), 9.

[47] Benseler goes on to quote L. Goldmann's supposition that Lukács even inspired Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit.* Ibid.

> geistesgeschichtliche Strömungen, insbesondere der Neukantismus. Ein mystischer Subjektivismus überlagerte damals alle seine Theorien.[48]

This accusation of "mystical subjectivity" is a damning dismissal coming from an East German, as both "mysticism" and excessive "subjectivity" were anathema to Socialist Realism. The skepticism shown here towards Lukács' description of his credentials as a Marxist reflects the goal of the volume: to re-evaluate the confluence of Lukács' ideas with East Bloc official discourse. Despite this heavy criticism, Mittenzwei would bring out the first collection of essays by Lukács in twenty years in 1977, called *Kunst und objektive Wahrheit: Essays zur Literaturtheorie und –geschichte,* which signaled the beginning of Lukács' re-incorporation into the GDR's official discourse.

Lukács' continued importance was perhaps best described in a letter from the editor in chief Dr. Teller and editor Dr. Middel of Reclam publishing house that accompanied their application for permission to publish Mittenzwei's edited volume of essays on Lukács in 1975. The letter opens by claiming that a commitment to explicating the history of Socialist Realism means that Lukács' contributions in directing authors of bourgeois heritage "to the side of the proletariat" means that his contribution to the theoretical substance of the debate must be addressed.

> [Zweitens] spielt auch in gegenwärtigen Diskussionen über das Erbe und dessen Rezeption in der sozialistischen Literatur Lukács, auch wenn sein Name zumeist nicht genannt wird, eine gewisse Rolle; die Auseinandersetzung indessen mit ihm ist in den letzten Jahren wesentlich beschränkt auf die zweifellos brillante und prinzipielle Rezension der „Ästhetik" durch Wilhelm Girnus.[49]

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[48] Werner Mittenzwei, "Geschichtspunkte: Zur Entwicklung der literaturtheoretische Position Georg Lukács" in *Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács*, (Leipzig: Verlag Philipp Reclam, 1975), 16-17.

[49] Bundesarchiv file DR 1/2208 "Verlag Philipp Reclam jun. Leipzig, 1975, A – Z," p.164.

We shall return to the renewed debate about Realism and literary heritage mentioned in this document from the mid-seventies below. Of the essence here is that even twenty years after his fall from political favor, Lukács' theoretical texts are still staples of intellectual debate. As a third reason for publication of this collection of essays, these two Aufbau editors refer to the industrious ("fleißig") engagement with Lukács in the West and suggest in vague terms that he be rescued from faulty or incomplete interpretation.

The volume to which this application refers does do a great deal to provide the necessary background to Lukács' work. Mittenzwei's essay contextualizes Lukács' true conversion to Marxism from Socialism as a product of revolution, namely that which lead to the establishment of the Soviet Republic of Hungary (Räterepublik) of 1919. During the crisis of government after the fall of the Hapsburg Empire at the conclusion of the First World War, Lukács joined Hungary's Communist Party, a move Mittenzwei carefully justifies with a description of Lukács' newfound acceptance of violent revolution, which represented a clear break from the platform of the Social Democrats.[50] Aside from creating the kind of revolutionary turning point so favored in heroes of Socialist Realism, Mittenzwei does perhaps rightfully dwell more on the transformation evident in Lukács' writing after the First World War and the military defeat of the Räterepublik, where Benseler (speaking from a Western context) had described the work of the twenties as the natural outcome of the pre-War (bourgeois) work. It was, after all, the defeat of 1919 that precipitated Lukács' exile to Vienna in the twenties and Berlin in the early thirties and the chance to take stock of what had gone wrong.[51]

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[50] Mittenzwei, "Geschichtspunkte: Zur Entwicklung der literaturtheoretische Position Georg Lukács," 18-19.

[51] To add another perspective, it is worth noting that István Mészáros also emphasizes the dominance of Hegelian aesthetics in Lukács' work before the Second World War. Mészáros

Though Benseler summarized Lukács' early work in terms of his books, all of which were published in Berlin, Lukács was extremely prolific in terms of writing articles for literary journals in the twenties and thirties. While living in Vienna from 1919-1929 Lukács contributed to at least six issues of *Kommunismus: Zeitschrift der Kommunistischen Internationale für die Länder Südosteuropas* between 1920 and 1922.[52] According to Mittenzwei, he also contributed fifteen articles to the party newspaper of Germany's Communist Party (KPD) *Die Rote Fahne* in 1922.[53] Much of *Kommunismus* dealt with strategic questions of organization, especially the debate of engagement with newly founded parliaments.[54] It also included reports on recent developments in Germany, Poland, Italy, Greece, the Balkans, and the Soviet Union. Lukács' contribution were more of the latter sort, though one notable exception is "Alte und neue Kunst" published in the November 7th 1920 edition of *Kommunismus*, which rehearses Lukács' basic views on the role of art in a Communist society.[55]

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claims, for example, that Lukács' early works *Die Seele und die Formen* and *Die Theorie des Romans* are united in their desire for totality, a semi-divine concept for Hegel. Mészáros, *Lukács' Concept of Dialectic*, 50.

[52] Cf: *Kommunismus: Zeitschrift der Kommunistischen Internationale für die Länder Südosteuropas*, (Milano: Feltrinelli reprint, 1967).

[53] Mittenzwei, "Geschichtspunkte: Zur Entwicklung der literaturtheoretische Position Georg Lukács," 24-25. Cf: Vol. 2 of Lukács' *Werke* published by Luchterhand. The volume is also published as a monograph called *Taktik und Ethik*, (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1975). It is also available in English as *Tactics and Ethics: Political essays 1919-1929*, Translated from the German by Michael McColgan, Edited, with an introduction, by Rodney Livingstone, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972). A study of the reception of Lukács in the British Communist movement of the seventies seems it would be fruitful.

[54] Mittenzwei calls Lukács part of the radical left because he refused to support Communist Party participation in the parliament. In fact, Lukács was chastised by Lenin for this position and relented in the twenties. Mittenzwei, "*Geschichtspunkte: Zur Entwicklung der literaturtheoretische Position Georg Lukács*," 31.

[55] Lukács, *Kommunismus*, 1538-1549.

Lukács' contributions to the Berlin-based *Rote Fahne* were far more literary in character, including for example commentary on Bernard Shaw, Balzac, Strindberg, Lessing, Schnitzler, Goethe, Freud, and Dostoevsky. These paved the way for what were perhaps his most important essays, namely those that addressed contemporary efforts to create Socialist literature. I am referring to Lukács' essays in *Linkskurve*, a short-lived journal published in Berlin from 1929-1932 by Johannes R. Becher, Kurt Kläber, Andor Gábor, Hans Marchwitza, Ludwig Renn, and Erich Weinert. In essays entitled "Willi Bredels Romane," "Tendenz oder Parteilichkeit?" "Reportage oder Gestaltung?" and "Gerhart Hauptmann,"[56] which came out between 1931 and 1932, Lukács focused on demonstrating that even when it had admirably described social ills, earlier German literature had failed to provide the proper solution to the problems of poverty it described, namely raising the class consciousness of the workers. Thus, according to Lukács, Gerhart Hauptmann is guilty of an overly subjective Weltanschauung that ascribes many events to chance when they should instead be understood in terms of class struggle. The answer to the questions posed in the titles of the middle two essays are of course Parteilichkeit and Gestaltung. As he writes, "Parteilichkeit ist im Gegenteil [zum 'Tendenz'] die Voraussetzung zur wahren – dialektischen – Objektivität."[57] *Gestaltung* is Lukács' term for writing in a way that not only describes reality, but provides the proper Communist context by which to understand and answer it. The documentary technique of the "Reportage" genre is too prone to subjectivity; Gestaltung reaches dialectical objectivity (the holy grail of Realism for Lukács) by means of a certain kind of typification of character, which was also known as generalization in the East German discourse.

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[56] Cf: Vol. 4 of Lukács, *Werke*.

[57] Lukács, *Werke*, Vol. 4, 32.

Lukács is perhaps clearest about stylistic necessities in his essay on Willi Bredel (1901-1964), one of the GDR's most celebrated early authors from the working class.[58] Though Lukács praised Bredel's novels as appropriate in subject matter, he found them stylistically rigid, especially the language used by characters. Lukács thought a dearth of dialectic in Bredel's writing responsible, writing, "Wir pflegen bei jedem Einführungskursus in den dialektischen Materialismus den Unterschied des metaphysischen und des dialektischen Denkens hervorzuheben und zu wiederholen; wir unterstreichen immer wieder, daß das dialektische Denken die starr erscheinende Dinge auch im Denken in Prozesse, was sie wirklich sind, auflöst."[59] In other words, though the ideology of Communism might seem like rigid pronouncements with a messianic quality, theses pronouncements are in fact, according to Lukács, descriptive of processes that are changing the world around us and literature should describe it as such. This is the objective dialectical reality that Lukács believed literature should convey.

Whereas Gorky and Zhdanov defined Socialist Realism in contrast to earlier versions of Realism, Lukács criticized contemporary literature, explicitly rejecting their forms of modernism. Above all, Lukács juxtaposed dialectical objectivity and decadent subjectivity in terms of style. Despite a general rejection of excess individualism, and the acceptance of "dialectical materialism" in Soviet discourse, Lukács' dichotomy was not used in foundational

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[58] On Bredel cf.: Rolf Richter, *Willi Bredel: ein deutscher Weg im 20. Jahrhundert*, (Rostock: Die Willi-Bredel-Gesellschaft, 1998) and the East German *Willi Bredel: sein Leben und Werk*, von Lilli Bock, (Berlin: Verlag Volk und Wissen VEB, 1969).

[59] Lukács, *Werke*, Vol. 4, 17. For a more complete description of Lukács' writing on realism see pages 25-30 of Tate's *Shifting Perspectives.* For a collection of late GDR scholarship on Lukács see *Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács: Der Methodenstreit deutscher sozialistischer Schriftsteller*, herausgegeben von Werner Mittenzwei, Kollektivarbeit der Forschungsgruppe 3 Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR Zentralinstitut für Literaturgeschichte, (Verlag Philipp Reclam: Leipzig, 1975).

texts on Soviet literature introduced above. In fact Soviet terminology was rather at odds with Lukács' paradigm despite the desire for comparable outcomes: Zhdanov had explicitly rejected "objective reality" in favor of "ideological remoulding and education" and Gorky had spoken of a "revolutionary attitude to reality." Dialectical objectivity means essentially the same thing, but the key words chosen do not match up. Gorky's call to forge "Socialist individuality" seems especially prone to producing the kind of decadent subjectivity Lukács disavowed.

The Beginnings of Official Culture in the GDR

After the war and the founding of the East German state, literary tradition was the first major debate of the cultural sphere and it remained a matter of conflict well into the twilight years of state. In East Germany the debate was centered around the idea of "Erbe" or inheritance, and the possession sought was legitimacy. By claiming the world-renowned figures of German literature and philosophy for the Eastern camp, the GDR was to be legimitized as the superior of the two Germanys. Beyond crafting the proper history for the GDR, however, the need for a vanguard German Socialist literature quickly became crucial. As West Germany's "Gruppe 47" (including Günter Grass, as well as authors like Günter Eich, Ingeborg Bachmann, and Paul Celan) found international resonance, often with quite experimental styles and forms, many outside and even some within the east Bloc began to argue that excluding major figures of modernity like Franz Kafka and James Joyce meant that East Bloc and especially GDR literature was stunted.

Immediately after the capitulation of the Nazi regime, the cultural sphere of divided Germany was controlled by its respective occupiers. Regarding the East Zone, known in German as the *sowjetische Besatzungszone* (SBZ), Emmerich writes:

> Oberste kulturpolitische Instanz in den Jahren 1945-1949 war die Abteilung für Information bei der SMAD [Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland] unter dem Obersten (später General) Sergej Tjulpanow, der zehn Abteilungen (u.a. eine für Literatur unter dem Literaturwissenschaftler Alexander Alexander Dymschitz) unterstanden und die auch einen eigenen Verlag der Sowjetischen Militäradministration (SWA-Verlag) ins Leben rief, in dem vor allem Werke der Sowjetliteratur (Gorki, Scholochow, Majakowski u.a.) in preiswerten Ausgaben erscheinen, von deren Vorbildfunktion noch die Rede sein wird.[60]

Though Berlin's Maxim-Gorki-Theatre took the Soviet writer's name in 1952, the efforts of the Soviet administration to set down exemplars for literature appear to have failed. Certainly authors like Gorky, Chernyshevsky, and Gladkov were mentioned as classic examples of Socialist Realist literary tradition in East Germany. But then again early Russian realist authors such as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, who were quite ambivalently incorporated into the Soviet canon, were also highly appreciated, by Anna Seghers among others.[61]

With the return of the so-called "Gruppe Ulbricht" on April 29th, 1945 to Berlin, the future core of the GDR's political elite returned from its exile in the Soviet Union. Johannes R. Becher, a leading figure of this group, was notably active in the inter-zonal Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands. Aufbau Verlag, which would grow to be one of the GDR's largest publishing houses, was founded in August of 1945 as part of the Kulturbund.

As the rivalry between the Soviet Union and its Western Allies became manifest in their respectively administered German territories, an internal struggle within the Soviet Sector led to the uncontested primacy of local adherents to the Soviet Union (foremost the Ulbricht Gruppe), who defeated adherents generally aligned with the pre-World War Two German Social

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[60] Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, 74.

[61] A particularly large section of the Verlag Volk und Welt, which was the publishing house responsible for bringing international literature to the GDR, was devoted to Soviet literature. Cf.: Simone Barck and Siegfried Lokatis, *Fenster zur Welt: Eine Geschichte des DDR-Verlages Volk und Welt*, Berlin: Links Verlag, 2003.

Democrats. Though represented at the time as a concentration of Socialist energies, the merging of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) with the Communist Party (KPD) into the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in 1946 has since been understood as the first victory of the Communists over the Social Democrats.[62] This rivalry between the Communist and Social Democrat parties was a continuation of fierce competition in the Weimar era, when, according to Emmerich, even after the National Socialists had seized power, the KPD still declared the SPD the "Hauptfeind" of the workers' class.[63] The merging of the two parties in 1946 was a harbinger for the further homogenization of the authorities of the East German state. Detlev Brunner claims that the SED rapidly transformed into a "stalinistischen Kaderpartei, der 'Partei neuen Typus', die die Führungsrolle der Sowjetunion vorbehaltlos anerkannte und den erbitteren Kampf gegen noch vorhandene sozialdemokratische Einflüsse in den eigenen Reigen auf ihre Fahnen schrieb." Immediately after the unification of the two parties, delegates within such leading institutions as the Board of Trade Unions were still divided by views that formerly distinguished the SPD from the KPD.[64] Above all, according to Brunner, the KPD delegates insisted on the leadership of the Soviet Union, as opposed to a Socialist German 'Sonderweg,' or uniquely German form of Socialism. As one KPD delegate put it at a conference in 1948,

> 'Unsere Liebe' so Warnke, gelte der Sowjetunion, 'weil das der wahre Sozialismus ist und wir eng verbunden fühlen als fortschrittliche Arbeiter Deutschlands mit den

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[62] Timothy Vogt claims the formation of the SED was understood according to the ideological persuasion of the analyst as either forced or mutually beneficial. See note 65 on page 274 of *Denazification in Soviet-occupied Germany: Brandenburg, 1945-1948*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

[63] Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, 72.

[64] *Der Wandel des FDGB zur kommunistischen Massenorganisation*, Hrsg. Detlev Brunner, (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 1996), 15.

> Arbeitern der Sowjetunion, die nicht nur uns, sondern der ganzen Welt das historische Beispiel gegeben haben, das für alle Zeiten gelten wird.'[65]

Excessive as this effusion of love for the Soviet Union as role model for Germany might sound, it is also perfectly summarizes the political message of Christa Wolf's first literary work, *Moskauer Novelle*, published in 1961 but meant to capture the tone of the GDR in 1959. In the interval between the narrated time of the novella and its publication, a new course had been set by the GDR regime, modeled on the Stalin's cultural revolution, but modified to reflect the economic deficits of the GDR. After such tools for controlling the economy as the Board of Trade Unions were brought to heel, the Zentralkommittee of the SED (ZK) turned its attention to stimulating general productivity by means of a new cultural atmosphere.

Walter Ulbricht's Failed Cultural Revolution

The Bitterfelder Weg and its failure is an important series of events because this central plank of the GDR's official culture was the first organizing principle of GDR culture, and even after many of its goals were abandoned, marked the context in which many of the GDR's most prominent authors got their start. More than just refashioning institutions and admissions policies, General Secretary Walter Ulbricht attempted to recreate the intelligentsia and redefine the role of the author in society with a new literary doctrine announced at a conference organized by the Mitteldeutscher Verlag in Bitterfeld's electro-chemical refinery in 1959.[66] This conference was a watershed moment in the definition of GDR literature, similar in importance to the

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[65] Brunner, *Der Wandel des FDGB zur kommunistischen Massenorganisation*, 21.

[66] The protocol of the conference with it presentations by Walter Ulbricht, Alfred Kurella, as well as Werner Bräunig, Erwin Strittmatter, and arguably the most successful worker-author, Willi Bredel, is available under the title *Greif zur Feder, Kumpel: Protokoll der Autorenkonferenz des Mitteldeutschen Verlag Halle am 24. April 1959 im Kulturpalast des Elektrochemischen Kombinats Bitterfeld*.

codification of German Socialist Realism as the Writers' Congress of 1934 (described above) was to Soviet culture. Ulbricht's larger cultural policy was comparable in many ways to the early years of Stalin's cultural regime and based on the Stalinist concept of cultural revolution.[67] At Bitterfeld in 1959 Ulbricht described the GDR's cultural revolution as a chance for the working class to "storm the heights of culture." The invited participants at the Bitterfeld Conference reflected the goal of the predominance of workers in the newly organized culture: "schreibende Arbeiter" (worker-authors who were not professionally trained) outnumbered the "Kopfarbeiter" (professionally trained authors) two to one, likely because that ratio was sought by those who organized the conference.[68] As Ulbricht envisioned it, workers would become the GDR's primary *Kulturschaffende*:

> Die Aufgabe besteht darin, daß sie das Neue im Leben, in den gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen der Menschen, in ihrem Kampf um den sozialistischen Aufbau, um die sozialistische Umgestaltung des gesamten Lebens künstlerisch gestalten, daß sie durch ihre künstlerischen Leistungen die Menschen begeistern und dadurch mithelfen, das Tempo der Entwicklung zu beschleunigen und vorwärtszubringen.[69]

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[67] For further comparison of Walter Ulbricht to Stalin, Boleslaw Bierut, and Mátyás Rákosi, see Chapter 3 "Communists" of Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe, 1944-1956*, New York: Doubleday, 2012. For an overview of the formation of Socialist Realism in the 1930s in the Soviet Union, cf: Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, Third Edition. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. The Soviet experience with early movements of proletarian artists such as Proletkult and the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP) meant that Soviet officials discouraged Ulbricht's ideas. Cf: SAPMO-BArch DY/30/IV 2/9.06/15, 183-84 and SAPMO-BArch DY/30/IV 2/2.026/90, 60-61, reports for the East German Central Committee of discussion on the emerging movement of writing authors, cited in William James Waltz, "The Movement of Writing Workers in the German Democratic Republic: The Vision of Cultural Revolution and the Reality of Popular Participation," The University of Wisconsin – Madison, 2014, available [Online] via ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 12.

[68] Fritz Bressau (Leiter des Mitteldeutschen Verlages), "Eröffnung der Konferenz," in *Greif zur Feder Kumpel*, 6.

[69] Walter Ulbricht, "Schlusswort," in *Greif zur Feder Kumpel*, 96.

Classics of Soviet Socialist Realism such as Gorky's *Mother* and Gladkov's *Cement* emphasize the struggles of the working class to grow in class consciousness. Ulbricht sought to actualize this thematic focus by encouraging representation of contemporary life in the GDR's factories. Now that a workers' state had been founded, Ulbricht expected the new literature to stimulate workers' productivity. These expectations of the tangible effects of literature revised its pedagogical role in Socialist culture from one of guided spiritual awakening to more practical guidance on matters of production. Ulbricht's cultural revolution sought to fulfill the quotas of the seven-year plan by providing positive examples of the working class, even specific technical advice in the newly published works of GDR literature.

As a recent dissertation has shown, the Bitterfelder Weg elicited a large movement of "schreibende Arbeiter," or worker-authors, but it was largely disregarded by contemporary literature critics in West Germany and even historical accounts composed after the fall of the Wall.[70] Ingeborg Gerlach cites a West German publication by the Ministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen meant to explain key GDR concepts published in 1969. Regarding the Bitterfelder Weg it claimed:

> Die Bitterfelder Bewegung erreicht, wie zu erwarten war, keines der ihr von der Partei gesetzten Ziele. Die zu laienkünstlerischen Betätigung aufgerufenen Arbeiter strebten von der Werkbank an den Schreibtisch, in die ‚Intelligenz'; ihre Produkte waren – mit vereinzelten Ausnahmen – dilletantisch und konnten, soweit sie überhaupt gedruckt wurden, auch einer sehr wohlwollenden Kritik nicht standhalten; das Interesse der Werktätigen an den dichterischen Versuchen ihrer Kollegen ließ sich nur durch eifrige Bemühungen der Presse und der Kulturobmänner in den Betrieben vorübergehend anfachen.[71]

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[70] Waltz, "The Movement of Writing Workers in the German Democratic Republic," 2-3.

[71] Cited in Ingeborg Gerlach, *Bitterfeld: Arbeiterliteratur und Literatur der Arbeitswelt in der DDR*, (Kronberg: Scriptor Verlag, 1974), 17. The name "Ministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen" reflects that fact the BRG did not recognize the GDR as a sovereign state until Willi Brandt's Ostpolitik of the early 1970s.

Thus according to the West German government not only is the quality of literature created under the auspices of the Bitterfelder Weg dismissed on the grounds of professional criticism of its literary merit, but even popularity amongst its intended audience (that is fellow workers) is negligible. By most account the Bitterfelder Weg was a complete failure.

Yet as William Waltz argues, such summaries drastically underestimate the participation in and influence of the circles of writing workers introduced by the policies of the Bitterfelder Weg. By one estimation, long after official support for schreibende Arbeiter had waned, in 1985, over 650 anthologies and 350 individual monographs by working authors had been published and 200 writing circles remained active.[72] The very breadth of the Bewegung schreibender Arbeiter (BSA) was part of its problems in the eyes of the cultural functionaries who attempted to govern it: Waltz writes that an internal memo of the BSA's sponsoring state organization (the FDGB) complained of

> poor coordination among various organs, the state's weak oversight and participants' poor motivation, lack of ideological clarity and the failure of writers to address topical issues in industry and agriculture, the many circles with no state support, and differing degrees of support from various leaders resulting in differentiated developments among circles.[73]

According to Waltz, in the early sixties a new philosophy of GDR culture led by the Ministry of Culture emphasized the creation of congenial leisure activities, which in the literary sphere meant high quality yet accessible literature. The 1963 Schwerin Conference of Workers and Farmers and the 1964 Second Bitterfelder Conference acknowledged the end of the goal of creating a new national literature created by schreibende Arbeiter in favor of developing a

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[72] Waltz, "The Movement of Writing Workers in the German Democratic Republic," 4. Cf: pp.87-92 on the inconclusive studies of the size of the movement.

[73] Waltz, "The Movement of Writing Workers in the German Democratic Republic," 97.

national literature of international caliber.[74] This goal was to be accomplished with newly centralized institutions for writers, such as the Johannes R. Becher Literaturinstitut in Leipzig.

For those professionally trained authors cautiously cultivated in the first decade of the GDR's existence, the Bitterfelder Weg encapsulated the idea that they should work in as close conjunction with the proletariat as possible, ideally in the production lines, in order to accurately capture both the need for Socialism and the gradual transformation of society taking place from the ground up. Even this idea rather lost its urgency in the latter half of the GDR's short existence, when authors experimented in portraying daily life at home as well as at work, and even intellectual work became a central subject of discussion. As I shall describe in the next chapter, after her epigrammatic Bitterfelder Weg novel *Der geteilte Himmel*, Christa Wolf's frequent representation of characters who are students, teachers, and writers in works after 1963 was symptomatic of a turn towards self-representation, which for professionally trained authors inevitably meant a turn towards representing life outside of factories. Still, well into the seventies university students were regularly sent into "production," in other words to work in factories or agricultural collectives during school breaks or for a longer period of suspension from studies if their conduct at university had been deemed reprehensible. Thus while the expectation that workers without literary training would create the GDR's new literature was abandoned, the ethos of a close connection between the state's intellectuals and the workers and farmers that officially formed its core constituency remained for its duration.

The products of Ulbricht's cultural revolution did not represent a national literature that continued the tradition of the nineteenth century realists over whom Germanophone intellectuals fought so very hard. As Ulbricht himself admitted at the Second Bitterfeld Conference of 1964,

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[74] Waltz, "The Movement of Writing Workers in the German Democratic Republic," 103-105.

"Das Problem besteht in der Schaffung der Einheit der mit dem Namen Weimar verbundenen humanistischen klassischen Literatur und des Bitterfelder Weges."[75] Ulbricht's reference to Weimar, the city of Goethe and Schiller, affects the contrast of a national literature that boasts of titans of world literature to that of the work of the amateur writers describing their daily life in factories. Lukács' idea of artful generalization, as well as his demand for quality of prose and crafting of a plot, were issues that were to be professionally taught at the Johannes R. Becher Literaturinstitut in Leipzig. However, as studying at the institute was a fulltime occupation, it meant that worker-authors who were selected to attend had to leave their work in factories. This reality negated the idea of authors writing about their daily experiences on the job and instead created a new cohort of professional authors educated at state institutions. From the sixties on, resources were concentrated on such centralized schools and therefore financial support for local groups of "schreibende Arbeiter" throughout the country was largely terminated.[76] Still, the Bitterfelder Weg is an important chapter in GDR literary history, not only for the early works of many authors like Christa Wolf, Brigitte Reimann, and Heiner Müller that bear its clear mark, but due to its lasting influence in the form of encouraging authors like Volker Braun, Wolfgang Hilbig, and Angela Kraus.

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[75] Walter Ulbricht, "Über die Entwicklung einer volksverbundenen sozialistischen Nationalkultur," *Zweite Bitterfelder Konferenz 1964. Protokoll der von der Ideologischen Kommission beim Politbüro des ZK der SED und dem Ministerium für Kultur am 24. und 25. April im Kulturpalast des Elektrochemischen Kombinats Bitterfeld abgehaltenen Konferenz*, (Berlin: Dietz, 1964), 71.

[76] In chapter five below, I highlight Wolfgang Hilbig's description of the tensions between factory work and that of a writer as worthy of consideration in terms of explaining the failure of the "schreibende Arbeiter" movement.

Part 2 Coming to Terms with Faulkner and Joyce's Style in the GDR

Formal Considerations Give Way to Bloc Conflict: The Case of Stream of Consciousness

Parallel to Ulbricht's attempts to form a new kind of author, the literary critics who returned to the GDR after the Second World War and their students argued about which figureheads of world literature were admissible to their canon of Socialist Realism. The literature of "fellow travelers," that is those who did not live in the East Bloc, but whose literature matched aspects of the Socialist worldview, remained objects of debate. Thomas Mann, for example, lauded by Lukács for the social critique he effected in *Buddenbrooks*, remained well respected despite refusing an invitation to live in the GDR.[77]

Politically speaking, the international backlash against the Bitterfelder Weg, which included criticism of the GDR as a backwater isolated from modernism, cut to the quick and encouraged cultural functionaries to include some token representatives of more experimental literary styles where some justification along Socialist lines could be found. For the many literary professionals who considered it their duty to craft the cultural landscape of the GDR into a "Leseland" (or land of readers), the nuances of aesthetic arguments were more important. Many like Lukács found classics of world literature incongruous with the landscape of the new East Germany, while others, like the critic Hans Mayer, sought to integrate newer, controversial representatives of "bourgeois modernism" into the literary tradition of the GDR. As I shall demonstrate below, aesthetic considerations of particular texts sometimes failed in light of the calculus of public image. Foundational statements at the First Soviet Writers' Congress amongst others against Joyce and Marcel Proust formed a cornerstone of the Socialist Realist identity. Joyce was a favorite example of degenerate decadence for critics within the East Bloc: his "obscene" subject matter and subjective narrative voices made him unsuited to the Socialist cause. Because he was derided specifically, Joyce was difficult to rehabilitate in the GDR: he remained unpublished until after the end of the Ulbricht era. Another representative of the

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[77] Cf. Mann's letter to Becher in *Briefe an Johannes R. Becher 1910-1958*, (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1993), 409-501.

stream-of-consciousness literary style, William Faulkner, was never publically denigrated by name and some of his work was published in the GDR as early as the mid-fifties, as can be seen in Figure 2 below.[78] That Joyce and Faulkner should have such radically different histories of reception may seem odd given that both are major representatives of stream-of-consciousness literary styles that are essentially subjective in a way incompatible with Socialist Realism.[79]

At the 1934 Soviet Writers' Congress, Karl Radek delivered a lengthy speech in which he addressed many contemporary authors. He singled out Joyce as representing a type of realism incompatible with Socialist Realism:

> What is the peculiarity of Joyce's method? He tries to depict a day in the life of his subjects motion by motion–the motions of the body, the motions of the mind, the motions of the feelings in all their shades, from conscious feelings to those which rise up in the throat like a spasm. He cinematographs the life of his subjects with maximum minuteness, omitting nothing.
> […]
> What is the basic feature of Joyce? His basic feature is the conviction that there is nothing big in life–no big events, no big people, no big ideas; and the writer can give a picture of life by just taking "any given hero on any day," and reproducing him with exactitude. A heap of dung, crawling with worms, photographed by a cinema apparatus through a microscope–such is Joyce's work.[80]

Radek's references cinematography suggest that Joyce's style portrays his subjects with hitherto unprecendented degrees of realism. However, Joyce's lack of an analytical framework, positive heroes, and demonstrated progress toward revolution mean his realism is ineffectual and inconsistent with the practical goal of Socialist Realism.

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[78] I compiled this list using publications records available from the Bundesarchiv Deutschland. See appendix 1.2 for a complete listing.

[79] The study of the reception of Kafka in the East Bloc is rather more complete than Joyce and Faulkner. Cf. for example Angelika Winnen, *Kafka-Rezeption in der Literatur der DDR*, Würzberg: Könighausen & Neumann, 2006.

[80] Karl Radek, "Contemporary World Literature and the Tasks of Proletarian Art," *Problems of Soviet Literature: Reports and Speeches at the First Soviet Writers' Congress*, 153.

Figure 2 Publication History of William Faulkner and James Joyce in the GDR
original titles listed
*unless otherwise noted, published by Verlag Volk und Welt

Faulkner	Joyce
1956 *Light in August*	1977 *Dubliners*
1963 *A Fable*	1979 A *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
1964 *Intruder in the Dust*	1980 *Ulysses*
1965 *The Hamlet, The Town, The Mansion*	1982 selected texts from Joyce's Collected Works
1967 *Soldiers' Pay*, Verlag Philipp Reclam	1982 *Stephen Hero*
1969 "The Bear," from *Go Down Moses*, Insel-Verlag Anton Kippenberg	1984 selected poems, Insel-Verlag Anton Kippenberg
1980-1981 selected short stories in two volumes	
1983 *The Sound and the Fury*	
1984 *As I Lay Dying*	
1985 *Absalom, Absalom!*	
1986 *Sanctuary, Requiem for a Nun*	
1988 *Sartoris*	
1989 *The Unvanquished*	

Shortly after the first Soviet Writers' Conference, in 1936, Lukács named James Joyce the epitome of all that was wrong with excessive subjectivity. As I shall explain below, the rejection of a stream of conscious style like that used by Joyce would be a major plank in defining what was *not* a Socialist style after the Second World War. Though this style was later derided as Western decadence, Lukács rejected it not because it was Western, but rather he argued that it did not suit the function of Socialist literature. As the purpose of Socialist literature was to demonstrate the basis of social conflict in economic realities, Joyce's focus on the individual failed to convey the totality, as Lukács saw it. Writing in a German-language literary journal in Moscow, *Internationale Literatur*, Lukács credits Hegel with the insight that a fixation on the here and now is actually the greatest abstraction, then identifies Joyce as one of many in twentieth-century Western European literature who focus on a false concreteness.

> Der Fall Joyce ist freilich ein extremer Fall. Aber er illustriert in seiner extremen Zuspitzung die künstlerisch weltanschauliche Seite der Gestaltung des Charakters.

> Gerade der extreme Subjektivismus der modernen Weltanschauung, gerade die wachsende Verfeinerung in der literarischen Gestaltung der Einzelnen, gerade die wachsende Ausschließlichkeit in der Betonung des psychologischen Momentes führen zu einer Auflösung des Charakters. Das modern-bürgerliche Denken löst die objektive Wirklichkeit in einem Komplex von unmittelbaren Wahrnehmungen auf. Es löst damit zugleich den Charakter des Menschen auf, indem es aus dem Ich des Menschen eine bloße Sammelstelle solcher Wahrnehmung macht.[81]

Stream-of-consciousness style realism lacks proper consciousness, according to Lukács. In his terms, the "objektive Wahrheit," in other words the objective truth of class and other realities of the world, is obscured by the extreme immediacy of the style. By focusing on the individual and its subjective perception, the larger picture is missed. This, he argues, is unforgivable considering that literature's primary function is to portray the world with the proper lens, so that the public may understand it.

In the early years of the GDR Lukács re-published and revised earlier work in a flurry of new publications. For example, In January of 1956 Lukács delivered a lecture at the Akademie der Künste that excoriated Joyce in particular as unacceptable to Socialist Realism, along the lines of his article quoted above, which he reworked into *Die Gegenwartsbedeutung des kritischen Realismus* (1957).[82] As he had just returned from the Soviet Union where he had been close with the so-called Ulbricht-Gruppe and wrote in German, Lukács' views on Realism were repeated and propagated by many cultural functionaries of the newly founded nation. For example, as Anna-Christina Giovanopulos describes, "Kurt Hager, bis zum Untergang der DDR ein Hauptvertreter des ideologischen Deutungsmonopols der SED, erkannte in Joyce 1956 eine Verkörperung von Krise und Verfall der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft." Hager claimed that Joyce's

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[81] Lukács, *Werke*, Vol. 4, 173-174.

[82] Cf.: *Georg Lukács Werke*, Bd. 4, (Hamburg: Luchterhand, 1971), pp.467-8.

literature does not fulfill the pedagogical goal of Socialist literature: it portrays failure rather than optimistic progress.

Public discourse on such controversial figures as Joyce was not always in agreement: Hans Mayer, renowned literary critic and professor of German literature in Leipzig, advocated for a broader engagement with modern world literature including Kafka, Joyce, and Faulkner. Mayer was not a complete renegade, he was in dialogue with the trends of his time. In numerous letters in the years 1950 to 1953 to the GDR's minister of culture, Johnannes R. Becher, Mayer called his friend essential to rebuilding German culture. Mayer also gave his advice on Becher's forthcoming publications: an anthology of poetry from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and a collection of Hölderlin's poetry.[83] As a scholar, Mayer defended James Joyce, as noted by Giovanopulos: "Erste Versuche des in Leipzig lehrenden Literaturwissenschaftlers Hans Mayer, Joyce in der literarischen Diskussion der DDR zu etablieren, schlugen fehl.[84] Mayer did not see the day in 1977 when Joyce finally appeared in GDR bookstores – he declined to return to East Germany from a trip to West Germany in 1963.

Sigrid Hoert describes Ernst Fischer, an Austrian Marxist, as another early proponent of Joyce within the GDR's cultural mainstream. He published two articles in *Sinn und Form* in 1958 and 1962 advocating the incorporation of Kafka and Joyce. The international conference held in Liblice to celebrate Kafka's 80th birthday provided the occasion for most delegates,

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[83] Cf.: letters from Mayer dated 4/19/50, 10/2/52, 11/1/52, 1/3/53 in *Briefe an Johannes R. Becher*, 386, 449-454, 458-460. In light of the arrest and sentencing of Walter Janka and associates, the relationship between Mayer and Becher became strained: they switched to speaking in the formal register. Cf.: Reinhard Müller, *Die Säuberung: Moskau 1936: Stenogramm einer geschlossenen Parteiversammlung*, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1991.

[84] Anna Christina Giovanopoulos, "Kein schöner Land– Amerikanische Literatur im Druckgenehmigungsverfahren," in *Fenster zur Welt: Eine Geschichte des DDR-Verlages Volk und Welt*, edited by Simone Barck and Siegfried Lokatis, (Berlin: Links Verlag, 2003), 188-189

including Ernst Fischer, to argue for his rehabilitation. At the conference, Fischer claimed that Proust and Joyce should also be accepted. The East German delegates rejected such arguments, and Alfred Kurella, a member of the central committee of the SED and a key cultural functionary in the GDR, attacked those delegates who had suggested it.[85] Kurella's rejection of Kafka, Joyce, and Proust was echoed by Arno Hochmuth and Wolfgang Joho in 1963, and Hans Koch in 1964.

Even within the East Bloc, the GDR's recalcitrance regarding authors of experimental literary styles was noted and criticized. Hoert describes the most direct of these remarks, which took place at an international colloquium organized in East Berlin in December of 1964:

> During this colloquium Egon Naganowski, a Polish scholar, noted that the literature of the DDR as far as international appeal is concerned, is inferior to and cannot stand comparison with that of West Germany. The reason for this shortcoming could be traced to the fact that in East Germany Joyce, Proust, and Kafka, the 'Ahnherren des modernen Romans,' were unknown and their works unavailable to the younger writers. The DDR, Naganowitz said, had lost contact with world literature due to the government's restrictive literary policy, and had, therefore, substantially contributed to the cleavage between East and West German literature.[86]

Clearly the GDR's official policy of exclusion was not only noted, but also blamed for a perceived deficit in the nation's cultural production discussed above in connection with the Bitterfelder Weg. As I shall describe below, the publication history of William Faulkner demonstrates that not all representatives of Western modernism were excluded from the East German literary offerings. Though Faulkner's most stylistically experimental texts were first published in the eighties when Joyce too had finally found a place in GDR bookshops, other texts by Faulkner rife with modernist innovations such as polyphony and stream-of-consciousness style were published in the GDR in the fifties. What was objectionable about

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[85] Sigfrid Hoert, "James Joyce in East Germany," *Joyce Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Winter, 1968), 133.

[86] Hoert, "James Joyce in East Germany," 135.

Joyce was his literary style and purported lack of class consciousness. In Faulkner, however, ostensible signs of class consciousness were seized upon. As we have seen above, Faulkner does not appear in the oft-repeated trifecta of bourgeois decadence of Joyce, Proust, and Kafka. I believe that because Faulkner was not denigrated by name by public officials, an argument could be mounted for his publication, which side-stepped the fact that his literary style was nowhere near that advocated by the likes of Gorky, Lukács, or Ulbricht. The argument for Faulkner turned on his later novels' criticism of social inequality in the American South, as can be seen by the documentation submitted by its publishers in the GDR.

Review of the Druckgenehmigungsvorgänge (applications for publishing licenses) suggests that Faulkner was incorporated into the Socialist worldview as a social critic who revealed deeply problematic contours within American society. Hans Petersen, a Lektor at the Verlag Volk und Welt, which brought out just about every work by Faulkner or Joyce that appeared in the GDR, suggested in a recent interview that the reviews he submitted in publication applications were merely what the board of censors wanted to hear, as were the scholarly commentaries usually added to such problematic texts.[87] Giovanopulos likewise notes that the interpretation of texts as critical of America was in general a good strategy for publishing American literature in the GDR.[88] Yet taken in the wider context of Lukács' and Ulbricht's aesthetics of German Socialist Realism as described above, Faulkner's and Joyce's publication

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[87] Hans Petersen, "Über Faulkner und die Erschließung der amerikanischen Literatur," in *Fenster zur Welt: Eine Geschichte des DDR-Verlages Volk und Welt*, 175. Strangely, Petersen does not mention publishing Faulkner's most important literary achievements, *The Sound and Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*

[88] Giovanopoulos, "Kein schöner Land– Amerikanische Literatur im Druckgenehmigungsverfahren," 181.

histories demonstrate that Cold War antipathies to America and American culture trumped the guiding ideals of those foundational figures.

The very first work of Faulkner's to come out in East Germany, *Light in August* (GDR 1957), is justified as follows: "In diesem seinem erfolgreichsten Roman greift der Autor das erregendste Problem des Südens der Staaten auf: die Negerfrage."[89] It is worth noting that Peter Nicolaisen and Daniel Glöske confirmed in a 2008 article that *Light in August* was the most widely read of Faulkner's works in Germany to date.[90] In the GDR, the novel reached four printings with the Verlag Volk und Welt in 1957, 1964, 1975, and 1985, and one with the GDR's most prestigious publishing house, Aufbau, in 1984. Read in the context of Cold War antipathy of the fifties, Petersen's statement seems an overt attempt to acquaint the reader with what has been identified as the greatest "problem" in American society, namely race relations and their social effects. The implied criticism of American society is at the heart of this and later applications to publish Faulkner, until his literary style could be directly referred to.

Six years later, in 1963, Faulkner's *A Fable* was brought out with a more general effort to secure the author a place in Socialist society. Petersen specifically referred to this publication as an example of one in which he elaborated on a thematic aspect of the text in order to make it amenable to the censor. Mentioning the Pulitzer Prize Faulkner won for the work, Petersen wrote in the application:

> Den Höhepunkt in der letzten Phase seines Schaffens stellt der 1954 erschiene Roman 'Eine Legende' dar, in dem William Faulkner, ausgehend von eigenen Erfahrungen des ersten Weltkrieges, das Problem des imperialistischen Krieges behandelt. Das Interesse

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[89] Bundesarchiv, DR 1/3972, 167.

[90] Peter Nicolaisen and Daniel Glöske, "William Faulkner in Germany: A Survey," *The Faulkner Journal*, (24:1) 2008, 63.

> für die Werke dieses humanistischen amerikanischen Realisten ist bei unseren Leser sehr groß.[91]

In the last sentence Petersen offers a gentle reminder of Faulkner's fame and therefore predictable financial success in the GDR. The same sentence justifies this interest by referring to Faulkner as a humanistic realist. This label set the American author firmly within the GDR's idea of fellow travelers, especially the progressive ideal of recognizing the worth of every person, regardless of socio-economic background. It was a way to enlist Faulkner into the Klassenkampf of Marxist history and the Socialist purpose of literature as documentary and yet inspiring. This justification for publication completely ignores the stylistic merit of Faulkner's work, which has much in common with that of the much-derided James Joyce.

Aside from the charge of exaggerated subjectivity leveled by Karl Radek and Georg Lukács, other German critics like Alfred Kurella, claimed Joyce's novels lacked positive heroes, a criticism that reflects a basic requirement of Socialist Realism.[92] All of this criticism could just as easily be leveled at Faulkner from *Light in August* and *A Fable* to his earlier novels *Absalom! Absalom!* and *The Sound and the Fury*, and yet his work passed inspection. It seems that the stigma attached to Joyce's work was not as consistently based on stylistic criteria as Lukács might have hoped.

A similar thematic interpretation of James Joyce as a humanist drove the first two applications to print his collection of short stories *Dubliners* and his first novel, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* In the 1979 application to publish Joyce's first novel the author's moral convictions are of central importance, but the subjectivity of the narrative is also challenged.

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[91] Bundesarchiv, DR 1/3972, 076

[92] Hoert, "James Joyce in East Germany," 135.

> Dieser Roman bringt in seiner Gesamtaussage deutlich Joyce' zutiefst humanistisches Anliegen zum Andruck, das heißt die Selbstbehauptung des Künstlers in einer ihm feindlichen – entfremdeten – Welt. Die realistische Grundtendenz diese[s] Romans ist nicht zu übersehen. Joyce wollte durch den Titel *Ein Porträt des Künstlers* ... vermutlich den autobiographischen Ausgangspunkt bzw. Bezug besonders betonen und damit möglicherweise auf seine eingeschränkte Gültigkeit hinweisen. Jedoch weitet die künstlerische Verallgemeinerung den Roman letztlich doch zum Porträt eines Künstlers in spätbürgerlicher Zeit.[93]

This analysis of Joyce folds him into such concepts of Socialist Realism as humanism and alienation, while at the same time subtly overruling the author's intention to create a subjective work; instead, according to this reviewer, the text conforms to the rule of generalization and objectivity demanded by Lukács and others. The applications for permission filed for Joyce's work show that all three licenses were purchased from Suhrkamp Verlag, *Dubliners* in late 1976 and *Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses* on the same date in 1978. The application to print *Ulysses* is an extremely dry affair rife with unimaginative platitudes. I conclude that Petersen, who wrote the more interesting justification of *Portrait of the Artist*, sufficiently cleared the path such that only a perfunctory recapitulation of Socialist views of *Ulysses* was necessary, along with the similarly themed afterword that accompanied the text. Since the licenses for both novels were purchased at the same time, it seems that *Ulysses* rode on the same acceptance as *Portrait of the Artist*.

Petersen's application for permission to print Faulkner's mostly stylistically experimental work in the early eighties registers a change in policy towards experimental literary style. In his 1982 application regarding *The Sound and the Fury*, Petersen refers to Faulkner as the "experimentierfreudigste" of twentieth-century American novelists, suggesting that certain former taboos had become moot.

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[93] Berthold Petzinna, " 'Todesglöcken des bürgerlichen Subjekts' – Joyce, Beckett, Eliot und Pound," in *Fenster zur Welt: Eine Geschichte des DDR-Verlages Volk und Welt*, 190.

> Faulkners viermaliger Versuch, dieselbe Geschichte – nämlich die der Familie Compson – zu erzählen, wird zu einem Experiment mit der Zeit begriff, was sich auf der Ebene der literarischen Technik als stream of consciousness, auf der Ebene der Tektonik des Romans als Problem der Chronologie manifestiert. [...]
> Wer sich durch die scheinbar willkürlich aneinandergereihten Assoziationsketten Benjys hindurchdringen kann und bei der Lektüre des monomanischen Monologs des Studenten Quentin nicht den Faden verliert, wer in die Lage ist, die hanebüchenen Gemeinheiten des ganz auf die nackte, bare Zahlung eingestellten Jason IV als Leistung des komischen Schriftstellers William Faulkner zu würdigen, dem sei dieser Roman – einer der großen Romane unseres Jahrhunderts – über die Auflösung einer Klasse, über eine von Eifersucht, Haß, Neid und Raffgier zerfressene Familie empfohlen.[94]

As before, Faulkner is presented as a man of vaguely Socialist convictions, though now his experimental style is not so much defended as excused as a kind of challenge, a way of highlighting the dissolution of an entire social class. The adherence to the theory of the functionality of literary style is evident in the reviewer's commentary on the effect of the stream of consciousness on the ability of the reader to understand the plot of the text. No defense of the style's aesthetic value is offered, compared to Western critics, who might well speak of the mesmerizing quality of Faulkner's prose, in other words the aesthetic experience of reading the text, aside from the message it conveys. In the quotation about *Portrait of the Artist* above the issue of literary style is also largely skirted in favor of *ad hominem* conjectures as to Joyce's personal philosophy and criticism of the West. It would be wrong to surmise that these applications for permission to print demonstrate that cultural officials in the GDR cared little for the literary style of major works of modernism. Rather, taking the documents for what they are, texts designed to appeal to the contemporary politics of culture, it is fair to conclude that literary style and concerns for its functional suitability were eventually laid aside. In the Honecker era, if the right ideological themes could be coaxed from a text, its stylistic "decadence" could be overlooked.

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[94] BArch DR 1/2379 573, 579. Emphasis original.

Conclusion

To sum up, I have demonstrated with the cases study of James Joyce and William Faulkner's publication history in the GDR that literary style was eventually disregarded in favor of thematic criteria for publishing literature. This development in the last two decades of the GDR forsook both Lukács and the German tradition of Socialist Realism developed before the Second World War and Walter Ulbricht's Bitterfelder Weg. The aesthetics of Socialist Realism lost their importance in the face of devotion to the propagandistic value of certain messages that could be read into literary texts. Above all, social criticism of Western society was a message that the cultural bureaucracy found ideologically convenient.

Chapter Two
Interiority and Narrative Style of Socialist Realism: A Case Study of Christa Wolf

Wolfgang Emmerich has claimed "der vielleicht entscheidende Pferdefuß der DDR-Literatur-Forschung war ihre umfassende und allseitige *Politisierung*."[95] Christa Wolf is an ideal case study of an author whose international reputation was inextricable from her perceived relationship with the GDR state, even after the collapse of that state. The generally warm reception of her first two prose works within the GDR was due to their reflection of official state policy, as I will have already suggested and will elaborate below. Conversely, as Julia Hell has pointed out, it was Marcel Reich-Ranicki's review of Wolf's third literary publication *Nachdenken über Christa T.* as subversive to the GDR state both thematically and stylistically that launched the narrative of Wolf as a dissident and brought her to the attention of literary

[95] Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, 17.

critics the world over. This narrative found its pinnacle in the international appreciation for Wolf's allegorical texts of the eighties, notably *Kassandra* (1983). Wolf's appearance before a massive protest at Alexanderplatz in the heady days of the *Wende* was predicated on this identity of the author as dissident. The backlash against Wolf's *Was bleibt* (1990) and the details of her collaboration with the Stasi from 1959-1962, which came to light in the early nineties, turned this identity on its head, as Wolf was decried as a Staatsdichter for a defunct state.

And yet, since the late nineties Wolf has found incorporation into period studies of her contemporaries. For example, several recent monographs that appraise authors who rose to prominence after the Second World War Two include Wolf.[96] Some more explicitly address themes such a childhood under the Nazis or the Holocaust though others deal with international movements, such as body poetics.[97] Wolf's importance to studies of women's literature continues unabated, as monographs and edited volumes on the subject, which include Wolf, appear at regular intervals.[98]

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[96] CF: Stuart Tabener, *Aging and Old-Age Style in Günter Grass, Ruth Klüger, Christa Wolf, and Martin Walser: The Mannerism of a Late Period*, Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013. Michael G. Levine, *The Belated Witness: Literature, Testimony, and the Question of Holocaust Survival*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006. Michelle Mattson, *Mapping Morality in Postwar German Women's Fiction: Christa Wolf, Ingeborg Drewitz, and Grete Weil*, Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010.

[97] Fatima Festić, *The Body of the Postmodernist Narrator: Between Violence and Artistry*, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2009.

[98] Cf: Laurence M. Porter, *Women's Vision in Western Literature: The Empathic Community*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005. Cheryl Dueck, *Rifts in Time and in the Self: The Female Subject in Two Generations of East German Women Writers*, Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi, 2004. Suok Ham, *Zum Bild der Künstlerin in literarischen Biographien: Christa Wolfs Kein Ort. Nirgends, Ginka Steinwachs' George Sand und Elfriede Jelineks Clara S.*, Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008. Michelle Mattson, *Mapping Morality in Postwar German Women's Fiction: Christa Wolf, Ingeborg Drewitz, and Grete Weil*, Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010.

The publication of Wolf's final work *Stadt der Engel, oder, The Overcoat of Dr. Freud* in 2010 and her death the following year led to a renewed level of focused engagement on the author in the form of obituaries and scholarly articles, ending a lull in singly focused works since the late nineties. Wolf's posthumous publications are limited to journals including *Ein Tag im Jahr im neuen Jahrhundert 2001-2011* and *Moskauer Tagebücher: Wer Wir sind und Wer Wir Waren: Reisetagebücher, Texte, Briefe, Dokumente 1957-1989.* At present, Christa Wolf's *Nachlass* (including drafts of her published works) is being organized at the Archiv der Akademie der Künste in Berlin. Additionally, based on the example of Heiner Müller, Gerhard and Christa Wolf's personal library will be hosted by the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Despite its title, *Zwischen Moskauer Novelle und Stadt der Engel: neue Perspektiven auf das Lebenswerk von Christa Wolf*, the first publication of the newly founded Christa Wolf Gesellschaft, largely neglects her first two prose works, a trend in many recent monographs. Those that offer thematically motivated assessments of GDR literature (Toposforschung) that prominently include Christa Wolf also usually focus on her work after her break from the Politburo. For example, Sonja Klöcke's *Inscription and Rebellion: Illness and the Symptomatic Body in East German Literature* (2015) focuses on Wolf's work in two of her four chapters, but the first work she thoroughly addresses is *Nachdenken über Christa T.*[99] Another edited volume *Christa Wolf – Im Strom der Erinnerung* is representative of new attempts to make sense of the author's career as a whole, though essays on *Stadt der Engel* make up a quarter of the volume. While such a focus on Wolf's final retrospective novel is surely warranted, my chapter will examine her earlier works as they emerged in the context of domestic and international GDR

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[99] Cf: Yvonne Delhey, *Schwarze Orchideen und andere blaue Blumen: Reformsozialismus und Literatur in der DDR: Mit Interpretationen zum literarischen Werk Christa Wolfs und Wolfgang Hilbigs*, Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004.

literary politics. I shall demonstrate that Christa Wolf's initially enthusiastic engagement with the official culture of the GDR and her growing disappointment with it is visible in her early literary texts. Wolf's literary efforts of the fifties and sixties demonstrate considerable autobiographical influence, but also commitment to the GDR's mission of a Socialist society.

Part 1: Christa Wolf and the Master Narratives of German Socialist Realism, 1950-1968

> Da zeigt sich (beinah hatte ich begonnen es zu vergessen), wie gut ich meine Lektion aus dem germanistischen Seminar und aus vielen meist ganzseitigen Artikeln über Nutzen und Schaden, Realismus und Formalismus, Fortschritt und Dekadenz in Literatur und Kunst gelernt hatte – so gut, dass ich mir unbemerkt meinen Blick durch diese Artikel färben ließ, mich also weit von einer realistischen Seh- und Schreibweise entfernte. [...] Wie kann man mit fast dreißig Jahren, neun Jahre nach der Mitte dieses Jahrhunderts und alles andere als unberührt und ungerührt von dessen bewegten und bewegenden Ereignissen, etwas derart Trakathaftes schreiben?
> –Christa Wolf, „Über Sinn und Unsinn von Naivität," 1974[100]

Christa Wolf's public image has been constructed and re-constructed innumerable times by literary critics of the East and West before and after the fall of the Wall. Wolf herself has been outspoken on her intentions as an author and critical of her own work, as seen in the author's comment (above) about her first novel, *Moskauer Novelle*. "*Moskauer Novelle*," wrote Julia Hell in 1997, "occupies an odd position in Wolf's oeuvre. Since it is now hard to find, the novella is effectively excluded from the corpus of her work, and the author herself explicitly censored, indeed seemed to loathe it in her 1973 essay 'Über Sinn und Unsinn von Naivität.'"[101] Christa Wolf's *Werke*, organized by Sonja Hilzinger and published beginning in 1999, include *Moskauer*

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[100] In Gerhard Schneider (ed.): *Eröffnungen. Schriftsteller über ihr Erstlingswerk*. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag 1974, 168.

[101] Julia Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies*, 146.

Novelle in volume three as an *Erzählung*, thus making it more generally accessible. However, Hilzinger's collection repeats other omissions, this time from Wolf's critical oeuvre.[102] Specifically, none of Wolf's early work from the fifties as a literary critic of contemporary literature is available in a collected volume with her name on it.

The failure to include Wolf's early critical work in her last authorized collection is most likely due to the author's personal objection to re-publication. In a 1974 essay on "Christa Wolf als Literaturkrikerin," Manfred Jäger emphasizes Wolf's feeling that her work as a critic held her back from more specifically literary pursuits. Nonetheless, having begun his essay with the premise that most authors who are also critics value their literary efforts more, Jäger claims that Wolf similarly discounted her critical efforts as inferior. He writes: "Die kritisch-theoretische Phase beschreibt sie auch deswegen so entschieden, weil sie in ihren literaturpolitischen Aufsätzen und in ihren Betrachtungen über einzelne Bücher, wie es damals der Brauch war, dogmatische Positionen bezogen hatte. In all diesen Beiträgen steckt eine naive Sehnsucht nach dem einfachen Weltbild."[103] Given the contemporaneous publication of Wolf's self-incrimination of her earliest literary work as naïve (of which he signals familiarity), Jäger creates a link between Wolf's earliest critical and literary works as politically immature. While there is no doubt that Wolf's political position changed radically between the mid-fifties and the mid-seventies, there is more to her early work than rote political dogmatism.

As I shall demonstrate below, Wolf had been taught as a student to reject work that was not sufficiently conscious of ideology, as is abundantly clear in her Diplomarbeit on Hans

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[102] The first collection of Wolf's critical essays was *Die Dimension des Autors: Aufsätze, Essays, Gespräche, Reden*, published by the East German Aufbau Verlag in 1986.

[103] Manfred Jäger, "Die Literaturkritikerin Christa Wolf," *Text + Kritik*, Heft 46 (April 1975), 43.

Fallada. As a critic, Wolf began to express her own views on what could constitute German Socialist Realism. Wolf's views were not identical to the Soviet model, nor the most conservative contemporary vision of East German doctrine. However, Wolf's views as a critic were conservative enough to fit well within the official culture of the day and, as part of her role as a cultural functionary, she even shared her professional opinions with the Secret Police in the hopes of forming the ideal cultural landscape in the GDR.

Wolf's two earliest works, *Moskauer Novelle* and *Der geteilte Himmel*, function as refracting mirrors for the major political shifts of their immediate present: East Germany's falling into vassalage of the Soviet Union, and the growing need to accelerate industrial production seem more relevant to these novels than Wolf's personal biography. Considering Wolf's work in the context of these issues of state is necessary given the dependence of the cultural sphere on official support, but also the fact that Wolf's conformity to the official line precipitated her special support by the state, most evident in her nomination to the central committee of the Party. Moreover, it is the conservative structure of the early texts that create the starkest contrast with Wolf's later, more experimental work.

As Wolf's views developed in the mid to late sixties, when she left her job as an editor to become a freelance writer, she grew increasingly apart from official ideology of the state and gradually developed an ideal of reform Socialism and Socialist Realism quite different from real existing Socialism. Dennis Tate correctly identifies the Eleventh Plenum, a 1965 meeting of the Central Committee of the ruling party in which Wolf participated, as the turning point for her relationship with the East German state. The second part of this chapter will examine the Eleventh Plenum as an example of the GDR regime's forceful insistence on the role of literature in a Socialist society and its attempts to tie economic problems to politically errant works of art.

In the aftermath of the Plenum, peer reviews written amidst the difficult process of publishing Wolf's 1968 novel *Nachdenken über Christa T.* establish that ensuring an unambiguous ideological message was the reviewers' chief concern, despite near universal appreciation of the novel's artistic quality and its decidedly modern narrative strategies, especially compared to Wolf's earlier work. *Nachdenken über Christa T.* represented a major shift for the intersection of fictional prose and autobiography due to the use of a first person singular perspective, yet the "signposts of fictionality" of the novel suggest that typification and generalization are still operating to lend a pedagogical dimension to the work.[104] Thus Tate's claim that the novel and Wolf's new poetic theory that governed it "marked a definitive break with the principles of socialist realism" seems too strong.[105] This chapter will demonstrate a continuous development in Wolf's conception of the aesthetic theory from Wolf's early years as a student exposed to a relatively broad canon of Socialist Realism, through her relatively conservative early works that nonetheless show a specifically German version of Socialist Realism, and on to the revolutionary *Christa T.* Even the functional use of autobiographical experience to create a realistic, or "authentic" form of fiction, which would come to define Wolf's adaptation of Socialist Realism, is more apparent in Wolf's early fiction than often acknowledged.

At every turn, Wolf's participation in official culture clearly impacted her literary work and not only in terms of necessary interaction with the state's publishing bodies. Rather, Wolf initial role as a cultural functionary reflected her sense of duty to a Socialist community, which she never lost. Her gradual frustration with the Politburo's hostility towards young people meant

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[104] Cf. Dorrit Cohn, *The Distinction of Fiction*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press: 1999.

[105] Denis Tate, *Shifting Perspectives*, 2.

that she experimented with the form of her work in order to refine a technique that would meet her goals of for literature, goals that were quite in line with the general aims of Socialist Realism.

Christa Wolf as a student and young professional

Christa Wolf's self-recriminatory assessment of her first novel *Moskauer Novelle* ends with a pointed question: what formed a young girl who grew up under the Hitler regime into a stridently committed Socialist author? Finishing her secondary schooling in 1949 at the age of twenty, Christa Ihlenfield joined the SED and began a "Deutsch- und Geschichtestudium" at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena. Having married a classmate, Gerhard Wolf, in 1951, she moved with him to Leipzig, continuing her studies under the eminent literary critic Hans Mayer. This formative course in German literature was certainly shaped by the institutional norms created by the ruling Communist party; however the influence of Mayer, a committed Socialist who nevertheless worked with a broad range international literature, should not be discounted. Indeed, Wolf's years as a student coincided with a raging debate within the newly founded academy of the GDR on the characteristics and proper method of Socialist Realism, a debate continued from before the Second World War by the first generation of Socialist writers and critics from the Germanophone world.

Though many found classics of world literature incongruous with the landscape of the new East Germany, Hans Mayer is an excellent example of a Marxist literary critic who attempted to integrate both the German cultural legacy generally deemed acceptable to Socialism and newer, controversial representatives of "bourgeois modernism" like Kafka, Joyce, and Proust into the literary tradition of the GDR. In the years in which Christa Wolf studied with him, Mayer offered seminars like "Große Romane der Weltliteratur" and "Probleme der modernen

Lyrik," the former of which Wolf certainly took.[106] Writing of his plan for the course to Becher, Mayer said, "Es wäre aber ausschließlich eine Debatte im Rahmen des Seminars, kein 'Festakt' mit 300 Teilnehmern."[107] As confirmed in Jörg Magenau's biography of Christa Wolf, Mayer expected his students to question prevailing judgments of canonical literature as he did: "Mayer versagte [Christa Wolf] die Teilnahme am Oberseminar, da er in der Studentin, die aus Jena gekommen war, eine Parteigängerin des Antipoden Gerhard Scholz vermutete."[108] Mayer was himself explicitly interested in authors of the Classical era and German Realism such as Goethe, Schiller, Büchner, Hauptmann, and Mann.[109] Nevertheless, Wolf's engagement with Mann, Büchner, Hauptmann, and authors of the Romantic like Kleist and Günderrode in the late decades of the GDR suggest that even after her ruminations on the naiveté of relying on her coursework, Mayer's influence might have continued unabated long after she moved past what Magenau calls the "Jenaer Sturm-und-Drang-Auffassungen."[110] When called upon to name her most influential authors, her list as set out in 1966 (Gorky, Anna Seghers, Thomas Mann,

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[106] Jörg Magenau, *Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie*, (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 2003), 57. Wolf presented on Romain Roland's *Jean-Christoph*.

[107] *Briefe an Johannes R. Becher* (09.09.52), 446

[108] Magenau, *Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie*, 57-58.

[109] One contemporary reported in a letter dated the second of September 1945 from Zurich: "Dr. Hans Mayer sprach über Thomas Manns Leben und Werk und zeigte klar seine Entwicklung zum antifaschisten Schriftsteller und Mitkämpfer." "Von Jo Mihaly of Vorstand von dem Schutzverband deutscher Schriftsteller in der Schweiz," *Briefe an Johannes R. Becher*, 173.

[110] Magenau, *Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie*, 58. Hans Mayer did not drop from Wolf's view after she completed her studies: in 1956, her husband Gerhard Wolf accepted and edited a radio report Mayer prepared entitled "Zur Gegenwartslage unserer Literatur" in which he condemned excluding Joyce and Kafka from the GDR. The last-minute censorship of this radio broadcast contributed to G. Wolf's decision to leave his job as culture editor at the radio station. Indeed Mayer's article, which the newspaper "Sonntag" published, was later used as evidence of dissent against its editors Gustav Just and Heinz Zöger, who were condemned along with Walter Janka and Wolfgang Harich in the GDR's show trials of March 1957. Magenau 83-84.

Thomas Wolfe, Aragon) completely forsakes Sturm und Drang Germany and thus, but for Gorky and Mann, the early preoccupations of the GDR official culture.[111]

Christa Wolf's final project as a student suggests that her interests in a German literary canon of Realism extended to the contemporary. In a letter to Johannes Becher dated the first of March 1953 from Leipzig, Wolf explains:

> Ich arbeite augenblicklich an meinem Staatsexamensthema über ‚Das Problem des Realismus in Hans Falladas Erzählungen und Romanen' bei Herrn Professor Hans Mayer, Universität Leipzig. [...] Vor allem benötige ich Informationen über den äußeren Lebenslauf Falladas, u.a. um festzustellen zu können, inwieweit einzelne Episoden und Gestalten aus seinem Werk autobiographische Züge tragen. Ich vermute wohl mit Recht, daß Dr. Granzow im ‚Alpdruck' auf Grund von Falladas Bekanntschaft mit Ihnen entstanden ist? – Natürlich wüßte ich gerne Näheres über Falladas ästhetische Ansichten – beispielweise, ob es Briefe gibt in denen er sich darüber ausspricht –, aber wahrscheinlich hat gerade Fallada sich über seine Kunsttheorie nicht allzu viele Gedanken gemacht. – Interessant wäre mir aber, etwas über die Verbreitung seiner Romane in der Sowjetunion zu erfahren: Welche Bücher sind dort beliebt und warum?[112]

Hans Fallada (1893-1947) was an author who criticized the socio-economic plight of the poor and working class, but remained in Germany during the Second World War, at times negotiating with the Nazi regime. The project described here is one well in keeping with the concerns of the fifties: on the one hand continuing the traditional interest in Socialist aesthetics, and on the other hand coming to terms with the war years and determining what figures could be incorporated into a new Socialist canon. According to Jörg Magenau, Wolf's thesis demonstrated that Fallada's bourgeois mentality damages the realism of his novels: basically, the "problem" Wolf found with Fallada's realism was that it was insufficiently informed by the Socialist

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[111] „Brecht und andere" (1966), *Dimension des Autors* Vol.1, 85.

[112] *Briefe an Johannes R. Becher*, 463-4. Wolf describes Becher's wife's article "Kronzeugen des kleinen Mannes" in "Neues Deutschland" 5.2.52 as "sehr nützlich." She also asks if Becher knows in which year "Trinker" was written.

worldview.[113] Wolf's argument reflects Fallada's tainted status in the GDR as insufficiently anti-Fascist during the Nazi era. At the same time, her interest in the correspondence between Fallada's biography and his novels foreshadows Wolf's later ideas of a writing process that transforms an author's personal experience into art.

A student's thesis is not only a statement of a particular argument, but also a demonstration of the ability to meet the expectations of the intellectual community she wishes to join. Christa Wolf's thesis reflects the debate carried on in the fifties amongst intellectuals regarding which German authors should be inducted into a canon of Socialist Realist literature, as described in the previous chapter. According to Magenau, Wolf's adviser Hans Mayer rejected her wish to work on contemporary GDR literature and instead suggested she work on Fallada. As we shall see below, the *Diplomarbeit* was not only in its topic, but also in its conclusions a reflection of the official culture of the GDR. Only after she graduated would Wolf be able to pursue her desire to comment on contemporary literature, with quite interesting results.

As is apparent from its table of contents (reproduced in appendix 2.1 with the kind permission of Gerhard Wolf), Wolf's thesis dwelt on the contemporary need to analyze a given text's consciousness of materialist history. With phrases like "literarisches Erbe," "Zeitalter des Imperialismus," and "vorfaschistische Gesellschaftsromane" Wolf was clearly working with the vocabulary of the newly founded GDR state, which sought to establish itself as the legitimate inheritor of a highly regarded literary heritage, now properly understood with the new ideological lens of anti-Fascist Socialism. Demonstrating the prevalent belief in the social function of literature, Wolf essentially claimed that Fallada was unable to grasp the underlying class conflict behind many of the problems he portrayed, and therefore was unable to offer the

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[113] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 58.

reader the proper teleological solution to said problems. This failure constituted an aesthetic one, as Wolf wrote:

> Er [Fallada] stenographiert mit sklavischer Unterwürfigkeit, was er sieht und hört, schmeckt, riecht und fühlt; er wagt es nicht, auszuwählen, weil er für eine solche Auswahl keine Maßstäbe kennt; er hofft, auf diese Art um die Entscheidung, was er für wesentlich hält, herumzukommen, und erreicht doch nur, daß das Unwesentliche in den meisten seiner Bücher das Wesentlich überwuchert. Das ist eine Folge der Nichtanerkennung objektiver Gesetze in der Wirklichkeit. [...] In diesen Romanen erstreckt sich seine Unmittelbarkeit in der Gestaltung ganz auf das Innenleben der bzw. des Helden, aus dessen Perspektive der Leser gezwungen wird alles zu sehen.[114]

This dismissal of Fallada's attempts at realism shows much in common with Georg Lukács' criticism of modern authors like Joyce. Indeed Wolf later described her thesis as written "im Geiste der Realismusauffassung von Lukács,"[115] a statement further borne out by a look at the sources she listed in her bibliography.

A teacher's eye on Wolf's bibliography might well find it suspect: it lists many sources that are not directly cited in her work. Aside from Hans Fallada, in the body of her text of seventy-six pages, Wolf most frequently quotes Marx and Lenin, approximately ten times, compared to one quotation of Johannes R. Becher's afterword to *Der Alpdruck,* and one quotation of Eduard Bernstein. Her bibliography, by contrast, lists no less than eight essays by Lukács published in collections by the Aufbau Verlag between 1946 and 1952. Certainly the spirit (as Wolf later put it) of Lukács' opinions on realism permeates the thesis, but the lack of direct quotation suggests that she may have absorbed it rather superficially. Her bibliography

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[114] Christa Wolf, „Das Problem des Realismus in Hans Falladas Erzählungen und Romanen" (Unpublished Diplomarbeit available at Archiv der Akademie der Künste in Signatur Wolf, Christa 827) 56-57. My thanks to Gerhard Wolf for his kind permission to excerpt the diploma thesis. Christa Wolf's engaging prose is on display here and elsewhere in the work, for example in the short introductory biography of Fallada she offers at the beginning of the work.

[115] Christa Wolf, "Die Dauerspannung beim Schreiben," Gespräch mit Helmut Böttinger, 22.3.2000, *Werke* XII, 710.

includes the exchange between Anna Seghers and Georg Lukács published in 1938, which became a key text in working through disagreements regarding Socialist Realist aesthetics. Yet Wolf makes no judgment between the two positions represented in the letters, though they touch on matters pertinent to her thesis such as "literarische Erbe" and the true enemy to be addressed in proper Socialist literature. Wolf's bibliography can best be read as a list of the texts expected to guide her work. Her unnuanced incorporation of the categories and agenda of well-regarded critics like Lukács suggests that his work held high currency in the academic community she moved in and re-examination of these trends was not desirable in a student.

Christa Wolf as a Young Literary Critic and Budding Author

As is apparent from appendix 2.2, which lists the publications in newspapers and literary journals that have been left out of her collected works, after she graduated Wolf joined the GDR's cultural sphere as a literary critic and not as an author. She put her desire to shape the new literature created under the auspices of the GDR to use as a reviewer for *Neue deutsche Literatur*, the official journal of the GDR's Writers' Union, eventually rising to the office of the editor from May 1958 to November 1959. Wolf also served as head lector at the Verlag Neues Leben, though her time there was short, as she moved to Halle with Gerhard in 1959.[116]

Wolf's literary reviews of the fifties are overwhelmingly critical, often of a perceived lack of Party spirit as expressed in Wolf's diploma thesis. Eventually though, she began to express her rejection of certain formulaic aspects demanded by conservative conceptions

[116] While below I discuss the reviews Wolf published in these years there remain at least five texts I have not yet reviewed: Wolf's testimonials for novels submitted for publication by Verlag Neues Leben, where she briefly served as chief editor. Given that Wolf was recommending each of these for publication they would necessarily be more positive than her other reviews.

Socialist Realism. Wolf's dismissal of rigid plot lines and flat characters suggests a vision of literature with a noticeable degree of separation from the Soviet novel.[117]

Wolf's first two publications show rather direct connections to the themes of her *Diplomarbeit*, but also her standards for an authentic art of storytelling. Her very first publication appeared before she graduated, in 1952, in the party newspaper *Neues Deutschland*. It shares the title of one of the last sections of her thesis, on contemporary popular literature and addresses E. R. Greulich, mentioned briefly in the thesis. However, Wolf's publication takes the form of a review, and rather than address its *Parteilichkeit*, Wolf complains the novel's melodramatic plot is plagued with unbelievable coincidences.

> Es löst sich alles immer überraschend schnell in Wohlgefallen auf, Spannung wird nur äußerlich erzeugt, mit Mitteln, die öfter an altes Unterhaltungsliteraturroman-Klischee erinnern. Darum wird auch der Zufall ziemlich oft bemüht, weil eben die Handlung von außen aufgebaut ist und sich nicht aus den Charakteren der Handlungsträger ergibt. [...] Zusammengefaßt: Greulich versteht es noch nicht, seine theoretische Erkenntnisse in die künstlerische Tat umzusetzen.[118]

Wolf's comments on the construction of the plot of Greulich's place it within the larger context of clichés of its genre. At the same time, as the title of the piece suggests, Greulich's novel serves as a representative of a number of recent publications that include desirably Socialist political messages, but fail in terms of artistry, as Wolf puts it.

Wolf's second article, published in 1954 in the official journal of the Writers' Union, *Neue deutsche Literatur* (1954), shares the general progression of her *Diplomarbeit*, from general remarks on the nature of "bourgeois" and proper literature, and then criticism of a specific work. Unlike in her dissertation, she chooses a recent publication to review, written after

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[117] See Katerina Clark's definition, discussed in my previous chapter.

[118] Christa Wolf, "Um den neuen Unterhaltungsliteratur: Zu E. R. Greulichs Roman 'Geheimes Tagebuch,'" *Neues Deutschland*, (July 20, 1952, Jahrgang 7 Ausgabe 169), 6.

the founding of the GDR. Wolf states her disappointment that the author has not yet overcome the problems of earlier authors of realist prose. Bourgeois authors, we are told, were unable to escape the thousand ties to their historical context, which meant that their ideological perspective was flawed. "In unserer Republik aber ist es ihnen leicht gemacht, sich zu orientieren."[119] Some encouraging signs are visible in recent literature, according to Wolf, though Ehm Welk's recent attempt to portray the "deutsche Revolution 1918" is rather a failure. I excerpt a longer quotation below to convey the boorish Party language of this particular article, largely omitted from Wolf's first review:

> Sehr zweifelhaft scheint schon die Motivierung der Themenwahl des Romans durch den Autor selbst: Um beiden, Revolutionären und Reaktionären „das spätere Heroisieren ihrer Taten" unmöglich zu machen, greift er zur Feder. Ist das nun wirklich die wesentliche Problemstellung, die sich einem Schriftsteller angesichts der Geschichte unseres Volkes in den letzten Jahrzehnten aufdrängen muß? Ist es möglich, sich nach dieser verhängnisvollen Entwicklung, die unser Volk durch eigene Schuld an den Rand des Abgrunds führte, gegenüber einem Ereignis wie der Novemberrevolution als Schriftsteller in die Rolle des unbeteiligten Chronisten zurückzuziehen, und sich größter ‚Objektivität' zu befleißigen? Diese Frage stellen, heißt sie beantworten.
>
> Hier wäre eine Gelegenheit gewesen, dem deutschen Volk zu zeigen, daß es an bestimmten Wendepunkten seiner Geschichte die Entscheidung über sein Schicksal selbst in der Hand hält, daß es an ihm liegt, das Steuer herumzureißen und mit Klugheit und Geschick den künftigen Kurs festzulegen. Der deutschen Arbeiterklasse könnte ein solcher Roman Selbstvertrauen und Stolz auf ihre revolutionäre Tradition einflößen, er könnte uns allen helfen, ein wichtiges Stück deutscher Gesichte richtig erkennen zu lernen durch die Erschütterung, die von den heißen Kämpfen der Menschen eines solchen Buches auf den Leser überspringt.
>
> Statt dessen überläßt Ehm Welk sich und uns dem Zufall.[120]

Wolf's rhetorical questions of the first paragraph above are certainly those of the ideologue preparing a lesson on the proper form and content of literature in a Socialist society, which the second paragraph delivers. By means of this text, claims Wolf, the German people could have

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[119] Christa Wolf, "Probleme der zeitgenössischen Gesellschaftsromans: Bemerkungen zu dem Roman ‚Im Morgennebel' von Ehm Welk," *Neue deutsche Literatur* (1/1954), 142.

[120] Christa Wolf, "Probleme der zeitgenössischen Gesellschaftsromans," *NDL*, 146.

been educated about a failed opportunity and even still this revolutionary tradition could have inspired in them confidence and pride. Welk's desire to avoid heroicizing and conversely demonizing historical characters maintains a realistic quality that is not compatible with Socialist Realism. Wolf goes on to criticize Welk for relying on his personal experience of the events and failing to properly form his narrative into the lesson she outlined in the above quotation. As in her first article, coincidence and chance are judged improper plot mechanisms. Here though, the historical context and its political significance led Wolf to denigrate the construction of the plot in ideological terms.

Yet if it seemed as if once she joined the Writers' Union's staff, Wolf wrote only doctrinaire reviews, her third article reiterates some points from her first published piece: that stultifying cliché was not welcome in a novel. In a critique somewhat reminiscent of Lukács' essay on Willi Bredel discussed in the previous chapter, Wolf inveighs against the kind of master narratives with stock figures that were prized in Socialist Realism at the time. Complaining of a novel written and published quickly with the aim of "ein Loch im Themenplan [des Verlags – NGB] zu stopfen," Wolf says:

> Überhaupt, das Personal der Romane, die sich mit dem „Thema" *LPG* [landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaften = nationalized farm collectives-NGB] beschäftigen, das ist ein trauriges Kapitel. [...] Wer die Gelegenheit hatte, eine Reihe von Manuskripten, Fabeln und Exposés durchzusehen, die den gleichen Stoff gestalten wollen (gibt es überhaupt gleiche Stoffe in der Literatur?), der erstickt von der Gleichförmigkeit, mit der fast überall bestimmten Figuren als unerläßliche Requisiten immer wieder auftreten.[121]

The characters Wolf derides are typical bourgeois villains and Socialist heroes. Her critique here is essentially that Werner Reinowski's new novel *Die Welt muß unser sein* failed to achieve

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[121] Christ Wolf, „Komplikationen aber keine Konflikte" (Rezension Werner Reinowski, *Diese Welt muß unser sein*, Mitteldeutscher Verlag: Halle, 1953), *Neue deutsch Literatur* (6/1954), 141-142.

realism. While Reinowski's novel might well fit the criteria of Socialist Realism as the regime propagated it, the novel did not meet Wolf's understanding of a Socialist form of realism. Although Wolf eventually named her understanding of a Socialist realism "subjective authenticity" in 1974, she had long insisted on representing an authenticity of contemporary experience. While the official definition of Socialist Realism advocated relating to readers' everyday problems, few authors inventively executed such a goal. As Wolf's early work as a literary critic shows, she strongly believed in conforming to official Socialist expectations, but also had strong opinion on what constituted an authentic realism.

Given her review's unswervingly dogmatic view of the purpose of literature and the proper political view of history and the present, it is small wonder that she eventually attracted the attention of the SED central committee. Wolf's numerous reproaches of Welk seem answered in her first narrative *Moskauer Novelle*, in which she explicitly addresses both the Communist and Nazi past of the Germans. Wolf's reproach of Welk for failing to craft a main character who develops to maturity (in class consciousness we assume) similarly reflects her incorporation of Socialist Realist norms such as the positive hero into both her criticism, and her early novels. These similarities only underscore the departure *Nachdenken über Christa T.* represents.

IM Margarete and Wolf's Commitment to an Institutionalized Cultural Sphere

Wolf's role as a *geheime Informator* (GI) and later *inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* (IM) of the East German Secret Police, known as Staatssicherheit, or Stasi, became a flashpoint in the nineties for a society that was coming to terms with the repressive system of the GDR. Careful examination of the files speaks a great deal to the East German state's powers of ideological enforcement, and further to the political atmosphere in which Wolf moved early in her career.

Wolf's collaboration with the Stasi finds little to no representation in the literature she published during the years of the GDR, despite her extensive treatment of the subject in works published later such as *Was bleibt* (1990) and *Stadt der Engel* (2010). Speculating on the impact of her collaboration with the Stasi on Wolf's literature of the late fifties and sixties, or its impact on her professional success within the state, is beyond the scope of this study. Still, the fact that she cooperated demonstrates a commitment to the philosophy of a German Socialist state comparable to the orthodox ideology of her early novels.[122] A brief overview of the files seems appropriate given the often bombastic accounts of Wolf's collaboration prevalent in the feuilletons of the *Wende* era.[123]

A portion of Wolf's Stasi file was published under her initiative in 1993 in a volume called *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf: Zerrspiegel und Dialog* edited by Hermann Vinke. Vinke writes that the publication represents the entirety of the file, "komplett insoweit, wie Daten- und Personenschutz-Bestimmungen dies zulassen, also mit fehlenden Seiten und Schwärzungen von Namen, die von der Gauck-Behörde vorgenommen wurden."[124] The Gauck-Behörde refers to the Bundesbeauftragte für die Stasi-Unterlagen when it was led by Joachim Gauck. Though researchers are allowed to read the uncensored files (like those of Christa Wolf), publication is limited to copies that have been expunged of the names of those still under "Personenschutz"

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[122] Cf. the case of Hermann Kant, an author identified by Wolfgang Emmerich among others as the ultimate Staatsdichter. Karl Corino (ed.), *Die Akte Kant: IM 'Martin,' die Stasi und die Literatur in Ost und West*, Reinbek bei Hamberg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1995. By way of contrast see Reiner Kunze, *Deckname "Lyrik:" Eine Dokumentation*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1990.

[123] Cf.: Thomas Anz (ed.), *"Es geht nicht um Christa Wolf:" Der Literaturstreit im Vereinten Deutschland*, München: edition spangenberg, 1991.

[124] Hermann Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf: Zerrspiegel und Dialog, Eine Dokumentation*, (Hamburg: Luchterhand Verlag, 1993), 11.

because they are alive and did not hold public office. Certain types of files, such as the protocols written of telephone conversations and confiscated mail, are not allowed publication unless permission is granted by both parties of the correspondence. Christa Wolf's files are a collection of the work of units of the Stasi located in Berlin, Halle, and Potsdam, reflecting Wolf's location at the time of surveillance. Some repetition of files occurs when the work of other units was requested and forwarded to another unit. Lastly, the files include a dutiful collection of press clippings from West German media about Wolf, not included in Vinke's volume. The above stated limitations begin to explain how a file of more than a thousand pages was reduced to three hundred and thirty-seven. However, as Vinke's volume seeks to address the debate that arose after Wolf's collaboration came to light, it contains many articles by prominent literature critics and some Wolf's correspondence in the year 1991-1993.

Despite protests against the reductionist nature of the categories, Stasi files are often referred to as *Täterakten* and *Opferakten* (literally "perpetrator" and "victim" files). The terms do not quite mean what we might expect, since they originate in the Stasi perspective. The former denotes the subject was an informant to the Stasi, the latter that the subject was a focus of an *Operativer Vorgang* (OV), in other words information was collected in the interest of potentially prosecuting the individual. Christa Wolf's *Täterakte* consist of two volumes, a total of 164 pages, and her *Opferakte* consist of about forty-two volumes and many thousands of pages. Christa Wolf was investigated with the intention of prosecution in an OV codenamed Döppelzüngler, which was opened in 1968, and also focused on her husband, Gerhard Wolf. Vinke's volume contains the entirety Wolf's "Täterakte" available for publication, though a tiny fraction of the "Opferakte" is reproduced.

The two volumes of Wolf's *Täterakte* are a personnel file (134 pages), which covers 1955-1964, and an *Arbeitsvorgang* file (thirty pages), which documents the actual meetings of Stasi officers with Wolf, 1959-1962. The personnel file contains an employment questionnaire completed by Wolf in Berlin, 1955, including two attempts at free-form descriptions she wrote about her life of about a page each. The file also contains letters of reference from colleagues from Wolf's time as a student, from the publishing house "Neues Leben", from the Writers' Union, as well reports by other IMs, 1955-1958. Other documents in the personnel file include reports from Stasi officers concerning Wolf's family, plans to recruit her as an informer, and the *Anwerbungsbericht* itself describing the events of March 24th, 1959. Wolf's promotion to editor and her move to a publishing house around this time also find their reflection in her file.[125]

Christa Wolf's recruitment by the Stasi is noteworthy in that it proceeded on the grounds of an interest in controlling the GDR's cultural milieu. After questioning Wolf regarding her connections with a West German "Gegner der DDR,"

> [d]as Gespräch wurde dann übergeleitet auf die Probleme in der NDL [Neue Deutsche Literatur, where Wolf was editor at the time –NGB], ihre dortige Aufgaben, die kadermäßige Situation und Fragen des Gegenwartsschaffens unserer Schriftsteller. Dabei wurde über solche Fragen wie der ‚harten Schreibweise' und ihre Vertreter, die subjektivistisch und zum Teil revisionistisch die Gegenwartsprobleme unserer Literatur behandeln. In diesen Zusammenhang wurde über die große Gefahr dieser Tentenzen [sic] gesprochen, wobei besonders festgestellt wurde, daß noch eine beträchtliche Anzahl von Schriftstellern nicht auf den Boden der Kulturpolitik von Partei und Regierung stehen und zweifelsohne für feindlich Tentenzen [sic] in der Ideologie ein offenes Ohr haben. Dabei fielen solche Namen von der Kandidaten [Wolf] wie XXXX und andere. Dabei wurde der Kandidatin aufgezeigt, wie der Gegner versucht auf unsere DDR-Schriftsteller Einfluß zu nehmen und besonders solche heraussucht, deren Schaffen in der letzten Zeit Gegenstand der öffentlichen Kritik war. Für die Kandidatin waren diese Fragen von Interesse, auch da wo geschildert wurde, wie republikflüchtige Schriftsteller vom Gegner zum Renegaten gemacht wurden. Dabei wurde ihr nachgewiesen, welche großen Aufgaben die Sicherheitsorgane der DDR haben.[126]

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[125] BStU BV Hle AIM 3627162 Band 1

[126] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 89-90.

The Cold War rhetoric of opposition is extended here to the cultural scene with specific examples of dangerous individuals and literary styles. Wolf was convinced enough by the officers, who showed their identification badges at the beginning of the meeting, to take on a codename for herself, Margarete (her middle name), and agree to the need to meet in so-called "konspirative Wohnungen," (in other words a private location operated by the Stasi). Wolf was not required to sign any kind of declaration or contract regarding her work, nor is there any evidence of remuneration.

In the course of her collaboration Wolf submitted only one written document, on July 1st, 1959. It is a report on the author Walter Kaufmann that she wrote by hand and signed with her codename. Regarding her reports, Vinke claims that:

> In der Praxis lieferte sie jedoch das Gegenteil dessen, was die Stasi von ihr erwartete: generelle Einschätzungen, Urteile, wie sie sie auch in ihren Literaturkritiken öffentlich aussprach, die zudem von Vorsicht und Zurückhaltung geprägt waren – damit kann kein Spitzelapparat der Welt etwas anfangen.[127]

My discussion of Wolf's literary criticism above confirms that Wolf was indeed sharp in her publications. It is true that Wolf's report to the Stasi on Kaufmann generally remains neutral on matters of his personal life and reserves opinion for his ideological position in his work. After summarizing what she knows of Kaufmann's activities during the Second World War in a neutral style, Wolf writes that she finds him a "konsequenter Antifascist und Antiimperialist." Yet he does not always find his place in the GDR because he was not present during its early stage of development before 1955. She briefly describes what she knows of his personal relations, though without political overtones. She then write "Ich halte XXXXXXXX für nicht talentiert. Sein Talent ist gefährdet durch mangelhafte theoretisches Kenntnis. Er ist, scheint mir,

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[127] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 12.

zu sehr Impressionen ausgesetzt; manchmal vermißt man daher die pendantliche [sic] Durchdringung der Stoffe." Lastly Wolf describes Kaufmann's professional contacts in terms of publishing his work.[128] Wolf's assessment of Kaufmann as untalented is hardly actionable grounds for prosecution. And yet her evaluation certainly identifies him as not entirely suited to the cultural landscape of the GDR, despite some shared views.

An anonymous article published in *Der Spiegel* on January 25th, 1993, shortly after Wolf's own "Auskunft" regarding her work with the Stasi, offers the most detailed presentation of this report to the public. Wolf is described as ready and willing to help the Stasi, even directing their attention to authors not in line with the Party's Kulturpolitik, naming Wolfgang Schreyer. The article's tone is certainly one of condemnation, but also fascination with Wolf's perceived reversal of roles in the GDR. "Verwunderlich bleibt, daß eine, wie sich jetzt zeigt, so überaus angepaßte, ängstliche Opportunistin wie sie zu einer Schlüsselfigur des Friedens und der Hoffnung, wenn schon nicht des Widerstands werden konnte."[129] In my opinion, this assessment of Wolf is flawed in its use of the word "opportunist." I do not believe Wolf reported on her colleagues in order to better her career position: I think she gave her opinions in the interest of shaping the GDR cultural sphere as she saw fit. It is unclear what Wolf knew of the potential consequences of the Stasi's action against writers. In any case, Wolf saw fit judge the suitability of certain individuals' support in the GDR. At the same time, the *Spiegel* article's insistence that, contrary to her own assertion, Wolf did offer personal as well as professional information to the

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[128] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 125-126.

[129] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 156. The story of how newspaper journalists were allowed access to Wolf's *Täterakte*, which she herself was not allowed to see, is a puzzling question that raises its own legal issues.

Stasi is well warranted. Still, the apparent end of Wolf's willingness to fully cooperate with the secret police does seem to be borne out in further documentation.

According to Vinke, the editor of *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf: Zerrspiegel und Dialog,* after Wolf moved from Berlin to Halle in 1959, "[i]n Halle hat sie gelegentlich Aussprachen mit dem offiziell auftretenden Stasi-Leutnant Richter, der für den Mitteldeutscher Verlag zuständig war."[130] According to the two reports from Halle, Wolf spoke generally about the situation in the Writers' Union in Halle and that of the publishing house. Her information was considered inactionable by the Stasi, and her refusal to continue meeting in "konspirative Wohnungen" was noted. Apparently because of this uncooperative behavior, when she moved again to Kleinmachow in 1962 Wolf was not further contacted by the Stasi.[131]

Based on the files kept by the Stasi, Wolf's collaboration in the years 1959-1962 was oriented around her work within the community of authors in the GDR. In this earlier phase of her career, her future seemed to be that of an author and functionary, especially considering her candidacy for the ZK. Still, to take the rhetoric in the officers' reports as Wolf's as the *Spiegel* article does is imprecise; other sources such as the above discussed reviews and the protocol of meetings of the Writers' Union, where Wolf criticized her peers to their faces, better reflect what one might hope to learn about Wolf in her *Täterakte*, namely detailed statements of her views of current cultural and political issues.[132] Nevertheless, Wolf's willingness to accept that policing the cultural sphere, quite literally, was a necessary facet of a Socialist state demonstrates her acceptance of the institutionalization of art according to ideology.

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[130] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 17.

[131] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 101.

[132] See for example the Aktennotiz describing a meeting in which Wolf and her husband roundly criticized a colleague's work as not Socialist. Vinke, *Akteneinsicht*, 79.

Coming of Age with the GDR: Wolf's early novels as exemplary Socialist Realism

Much as she demanded of the authors she criticized in her published reviews, Wolf believed a commitment to the Socialist state entailed addressing *some* of the problems of the GDR, although certainly not such taboo issues as censorship, or the growing exclusion of political opposition. Wolf's first book-length text, *Moskauer Novelle*, centers on the problems of the newborn German nation and its rising generation in dealing with the legacy of guilt for Second World War. At the same time it offers a blindly positive take on the Soviet Union. Her second book, *Der geteilte Himmel* gives air to problems of mass immigration from East to West Germany: however it preserves some formulaic stereotypes of what Katerina Clark terms the "production novel." Still, the necessity of including these very recent issues was a central tenet of Wolf's early and enduring understanding of Socialist Realism.

The pedagogical role of literature set out by official doctrine, that artistic works should set an example to the masses, is a goal that Wolf's literature never abandoned, though the focus of her work turned radically inward in the latter half of the sixties. As evidenced by her contribution at the Second Bitterfeld Conference in 1964, Wolf had a very specific audience in mind, and it was a young German one. At the conference, she favorably compared GDR literature to its West German counterpart because of the relevance of East German literature to the reader's day-to-day problems, thereby implicitly praising the central tenet of Socialist Realism as a pedagogical tool.

> Man wundert sich über unsere Themen. […] die wirklichen, im täglichen Leben entstehenden Konflikte junger Leute, den Alltag von Millionen Menschen, das gewaltige Thema des Arbeiters in einer hochentwickelten Industriegesellschaft, die Kampfaktionen, die außer ihrem politischen Gehalt eine große moralische Bedeutung für jeden einzelnen ihrer Teilnehmer haben. […] Diese jungen Leute, in denen wie in jedem Menschen das

> Bedürfnis ist, sich selbst in Kunst ausgedrückt zu sehen, fühlen sich […] von der westdeutschen Literatur im Stich gelassen.[133]

While emphasizing the apparently universal experiences of everyday life in industrialized society, Wolf clearly has a reader in mind who is highly engaged in public life and is thinking about issues like the structure of society, the effect of economy on daily life, a reader who can extrapolate from art to reality. This description of what literature is meant to achieve complements the official definition of Socialist Realism presented in 1934, adding an immediacy to the issues to be addressed, an addition inspired by Walter Ulbricht cultural policy.

Wolf's ideas of literature helping the general population to an intellectual kind of self-reflection and eventually self-consciousness complemented the philosophical aspirations of Socialist Realism. However, they did not address the more practical aims of the Politburo in championing the "Bitterfelder Weg."

Model Socialist author that she was, Christa Wolf put this ideal into practice while serving as an editor at the Mitteldeutscher publishing house in the industrial center of Halle. There, Wolf also completed a study residency at the VEB wagon factory Ammendorf from 1960 to 1961, the positive details of which are featured prominently in *Der geteilte Himmel*.[134] In fact I will argue below that this novel represented an appropriation of a popular product of the "schreibende Arbeiter," the *Brigadetagebuch*, "das über alltägliche Vorkommnisse im Produktionsprozeß geführt wurde, aber thematisch oft weit darüber hinausgriff, indem es die

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[133] Wolf, *Dimension des Autors*, 385.

[134] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 338. Negative observations of her time in the factory are recorded in pertinent entries of Wolf's journalistic text *Ein Tag im Jahr,* but are largely lacking in the novel.

Beziehungen der Menschen untereinander, von einer Brigade zur anderen usw. darstellte."[135] As described in the previous chapter, the development of a national literature from this genre had failed. But it was precisely this extremely tall order that Wolf's novel came quite close to filling, as demonstrated by the acclaim it won her from the state.

Wolf made her aesthetic statement at the Second Bitterfeld Conference one year after the publication of *Der geteilte Himmel*, and it provides a good means of measuring that novel, as well as to some degree the earlier *Moskauer Novelle*. The latter faithfully matches the central tenets of Socialist Realism as set out in its first official formulation, the 1934 Soviet Writers' Congress. While highly praising the Soviet Union, it also features a positive hero in Pawel, and even a positive heroine in Vera, both of whom sacrifice their potential romance in order to fulfill more practical social roles. *Moskauer Novelle* also ruminates on the Second World War with a decisively Socialist worldview, heroizing the Red army and German Communist resistance, thus recapitulating the Anti-fascist founding myth of the German Democratic Republic, as Julia Hell has revealed.[136]

By contrast, Wolf's novel *Der geteilte Himmel* is less about coming to terms with the past than speaking to the contemporary problems of young people, as she would urge at the Second Bitterfelder Conference. As a result, the heroine of *Der geteilte Himmel* is younger than that of *Moskauer Novelle*, without a family of her own, and still searching for her place in the new society developing around her. Legitimation of the East German state plays a large role in both narratives. In *Moskauer Novelle* legitimacy is conferred on the young German Communists traveling to the capital of the Soviet Union by the proponents of Communism in the Second

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[135] Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, 140.

[136] Hell, *Post-Fascist Fantasies*, 138-197.

World War, the Red Army, and the German Communist resistance, thereby adding young East Germans to a proud and stoic tradition. In *Der geteilte Himmel* the debate over the opportunities of East Germany versus the West is more sharply brought into focus as a younger protagonist finds Socialist maturity and a homeland in the GDR.

Set in 1959 and published in 1961, *Moskauer Novelle* is an acutely contemporary love song to the Soviet Union as the role model of a functioning Socialist state and the spiritual homeland of all dedicated Communists. The novella is, to use Wolf's own word, "trakathaft" in that the protagonist's experience of the Soviet Union as the successful modern metropolis Moscow, supported by rosy rural agricultural communities, represents the imperial power as a veritable utopia. Aside from glowing descriptions of the Soviet Union, the representation of the older generation of German Communists sets up a background of the pain of persecution during the Nazi era that culminates in the joy of finally reaching the true motherland. Ideological brotherhood allows the younger Germans to feel a connection to a country that is portrayed as the legitimate, moral way forward, with the blessing of the idolized German Communist resistance.

Half love story and half travelogue, Wolf's novella features Moscow prominently and in a very positive light. Shortly after arrival, the young protagonist Vera enthusiastically explains to the romantic hero of the novel, Pawel, that she imagined Moscow as narrow and grey, finding it instead "[l]ichter Ocker, fast gelb. Und Rosa."[137] Walking the streets that first night, she is impressed by the energy of the place, as even at midnight she crosses the path of people carrying

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[137] Christa Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," *Die Lust, gekannt zu sein: Erzählungen 1960-1980*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2008), 10.

full grocery bags.[138] Even more than the aesthetic and material success of the city, the narrator describes Moscow as the center of a great, culturally diverse nation: "Weiße, gelbliche, braune Gesichter. Alle Völker des großes Landes trafen sich hier, in alle Richtungen fuhren die Abgesandten Moskaus."[139] Even the widely derided "Plattenbau" Soviet architecture, constructed of prefabricated concrete slabs, is integrated into the traditional landscape of a city "summend von Lebensfreude und Schaffendrang, von spitztürmigen Kirchen, Zwiebelkuppeln, bunten Klöstern und den mächtigen weißen Hochhäusern überragt."[140] Despite the presence of older architecture in the church spires and onion domes, the modernity of the city is reiterated by the Germans' visits to new hospitals.[141]

Vera's Russian host Pawel cuts a decent profile as the positive hero described by Clark as essential to Soviet novels.[142] Calm and thoughtful, he almost immediately rekindles the feelings Vera felt for him in 1945, when he courted her at the respectful distance required, given the ban on romantic relations between Russian soldiers and Germans. Vera dwells on her own identity as a refugee at the time, empowered by traveling with Pawel to finally see the insides of the farmers' homes, rather than the barns in which she stayed.[143] Wolf has been criticized for completely ignoring the *Russenschreck* of the time, which some have noted was not unreasonably based on fears of rape and other violence. In Wolf's account of the end of World

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[138] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 15.

[139] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 17.

[140] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 20.

[141] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 21.

[142] Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 46.

[143] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 14.

War Two, the Soviet Army is the victim of an apparently wholly unwarranted arson attack on the soldiers' barracks by local hooligans, which seriously injures Pawel, preventing him from fulfilling his dream of becoming a doctor.[144] This is a source of guilt for Vera, who fails to warn her beau despite suspecting the perpetrators. Pawel magnanimously bears no grudge, reassuring Vera that the war is now ancient history.[145] By the calculus of the novella and Socialist Realist morality, this debt is repaid when Vera and Pawel sacrifice their feelings for one another so that Pawel can stay with his wife and take advantage of a prestigious position teaching German. Thus duty to productively serve one's country outweighs the summer flush of love that Vera and Pawel unexpectedly re-discover.

Perhaps the capstone of this unswervingly positive take on the Soviet Union is the day trip the group takes to a collective farm outside Kiev. Considering the recent East German history of the *Bodenreform* in 1945 and *Zwangskollektivierung* of agricultural land, which began in 1952 with the Soviet Union as role model, this visit could have spoken to current issues in the GDR. The trip is the result of pure coincidence, according to the plot of *Moskauer Novelle*, because Pawel meets a fellow highly decorated officer from the Red Army, who now directs the collective farm, by chance in a market in Kiev. Three hours away from Kiev over bad roads, this location represents an unofficially organized excursion to the remote, rural area that is so often neglected by large governments. Yet here too energetic happiness reigns, as the only activity at the farm on the day of the visit is a celebration in recognition of the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the collective, in 1929. To a German audience experiencing the problems of the new policy of collectivization, this picture is likely meant to be one of the happy future to come.

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[144] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 42-45.

[145] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 30.

The celebration is an informal one that honors the traditional activities of the farm. It is as Vera heartily applauds the recognition of a young girl her age with an award (apparently for being the most productive from the milking team) that she is accepted amongst the girls as if she were one of them.[146] This all-important acceptance is not merely a question of these authentically Socialist citizens recognizing their German comrades, but also of overcoming the recent vicious past between the two nations.

The goal of the trip was already addressed back in Moscow as Vera's host at a local hospital pointedly brought Vera to toast a glass of vodka with another female doctor, a girl of about Vera's age. As their glasses clink Vera is told that Germans hanged the girl's father presumably during the war, and presumably for his Communist convictions. Repeating it to herself later, Vera thinks in confusion:

> Die Deutschen haben ihren Vater erhängt. Mein Vater war dabei. Und ich sitze an ihrem Tisch, lasse mich bewirten, lache und trinke. Ihren Vater haben sie erhängt. Tausend Meter weiter lief der Schützgraben. Der Sibirier hat ein MG bedient. Sein Arm ist steif. Das Haus war zerstört. Nach Hause fahren, dachte Vera. Heute noch. Keinem von ihnen mehr ins Gesicht sehen müssen. Nie mehr hierherkommen. Allein sein. Allein bleiben.[147]

Chosen as representatives of the new goodwill between the Germans and Russians, Vera and the young Russian doctor were both quite impacted by the Second World War. Vera's sense of discomfort stems from her ambivalent relationship with her father, whom she loved and comforted when he expressed his remorse, even though in her thoughts criticized and rejected his choices.[148] While Vera's father serves a purpose in representing the typical German of the Second World War (though perhaps not so typical in that he finds the ideological error in his

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[146] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 60.

[147] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 27.

[148] The novella specifically ties Vera's condemnation of her father to new perspectives brought by her joining the party and studying at university. Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 30.

service), the novella overtly provides a replacement role model for the young protagonist, namely the older generation of German Communists who experienced the Second World War as victim, rather than perpetrator. This generation is represented by Walter Kernten, the organizer of the trip from the German side. Walter's trip to Moscow is more of a long-awaited homecoming than the exciting new adventure it proves for the young people.

At once exhilarated and challenged, Vera relies on Walter throughout the trip to ground her. On the first night, Walter offers his protection to Vera. " 'Ich werde wie eine Mutter zu dir sein.'" Walter laughs. "'Wie Mutter und Vater.'" answers Vera.[149] That this character should act as father and mother to the protagonist suggests a political as well as personal relationship, considering Walter's unmistakable representation of the old generation of Communists. Julia Hell has analyzed this substitution of the parental authority at length. In terms of the political significance of standing in Red Square for the old Communist, Vera formulates it in her thoughts as follows:

> Ihr Blick fiel auf Walter. Er stand allein, gebückt, alt geworden und blickte auf den roten Stern am Spaßkiturm. Vera kannte das Leben dieses Mann und begriff: Das war sein Tag. Walter Kernten war eines der ersten Mitglieder des Spartakusbundes; in den zwanziger Jahren trug er die graue Uniform des Roten Frontkämpfers; die Faschisten jagten ihn und fingen ihn ein. Hochverrat. Sieben Jahre Zuchthaus. KZ. In den letzten Kriegsjahren Zwangsarbeit in der Rüstung. Illegale Arbeit unter den Augen der Gestapo. In Demonstrationen, Aufständen, Verhören und Zuchthausjahren war ihm das unbewegliche Gesicht gewachsen, das er heute noch trug. Jetzt war es durchscheinend, sein Inneres drang nach außen. Jeder konnte es sehen.[150]

Clearly Walter epitomizes an idealized composite of the Communist resistance to Fascism: an agitator for a worker's revolution in the precarious Weimar years and an unbending saboteur of the Nazi regime. That this man should stand in as father and mother to Vera is made all the more

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[149] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 13.

[150] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 20.

important by the scene narrated at the *kolchoz*, which comes after Vera considers her own father's role in the unjust war. There Walter bonds with the young people around him based on their singing of a Communist song that he too sang with comrades. Beyond the implicit connection between the Communist partisans and the youths of the day, the narrator claims that Walter decision to share the story with those present is a sign of friendship. It happens at the end of the visit to the collective farm:

> In die Stille nach dem Gesang sagte Walter: ‚Einmal, vor zwanzig Jahren haben wir das auch gesungen. Ich war erst seit ein paar Wochen in einem neuen KZ. Schwer, Genossen aufzuspüren. Aber dann fanden wir uns doch, fünf aus unserem Block. Wir hockten eng beieinander auf dem kahlen Fußboden. Draußen hielt ein zuverlässiger Parteiloser Wache. Alle zwei Minuten sah einer von uns nach, ob er noch da war. Wir hatten nur zehn Minuten.
> Wir mußten flüßtern. Paul, den sie später umgebracht haben, wurde zum Sekretär gewählt. Wir besprachen die nächsten Aufgaben – alles flüsternd _ und legten fest, wann wir uns treffen wollten. Am Schluß sagte Paul: ‚Wir singen jetzt unser Lied: Brüder, zur Sonne, zur Freiheit!' Wir standen auf und rückten noch enger zusammen. Paul gab das Zeichen. Wir sangen lautlos. Es war dunkel. Wir sahen nicht, wie wir die Münder bewegten. Aber der Atmen der Genossen schlug die ins Gesicht. Mancher weinte. In unserem Kopf dröhnte das tonlose Lied, als sängen Tausende.'
> [...]
> Walter, der sonst so schweigsam war, hatte mit seiner Geschichte jeden von ihnen zu seinem Freund erklärt.[151]

Thus according to *Moskauer Novelle*, the cast of characters of the Second World War included soldiers like Vera's father, who fought (rather successfully, and perhaps in that way honorably) for ideologically unsound purposes; young Russian soldiers like Pawel, who disproved the stereotype of the violent Red Army; true believers like Walter; and the faceless mass of the rest, who must include all others who were persecuted, displaced, or murdered amongst them Vera herself, a self-identified refugee. Against this backdrop of the Second World War, the trip to Moscow revels in the ascendancy of Communism as the way forward from this dark past. The familial substitute created for the protagonist is explicitly rooted in ideological commitment.

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[151] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 63.

While several flashbacks to the immediate post-World War Two Russian occupation of Germany punctuate the text, on the whole, *Moskauer Novelle* is uncomplicated in terms of narrative time and perspective. The novella begins with the protagonist's arrival in Moscow, and ends as she boards the plane headed back home. The episodic representation of the past centers on tableaus of Vera and Pawel in 1945, as well as other representative events of earlier decades such as the founding of the collectivized farm outside Kiev in 1929, the internment of Communists in concentration camps in 1939, and Vera's father's service on the Eastern Front and eventual death after his return. [152] The future following the trip to Moscow is temporarily uncertain due to the rekindled passion between Vera and Pawel. However, closure is provided at the end as both return to their respective spouses and careers as though fulfilling duties.

The moral and ideological import of the novel is conveyed by a rather conventional narrative structure, featuring an omniscient narrator, though the narrative is generally focalized through Vera, the protagonist of the story, occasionally revealing her inner monologue in third or first person. The third person narrator occasionally takes in the larger scene in a way that is more authoritative than Vera's often emotional perspective. This narrative structure is commonplace, used in a range of classics by authors from Gorky and Chernyshevsky to Büchner and Mann.

Aside from the similarity in Vera's position as a refugee working as a kind of secretary for the mayor in a small town in the province of Mecklenburg in 1945, Jörg Magenau notes that Wolf has admitted little else from the novella's plot to be autobiographical.[153] Still, this early self-identification as a refugee, which would become a key episode or "medallion" as Wolf calls it, marks the subject as one that occupied Wolf quite literally from the beginning of her career as

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[152] Wolf, "Moskauer Novelle," 14, 63.

[153] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 114-115.

a writer on to "Lesen und Schreiben" and *Kindheitsmuster*. Magenau explains that Wolf's two trips to Moscow in 1957 and 1959, both of which she took as a delegate of the Writers' Union, provided the basis of the travelogue aspect of the text. The description of Moscow analyzed above in which the protagonist's gaze moves over the city landscape is quite similar to that of Wolf's diary from June 1957, Magenau notes, and in this way perhaps an autobiographical snapshot of the young literary critic's enthusiasm.[154] He also describes what Wolf failed to include from her personal experience:

> Immerhin verriet sie, dass sie die *Moskauer Novelle* im Anschluss an ihre zweite Moskaureise 1959 geschrieben habe, als sie vom III. Schriftstellerkongress berichtete. Da zeigte ihr der Delegierte Willi Bredel die Lubljanka und das Hotel Lux, in dem einst die Emigranten gewohnt hatten, ständig in Gefahr, in der Atmosphäre allgegenwärtiger Denunziation verhaftet zu werden.[155]

It is unclear how the young author integrated the German-Soviet history of the Stalinist purges into what she would later describe as a "Versöhnungsmission."[156] Rather, as I have pointed out above, the burden of the German aggression on the younger generation was the chief tension she chose to represent. The GDR regime's uncompromising loyalty to the Soviet Union (described in the previous chapter) explains its enthusiasm for the novella and its author.

The most striking departure from Wolf's own biography, aside from the romantic *Seitensprung*, is her decision to make the German delegates doctors instead of authors. Perhaps doctors, with their technical know-how, seemed a more appropriate role model for workers, or one with whom a greater majority could identify as opposed to authors. Scientists are not always

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[154] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 116.

[155] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 115.

[156] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 117.

portrayed in a positive light: Manfred the chemist from Wolf's novel *Der geteilte Himmel* is frustrated by GDR bureaucracy and uninterested in his fiancée's factory work.

Perhaps a novella in the sense of Goethe's "unerhörte Begebenheit," *Moskauer Novelle* portrays a kind of intervention into the protagonist Vera's daily life in East Germany. Leaving behind her husband and small son, she confronts a potential lover from a decade ago, ultimately laying the painful past to rest and moving forward to the Socialist paradigm. Wolf's first text is in many ways the story of a lost young adulthood. While the breathless young love of yore is not exactly recovered, the loss is sanctified as necessary to the life path of a dutiful Socialist.

While *Der geteilte Himmel* also retrospectively reflects on a love sacrificed, the story of the protagonist Rita epitomizes a Socialist coming of age story, rather than a brief contemplative departure from normal life. Displaced and fatherless because of the Second World War, Rita, the protagonist of *Der geteilte Himmel*, leaves her office job in her small town to study education, but her work in a factory during her summer vacations proves life changing. As Sonja Hilziner has described, Wolf began the text in 1960, in reaction to recently announced Bitterfelder Weg, a concept of literature that emphasized factory life as a motif in GDR literature. Wolf and her husband Gerhard moved to the industrial city of Halle (also the location of the Mitteldeutscher Verlag for which Gerhard and Christa worked) and lead a circle of worker-authors in the state-owned train car factory in Ammendorf. After working through a few drafts, the building of the Berlin Wall in August of 1961 gave Wolf a central plot device.[157] As the Wall makes compromise between the two sides impossible, personal relations lead Rita to consider moving to West Germany, though ultimately she decides to remain in the East. The novel ends on a hopeful note, suggesting Rita has overcome her love for the haughty lover who left her and the GDR, and

[157] Christa Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel: Erzählung Mit einem Kommentar vom Sonja Hilzinger*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2014), 287, 289, 295.

that she is now certain that her friendliness and ability to love have not been exhausted by her loss.

This second major prose text, published in 1963, offers an unrealistically positive view of such recent events as the experiences of the younger generation as German soldiers in Soviet prisoner of war camps, university experience, and the struggle to establish a career in the GDR's mismanaged economic system. In Wolf's novel, two of the most inspiring pro-East characters were positively influenced by their experiences in the "Antifa" or anti-Fascist re-education camps and not a word is spoken of the death by famine and overwork so many found there.[158] In the realm of schooling, Wolf's text offers three descriptions of the common occurrence of public humiliation and ex-matriculation from a degree program on the basis of ideologically impure actions or statements.[159] In two of the three cases in *Der geteilte Himmel*, the catastrophe of unfair punishment is miraculously averted, while the third vaguely validates the expulsion. This last character, partner to the protagonist's lover Manfred who fled to the West, is the one who writes to Rita to describe how if only Manfred would have stayed another eight months, the

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[158] Rolf Meternagel, the fatherly carpenter who inspires his work company in the factory describes his experience in a work camp on page 73. Ernst Wendland, Rita's ideologically upright suitor, describes his experience in an AntiFa camp on page 134. Not long after the work Alexsandr Solzhenitzn laid bare the suffering in such camps in *One Day in the Life of Denis Ivanovich* and *Gulag Archipelago.* Franz Fühmann was also a prisoner of such a camp. According to Sonja Hilzinger's notes, German emigrants such as Friedrich Wolf, Erich Weinert, and Willi Bredl work as teachers in such camps. Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 328.

[159] Manfred, Rita's lover who eventually leaves for the West, got into trouble over a poetry club that enjoyed less-regime friendly work of Bertholt Brecht. He was saved by the secretaries of FDJ, the obligatory youth organization in the GDR, none other than Ernst Wendland and Rudi Schwabe. Rita herself experiences the trouble of a friend whose family leaves for the West. The young woman at first acts to cover up their flight, thereby technically abetting criminals. A rousing address by another friendly Party official, Schwarzenbach, admonishes her accusers "'Sorgen Sie lieber dafür, daß eine Sigrid merkt: Für sie ist die Partei da, was ihr auch passiert. – Für wen sonst, wenn nicht für sie.'" At least the narrator admits the "Ohne Schwarzenbach hätte alles anders auslaufen können." Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 165-166.

frustration which caused him to leave would have been alleviated. Having persevered after his expulsion from university, the young man succeeds in implementing his academic work in a factory, as Manfred could not.[160]

On the other hand, certain real problems, such as those that stymied production in factories, and a quite ambivalently described older generation are presented in such detail as to have unleashed the ire of some cultural functionaries.[161] Rolf Meternagel, the fatherly character who became a committed communist after his time in a Soviet prisoner of war camp, perseveres despite unfair demotion and eventually stirs his work brigade to fame. He notes that half the inefficiency in the factory is due to deficits in material and organization. He seeks to address the other half, for which the brigade is directly responsible.[162] Eventually, his irrepressible enthusiasm simply burns out. When Rita returns from her hospitalization she finds him forced to bed from serious illness. Listening to his wife's complaints about his overzealousness, Rita's attempts to describe Meternagel's accomplishments are unequal to the task of justification.[163] This perspective of the housewife is a standard character type in the novel: not a single older woman is inspired by the Socialist cause. Invariably they support their husbands, and the men's morality is definitive for the couple. The variation amongst the men of the older generation is significant, especially compared to the previous schemata of *Moskauer Novelle*. There, the range of character was limited to the protagonist's father, a former soldier, who recognized his error

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[160] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 172-173.

[161] Sonja Hilzinger provides an overview of criticism and canonization. Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 305-310. Cf. Martin Reso, Der geteilte Himmel *und seine Kritiker.* Halle: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1965.

[162] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 93-94.

[163] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 252.

and an inspirational comrade, who suffered through the concentration camps to realize a Socialist society. *Der geteilte Himmel* repeatedly emphasizes the utter hatred Manfred feels for his father. Herr Herrfurth has only ever sought to move with the powerful, but his sheer lack of commitment to any ideology disgusts his son, who looks upon his uniform for the Communist party with almost as much loathing as that of his Nazi trappings.[164]

Another element of criticism, apparently unremarked by contemporary critics, was Wolf's descriptions of industrial pollution. The theme of governmental disregard for such a health hazard was crucial for later protest movements in the GDR and of course Wolf's acclaimed *Störfall: Nachrichten eines Tages* about the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. In *Der geteilte Himmel* not only is this aspect of the cityscape described in negative terms, but hints are made to the impact on human health. As Rita, the village girl newly arrived in medium sized industrial city Halle describes the situation:

> Jedes Kind könnte hier die Richtung des Windes nach dem vorherrschenden Geruch bestimmen: Chemie oder Malzkaffee oder Braunkohle. Über allem diese Dunstglocke, Industrieabgase, sie sich schwer atmen. Die Himmelsrichtungen bestimmte man hier nach Schornsteinsilhouetten der großen Chemiebetriebe, die wie Festungen im Vorfeld der Stadt lagen. Das alles ist noch nicht alt, keine hundert Jahre. Nicht mal das zerstreute, durch Dreck und Ruß gefilterte Licht über dieser Landschaft ist alt: ein, zwei Generationen vielleicht.[165]

This quotation shows a certain ambivalence in ascribing blame for the condition. At first, by referring to the cardinal directions and the associated smells, it seems as though the industrial marks are accepted as natural landmarks. The second sentence though, which offers more negative terms than the smells of the previous sentence for what in English could be called smog (Dunstglocke, Industrieabgase). The exact translations could refer to a thinner airborne quality,

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[164] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 55-59.

[165] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 35.

such as steam or gas rather than smog, however, it is clear that these atmospheric additions make it hard to breathe. The following three sentences somewhat ambivalently attempt to name when the cityscape achieved this quality, which from the perspective of a country girl is distinctly negative, as later descriptions of the city re-emphasize.[166] The timeline offered by the narrator for the industrial development is certainly less than a hundred years, but perhaps only as little as one or two generations. This range begins with the Prussian empire and includes the Weimar Republic, Nazi empire and perhaps even hints at the culpability of the current government. The latter is suggested by the description of a river in the poor people's neighborhood, known to Manfred from childhood, which has become more useful and less friendly: it smells terribly, poisoned by the chemical factory.[167] Indeed even when Rita returns from her mental breakdown, having decided to remain in the East on principle, she describes the city as "rußerfüllte" in other words sooty or grimy, with a distinct reference to the product of burning coal.[168] In the West "Sie [Rita] atmete sich leicht, viel zu leicht. Man spürte sie nicht in den Lungen. Man wollte immer noch nachatmen, um nicht zu ersticken in diesem Nichts. Diese Luft verweis jeden auf sich selbst, außerstande, Freude oder Schmerz von einem zum anderen leiten."[169] Here, perhaps the metaphorical meaning of air quality is more apt. Wolf's description of the West as somehow too easy and a place where everything is meaningless struck Anna Seghers as unconvincing, though

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[166] Cf. Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 67 and 118 for further descriptions of the city, which include the pollution. By contrast Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 135 describes the clarity of the air in Rita's village and her longing for it.

[167] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 36.

[168] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 240.

[169] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, 235.

she praised the emotional quality of the story. A comparison with Seghers' own style is a fitting entry to *Der geteilte Himmel*'s narrative structure.

In terms of narrative perspective, the structure of third-person omniscience lends itself to presenting the thoughts of a number of characters, though those of our heroine are gently lent supremacy. The inner monologue serves to heighten the reader's connection with the protagonist, though at the same time the narrator's commentary and judgments of other characters provide authoritative distance from the main character. This structure makes the hackneyed turns of plot seem more natural. Consider this excerpt from an evening with Rita, her fiancé Manfred, and Wendland, the manager from the factory:

> Ernst Wendland hielt sich neben Rita. „Was macht die Brigade Meternagel?" fragte er. Rita mußte lachen, weil er so genau wußte, wer in ihrer Brigade den Ton angab. Sie blickte sich nach Manfred um, ob er nicht hören könnte, und senkte unwillkürlich die Stimme, als gehe das, was sie jetzt besprachen, nur sie und Wendland an.[170]

As this quotation shows, the novel relies on personal relationships to establish the protagonist's constellation of priorities. Here, Rita is brought to an intimate exchange of ideas on the work of the factory from which she instinctively excludes Manfred, her lover who eventually moves to West Germany. Wendland is often used as a mouthpiece for the ideological rationale of the work at the factory, though Rita clearly finds his conviction persuasively honest. Even the work at the factory, which one might expect to be mechanized in such a way to exclude personal relations, is actually quite reliant on the personalities of the workers. The drama of meeting production goals is mostly couched in these kinds of terms of personal commitment. For example, the decision to attempt to regain recognition as the most productive team is supported by members of Rita's team dramatically signing on to a pledge to install a higher number of train windows within each

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[170] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 107.

shift.[171] Though it is not at all clear just how productive Rita herself is during her shifts, her self-identification as one of the team proves more unshakable than Rita's relationship with Manfred.

Thus *Der geteilte Himmel* perfectly meets Ulbricht's demand for a Socialist literature that would increase productivity, and also falls into Clark's schemata of basic types of Soviet novels, most clearly the production novel, but also the historical novel. The historical event of the building of the Berlin Wall represents a crucial plot device, not only forcing a definitive reckoning between the lovers, but also looking back at the tense atmosphere preceding the Wall's construction, namely the causes and consequences of Republikflucht (illegally leaving East Germany, usually for West Germany). According to Dennis Tate, Wolf was "subjected […] to breathtaking political accusations of displaying a 'dekadente Lebensauffassung' in her novel and of providing too sympathetic a portrait of Manfred, the ex-lover of her heroine, who is judged to have shown 'unverbesserlichen bürgerlichen Individualismus' in leaving the GDR to pursue a career in the West."[172]

Wolf's early years as a writer show on the one hand great enthusiasm for the Socialist project, and on the other hand a willingness to formally experiment to find the best means to convey this enthusiasm to a broad audience, as demanded by Socialist Realism. Wolf's work shows devotion to positive engagement with contemporary German political issues key to the new Socialist state such as the legacy of the Second World War, the parental role of the Soviet Union to the GDR, and the wave of *Republikflucht* to the west. In terms of literary form, Wolf's first three texts vary the most in terms of the narrative perspective, as the use of inner monolog increases from one work to the next, finally culminating in a first-person narrator in *Nachdenken*

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[171] Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel,* 114-116.

[172] Tate, *Shifting Perspective*, 197.

über Christa T. Parallel to the increasing use of inner monolog, Wolf gradually added contrast within her Socialist utopias, moving from the relentlessly positive *Moskauer Novelle* to the more nuanced *Der geteilte Himmel* to *Nachdenken über Christa T*., which presents a complicated protagonist rife with flaws. Choosing non-conformity as a role model for this novel had everything to do with the Eleventh Plenum of the Central Committee of the ruling Socialist Unity Party, immediately after which Wolf began work on the novel.[173]

Part 2 "Döppelzüngler:" Institutional Rejection of Christa Wolf's Socialist Realism

According to SED Party statutes, all members and candidates of the ZK (Central Committee of the SED) were expected to attend the Eleventh Plenum, and therefore, as a candidate, Christa Wolf was required to attend.[174] This particular meeting of the ZK proved to be more focused on the cultural atmosphere of the GDR than previous such meetings. Two films were screened as mandatory evening events, and Erich Honecker, the future General Secretary of the Party, issued a scathing attack on these and other recent works as representative of a larger failure of the cultural scene. According to Honecker, this failure would be corrected by preventing the distribution of works deemed ideologically flawed, and withdrawing support for certain authors and artists, thereby effectively blacklisting them. According to Günter Agde, Honecker also implied a sinister connection between direct criticism of the government and the portrayal of conflict in recent publications and productions that portrayed contemporary life in

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[173] Christa Wolf, "Erinnerungsbericht," in *Kahlschlag: Das 11. Plenum des ZK der SED 1965, Studien und Dokument*, (Berlin: Aufbau, 2000), 349.

[174] Günter Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 186. According to the chronology created by Vinke (Akteneinsicht 338), Wolf was a candidate of the ZK from the VI. to the VII. Parteitag of the SED, in other words from 1963 to 1967.

the GDR. Honecker went so far as to imply a criminal plot to undermine the East German state by poisoning its youth.[175] Already a minority amongst representatives of the industrial sectors, Wolf was one of the few representatives of the cultural scene to attempt to answer the charges, despite overt requests from Honecker and Ulbricht for an explanation. Wolf's response was mostly notable for the falling out it precipitated between herself and the Politburo, as it does not seem to have had much persuasive impact. Wolf's statement clarified her position as an ally of cultural freedom, a dangerous proposition in terms of the ZK's attempts to preserve its monopoly of control.

Walter Ulbricht laid bare the Plenum's aim to place the blame on the cultural productions of the East German authors for rising dissatisfaction with the SED dictatorship and the continuing failure to achieve economic success equal to that of West Germany. As he put it, "Als in der DDR durch bestimmte Gruppen der Jugend und durch die sogenannte Beat-Bewegung Excesse sichtbar waren, […], haben wir uns die Frage gestellt: Was sind die Ursachen? […] wir haben nicht begonnen mit einer Diskussion über Jugendfragen, sondern mit der Aussprache über das Thema: Wie haben die leitenden Organe und die Erzieher gewirkt?"[176] Ulbricht makes clear that by "Erzieher" he means television, literature, university professors and other cultural representatives, who, according to the ideology of Socialist Realism, are responsible for educating the masses regarding Socialism. Honecker returns to the broader party line when he explains that not only is the morality of young people at risk, but that "in Durchführung des Perspektivplans bis 1970 und des Volkswirtschaftsplan für 1966 die weitere Entwicklung des geistig-kulturellen Lebens und die Organisierung einer sinnvollen, anregenden Freizeit zu einer

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[175] Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 189.

[176] Walter Ulbricht, "Zwischenrede," *Kahlschlag*, 253.

wichtigen Aufgabe der Partei, des Staates und der gesellschaftlichen Organisationen wird."[177] As Honecker and Ulbricht see it, the state supports a culture for the worker's free time that would further inspire his commitment to maximum productivity in the factory. Indeed Honecker expands on the point that GDR culture is funded by the government for the enjoyment of the people at large when he condemns critics of the regime for re-paying the support they received with "spießbürgerlichen Skeptizismus," for which there is no place in the GDR.[178]

A conspiracy to propagate fatally infectious ideas from America was undermining the Party's careful plan to educate its citizens to form a clean and enlightened society, according to Honecker. "Er vermutete, dass die Verschwörer 'auf jede Leitun[g]stätigkeit verzichten und Freiheit für Nihilismus, Halbanarchie, Pornographie und andere Methoden der amerikanischen Lebensweise gewähren wollen.'"[179] Honecker, and many of those who spoke after him, named specific individuals as representatives or promoters of these foreign influences, including Wolf Biermann, Stefan Heym, Volker Braun, and Robert Havemann.[180]

Christa Wolf's contribution to the debate defended the writers of the GDR and even the youth of the GDR in general terms, and criticized the demands of the ZK. Wolf insisted that East Germany's Writers' Union "ist nicht in der Gefahr, in irgendeiner Form zu einem Petöfi-Klub zu werden und ich halte es nicht für richtig, diesen Begriff bei jeder sich dafür bietenden

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[177] Erich Honecker, "Bericht des Politbüros," *Kahlschlag*, 238.

[178] Honecker, "Bericht des Politbüros," *Kahlschlag*, 243.

[179] Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 189.

[180] Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 186. Honecke himself „kritisierte heftig einige DEFA-Filme, die Romane *Rummelplatz* von Werner Bräunig und *Sternschnuppenwünsche* von Gerd Bieker, den die FDJ-Tageszeitung *Junge Welt* in Fortsetzungen abdruckte, den Jugendsender DT-64 und allgemein die Beat-Musik. Allen diesen Beispielen maß Honecker zu, die moralische Haltung der DDR-Jugend und ihren DDR-Patriotismus zu gefährden.

Gelegenheit in die Debatte zu werfen."[181] She stated that she and her fellow comrades in the executive committee (Vorstand) of the DSV felt themselves part of the GDR and the Party, such that accusations that an author's work is anti-socialist were extremely serious and best dealt with by a discussion with and within the Schriftstellerverband.[182] Wolf claimed that the present conference was seeking to negate that which had been openly desired at the First Bitterfeld Conference, a claim she repeated as evident in hindsight in her Erinnerungsbericht of the Plenum forty years later.[183] Regarding the problems of the GDR's youth, Wolf cited the overwhelming response to her novel (she presumably meant *Der geteilte Himmel* as it was more popular than *Moskauer Novelle*) as giving rise to many meetings with the GDR's young people. "Diese Menschen, die hier bei uns gewachsen sind, sind reif dafür, solche Literatur, wie sie in den letzten Jahren entstand, zu begreifen, richtig zu verstehen und durch ihre Anregungen, durch ihre Kritik und dadurch, wie sie sich dazu verhalten, weiterzuentwickeln."[184] Aside from this positive evaluation of the rising generation, Wolf reminded her audience that the Writers' Union had met with Ulbricht, and developed a plan to drive the influence of the Beats from young people's lives.[185]

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[181] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 256. Fröhlich had mentioned the Petöfi Club, by which he referred to meetings amongst the Hungarian intelligentsia including Georg Lukács to discuss grievances. These were seen as fomenting the Hungarian revolt of 1956 and as a dangerous model of cultural agents run amok. Sándor Petöfi (1823-1889) was a Hungarian nationalist and revolutionary poet.

[182] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 256, 263-264.

[183] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 264, 351.

[184] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 257.

[185] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 262.

At the Eleventh Plenum, Wolf also directly defended several individuals, both from the East and West. Of Bräunig's uncompleted novel, a center of criticism, most likely because of its unflattering portrayal of the state uranium mining company Wismuth, she said, "ich kenne die Konzeption und weiß, daß es kein Wismuthroman, sondern der Roman der Entwicklung eines jungen Menschen ist, der die tiefsten Tiefen durch die Hilfe der Partei überwindet und zu einem klaren Mensch wird, der heute ganz bei uns ist."[186] Wolf also spoke quite forcefully of Peter Weiss, calling him "eine der großen literarischen Potenzen und einer der ehrlichsten und anständigsten Schriftsteller, die ich in unsere Zeit kenne" on the merit of his plays *Marat/Sade* and *Die Ermittlung*, which had recently been produced in the GDR.[187] She was defending him from Harald Hauser and Günter Görlich, who had attacked his recently published "10 Arbeitspunkte eines Autors in der geteilten Welt."[188] Stressing the need for the GDR to profit from the work of like-minded West Germans, she also noted the recent work of Hochmuth and Walser, which addressed that which, according to Wolf, was taboo in the West only three years ago, *Kommunistenstoff*, which she believed demonstrated the GDR's potential for "Ausstrahlung" (broadcasting beyond its borders). In this capacity Wolf expanded on her statement at the Second Bitterfelder Conference to the effect that her travels to West Germany had brought about meaningful dialogue with West German youth, who were genuinely appreciative of her honest support of the Berlin Wall and the East German state in general.[189]

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[186] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 263.

[187] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 261.

[188] "Betr. Information über ein Theaterstück von Manfred Bieler (Beschluss des Politbüros vom 9.11.65)," *Kahlschlag*, 202.

[189] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 259-60.

Wolf's counter to the accusations of the ZK, despite her specific examples, did little to gain the respect of the party functionaries: in fact it only marked her as an outsider. According to Agde, Wolf and the two other representatives of the cultural sphere who spoke in defense of recent cultural activity were frequently interrupted by unprofessional exclamations, mostly from the Politburo.[190]

> Sie wurden nicht zu Ende angehört und ignoriert. Etliche nachfolgende Redner fabulierten weiter an der Komplott-Theorie. [...] Die anonymen, kollektiven Reaktionen des Auditoriums (Beifall, Lachen) wirkten darauf zurück: immerhin war die Manövriermasse – der Menge der Gäste wegen – rund doppelt so stark wie bei sonstigen ZK-Tagungen. Das Lächerlichmachen und schadenfreudigen Witzchenreißen auf Kosten anderer und die prompte lautstarke Quittung der Anwesenden animierten nachfolgende Redner zu Wiederholung und Übersteigerung dieser Muster.[191]

Though Wolf recalls an aide to Kurt Hager congratulating her on averting a crisis in the cultural scene, Agde describes the fallout of the Plenum as including drastic restrictions or even complete blacklisting of certain authors.[192] For Wolf personally it meant the end of her candidacy to membership of the ZK and a distribution ban on the film *Fräulein Schmetterling*, directed by Konrad Wolf, with a screenplay written by Christa and Gerhard Wolf, and Kurt Bathel (Kuba), though it was already in post-production.[193]

Wolf's outspoken frustration with the situation was recorded by the Stasi agents, who watched her back home in Potsdam after the Eleventh Plenum. According to one report, at a meeting of the Potsdam chapter of the Writers' Union, organized to address the problems raised by Ulbricht, Wolf refused to take a position, saying "Ich will mit der ganzen Sache nichts zu tun,

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[190] Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 190.

[191] Agde, "Das Plenum: Eine Rekonstruktion," *Kahlschlag*, 190, 187.

[192] Wolf, "Diskussionsbeitrag," *Kahlschlag*, 346. Kurt Hager was leader of the ideological commission of the Politburo beginning in 1963.

[193] Wolf "Erinnerungsbericht," *Kahlschlag*, 352-354.

warum soll ich immer Stellung nehmen und Sündenbock sein."[194] The Stasi also quote Wolf saying at a party meeting of the Writers' Union in Potsdam: "Wenn die Kulturpolitik so weitergeht, wie sie sich gegenwärtig abzeichnet, kann ich meine ganzen Manuskripte ebenfalls verbrennen."[195] In retrospect, Wolf claimed that the Eleventh Plenum was ultimately a reaction to the economic reality of the GDR, explaining, "wir hatten ganz deutlich das Gefühl, daß die Kunst‚diskussion' als Ersatz für die Auseinandersetzung mit den Problemen, die sich in der ökonomischen und gesellschaftlich-politischen Realität der DDR angehäuft hatten, dienen mußte, daß wir als Sündenbock herhalten sollten."[196] Indeed, it does seem clear in retrospect that the ZK sought to solve its economic and political problems in the most cost effective way by changing public attitude through education (or indoctrination) rather than changing the material situation.

Economic motivation aside, the Eleventh Plenum created a litany of criticism of contemporary literature that would define the objections raised against the protagonist of Wolf's break-through novel, *Nachdenken über Christa T.* The central objection was that the protagonist of Wolf's third novel represented a negative hero who is ultimately stifled by life in the GDR. Other objections included claims that Wolf's modernist style diluted the pedagogic potential of the novel, or encouraged an emphasis on subjectivity that was antithetical to the values of Socialist society.

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[194] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 23

[195] Vinke, *Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf*, 23

[196] Wolf, "Erinnerungsbericht," *Kahlschlag*, 347. Wolf generalized her own experience to specifically address the concerns of the ZK, implicitly taking on the role of representative of the cultural sphere.

Wolf's *Nachdenken über Christa T.* renewed the debate on subjectivity in Socialist Realism

The publication history of *Nachdenken über Christa T.* is an excellent example of East German censorship; stumbling blocks were inserted at just about every stage where ideological objections to the text could thwart publication. The process also demonstrated the extent to which representatives from all parts of the cultural scene were drawn into the process, as well as the expectations of the author's compliance in essentially censoring her own work. This is because rather than having a censor simply strike sections or reject the entire text, revision was expected at several stages.

According to Wolf, she considered the novel complete enough to submit the manuscript to the Mitteldeutscher Publishing House in March of 1967.[197] In East Germany, when a publishing house decided to accept a manuscript, it submitted it to a bureau of the Culture Ministry called the Hauptverwaltung Verlage und Buchhandlung (HV). This bureau was the main means of censorship within the GDR, and would refuse to provide a *Druckgenehmigung*, or permission for printing, to those texts it found ideologically unacceptable. As Robert Darnton has shown in the case of other authors such as Volker Braun, it was common for representatives of the bureau to negotiate with high-profile authors over alterations to a text in ways that would make it suitable for publication.[198] In Wolf's case, even before the manuscript was officially submitted to the HV, the publishing house, perhaps uneasy due to the negative nature of the *Arbeitsgutachten* commissioned, informally passed the manuscript to a representative at the HV for his opinion. In a meeting with Wolf he insisted on large-scale alterations, which according to

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[197] Christa Wolf, "Brief anläßlich der Ausstellung 'Zensur in der DDR'" in Angela Drescher (Ed.), *Dokumentation zu Christa Wolf* „Nachdenken über Christa T.," (Hamburg: Luchterhand Verlag, 1991), 25.

[198] Robert Darnton, *Berlin Journal 1989-1990*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1991. Cf. 188-203.

Wolf, she rejected, though she did add a final chapter to the manuscript.[199] The manuscript was then submitted to the HV with an additional two *Außengutachten*, and approved in April 1968. Delivery of the first edition of 15,000 copies was to be March 1969.[200] An excerpt of the novel was published in *Sinn and Form* Volume 2/1968 and Wolf gave several readings.[201] In October of 1968, however, the Culture Department of the ZK decided the novel should be publically criticized by reviews placed in the nation's literary journals, and in November of 1968 further inquiry into the matter resulted in the interruption of the production of the book in December of 1968.[202] Nevertheless, the copies of the partial printing were delivered in early 1969, though another temporary halt of delivery occurred before the VI. Schriftsteller Kongress in May 1969.[203] By this point, members of the ZK, the Writers' Union, and even the publisher who had previously worked to secure the printing of the novel gave speeches and published articles in which they criticized the novel. A second printing of the novel was not approved until 1972.

The many detractors of *Nachdenken über Christa T.* mainly criticized the novel for portraying a non-conformist anti-heroine who seemed unable to flourish in what was clearly

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[199] Wolf, "Brief anläßlich der Ausstellung 'Zensur in der DDR,'" *Dokumentation*, 26.

[200] Though the identity of the authors of three of the four reviews submitted in the process of gaining permission to print has been excluded in Drescher's collection of documents, it would seem that the first two "Arbeitsgutachten" were completed by readers at the publishing house, whereas the latter two, one of which was by an editor of the another publishing house, Aufbau Verlag, were not employees of the Mitteldeutscher Verlag.

[201] Drescher, "Vorwort," *Dokumentation*, 14-15.

[202] "Protokoll der Sektorenleiterberatung, Abteilung Kultur des ZK," 25. Oktober und 25. November 1968 in Drescher, *Dokumentation*, 56-57.

[203] Wolf, "Brief anläßlich der Ausstellung 'Zensur in der DDR'" in Drescher, *Dokumentation*, 26-27. As Wolf describes, the West German edition published by Luchterhand appeared according to contract in early 1969, which, aside from the press coverage of a book not widely available in the East, made the novel into a story in both East and West Germany.

modern-day East Germany and whose death seemed a consequence of her surroundings, rather than of chance. Critics often analyzed the success of this character as a generalization of a personality, because Socialist Realism called for positive heroes that represented an idealized generalization of the common man. The author of the first *Arbeitsgutachten* went so far as to suggest Wolf wished to subvert this convention, which, given her criticism of stereotypical characters in 1957, could be a fair claim. He or she wrote of the eponymous protagonist Christa T.: "Vielmehr ist sie kein Vorbild, d.h. als Beispiel 'nicht beispielhaft' und also kaum 'verwendbar'. Man hat den Eindruck, daß sich hinter dieser Auffassung eine Polemik vom Typischen und vom Menschenbild im sozialistischen Realismus verbirgt oder auch nicht verbirgt."[204] In the context of the Eleventh Plenum, the danger of a non-conformist anti-heroine was especially great, especially given Christa T.'s death at 35, which many critics suggested symbolized the death of a youthful misfit. Christa T. could well be a role model for disaffected youth, encouraging disorientation, the first *Arbeitsgutachter* feared, rather than bringing them under control as the state's leaders sought.

The representative from the HV and the first two *Arbeitsgutachter* suggested that the narrator should more explicitly distance herself from Christa T., thereby ensuring the didactic message of the novel by means of the customary objective narrator, in line with what Lukács had suggested. Indeed, the two later *Außengutachter*, as well as the *Verlagsgutachten* signed by Hans Sachs, all claimed that Wolf's addition of the nineteenth chapter significantly quashed the dangerous ambiguity of Christa T.'s character. According to Wolf the chapter was "keineswegs eine 'Entschärfung' des Manuskripts," though because of it the director of the publishing house,

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[204] Erstes Arbeitsgutachten, *Dokumentation*, 32. The second Arbeitsgutachten explicitly calls Christa T. an "anti-Held" while still claiming it achieves "die weltanschauliche Verallgemeinerung der Prototyps." Dokumentation 35.

Sachs, claimed in the application to print *Nachdenken über Christa T.* in 1968 that she had worked diligently at revisions with its editors.[205] Later in 1969, as the printing process was interrupted, Sachs revised his opinion of Wolf, presenting her as unwilling to revise her work sufficiently; he withdrew the application for permission to print her volume of essays *Lesen und Schreiben*.[206]

One persistent criticism of *Nachdenken über Christa T* was of its narrative style as technically adept, but detrimental to the pedagogical function of the text. The second Arbeitsgutachter called the novel "ein sprachkünstliches Meisterwerk," claiming "[d]as Wachstum der Autorin bei der Fähigkeit, seelische Prozesse zu erfassen, ist beachtlich." "Innerlichkeit" (interiority) became a watchword for reviewers, because consistent use of interior monologue was often condemned as presenting an overly subjective perspective incompatible with the pedagogic purpose of Socialist Realism. Detractors found the style confusing. The first *Arbeitsgutacher* tied this back to the uniqueness of the anti-heroine Christa T.:

> Der *innere* Reichtum des Beispielmenschen wird, vielleicht nicht der Absicht, aber doch der Wirkung nach, gegenüber den reichen gesellschaftlichen Menschenmöglichkeiten allzu sehr betont. Die Eigenarten der Erzähltechnik begünstigen eine mehr dem Beeindrucken als dem Erkennen zugeneigte, mehr dem Beeindrucken als dem Durchschauen von gesellschaftlichen Kausalbeziehungen dienende atmosphärische Verdichtung des Erzählgefüges.[207]

The narrative perspective of the novel dangerously emphasizes subjective, individual experiences, rather than the objective, pedagogical tone of an enlightened narrator common in Wolf's earlier work. The second *Arbeitsgutachter* and first *Verlagsgutacher*, Dr. Caspar, focused

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[205] Drescher, "Vorwort" quoting Wolf, *Dokumentation*, 11.

[206] Drescher, "Vorwort," *Dokumentation*, 17.

[207] "Erstes Arbeitsgutachten," *Dokumentation*, 33.

on the reference to reality, clearly taking the first person voice of the text as signaling a new autobiographical turn for the author.

Nachdenken über Christa T. is novel about students and writers that highlights a broad engagement with centuries of literature. The students in Wolf's novels examine the very first extant examples of German literature: the ancient Meerseburger Curses and the *Hildebrandslied*. It is difficult to imagine what lesson of Marxist class conflict might be drawn from such texts, though Gorky had traced the roots of Socialist Realism to magical tales and folklore. As described below, one student prepares a model lesson on Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*. This bourgeois drama of love foiled by class offers a prime opportunity for criticizing hierarchy. Yet Wolf's narrator merely takes the opportunity to comment that the title well describes the student's own love troubles, even though they have nothing to do with class and thus the parallel is not that apt. Later the narrator will use literary allusions to describe Christa T. herself, as she transforms from the enviable author Sophia La Roche to the immoral Madame Bovary. As the novel's non-conformist, Christa T. chooses Theodor Storm (an example of German "poetic realism") for her thesis project and reads Dostoevsky in her free time to discover the "strength of weakness," suggesting both types of realism have their place in her personal canon.

For Dennis Tate, *Nachdenken über Christa T.* is "an exercise in (auto)biographical comparison that seeks to identify what aspects of [Wolf] herself had remained underdeveloped, what personal potential had been lost, by analyzing the differences in upbringing and post-1945 fortunes that marked two lives that ran remarkably parallel in other respects."[208] Aside from the biography of Christa T. that dominates the novel, and the few scarce autobiographical notes of

[208] Tate, *Shifting Perspectives*, 201. Despite his references to as yet unpublicized archival documents that Wolf collected of a certain Christa Tabbert who appears to be the basis of Christa T., Tate appreciates that the character of Christa T. is fictionalized and notes the distance Wolf establishes between her authorial self and the narrator.

major life events of the narrator's life mentioned, Tate is more interested in the narrator's identification of herself with the conformist majority, compared to Christa T.'s accelerated "progress to a sense of self" and most of all he finds remarkable the narrator's story of delayed self-realization, inspired by Christa T.'s apparently natural proclivity.[209] Tate makes an insightful point that it seems to be Christa T.'s writing that inspires the narrator to overcome "die Schwierigkeit 'ich' zu sagen" by quite literally writing in the first person. The experimental nature of the semi-autobiographical first-person prose *Nachdenken über Christa T.* shows a clear departure from the narrative structure of Wolf's earlier novels and a shift to the defining narrative voice of her later work. Yet aside from the narrative perspective, which encourages the conceit of autobiographical writing, other markers of the narrative style, what Dorrit Cohn calls "signposts of fictionality," complicate the status of the text is a decisively modernist way. Still, Tate's assertion quoted above that with *Nachdenken über Christa T* Wolf took leave of Socialist Realism is not entirely the case.

Though Christa T. is certainly portrayed by the author as a non-conformist who thinks differently from the others, her actions quite often support the status quo. Consider this excerpt, which describes the public censure of a student in assembly for allowing the loss of his girlfriend to his friend to upset him such that he committed an ideological error during an hour of practice teaching. Though the point of the lesson was meant to be to have the students consider how Friedrich of Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe* prioritizes his social obligations to the upper class over his love for Luise, a commoner, Günter hotly argues for the place of tragedy in modern love,

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[209] Tate, *Shifting Perspectives*, 202.

thereby confusing the pupils. In the aftermath, Günter, formerly one of the most engaged and dogmatic of the students, is stripped of his position as class secretary.[210]

> Günter aber würde nicht als Günter abgeurteilt werden, sondern als Beispiel, wohin ein Mensch gerät, der dem Subjektivismus verfällt. So ist es auch gekommen, der Mensch Günter und der Fall des Subjektivismus wurden voneinander abgetrennt, und Frau Mrosow war die erste, die nach der Versammlung, nachdem alle Hände hochgegangen waren – auch meine, auch die von Christa T., von Kostja und von der blonden Inge –, Frau Mrosow war es, die zu Günther ging, ihm die Hand gab und ihn sogar um die Schulter faßte.[211]

Each person who raises their hand to chastise the friend is singled out among the mass of people, suggesting a sense of personal betrayal. Yet at the same time, the narrator's reference to the ruinous effect of subjectivity does not seem sarcastic. Personal connections are put to the side while the larger danger of acting out of self-interest is condemned. Public censure is a lesson for the community as for the individual. As this individual's successful rehabilitation later in the plot shows, the lesson is well taken.

This incident is also an example of how even the non-conformist protagonist of the novel, Christa T., participates in the communal apparatus of the state. In the case narrated above, Christa T. had attempted to intervene in the censure privately with Frau Mrosow because she knew the backstory of Günter's emotional state. Still, Christa T. raises her hand to censure. This school drama recalls an earlier moment of questionable solidarity: Christa T., like all her fellow students wore their uniforms to show their solidarity with Hitler the day after his attempted assassination.[212] Though Tate claims for Christa T. the ability see through the majority's attempt

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[210] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 79.

[211] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 80.

[212] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 15.

cut themselves off from this Nazi past,[213] Christa T. makes the same superficial gesture as Vera of *Moskauer Novelle* of burning her childhood diaries. "[D]a gingen die Schwüre in Rauch auf und die Begeisterungen, deren man sich nun schämte, die Sprüche und Lieder. Die Lebenszeit wir nicht ausreichen, wieder davon sprechen zu können, *ihre* Lebenszeit nicht."[214] This is one of the things the narrator wishes she and Christa T. had discussed openly rather than relying on the innuendo of a feeling of understanding each other.

While in a few instances, such as Christa T.'s sudden trumpeting through a rolled up newspaper in the streets as a teenager, and her insistence on owning a country home, Christa T. shows herself to be at odds with prevailing social norms, for the most part, the all-important evidence of coming to oneself is entirely in the hands of the narrator who attempts to piece it together from documents to which only she has access. The narrator leaves the potential for an allegorical interpretation of Christa T. as symbolic of the slow death of democratic hope entirely untouched. Indeed an ambiguity remains as to whether the environment stifled Christa T., or if she was incapable of benefitting from the communal lesson as Günter did (at least from the perspective of GDR ideology).

Given the decidedly Socialist worldview of the novel and its at most ambivalent potential to be interpreted as critique, the truly revolutionary quality of *Nachdenken über Christa T.* is not so much the message and plot, as the radically different method of telling the story. Gone is the omniscient narrator of *Der geteilte Himmel*, replaced with a homodiegetic narrator that is clearly an individual who has changed as a result of her engagement with Christa T. The quotation provided might carry a heavy pedagogical tone, but it does so entirely using facts and opinions

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[213] Tate, *Shifting Perspectives*, 203.

[214] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 35.

established in the first person. Indeed specific reference is made to the narrator's new understanding of the situation, given her perusal of Christa T.'s letters and diaries.[215]

Moreover, the *limitations* of the narrator's first-hand knowledge are a subject of discussion throughout the novel. In one passage, the narrator's credibility is brought to the reader's attention when she insists that she possesses a letter from Christa T. though it seems beyond belief. "Ich erfinde ihn [the letter] nicht, aber ich erlaube mir, ihn zu kürzen, zusammenzurücken, was bei ihr verstreut ist" the narrator says.[216] The highly subjective process described alerts the reader that the narrator may be questioned, indeed expects to be questioned. It also refers to Cohn's first signpost of fictionality, the suspension of a commitment to verifiable documentation.[217] In directly referring to what Cohn calls a "data base," though an imaginary or embroidered one, Wolf's novel is pointing to the formal line between historical reality and fiction the author thematized in her discussion of "subjektive Authentizität."

Another new development in Christa Wolf's conception of Socialist Realism in the late sixties is the reference to the author's experience, an idea which finds resonance with Cohn's third distinction of fiction. Relating the introduction of the distinction between author and narrator, Cohn quotes Wolfgang Kayser, who claimed "in answer to the titular question of his essay 'Who narrates the Novel?' (1958), 'not the author … the narrator is a created character [eine gedichtete Person] into which the author has transformed himself.'"[218] In "Lesen und Schreiben" Wolf specifies that an essential part of her own individual experience is life in a

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[215] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 74-76.

[216] Wolf, *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, 82.

[217] Cohn, *Distinction of Fiction*, 113.

[218] Cohn, *Distinction of Fiction*, 124.

Socialist society, though she emphasizes the transformative process of writing in her 1973 interview with Kaufmann. The complex narrative situation of *Nachdenken über Christa T.* is matched by a new idea developed by Wolf of what constitutes the truth that literature is meant to convey to its audience. In "Lesen und Schreiben," Wolf writes "zu erzählen, das heißt: wahrheitsgetreu zu erfinden auf Grund eigener Erfahrung."[219] Realism is "phantastische Genauigkeit", she claims.[220] The contradiction of terms like truth and invention, fantasy and exactitude echo the contradiction of a narrator insisting to the reader that a fictional letter truly existed.

Though groundbreaking within Wolf's development as a writer, the first-person narrative of the novel has antecedents in the works of such Socialist luminaries of the East German canon as Anna Seghers. In "Der Ausflug der toten Mädchen," a short story of 1943, a feverish and hallucinating narrator relives a school trip before the First World War, juxtaposing young innocence with the death or disgrace of all her former schoolmates and teachers, as well as her hometown, now rubble. Though the narrator's persona as both child and knowledgeable adult lends a tinge of omniscience, the highly subjective perspective of the present, shot through with mirage and uncertainty, represents a far more complex narrator than Lukács would have desired. Seghers' work demonstrates that the first person perspective was an aspect of the German tradition of Socialist Realism, even if was not prevalent in the GDR's institutions.

Though Wolf's *Nachdenken über Christa T* is the most experimental of her first three novels, it still represents a contribution to the discourse on Socialist Realism. Each of Wolf's first three novels gratified the East German Politburo's functional approach to literature as a

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[219] Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," 199.

[220] Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," 205.

pedagogical tool with which to communicate Socialist ideology to a large audience. Wolf's commitment to addressing contemporary issues led her to gradually address ever more insistently the negative aspects of life in the GDR, though she ultimately chose to reinforce the Socialist project of East Germany in each of her novels. Wolf's gradual disillusionment with the East German state has been explained with close attention to the totalitarian agenda of the Politburo. However, Wolf's continued attempts at engaging and reforming the state are crucial to understanding her work in the latter half of the German Democratic Republic. As will be described in the next section, the intellectual foment surrounding the reform Socialist movement in Czechoslovakia resonated with many committed Socialists in East Germany, including Wolf, who appreciated the desire for "Socialism with a human face." I shall demonstrate that Wolf's aesthetic manifesto "Lesen und Schreiben" is best understood in this atmosphere of reform Socialism.

Christa Wolf and the Prague Spring

In his biography of Christa Wolf, Jorg Magenau attempts to bolster her credentials as a dissident by claiming that Wolf's connections to Czech intellectuals such as Františka Faktorová (a translator and editor of a literary journal known as Franci to the Wolfs) and Eduard Goldstücker (a literary critic and historian), were potentially dangerous, but hardly publically known.[221] Having been targeted in the 1951 show trials, but rehabilitated in the post-Stalinist thaw, Goldstücker was quite active during the Prague Spring as chairman of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union. Cultivating a relationship with him would well have interested the East German

[221] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 205. Wolf's article in a Czech journal positively described a new generation of writers in the GDR of which she was a part by age. Christa Wolf, "O jedné generaci (NDR)," *Literární noviny* vol. 11/1962, no. 15, p. 9.

secret police. However, the color-coded infographics in Christa and Gerhard Wolf's Stasi file created in the late sixties and early seventies to represent their international connections do not name Goldstücker.[222] Given his role in the Writers' Union and organization of the 1963 conference on Kafka in Liblice, contact is quite possible, but could not be verified beyond Magenau's statement.[223]

As Gerhard and Christa Wolf described in interviews, their relationship with Faktorová was to some extent personal: their daughter Annette (b. 1952) was friendly with and eventually married Faktorová's son Jan Faktor, a poet later connected to the Prenzlauer Berg scene.[224] Faktorová is credited with translating Wolf's novels *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, *Kindheitsmuster*, and *Kassandra* into Czech in 1977, 1981, and 1987 respectively using a

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[222] BStU ANS AOP 16578/89 Bd. II See also Bd. V, p.7. These infographics, color-coded and written in the old German handwriting known as "deutsche Kurrentschrift," are truly bizarre in their ornamentation and more than a little disturbing.

[223] The Wolfs appeared with Goldstücker in an event commemorating the 30-year anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Prague, as reported by the *Berliner Zeitung*. Volker Müller, "Ein Moped für Kafkas *Schloß*: Christa und Gerhard Wolf im Gespräch mit Eduard Goldstücker über Hoffnungen des Prager Frühlings" *Berliner Zeitung*, August 27, 1998. Available [Online] at http://www.berliner-zeitung.de/archiv/christa-und-gerhard-wolf-im-gespraech-mit-eduard-goldstuecker-ueber-hoffnungen-des-prager-fruehlings-von-volker-mueller-ein-moped-fuer-kafkas--schloss-,10810590,9470576.html. And Volker Müller, "Kafka gegen Kalaschnikow: Eduard Goldstücker, Christa und Gerhard Wolf erinnerten sich an Prag 1968," in *Berliner Zeitung*, September 4, 1998. Available [Online] at http://www.berliner-zeitung.de/archiv/eduard-goldstuecker--christa-und-gerhard-wolf-erinnerten-sich-an-prag-1968-kafka-gegen-kalaschnikow,10810590,9474322.html.

[224] "Günter Gaus im Gespräch mit Gerhard Wolf," *Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg*, October 15, 2003. Available [Online] at https://www.rbb-online.de/zurperson/interview_archiv/wolf_gerhard.html. "'Nehmt euch in Acht': Interview mit Christa Wolf," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 11, 2008. Available [Online] http://www.fr-online.de/zeitgeschichte/interview-mit-christa-wolf--nehmt-euch-in-acht-,1477344,2689666,item,0.html.

pseudonym. Furthermore, according to records of the Jewish Museum in Prague, Faktorová's memories of the Nazi era were recorded by Christa Wolf.[225]

Both Gerhard and Christa Wolf knew Faktorová as an editor of the literary journal *Literární noviny*, which it is fair to describe as a leading factor in the climate of liberalization in Czechoslovakia in the sixties. While the Wolfs submitted short pieces to *Literární noviny*, these appeared from 1959-1962 and thus not even really close to the heady days of 1968, when

Figure 3 Christa and Gerhard Wolf in *Literární noviny*

Wolf, Gerhard. "Dopis z Berlína," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 8/1959, číslo 31, s. 8 (Politická publicistika) [Letter from Berlin regarding Bruno Apitz, „*Nackt unter Wölfen*, Otto Gotsche, *Die Fahne von Kriwoj Rog*, Otto Brosowski].

Wolf, Gerhard "'Rozhodnutí' Anny Seghersové, Dopis z Berlína," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 8/1959, číslo 46, s. 8 (stati a články) [*Die Entschiedung* by Anna Seghers, Letter from Berlin].

Wolfová, [Ch]rista. "Dopis z Berlína," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 9/1960, číslo 44, strana 8 (Kritika (Literatura a/ stati a články)) [Letter from Berlin regarding Rolf Schroers, *Auf den Spuren der Zeit; junge deutsche Prosa*, München: P. List, 1959. Günther Grass discussed at length].

Wolf, Gerhard "Dvě křídla si představ...K situaci mladé německé lyriky," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 10/1961, číslo 28, s. 9 (Literatura (stati a čláky)) [Imagine Two Wings... Toward the Situation of Young German Lyric].

Wolf, Gerhard. "Zářijové dny," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 10/1961, číslo 39, s. 7 (Politická publicistika) [September days].

Wolf, Christa. "O jedné generaci (NDR)," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 11/1962, číslo 15, s. 9 (Literatura) [About a Generation].

Wolfová Christa. "V kameni," *Literární noviny* (III), ročník 10/1999, číslo 14, strana 14 (Beletrie) [In Stone].

[225] The citation reads as follows: Faktorová, née Šorková, Františka, Ing. Recollections recorded by the German writer Christa Wolf. (Ostrava, Prague, Terezín/Theresienstadt, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Christianstadt, death march, escape, liberation). Source: *Judaica Bohemiae*, issue: 38 / 2002, pages: 182-197, on www.ceeol.com.

political reform became reality in Czechoslovakia, as described in the next chapter. As is also apparent from Figure 3 above, which lists the Wolfs' publications in a Czech literary journal, Gerhard published twice as much as Christa.

Magenau makes much of Wolf's perhaps purposefully vague statement of reaction to the invasion of Prague, which she published in *Neues Deutschland* two weeks after declining to sign on to the East German Writer's Union statement of support for the military action. Magenau writes:

> Da sich alle spätere Vorwürfe, sie habe den Einmarsch unterstützt, auf diesen Text berufen, sei er hier in vollem Wortlaut wiedergeben: "1.) Die erbitterten Kämpfe, in denen die Widersprüche unseres Jahrhunderts sich ausdrücken, lassen nach meiner Überzeugung nur eine Lösung zu: den Sozialismus. 2.) Wer diese Lösung mit allen Mitteln verhindern, wer sie rückgängig machen will, dort, wo sie gefunden wurde; wer die Bombenopfer in Vietnam hinnimmt; die gesellschaftlichen Hintergründe der Ermordung Martin Luther Kings verschwiegt; die reale neonazistische Gefahr in Westdeutschland bagatellisiert: der rede nicht von Freiheit, Demokratie und Menschlichkeit. 3.) Meine Wünsche für die sozialistische Tschechoslowakei können nur von der Übereinkunft ausgehen, die zwischen der UdSSR und der CSSR in Moskau geschlossen wurde. Die Entwicklung zeigt: Es besteht Hoffnung, dass die Vernunft sich durchsetzen wird."[226]

Relatively little of this statement speaks directly about the invasion of Prague, instead it dwells on Wolf's support for Socialism in extremely general terms. The two sentences dedicated to Wolf's "wishes for Czechoslovakia" are actually about the agreement reached in Moscow. Wolf thereby suggests that she has no knowledge or opinion of Czechoslovakia in itself, but only as party to an agreement with the Soviet Union. The final sentence's suggestion that the agreement (to which Dubček had been kidnapped to retroactively give permission to the invasion) are grounds for hope shows no respect for Czechoslovakia's sovereignty.

Assuming that the Wolfs' connections and publications in Czechoslovakia had passed unnoticed, Magenau claims:

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[226] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 206-207.

> Ihre Sympathien für die Ideen des Prager Frühlings waren jedoch spätestens dann deutlich geworden, als es in der Schule ihrer Tochter Aufregung über eine Wandzeitung zum Thema CSSR gab. Annette Wolf war an der Aktion beteiligt, ebenso die drei Jahre ältere Schülerin Daniela Dahn, die einen von Christa Wolf geleiteten Literaturzirkel besuchte. Es handelte sich um eine Collage aus Artikeln aus dem ND, die aber in der Summe ein eindeutig Dubček-freundliches Bild ergaben.[227]

Of the same incident Alexander von Plato concluded: "Tröstlich für Annette Simon war, dass sich ihre Eltern hinter sie stellten, dass sie sogar hinter den Polizei- oder Stasi-Autos herfuhren, wenn sie vorgeladen worden war. Aber da sei sie die einzige gewesen; die anderen Eltern hätten ihre Kinder im Stich gelassen, besonders die Eltern von Gunter Begenau."[228] Magenau's attempt to interpret Wolf's support for her daughter as support for Dubček seem tenuous; as von Plato suggests, her primary motivation was most likely familial regard, though support for freedom of speech might have entered into the equation as well.

As Christa Wolf described it in a 2008 interview, the main cause of her family's surveillance by the secret police was their association with young rebels:

> Hinzu kam noch: Der damalige Freund meiner Tochter wurde beim Motorradfahren wegen Geschwindigkeitsübertretung angehalten. Dabei entdeckten die Polizisten Flugblätter mit dem 2000-Worte-Manifest von Ludvík Vaculík. Das war damals das begehrteste Stück Literatur aus dem Prager Frühling. Als der junge Mann nach der Herkunft des Textes gefragt wurde, sagte er, er wäre öfter bei Wolfs, und die seien derselben Meinung wie Vaculík. Annette Wolf sei seine Freundin. Danach wurde sie zum ersten Mal nach Potsdam zur Stasi bestellt. Mein Mann fuhr mit. Er wartete draußen auf sie. Ich wartete zu Hause und las "Krebsstation" von Alexander Solschenizyn. Von da an standen wir ständig unter Beobachtung. Das kann man jetzt alles in den Stasi-Akten nachlesen.[229]

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[227] Magenau, *Christa Wolf*, 205.

[228] Alexander von Plato, "Revolution in einem halben Land," *Opposition als Lebenform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der ČSSR un in Polen*, (Berlin: Lit Verlag Dr. W Hopf, 2013), 117. Annette Wolf became Annette Simon following her first marriage. In his profile of Annette Simon von Plato incorrectly identifies her father. He is Gerhard (not Günther) Wolf.

[229] "'Nehmt euch in Acht': Interview mit Christa Wolf." In fact, Stasi surveillance had begun earlier, though the appearance of agents before the house was likely calculated as overt intimidation.

Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon yet to be explored is the Wolfs' direct contact with younger generations of writers. Here, differences between Gerhard and Christa might well exist, as Gerhard has been credited with encouraging young poets while Christa has not. On the other hand, aside from the reference to Christa's literary circle Magenau makes above, in *Was bleibt*, completed in 1979, though not published until 1990, the nameless protagonist receives a visit from a young woman whom she feels compelled to praise, though also warn against attempting to publish her work, as it will likely land her in jail (again). As we shall see in the next chapter, the support of an established artist, like Ludvík Vaculík in Czechoslovakia, is essential to the founding of a network of underground literature. A study of Christa and Gerhard Wolf's potential as such a figure would be rewarding indeed.

Christa Wolf's Reform Socialist Realism of 1968

According to Sonja Hilzinger, Wolf worked on the essay "Lesen und Schreiben" from May up to and including August of 1968, though the volume of essays would go through numerous revisions until it was accepted for publication in 1972.[230] Thus the volume, a landmark in Christa Wolf's developing aesthetics, was born in the height of Wolf's first period of dissonance with the state. This makes her clear commitments to Socialist aesthetics such as the functional purpose of the author and her literature that much more notable. Yet to examine the text as a re-stating of Socialist Realism would not do it justice, as it clearly sets out an agenda of renewal and reform.

A number of passages in "Lesen und Schreiben," suggest a revolutionary moment when suddenly everything is seen in a new way, and an equally new way of writing becomes

[230] Sonja Hilzinger, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Werke* IV, (München: Luchterhand, 1999) 483.

necessary. At one point, Wolf describes how the landscape from her hotel window looks radically different than it did the day before.[231] Elsewhere, however, Wolf names Georg Büchner, a nineteenth-century realist author and member of the revolutionary movement *Junges Deutschland*, as the ideal example of the new kind of writing she finds necessary.[232] How new is Wolf's revolutionary form? In fact it restates a number of the basic tenets of Socialist Realism, albeit jettisoning specific aspects, such as the aim of objectivity, and the reliance on master plot and stock figures.[233] In essence, Wolf attempted to revitalize the official Socialist doctrine with some new elements related to modernist literary styles.

Much in the manner of political manifestos like Marx' *Communist Manifesto*, Wolf begins with a historical overview, meditating at length on the current crisis: scholarly disciplines such as history and anthropology have slowly encroached upon the traditional subject matter of prose. Yet Wolf imagines a revolutionary new form, which she calls *epische Prosa*, in the manner of Brecht's *episches Theater*: "eine Gattung, die den Mut hat, sich selbst als Instrument zu verstehen – scharf, genau, zupackend, veränderlich – und die sich als Mittel nimmt, nicht als Selbstzweck."[234] Here Wolf quite clearly aligns herself with the orthodox Socialist idea of literature as pedagogical, rejecting art for art's sake. She thereby implicitly reinforces the idea of the intellectual elite as a guiding influence, engineers of the soul. Speaking of the new literature, she writes "Gebraucht wird aber eine unbestechliche und zugleich verständnisvolle Begleiterin

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[231] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2, 8.

[232] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 30-1.

[233] Anna Seghers espoused a similar position in early debates on Socialist Realism with Georg Lukacs.

[234] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 34.

auf einer kühnen und gefährlichen Expedition."[235] The idea of an "unbestechliche" literature prompts the question of who exactly might try to bribe or corrupt authors undertaking this journey. It seems fair to surmise, given the proximity of this statement to the Eleventh Plenum discussed above, that Wolf was concerned not only about infiltration by Western culture, but also about the East German state's interference with literature.

Wolf explains that excellent literature encourages the development of keen critical reasoning in its readers. Imagining her life without books, Wolf concludes that her very individuality has been shaped by her interaction with artfully created characters. From this observation she extrapolates that had she never experienced literature, "Meine Moral ist nicht entwickelt, ich leide an geistiger Auszehrung, meine Phantasie ist verkümmert. Vergleichen, urteilen fällt mir schwer." Wolf establishes a connection between literature's ability to encourage fantasy and developing subjectivity, in other words, the ability to speak in the first person. The idea that literature is meant to help its readers toward political and social growth is expressed with terms like "Reife" (maturity) and the Kantian "mündig" (of age).

According to Wolf, not only is the reader encouraged toward individuality by literature, but the author's individuality is also an essential ingredient in the production of literature. The new and necessary prose must transform personal experience into art by means of imagination. Büchner's genius as an author was to demonstrate this fourth dimension of the subjective: "das der erzählerische Raum vier Dimensionen hat; die drei fiktiven Koordinaten der erfundenen Figuren und die vierte 'wirkliche' des Erzählers. Das ist die Koordinate der Tiefe, der Zeitgenossenschaft."[236] Based on Büchner's example, Wolf creates the maxim: "Zu erzählen, das

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[235] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 36.

[236] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 31.

heißt: wahrheitsgetreu zu erfinden auf Grund eigener Erfahrung."[237] This core of individuality is Wolf's most explicit rejection of the Lukácsian encouragement of objectivity as well as standard plots and stock characters, which Wolf labels cliché.

Speaking of the bond between the individual and his society, Wolf writes, "Warum sollte er sich fahrlässig des Vorteils begeben, der darin liegt, dass seine Gesellschaft die Selbstverwirklichung ihrer Mitglieder anstrebt? Eine der wichtigsten Voraussetzungen für das Entstehen der Literatur ist aber Sehnsucht nach Selbstverwirklichung."[238] Here Wolf simultaneously reaffirms her commitment to the Socialist state as the most conducive to advanced society and art, while suggesting a new form of Realism that encourages subjective experience and the development of the individual.

In his 2007 monograph *Shifting Perspectives: East German Autobiographical before and after the End of the GDR*, Dennis Tate addresses the increase in autobiographically influenced fiction in the GDR most directly. After introducing Christa Wolf as a central figure in the development of autobiographical writing in the GDR, Tate turns to five case studies on Birgitte Reimann, Franz Fühmann, Stefan Heym, Günter de Bruyn, and Wolf herself. Of the monograph as a whole Tate writes:

> This volume has been conceived in this spirit of open-minded reassessment [advocated by Wolfgang Emmerich –NGB]. It focuses on just one feature of the writing of East German authors in the GDR era and beyond, chosen from the many treated in the *Kleine Literaturgeschichte*, but it is one that is notoriously difficult to categorize: the steady stream of prose works located in the ambiguous area between first-person fiction and autobiography that have been published between the 1960s and the present day by two generations of authors, each following their own creative priorities in choosing this vein. Christa Wolf, in her highly influential essay of 1968, "Lesen und Schreiben," which she wrote after completing one of the most enduring examples of the genre, *Nachdenken über*

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[237] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 25.

[238] Christa Wolf, "Lesen und Schreiben," *Dimension des Autors*, B.2 42.

> *Christa T.*, provided an initial set of criteria, as well as a distinguishing label not previously used in East German literary discourse–"Prosa"–for this body of writing.[239]

While Tate is right to point out Wolf's reluctance to use the term "Roman" or novel beginning in 1967, his insistence that she reinvented the broader category of "Prosa," turning into something new, is overstated. As I have described above, in 1959 Gerhard and Christa Wolf edited two volumes, one devoted to poetry and the other to prose ("Prosa") from the first ten years of the GDR's existence.[240] Stories by Anna Seghers, whose experimental narrative structures including first person perspective substantially influenced Wolf, are the very first and very last presented in the volume.[241] In essence, Tate's study, though extremely insightful, overstates Wolf's break from the existing tradition of Socialist Realism generally speaking and even underestimates the varied discourse within the GDR on precisely this subject.

Christa Wolf's poetics, as outlined in her 1968 essay, does not break with Socialist Realism, but rather takes a firm stand on issues that had defined scholarly debate since the beginning of the German engagement with the official aesthetic imported from the Soviet Union. As we saw above in Wolf's 1954 review of a recently published novel, Wolf rejected some aspects of official culture such as stock figures. "Lesen und Schreiben" takes an even bolder position in rejecting objectivity in favor of a new kind of subjectivity. And yet this decision mirrors Seghers' position in her correspondence with Lukács during the Second World War and

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[239] Tate, *Shifting Perspectives*, 2.

[240] Christa and Gerhard Wolf (eds.), *Wir, unsere Zeit: Gedichte aus Zehn Jahren* and *Wir, unsere Zeit: Prosa aus Zehn Jahren*, Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1959. The volume contains the short story by Willi Bredl called "Das schweigende Dorf," which Stephan Brockmann claims as evidence that GDR literature engaged with the murder of the Jews in his recent monograph, *The Writers' State: Constructing East German Literature, 1945-1949*, (New York: Camden House, 2015) 10.

[241] The volume begins with "Vertrauen" (1949) and ends with "Begegnung" (1959), which are excerpts from *Die Toten bleiben jung* and *Die Entscheidung* respectively. Also included is "Das Geständnis" an excerpt from the short story "Der Mann und sein Name."

Seghers' prose fiction thereafter. Wolf's emphasis on curtailing what has gone wrong with Socialist literature since the codification of official doctrine, and her desire to create literature that would bring its readers to Mündigkeit, signal her maturity as an independent author disillusioned with some aspects of her community, but still firmly committed to working to improve it.

Figure 4 "Stell dir vor, es ist Sozialismus, und keiner geht weg!"





The above images of Christa Wolf speaking to a crowd of protesters at Alexanderplatz just days before the fall of the Wall portray what was surely the height of her reputation as a dissident.[242] To some extent, the content of that speech reinforces such a persona: Wolf loudly and repeatedly expressed her support for regime change. Yet even this pinnacle, which evokes a hint of the political success of other cultural figures such as Václav Havel, displays Wolf's ultimate failure to connect with her audience. Amidst her attempts at light-hearted plays on the new vocabulary of the *Wende*, Wolf made clear that her commitment to Socialism was as strong

[242] Christa Wolf, "Sprache der Wende: Rede auf Alexanderplatz," *Werke* IV, 182. Video available online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSk-ytE9c20.

as ever. Yet her vision of a socialism free of restrictions imposed by the SED regime failed to resonate with the general public, as evident in the shift from the phrase Wolf quoted with pleasure "Wir sind das Volk" to one she couldn't disagree with more, "Wir sind ein Volk." My analysis of Wolf's essay "Lesen und Schreiben" and novel *Nachdenken über Christa T.* demonstrates a similar commitment to the ideals of Socialist combined with an aesthetic that departs from some of the dogmas of Socialist Realism. Here Wolf truly forged a new path away from her roots in official culture, as the contrast to her days as a student and early career as a literary critic demonstrate. Pausing at this moment, the steep tumble in Wolf's moral authority that took place once her association with secret police was made public becomes appreciable. As I shall discuss in chapter four, the lustration of political and cultural figures of the Communist era presents the continuation of the Socialist heritage into the present. Before exploring this deconstruction, which demolished both official and unofficial culture in East Germany, in the next chapter I shall reconstruct the literary world outside of the official institutions described thus far, moving beyond the stylized picture of this underground conjured by the West.

Chapter Three
The Prague Spring, Dissent, and their German Spectators: Politics and Prose in Tamizdat

> "Der politische Orientierungspunkt für uns im Osten [Deutschlands –NGB] war vor allem der Versuch, den Sozialismus in der ČSSR zu demokratisieren. Das Trauma der Achtundsechziger der DDR war die Okkupation dieses Landes im August 1968."
> Annette Simon, 2000[243]

In the study of underground culture and its effects on political discourse, the case of Czechoslovakia has risen to prominence for three main reasons: the liberalization of art in the sixties heralded political reform (which was, however, violently crushed), the defense of artistic expression precipitated one of the most recognized human rights movements in the seventies (Charter 77), and eventually figures from the cultural sphere such as Václav Havel and Jiří Gruša took up political roles in the post-Communist era. It is an ideal case for studying how the cultural sphere can contribute to political discourse, especially when vehicles for public discourse such as official newspapers, magazines, etc. are restricted by state censorship. Furthermore, it is an ideal example of both samizdat and tamizdat. Samizdat, or self-published literature, was produced by organized networks in Czechoslovakia beginning in the seventies a full decade before such a phenomenon coalesced in the GDR. The Sixty-Eight Publishers in Toronto, Canada published

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[243] Annette Simon, "Vor den Vätern sterben die Söhne?" *Fremd im eigenen Land*, (Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, 2000), 11. Annette Simon's mother, Christa Wolf, claimed the same orientation towards Czechoslovakia in an interview in 2008. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, "'Nehmt euch in Acht': Interview mit Christa Wolf," July 11, 2008. Available [Online] http://www.fr-online.de/zeitgeschichte/interview-mit-christa-wolf--nehmt-euch-in-acht-,1477344,2689666,item,0.html. The import of Wolf's influence on Simon, and in turn Simon's opinions of her parents' political engagement are matters perhaps best addressed with appropriate psychological framework in the manner of Hell's *Post-Fascist Fantasies*.

the novels and essays of scores of banned or marginalized authors from Czechoslovakia, and represented the center of Czechoslovak tamizdat, or banned texts published abroad.

But beyond re-visiting the Czechoslovak case study for comparative purposes, in this chapter I shall re-examine the contemporaneous influence of these phenomena on the GDR. Using recently published historical analysis based on archival evidence, I demonstrate what many scholars and writers have long claimed in interviews: the events of the Prague Spring, especially the Soviet invasion were keenly felt in the GDR, inspiring both public protest and literary endeavors in the years directly thereafter. However, my research suggests that the political agenda advocated in Czechoslovakia had greater contemporaneous influence than literary productions. Though many signs of public protest and surviving collections of political texts demonstrate East German interest in the reforms of the Prague Spring, there is no evidence that Czech literary texts made an impression in the GDR. In fact, banned or repressed authors in Czechoslovakia and the GDR found an audience in West Germany rather than amongst each other.

Revolution by the Political and Cultural Elite of Czechoslovakia

Politically speaking, the Prague Spring of 1968 was an inner-Party reform movement led by Alexander Dubček that was unable to keep abreast of the ensuing demands from the public for further reform, and therefore precipitated a Soviet invasion to preserve the status quo of East Bloc power relations. On the other hand, Dubček's focus on freedom of speech and assembly, especially evident in the Party's Action Program of 1968, attempted to legally codify the increasingly permissive cultural sphere. The image he struck of reform from above gained him

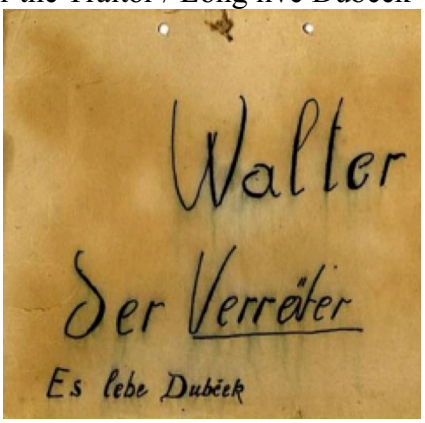
international popularity as Figures five, six, and seven below of East German graffiti suggest.

Figure 5 "Long live Dubček"



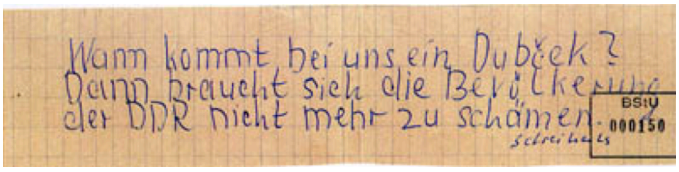
BStU, MfS, Ast. Chemnitz 2339/68 Bd.1, S.57
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=2886

Figure 6 "Walter the Traitor / Long live Dubček"



BStU, MfS, Ast. Chemnitz Ha-27, Bd.2
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=4161

Figure 7 "When will we have someone like Dubček? Then the citizenry wouldn't need to be ashamed anymore."



BStU, MfS, BV Schwerin, AU 11/69, GA Bd. 3, Bl. 150, S. 4
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=5248

Czechoslovakia's thaw of the sixties was characterized by the rehabilitation of victims of the show trials,[244] the publication of formerly inconvenient authors such as Bohumil Hrabal and Josef Škvorecký,[245] and the success of Czech New Wave Cinema.[246]

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[244] For an overview of the show trials in the broader context of the East Bloc, see George H. Hodos, *Show Trials: Stalinist Purges in Eastern Europe, 1948-1954*, New York: Praeger Publishing, 1987. As noted by Tony Judt, there had been two earlier investigating commissions into the Slánský trials, one in 1955-7 and one 1962-3. Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945, (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 436. The Action Program of 1968 called for yet another to ensure that rehabilitation entailed the proper restoration of rights and privileges. *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 156-157.

[245] For a contemporaneous account of the role of cultural liberalization in the political events of the Prague Spring see Antonín J. Liehm, "On Culture, Politics, Recent History, the Generations– and also other Conversations," *The Politics of Culture*. Translated by Peter Kussi, With "The

The political reform of the Czechoslovak Communist Party began when Antonín Novotný was ousted as general secretary and Alexander Dubček (a Slovak) was voted into the seat of power by his fellow members of the central committee.[247] In his speech of April 1st, in which he presented the 1968 Action Program of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to the central committee for approval, Dubček voiced the most liberal official agenda of the Prague Spring. Still, while pledging to "get rid of everything that has become obsolete or that has proved to be incorrect,"[248] Dubček had no interest in radically challenging the Socialist political and economic structure of the Czechoslovak nation and he also reiterated his acceptance of the leadership of the Soviet Union. Dubček insisted on the leading role of the Communist Party, declaring "the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia continues to be, and is now even more rightly, the decisive, organized, and progressive force of our society."[249] He envisioned the current process of "self-criticism" as a revitalization of the Party, following the example set by

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Socialism that Came in from the Cold" by Jean-Paul Sartre. New York: Grove Press, 1973 41-92. This volume also includes interviews with Milan Kundera, Josef Škvorecký, Ludvík Vaculík, Edward Goldstücker, Ivan Klíma, Václav Havel, Karel Kosík, and others.

[246] Tony Judt characterizes these developments as a delayed post-Stalinist thaw. See *Postwar*, 436-445. For a recent account of new media's role in the movement, see Paulina Bren, *The Greengrocer and his TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.

[247] Cf. William Hitchcock's description in *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945 to the Present*, (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 289. On Dubček's role in the movement, see for example *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom: His original documents leading to the invasion of Czechoslovakia*. Profile by Hugh Lunghi, Commentary by Paul Ello. London: William Kimber, 1969. Later accounts of the events by Dubček include an interview in 1989, available as *Dubček Speaks*, London: I.B. Tauris and Co Ltd Publishers, 1990 and Dubček's autobiography, available as *Hope Dies Last: The Autobiography of Alexander Dubček*. Edited and Translated by Jiri Hochman. New York: Kodansha International, 1993.

[248] "The Speech delivered by Comrade Alexander Dubček at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on April 1st 1968," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 74.

[249] "Dubček's Speech," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 73.

the Soviet Union in the post-Stalinist era. The 1968 Action Program of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia takes the Soviet Union's Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party[250] as "an impulse for revival of the development of socialist democracy," which inspired the Soviet Union to adopt "several measures which were intended to overcome bureaucratic-centralist sectarian methods of management or its remnants, to prevent the means of class struggle being reversed against the working people."[251] These "bureaucratic-centralist" tendencies are later more explicitly tied to the "personality cult," which is a clear reference to Khrushchev's condemnation of Stalin as an authoritarian tyrant. Furthermore the direct reference to the use of elite power against the workers of the nation put the issue of abuse of power front and center. While promising an end to egregious injustices, Dubček and the Action Program did not promise the reorganization of state into a pluralist system. However, it did promise its citizens bourgeois civil rights.

In the interest of pleasing citizens by codifying the cultural and social developments of the preceding years, the Action Program proclaimed that: "The implementation of constitutional freedoms of assembly and association must be ensured this year so that the possibility of setting up voluntary organizations, special-interest associations, societies, etc. is guaranteed by law."[252]

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[250] At the Twentieth Party Congress the new leader of the Soviet Union's Communist Party, Nikita Khrushchev, condemned Stalin's use of torture and purges and criticized the cult of personality that had risen around him. Cf. William Hitchcock's description in *The Struggle for Europe*, 202.

[251] "The Action Programme of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia adopted at the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on April 5th, 1968," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom,* 131.

[252] "The Action Programme," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 154.

A new press law would "exclude the possibility of preliminary factual censorship."[253] Thus the Action Program promised individual rights such as freedom of speech and assembly in a way unusual for the legal system of the Soviet bloc countries.

Freedom of movement, a crucial component of the peaceful revolution in 1989 in East Germany that brought down the Berlin Wall, was also prominent in Dubček's Action Program, as were other personal rights.

> Legal norms must guarantee more exactly the freedom of speech of minority interests and opinions also /again within the framework of socialist laws and in harmony with the principle that decisions are taken in accordance with the will of the majority/. The constitutional freedom of movement particularly the travelling of our citizens abroad, must be precisely guaranteed by law.[254]

The emphasis on the right to travel, as well as the Action Program's promises of increased rule of law (rather than opaque enforcement by the secret police), are likely among the ideals of the Prague Spring that inspired enthusiasm in young East Germans like Annette Simon, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, and those she identifies as the instigators of the civil rights campaigns of the eighties in the GDR. Moreover the idea of Party reform that would revitalize civil society appealed to East Germans committed to the Socialist project, as I will elaborate further below.

As Pavel Tigrid has pointed out, the democratic potential of the Action Program was undercut by contradictory elements within it, and effectively neutralized by the Central Committee's directives published two months later, in June of 1968. He writes:

> Here it is, black on white: No political party or force is allowed to "develop political activities"–not even legal ones–aimed against the existing socialist society, for that would "threaten the socialist character of social development." Thereby, the good intentions of

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[253] "The Action Programme," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 154-155.

[254] "The Action Programme," in *Dubček's Blueprint for Freedom*, 156 Emphasis original. Cf. Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe,* 290.

> the Action program to end the limitations imposed on the rights and freedoms of citizens are abolished.[255]

Tigrid's point is that even had the Prague Spring continued unfettered by the invasion of the Soviets, the popular movement's demands quickly outstripped the Communist Party's efforts at reform. Tigrid explains the Action Program already lagged far behind the demands of "an engaged intelligentsia" and Ludvík Vaculík's "Two Thousand Word Manifesto" surprised and unsettled Dubček and the central committee. The Party and public's contradictory views on the end point of the movement meant it was doomed from the beginning, according to Tigrid.

In East Germany, the Party leadership by no means admired the events unfolding in Prague, which were quite quickly labeled "counter-revolutionary," likely because the Party itself was the target of proposed reform.[256] As I shall demonstrate, recent research supports Simon's claim that the Prague Spring found a great deal of popular support in East Germany, where engaged citizens sought greater bourgeois rights within the Socialist project. Since all attempts to announce and spread politically unorthodox opinions were aggressively investigated by the Secret Police, it is largely through their records and interviews with contemporary witnesses that evidence of this underground current has been preserved.

Underground Reception of the Prague Spring in East Germany

Generally, histories of East Germany claim that an underground culture of samizdat, or self-published texts, first emerged in the late seventies with the rise of church newsletters, and

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[255] Pavel Tigrid, "And What If the Russians Did Not Come…" *The Prague Spring: A Mixed Legacy*, Edited by Jiří Pehe, New York: Freedom House, 1988.

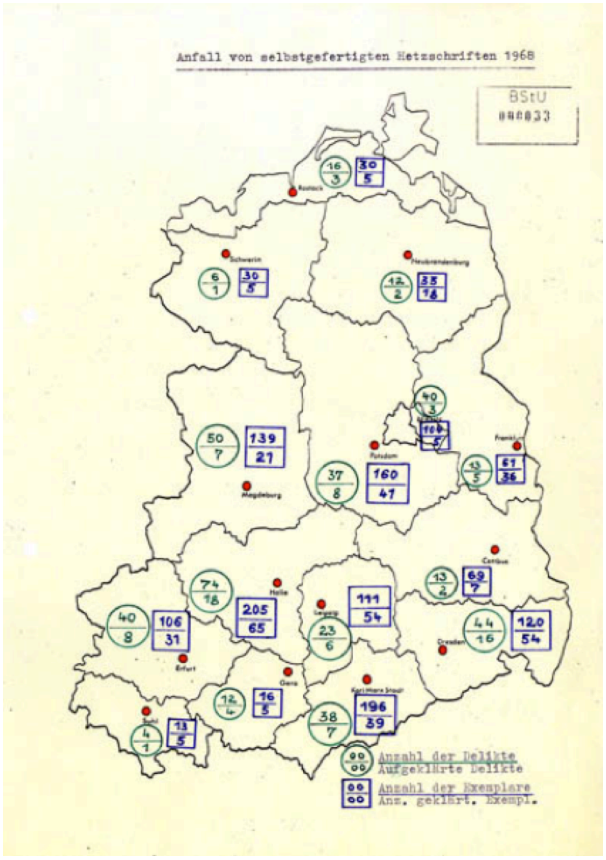
[256] See Manfred Wilke's "Die SED und der Prager Frühling 1968: Politik gegen Selbstbestimmung und Freiheit," *Die Politische Meinung: Zeitschrift für Politik, Gesellschaft, Religion und Kultur*, Ausgabe 465(8/2008), especially pp.47-48.

the appearance of new literary journals in the early eighties. A summary of the East German underground along these lines is provided, for example, in Alexander von Plato's contribution "Revolution in einem halben Land" in *Opposition als Lebensform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der CSSR und in Polen*, and Klaus Michael's "Samisdat – Literatur – Modernität: Osteuropäischer Samisdat und die selbstverlegte Literatur Ostdeutschlands," in *Heimliche Leser in der DDR.*[257] This position is largely based on an interest in discovering organized networks of dissent, and as such discounts the many instances of individual acts of protest. While self-produced texts of the late sixties and early seventies might not have been duplicated in such high numbers that one text reached many readers, the sheer number of distinct productions makes the phenomenon notable in the history of the underground. Furthermore, the idea that underground circulation of unofficial texts only took off in the eighties does not take into account the duplication and dissemination of otherwise unavailable information, such as copies of the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto. The practice of circulating typed copies of Western newspaper articles, and even speeches by Eastern intellectuals, such as Christoph Hein's infamous denunciation of the GDR's censorship system at a meeting of the Writers' Union in 1987, represents a complement to the widespread practice of listening to West German and other foreign radio stations, and later watching West German television. In a society in which access to information was carefully guarded, such clandestine circulation of both self-duplicated factual documents and original literary texts should be considered evidence of a wide-reaching underground sphere.

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[257] Alexander von Plato, "Revolution in einem halben Land: Lebensgeschichte von Oppositionellen in der DDR und ihre Interpretation, *Opposition als Lebensform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der ČSSR und in Polen,* Berlin: Lit Verlag Dr. W Hopf, 2013. Klaus Michael, "Samisdat – Literatur – Modernität: Osteuropäischer Samisdat und die selbstverlegte Literatur Ostdeutschlands," *Heimliche Leser in der DDR* ed. Siegfried Lokatis and Ingrid Sonntag, Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag, 2008, 340-356.

Figure 8 Incidents Related to the Prague Spring as Recorded by the Stasi



BStU, MfS, ZA, HA XX, AGK Nr. 804, Bl. 33
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=5265

As far the East German secret police were concerned, 1968 was a prolific year for "selbstgefertigten Hetzschriften," literally "self-published inflammatory texts," or, in the terminology of the East Bloc, samizdat. Figure eight above (a graphic prepared by the Stasi) shows that the number of copies compared to criminal instances suggests that such texts were often reproduced, though no more than three- or fourfold. While some texts were handwritten, such as that in figure seven above, the standard method of reproducing samizdat texts in the

GDR and throughout the East Bloc was to create carbon copies of texts by placing many sheets in a typewriter at once, an example of which can be seen in Appendix 3.1.[258]

In the GDR's capital the invasion of Prague unleashed a strong response. Stefan Wolle writes that, according to the Stasi, between August 21st and September 8th, "ohne raffinierte Methoden wurden an 389 Stellen in Berlin insgesamt 3528 Flugblätter verbreitet und an 212 Stellen 272 Losungen geschmiert."[259] According to the captions of images published jointly by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung and the Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, and Wolle's analysis, a striking number of the acts of public vandalism and distribution of fliers was

Figure 9 "Occupiers! Get out of the ČSSR"



BStU, MfS, Ast. Chemnitz, 744/69 Bd. 1
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=3920

Figure 10 "Russians get out of the ČSSR"



BStU, MfS, BV Schwerin, AU 11/69, GA Bd. 2, Bl. 59
http://www.jugendopposition.de/index.php?id=5256

perpetrated by young people, often of high-school age. Wolle writes that according to a concluding report on December 2nd 1968 by the Stasi, of the 1,290 people investigated to that

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[258] In addition to numerous archival examples, Siegmar Faust confirmed this method was used in the GDR in an oral interview on June 25th, 2014 in the Berlin Gedenkbibliothek. On the practice in Czechoslovakia, see Zdena Tomin's "The Typewriters Hold the Fort" and Jan Vladislav's "All You Need is a Typewriter," in *Index on Censorship* Vol.12, No.2 (April 1983). For broader introductions to unofficial Czech literature see Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012 and *Samizdat, Tamizdat, and Beyond: Transnational Media during and after Socialism*, edited by Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013.

[259] Stefan Wolle, *Der Traum von der Revolte: Die DDR 1968*, (Berlin: Ch. Link Verlag, 2008), 159. This number is much higher than that registered on the graphic by the Stasi, possibly owing to a distinction on their part between fliers and lengthier texts.

date in connection with infractions related to the invasion of Czechoslovakia just over sixty percent were under the age of twenty-five.[260] If Annette Simon's story is any indication, running afoul with the secret police gave a young person a new identity as a malfeasant. In an interview, Simon recalled once that she and her friends demonstrated their support for Dubček publically at school, they became the usual suspects for the local secret police: they were summoned to the police again months later, after the invasion of Prague, when graffiti reading "Es lebe Dubček" was discovered in their hometown.[261] In Wolle's estimation, the particularly embarrassing number of protests by the children of high-ranking Communists emphasizes that the shattered ideals of the younger generation made the invasion of 1968 a key battle in a generational conflict that defined the era.[262]

If Dubček was the face of reform Socialism, his lengthy speeches and action program did not lend themselves to quotation and dissemination as much as Vaculík's manifesto. Although Dubček spoke of the need for change in the bureaucratese of the politburo, Vaculík wrote with pith and elegance. Published in *Literární listy* on the 27th of June, 1968 almost three months after Dubček's action program, Vaculík's "Two Thousand Words that Belong to Workers, Farmers, Officials Scientists, Artists, and Everybody" summarized the failure of the Party since the end of the Second World War and called the current process one of regeneration. Vaculík, however, advocated widespread engagement on the local level, rather than Dubček's firm voice of

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[260] Wolle, *Der Traum von der Revolte*, 160. Wolle also notes that according to the Stasi statistics, 70% of those accused were workers or beaurocrats and not students, thus gainsaying the impression that mostly students protested the invasion.

[261] Quoted in Alexander von Plato, "Revolution in einem halben Land: Lebensgeschichte von Oppositionellen in der DDR und ihre Interpretation, *Opposition als Lebensform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der ČSSR und in Polen,* 117-118.

[262] Wolle, *Der Traum von der Revolte*, 172-173.

guidance from the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In this way, not only individual rights, but also individual civic engagement was a major theme of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, as espoused by Vaculík.[263] Signed by sixty-seven people when published, the Manifesto of Two Thousand Words was eventually signed by hundreds of thousands, making it an unmistakable step towards popular engagement.[264] Considering that Vaculík advocated armed protection of a government in possession of the people's mandate, clearly concerned with the possibility of Soviet intervention, it was a momentous document indeed.

My research shows that Vaculík's "Two Thousand Word Manifesto" was one of the most popular texts to smuggle from Czechoslovakia into East Germany. Appendix 3.1 shows an example of the manifesto reproduced in the manner of samizdat from the collection of human rights activist Heiko Lietz.[265] This particular version was distributed together with the text of a pamphlet reportedly given to German tourists in Czechoslovakia denouncing the Soviet invasion. In a 2008 interview, Christa Wolf called Vaculík's manifesto the most sought after piece of the Prague Spring. She recalled how her daughter Annette Simon's boyfriend at the time, Klaus-

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[263] Ludivík Vaculík, "The 'Two Thousand Words' Manifesto," *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*, Compiled and Edited by Jaromír Navrátil, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998), 177-188.

[264] Wolle, *Der Traum von der Revolte*, 141.

[265] See von Plato's interview with Lietz in *Opposition als Lebensform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der ČSSR und in Polen*, 85-90. Lietz was active as a "Bausoldat" in 1968, in other words fulfilling his required military service as a construction worker. He was stationed in Bad Saarow, a town to the southwest of Berlin and closer to the border with Czechoslovakia, before returning to his home in Rostock. Figure seven above demonstrated the higher proportion of acts of protest on the border with Czechoslovakia as opposed to Poland or in the capital city Berlin, which suggests that proximity encouraged greater involvement.

Peter Schmidt, was caught bringing a copy from Prague.[266] He was jailed and ex-matriculated and eventually left the GDR for life as a translator in the West.[267] Other notable texts smuggled into the GDR included the Charter 77, as Tomáš Vilímek describes in his one-of-a-kind book, *Solidarita napříč hranicemi: opozice v ČSSR a NDR po roce 1968*.[268] Additionally, German translations of "Informace o Chartě 77 (Infoch)," a newsletter meant to describe of the continued activities of signatories of Charter 77, are available in the archive of the Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, though their exact provenance is unknown.[269]

Networks of Unofficial Publication in Czechoslovakia After the Invasion of 1968

In the aftermath of the Soviet Invasion, a period of renewed restrictions called "Normalization" began. Many of the prominent reformers of the Prague Spring were kicked out of the Communist Party, which negatively affected one's career no matter the sector. Similarly, many writers were banned from publishing in Czechoslovakia. While the revocation of Party membership was a public knowledge, a publication ban was sometimes discovered by the experience of repeated rejection, rather than by a statement. Ludvík Vaculík, discussed above as the author of the Two Thousand Word Manifesto, launched a samizdat series of novels, plays,

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[266] "'Nehmt euch in Acht': Interview mit Christa Wolf," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 11, 2008. http://www.fr-online.de/zeitgeschichte/interview-mit-christa-wolf--nehmt-euch-in-acht-,1477344,2689666,item,0.html.

[267] Plato, "Revolution in einem halben Land," in *Opposition als Lebensform: Dissidenz in der DDR, der ČSSR und in Polen*, 118.

[268] According to my research, Vilímek's book is one of a kind in terms of its topic. Tomáš Vilímek, *Solidarita napříč hranicemi: opozice v ČSSR a NDR po roce 1968*, (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2010), 85ff.

[269] RHG/ 12/01. For insight into the pivotal year of collapse, see Edita Ivaničková, Miloš Řezník und Volker Zimmermann (eds.), *Das Jahr 1989 im deutsch-tschechisch-slowakischen Kontext*, Essen: Klartext, 2013.

and essays called Edice Petlice, when his novel *The Guinea Pigs* (*Morčata*, 1970), was refused publication. With this series Vaculík, who had long been a progressive voice within Czechoslovak cultural institutions, became a key figure in Czechoslovakia's alternative culture.

Born in Moravia in 1926, in the fifties Vaculík served as editor of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party's Press, as well as the Czechoslovak radio for young people. In the mid-sixties he began working at the weekly literary journal *Literární noviny* until it was banned in 1969. In 1967 he gave a speech to the IV Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union in which he criticized Czechoslovakia's Communist regime as inept in providing basic needs such as housing and schooling, as well as failing to allow its citizens "the subordination of political decisions to ethical criteria."[270] Vaculík's novels include include *Rušný dům* (*Bustling House*, 1963), *Sekyra* (*The Axe,* 1966), and *The Guinea Pigs* (*Morčata*, 1970).[271] Vaculík also published a novelistic diary project of the year 1979 called *The Czech Dream Book* (*Česky snář*, 1980) and numerous feuilleton articles as samizdat.[272] Vaculík's samizdat publication of the *The Czech Dream Book* was not only controversial for the personal relations it laid bare to a circle of friends and, eventually, the world, but also for revealing these illegal operations to the secret police.[273]

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[270] Ludivík Vaculík, "Proceedings of the 4th Czechoslovak Writers' Congress, June 27-29, 1967," *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader*, Compiled and Edited by Jaromír Navrátil, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998), 10.

[271] Ludvík Vaculík, *Rušný dům*, Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1963. Ludvík Vaculík, *Sekýra*, Prague: Československy spisovatel, 1966. Ludvík Vaculík, *The Axe*, London: Deutsch, 1973. Ludvík Vaculík, *Die Meerschweinchen*, Translated by Alexandra und Gerhard Baumrucker, Luzern und Frankfurt am Main: Bucher, 1971. Ludvík Vaculík, *The Guinea Pigs*, Translated by Káča Poláčkova, New York: Third Press, 1973. Ludvík Vaculík, *Morčata*, Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1977.

[272] Ludvík Vaculík, *Tagträume: alle Täge eines Jahr*, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe; Luzern: Reich, 1981. Ludvík Vaculík, *Český snář*, Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1983.

[273] Cf: Jonathan Bolton, *World of Dissent*, 243-265.

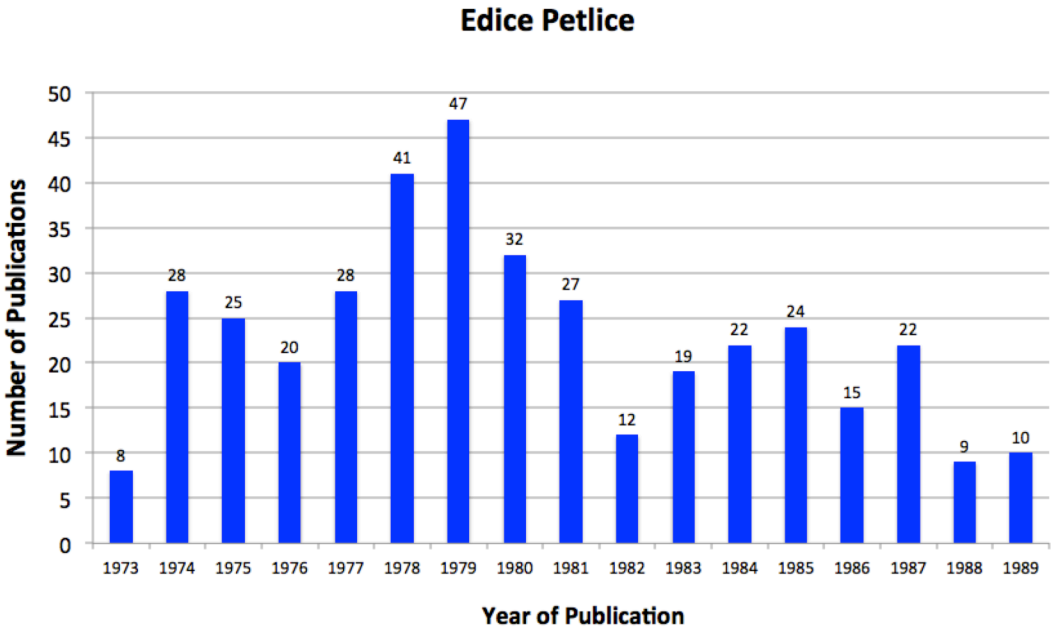
Vaculík's entries detail his efforts to organize underground journals, novels, essays, and other texts such that the diary has been read as invaluable source material, a veritable window into the functioning of the dissident world. Though it was quickly translated into German, *The Czech Dream Book* remains untranslated into English. Conversely, though few of Vaculík's feuilleton texts were translated into German, for English readers, a collection is available under the title *A Cup of Coffee with My Interrogator: the Prague chronicles of Ludvík Vaculík*.[274] By the time the Czechoslovak Communist regime fell in 1989, the Edice Petlice series reached 368 volumes. As can be seen in Figure 11, the Edice Petlice series was especially prolific in the late seventies, once the network of unofficial collaboration surrounding the Charter 77 had coalesced.[275]

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[274] Ludvík Vaculík, *A Cup of Coffee with My Interrogator: The Prague chronicles of Ludvík Vaculík*, London: Readers International, 1987.

[275] I produced this chart using the bibliographic information available in "Předběžný Anotovaný Seznam Edice Petlice," *Acta: čtvrtletník Československého dokumentačního střediska nezávislé literatury,* (1987, roč. 1., č. 3-4), 41-87 and Jitka Hanáková, *Edice českého samizdatu 1972-1991*. Prague: Národní knihovna České republiky, 1997.

Figure 11 Samizdat Production in Czechoslovakia



Vaculík was an original signatory of Charter 77, though his 1978 article "Notes on Courage" challenged expectations of widespread public participation in the movement, because Chartists were punished by the Communist regime with publication bans and jail time. Even the spouses and children of Charter 77 participants were denied education and employment opportunities. Vaculík continued to write for feuilletons and international journals after the Velvet Revolution. He died in Prague in 2015.

The Edice Petlice series is especially remarkable compared to other Czechoslovak samizdat series for its high rate of translation and publication of its volumes abroad.[276] As demonstrated in an annotated bibliography, a larger number of the volumes were published in West Germany than by the Czech language tamizdat press Sixty-Eight Publishers in Toronto.[277] Forty-five volumes of the Edice Petlice series were translated into German and published in

[276] For comparison to other Czechoslovak series, see Jitka Hanáková, *Edice českého samizdatu 1972-1991*. Prague: Národní knihovna České republiky, 1997.

[277] "Předběžný Anotovaný Seznam Edice Petlice," *Acta: čtvrtletník Československého dokumentačního střediska nezávislé literatury,* (1987, roč. 1., č. 3-4), 41-87.

West Germany. Sixty-four volumes of the Edice Petlice series were published in their original Czech in West Germany. Both these figures are higher than the thirty-five volumes of the series that were published by Sixty-Eight Publishers in Toronto. Thus, when examining the international impact of banned authors who lived in Czechoslovakia, West Germany should be a cultural field of central importance. The personal connections behind these publications are worth further investigation: the translators Joachim Bruss, Marianne Pasetti-Swoboda, Gerhard and Alexandra Baumrücker would be the ideal people to begin with.

A colleague and close friend of Ludvík Vaculík, Jiří Gruša (1938-2011) was a fixture of the underground literature scene in Czechoslovakia even after he was forced to leave the country in 1980. He is of great interest here due to his connections with publishing houses in Austria (as mentioned by Vaculík in *Český snář*), Switzerland, and West Germany, his residence in West Germany beginning in 1980 and later service as ambassador to Germany (1993-1997) and to Austria (1998-2004). As appendix 3.2 demonstrates, all of Gruša's prose work was quickly translated into German. For example, his novel *The Questionnaire* first circulated in samizdat form in Czechoslovakia in 1976 and was published in Czech in Toronto in 1978. The first translation, into German, appeared in West Germany in 1979. The novel did not appear in English until 1982. It has since been taken on by the rather trendy Dalkey Archive, and re-published in 2000. As I shall describe below, in addition to publishing his own work in West Germany, Gruša edited three anthologies of Czech essays and literature translated into German. These volumes demonstrate his role as transnational organizer as well as author of Czech literature that was banned in his native Czechoslovakia.

In comparison to the Czechoslovak series Edice Petlice, East German authors of experimental and politically unorthodox novels who had not established themselves within the

GDR's official cultural scene were far less successful at circulating manuscripts in within the country and certainly did not make it beyond its borders. The East German secret police quite effectively confiscated such material, as is clear from a recently created archival collection, which contains over a hundred such confiscated manuscripts.[278] That said, one example of a prominent East German author who managed to publish novels in West Germany deemed unfit for publication in the GDR is Stefan Heym (1913-2001). Both his novels *Fünf Tage im Juli* (1974) and *Collin* (1979) were published in West Germany but banned in East Germany. The latter of the two precipitated Heym's ejection of the GDR Writers' Union.[279]

GDR poetry was a different matter. Anthologies like *L 76* and *Hilferufe von Drüben* (1978) provided Wolfgang Hilbig (1941-2007) an introduction to the West German scene.[280] The following year, he was able to publish his first solo volume of poetry entitled *abwesenheit* with S. Fischer Verlag, one of the most prominent publishing houses in West Germany. This publication landed Hilbig in hot water in the GDR, as he had not obtained the compulsory permission from the proper licensing board and he was required to pay a fine. Nevertheless, the success of his West German publication cleared the way for publication in the GDR.[281]

When an underground network of unofficial literature finally did coalesce in the GDR in the eighties case of the GDR, its products were not a series of novels like Edice Petlice, but

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[278] Cf. Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, *Gesperrte Ablage: Unterdrückte Literaturgeschichte in Ostdeutschland 1945-1989*, Düsseldorf: Lilienfeld Verlag, 2015.

[279] For a detailed new analysis of cross-border trade of literature and the relations between East German and West German publishing houses, see Julia Frohn, *Literaturaustausch im geteilten Deutschland: 1945-1972*, Berlin: Christopher Links Verlag, 2014.

[280] *L 76 [i.e. Sechsundsiebzig]*, Nr. 10 (1978), 89-93. Wilfried Ahrens (ed.), *Hilferufe von drüben: die DDR vertreibt ihre Kinder: authentische Berichte*, Huglfing/Obb.: Verlag für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit in Wirtschaft und Politik, 1978, 17, 45, 61, 89, 103.

[281] Cf. Birgit Dahlke, *Wolfgang Hilbig*, Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2011.

rather art and literary journals, which could well be compared to anthologies of poetry, short stories, essays, and graphic design.[282] As I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, right up until the end of the eighties, the Stasi acted harshly against attempts like those of Heidemarie Härtl to produce longer texts, though her efforts to contribute shorter texts to journals were successful. Such contradictions lend plausibility to Hilbg's 1993 novel "*Ich*," in which the Berlin underground scene is parodied as a fabrication of the secret police. Perhaps there is some truth to the idea that certain literary endeavors were tolerated due to the collaboration of prominent organizers like Sascha Anderson.

Czechoslovak Tamizdat Anthologies in West Germany

Above I have briefly described how Ludvík Vaculík's series of unofficial novels, essays, and plays were not only published in their original language abroad, but also enjoyed high rates of translation into German. Anthologies of shorter texts were a tool used to more directly address a broader public, often beyond one's restrictive borders. Many of the same group of officially banned Czechoslovak authors published in the Edice Petlice series also contributed to anthologies that were translated and published is West Germany. Jiří Gruša edited three such collections, one of which was co-edited by Ludvík Vaculík. As we shall see, each of these capitalized on the international resonance of the Prague Spring, reminding the reader how many years had passed since the Prague Spring and offering to give insight into Czechoslovak culture since then.

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[282] The Robert Havemann Gesellschaft in Berlin offers easy access to reproductions of the widest range of such samizdat journals. See also the following website: www.deutschefotothek.de/cms/kuenstlerzeitschriften.

The first such anthology is a translation of Edice Petlice volume 130, produced in 1978 and titled *Hodina naděje: almanach české literatury 1968-1978*. Jiří Gruša, Milan Uhde, and Ludvík Vaculík are credited with editing it, though Vaculík wrote the introductory text himself. Vaculík's foreword is aimed at explaining what it means to be banned from publication in one's native country, emphasizing the difficulty of producing the current volume and the dangers involved for its contributors. Similarly, Vaculík's first two (of five) entries describe how the Secret Police prevented him from attending Jan Patočka's funeral and a meeting with a country cousin who has come to hear the truth of his relative's illegal activities. Indeed a five of fifty-two diverse contributions are homages to Patočk, one of the first speakers for Charter 77 and a philosophical father to the movement, who died in 1978. Jiří Gruša's entry is most in line with the general marketing of the volume: it offers a history of Czech literature since the Second World War, focusing on explaining Edice Petlice to an audience beyond its immediate participants.

The collection was published under the same title by Sixty-Eight Publishers in 1980 and as *Stunde Namens Hoffnung: Almanach tschechischer Literatur 1968-1978* by S. Fischer Verlag in West Germany in 1978.[283] The back cover of the book offers the following summary to attract a potential reader:

> 1968-1978.
> Zehn Jahre tschechischer Literatur nach dem „Prager Frühling".
> Der Almanach bietet einen Querschnitt durch das Schaffen von Autoren, denen es weitgehend verwehrt war und ist, im eigenen Land und in der Welt gelesen, gehört und gewürdigt zu werden.

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[283] Jiří Gruša, Milan Uhde and Ludvík Vaculík (eds.), *Hodina naděje: almanach české literatury 1968-1978*, Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1980. Jiří Gruša, Milan Uhde and Ludvík Vaculík (ed.), *Stunde Namens Hoffnung: Almanach tschechischer Literatur 1968-1978*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1978.

> Erzählungen ernster und satirischer Art, Erinnerungen, Gedichte, ein Hörspiel und Liedertexte, Essays, und klassisches „böhmisches Feuilleton“, Collagen von Jiří Kolář sowie Porträts der vertretenen Autoren.[284]

Clearly the first two lines are meant to capitalize on the broadest of associations with the political events of 1968 in Prague. No familiarity with individual authors is expected, as only Kolář is individually named. The wide array of genres suggests numerous ways to capture a cultural milieu and avoids any specialization aside from the thematic of the Prague Spring introduced.

Two years after the publication of the above volume Gruša was forced to leave Czechoslovakia in order to escape prison in 1980, a practice well known from the German-German political relationship as *Freikauf*. Gruša appears to have developed local connections a short distance from his new place of residence, the West German capital city, Bonn. His two further anthologies *Verfemte Dichter* and *Prager Frühling - Prager Herbst* both appeared with the Bund Verlag in Cologne, in 1983 and 1988 respectively.[285] Aside from the clear allusion to the Prague Spring in the title of the latter volume, both refer to the elapsed number of years since 1968 in the forewords, which justify the thematic of the volume. Whereas the Fischer anthology spoke of its authors' "broad denial" of public attention, Gruša's volumes speak simply of banned authors and publication bans. *Verfemte Dichter* successfully conveys intimate details of life as banned writer, from the joys of samizdat literature, to meditations on the laws used to prosecute cultural activity, and how to survive day-to-day life in prison. Notably, the final anthology features far fewer authors who still lived in Czechoslovakia and even entries by Heinrich Böll and Günther Grass, conveying their critical observations of the invasion of Prague. Unlike the

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[284] Jiří Gruša, Milan Uhde and Ludvík Vaculík (ed.), *Stunde Namens Hoffnung: Almanach tschechischer Literatur 1968-1978*.

[285] Jiří Gruša (ed.), *Verfemte Dichter: Eine Anthologie aus der ČSSR*, Translated by Joachim Bruss, Köln: Bund-Verlag, 1983. Jiří Gruša and Tomas Kosta (eds.), *Prager Frühling – Prager Herbst: Blicke zurück und nach vorn*, Köln: Bund–Verlag, 1988.

rest of the entries by the Czech authors except for the entry by Václav Havel, these texts are reproduced from previously published volumes.

The three anthologies of literary texts I have introduced in this section open a discussion of Czech *tamizdat* in West Germany. Of the three, the translation of a pre-exisiting compilation was by far the most extensive at 377 pages. Its diversity and length matches the height of production of the Edice Petlice series shown in the chart above. The two later anthologies show decreasing connections between former collaborators such as Jiří Gruša now living abroad with those who remained in Czechoslovakia: the number of contributions by banned authors in Czechoslovakia rapidly diminished. Nevertheless the anothologies represent efforts to maintain Western attention to the struggle for freedom of speech in Czechoslovakia, by capitalizing on the fame of the Prague Spring.

East German Anthologies: Showcases of Experimental Talent Nipped in the Bud

In the early decades of the GDR, anthologies were a tool of the official cultural sphere in the GDR to showcase new talent or a particular topic, often the Socialist literature of a particular foreign country.[286] Anthologies of new literature also thematized the new conditions of Socialism that reigned in East Germany and the achievements of the growing nation. An early example is Christa and Gerhard Wolf's *Wir unsere Zeit* of 1959, published by Aufbau Verlag, the GDR's most well respected publishing house. The two volumes, one devoted to poetry and one to prose, contained the newer material of the GDR's all-stars, such as Anna Seghers, Bertolt Brecht, Johannes R. Becher, and Johannes Bombrosky. However it also contained the work of

[286] For a manageable sample cf: BArch DR/5113 – DR/5130, which contain all anthologies published between 1953 and 1965 in the GDR. Later anthologies are in the files organized by publisher and then year.

Reiner Kunze, Günter Kunert, and Sarah Kirsch, fresh new authors who had become adults in the GDR. From 1962 to 1968 the Aufbau Verlag published a series entitled *Neue Texte: Almanach für deutsche Literatur*. Judging by the authors included, the series sought to provide a controlled view of experimental new work. That the series ended in 1968 is telling, as it foundered in a period of greater restriction, which began in 1965, let up in the immediate aftermath of Honecker's change in cultural policy in 1972, but tightened again from 1975 until the mid eighties.

A prime example of the hopes Honecker inspired and their disappointment is captured in the volume *Berliner Geschichten: 'Operativer Schwerpunkt Selbstverlag' Eine Autoren-Anthologie: wie sie entstand und von der Stasi verhindert wurde*.[287] Published in 1995, it contains the original contributions of eighteen short texts collected by the editors from 1974-1975, as well as the Stasi describing how and why the volume was kept from publication. In their foreword, Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade explain:

> In dieser Zeit, in diesem Klima ist die Idee geboren worden, Texte für eine Anthologie zu sammeln – Thema: Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR; Zeit: vom Kriegsende bis zur Gegenwart. Sie sollte sich von anderen Anthologie dadurch entscheiden, daß alle Teilnehmer von allen Beiträgen Kenntnis bekommen, darüber beraten und – nach Einigung – auch als kollektive Herausgeber gegenüber einem unserem Verlage auftreten sollen.[288]

The process, described by Fritz Rudolf Fries and Christa Wolf as "demokratisch," was meant to circumvent the censorship exercised by the GDR's publishing houses and by extension

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[287] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, *Berliner Geschichten: 'Operativer Schwerpunkt Selbstverlag' Eine Autoren-Anthologie: wie sie entstand und von der Stasi verhindert wurde*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995.

[288] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, "Die Affaire," *Berliner Geschichten*, 8.

representatives of the regime.[289] The very first report filed by Stasi inflated the project from one of producing an anthology to that of founding a new publishing house, hence the operation name "Selbst Verlag."[290] As the editors describe it, the Stasi's response was to spread disinformation, including rumors that a West German press had been contracted to publish the volume and that the participants wanted to create a "platform" for political activity with their anthology. Though the first accusation was false, the second, as the foreword notes, was so vague as to be difficult to disprove.[291] In any case, such accusations made difficult further cooperation with the Writers' Union, through which potential contributors were approached and where discussion of the project was held. After a depressing meeting that seemed more like an interrogation with five culture functionaries and a rejection from a GDR publishing house, the editors broke off work on the publication in 1976.[292]

Aside from the title of the Stasi operation (Selbst Verlag), the fact that many of the texts to be published in the anthology quickly found their way into print proves that the political implications of the project aroused greater suspicion than the texts themselves. Two of the editors were able to publish their texts in their own collections of short stories printed by GDR

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[289] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, "Die Affaire," *Berliner Geschichten*, 9.

[290] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, *Berliner Geschichten*, 216.

[291] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, "Die Affaire," *Berliner Geschichten*, 12-13.

[292] Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, and Martin Stade, "Die Affaire," *Berliner Geschichten*, 14-15.

publishing houses: Martin Stade in 1976 and Klaus Schlesinger in 1977.[293] Ulrich Plenzdorf was awarded the Ingeborg-Bachmann-Preis in 1978 for his planned contribution, though it was first published in West Germany in 1984.[294] The betterknown authors in the anthology, such as Günther Kunert and Stefan Heym, were also able to quickly publish their contributions in their collections of short stories, Künert in the GDR and West Germany and Heym in West Germany alone.[295] All of these publications were by a single author, and thus the main success in deterring the original project was to deter the collaboration of authors outside of the GDR's established cultural institutions, especially publishing houses.

Two authors who participated in the project are notable for their connections to the GDR's samizdat culture of the eighties.[296] Gert Neumann (published here under his married name Gert Härtl) and Heidemarie Härtl both submitted pieces from novel-length prose texts. Neumann's *Die Schuld der Worte* was published by the West German S Fischer Verlag in 1979.[297] However, before the fall of the Wall, Härtl's *Entweder Oder* appeared only under the imprint bergen verlag, a press founded by Härtl, Neumann, Matthias Hinkel, and Micha Scholze

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[293] Martin Stade, "Von einem, der alles doppelt sah," *17 schöne Fische: Erzählungen*, Berlin: Buchverlag Der Morgen, 1976. Klaus Schlesinger, "Am Ende der Jugend," *Berliner Traum: fünf Geschichten*, Rostock: Hinstorff, 1977.

[294] Ulrich Plenzdorf, *kein runter kein fern*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984.

[295] Günther Kunert, "Die Druse," *Warum Schreiben: Notizen zur Literatur*, Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1976. Günther Kunert, "Die Druse," *Warum Schreiben: Notizen zur Literatur*, München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1976. Stefan Heym, "Mein Richard," *Die richtige Einstellung und andere Erzählungen*, München: Bertelsmann, 1976.

[296] The full list of contributors is: Günther de Bruyn, Elke Erb, Fritz Rudolf Fries, Uwe Grüning, Gert Härtl, Heide Härtl, Stefan Heym, Hans Ulrich Klinger, Paul Gratzig, Günther Kunert, Jürgen Leskien, Ulrich Plenzdorf, Klaus Schlesinger, Rolf Schneider, Dieter Schubert, Helga Schubert, Martin Stade, and Joachim Walther.

[297] Gert Neumann, *Die Schuld der Worte*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1979 and Gert Neumann, *Die Schuld der Worte*, Rostock: Hinstorff, 1989.

in mid-October of 1988.[298] Neumann's *Die Klandestinität der Kesselreiniger*, which eventually drew praise from Martin Walser and Frank Hörnig, was also first published as samizdat.[299] Härtl and Neumann were also active contributors to the samizdat literary journal *Anschlag*, however their samizdat novels represent two of the very few texts of the genre available in GDR archives today.

Many of the charges leveled at the editors of *Berliner Geschichten* could be confirmed in the case of contemporaneous Czechoslovak efforts. Václav Havel did indeed build a platform for political opposition from his work with other imprisoned, banned or marginalized authors in the form of Charter 77 and VONS, and many of those authors overlapped with Ludvík Vaculík's self published series. Moreover, the international distribution of Czechoslovak self-published literature is impressive, considering that translation was necessary even to penetrate the West German market. Why then were GDR authors offended at the idea that they would attempt to publish in West rather than East Germany? Plenzdorf, Schlesinger, and Stade's attempt to work with the Writers' Union and their interest in publishing their anthology with a GDR publishing house demonstrates their desire to criticize their system from within. This attitude might well be symptomatic of the commitment of those who chose to live in the GDR to contributing to the Socialist project it represented and also an antipathy to West Germany.

Conclusion

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[298] Copies of the samizdat manuscripts are held by the Gendenkbibliothek Berlin. Cf. Heidemarie Härtl, *Puppe im Sommer*, Frankfurt am Main: Edition Büchergilde, 2006, an edition of *entweder oder* produced by the Archiv der unterdruckter Literatur der DDR.

[299] Gert Neumann, *Die Klandestinität der Kesselreiniger: ein Versuch des Sprechens*, Frankfurt am Main: S Fischer Verlag, 1989.

Jan Faktor, born in Prague in 1951 and a resident of East Berlin beginning in 1978, was a frequent visitor to the GDR in the seventies before moving there. He participated in the Prenzlauer Berg scene and as he describes in his joint publication with his wife, Annette Simon, the general attitude of East Germans, even those of the so-called disaffected younger generation was distinctly different from that of his hometown. Like many others, including Simon, he noted the respect with which Czechoslovakia's underground culture was regarded. For Faktor this regard was due to a certain kind of faith in Socialism that led to many misconceptions. In his essay "Die DDR-Linken und die tschechische Opposition," he writes:

> In der DDR lebten viele Hoffnungen, die woanders im Ostblock mehr oder weniger tot waren, munter weiter. Und zwar nicht nur in den Köpfen der älteren, sondern auch in den Köpfen der jungen Linken. [...] Diese Gläubigkeit kam – wie auch die Musik oder die grünen Parkas oder der wirklich klebende „tesa-film", „Kennzeichen D", „Weltspiegel" und vieles mehr – aus dem Westen. Sie hatte ein Standbein in den Diskussionszirkel der westdeutschen Linken, in der APO oder in den K- oder anderen (z.B. anarchistischen) Gruppen; diese Gläubigkeit nährte sich u. a. von der Wut der West-Linken auf deren nicht sehr mütterliches System, sie nährte sich aus der Wissen über die globalen Probleme in der Welt. Aber auch aus der Auch-Ohnmacht, aus dem Auch-Nicht-Glücklich-Sein dieser Leute, die man dort im Westen persönlich kannte. [...] Und zusätzlich gefüttert wurde diese Gläubigkeit durch immer neue (neo)marxistische oder eben links-alternative politische Literatur, die in die DDR geschmuggelt wurde. Im Vergleich zu Prag ging man hier an Dinge viel theoretischer heran.[300]

Faktor describes the pervasive faith in Socialism present in the East German intellectual milieu as the product of proximity to West Germany. In his opinion, intimate knowledge of the flaws of Western society and discussion with West Germany's sympathetic political left lent the Socialist project in the East legitimacy. Faktor even claims that the contact with the West led many East Germans to import a certain blindness: "Und mit der–damals jedenfalls sehr suggestive wirkenden–Authentizität der West-Linken wurden in die DDR witzigerweise Illusionen auch

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[300] Jan Faktor, "Die DDR-Linken und die tschechische Opposition," *Fremd im eigenen Land*, (Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, 2000), 38-39.

über Dinge importiert, an denen man selbst eigentlich viel näher dran war."[301] In other words, West and East Germans who supported the Socialist project ignored certain truths of living in the East Bloc.

The records of the secret police and interviews with individuals show that the Prague Spring's political agenda of reforming Socialism found a great deal of resonance in East Germany, especially in the form of contemporaneous protests of the invasion of Prague. While in West Germany, anthologies of Czechoslovak literary texts were marketed to capitalize on the fame of the political movement, there is no evidence to suggest that Czechoslovak culture of the sixties, be it film, novels, or short stories, found an audience of like-minded readers in the GDR. Still, further comparison of the success of banned or marginalized authors of the ČSSR and GDR in West Germany is warranted, in order to ascertain whether similarly themed or styled texts were favored.

[301] Jan Faktor, "Die DDR-Linken und die tschechische Opposition," *Fremd im eigenen Land*, 39-40.

Chapter Four
Generational Experience and the GDR's Underground Literature Before Prenzlauer Berg

In 1962, Christa Wolf reported on the current state of East German literature in the liberal Czech literary journal *Literární noviny*. It was Wolf's second article published in Czechoslovakia, following up on a shorter piece published in 1960, about a recent anthology of West German prose.[302] The 1962 piece describes GDR literature by means of a generational schema. According to Wolf, the most exciting new GDR literature is defined by generational experience of the Second World War. She writes:

> Knihy, které v minulém roce vyvolaly nejvíce diskusi a sporů – a které měly samozřejmě i nejvíce čtenářů – byly napsány spisovateli takzvaně mladší generace, třicetiletými až pětatřicetiletými. „Mladší generace" je pojem. Vznikl z potřeby vést dostatečně jasnou dělící čáru mezi touto skupinou a „staršími" (čtyřicátníky) i „mladými", kteří právě překročili dvacítku a už ohlásili svůj vstup do literatury, zejména básněmi. Nevím, jak v jiných zemích, ale fašismus, válka a poválečná léta svými otřesnými zážitky zakreslily u nás zřetelné generační hranice, které byly poslední dobou registrovány a jež je třeba brát na vědomí.[303]

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[302] The earlier article was [Ch]rista Wolfová, "Dopis z Berlína," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 9/1960, číslo 44, strana 8. It refers to Rolf Schroers, *Auf den Spuren der Zeit; junge deutsche Prosa*, München: P. List, 1959.

[303] Christa Wolf, "O jedné generaci (NDR)," *Literární noviny* (II), ročník 11/1962, číslo 15, s. 9 (Literatura) [About a Generation (GDR)]. There seems to be no German version of this piece, which it may be assumed was translated by Františka Faktorová, friend to the Wolfs and editor of *Literární noviny.* Though it is not explicitly named in the text, Wolf mentions a recent meeting of her generation of writers, likely refering to a conference of young people in July of the same year (1962), which was organized with the participation the Writers' Union and took place in Halle, headquarters of the Mitteldeutscher Verlag. The authors she names in her article as worthy of attention are Dieter Noll (b.1927), Brigitte Reimann (b. 1933), Herbert Nachbar (b.1930), Karl-Heinz Jakobs (b.1929) and Bernhard Seegher (b.1927). These individuals do indeed belong to the five-year span Wolf names in her article. Cf.: Christa Wolf, "[Über die Beziehung der Literatur zur Nation] Beitrag zum Konferenz junger Schriftsteller," *Neue Deutsche Literatur* 8/1962, and Magenau, *Christa Wolf: Eine Biographie*, 135. Magenau does not explicitly describe the "Konferenz junger Schriftsteller in Halle" featured in volumes seven and eight of the Writers' Union publication *Neue Deutsche Literatur*; he does, however, name the rising youth of

> The books that have elicited the most discussion and controversy during the last year (and that, of course, have also had the most readers) were written by authors of the so-called younger generation– thirty-year-olds to thirty-five-years olds. "The younger generation" has become a recognizable concept. It arose from the need to draw a sufficiently clear dividing line between this group and the "older" (forty-year-olds) and the "young," who are just over twenty and have already announced their arrival on the literary scene, especially through their poetry. I don't know how it is in other countries, but in our country, the harrowing experiences of Fascism, war, and the post-war years etched clear generational borders, which have been registered in recent times and which it is necessary to note.

Wolf's specificity is quite notable here: she claims the title of the younger generation for a cohort of just five years, specifically those born between 1927 and 1932. Wolf, born in 1929, occupies the center of this generation. Born in 1922, the "old people," as Wolf calls them, are nonetheless a generation away from the founding generation of GDR authors, having been born a solid twenty years later. The "young people" apparently born around 1942 or later are still too old to be Kolb's generation of poets (who were born in the nineteen fifties).

The crux of Wolf's analysis of the GDR's new literature is that personal experience of the Second World War was not only reflected in recent novels, but that the age of authors during the Second World War was crucial. Wolf's self-identified age group lived their adolescence under Hitler, unlike the young people who were too young to experience the War, or the old people, who were already adults. At the time of writing the article, Wolf had just completed her first fictional piece *Moskauer Novelle*, about coming to terms with a young person's dangerous naiveté during the Hitler years, and was in the process of completing *Der geteilte Himmel*, a novel about making an informed decision to remain in GDR. This article is as much a reflection

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the day. The conference was described in entries by Helmut Preißler, Eva Strittmatter, Gerhard Wolf, Hans Koch, and Christa Wolf. A short excerpt from Alfred Kurella's closing remarks was also printed. Oddly enough, other young poets she would have met there, who later gained international prominence, such as Volker Braun, (b. 1939), Wolf Biermann (b. 1936), or Sarah and Rainer Kirsch (b. 1935 and 1934 respectively), do not fit into her schema of generations at all.

of Wolf's works as the authors she analyzes: Wolf has stated that her experience of the Second World War shaped her commitment to the Socialist project and by extension her decision to remain in the GDR state.

In the post-Wall reckoning with GDR literature, generational experience continues to dominate many histories of GDR literature. Wolfgang Emmerich offers a representative example of such schemas when he describes the following four generations: the first, that of the founding fathers of the GDR such as Bertolt Brecht, Anna Seghers, and Johannes R. Becher, being those born before 1915. The second, born between 1915 and 1930, experienced Nazism as youths and basically exchanged that system of belief with Socialism. Those born after 1930, according to Emmerich, were already quite different as they did not experience Fascism in the same way. Still, these first three generations agreed in the following ways: 1) they understood themselves as Socialists, 2) they accepted a moral, socially operative task to literature, and 3) they held fast to the idea of social utopia as a central tenet, at least until the mid-seventies. The fourth generation identified by Emmerich is that of those born after 1950. Named after Uwe Kolb's volume of poem "hineingeboren," these represented a radical break from the former three in that they had no interest in taking up the task of building Socialism. These were the "Aussteiger" or dropouts of GDR society who made up the Prenzlauer Berg scene, a loosely connected group of authors named after the neighborhood in Berlin where they lived, often illegally. Until recently, the Prenzlauer Berg scene has been described as the GDR's closest equivalent to an alternative cultural scene, perhaps even oppositional in the sense that it refused politicization.[304]

The first three generations of GDR authors that Emmerich described are characterized by their relationship to the Second World War, much as Christa Wolf had suggested in her 1962

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[304] Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, 403-5.

article. The fourth generation, which reached adolescence after the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, had no choice in the matter of remaining in the GDR. As Emmerich describes it, these young people were the most likely to rebel, because they never shared the basic values of the previous three generations.

A number of studies have already challenged this characterization of the fourth generation of GDR authors, and the Prenzlauer Berg scene in particular. Karen Leeder takes issue with the common view of the Prenzlauer Berg scene as dominated by a single generation in her influential book *Breaking Boundaries: A New Generation of Poets in the GDR*.[305] In a recent dissertation, Anna Horakova has argued that a number of the Prenzlauer Berg authors were in fact committed to Socialism, and sought to reform their society.[306] That the Prenzlauer Berg scene was taken to be representative of an entire generation is a central weakness of Emmerich's generational overview.[307] Furthermore, the study of oppositional culture in the GDR remains mistakenly limited to the Prenzaluer Berg scene.

The standard view taken by historians is that in parallel, or indeed, in connection with the human rights movement of the eighties, an appreciable culture of underground art took root in the GDR much later compared to neighboring countries. Counting from the 1960 production of the poetry magazine *Syntax* by Alexander Ginzburg in Leningrad, Klaus Michael writes:

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[305] Karen Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries: A New Generation of Poets in the GDR*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

[306] As her dissertation is not yet available, cf. Anna Horakova, "Producing A Future, Commemorating A Past: Jan Faktor And The Avantgardes," *German Life and Letters*, (2015, Vol.68/2), 284-301.

[307] Cf. Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, *Gesperrte Ablage*, 264-306, Diana Göldner, "Punk in Leipzig. Youth opposition between repression and hope," *Deutschland Archiv*, (Sep 2002, Vol.35/5), 815-824 and Dieter Rink and Michael Hofmann, Opposition Groups and Alternative Milieus in Leipzig and the Process of Change in Eastern Germany, *Deutschland Archiv*, (Sep 1991, Vol.24/9), 940-948.

> Im Unterscheid zur Sowjetunion setzt eine vergleichbare Entwicklung in der DDR allerdings mit zwanzigjähriger Verspätung ein, zu den osteuropäischen Nachbarländern besteht eine zeitliche Differenz von zehn Jahren. Natürlich kursierten immer wieder Manuskripte oder Abschriften von Büchern, die nicht erscheinen konnten, so von Wolf Biermann, Reiner Kunze, Jürgen Fuchs oder Rainer Kirsch. Fraglich ist aber, ob dies zum Samisdat gerechnet werden kann. Auch Flugblätter, die unmittelbar nach der Niederschlagung des Prager Frühlings 1968 von Hand zu Hand gingen, können rückblickend nicht als Beginn des Samisdat gelten, selbst wenn sie Abschriften der Lieder Wolf Biermanns enthielten, da sie weder über einen Herausgeber noch über Reihencharakter verfügen. Auch ist der Kriterium der Wiedererkennung nicht gegeben. Strenggenommen kann der Beginn einer nicht offiziellen Zeitschriftenliteratur für die DDR erst mit dem Jahre 1979 angesetzt werden, mit der Herausgabe der Textsammlungen *Papiertaube* von Dieter Kerschek, Lothar Feix, Gerd Adloff, *Laternenmann* von Thomas Böhme und der als Vorläufer der Zeitschrift *Mikado* von Uwe Kolb herausgebrachten Edition *Der Kaiser ist nackt*.[308]

Michael's reluctance to include manuscripts and copies of unpublished work by well-known authors in his survey of samizdat is quite reductive, though explained by his stated criteria. Samizdat, according to Michael, must have an editor and be part of a series. The ability to recognize the author is also crucial. This explains Klaus' focus on *Zeitschriften*, or literary magazines, throughout his piece. It is true that in studies of underground literature in Czechoslovakia, series such as Edice Petlice and Edice Expedice edited by Ludvík Vaculík and Václav Havel respectively are often of central importance.[309] However, to completely dismiss texts produced without such organized efforts overlooks an important dynamic of GDR culture. The failure to organize a visible network of individuals who produced a curated series of texts should not be interpreted as the absence of underground culture, and certainly does not connote a

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[308] Klaus Michael, "Samisdat – Literatur – Modernität: Osteuropäischer Samisdat und die selbstverlegte Literatur Ostdeutschlands," *Heimliche Leser in der DDR*, (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2008), 343.

[309] In point of fact, neither of these series began in 1969, as Michael suggests. The first volume of Edice Petlice was produced in 1973 and peak production was reached in 1978 and 1979, no doubt due to the increased organizational structure surrounding Charter 77. The series Edice Expedice began in 1975, as did *Kvart*. Cf.: Jitka Hanáková, *Edice českého samizdatu 1972 – 1991*, Prague: Národní knihovna České republiky, 1997.

lack of dissent in the GDR. In my opinion, the success of the Stasi in destroying all efforts to organize alternative groupings in the late sixties and throughout the seventies should encourage, rather than deter the study of such activities.

Even if we are to reject Michael's criteria for identifying samizdat, first person accounts of the kind collected by Alexander Plato, which describe reading such illicit texts bring us no closer to establishing the extent of underground culture. Archival collections such as that of the Robert Havemann Gesellschaft often focus on the same literary magazines described by Michael, and therefore new appraisals of underground culture are stymied by the current lack of materials dating from before 1979. The best hope for new research into literary culture is perhaps the files of the Stasi, from which Ines Giepert and Joachim Walther have retrieved confiscated manuscripts and begun to publish a series called "Die verschwiegene Bibliothek."[310] The texts, which appear to range across all genres of life writing, present new challenges in terms of explicating their aesthetic qualities as well as their historical relevance. Descriptions of East Germany's underground culture that are confined to the literary magazines, art journals, and church newsletters of the eighties exclude the diverse efforts at self-expression in the seventies.

In this chapter, I broaden the study of samizdat in the GDR with a case study of Siegmar Faust's (1944-) autobiographical novels *Der Freischwimmer* and *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*,

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[310] More information on this project can be found online at https://www.bundesstiftung-aufarbeitung.de/archiv-unterdrueckter-literatur-in-der-ddr-die-verschwiegene-bibliothek-4004.html. See also Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, "Intellekt ohne Repräsentanz. Ein Arbeitsbericht über ein Archiv der Widerworte," in *Zeitschrift des Forschungsverbundes SED-Staat* 12 (2002), 29–34 and Appendix 3.2 for a list of the texts published thus far. Of the nine in print, four contain poetry or prose written before the eighties: *Kolberger Hefte: die Tagebücher von Henryk Bereska 1967-1990* (an engaged writer and translator of Polish literature), Edeltraud Eckert, *Jahr ohne Frühling: Gedichte und Briefe* (about the fifties), Thomas Körner, *Das Grab des Novalis: dramatisierter Essay, Fragment von der Weltanschauung*, Günter Ullmann, *Die Wiedergeburt der Sterne nach dem Feuerwerk*. No new publications are planned, however the archive, which contains thousands of texts, is open to research.

both of which were written between 1968 and 1971, but published later in West Germany. While historical studies of the GDR's widespread public protests against the Soviet invasion of Prague have already been written, Faust is an ideal example of such sentiments expressed in literary form. I argue that the Prague Spring was a formative experience for those who came of age in 1968. Faust's novels further demonstrate a strong generational conflict, which I argue speaks to the schema of generations of GDR alluded to above. Comparing Faust's antipathies to his parents' generation as Nazis to contemporaneous West German youth literature would be fruitful. However, I argue that in Faust's early autobiographical work is best understood as portraying frustration with Socialist society and the protagonist's disappointed hopes in that system.

By comparing Faust's work to a 1976 novel by Czech author Jiří Gruša (1938-2011), I establish that the Prague Spring forged a link between the aggressive measures of post-World War Two Socialist authority and that of the Nazi authority beyond East Germany. In Gruša's novel *Dotazník* (*The Questionnaire*) the protagonist struggles to find a job, as each time he applies he must complete a standard document designed to test the candidate's ideological conformity. He has applied to fifteen positions before the novel begins. In answering the questions, the narrator goes deep into the past, recovering his family's history back to the eighteenth century, and retelling the story of the Czech lands in the process. This history highlights similarities between German authority of days past and the present Communist dictatorship.

Though each of the novels' discussed are written in quite different styles, their common themes speak to the generational experience of East Bloc youth's disappointment with the Socialist system, embodied in the defeat of the Prague Spring. Faust and Gruša's exposition of

this frustration in literary form add depth to East German solidarity with Czechoslovakia, already well studied in histories of East German political protest.

The '68ers of East Germany

The West German generation of so-called '68ers have their place in a worldwide movement for (mostly) peaceful liberalization often compared to student movements in the United States, France, and beyond. As Annette Simon describes it,

> Die Geburtsjahrgänge 1938-1948 (mit der Möglichkeit der Abweichung nach hinten und nach vorn) sind als Achtundsechziger in die Geschichte der Bundesrepublik eingegangen als eine Generation, der es gelang, ihr Lebensgefühl in einzigartiger Weise politisch zu artikulieren und damit auch Katalysator eines gesellschaftlichen und vor allem kulturellen Umbruchs zu werden, wie es den Generationen nach ihr nicht vergönnt sein sollte.[311]

This description of a generation is notable for the emphasis on the success of the Western '68ers, who, according to Simon changed their society to an unparalleled degree. Postulating a delay in efficacy, Simon claims the same distinction for the parallel generation in East Germany. She writes, "Den gleichen Geburtsjahrgängen der DDR wurde eine ähnliche Aufmerksamkeit nicht zuteil, sie sind weitgehend unbekannt geblieben bzw. als Generation nicht identifiziert worden, obwohl die vielen Gruppen, aus denen sich die Bürgerbewegung von 1989 schließlich konstituierte, ohne sie nicht denkbar wären."[312] In other words, the peaceful demonstrations of the eighties that eventually brought down the Wall are the legacy of the East German '68ers, according to Simon.

The '68ers in East Germany: Case Study Siegmar Faust

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[311] Annette Simon, "Vor den Vätern sterben die Söhn?" in *Fremd im eigenen Land*, (Gießen: Psychosozial Verlag, 2000), 7.

[312] Simon, "Vor den Vätern sterben die Söhn?" 8-9.

The combination of influences from Western culture and from Socialist reform in Czechoslovakia made the '68ers in East Germany a double threat to the stability of the GDR. In response to this situation, the East German politburo resorted to methods familiar from throughout the East Bloc. The state ejected students from its universities, relegated to obscurity those who protested government measures by revoking permission their permission to live in large cities and ensuring with negative employment evaluations that they could find only menial forms of work, if any. Some were jailed. The case study of Siegmar Faust demonstrates all this and more: the effort to intimidate individuals into leaving the GDR for West Germany. As Faust demonstrates, normalization in the GDR meant imprisonment or expulsion from the state for those who sought to organize privately outside the purview of officially sanctioned groups.

Siegmar Faust, born Siegmar Kaylenberg on December 12th, 1944 in Dohna, Sachsen was twice ex-matriculated from university and twice imprisoned for "staatsfeindliche Hetze," or anti-state agitation. Though he had earlier refused to be released into West Germany, after his second period of incarceration, Faust emigrated to West Germany where he lived as an independent author until reunification.[313] After the fall of the Wall, Faust returned to East Berlin where he worked as a referent to the commission for the Stasi archives in Berlin, later serving as a representative on the commission of the Stasi archives in Dresden. Today he guides groups through the former prison Höhenschönhausen in Berlin. Faust has been profiled as a dissident in a few collections such as that organized for the Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft by Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk and Tom Sello, as well as that edited by Klaus J. Groth and Joachim Schäfer, titled

[313] See Faust's entry in *Wer war wer in der DDR*, Berlin: Christopher Links, 2010.

Stigmatisiert: Der Terror der Gutmenschen.[314] Both of these dwell on Faust's political engagement rather than literary accomplishments.

Faust first began his university studies at the Karl-Marx University of Leipzig in 1965, his course of studies was "Kunsterziehung und Geschichte." In 1966 he came to the attention of the Stasi as "Mitinitiator einer Lyrikveranstaltung 'unzensierte Lyrik,'" for which he was ex-matriculated from the university, and sent for a year of 'Bewährung in der Produktion.'"[315] As Faust explained in an interview of June 2014, he was nominated from amongst his fellow workers to attend the prestigious Johannes R. Becher Literature Institute in Leipzig. There, Faust was able to join the young writer's section of the GDR Writers' Union and publish a few poems in the journal *Neue deutsche Literatur*. However, Faust was kicked out of the institute when he distributed a poem called "Ballade vom alten Schwelofen" to fellow workers at a coal processing plant because the poem contained a reference to the June 17th workers' revolt of 1953.[316] As Faust explained in an interview he was at the time still an ardent believer in Socialism and indeed the poem reads as optimistic. Faust further commented that he was part of a larger wave of purges of the institute, which in 1968 was seen as a dangerous concentration of counter-revolutionaries. As David Clarke explains, the purge was also shaped by the recent censure and dismissal of Walter Bräunig from his position as teacher at the literature institute immediately

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[314] Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk and Tom Sello (eds.), *Für ein freies Land mit freien Menschen: Opposition und Widerstand in Biographien und Fotos*, Berlin: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, 2006. "Der Dissident: Siegmar Faust – Im Visier des sozialistischen Establishments," in *Stigmatisiert: Der Terror der Gutmenschen* edited by Klaus J. Groth and Joachim Schäfer. Unna: Aton Verlag, 2003, 115-124.

[315] Uta Rachowski, "Siegmar Faust," *Für ein freies Land mit freien Menschen*, (Berlin: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, 2006), 172.

[316] The poem is quoted in a review of Faust's presentation of his novel *Der Provokateur* at the Gedenkbibliothek zu Ehren der Opfer des Stalinismus, Berlin 9/26/1994. Available online at http://gedenkbibliothek.de/download/Siegmar_Faust_Der_Provokateur_vom_26_09_1994.pdf

preceding the Eleventh Plenum, during which, as described in the previous chapter, Bräunig was severely criticized.[317]

The East German secret police tracked Faust in the OV (operativer Vorgang or operation) "Literat" after his expulsion due to Faust's efforts to organize friends into an authors' circle that followed the Prague Spring. Deprived of the stipend to support himself and his family, Faust found a job driving boat tours of the Elsterstausee, south of Leipzig. Faust recalls his job as convenient for pursuing intellectual interests, saying in another interview

> […] ich könnte viel lesen, hatte viel Zeit. Vor allem, wenn es regnete, saß ich in meiner Kajüte und las, vor allem Lyrik und Marx. Ich wollte immer noch die mit ihren eigenen Waffen schlagen, deshalb habe ich mich immer noch mit Marx beschäftigt. Und nun muss man dazu sagen, dass, was alle bewegt, war damals, war was sich in der CSSR, vor allem in Prag abspielte. Die sendeten täglich 5 Stunden in deutscher Sprache. Ich hatte damals ein kleines Kofferradio. Ich könnte das also empfangen, war also bestens informiert, was da los war. Auch konnte ich mir über Radio Prag das Dubczek-Programm zuschicken lassen. Das KPC-Programm, wo sie Fehler zugaben und Demokratie einführen wollten. All das, was die letzte Hoffnung für uns war, Sozialismus mit menschlichen Ansätzen.[318]

Faust had the idea of organizing an event on the boat at night, and, having passed the invitation about in whispers, he realtes that about thirty people met at the anchored ship one night in June, arriving by means of rowboats. The event attracted a great deal of attention from the Secret Police. Copies from the Stasi archives show that IM Kretschmar reported

> Faust führte in seiner Einleitungsansprache unter Zuhilfenahme tschechischer Aktionsgruppe sinngemäß aus, daß für die Freiheit der Kunst in der DDR verschiedene Dinge, wie Abschaffung der Pressezensur, Zensur für die Literatur überhaupt nötig und

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[317] David Clarke "Parteischule oder Dichterschmiede? The Institut für Literatur 'Johannes R. Becher' from Its Founding to Its Abwicklung," *German Studies Review* Vol. 29, No. 1 (Feb. 2006), 94, 105.

[318] The documentary film, entitled "Das Sächsische Meer: Schriftsteller und der Prager Frühling in Leipzig" was made in 2003 by Ralph Grüneberger and Gerhard Pötzsch to accompany a traveling exhibit called "Gegen den Strom." The film was distributed with a transcription of the film quoted here with page numbers deduced beginning with the first page of text after the title page. Here page 6.

> zu übertragen seien. Die Kunst müsse sich frei entwickeln, ohne Manipulationsfaktoren von machtpolitischen Seite her. Ich halte Faust's Beeinflussungsvermögen auf seine jeweiligen Gesprächspartner für außerordentlich groß. Er ist bemüht, seine Ideen auf den Gesprächspartner zu übertragen.[319]

Among approximately thirty people whom Faust was supposedly agitating were Dietrich Gnüchtel, Wolfgang Hilbig, Bernd-Lutz Lange, Gert Neumann, and Andreas Reimann.

The Motorbootlyriklesung did not lead to Faust's arrest, though he was fired from his job as boat driver and was hard pressed to find a new one, serving as a caregiver to his children for two years. Eventually he was hired as a nighttime security guard at the Deutsche Bucherei, the East German predecessor of the German National Library, from which he secretly borrowed books. On discovery that the second volume of Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* was missing, Faust's apartment was searched. "Bei einer Durchsuchung meiner Wohnung fanden sie zwar nicht die *Krebsstation*, dafür aber Manuskripte, mein Tagebuch und einen Briefumschlag, aus dem zu ersehen war, daß ich eines meiner Manuskripte einem westdeutschen Verlag zur Veröffentlichung angeboten hatte," he explains in an entry in the 1978 collection *Betrogene Hoffnung: Aus Selbsterzeugnisse ehemalige Kommunisten.*[320] Faust spent eleven months, from November 27th 1971 to October 1972 in "Untersuchungshaft," meaning he was not officially convicted or sentenced. He was released as part of an official amnesty celebrating the twenty-third founding of the GDR.

Working in a paper factory near Heidenau, Faust was arrested again on May 10th 1974 for posting Rosa Luxemberg's quotation regarding freedom to think differently to the Wandzeitung at work. Faust's later review of his secret police file showed that he was considered a great threat

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[319] "Das Sächsische Meer: Schriftsteller und der Prager Frühling in Leipzig," 38.

[320] Siegmar Faust, "Irgendwas muß doch passieren!" *Betrogene Hoffnung: Aus Selbsterzeugnisse ehemalige Kommunisten*, (Krefeld: SINUS-Verlag, 1978), 200.

at this time. He was sentenced to four and a half years, but released after just about two thanks to intervention by Robert Havemann, Wolf Biermann, and Amnesty International. While in prison, Faust created a handwritten newsletter entitled "Armes Deutschland" for which he was punished with over four hundred days of solitary confinement in a basement.[321]

Upon his release in 1976, Faust emigrated to West Germany, where he began publishing his own material in 1979. Faust published eighteen reports or commentaries in various newspapers or newsletters between 1979 and 1982.[322] His published literary oeuvre includes one collection of poetry and three first person autobiographical texts. According to Faust's commentary, the collection of poetry published in *Die Knast- und Wunderjahre des Faustus Simplicissimus* (1979) was written between 1967 and 1973.[323] Though Faust's final novel, *Der Provokateur: Ein politischer Roman* (1999) was clearly written after leaving the GDR, dating his earlier two novels was difficult until both were recovered from Faust's Stasi files.[324] The foreword and afterword to Faust's *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid: ein experimentelles Essay* explains that it was completed in 1970 but confiscated by the secret police. In 1984, Faust and was able to publish a copy of it found in the archives of a West German publishing house to

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[321] *Wer war wer in der DDR*. See a part of one issue of "Armes Deutschland" in Faust's *Ich will hier raus*, (Berlin-West: Klaus Guhl Verlag, 1983), 137. This collection of fragments including letters and commentary related to Faust's literary efforts and intellectual pursuits, as well as incarceration forms a kind of autobiography, as well as a biography of a generation, according to Ulrich Schacht.

[322] See the bibliography in Faust, *Ich will hier raus*, 280.

[323] Siegmar Faust, *Die Knast- und Wunderjahre des Faustus Simplicissimus*, Berlin: Guhl Verlag, 1979.

[324] Siegmar Faust, *Der Provocateur*, München: F. A. Herbig Verlag, 1999. Faust's Stasi files and Vorlaß are part of the new Archiv unterdrückter Literatur der DDR, organized by the Bundesstiftung für die Aufarbeitung der SED Diktatur. Cf. Ines Geipel and Joachim Walther, *Gesperrte Ablage: Unterdrückte Literaturgeschichte in Ostdeutschland 1945-1989*, Düsseldorf: Lilienfeld Verlag, 2015.

whom he had sent his work before his incarceration.[325] Faust's other early autobiographical novel, *Der Freischwimmer: Das Ende einer Jugend in Dresden* (1987) contains neither introduction nor afterword to explain its provenance, though the following marketing blurb on the back cover describes the book as follows:

> "Mir ist…ich muß mal kotz." Pardon! Doch auch dies gehört zu den Empfindungen des jungen Arbeitersohnes Siegmar Faust in der Zeit des bedeutsamen Jahres 1968, als er sich an seinem ersten Roman versuchte. Es versteht sich von selbst, daß dieses unkonventionelle Zeugnis eines Individualisierungsprozesses in der DDR nie erscheinen durfte. Denn der sächsische Faustus Simplicissimus, dem noch auf dem Abitur-Zeugnis eine „parteiliche und bewusste Einstellung zum Arbeiter-und-Bauern-Staat" bescheinigt wurde begann in jener Zeit der gewaltsamen Zerstörung des „Prager Frühlings" durch die Truppen des Warschauer Paktes zu rebellieren und gegen den Strom zu schwimmen.[326]

The claim that *Der Freischwimmer* was Faust's first novel, begun around 1968, cannot be verified by means of any other published statement. However, the recovery of its manuscript, along with that of *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* from Faust's Stasi files confirms that despite their delayed publication, both existed in much the same form in 1971. If *Der Freischwimmer* was indeed Faust's first novel, then both it and *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* and were written within three years. Though thematic similarities such as rebellion against an older generation unite the two texts, they are very different stylistically speaking.

Both of Faust's texts written between 1968 and 1971 display two major autobiographical concerns: insistent allusion to literary and philosophical works, and frustration with an inability to find a place in GDR society. These two issues are clearly linked, as Faust delights in quoting philosophy and literature far beyond the acceptable GDR canon. In a practice widespread amongst reform-minded young people of the GDR and likely in homage to Hans Magnus

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[325] Siegmar Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid: ein experimentelles Essay*, (Berlin: Guhl Verlag, 1984) 5-6, 125.

[326] Siegmar Faust, *Der Freischwimmer: Das Ende einer Jugend in Dresden*, Sindelfingen: Anita Tykve Verlag, 1987.

Enzenberger, Faust forsakes standard German capitalization in *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* and *Der Freischwimmer*, capitalizing only the first word of a sentence or proper nouns, as in English. Faust's work is rife with word play, using puns and repetition to create a palpable narrative presence that is boisterous, if at times somewhat difficult to follow. Erotic humor, highly inappropriate according to the GDR's censors, also features strongly in these novels.

Faust's *Der Freischwimmer* is episodic in plot like *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, but presents a more circumspect narrative of a life. Openly modeled on Günter Grass's *Die Blechtrommel*, it begins by recounting memories of the narrator's grandparents. For the majority of the narrated time, the narrator is in his early twenties. With his *Abitur* (University qualification) and two years' work in factories and collective farms behind him, the narrator describes setting off from native Dresden to Leipzig by train. Of his ensuing years at university he writes:

> Übrigens wurde ich bald wieder aus Leipzig herausgefeuert, nach einem jahr etwa, nachdem ich mich kulturell ganz schön hervorgetan hatte unter den schüchternen tüten des ersten studienjahres...naja, bald wurde auch bekannt, daß ich so ähnliches wie gedichte verfaßte, und ich fand noch ein paar freunde, die ebenfalls gedichte schrieben. Wir taten uns eines tages zusammen, luden im studentenklub allerlei volk ein aber... nein, ich habe wirklich nicht die absicht, in alten peinlichen geschichten herumzuwühlen, jedenfalls aufgrund dessen zwei studenten, darunter ich, geext, aus den matrikeln der Karl-Marx-Uni, wegen, nun, wir waren noch nicht würdig, an einer sozialistischen hochschule zu studieren, wir sollten erst in die produktion bewähren.[327]

Nearly every clause of the above two long sentences contains extraneous qualifiers such as "etwa," "so ähnliches," "aber," "nun," which add to the colloquial quality of the narrative. At the same time this pattern of insouciance signals a disregard for the university authority's stern judgment. Similarly, regarding the second time the narrator was ejected from university studies, this time from the Johannes R. Becher Literaturinstitut in Leipzig, he writes: "Warum? Nun in

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[327] Faust, *Der Freischwimmer*, 31.

der Welt ging's zu dieser Zeit heiß her, überall in den angrenzendten staaten machten sich studentenunruhen von sich reden, auch in den sozialistischen freundesländern."[328] Though he admits this does not really answer the question, the narrator insists the details are too banal to bother with. In fact, as described above, Faust was forced to leave the Becher Institute in 1968, when swathes of the student body were ejected without necessarily establishing any particular wrongdoing. This brief description of "studentenunruhen" in *Der Freischwimmer* is the closest Faust comes to describing the Prague Spring in his early novels.

For the narrator, the most important thing about the Prague Spring was the opportunity it provided to form a community of friends critical to GDR's society. Rather than detail political events in Czechoslovakia or the GDR, the narrator of *Der Freischwimmer* describes meeting Wolfgang Hilbig for the first time and includes two excerpts of Hilbig's poetry. He writes, "Es mag kindisch erscheinen, wenn sich zwei junge menschen über väter, land und staat beklagen, dennoch: wir täten es."[329] Indeed, from this point in the novel there are no further plot developments, rather portrayals of daily life and length philosophical meanderings on such themes as "Will ich ein Künstler werden?" and "Ich selbst bin eins der jüngsten kinder des sozialismus."[330] Yet the importance of building a like-minded community reflects Faust's efforts to build the kind of alternative cultural scene that developed in Prague. Unfortunately, Faust's unstable employment and residence, as well as his imprisonment just three years after his first infraction severed these attempts to build a network of authors.

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[328] Faust, *Der Freischwimmer*, 32.

[329] *ibid*.

[330] Faust, *Der Freischwimmer*, 80, 135.

Faust's second autobiographical text, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, also shows a certain sardonic playfulness with the official culture of the GDR, but also the most explicit condemnation of figures of authority as Nazis. In order to give a sense of the demands of the older generation on his own, the narrator of this experimental essay repeats paroles from youth culture, for example the imperatives of a song: "Bau auf, bau auf, bau auf, bau auf, FREIE DEUTSCHE JUGEND, bau auf!"[331] The elder generation is frequently addressed as "väter," male authority figures who have stepped into the place of the narrator's deceased father.[332] The narrator's relationship with figures of authority is troubled, as their mutual expectations are frequently disappointed. This is best demonstrated by an excerpt from a letter of rejection from *Neue Deutsche Literatur* included in the text. An editor of the journal writes, "[i]ch bin einigermaßen erstaunt über Ihre Unverfrorenheit uns derartiges überhaupt anzubieten. […] Der einziger Rat den ich Ihnen geben kann, ist: Versuchen Sie einmal zur Abwechslung wirkliche Literatur zu lesen und werfen Sie das üble Zeug, daß Sie sich zum Vorbild genommen haben, in den nächsten Ofen."[333] The budding author may thus surmise that he is not completely devoid of

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[331] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 18, 35

[332] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid,* 20, 21, 29.

[333] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid,* 28. A copy of a letter from the Aufbau Verlag in Faust's *Ich will hier raus* seems to confirm this judgment. Replying to some poems Faust had submitted, an editor named Caspar (mentioned above in chapter two regarding Wolf's publication process) writes "[o]bwohl Ihre Schreibweise noch deutliche Spuren trägt, die zu Enzenberger, Mickel und anderen zeitgenössischen Lyrikern führen, glauben wir, daß Sie sich um eine eigene Diktion bemühen. Vorschläge für eine Zusammenarbeit können wir leider nicht machen…" Faust, *Ich will hier raus*, 16. While Caspar finds Faust talented, his publishing house has no forthcoming publications in which Faust might be introduced. To revenge himself upon his critic, Faust excerpts Caspar's essay on Stalin's literary genius on the facing page under the title "Was charakterisiert diesen Herrn Caspar?" Cementing the impression that Faust is at odds with the expectations of those around him, he includes other excerpted letters such as the letter announcing his ejection from university, a rejection from a job, and a lengthy missive from his

talent, merely misguided in his role models as discerned by the literary critic who has reviewed his work.

Indeed, as the text's subtitle "ein experimentales Essay" suggests, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* offers a fractured portrait of the artist far from narrow strictures of Socialist Realist style. The first line of his text plays with chastising excessive subjectivity: "Ich möchte den satz nicht mit ich beginnen lassen, aber ich beginne nun doch mit ich, weil ich nicht leugnen kann, daß ich gern mit ich bzw. mit mir beginne, auch wenn ich dadurch in verruf gerate, ein persönlicher mensch zu sein; und das bedeutet nach Immanuel Kant, ein femininer mann zu sein."[334] The wit and allusion to literary theory blends with a youthful engagement with his imagined audience. Faust's desire for interaction is clear as much of his text stages interrogation, or piles rhetorical question upon rhetorical question. For about a third of the essay he creates an alter ego, Charli, whom he challenges to demonstrate erudition in a battle of one-upmanship. Indeed the irrepressible enthusiasm to join scholarly debate explains Faust's many allusions and quotations added to the work. Faust's experimental essay quotes so many other authors as to resemble a paradoxical attempt to constitute individuality through pastiche.

Compared to *Der Freischwimmer*, Faust's experimental essay emphasizes religious texts as a source of inspiration and wisdom. The title of the text, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* is a quotation from the Song of Solomon, and the title of each of the text's eight chapters is a further quotation from Solomon.[335] Throughout the text the narrator further quotes the First Epistle of

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stepmother to his father, urging intervention in favor of forcing responsibility upon the truant youth.

[334] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 9.

[335] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 11-12.

the Corinthians, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the Book of Moses and the Gospel of John.[336] Religious teaching is presented as the antidote to Socialist dogma:

> So wird heute noch gearbeitet: Auge um auge, zahn um zahn… kapitalismus gegen sozialismus, Volker Braun kontra Günther Eich, öl gegen sand, nation wider nation, weltanschauung gegen weltanschauung, freiheit wird gegen frieden ausgespielt...
>
> Als wäre das neue Testament nie geschrieben worden, als hätten die indischen buddhisten, die chinischen weisen, die japanischen zen-meister niemals gelebt und gewirkt, als hätten Marx und Lenin die welt erschaffen, als hätte man beim bauen nicht auch dynamisch gesetze des dialektischen, historischen materialismus?[337]

The narrator finds contemporary culture's black and white contrast of East and West Germany overly simplistic and dangerous. He is concerned that historical wisdom of other cultures has been lost in favor of a new, morally impoverished world order. Here, Faust refers to the rejection of religion by Communist ideology. Faust's emphasis on religious teaching foreshadows later developments in the GDR: the Protestant Church became a center of opposition in the eighties, especially in Leipzig where weekly demonstrations emanating from the Church were held on Mondays.

The narrator dismisses criticism of his work by claiming that the GDR's figures of authority merely parrot official dogma, calling this a form of fascism similar to Nazism, just with a redder tinge.[338] At another point, referring to the GDR's two dictators and the chief of the secret police, the narrator exclaims "Heil Honecker! Heile-heile-heile… Heil Mielke! Heil Ulbricht! Heil Hitler!"[339] The protagonist of *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* offers no evidence of the

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[336] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 47, 86, 110, 113.

[337] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 37.

[338] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 28-29.

[339] Faust, *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid*, 34.

connection between these GDR statesmen and the Führer of Nazi German, however his aim to discredit the generation in power is clear.

Disappointed Youth in Jiří Gruša's *The Questionnaire*

Jiří Gruša, born in Pardubice in 1938, fits Annette Simon's definition of the Sixty-Eighter generation in the East in terms of his age and efforts to reform Communism in his native Czechoslovakia.[340] The similiarities and differences to Faust's biography in terms of collaboration and eventual imprisonment and exile are instructive. As we shall see below, though youth culture and concerns were central to Gruša's cultural engagement and literary work, Gruša's experience of the Second World War was very different from Faust's, despite only a few years' of difference in age.

Gruša completed a degree in philosophy at Charles University in Prague. Contributing to to the atmosphere of cultural liberalization during the Prague Spring, he wrote articles for the literary journals *Tvář* and *Sešity*, which sought to represent the younger generation of Czechoslovak authors. Gruša published three collections of poetry in Czechoslovakia: *Torna* (1963), *Světlá lhůta* (1964), and *Cvičení mučení* (1969).[341] In 1969, Gruša began to serialize his first novel *Mimner aneb Hra o smraďocha* (later published in German as *Mimner, oder, Das Tier*

[340] Simon's idea of the generation of Sixty-Eighters fails to transfer to Czechoslovakia in the sense that the Prague Spring movement was lead by politicians and writers, some of whom were decades older than those she named, for example Ludvík Vaculík, born 1926.

[341] Jiří Gruša, *Torna*, Ilustrated by Jaroslav Junek, Prague: Mladá fronta, 1962. Jiří Gruša, *Světlá lhůta*, Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1964. Jiří Gruša, *Cvičení mučení*, Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1969.

der Trauer).[342] However, he was charged with pornography and banned from further publication in 1970. In the seventies he collaborated with Ludvík Vaculík to produce the Edice Petlice series until in 1978 he was arrested for circulating manuscripts of his second novel, *Dotazník* (1976, *The Questionnaire*).[343] Gruša was released in 1980 on the condition that he leave the country and his citizenship revoked in 1981. Having settled in Bonn, West Germany, Gruša organized the publication of two more of his novels, a collection of poetry, a history of Franz Kafka, and two anthologies of Czech literature by banned authors, all within a decade. After the fall of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia he served as Czech ambassador to West Germany and then Austria. He died in 2011 in Germany.

The premise of Jiří Gruša's *The Questionnaire* is that in an unspecified year in the nineteen seventies, the narrator, Jan Chrysostom Kepka is asked to fill out a standard document to establish ideological conformity in order to get a job. In fact, this the sixteenth such questionnaire Kepka has submitted: each time he is rejected. This one, however, has an additional instruction marked in pen: DO NOT CROSS OUT![344] The narrator takes this as a positive omen, and license to provide an exhaustive autobiographical statement addressed to Comrade Pavlenda, who gave the narrator the form with its special instructions. The text includes sexually explicit encounters beginning with Jan Chrysostom's own conception, his early

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[342] This novel was published in the Edice Petlice samizdat series as volume number 32, under the pseudonym Samuel Lewis. Jiří Gruša, *Mimner, oder, Das Tier der Trauer*, Köln: Bund-Verlag, 1986.

[343] Jiří Gruša, *Dotazník, aneb, Modlitba za jedno město a přítele*, Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1978. Jiří Gruša, *Der 16. Fragebogen*, Translated by Marianne Pasetti-Swoboda, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1979. Jiří Gruša, *The Questionnaire, or, Prayer for a Town and a Friend*, translated by Peter Kussi, London: Blond & Briggs, 1982. Cf. Eduard Goldstücker, "Profile: Jiří Gruša,"*Index on Censorship* Vol. 7 Nr.6 (Nov/Dec 1978), 49.

[344] Jiří Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 3.

romances, but also excursuses into his uncle's life as a soldier abroad and political prisoner in forced labor camps that weave in the mystical story of a certain breed of cat notable for the colors of its fur and eyes. Jan Chrysostom also describes his own tour of duty in the Czech army, which he spends painting propagandistic portraits. Back from service, the narrator's success in breeding the cat facilitates a creative hobby and an amorous connection with a West German lady.[345] The novel ends with the disappointment of finding that Comrade Pavlenda has inexplicably left his post and no information regarding his return is available.

The novel dwells on historical parallels of German imperialism, war, and the present Communist regime, especially when the Russians enter the picture.[346] The narrator elaborates how the Nazis and Communists share an obsession with heritage, and by extension Anti-Semitism. The narrator's officious uncle is the first to grasp that the narrator's mother's "Jewish eyes" will mean that the "Erklärung über die Abstammung" required by the Nazis is a danger to Alice and her whole family.[347] Thus begins the narrator's rumination on "das Volljüdische," the Nazis' precise idea of heritage, which though not very effective in its determination according to

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[345] The German cat owner's city of origin is not specified, however, unless the narrator may be taken to have exaggerated, she bears a title of nobility, which seems unlikely in an East German. Furthermore, her awards from British and French pedigree shows were likely beyond the purview of an East German citizen. In any case, the equation of her pedigreed cat with the mystical talking cat Fatima whom Olin came across in El Arish, all of whom share "Jewish eyes" lend a positive valence to a heritage revered by the narrator, but persecuted by both the Nazis and Communists. Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 24-25, 249-263.

[346] Though Gruša was born on November 10, 1938, the narrator of *The Questionnaire* was conceived on the twentieth of October, 1938, in other words in the immediate aftermath of the annexation of the Sudentenland by Hitler and fall of the First Republic. The narrator claims he remembers the date so precisely because he could see a newspaper fall from his father's pocket, which announced the banning of the Communist party. Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 8.

[347] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 11, 43-44.

the narrator, is nonetheless shared by the Communists.[348] Playing on German words meant to suggest essential qualities, the narrator suggests that the ideology of the Communists is actually extremely subjective. Following an incident in which Uncle Olin's brewery was closed, apparently due to insufficient bribes to officials or perhaps merely perceived disrespect,[349] the narrator's father must find a new job:

> Potom se tatínek šel zeptat do pekáren, jestli by ho nevzali zpátky. Řekli mu, že ho snad vezmou, a dali mu zrovna ten dotazník, co já mám, s. Pavlendo, od vás. Byl právě čerstvý, s nízkým ročníkovým číslem. V dotazníku se nás ptali, zda jsme dělníci. Avšak znovu tím mířili na Aliciny oči. Ty v sobě jako by dělnickost neměly (das Vollarbeiterschaftliche?). Edvinovi to vrtalo hlavou. Napsal jim do rubriky „původ" (už tehdy č. 6, ale na rozdíl od nynější rubriky, která se oklikou ptá na tzv. původní povolání, kladla se tehdy otázka přímo), že pochází z téhož Edvina knihtiskaře jako bratr Bohuslav. Přesto mu odpověděli, že není tak dělníkem jako Bonek.[350]

> Then Dad went over to the bakery to find out whether they would take him back. They said they might, and gave him the same kind of questionnaire to fill out that you gave me, Comr. Pavlenda. The form was still quite new then, it had been in use only a few years. They asked us in the questionnaire whether we were workers. What they were really after were Alice's eyes: somehow they seemed to lack pure workerness (*das Vollarbeiterschafliche*). Edvin couldn't make it out. One question called for *origin* (it was designated as Question 6, just as it is now, but in contrast to the current version of the form, which inquires in a round-about way about so-called *Original Occupation*, the question was put more directly). Edvin answered that he originated from the same printer, Edvin Sr., as his brother Bonek. However they replied that he was not as "working class" as Bonek.[351]

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[348] The narrator encloses a chart of his ancestry, which he claims delineates the propagation of chrysoberyl colored eyes. Despite being racially pure by Nazi standards, the signification of these eyes as traces of a single Jewish forbearer is emphasized by the narrator. The ancestry chart, which appears to be an authentic form filled out in for the fictional character in the Czech original, bears a caption in Czech, German, and Russian, providing the first equation of the Nazi and Communist request for information. Jiři Gruša, *Dotazník aneb modlitba za jedno město a přítele*, (Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1978), 67. Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 56, 61-69.

[349] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 147.

[350] Jiří Gruša, *Dotazník aneb modlitba za jedno město a přítele*, (Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers: 1978), 153.

[351] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 161.

Despite having the exact same ancestry, the two brothers are considered to have different heritage, as an excuse to explain their different demeanors towards the new Communist powers. Class is actually as much to do with current association as financial holdings: Bonek received the invading Soviet army with welcome, whereas Edvin is discounted by the new authority due to his association with Alice, her Jewish eyes, and her disrespectful brother Olin.[352]

The most explicit equation of the Communist regime with that of the Nazis is made in Jan Chrysostom's description of the Soviet invasion of 1968. The narrator described in detail the Germans' declaration of "Ausnahmezustand" as coinciding with his first success at riding his bicycle on May 27, 1942,[353] and invokes similar terms for the events of 1968. Having recounted the arrival of tanks, the conquest of the square and his own (imagined) death at the hands of the soldier, Jan Chrysostom evokes a final, near mythic scene,

> Jak se rozsadili & vytáhli psací stroj se svými písmenky, bylo už jisté, že přijeli na dýl. Ten, co si přiloží k očím dělostřelecký triedr, je nyní velitel Chlumce. Sluncezápad [sic] mu prosvětluje tváře a zároveň mu... ale to už jsem maloval. Smýkne triedrem od sv. Barbory k Hatušárně a vyhlásí městu hodiny vycházek, zase ten Ausnahmeszustand.[354]
>
> The way they made themselves at home & set up their Cyrillic typewriter, it was clear they had come to stay. The one looking through field glasses was Commander of Chlumec. The setting sun illuminated his face and…but I had already painted all that before. His field glasses swept the landscape from St. Barbora to the Hatus works, and he established curfew hours for the town–again the old *Ausnahmezustand* (martial law).[355]

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[352] When the Soviet Army reached Chlumec, Bonek made himself useful to them. Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 116-118. Bonek's propensity to get along with whomever is in power earns the narrator's scorn and Bonek suffers an ignominious, possibly imagined death, which the narrator calls "das Vollsterben," 233.

[353] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 73.

[354] Gruša, *Dotazník*, 250-251.

[355] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 268. By speaking of his painting, the narrator refers to his main occupation during his time in the army, namely being sent to various units and painting

Aside from the obvious reference to German occupation with the use of a language-specific term, the image of tanks rolling through more specifically repeats imagery of the arrival of the Soviets in 1945.[356] However, the description of the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich's invasion of Chlumec in 1866 is an additional point of comparison.[357] The repetition between these several scenes of invasion culminate in the equation of the militant forces of the Germans and Russians. The townspeople's sheep-like fright in the face of all such activity is belied only by a few attempts at courage that end in absurdity tinged with violence.[358]

In many ways, the concerns of young people in the Socialist system are apparent in both Gruša's and Faust's texts. Both are generally most concerned with gaining long term employment and frustrated by authority figures that find their views unorthodox. Sexuality, another consuming interest of young people, colors all texts discussed. In terms of sexually explicit passages, Gruša far surpasses Faust's cheeky descriptions of his own sexual excitement and frustrations.[359] The detailed physical descriptions of sexual relation are the greatest offense to Socialist Realism, as it does not condone all reflections of reality, only those deemed productive for the civic body.

"'Comrades in Arms,' 'Struggle for Peace,' 'The Liberators,' and 'Mutual Friendship.'" Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 212

[356] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 116.

[357] Gruša, *The Questionnaire*, 49-53.

[358] Cf: Kaspar Trubac's death by fright during the Prussian invasion (53), the townspeople's bloody and unfair efforts to bring Nazi collaborators to justice (108-114), and quickly dispersed unrest on the day of the Soviet invasion (266).

[359] Masturbation is also a significant theme for Faust's friend Wolfgang Hilbig, discussed in the next chapter.

Unlike Gruša's repetition of motifs and extensive criticism of the concept of ancestry, Faust's texts draw on the Second World War as an ambiguous foundation for the current social order. Whereas in Gruša's detailed history of his small town the continuity of collaboration of characters like Uncle Bonek with the Nazi and Communist regimes may be observed, Faust equates authority figures with whom he disagrees with Nazis without evidence. Unlike Faust, who lists significant dates in history of which he had no knowledge that coincided with his birth, Gruša's narrator, by contrast, relates his own memory of significant events of the war, such as how Ausnahmezustand was declared at the exact moment he learned to ride a bike. Though these memories of early childhood may be doubted, the emphasis on person experience of the Second World War remains.

Conclusion

For Faust and Gruša, the decade of normalization meant not only exclusion from publication and literary life and relegation to menial work, but imprisonment and release only into the West. Gruša offers the most brazen criticism in a literary text of the three under consideration here given his detailed equation of the faults of the Communist ideology with those of the Nazis. In addition to that particular criticism, the larger import of the novel is quite similar to that of Faust's two surviving novels from the Communist era: *Ein jegliches hat sein Leid* and *Der Freischwimmer.* Struggles to find gainful employment and a sense of community are the main themes of Faust's work, and Gruša presents similar concerns in the narrative frame of his *Questionnaire.* These struggles are portrayed as continual disappointment of the protagonist's enthusiastic efforts to be of use and the implicit criticism of a system too rigid to accommodate such youngsters is clear.

Paradigms for the study of Czechoslovak underground culture that survey the networks of participants in the human rights movements, underground literary publications, and the music underground should be imported to study the East German underground. Though some myths about Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg scene have been deflated by critics like Karen Leeder, it is time for German studies to take in a more nuanced view of underground culture. Case studies of underground literature from East Germany, like that of Siegmar Faust, show that beyond new perspectives on the current canon of East German underground culture, new material from before 1979 must be found and examined. Historians have led the way with studies of the previously unknown extent of political protest. Now it is time for closer textual analysis of recently recovered manuscripts and other cultural products.

Chapter Five
Dissent and the Secret Police in Hindsight: Herta Müller and Wolfgang Hilbig After the Wall

Though the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 remains representative of the end of the SED regime, the occupation of the official offices of the East German Secret Police, known as the *Stasi* (Staatssicherheit) in early December of the same year precipitated a coming to terms with the Communist era that shaped the course of post-Communist politics and culture in the former East. Access to the secret police files and their use by new regimes varies greatly throughout the former East Bloc. The occupation of the East German Secret police headquarters meant that an unusually high percentage of the files were saved from the former agents who sought to destroy them. As I shall argue, public and academic access to the files has left its mark on how the GDR is remembered today and shaped new literary accounts of the GDR experience that reflect the information gained long after. A comparative look at those not allowed access to their files shows that retrospective accounts similarly reflect the post-Wall situation, though in this case the frustrating lack of information.

After taking stock of the accessibility of secret police files across the former East Bloc, I will focus on the new information that has emerged about the secret police's actions against unofficial cultural scenes in the GDR and Romania. The stark contrast between the two, made even more apparent by the connections formed by immigrant communities, are reflected in the retrospective representations of the secret police in the works of Herta Müller (1953-) and Wolfgang Hilbig (1941-2007). Müller and Hilbig describe the disturbingly unprofessional, indeed intimately abusive conduct of the secret police against writers in Romania and East

Germany respectively.[360] From the point of view of intellectually inclined, young characters, their novels narrate similar experiences, especially traumatic interaction with secret police agents. And yet, Hilbig's portrayal of the underground scene uses the information gleaned from reading his file to persuasively if radically describe it as a complete fabrication by the secret police. Hilbig's Stasi are distinguished by their specialist knowledge of literature, and their involvement in underground literature during the eighties is even greater than suspected.

In terms of the representation of dissent in general, I argue that both authors emphasize its futility, though Müller portrays underground activities as constitutive of an authentic self. By contrast, Hilbig sought to describe the complete inauthenticity of his protagonist who is author and spy. Both Hilbig and Müller moved to West Germany in the late eighties. Despite their different points of origin and ten-year difference in age, their representations of that nation both show that the pressure of life under surveillance is by no means left behind, even though freedom has supposedly been attained in the West.

The Secret Police Disempowered and Disembodied: Access to the Files and its Fallout

In the GDR, during the turbulent times between the fall of the Wall and the official unification of East and West Germany on October 3, 1990, a little less than a year later, the dissolution of the East German secret police force and the seizure of their files gave rise to contentious discussion about how best to manage the files and whether to make them accessible

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[360] For a history of Müller's ethic group, the Banat Swabians, and an analysis of *Herztier*'s ethnic dimensions see Valentina Glajar, "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's 'Herztier,'" *Monatshefte*, Vol. 89, No. 4, (Winter, 1997), 521-540. For an introduction to the Prenzlauer Berg art scene, which Hilbig describes, see Karen Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries: A New Generation of Poets in the GDR*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

to the public at all.[361] Following the first open elections of March 1990, representatives of the newly founded or reorganized political parties and citizen committees negotiated guidelines for the opening of the Stasi archives as part of the legal framework of the unification of East and West Germany.[362] The resulting "Gesetz über die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik" (Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz or StUG) provided individuals access to files compiled about them, as well as more controversial access for researchers and journalists to the files of persons of public interest, and even limited rights for West Germany's intelligence and law enforcement services to use the files.[363]

A brief survey of the burgeoning field of scholarly research making use of the Stasi documents reveals four main currents. One finds many general introductions that claim to provide the "inside story" of the organization. Such books reflect a real need for reference material to help decode the elephantine structure and the special vocabulary of the secret police, though not all such accounts are equally successful. Many focus on a narrow and sensational aspect of the operations of the secret police without providing a reasonable overview that integrates the large role of Party officials among other elements of the bureaucracy. The most authoritative work on the Stasi is produced by the Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des

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[361] On the reasons for and process of re-unification cf.: Charles Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

[362] For an account of the different positions of the FDP, CDU, SPD, and Bündnis 90/Grüne on the legislation governing the secret police archives see Thilo Weichert, "Der parlamentarische Mikrokosmos oder Die Feinabstimmung mit Eckwerten und Formulierungshilfen," *Die Eroberung der Akten: Das Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz Entstehung/Folgen. Analysen/Dokumente*, (Mainz: Podium Progressiv, 1992), 17-26. While the scholarship in this article is persuasive, it is worth noting that this volume was put out under the collaboration of the PDS/Linke Liste (the PDS is the party to emerge from the SED) and is therefore biased.

[363] The text of the law governing the secret police files can be accessed online at http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/BundesbeauftragterUndBehoerde/Rechtsgrundlagen/StUG/stug_node.html.

Staatssicherheitsdienstes (BStU), the federal German institution devoted to preserving and analyzing the surviving East German secret police files.[364]

A number of autobiographical testimonies published by individuals or edited into collections have also emerged. For example, regarding the Stasi jail located on the outskirts of Berlin, Hubertus Knabe a historian of the GDR has edited *Gefangen in Hohenschönhausen: Stasi-Häftlinge berichten*.[365] These compilations are especially important, as they often include reproductions from Stasi files and thereby provide a public archive made accessible by those who choose to contribute to the discourse. In other countries, such as Romania, where access the

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[364] The BStU's handbook is available online as a series: *Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden (MfS-Handbuch)*, Berlin: Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der Ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Abteilung Bildung und Forschung, 1996-2012. Available [Online] at http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Wissen/Publikationen/Reihen/Handbuch/handbuch_node.html. An overview of the publication is available on page three of the final publication in the series at http://www.nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0292-97839421302889. Of particular interest is the volume on Hauptabteilung XX, the Stasi division that covered culture, churches, and the political underground among other things. Thomas Auerbach, Matthias Braun, Bernd Eisenfeld, Gesine von Prittwitz, Clemens Vollnhals, *Hauptabteilung XX: Staatsapparat, Blockparteien, Kirchen, Kultur, »politischer Untergrund« (MfS-Handbuch)*, Berlin: BStU, 2008. Available [Online] at http://www.nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0292-97839421301343. The BStU website also provides glossaries of abbreviations for practical use of files. A more accessible introduction by the BStU is an exhibit catalog: *Stasi. Die Ausstellung zur DDR-Staatssicherheit: Katalog und Aufsätze*, Berlin: BStU, 2011.Two further well regarded works are: Joachim Walther, *Sicherungsbereich Literatur: Schriftsteller in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Berlin: Ch. Link Verlag, 1996 and Joachim Gauk, *Die Stasi-Akten: Das unheimliche Erbe der DDR*, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1991. Walther was a publicist during the GDR and was given the role of internal researcher at the BStU, which allows less restricted access to the files. Gauck was oppositional politician, later named special commissioner of the archive.

[365] Hubertus Knabe (ed.), *Gefangen in Hohenschönhausen: Stasi-Häftlinge berichten*, Berlin: List Verlag, 2007. Cf. the regionally focused series organized by Die Landesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR in Sachsen-Anhalt entitled "Betroffene erinnern sich." Some collections tend towards sensationalized titles, for example *Die Vergessenen Opfer der DDR: 13 erschütternde Berichte mit Original-Stasi-Akten*, edited by Jürgen Aretz and Wolfgang Stock, Bergisch Gladbach: Bastei-Verlag, 1997. Reporting on the bizarre and frightening aspects of the GDR in a rather colloquial tone is Australian academic Anna Funder, *Stasiland: True Stories from behind the Berlin Wall*, London: Granta Publications, 2003.

secret police files is more limited, such collections represent source material that cannot be otherwise obtained. However, contextualization of documents without the benefit of the complete file is more difficult in such cases.

A large number of publications address the international reach of the Stasi: numerous volumes have been devoted to their activities from Britain and Ireland to Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, written in the languages of these countries. A significant number of such studies about the Stasi abroad are also devoted to their operations in West Germany, which were extensive and sensational. Finally, a growing body of literature of varying scholarly weight addresses the "Stasi-Gesetz" itself and its many ethical conundrums.[366] For example, persons with official roles in the GDR are exempt from rules designed to protect personal privacy, though who qualifies is a matter of debate and the privacy of the many third parties named in the files is difficult to preserve.

Unfortunately, despite many claims by politicians and various museum exhibitions that in comparison to the secret police in other countries, the Stasi were the most technologically advanced in their work, or the most effective, there are few studies to back up such assertions. At most, conference proceedings where experts compare notes on a few countries give some idea of the variation between the states.[367] Thus, my comparison of the secret police archives and their influence on literary culture contains the basic flaw of insufficient comparative qualification of

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[366] Cf. as a recent update: Paul Maddrell, "The Opening of the State Security Archives of Central and Eastern Europe," *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Vol.27/1 (2014), 1-26 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850607.2014.842794. This article primarily compares Germany and Romania, but also provides comparative notes on Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia.

[367] Cf. Dakowska, Dorota, Agnès Bensussan, and Nicolas Beaupré (ed). *Die Überlieferung der Diktaturen: Beiträge zum Umgang mit Archiven der Geheimpolizei in Polen und Deutschland nach 1989*. Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2004.

the scope of secret police activities. However many similarities between the kinds of repression described in fictional accounts such as that of Herta Müller and Wolfgang Hilbig, historical equivalence cannot be proven. By contrast the post-Communist situation in terms of access to secret police archives across the former East Bloc is more transparent, though by no means free from controversy. Below I offer a brief overview of recent reports on the Czech Republic, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Romania.

In terms of the political consequences of opening a secret police archive, in 1996 Tina Rosenberg called Czechoslovakia's *lustrace* law "the single most controversial law passed anywhere in the former Soviet Bloc to deal with the past."[368] As she explains, the law "bars from top government jobs those who held certain positions under communism or whose names appear in the secret police's register of informants."[369] As one of a series of profiles Rosenberg compiled on the topic, she chose the story of Rudolf Zukal, whom she describes as a dedicated dissident unfairly tainted for reports about an American friend he made to the StB (secret police) under blackmail.[370] Indeed, as Rosenberg portrays it, many of those found "StB-positive," and therefore to be fired, were undeserving of their punishment. She demonstrates this in large part by focusing on the details of the secret police categorizations of persons of interest. According to Rosenberg, a certain category, which was liable for employment penalties under the *lustrace* law were unjustly maligned, as the penalty was based on a poor understanding of what it meant to

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[368] Tina Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land: Facing Europe's Ghosts After Communism*, (New York, Vintage Books, 1996), xxi.

[369] *ibid*

[370] Such ambivalent figures have returned to headlines in the recent coverage of Lech Walsea, former president of Poland and Solidarity leader, accused of collaboration with the secret police. "Espionage charges show how bitter Poland's politics remains: Conservatives and liberals are still struggling over the meaning of Poland's post-communist transition," *The Economist*, February 23rd, 2016, http://www.economist.com/node/21693499/.

appear in the secret police records in this category. In fact the law was changed to reflect new interpretations of the secret police files in 1993.[371] Rosenberg's larger point is that the use of secret police records in service of new ideals is fraught, and sometimes well-intentioned policies work to the detriment of the innocent, as she sees them. Rosenberg contrasts the situations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as in the latter nation lustration was not implemented following the division of the states in 1992. In Slovakia, few figures of authority had changed since the Communist era, but the lustration law in effect next door was not a desirable paradigm to follow, according to Rosenberg.[372] Since Rosenberg's report, the lustration law in the Czech Republic was extended from the original five-year ban on certain employment to a lifetime one.[373]

Rosenberg does not describe the Czech Republic's foremost center of research into the secret police files devoted to coming to terms with the Communist past, the name of which demonstrates its range in purpose from education to prosecution. The first body to oversee the archive of the secret police was the Úřad pro dokumentaci a vyšetřování činnosti StB, founded in 1991 and renamed Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu in 1995. As its revised name suggests, the institute was tasked with publishing documentation and analysis of the secret police files, as well as preparing cases for prosecuting individuals for their activities during the Communist era.[374] After the introduction of a 1996 law, which guaranteed citizens the right to

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[371] Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land*, 73-74.

[372] Rosenberg, *The Haunted Land*, 76-85.

[373] Muriel Blaive, "Einige Etappen der Bewältigung der kommunistischen Vergangenheit seit 1989 in der Republik Tschechien", *Die Überlieferung der Diktaturen: Beiträge zum Umgang mit Archiven der Geheimpolizei in Polen und Deutschland nach 1989*, (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2004), 115.

[374] According to the Ministry of the Interior's "Report on Public Order and Internal Security in the Czech Republic in 2008 (compared with 2007)", "During the existence of the ODICC [Office

see any files compiled by the secret police against them, concerns regarding the proper management of the files led to the founding of the Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů (Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes) in 2007.[375] This institute houses both the Communist secret police archive as well as the archive on the Nazi era beginning in 1939.

Muriel Blaive, who wrote a 2002 report on the Czech Republic for researchers engaged with secret police archives in Germany and Poland described the initial legal framework for the Czech Republic's Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes as conceptually based on the German and Polish models. Blaive's fellow conference participants were mostly engaged in contrasting the latter two institutions: despite the similar organizational structure and range of activities, the BStU and its Polish equivalent the Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (IPN, rendered in English as Institute for National Remembrance)[376] had quite different histories and abilities. Blaive writes:

> In Deutschland waren die vom Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (MfS) zurückgelassenen Archive innerhalb kürzester Zeit einem breiten Publikum zugänglich. Daher wurde der deutsche Umgang mit der Vergangenheit als exemplarisch gepriesen. Andere postkommunistische Länder wie Polen versuchten diesem Modell der Öffnung zu folgen, aber der Prozess stellte sich als langwieriger und in der Umsetzung als wesentlich schwieriger heraus.[377]

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of Documentation and Investigation of the Crimes of Communism] in total 195 charged persons were prosecuted in 101 cases. The unfinished prosecution of one charged person was transferred to 2008. In 2008 prosecution was commenced in two cases. One criminal file was closed. The average period of investigation of a criminal case is 23 months. In total 1,957 cases were examined. In 2008 altogether 190 new cases were recorded, 212 cases were closed, and thus 78 cases remain open."

[375] The act by parliament that called the institute into existence can be read in Czech and English on the Institute's website, http://www.ustrcr.cz/. Another of the institute's publications of note is *Praha objektivem tajné policie/ Prague through the Lens of the Secret Police*, Prague: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů, 2008.

[376] Cf.: https://ipn.gov.pl/en.

[377] Dorota Dakowska, Agnès Bensussan, and Nicolas Beaupré, "Der politische und wissenschaftliche Umgang mit den Polizeiarchiven des Kommunismus in Deutschland und in

Aside from the fact that the IPN was founded comparatively later than the BStU, up to fifty percent of Communist Poland's secret police files were missing by the time inventory was taken in the nineties.[378] This was partly due to the process of regime change in Poland in the late eighties, which involved a negotiated transferal of some power from the Communist Party, though the all-important Ministry of the Interior remained within its purview.

At a 1993 conference in Moscow, György Dalos portrayed a similar situation in terms of the destruction of secret police files by the KGB after the transformation of the Soviet Union into the Russian Federation as that of Poland.[379] Access to most files was strictly curtailed, though notable exceptions were those files complied as the basis for prosecution. Dalos reports on the case of Anna Akhmatova, who was investigated as a spy, as well as manuscripts by a number of prominent authors that were confiscated in the Stalinist era, but recovered from the files in 1988.[380] Writing in 2010, Cristina Vatulescu describes the documents about and by Isaac Babel, Mikhail Bulgakov, Maxim Gorky, Osip Mandel'shtam and others as the most notable source

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Polen," *Die Überlieferung der Diktaturen: Beiträge zum Umgang mit Archiven der Geheimpolizei in Polen und Deutschland nach 1989*, (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2004), 13. The authors cite Timothy Garton Ash, "Mesomnesie," *Transit. Europäische Revue* 22 (2001/2002), 32-33 in support of their claim of "exemplary" action.

[378] Dakowska, Bensussan, and Beaupré, "Der politische und wissenschaftliche Umgang mit den Polizeiarchiven des Kommunismus in Deutschland und in Polen," *Die Überlieferung der Diktaturen: Beiträge zum Umgang mit Archiven der Geheimpolizei in Polen und Deutschland nach 1989*, 15.

[379] György Dalos, "Repression und Toleranz. Literarisch-politischer Vergleich," *Stasi, KGB, und Literatur: Beiträge und Erfahrungen aus Rußland und Deutschland*, Köln: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 1993.

[380] Witali Schentalkinski, "Beschlagnahmte Manuskripte," and Oleg Kalugin, "Die KGB-Akten über Anna Achmatowa," *Stasi, KGB, und Literatur: Beiträge und Erfahrungen aus Rußland und Deutschland*, Köln: Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 1993.

available from the Russian secret police archives.[381] Since then individuals have been granted access to their own files and "some of them have made files public, either independently or by adding them to collections such as the pioneering Memorial archive."[382]

Vatulescu's monograph *Police Aesthetics: Literature, Film, and the Secret Police in Soviet Times* investigates the topos of the secret police in novels, but also the uncanny involvement of agents of the secret police as screen writers, directors, and producers in the film industry of the Soviet Union. In terms of the current situation regarding access to the secret police archives, Vatulescu describes selective processes practiced in Romania and Russia. Unlike Russia, which still has no law or administrative body that specifically addresses access to the secret police files, Romania has created CNAS (Casa Naţională de Asigurări de Sănătate). Vatulescu explains that her efforts to gain access to the files meant that she was included in the training sessions for those hired to work for CNAS and as "research access" as she puts it "had not been officially settled, I was often the first researcher to gain access to the files of major Romanian writers."[383] As we shall see below, access to her file did not satisfy the author Herta

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[381] Cristina Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics: Literature Film, and the Secret Police*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 30. Cf.: Vitaly Shentalinsky, *The KGB's Literary Archive*, London: Harvill Press, 1995.

[382] *ibid*

[383] Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, 29. Vatulescu's description of her experience in Romania brings to light an important tension between academic researchers affiliated with a university and the employees of secret police archives, who often produce their own publication series. Though every researcher must show diligence and respect in terms of privacy rights of the subjects of the files, the premise that employees of the archives deserve greater privileges in terms of access to the material is unsupportable, in my opinion. The existence of discrepancies in access to material at the BStU is mentioned in Dorota Dakowska, Agnès Bensussan, and Nicolas Beaupré, "Der politische und wissenschaftliche Umgang mit den Polizeiarchiven des Kommunismus in Deutschland und in Polen," 25. Similar issues are described in a report on the situation in the Czech Republic from the same conference proceedings: Muriel Blaive, "Einige Etappen der Bewältigung der kommunistischen Vergangenheit seit 1989 in der Republik Tschechien", 121.

Müller, as it was missing a great deal. Indeed, I argue below that this disappointment has its reflection in Müller's fictional representation of dissident activity.

Of the nations that have organized institutes devoted to the explication of the recent past, it is worth noting that the most functional ones (Germany, Czech Republic, and Poland) have chosen to house records on the Nazi and Communist eras in the same institution. On the one hand the Communist regimes found local support because Communism was widely viewed as the victor over and antidote to the suffering and horrors of the Nazi ideology. From that perspective, institutions that promote a solid understanding of the Nazi era as a strong foundation for understanding the Communist era are well warranted. On the other hand, the Czech institution's decision to subsume their records of the two regimes beneath a common category of "totalitarianism" sends a dangerous signal of equivalence, I think. The two regimes should be contrasted so that their particularities give greater meaning to the crimes of each.

Whatever the archives are called, there remains the more pressing issue of their provenance and consequent reliability as historical sources. In nations such as Poland, the Czech Republic, and Romania the damage resulting from altered or incompletely released records has been openly discussed. In Germany, by contrast the debate has centered on how best to interpret the surviving documents. The human dimension of repression, changing allegiances, and good intentions are demonstrated in cases like that of Christa Wolf, who claimed to have forgotten or repressed her collaboration, and Knut Wollenberger, who claimed his was a conscious effort at engaging the state.[384] Thus far such debates had the advantage of addressing an audience with a

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[384] For an overview of the German controversy surrounding GDR authors' collaboration with the Stasi, see David Bathrick, "Epilogue: The Stasi and the Poets," *The Powers of Speech: The Politics of Culture in the GDR*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995, 219-242 and Wolfgang Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2009, 469-477.

fair amount of personal experience with the topic at hand. The ideological bias of the secret police is uncontested by those who can compare personal experience with the stilted vocabulary of the police files. Younger scholars though must avoid hasty conclusions. Continued scholarly collaboration and debate across national divides is essential to the future study of the secret police during the Communist era, as a worthy scholarly apparatus for the dissection of the files is slowly built. Collaboration across the divide between history and literature is a worthy goal too. Below I shall demonstrate that fictionalized representations of underground cultural activities–a prime subject of secret investigation and intimidation–provide another view of the activity of the secret police. Such fictional representations as those examined below that were written in the newfound freedom of the post-Communist era also contribute to the continuing study of how a society and its culture begins to make sense of its own past.

Herta Müller's novels *Herztier* (1994) and *Heute wär ich mir lieber nicht begegnet* (1997) narrate a similar relationship with the secret police: repeated interrogation, threats of imprisonment, and the permeation of the police force into one's daily life as a terrifying contagion that reaches trusted friends and loved ones.[385] As we shall see below, Hilbig

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[385] For a short overview of the Aktionsgruppe Banat, the oppositional literary group to which Müller belonged, see Karin Bauer, "Tabus der Wahrnehmung: Reflexion und Geschichte in Herta Müllers Prosa," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (May, 1996), 257-259. Working with Müller's collection of short stories *Barfüßiger Februar* (1990) and novel *Reisende auf einem Bein* (1989), Bauer makes the following assessment: "Sicherlich ist Müllers Schreiben Ausdruck eines Willens zum Protest; ich behaupte aber, daß die Normen und Verbote ihres Dorfes ihren Texten als blinde Flecken eingeschrieben sind, und daß die Texte, trotz der eigenwilligen Umsetzung der Wahrnehmungen und der Infragestellung des Bestehenden, unfähig sind, die von ihnen problematisierten Bewußtseinsinhalte zu überwinden." Bauer, "Tabus der Wahrnehmung: Reflexion und Geschichte in Herta Müllers Prosa," 263. In some ways parallels may be drawn between my arguments below regarding Müller's frustration with dissident activities and Bauer's impression of Müller failure to overcome certain taboos in the above mentioned texts. However, Bauer's reference to "der unreflektierten Reproduktion der Tabus, von Selbstreflexion und Bildung von geschichtlichem Bewußtsein, die sich in die Konstitutionsprozesse von Identität eingeschlichen haben" (274) does not seem applicable to

challenges this conception with his representation of the Berlin underground literary scene as not only infiltrated, but indeed actually constituted by the secret police. Romantic attachment plays a role in both novels: "*Ich*" and *Herztier* represent especially complex exploitation of the trust implicit in personal relationships, a shadow of which is apparent in the authors' later novels. Both *Herztier* and "*Ich*" touch upon the power of bodily harm utilized by the secret police, however Müller's novel emphasizes this dynamic far more in its portrayal of central female characters.

The Complex Gender Roles of Herta Müller's *Herztier*

Müller's 1994 novel *Herztier* opens with two scenes that establish two rather different centers of dissent in the nameless narrator's life: a discussion with Edgar, the last of three male friends still alive, and meditations on the life story of a young girl called Lola, also deceased.[386]

Herztier. Rather, much as in Müller's *Niederungen*, provincial life and the values of the older generation are explicitly criticized in *Herztier*, in the interest of forging a different self-identity. Müller's 1997 novel *Heute wär ich mir lieber nicht begegnet,* also features the exploitation of personal relationships to perpetrate the repressive will of the regime. However, the lack of significant female characters leaves the story less dynamic than *Herztier.* In the later novel, a disappointed lover denounces the narrator to the police in order to get her fired. Her crime is the attempt to find love outside of the country by sewing notes into jackets bound for Italy. The climax of the novel is the betrayal of the narrator by her current boyfriend, Paul, when by chance she sees him receiving a pay off from the secret police. By exploiting the narrator's personal life as the terrain for conflict with the government, the novel successfully blends a deeply personal narrative with a representation of restrictions that are hard to define. This novel, interesting enough, does contain the dimension of intellectual struggle that *Herztier* does. In contrast to the latter, in which the protagonist is a student, and later translator, in *Heute wär ich mir lieber nicht begegnet*, the narrator appears to be one of the undistinguished multitude mentioned in *Herztier*, who work in a factory and simply want to leave the country. The later novel attempts to represent how even one who is not a dissident, who is not intellectually engaged with the ideology of the state, is nonetheless repressed in terms of freedom of movement, harassed, and prevented from a fulfilling personal relationship by the Secret Police.

[386] Though many characters in the novel such as Edgar, Kurt, Georg, and Tereza correspond to friends Müller describes in non-fictional writing, I am not aware that Lola has a clear real-life antecedent. Cf.: Herta Müller, "Herta Müller über die Geheimpolizei: Die Securitate ist noch im

The former group offered quite open opposition to the dictatorship: the first mention of Georg, Kurt, and Edgar relates that they do not believe that Lola committed suicide, as suggested by authorities.[387] Lola, a politically ambiguous character, inspires the narrator to begin the activities that draw the negative attention of the state. In many ways, Lola embodies an ideal citizen of a Communist regime, and yet somehow her independent streak leads to her death. Lola's desires are quite simple: she moves to the city to study Russian, but more importantly to find a refined husband.[388] She volunteers to tend to the showcase of newspaper clippings and the dictator's speeches in the student dorm, joins the party and avidly reads its propaganda brochures.[389] Perhaps in her desire to look her best, despite having the fewest possessions of the six girls who live together in a dormitory, Lola takes whatever she likes from her roommates.[390] Lola is also singularly bold in going out in the evening to find sexual partners, almost exclusively workers whom she meets by riding the streetcars, and then leads to a deserted park.[391] In her fourth year of study Lola appears to have committed suicide by hanging herself in the closet by the narrator's belt. The narrator learns from Lola's diary, which she finds in her own suitcase later that day, that Lola's most recent lover was a well-to-do Party man and that she was pregnant.[392]

Dienst," *Die Zeit* Nr.31 (July 23, 2009) and Herta Müller, *Cristina und ihre Attrappe, oder, Was (nicht) in den Akten der Securitate steht*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2009.

[387] Herta Müller, *Herztier*, (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2009), 43.

[388] Müller, *Herztier*, 9, 11.

[389] Müller, *Herztier*, 20, 27-29.

[390] Müller, *Herztier*, 11-13.

[391] Müller, *Herztier*, 19-20.

[392] Müller, *Herztier*, 29-31.

In the aftermath of Lola's death, the narrator joins a group of fellow students who criticize the dictatorship, in order to air her feelings about what she reads in Lola's diary and the latter's ill treatment. Lola's memory is debased by the party when, after her death, she is publicly condemned for committing suicide and eventually ex-matriculated and ejected from the party.[393] Kurt, Georg, and Edgar are the only ones who question the public interpretation of Lola's death, and when alone with the narrator they call the dictatorship a mistake aloud, as no one else dares.[394] For her part, the narrator needs the company of others in order to work through Lola's story, partly because Lola's diary was stolen from the narrator's suitcase. "Wenn ich allein an Lola dachte, fiel mir vieles nicht mehr ein. Wenn sie zuhörten, wußte ich es wieder."[395] Aside from such conversations, the activities of the group consist of reading books from West Germany, documenting the daily transfer of political prisoners to and from a factory, and writing poetry.[396]

In Müller's *Herztier,* men make up a black and white dichotomy of dissidents versus the state. The narrator at first believes that Kurt, Edgar, and Georg will be able to do harm to the dictator and his representatives called "Wächter." These latter are the all male secret police, who roam the land with their mouths and pockets full of stolen green plums, surveilling, and

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[393] Müller, *Herztier*, 30, 32.

[394] Müller, *Herztier*, 7-9.

[395] Müller, *Herztier*, 43.

[396] Müller, *Herztier*, 57-58. Glajar quotes an interview with Müller from 1987, in which the author said that she learned the details of the concentration camp and the crimes of the Second World War in college, from books from West Germany. These in turn precipitated a new perspective of her father. These events are reflected in *Herztier*, though not explicitly spelled out. Glajar, "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's 'Herztier,'" 526.

occasionally harassing or arresting members of the public.[397] The narrator eventually comes to the conclusion that the secret police require the activities of those such as Edgar, Kurt, and Georg, in order to justify their own.

> Und ich dachte mir, daß alles etwas nützt, was denen schadet, die Friedhöfe machen. Daß Edgar, Kurt und Georg, weil sie Gedichte schreiben, Bilder machen und hier und da ein Lied summen, Haß anzünden in denen, die Friedhöfe machen. Daß dieser den Wächtern schadet. Daß nach und nach alle Wächter und zuletzt auch der Diktator von diesem Haß den Kopf verlieren.
>
> Ich wußte damals noch nicht, daß die Wächter diesen Haß für die tägliche Genauigkeit einer blutigen Arbeit brauchten. Daß sie ihn brauchten, um Urteile zu fällen für ihr Gehalt. Urteile geben konnten sie nur den Feinden. Die Wächter beweisen ihre Zuverlässigkeit durch die Zahl der Feinde.[398]

The narrator's qualification of "Freidhöfe machen" is one that is first applied to her father, to make sense of his behavior upon returning from the Second World War where, as the child understood it, he made cemeteries.[399] The comparison between the violent crimes of the Nazi era and that of the Communist era are later made explicit, as I shall detail below. In this example, the agents of the secret police make cemeteries of all those who attempt to escape Romania, and the narrator claims absolutely everyone dreams of attempting escape.[400] The quotation describes an abstract battle of intellects and links the two groups as antitheses in a manner elaborated upon

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[397] According to the narrator, the agents eat the plums surreptitiously because "Pflaumenfresser" is an expletive meaning "Emporkömmlinge, Selbstverleugner, aus dem Nichts gekrochene Gewissenlose und über Leichen gehende Gestalten." The plums are also associated with the narrator's father, who warned her that eating them would cause a deadly fever. The narrator claims that the agents eat the plums for their sour taste of poverty, which reminds them of their childhood as farmers. On the other hand, the narrator and all three of her friends ate the plums as children. Müller, *Herztier*, 58-61. Thus the Land of the Green Plums refers to provincial childhoods shared by supporters and opposition to the regime with imprecise associations of interdiction and bodily punishment.

[398] Müller, *Herztier*, 58.

[399] Müller, *Herztier*, 51.

[400] Müller, *Herztier*, 54-55.

(and perhaps even exaggerated) by Hilbig, as described below. First, however, a brief look at the female characters reveals a far less theoretical battle, as physical struggle is far more frequently thematized in relation to women in *Herztier*.

Whereas Kurt, Edgar, and Georg show no equivocation in their opposition to the regime and its agents, the narrator's female friends represent far more liminal spaces between the opposing forces of the state and rebels, not yet well examined in existing scholarship.[401] Two recent edited volumes, *Herta Müller* and *Herta Müller: Politics and Aesthetics*, demonstrate similar ideas of the discourses that dominate the author's reception.[402] Both focus on Müller ethnic identity and her representation of a provincial or "minor" literature, her dissent from a Communist dictatorship, and finally the visual language of Müller's oeuvre.[403] The former volume, edited by Lyn Marven and Brigid Haines, includes an introduction that recounts Müller's reception to date in detail and includes essays that trace her international appeal and the

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[401] In her section "Political Persecution under Ceaucescu's Dictatorship," Glajar refers to Lola only as the narrator's impetus for joining Kurt, Edgar, and Georg. Tereza is not mentioned. As the title of her article suggest, Glajar focuses rather on ethnic identities. Glajar, "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's 'Herztier,'" 530-535.

[402] Lyn Marven and Brigid Haines (eds.), *Herta Müller*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Bettina Brandt and Valentina Glajar (eds.), *Herta Müller: Politics and Aesthetics*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013.

[403] Cf. the more recent: Lucy Gasser, "Herta Müller's East/Central European Network: Romania, Russia and Germany in The Passport," *Oxford Research In English* 2, (Winter 2015): 53-67. Ulrike Steierwald, "Fluchtbewegung in Variationen: Herta Müllers Poetik im Spannungsfeld von Ästhetik und Politisierung," *Gegenwartsliteratur: A German Studies Yearbook* 14, (2015): 223-241. Jenny Watson, "'Reden ist Silber, Schweigen ist Gold': German as a Site of Fascist Nostalgia and Romanian as the Language of Dictatorship in the Work of Herta Müller," in *New Literary and Linguistic Perspectives on the German Language, National Socialism, and the Shoah*, Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2014, 143-158.

explosion in interest in her work since her 2009 Nobel Prize for Literature.[404] Though scholars have long commented on the *Bildlichkeit* of Müller's prose work, her four sets of collages have drawn an increasing amount of scholarly attention.[405] The autobiographical qualities of Müller's work have also been heavily commented on, especially since Müller herself has written about this quality in essays, of which more below. Müller's most recent prose work, *Atemschaukel* (2009) expands the debates on life writing, as she fictionalized the memories of poet Oskar Pastior's time spent in a Ukrainian gulag.

In one of example of oversimplification of gender roles in Müller's *Herztier*, Ileana Orlich writes:

> In [Müller's] novels, the transition from the narrative Ich zum wir (I to We), which in communist countries offers insights into the collective spirit of Socialist Realism, is achieved on an immediate level by the doubling of female characters who are complicit in the activities of the communist Party/state, like Lola and then Tereza in *The Land of Green Plums*. In a bitterly ironic twist, these doublings represent not the unity of Socialist Realist literature promoting a utopian vision of a collective identity pledging allegiance to the communist state but a grotesque representation of the victim-oppressor polarization. The doubling suggests the physical incorporation of the individual by the Communist state, as in the case of Tereza, the friend who had been charged with spying on the narrator and whose betrayed confidence is used in the narrator's subsequent interrogation by the Securitate. The doubling of Tereza's character assumes a highly sinister level when

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[404] Wiebke Sievers, "Eastward Bound: Herta Müller's International Reception," in *Herta Müller*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Jean Boase-Beier, "Herta Müller in Translation," in *Herta Müller*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

[405] Müller's collage collections: *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm* (1993); *Im Haarknoten wohnt eine Dame* (2000); *Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen* (2005); *Vater telefoniert mit den Fliegen* (2012). An early example of scholarly attention is: Ralph Köhnen (ed.), *Der Druck der Erfahrung treibt die Sprache in die Dichtung: Bildlichkeit in Texten Herta Müllers*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag, 1997. Cf. the more recent: Lyn Marven, "'So fremd war das Gebilde': The Interaction between Visual and Verbal in Herta Müller's Prose and Collages," in *Herta Müller*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Angelika Weber, "Fragmentierte Identität–fragmentierte Geschichte: Der Apfel als Motiv in Herta Müllers Collagenband Vater telefoniert mit den Fliegen und sein intertextueller Bezug zu einigen ihrer Prosawerke," *Acta Germanica/German Studies In Africa: Jahrbuch Des Germanistenverbandes Im Südlichen Afrika/Yearbook Of The Association For German Studies In Southern Africa* 43, (2015): 224-235.

> her terminal cancer ultimately projects outwardly the individual reduced to a body that could be controlled and potentially eliminated by the cancer-like political surveillance, an extended metaphor reminiscent of Solzhenitsyn's portrayal of the devastations caused by the police state and its network of informers in Cancer Ward.
> Müller's focus on the female body as a scriptorial entity, as a script and representation, features Lola, the girl from the country who joins the Communist Party and at night lies in waiting for the factory workers to have sex in the park, an act symbolically consummated to suggest the grotesque intersection of public and private spheres in a communist context.[406]

Orlich suggests that Tereza and Lolita are reduced to mere bodies appropriated by the state, backing up her claim with a description of the contemporary law against abortion that claimed each unborn fetus to be the Socialist property of the state.[407] Her concluding assertion that "Müller's novels help forge a new strategy of cultural survival for women, the most oppressed victims, through the art of fiction" reiterates women's roles as victims in Müller's writing, which Orlich sees as dominant.[408] Though the bodily dimension of the female characters in *Herztier* is emphasized in its narration, Orlich's descriptions of Tereza and Lola recapitulate only part of their stories: Tereza helped the narrator hide contraband and tried to mitigate the efforts of the secret police to get the narrator fired.[409] She accepted the task of spying on the narrator in order to secure the necessary visa to visit her once the narrator emigrated.[410] As described above, Lola pursued her own vision of a happy life in the village by wooing potential husbands and in the process over-stepping social norms like borrowing roommates' possessions and engaging with

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[406] Ileana Alexandra Orlich, "Incorporations: Styling Women's Identity and Political Oppression in the Novels of Herta Müller," *Journal of Research in Gender Studies* 4, no. 1 (2014): 220-221.

[407] Orlich, "Incorporations," 222.

[408] Orlich, "Incorporations," 224. In my opinion, naming women the most oppressed victims requires further evidence than Orlich offers.

[409] Müller, *Herztier*, 123.

[410] Müller, *Herztier*, 157-161.

numerous sexual partners. It is true that Lola was abused by some of her sexual partners, however Orlich does not address Lola's motivation in her analysis. Both Tereza and Lola collaborate with the state and suffer for it, but to disregard their personal motivations in so doing unduly reduces their agency.

As with Edgar and Kurt, Tereza and Lola's deaths present the strongest indication of the vulnerability of the body. On the first page of the novel, the narrator writes, "Ich kann mir heute noch kein Grab vorstellen. Nur einen Gürtel, ein Fenster, eine Nuß und einen Strick."[411] Lola was found hanging on the narrator's belt, Georg fell from a window, Tereza ignored a growth under her arm that resembled a nut, and Kurt was found hanging by a rope. For the narrator, the four relatively benign items evoke the frailty of life, as well as the confusing situations of each of the characters deaths. The belt, window, nut-shaped tumor, and rope physically caused the death, however each required each item covers an ambiguous story. Lola, Georg, and Kurt might well have been murdered by the secret police, or, even more difficult to prove, coerced into suicide. Tereza ignored her tumor, perhaps disappointed at the unraveling of her relationship with a doctor or frightened to face the reality of her serious illness. Beginning with the four objects that represent her friends' deaths, the narrator sets out to reconstruct their lives. Another look at the female characters suggests their sexuality played more of a role in their dealings with the state than that of the Georg and Kurt.

Karin Bauer offers a judicious reading of the ambiguity Müller's female characters display, writing:

> In Müller's texts it is foremost female figures who act out their distorted emotionality and whose instrumentalization of sexuality is delineated as a reactive force in confrontation with abuse and male aggression. Müller's texts show women's instrumentalization of sexuality—often condemned by the community as female depravity—to take place under

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[411] Müller, *Herztier*, 7.

> particular social and political conditions, often functioning as a strategy of self-preservation. Müller resists portraying women as mere victims of the patriarchal order; however, their participation in the communal web of delusion and violence suggests that they already bear the scars of political and social mutilation. Although Müller's texts question the strict division between female victim and male perpetrator, the female characters are nevertheless depicted as the products of domination. Women's reactions against oppression and male violence thus carry domination's negative imprint: 'femininity itself is already the effect of the whip.' Affected by the whip, women develop strategies to assert their agency and sexuality, albeit these strategies are themselves tied to emotional, social, and political distortions.[412]

Bauer goes on to describe the principle of exchange she sees in Müller's *Der Mensch ist ein großer Fasan auf der Welt* (1986) and *Atemschaukel* (2009). Given this focus, her assessment of *Herztier* and *Heute wär ich mir lieber nicht begegnet* (addressed below) is limited to noting its representation of "the use of sexual innuendo as an interrogator's tool."[413] In fact, in addition to the ways that Lola and Tereza negotiate with the state, numerous other female characters exist in a gray zone outside of complete compliance with the state and a life defined by opposing it.

In keeping with Bauer's focus on economic exchange, Tereza describes how an acquaintance crosses the border to Hungary in order to sell desirable clothing at a profit. It is exchanged for gold, which is then smuggled back across the border hidden in the acquaintance's vagina.

> Frauen können besser handeln als Männer, sagte Tereza, zwei Drittel im Bus waren Frauen. Jede hatte auf der Ruckreise ein Plastiksäckchen mit Gold in der Schnecke. Die Zollner wissen das, aber was sollen sie tun. [...] Nach dem Zoll war die Angst weg, sagte Tereza. Alle sind eingeschlafen mit ihrem Gold zwischen den Beinen.[414]

Here women use their bodies to conceal contraband from male authority figures, whom social norms prevent from searching a woman's genitals. The contraband is gold, a universally

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[412] Karin Bauer, "Gender and the Sexual Politics of Exchange in Herta Müller's Prose," *Herta Müller*, Edited by Brigid Haines and Lyn Marven, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 155.

[413] Bauer, "Gender and the Sexual Politics of Exchange in Herta Müller's Prose," 153.

[414] Müller, *Herztier*, 148.

acknowledged form of wealth, independent from any national currency and its corresponding regime.

The male force of the state finds embodiment in Hauptman Pjele, the secret police agent who interrogates Edgar, Kurt, Georg and the narrator. Pjele's efforts at intimidating the men are less often physical than his interrogation of the narrator, which insists on sexual connotations of said physicality. For example, whereas Pjele mostly questions Edgar, Kurt, Georg, only once making Kurt eat a piece of paper and threatening the men with his dog,[415] he regularly forces the narrator to characterize her relationship with the other three as erotic and to sing naked in front of him.[416] The narrator imagined herself as part of a group with Kurt, Edgar, and Georg distinctive from the rest of those who moved from provincial to city life, but admits that in fact reading books led to differences as fine as a hair. Her bodily treatment by the secret police undermines the abstract foundation of her association with her fellow students.

In Herta Müller's *Herztier*, changes of perspective are used to convey a sense of generalization. A degree of interchangeable generalization, is introduced in the second scene of the novel, which describes a girls' dormitory of six neatly ordered beds with identical possessions. Only Lola, with her lack of possessions and independent air, stands out amongst the six. The narrator emphasizes her relative obscurity amongst the girls, writing of one incident during which Lola masturbated in their common dorm room as the other girls looked on: "Alle Mädchen stand um ihr Bett. Jemand zog sie am Haar. Jemand lachte laut. Jemand stopfte sich die Hand in den Mund und sah zu. Jemand fing an zu weinen. ich weiß nicht mehr, welche von

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[415] Müller, *Herztier*, 87-88.

[416] Müller, *Herztier*, 103-104, 106.

ihnen ich war."[417] Lola herself singled out the narrator with the gift of her diary, presumably because the narrator walked with her, talked with her, and sat with her in the cafeteria.[418]

The narrator, who remains nameless, is constituted by her continuing remembrance of Lola within the newfound community of her three friends. This is apparent from the way the novel introduces the "Ich" persona as part of the group with Edgar, Kurt, and Georg on the first pages of the novel, and the quotation above which relates how the narrator found her own voice when speaking of Lola to the others. Perhaps the one distinguishing factor the narrator relates is the story of her grandparents, though her grandfather's service in the First World War again constitutes a generational experience.

Even within the group made up of the narrator, Kurt, Georg, and Edgar a large degree of interchangeable generalization is present, especially in terms of stories of childhood. In narrating her childhood, Müller's protagonist consistently uses indefinite articles, speaking of "eine Mutter," "ein Vater," and eventually "ein Kind," which she only acknowledges as herself after Lola's death.[419] Despite this acknowledgement, she continues to narrate the story of her childhood in sections beginning with "ein Kind," thus not only obscuring the identity of the child, but suggesting it might be any child. The narrator finds much in common with her three friends, Kurt, Georg, and Edgar, as all three are ethnically German, like the narrator, and come from small towns. Once the secret police agents begin to investigate the four friends, they begin by searching their parents' houses, turning things inside out and upside down. This treatment causes a kind of nervous illness amongst their mothers. The narrator explains, "Wenn wir statt

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[417] Müller, *Herztier*, 26.

[418] Müller, *Herztier*, 24.

[419] Müller, *Herztier*, 42.

über unsere heimgekehrten SS-Väter über unsere Mütter sprachen, staunten wir, daß diese Mütter, obwohl sie sich im Leben nie gesehen hatten, uns die gleichen Briefe mit ihrer Krankheiten nachschickten."[420] The group's interdependence and the parallel progress of each mean that even differences between them, such as their place of employment after completing studies, and even whether they live or eventually die under suspicious circumstances interpreted as suicide seems interchangeable: elements of each of their stories could well have been those of the others.

As described above, Lola, though in no way openly oppositional to the state (quite the contrary) she inspired the narrator to activities deemed hostile to the state. Tereza, whom the narrator never completely trusted despite a strong affection, complicates the simple boundaries between dissidents and agents of the state that are often drawn in the scholarly reception of the novel. She is an accomplice of the narrator, though by the end of the novel she has become a double agent.

Still the repeated references to her father and herself as his child seem to find their explanation on the final page of the novel. There the narrator, looking at a picture of Hauptmann Pjele with his grandson, thinks to herself,

> Ich wünschte mir, daß Hauptmann Pjele einen Sack mit allen seinen Toten trägt. Daß sein geschnittenes Haar nach frischgemähtem Friedhof riecht, wenn er beim Frisör sitzt. Daß das Verbrechen stinkt, wenn er sich nach der Arbeit zu seinem Enkel sitzt. Daß dieses Kind sich vor den Fingern ekelt, die ihm den Kuchen geben.
> Ich spürte wie mein Mund auf und zu ging:
> Kurt hat einmal gesagt, diese Kinder sind schon Komplizen. Die riechen, wenn sie abends geküßt werden, daß ihre Väter im Schlachthaus saufen und wollen dorthin.[421]

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[420] Müller, *Herztier*, 52. See Glajar, "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's 'Herztier,'" 525-530 for further commentary on the narrator's parents and their efforts to come to terms with the Nazi era.

[421] Müller, *Herztier*, 252.

The complicity of the children in their father's and grandfather's violence is equally applicable to the killers of the Communist regime as that of the Nazi regime. In repeatedly referring to her own father the narrator demonstrates her awareness of his crimes, and her own disgust of them, just as she wishes of the children today.

Though Müller's narrator addresses her father's collaboration with the Nazis, Hilbig makes explicit that the protagonist of his 1993 novel *"Ich"* is meant to represent "einer der vielen vaterlosen Lebensläufe der Nachkriegsgeneration."[422] Hilbig continues, "In unterbemittelten Verhältnisse aufgewachsen, hatte sich der Jugendliche, konfrontiert mit Erwachsenen, die er als Ich-los empfindet, seine Lebens-Parameter selbst erfinden müssen, seine introspektiven Neigungen schienen ihm dabei zu Hilfe gekommen zu sein." This quotation seems to speak to the experience of the young people in Müller's *Herztier*, and the idea of individuals who lack a personal identity ties in very well with what I have above described as the generalization of familial roles in Müller's novel: a mother, a father, a child. The twist in Hilbig's case is that the apparent success in re-organizing the self is a mirage, or as I shall argue below simulacrum, the title of the novel puts the first person pronoun in quotation marks in order to question its authenticity more emphatically.

Hilbig's *"Ich"*: The Fictional Autobiography of a Secret Police Spy

[422] Wolfgang Hilbig, *Werke: Bd. 5 "Ich,"* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2012), 393. In my estimation this detail proves pivotal in that the protagonist is coerced by the Stasi into signing a statement in which he recognizes another man's child as his own. There are clear indications that the protagonist feels sympathy for the fatherless child, evident in his inquires into the father upon first seeing the child, and his reminiscences on his own absent father in describing when he signs the false document. It seems noteworthy that Hilbig describes a common generational experience of absent fathers, while Müller describes a generational experience of fathers that returned from the war. Perhaps the ten-year age difference in the authors, which might be assumed to hold for their fathers as well, is the key difference, though nationality might be an important variable as well.

Bypassing the young adult years described in Siegmar Faust's prose efforts (see chapter 4), Hilbig weaves his own experiences into the story of a man in his mid-forties whose interest in literary endeavors finds its culmination in work for the secret police. Around quite convincing descriptions of a worker's failure to maintain his factory job while attempting to write the new kind of literature advocated by the state, as well as a clear window into the literary underground of Berlin's famed Prenzlauer Berg scene, Hilbig pursues theoretically informed contemplation of the nature of the Stasi.[423] Ultimately he concludes that the "reality" of a report is as much a work of fiction, especially when the scene described is one as thoroughly orchestrated by the Stasi. As I shall describe below, in addition to the novels clear debts to post-structural theory, the focus on the concept of Enlightenment is undercut by frequent references to simulation. I find that the confusion that undermines the authenticity of the underground literary scene suggests that it is actually a simulacrum of Baudrillardian proportions.

As described above, the protagonist of *"Ich"* is a worker and aspiring writer. His very first attempts at writing combined description of daily life with fantasy, making Realism a stylistic point of comparison, as is later made explicit. The narrator describes his work as follows:

> Der Text oder die Texte – es war wirklich nicht zu entscheiden – waren ein uneinheitliches Gemisch von hypertropher Selbststilisierung (eines erfundenen Selbst) und der nüchternen Beschreibung von Alltäglichkeit aus seinem wirklichen Dasein. In seinen ‚Fiktionen' war ihm sein Ich oftmals so weit in phantastische Bereiche entwickeln – in entlegene Zeiten oder ausgedachte Landschaften –, daß er es mit den Einschüben aus seiner langweiligen Wirklichkeit zurückholen mußte: um es nicht gänzlich zu verlieren![424]

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[423] Hilbig therefore skips over the late sixties and early seventies, which he spent in Leipzig and Dresden and established contact with Faust and Gert Neumann.

[424] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 86.

This teasingly vague description of everyday life interspersed with the fantastic is tantalizing because there is no further indication of such departures from reality in the rest of the text, though at times the machinations of the secret police seem quite surreal. On a meta-level not at all alien to the novel, it might be fair to compare this description of the protagonist's early work with the finished product in hand. After all, Hilbig has interspersed realistic portrayal of his own life with a fantastic story of collaboration with the secret police. The difference though is that Hilbig claims that his inspiration, and even written and oral expressions within the text come from real informants.[425]

Reflecting on his early attempts at writing, which might well constitute an autobiographical element to this novel, M.W. describes how his life as a "schreibender Arbeiter" fails, thereby providing an interesting post-mortem of a major failure of East German Socialist Realism. As described in chapter one, Walter Ulbricht's Bitterferlder Weg envisioned a national literature written by workers that described their daily life in the GDR. From the above description of W.'s work, the texts he wrote seem to have great potential to contribute to this movement, except for his flights of fancy.[426] However, Hilbig's *"Ich"* describes how a factory worker's fellow colleagues are immediately suspicious of his efforts to write, and since such pursuits set him apart from them, it is impossible for him to be both worker and writer. Moreover, W.'s association with the small town's intellectuals, seen by his co-workers as lazy people who look down upon factory work, deepens their suspicion.[427] The narrator's utter inability to arrive at work punctually because he devotes late nights and mornings to writing

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[425] Wolfgang Hilbig, "Anmerkung," in *"Ich,"* 377.

[426] Cf. a collection of work by schreibende Arbeiter: *Ein Baukran stürzt um*, München: Piper Verlag, 1970.

[427] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 87.

reinforces the assumption that intellectuals harbor a disrespect for factory work.[428] As W. describes it, though, in a society obsessed Marxist concepts of class, the smallest hint of intellectual work was enough to separate him from the other workers.

> Man konnte es an ihm riechen, wie er sich an der Unvollkommenheit der Gemeinschaft begeilte, in die er sich eingeschlichen hatte... wenn er jetzt auch noch unten in seinem Loch hockte, so war er doch längst emporgekommen und gehörte einem anderen Stand an. Er selbst mußte es noch nicht gespürt haben, doch jeder der von ihm im Stich gelassenen Kollegen merkte es ihm an. Jeder roch es...es war der Geruchsinn der Klasse...die Arbeiter hatten die ganze Tragweite seines Tuns sofort erfasst... er hatte eine Wand von Buchstaben zwischen ihnen aufgerichtet.[429]

There is a clear sense of guilt in this description of his co-workers' opinion, which M.W. accepts as more prescient than his own. W. expresses real regret when eventually he feels it necessary to leave his job and co-workers at the factory,[430] but he seems to accept that being a worker and writer are two mutually exclusive occupations. In leaving his small town behind, W. initiates a new identity, and begins the struggle to find his way into the life of a professional writer.

Literary Style and the Collapse of Stasi and Underground into each other

After W. becomes helplessly entrapped by a troubled young woman often in prison, the Stasi exploits the resulting legal action against him to recruit him as an informant on the group of intellectual misfits in his town. Eventually, as his work life at the factory falls apart, new plans for a move to a larger city are made. Once the Stasi have asserted their authority, they begin to instruct our narrator in the art of writing. W. finds his commanding officer, the Chef or boss of the regional office in W.'s hometown, quite helpful, returning to his advice on how to be a good

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[428] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 108, 112.

[429] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 88.

[430] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 116.

author a number of times throughout the novel.[431] "Man sieht am besten aus dem Dunkel ins Licht!" the Boss's bon mot for writers, becomes W.'s idee fixe in Berlin, where he never fully joins the alternate literary scene, and in fact follows a young woman from the shadows and hides in the sewer.

W.'s first Stasi commanding officer's suggestion that he write his reports with the kind of attention to detail that makes good fiction inaugurates the inherent tension artfully played up in the novel between the protagonist's literary creations and his written reports for the Stasi. Of the reports, the narrator concludes that:

> Es sollte also hier um Alltagsprosa gehen, um realistische Geschichten, um den Realismus der Geschichten, in die er Einblick nehmen sollte. Um den Realismus seiner eigenen Geschichte ging es nicht...folgerichtig war diese draußen im Dunkel geblieben. – Genau dies, sagte sich W., war das Hauptmerkmal des nichtexistierenden Sozialistischen Realismus, über den der Chef so wenig guter Meinung gewesen war.[432]

In many ways, what the narrator and his officer hope to undertake is precisely a form of Socialist Realism, though of course it must feature wrongdoers and enemies as opposed to a positive hero. Still the intent to shape reality according to the ideology and even vocabulary of the Stasi makes the task of reporting comparable to writing under other circumstances. Stasi reports are in fact quite prone to exaggerating an individual's danger to the state, as well as dubious interpretation of actions like a literary reading as an act of organized resistance. Given the fiction of the reports then, perhaps it was only a matter of time before the narrator considered embellishing his reports

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[431] Hilbig, *"Ich,"*133, 132, 294, 324.

[432] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 169. The failure of Socialist Realism referred to here might well be that of the "schreibende Arbeiter" among whom the protagonist could well be counted. Of course, it might just as well be a condemnation of the official literature of the GDR in general, though I personally would disagree that official literature lacked a significant exploration of the self. M.W. receives a fair amount of criticism for the excessively literary nature of his reports. Not only do they dwell too heavily on the literary influences he perceives amongst those of the scene (Beckett) but also himself. Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 39.

with untruths, as he does towards the end of his career, apparently motivated by rivalry with a fellow author who has risen to prominence and even claimed the affections of the narrator's love interest.[433]

Hilbig's *"Ich"* quite aggressively experiments with perspective in the three sections of the novel. The first and third sections are mostly written in the first-person and narrate the near-present of protagonist's life in Berlin as a Stasi informer. As Hilbig wrote in his publishing pitch for the novel, the perspective shift to third person in the second section was meant to signify the protagonist's distance from his past, which he relates in that section. Even beyond the distance of the third person perspective, the protagonist is shown to be a fractured individual as he is referred to by his initials M.W. or W. though at other times by his cover name Cambert or C. A consistent split in the narrator's identity does not seem to be represented. The first and third section, though mostly narrated in the first person, both contain further hints at a fractured identity. For example in a brief moment of foreshadowing in the first section before the narrator moves on to recollect what led to his present situation in Berlin, he writes: "Oh, wie wünschte er sich hinüber…dachte ich; es war, als ob ich im Gedanken von einer fremden Person aus meiner

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[433] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 295. The writer S.R. or "Reader," as W. dubs him in his reports, causes the narrator great frustration in terms of the former's literary and romantic success, despite Reader's utter lack of talent. After making the great blunder of scaring off a potential contact for Reader in the West, W. is asked to leave town. Upon returning to the apartment given to him by the Stasi a month later, he finds Reader there. As he soon learns from Feuerbach, however, this perfect spy is considering "Dekonspiration," in other words, forsaking his identity as an agent of the secret police. W.'s new assignment, should he choose to accept it, is to make sure Reader remains true to script. Unfortunately, W. is thrown into jail after attempting to contact *die Studentin*, with the intention of putting her off from Reader. In solitary confinement, W. suffers a sexual attack by Feuerbach, a central event in Annie Ring's analysis of "*Ich*" in her recent monograph, *After the Stasi: Collaboration and the Struggle for Sovereign Subjectivity in the Writing of German Unification*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 67-74.

Vergangenheit sprach."[434] In the third section there are page-long interludes in parentheses narrated in the third person, shedding light on the protagonist's literary endeavors, especially a final project, which breaks down the boundaries between the narrator's identities as writer and informer.[435] This deconstructive equation of what at first appears to be diametrically opposed identities is the crux of the novel. As Hilbig described the novel-to-be in his proposal:

> Vielleicht, sagte ich mir, ist der Ich-Verlust eines IM, der seine Arbeit an einem Bild von Wirklichkeit im Geheimen leistet, mit dem Ich-Verlust eines Schriftstellers zu vergleichen, der sich, im Verlauf seiner Arbeit, mehr als einmal vor die Frage gestellt sieht: wer oder was denkt in mir?[436]

Thus, while it might appear that by the end of the novel the protagonist finds a certain unity of self, while demonstrating that his writer and informant identities are really one and the same, the author identifies that self as inauthentic.

Even Berlin's alternative scene, conceivably the polar opposite of world of the Stasi, becomes part of the surreally interchangeable swirl of W.'s life in the GDR. The titles of the book's first two sections, "Der Vorgang" (referring to the Stasi term for an operation) and "Erinnerung im Untergrund" set up what seems to be two contrasting terms. In a de-constructive move, the last section of the book "Aufklärung" plays on the overlap of these two worlds and their collapse into one another. Though one might expect the concept of Aufklärung or Enlightenment to describe the intellectuals of the scene and their breaking away from their restrictive society, in fact the term is company jargon for the Stasi's work. In the end it seems the underground literary scene is in essence the work of the Stasi. Shortly before describing a bold

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[434] Wolfgang Hilbig, *"Ich,"* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2003), 36.

[435] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 289, 364-5. The latter of these refers directly to the current text and addressed the reader directly.

[436] Hilbig, *Werke: Band 5 "Ich,"* 392.

new project, the narrator relates how he begins to play on "inoffizielle Literatur" and "Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter," accidentally interchanging them.[437] The project he begins to consider essentially exchanges his identity M. W. with his cover name Cambert. As Cambert, the protagonist intends to flood the underground literary magazines with a new kind of text, short prose pieces.[438] In other words, the narrator appears poised to publish texts almost indistinguishable from his Stasi reports under his Stasi cover name in the literary journals of the underground. In a gesture that solidifies the connection of these literary productions with of his Stasi work, W. eventually chooses to seek out his commanding officer's opinion on this new project, though he had previously thought to do so would mean to lose his identity as author.[439]

Hilbig's protagonist M.W. arrives in Berlin at a time when the beginnings of the protest movements that defined the eighties are already apparent. W. learns from his second commanding officer, known as Feuerbach,[440] that the decision on the part of many within the literary "scene" to remain in the GDR is taken to be evidence of the will to build a resistance to the state. Furthermore, those above Feuerbach are fearful that the literary scene might combine

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[437] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 284.

[438] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 286-289. M.W. seems to mock the prevalence of literary theory in talking up his format as the next big thing: "…meiner Ansicht nach war man damit sogar ziemlich nahe bei den neusten Texttheorien, vielleicht stimmte es, daß die Neostrukturalisten das Fragment als den einzig zeitgemäßen Text erkannt hatten?" Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 287. Cf. Judith Ryan, *The Novel After Theory*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 139-144.

[439] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 287, 358.

[440] Judith Ryan notes the connection to the philosopher drawn upon by Marx, *The Novel After Theory*, 140. Additionally, Hilbig's novel seems to hint at a Jewish heritage of this commanding officer: his name is actually Wasserstein, the narrator tells us, and "Dieser Name mißfiel ihm selbst aufs äußerste, gab er doch oft genug zu Spötteleien Anlaß in einem Verein, in dem allerwegen mit Namen gewirkt wird. Dennoch wechselte er ihn aus Trotz nicht, obwohl es vorkam, daß einer der Häuptlinge ihn fragt: Wasserschwein, wie lange wollen Sie Ihre Sippe noch mit dieser Gattungsbezeichnung irritieren? Das ist ja sogar für uns Philosemiten zu viel." Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 10-11.

with the movements devoted to causes, such as ecological concerns, or united against the mandatory military service. All of these groups are ascribed the intention of changing the GDR from within. Feuerbach, whom W. respects as knowing the scene like no other disagrees with his superiors on the potential for collaboration between the unsanctioned groups:

> Feuerbach schüttelte den Kopf über diesen Gedanken einer Annäherung... Dazu kennen wir die Szene nun aber zu genau, sagte er zu W., die fühlen sich doch von den Basisgruppen bloß benutzt. Und wenn es noch nicht so ist, dann wird es bald passieren. Und was hinzukommt, die sind in der Szene viel zu intelligent für diese Nachtwachen auf der Straßenkreuzung mit Wachskerze in der Pfote. – Feuerbach meinte, es sei in der Szene einfach niemand zu entdecken, der über eine Strategie verfügte, mit deren Hilfe ein Widerstand in eine überschaubare Organisation überfuhrt oder nur auf eine einheitliche Linie gebracht werden könne. Einerseits fehlt ihnen einfach der führende Kopf, also irgendein Guru, der die Impertinenz hat, sie alle für sich springen zu lassen, anderseits ist unter ihnen gar keiner blöd genug, einem solchen Scharlatan auf den Leim zu gehen...und das macht sie mir ja so sympathisch! – Feuerbach grinste und erzählte, es werde drüber nachgedacht, ob man ihnen diesen führenden Kopf nicht beibringen solle...Haben Sie nicht Lust dazu? [...] Und nach gebührender Entwicklung würden wir uns diesen Kopf schnappen und daran die Bande aufknacken...[441]

The protagonist's own views confirm those of Feuerbach. W. states that he thinks such scenes have grown as weeds, wherever the costs of renovations have proven too great to undertake. The lack of plan led W. to describe this grouping as a milieu, rather than scene, though he submits to the phrase "scene" used by the Stasi and participants alike. The lack of organization and political intent is but one area where W. and his comrade officer agree. As I shall elaborate below, their meeting of minds extends quite far into questions of literary import.

M.W.'s Stasi handler gives him a great deal of advice on managing his attempt to become a professional writer. For example, confronting his first opportunity to give a reading within the scene, W. is nervous about whether he has enough material. Feuerbach seems to give some friendly and helpful advice by suggesting delaying the reading by two or three weeks. The tone changes, however, when Feuerbach suddenly makes clear that the suggestion is an order,

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[441] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 193-194.

presumably to organize better surveillance.[442] As W. appears to have some success, the officer offers some industry specific advice: "Sie müssen gezielter arbeiten, mit mehr Konsequenz. Es müßten langsam wieder mal ein paar Neuigkeiten über Ihrem Tisch kommen, Gedichte zum Beispiel. Oder schreiben Sie doch einfach auf, was Sie in der Szene so hören und sehen...aber Gedichte haben im Augenblick Vorrang."[443] On the one hand we see here the seed of the narrator's later project to pass his Stasi reports on as prose fragments. On the other hand, the Stasi major's suggestion of pursuing poetry certainly does reflect the reality of the East German underground of the eighties.[444] As I shall elaborate upon below, it is not only the case that the major knows better than others the current trends of the scene, but even, as the narrator suggests, actually he sets them. This is especially so, according to W., in terms of the GDR's recognizable official culture.

According to our narrator, the West is quite dependent on the Stasi's judgment of literature. While considering the possibility of publishing in West Germany, W. thinks to himself how little he knows of the trends in West German literature, compared to his commanding officer Feuerbach:

> Außerdem – dies resultierte zwingend aus den vorausgegangenen Gedanken – hatte der Westen überhaupt keine eigene Meinung zur Literatur; er war völlig abhängig von den Witterungsbedingungen, die aus dem Osten herangezogen. [...] Es gab im Westen niemanden – von unauffälligen Ausnahmen abgesehen –, der nicht widerstandslos die Urteile des MfS (beziehungsweise des KGB) über literarische Qualität waren. Es war einer unserer besten Schachzüge, die Literatur von ‚überwiegend sozialismusfremder, pessimistischer Aussage' (wie bei uns die Inoffizielle Literatur beschrieben wurde) mit dem Merkmal ‚mangelnder

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[442] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 195-196.

[443] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 197.

[444] As Karen Leeder notes, some stylistic trends of the East German underground such as the production of graphic art that included poetry were at first motivated by a loophole in GDR publication law, which did not require the certification of such texts. Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, 35.

> literarischer Qualität' zu koppeln: und die Mumien der westlichen Literaturtheorie glaubten diesem Urteil...sie hatten freilich gar keine andere Möglichkeit, denn ihr offizieller Diskurs beschäftigte sich mit offizieller Literatur, also mit jener, die *wir* ihnen, ausgewählt und verformt, servieren.[445]

The narrator's distinctly derisive description of the West's literary criticism echoes later sentiments by Feuerbach on what he views as the unenviable position of freelance writers in the West, who serve a vapid market.[446] Perhaps most interesting in the above passage is its rather clear-eyed account of the historical situation of the eighties, coupled with the odd sense of pride in the work of the Stasi. The narrator's clear identification with the secret police in phrases that use the first-person plural perspective like "einer unserer besten Schachzüge," and the italicized "wir," as well as the more expected references to "wie bei uns" further demonstrate that the narrator considers himself one of the Stasi.

The small signs of respect for and self-identification with the Stasi culminate in more specific statements that suggest the narrator's true calling is to be a secret police agent. The profession is portrayed as a worthy one, which requires many skills including literary ones. In terms of the narrator's identification with the Stasi, the most overt example comes towards the end of the novel, when the narrator comes across an agent from his small hometown. The agent fears that he has been "caught" by W. out of his jurisdiction. The narrator accepts that he is a representative of the culture section of the Stasi, thinking "ich war die Hauptabteilung XX."[447] Towards the end of novel after an odd encounter with a romantic interest W. thinks to himself, "Ich war ein aufgeklärter Mensch, gehörte einer aufgeklärter Institution an…jedenfalls war jeder

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[445] Hilbig, *"Ich*, 288.

[446] Hilbig, *"Ich*," 325. The narrator also notes that Westerners would be very surprised to learn of the extent of some of the Stasi agents' devotion to literature (315).

[447] Hilbig, *"Ich*," 292.

anderslautende Gedanke absurd, ja unzulässig, – *wir* waren der harte Kern der Aufklärung, *wir* waren Schwert und Schild der Aufklärung."[448] It sounds as though he is trying to convince himself of the moral credentials of the Stasi, and indeed the following pages confirm it. Most interesting in this statement, though, is perhaps the phrase "Schwert und Schild der Aufklärung." "Aufklärung" is indeed the Stasi's euphemistic designation for their work investigating suspects, perhaps translatable to the idea of "discovery" in American spy parlance. However, the motto of the Stasi is actually Schwert und Schild *der Partei*. The substitution in terms suggests quite a different loyalty, not to the Party, of which there is absolutely no representation in the novel, but to *Aufklärung*, which in German literally means "enlightenment," denoting both the period and concept. The narrator feels quite strongly that the work of the Stasi is honorable and erudite and indeed the literary profession he sought and his work for the Stasi seem one and the same. Still, the work of Aufklärung implicitly requires an enemy to be uncovered or darkness to be vanquished.

Throughout the novel, the Stasi represent the underground literary scene as an organization of dissent, a charade in which the narrator participates. As W. describes, he interacts with a simulation:

> Ich lebte in einer Welt der Vorstellung…immer wieder konnte es geschehen, daß mir die Wirklichkeit phantastisch wurde, irregulär, und von einem Augenblick zum andern bestand die Ruhe für mich nurmehr in einer unwahrscheinlich haltbaren Simulation. Dies war kein Wunder, wir lebten schließlich andauernd unter dem Druck, ein Verhalten in Betracht ziehen zu müssen, das womöglich gar nicht existierte. Es war ein Zweispalt, in dem wir lebten: wir betrieben ununterbrochen Aufklärung, inwiefern sich die Wirklichkeit unseren Vorstellung schon angenähert hatte...aber wir duften nicht glauben, daß unsere Vorstellungen wahr werden konnten.[449]

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[448] Hilbig, *"Ich*," 330.

[449] Hilbig, *"Ich*," 44.

Thinking back to the above quotation about the imagined concern that the scene would join forces with that of other anti-state groups, the simulation herein would be to act as though this were reality and attempt to prevent it. This is known not to be the case, but the Stasi must remain vigilant in terms of measuring any progress towards this imagined threat. Despite the theoretical confusion it substantiates, the narrator follows this understanding, describing his earlier life as an outsider in his small hometown as a period of simulation, and his interaction with the Stasi as the inauguration of reality.[450] However the narrator's discovery at the end of the novel that the literary underground's central figure is an Stasi informant, and apparently has been from the very beginning, suggests that the underground is not only simulation but a simulacrum: it is an imagined creation with no reference to reality, much like what Feuerbach had intimated was in his account of a planning phase.[451]

Hilbig's *"Ich"* and Müller's *Herztier* appear to offer very different insight into oppositional culture. However, both novels allude to changes in the scene according to setting. Müller's novel distinguishes between village, town, and the capital city. The latter is mentioned only once, in connection with a well-to-do doctor.[452] The villages of Müller's novels seem to have no intellectual life, but that of the narrator. A university town is the first collection point for intellectual life.[453] Müller's *Herztier* offers no commentary on the culture of the capital city.

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[450] Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 64.

[451] At one point the narrator specifically refers to Baudrillard's "leere Signifikanz": Hilbig, *"Ich,"* 34.

[452] Müller, *Herztier*, 152.

[453] In referring to the jobs Edgar and Kurt find, the narrator explains their situations in an "Industriestadt" (93) and in a factory close to the city (100) respectively. Glajar, taking a cue from Müller's biography, identifies this small city as Timigoara/ Temeswar. "Banat-Swabian, Romanian, and German: Conflicting Identities in Herta Müller's 'Herztier,'" 530.

Perhaps because it begins with life as a factory worker, and not as a child, Hilbig's *"Ich"* is set only in the "Kleinstadt A" and the capital city, Berlin. As mentioned above, a jurisdictional dispute between the Stasi agents of the small town and department twenty (that devoted to culture) hints at the boundary between regional and national operations. Smaller towns such as Leipzig and Dresden are mentioned as further locations of literary scenes, and in fact the author Hilbig had experience with both. His choice to set his story only in Berlin and A. avoids taking a position on the authenticity of the literary scene in smaller cities. Any attempt to integrate their views on the literary underground must take into account the incongruity in setting. Still, one place on which the novels offer parallel insight is the NSA, nicht-sozialistisches Ausland, and more specifically, West Germany.

For both Wolfgang Hilbig and Herta Müller the West largely represents a continuation of the concerns of the East. As described above, the narrator of *"Ich"* disparages the literary scene of the West as superficial, and especially disappointing in terms of providing new views on the East. Hilbig's final novel, *Das Provisorium* (2000) relates in the third person the struggles of C. (perhaps a reference to Cambert?), a writer from the East to find his place in the Western literary market, which end in disappointment.[454] Though the novel certainly achieves thick description of its new settings, traces of the past call the narrator back. Müller's *Herztier* features incredible connection between East and West: the forbidden books collected by the students have intimate knowledge of their innermost conflicts.[455] This intimacy is a two-way street. Once the narrator reaches West Germany, she continues to receive death threats by telephone and mail from

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[454] This last of Hilbig's novels, though narrated in the third person, is perhaps most clearly identified as autobiographical by its paratexts: the first epigram is a quotation from August Strindberg on sacrificing one's biography to fictional work.

[455] Müller, *Herztier*, 55.

Hauptmann Pjele.[456] One her friends' death under suspicious circumstance interpreted as suicide occurs in Frankfurt, West Germany.[457] Perhaps this inability to escape, as well as other hints at disappointment, might explain the chiasmic repetition of the phrase "wenn wir schweigen werden wir unangenehm, sagte Edgar, wenn wir reden werden wir lächerlich" as the first and last line of the novel.

The frustration in Müller's novel has its fair share of potential inspiration in her personal autobiography. As Müller wrote in a 2009 article about the secret police in her native Romania entitled "Die Securitate ist noch im Dienst,"

> Jede Reise nach Rumänien ist für mich auch eine Reise in eine andere Zeit, in der ich von meinem eigenen Leben nie wusste, was ist Zufall und was ist inszeniert. Deshalb habe ich jedes Mal in allen öffentlichen Äußerungen die Einsicht in meine Akte gefordert, was mir mit wechselnden Gründen stets verweigert wurde. Stattdessen gab es aber jedes Mal Indizien, dass ich schon wieder, also immer noch beobachtet werde.[458]

According to Müller, the file that she was given to peruse was missing an insulting amount of documentation. She describes a number of her harrowing experiences with the secret police, arguing that documentation of these encounters has been removed from her file in order to protect the perpetrators.[459] Romania's current secret service, says Müller, is but a continuation of the Securitate and therefore controls the files in order to avoid prosecution. Moreover Müller writes that institutions still active in coming to terms with the Communist past in Germany and

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[456] Müller, *Herztier*, 245-245.

[457] Müller, *Herztier*, 234.

[458] Herta Müller, "Herta Müller über die Geheimpolizei: Die Securitate ist noch im Dienst," *Die Zeit* Nr.31 (July 23, 2009) http://www.zeit.de/2009/31/Securitate/komplettansicht.

[459] Given the similarities in the events Müller describe in this article and those of *Herztier*, the novel is autobiographical.

Romania contain many unreformed informants to the Securitate, who continue their campaign of misinformation.

Conclusion

Written fifteen years after *Herztier*, Müller 2009 article on her frustration with the incomplete version of her secret police file she is given in her native Romania reflects much of the frustration underlying her novel. Though persecuted for activity deemed dangerous to the state, there is no visible damage to the behemoth of the secret police or possibility for exposing the truth, even once one has escaped to the West. Wolfgang Hilbig, by contrast, used his access to his secret police file to confirm suspicions that the Berlin literary scene was infiltrated by the secret police. He crafted a novel, which according to his own note to the text, incorporates the language of informants into his own life story. Moreover, his novel offers a new pinnacle of secret police activity: rather than fearing that a trusted individual is engaged in betrayal, the very concept of the underground literary collective is shown to be a fabrication, as every kind of coalescence of the scene is revealed to be false. Whereas Hilbig represents the Berlin scene as utterly counterfeit, deflating the aura that has grown around the Prenzlauer Berg scene, Müller represents clandestine activities that are authentic, if ineffectual. This is not the place for a more far-reaching survey, but further comparison of literature from the Czech Republic, Poland and Russia would very likely substantiate the connection between the accessibility of secret police files and the tone of post-Wall literature on the underground literary scene herein established.

Conclusion

Due to my focus on underground culture, I have limited my discussion of Post-Wall literature to just two authors, Wolfgang Hilbig and Nobel Prize-winner Herta Müller. However, no study of GDR literature would be complete without a glance at the scholarly questions that have swirled around such authors as Angela Krauß, Kersten Hansel, Uwe Tellkamp, and Durs Grünbein. Is there still such a thing as GDR literature now that the Wall has fallen? The idea of "Weiterschreiben" implies a search for continuity between the literature of the GDR era and the works of younger writers whose form and themes reflect their literary heritage. The phrase can also be construed as an imperative: a call for authors and scholars of the former East to continue their work, offering new perspectives on what may appear as a bygone moment in German history and literature that has lost relevance for cultural life today.

The 2007 volume *Weiterschreiben: Zur DDR-Literatur nach dem Ende der DDR* edited by Holger Helbig, Kristin Felsner, Sebastian Horn, and Therese Manz appears to have set the trend by introducing the phrase *Weiterschreiben*. The editors note in the introduction that the volume is based on the proceedings of a conference in Erlangen that brought together a diverse group of scholars in terms of age, nationality, and subject. Given the thematiziation of generations of East German writers within the volume, this reference to the diverse backgrounds of the contributing scholars is well taken. Helbig's contribution, the first in the volume, directly addresses the terms, *Umschreiben, Weiterschreiben,* and *Nachschreiben*. The first of these takes note of and further encourages scholars to re-write their accounts of GDR literature with recourse to new paradigms. *Weiterschreiben* is rather specifically used to describe GDR authors who similarly take new perspectives of the subject matter of the GDR era in new novels and

autobiographies (the lines between which blur interestingly). *Nachschreiben* seems to be referring to a kind *Nachlass* as Helbig is concerned with the incorporation of formerly unavailable texts written during the GDR era, for example Werner's Bräunig's *Rummelplatz* or Karl Mickel's *Lachmunds Freunde.* Many of the articles within the volume may be sorted into these three categories. For example Wolfgang Emmerich's article offers a kind of *Umschreiben* by deploying Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social capital to re-conceptualize generational communities. Judith Ryan's article on Durs Grünbein exemplifies Helbig's definition of *Weiterschreiben* in demonstrating how even when East German authors appear to have consigned to their experience of the GDR to the past, an archeology of recent texts reveals its foundational importance for their development. As Helbig himself noted, literary criticism of previously unknown texts, which he called *Nachschreiben* is relatively sparse and indeed not present in the volume in the same density as the previous two methods. Martin Weskott's article "Weiterlesen: Vernachlässigte und übersehene Texts der DDR" is the most pertinent contribution to Helbig's idea of *Nachschreiben*. His article describes how the availability of literature from the GDR has decreased as many librarians literally dump large swathes of their collection. He describes his efforts to rescue such books from the trash and offers a few examples of novels that were available in the GDR despite their controversial topics such as land collectivization and the border area with Poland. Another article to touch on a kind of *Nachschreiben* is Mark Schönleben's on Gert Neumann, which attempts to add *Elf Uhr* and post-Wall novel *Anschlag* to the GDR canon. This article, as well as many others in the volume are devoted to identifying the elusive but eagerly anticipated phenomenon of the *Wende*-Roman.

From the Anglosphere (though featuring input from France, Belgium, and Germany), the most recent relevant publication to the topos of *Weiterschreiben* is *Twenty Years On: Competing*

Memories of the GDR in Postunification German Culture.[460] Edited by Renate Rechtien and Dennis Tate this volume of essays explores a wide range of media including essays on television and film in addition to such genres as narrative and poetry. As the title suggests, the editor promotes a pluralistic approach to a topic that has tended to focus on a somewhat stereotypical portrayal of the GDR after its demise, especially screen memories of the fall of the Wall on November 9th, 1989. It is notable for its efforts to expand the focus beyond the events in Berlin and for its engagement with Uwe Tellkamp's *Der Turm* in several essays (Brockmann, Geier, and Plowman).

Had I wished to write a dissertation on Post-Wall East German literature, it would likely have looked like Ulrike Kalt Wilson's 2011 study *East German Literature after the* Wende: *Kerstin Hensel, Angela Krauß, and the* Weiterschreiben *of GDR Literature*. Wilson argues that Hensel and Krauß's "choices of subject matter are directly related to the GDR's unique past and present situation and […] their narrative methods can be traced back to the kinds of writing styles previously identified as particular to the GDR's literary scene." In Wilson's analysis, the continuation of style and themes beyond the GDR era validates the work of the two authors as a form of *Weiterschreiben.* For the most part, she argues that works by authors like Christa Wolf, Imtraud Morgner, and Maxi Wander function as intertexts to novels published after the fall of the Wall. Though the words "Socialist Realism" make no appearance in her two central chapters (analyses of Hensel and Krauß), Wilson does speak to such related issues as *Gestaltung* and the inspirational function of a literary text, notably in her section on Hensel. In Wilson's analysis of Krauß, the idea of GDR literature as a regional phenomenon takes on a distinctly physical

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[460] As this thesis is completed another forthcoming volume has been announced, but is not yet available: *Re-Reading East Germany* edited by Karen Leeder, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

dimension as she comments at length on the landscape of Saxony and its representation in Krauß's fiction and essays. Wilson's frequently refers to Wolf's "subjective authenticity" as a particularly East German aesthetic that inspired Hensel and Krauß. I agree that though it does not represent the official cultural policy of the GDR, Wolf's aesthetic is particularly East German. However, Wilson writes that neither Hensel nor Krauß shared Wolf's devotion to the Socialist cause nor Realism's broader goals of social commentary making it difficult to see what is left of the East German particularity.

One further volume that does not explicitly speak to the discourse of *Weiterschreiben*, but is nonetheless essential to it is the 2014 *DDR-Literatur: Eine Archivexpedition* edited by Ulrich Bülow and Sabine Wolf. As it is rooted in newly available archival sources ranging from the Stasi, the Writers' Union, and a number of publishing houses' records to the personal papers of authors housed at the German Literature Archive in Marbach and the archive of the Academy of the Arts, this collection is particularly striking. I find the volume's use of archival materials in the service of a breadth of subjects compelling, and the new material it treats represents a significant contribution to our knowledge of literary endeavors in the GDR. Under the sign of an expedition of archives, I shall reiterate my own findings below and then take stock of the outlook for future research.

The very first task of my study was to make clear that "Socialist Realism" should not be considered an empty signifier for the capricious will of a political elite. I contrast its codification as official cultural doctrine in the Soviet Union and the GDR, emphasizing the economic and political motivations in defining the function of literature in the Socialist state, but also the literary history of the aesthetics established by writers and literary critics. Instead of focusing on

Ulbricht and the edicts pronounced in his "Bitterfelder Weg," I regard Georg Lukács as the key figure in the German-language intellectual debate. As the West German edition of his *Werke* is incomplete and in any case does not say much about his influence in the East, I compiled a bibliography of his publications in East Germany (numbering more than twenty in the first decade of the post-War era) and also later publications about him that demonstrate the extreme aversion to and fear of Lukács participation in the Hungarian uprising of 1956.

While some historians have used the new access to state files to describe the workings of one or another cultural institution, I believe that the totalitarian project of the state has faded from view; this absence of a broader overview in turn detracts from a clear understanding of the stakes of underground or oppositional culture. I therefore focus on what I term the "interlocking institutions" of the GDR's official culture. I further argue that as the GDR's cultural apparatus became guided less by intellectual debates that began before the Second World War, the machinery of cultural institutions was used to pursue a different set of goals. These goals were those created by the Cold War bloc mentality, which utilized literature not only to assert the superiority of the East, but also to point out flaws of society and culture in the West. As a case study to illustrate this point, I trace the publication history of James Joyce and William Faulkner (two representatives of Western modernism) in the GDR using records I collected from the Bundesarchiv. I conclude that their literary style was eventually excused because of their political message, an accommodation to which Lukács, with his concern for the aesthetics as well as the politics of literary texts, would doubtless have objected.

Though she remains the most prominent author of the GDR, with good reason in my opinion, Christa Wolf was not strictly speaking a dissident. She did however hope to reform German Socialist aesthetics. To reconstruct the neglected part of Wolf's early career as a critic I

focused on her 1953 diploma thesis on Hans Fallada in the Archive of the Academy of the Arts. To complement this image of the early Christa Wolf, I created a collection of every review or article Wolf published between 1952 and 1961; most of these were published in *Neue Deutsche Literatur* and are widely accessible in library holdings. This list in included in the present sudy. I also reviewed Wolf's files in the BStU in Berlin. Based on these documents, I have concluded that a high degree of continuity in terms of Wolf's aesthetic philosophy is visible from the beginning of her career. Wolf was an outspoken critic of the GDR's literature who believed in the need for a body of literature that productively guided its readers on the path to Socialism. This prescriptive stance motivated her collaboration with the secret police, in my opinion. When, in the mid sixties, a clear parting of views ended Wolf's hitherto successful interactions with the GDR state, Wolf became officially suspect in the eyes of the cultural authorities. However, prior to the watershed year of 1989, Christa Wolf never participated in the underground movements in East Germany or Czechoslovakia in a significant way, despite her sympathy for such movements. A list of publications in Czech written by Gerhard and Christa Wolf, based on my own bibliographical research and also included in this study, supports this claim.

In terms of Christa Wolf's literary oeuvre, her earlier works *Moskauer Novelle* and *Der geteilte Himmel* are most notable for their political agenda, which won Wolf the East German Politburo's appreciation. By contrast the changing narrative perspective apparent in Wolf's work, which reaches a breakthrough with her third novel, *Nachdenken über Christa T.* As is clear from the reviews submitted with the application to print the latter novel (available from the Bundesarchiv and Angela Drescher's documentation volume), contemporary critics understood the novel's overt challenge to orthodox Socialist Realist doctrine. Wolf's contemporaries noted, but largely accepted the first person perspective of the novel, but were far more concerned with

its lack of a positive hero, a basic premise of Socialist Realism. In addition to the increasingly subjective narrative perspectives of these novels, I demonstrated Wolf's shift towards representing individuals who are writers, like the author, as opposed to workers, the most common characters in Socialist Realist texts. Even Wolf's earliest novel shows traces of autobiographical writing, based as it is on her experience at the end of the Second World War and travels to the Soviet Union. Similarly, *Der geteilte Himmel*, with its reflections of Wolf's own apprenticeship in a factory and recent scholarship on the historical referent for Christa T. makes evident that autobiographical writing has featured in each of Wolf's early publications. *Nachdenken über Christa T.* begins Wolf's attempt to come to terms with a childhood under Hitler and the ideologically driven university atmosphere of the fifties without the unswerving loyalty present in *Moskauer Novelle*. In terms of the autobiographical import of *Der geteilte Himmel*, Christa Wolf's admissions since the fall of the Wall that she had long considered leaving the GDR deserve closer inspection.

Above all, I have demonstrated in this study that despite most scholarship's exclusionary focus, GDR underground culture was not limited to the eighties. Though the Prenzlauer Berg scene has dominated scholarship, I demonstrate that many hallmarks of underground culture from public protest to attempts to create networks of writers were a major feature of the East German reaction to the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968. Evidence from the Gedenkbibliothek Berlin, notably the manuscripts of autobiographical novels by Gert Neumann and Heidemarie Härtl from 1989, confirm the existence of unpublished writings from the Communist era. In the Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft I found an extensive archive of art journals that are the focus of most underground scholarship on the cultural underground, but there was very little material from before 1978. Yet the RHG did contain a great deal of evidence of the political protests

related to the watershed years 1953, 1956, 1961, 1968, 1976, and of course 1989, often from the archives of the Stasi. Stefan Wolle's historical study of political opposition connected to the Prague Spring of 1968 unfortunately brought me no closer to the underground East German literary scenes before 1978. The writer Siegmar Faust, of whom I had learned of at the beginning of my research at the Gedenkbibliothek due to his involvement with Wolfgang Hilbig, Gert Neumann, and Heidemarie Härtl, proved to be a rich source of information. I interviewed him at the Gedenkbibliothek in the summer of 2014. Collecting Faust's oeuvre was an exercise in reconstructing their often opaque provenance: much of his work appeared in the West long after their creation. Now that a new archive with a collection of manuscripts from the Stasi files is opening, new scholarly opportunities for approaching novelistic texts written before 1978 await.

In comparing three novels written in the aftermath of the Prague invasion, by Siegmar Faust and the Czech Jiří Gruša, I analyze the generational experience of coming to age during the Prague Spring. All three engage in forms of social criticism that link Socialist authority with the Nazi regime. Whereas Faust's experimental style more resembles the (Western) surrealism or transgressive writing of J. D. Salinger and Henry Miller, Jiří Gruša joining the East European tradition of Realism that began with Gogol. In so doing, they forged new hybrid types of Realism.

By setting Wolfgang Hilbig and Herta Müller in dialogue, my aim was to initiate a new approach in which the literature of the former East Bloc is compared across national boundaries. These novels, which describe oppositional activity in the eighties, are examples of how variations in access to secret police files across the East Bloc are reflected in post-Wall literature. As I have demonstrated in an overview of the legal frameworks of accessing the secret police files in Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Russia, whereas revolutionary

regime change in the Czech Republic and Germany brought access to the files of the secret police, the continuity of regimes in Romania and Russia led to far less access. Hilbig made clear that the public debate of those revealed to be secret police collaborators, as well as the opportunity to read his own Stasi file, were central to the conception and even the diction of his novel "*Ich.*" Müller, by contrast, is restricted primarily to her own memories of the ambiguities of the eighties, as the secret police files provided to her have been heavily redacted by Romania's intelligence personnel.

In attempting to locate samizdat by Hilbig and Müller, I found instead a lesson in the uncertainties–and serendipities–of archival sources. At the Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, hosted by the University of Bremen, I found an excellent collection of material from the Soviet Union and the Prenzlauer Berg scene of the eighties and some intriguing items featuring text by Hilbig and Müller, though again no East German material from before 1978. The three large-format books, which listed either Hilbig or Müller as authors were created by Christiane Just, a graphic artist who studied in Dresden. Just appears to have created illustrations for texts published in the West by Müller and Hilbig, though whether she established contact with the authors is not clear from the texts. One noteworthy find from that archive was Ursus Press in Berlin, which appears to have published Herta Müller and Jan Faktor. It is unclear whether this press operated in East or West Berlin. Though I did not include these findings in the present study, I plan to investigate them in the near future.

Further Future Research

Aside from new opportunities to contextualize the existing canon with the help of the kind of sources deployed here, perhaps the most exciting development in the field of GDR

studies are the new texts available since the fall of the Wall. The new "Archiv unterdrückter Literatur der DDR" or archive of repressed literature, a project of the Bundesstiftung für die Aufarbeitung der SED, promises rich possibilities. This collection of manuscripts culled from the Stasi files ranges widely in terms of date of creation and literariness. I have demonstrated that the historical provenance of a manuscript can make it an important artifact in the effort to understand the underground culture of the GDR. Yet beyond such historical relevance, the aesthetic characteristics of such texts must remain central in their analysis, not least because of the critical debates in the GDR and other East bloc nations about the relative importance of theme and form in Socialist Realism.

As interest in Socialist Realism becomes the province of an increasingly specialized group of scholars, it may be time to step back and look at it within the larger framework of realism more generally. Writing of Herta Müller, Katrin Kohl suggests,

> The politically committed master narratives favoured by cultural policy in the Eastern-bloc countries during the post-war era serve Müller as a model to be avoided. Casting herself as a 'child burnt by Socialist Realism', she sees the overt fictionality and literariness of her work and her leanings towards surrealism as a reaction against that collective heritage.[461]

Here Kohl establishes Müller's choice of literary style as a reaction, or, in other words a protest against the prescribed model. That observation tallies with the examples of Communist-era underground literature that I have adduced in this study: clearly a similar move had already been made earlier than the eighties and in other countries as well. The surrealist qualities of Müller, Vaculík, Gruša, and Faust's prose works differ from earlier twentieth century Surrealism precisely because they respond to Socialist Realism. By the same token, the elements of fantastic realism evident in Vaculík and Gruša may also be understood as a response to Socialist Realist

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[461] Katrin Kohl, "Beyond Realism: Herta Müller's Poetics," *Herta Müller* edited by Brigid Haines and Lyn Marven, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6.

models by introducing modes of representation that are fundamentally at odds with it, but share a common heritage of Eastern European Realism. Nonetheless, each of these writers– Müller, Vaculík, Gruša, and Faust– continued to believe in the critical potential of literature, a concept inherited from nineteenth-century critical realism and reshaped by Socialist Realism.

With this dissertation, I hope to have begun a literary history that incorporates East Germany into Central European trends, with references to a more extensive genealogy of Realisms. Further work, which expands the time period and depth of investigation into the literature of other East bloc nations, is already underway.

Appendix 1.1 Publications by and about Georg Lukács in the GDR

Listed in chronological order. Collected from the OCLC World Catalogue and Bundesarchiv records. Where multiple years are listed, I believe a reprint was issued. Records available from the Bundesarchiv include Drucknummer and often the names of those who prepared reviews for the censorship office.

Deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter des Imperialismus: eine Übersicht ihrer Hauptströmungen. Berlin: Aufbau, 1945 (2), 1946 (2), 1947, 1948, 1950.

Fortschritt und Reaktion in der deutschen Literatur. Berlin: Aufbau, 1947, 1950, 1989.

Gottfried Keller: mit einer Einleitung. Berlin: Aufbau, 1946, 1947.

Schicksalswende: Beiträge zu einer neuen deutschen Ideologie. Berlin: Aufbau, 1947, 1948. 1955, 1956. Druck-Nr. 120/109/55 (120/110/55); Gutachten: Wolfgang Harich

Essays über Realismus. Berlin: Aufbau, 1948. Second ed. (1955): *Probleme des Realismus*.

Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels als Literaturhistoriker. Berlin: Aufbau, 1948.

Thomas Mann. Berlin: Aufbau, 1949, 1957.

Der russische Realismus in der Weltliteratur. Berlin: Aufbau, 1949.

Goethe und seine Zeit. Berlin: Aufbau, 1950, 1953, 1955.

Existentialismus oder Marxismus? Berlin: Aufbau, 1951.

Deutsche Realisten des 19. Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Aufbau, 1951, 1952, 1953

Balzac und der französische Realismus. Berlin: Aufbau, 1951, 1952, 1953.

Der Zerstörung der Vernunft: der Weg des Irrationalismus von Schelling zu Hitler. Berlin: Aufbau, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1984, 1988.

Skizze einer Geschichte der neueren deutschen Literatur. Berlin: Aufbau, 1953.

Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ästhetik. Berlin: Aufbau, 1954.

Der Junge Hegel: und die Problem der Kapitalistischen Gesellschaft. Berlin: Aufbau, 1954.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Ästhetik*. Herausgeben von Friedrich Bassenge mit einem einführenden Essay von Georg Lukács. Berlin: Aufbau, 1955.

Der historische Roman. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1955. Druck-Nr. 120/108/55; Gutachten: Wolfgang Harich.

Georg Lukács zum siebzigsten Geburtstag. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1955. Druck-Nr. 120/116/55; Gutachten: Wolfang Harich

Probleme des Realismus. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1955. Druck-Nr. 120/110/55;

Haym, Kautsky, Mehring, Lukács, Wolfgang Harich (Hg): *Arthur Schopenhauer*; Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1955. Druck-Nr. 120/103/55; Gutachten: Johanna Rudolph, Caspar.

Franz Mehring, Georg Lukács: *Friedrich Nietzsche* (Reihe: Philosophische Bücherei); Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1956. Druck-Nr. 120/230/56; Gutachten: Ruth Greuner, Wolfang Harich.

Zur Gegenwartsbedeutung des kritischen Realismus. Berlin: Aufbau, 1956. Druck-Nr. 120/312/56; Gutachten Wolfgang Harich.

Georg Lukács und der Revisionismus: Eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1960. Druck-Nr. 120/214/61 (120/190/60); Gutachten: Caspar.

Fröschner, Günter „Die Herausbildung und Entwicklung der geschichtsphilosophischen Anschauungen von Georg Lukács: Kritik revisionistischer Entstellungen des Marxismus-Leninismus," 1965. (Dissertation: SED Akademie für Gesellschaftswissenschaften. Available through the Bundesarchiv under Bestellsignatur: AFG: Diss 339).

Mittenzwei, Werner (Hg). Dialog und Kontroverse mit Georg Lukács. Leipzig: Reclam, 1975. Druck-Nr. 340/137/75; Gutachten: Eike Middell, Herman Kähler.

Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen, Band I und II. Berlin: Aufbau, 1981. Druck-Nr. 120/243/249/81; Gutachten: Jürgen Jahn, Peter Vogel, Dieter Kliche.

Die Besonderheit als Kategorie der Ästhetik. Berlin: Aufbau, 1985. Druck-Nr. 120/240/85; Gutachten: Jürgen Jahn, Günther K. Lehmann.

"Deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter des Imperialismus" in *Reprint-Kassette* (Becher, Heine, Hermann-Neiße, Lukács, Scharrer). Berlin: Aufbau, 1985. Druck-Nr. 120/89/85.

Georg Lukács, Sebastian Kleinschmidt (Hg). *Über die Vernunft in der Kultur. Ausgewählte Schriften 1909-1969*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1985. Druck-Nr. 340/113/85; Gutachten: Henniger, Dieter Schlenstedt; Günter Fröschner.

Zur Kritik der faschistischen Ideologie. Berlin: Aufbau, 1988. Druck-Nr. 120/251/88; Gutachten: Jürgen Jahn, Dieter Kliche.

Appendix 1.2 Druckgenehmigungsakten for William Faulkner and James Joyce

Records from the Bundesarchiv

William Faulkner

DR 1/3972 Druckgenehmigungsvorgänge alphabetisch nach Autoren, Fau – Faz
William Faulkner: Licht im August; Verlag Volk und Welt, Berlin (Rowohlt Verlag, Hamburg); Druck-Nr. 410/26/57; 1957; Gutachten: Karl-Heinz Wirzberger

William Faulkner: Eine Legende; Verlag Volk und Welt, Berlin (Verlag Fretz & Wasmuth, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/97/63; 1963; Gutachten: Irmhild Brandstädter, K. H. Wirzberger, Petersen, Paul Friedländer

William Faulkner: Griff in den Staub; Verlag Volk und Welt, Berlin (Verlag Fretz & Wasmuth, Zürich); Verlag Volk und Welt, Berlin; Druck-Nr. 410/89/64; 1964; Gutachten: Erich Schreier, Joachim Krehayn, Petersen

William Faulkner: Das Dorf. Erster Band der Snopes-Trilogie; Verlag Volk und Welt/Kultur und Fortschritt, Berlin (Vlerag Fretz & Wasmuth, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/91/65; 1965; Gutachten: Petersen, Joachim Krehayn

DR 1/2200a Verlag Philipp Reclam jun. Leipzig, 1967, C – Z
William Faulkner: Soldatenlohn; Druck-Nr. 340/144/67 (340/30/67); 1967 (1966); Gutachten: Herzog, Karl-Heinz Schönfelder

DR 1/2331a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1967, C – G
William Faulkner: Die Spitzbuben; (Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/66/67; 1967; Gutachten: Hans Petersen, Karl Heinz Berger

DR 1/3479 Insel-Verlag Anton Kippenberg Leipzig, 1969 – 1972
William Faulkner, Günter Gentsch (Herausgeber): Der Bär; Druck-Nr. 260/22/69; 1969; Gutachten: Heinz Förster

DR 1/2371a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1980, E – J
William Faulkner, Hans Petersen (Herausgeber): Dürrer September. Ausgewählte Kurzprosa 1925-1939; (Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag AG, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/110/80; 1980; Gutachten: Karl Heinz Berger, Hans Petersen

DR 1/2373a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1981, C – G
William Faulkner, Hans Petersen (Herausgeber): Der Bär. Ausgewählte Kurzprosa, Band II; (Fretz & Wasmuth AG, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/104/81; 1981; Gutachten: Hans Petersen, Norbert Krenzlin

DR 1/2376a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1982, C – G
William Faulkner, Hans Petersen (Herausgeber): Der Bär; (Fretz & Wasmuth, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/119/82; 1982
*same as that listed in 1981 above, only published a year later than planned

DR 1/2379a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1983, E – G

William Faulkner: Schall und Wahn; (Fretz & Wasmuth Verlag, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/103/83; 1983; Gutachten: Günter Gentsch, Hans Petersen

DR 1/2382a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1984, E – G
William Faulkner: Als ich im Sterben lag; (Fretz & Wasmuth, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/123/84 (410/104/83); 1984 (1983); Gutachten: Sabine Teichmann, Hans Petersen

DR 1/2385a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1985, F – L
William Faulkner: Absalom, Absalom! (Diogenes Verlag, Zürich / Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg); Druck-Nr. 410/126/85; 1985; Gutachten: Hans Petersen, Karl Heinz Berger

DR 1/2387a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1986, C – K
William Faulkner: Die Freistatt / Requiem für eine Nonne; Druck-Nr. 410/140/86; 1986; Gutachten: Karl Heinz Berger, Hans Petersen

DR 1/2392 Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1988, F – O
William Faulkner: Sartoris; (Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, New York / Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbek bei Hamburg); Druck-Nr. 410/134/88 (410/124/87); 1988 (1987); Gutachten: Karl Heinz Berger, Hans Petersen

DR 1/2394a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1989, C – F
William Faulkner: Die Unbesiegten; (Random House, New York / Diogenes Verlag, Zürich); Druck-Nr. 410/112/89; 1989; Gutachten: Hans Petersen, Karl Heinz Berger

<u>James Joyce</u>
DR 1/2364 Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1977, F – K
James Joyce: Dubliner; (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.); Druck-Nr. 410/108/77; 1977; Gutachten: Karl Heinz Berger, Joachim Krehayn

DR 1/2369a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1979, E – J
James Joyce: Ein Porträt des Künstlers als junger Mann; (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.); Druck-Nr. 410/104/79; 1979; Gutachten: Erwin Pracht

DR 1/2371a Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1980, E – J
James Joyce: Ulysses; (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.); Druck-Nr. 410/106/80; 1980; Gutachten: Erwin Pracht, Joachim Krehayn

DR 1/2377 Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1982, H – Q
James Joyce: Stephen der Held; (New Directions, New York / Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.); Druck-Nr. 410/114/82; 1982; Gutachten: Hans Petersen, Herbert Krempien, Wolfgang Wicht

DR 1/3483 Insel-Verlag Anton Kippenberg Leipzig, 1982 – 1984
James Joyce, Wolfgang Wicht (Herausgeber): Kammermusik. Gesammelte Gedichte. Zweisprachig; Druck-Nr. 260/32/82; 1982; Gutachten: Heide Steiner

DR 1/2383 Verlag Volk und Welt, Verlag für internationale Literatur, Berlin, 1984, H – K
James Joyce, Wolfgang Wicht (Herausgeber): Ausgewählte Schriften; (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt a. M.); Druck-Nr. 410/117/84; 1984; Gutachten: Klaus Schultz

Appendix 2.1 The Table of Contents of Christa Wolf's 1953 Diploma Thesis

Das Problem des Realismus in Hans Falladas Erzählungen und Romanen
Christa Wolf
Leipzig, im Mai 1953

Gliederung

A. Einleitung: Es geht um eine parteiliche Auseinandersetzung mit dem literarischen Erbe der Vergangenheit
B. Zur Problematik der Literatur im Zeitalter des Imperialismus
  1. Funktion der Literatur im Zeitalter des Imperialismus
  2. Die Möglichkeit der Entstehung realistischer Literatur im Zeitalter des Imperialismus
  3. Die Lage des bürgerlichen Schriftstellers im Imperialismus
C. Problemstellung und Zielsetzung der Arbeit:
  1. Untersuchung des Zusammenhangs zwischen der Ideologie eines Schriftstellers und der Form seiner Werke, am Fall Hans Fallada demonstriert
  2. Erörterung einiger Fragen der Unterhaltungsliteratur im Kapitalismus und Sozialismus
D. Entwicklungsgang Hans Falladas – der typische Weg eines kleinbürgerlichen deutschen Intellektuellen
E. Falladas Stoffe und Fabeln: „Die kleinen, häßlichen Tragödien des Bürgertums
  I. Revolte gegen die bürgerliche Moral in den ersten Romanen: „Der junge Goedeschal" und „Anton und Gerda".
  II. Falladas vorfaschistische Gesellschaftsromanen über die Weimarer Republik als typische Beispiele für die Begrenztheit einer bürgerlichen Kritik an der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft
    1. "Bauern, Bomben und Bonzen" und das Problem der Parteilichkeit in der Literatur.
    2. "Kleiner Mann, was nun?" als Höhepunkt der Gesellschaftskritik Falladas.
    3. "Wer einmal aus den Blechnapf frißt" – eine Schilderung der Ausweglosigkeit für den kleinen Mann.
  III. Falladas künstlerischer Abstieg als Folge der Unterwerfung unter den Faschismus.
    1. „Wir hatten einmal ein Kind", – Bruch mit der realistischen Schaffensmethode der früheren Bücher.
    2. Die Flucht in die Unverbindlichkeit:
      a) "Märchen vom Stadtschreiber, der aufs Land flog"
      b) "Altes Herz geht auf die Reise," "Der ungeliebte Mann", "Kleiner Mann, großer Mann – alles vertauscht," und "Das Abenteuer des Werner Quabs" – Produkte platter Unterhaltungsliteratur zur Verschleierung der Widersprüche im Imperialismus.
      c) "Der Trinker" – eine grauenvolle Vision von der bürgerlichen Staatsmachinerie
      d) Märchen und Kindergeschochten [sic]: "Geschichte aus der Murkelei" und "Hoppelpoppel – wo bist du?:

3. Versuche zur künstlerischen Bewältigung der Vorgeschichte des Faschismus
a) “Wolf unter Wolfen“
b) “Der eiserne Gustav“
IV. Nach der Befreiung vom Faschismus: Neuer Stoff – die alte Gestaltungsweise
1. “Der Alpdruck“ – eine starke autobiografische Schilderung der Jahre nach dem Zusammenbruch.
2. “Jeder stirbt für sich allein“ – ein Roman des aussichtlosen Widerstandskampfes unter dem Faschismus.
F. Falladas charakteristische formal-künstlerische Eigenheiten als Ausdruck seiner spezifischer Ideen- und Gedankenwelt. 55
I. Ideologisches Steckenbleiben in der Spontanität, Verkennung der Bedeutung der Theorie für die gesellschaftliche Entwicklung Fatalismus erzeugen in Falladas Romanen:
1. Naturalismus der Sprache
2. Niedriges intellektuelles Niveau der Gestalten
3. Weitgehende Ersetzung der Handlung durch Zustandsschilderung.
4. Mangelnde Parteilichkeit durch fehlende Einsicht in die gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhänge.
5. Auswahl untypischer Gestalten.
6. Alltagsbeschreibung oder sehr turbulente Handlung.
7. Auf Zufällen basierende Komposition.
8. Filmelemente im Roman.
9. Unpassende Symbolisierungsversuche.
II. Zu einigen Fragen der Unterhaltungsliteratur im Kapitalismus und Sozialismus.
G. Zusammenfassende Gesamteinschätzung Falladas.

Appendix 2.2 Christa Wolf's Early Work as a Literary Critic

Listed in chronological order. Compiled from the following sources and personally verified except where noted.

Neue Deutsche Literatur, Berlin, 1953-1962 (Jahrgang 1-10), Bibliographie einer Zeitschrift. Bearbeitet von Siegfried Scheibe, Mit einem Vorwort von Günther Deicke. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1989.

Bardeleben, Bianka. „Die Entwicklung der literaturtheoretischen Äußerungen Christa Wolfs und deren Realisierung in der ‚Moskauer Novelle' und im ‚Juninachmittag.'„
This Diplomarbeit is available in the archive of the Akademie der Künste, Signatur Wolf, Christa 630.

Akteneinsicht Christa Wolf: Zerrspiegel und Dialog, Ein Dokumentation Herausgegeben von Hermann Vinke, Hamburg: Luchterhand Literaturverlag, 1993, 108.

Notes:
NDL = *Neue Deutsche Literatur: Zeitschrift des Deutschen Schriftstellerverband*
Wolf was a Redaktionelle Mitarbeiter Jg.6, H.5- Jg.7, H.11 (May 1958 – November 1959)

ND = *Neues Deutschland*, BZ = *Berliner Zeitung*
Available via a project of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin
http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/ddr-presse/

169/1952 ND „Um den neuen Unterhaltungsroman". (Rezension Emil Rudolf Greulich, *Das geheime Tagebuch*).

Mai 1953 „Das Problem des Realismus in Hans Falladas Erzählungen und Romanen" (Unpublished Diplomarbeit available at Archiv der Akademie der Künste in Signatur Wolf, Christa 827. Wolf's notes on the preparation are available in Signatur Wolf, Christa 828 and 829).

1/1954 NDL „Probleme der zeitgenössischen Gesellschaftsromans: Bemerkungen zu dem Roman ‚Im Morgennebel' von Ehm Welk." (Verlag Volk und Welt: Berlin, 1953).

6/1954 NDL „Komplikationen aber keine Konflikte" (Rezension Werner Reinowski, *Diese Welt muß unser sein*, Mitteldeutscher Verlag: Halle, 1953)

12/1954 NDL „Ost-West-Gespräch in Halle." [Über die Autorentagung des Mitteldeutschen Verlages, Halle, Oktober 1954] in the section „Rot eingerahmt."

2/1955 NDL „Achtung Rauschgifthandel" in the section „Unsere Literaturdiskussion."

3/1955 NDL „Die schwarzweißrote Flagge." (Rezension Peter Bamm, *Die Unsichtbare Flagge*, Kösel-Verlag: München, 1953).

7/1955 NDL „Menschliche Konflikt in unserer Zeit“ (Rezension Erwin Strittmatter, *Tinko*, Aufbau-Verlag: Berlin, 1954).

9/1955 NDL „Besiegte Schatten?“ (Rezension Hildegard Maria Rauchfuß, *Besiegte Schatten*, Mitteldeutscher-Verlag: Halle, 1954).

11/1955 NDL „Menschen und Werk.“ (Rezension Rudolf Fischer, *Martin Hoop IV*, Dietz Verlag: Berlin, 1955).

11/1955 NDL „Die Literaturtheorie findet zur literarischen Praxis“ in the section „Umschau.“

1/1956 NDL Popularität oder Volkstümlichkeit? * I have been unable to locate this article**

4/1957 NDL „‚Freiheit’ oder Auflösung der Persönlichkeit?“ (Rezension Hans Erich Nossack, *Spätestens in November* und *Spirale, Roman einer schlaflosen Nacht*, Suhrkamp: Berlin und Frankfurt, 1955, 1956).

10/1957 NDL „Autobiographie und Roman,“ (Rezension Walter Kaufmann, *Wohin der Mensch gehört*, Verlag Neues Leben: Berlin, 1957).

12/1957 NDL „Vom Standpunkt des Schriftstellers und von der Form der Kunst,“ in the section „Literaturdiskussion.“

1/1958 NDL [Kommentar. Über eine Diskussion um die Gestaltung von Gewerkschaftsfunktionären in der Literatur der DDR in der Zeitung „Tribune“, Berlin]. An editorial in the section „Unsere Meinung.“

2/1958 NDL „Botschaft wider Passivität,“ (Rezension Karl Otten, *Die Botschaft*, Luchterhand Verlag: Berlin und Neuwied am Rhein, 1957).

6/1958 NDL „Kann man eigentlich über alles schreiben?,“ in a section called „Der Schriftsteller und unsere Zeit.“ Christa Wolf was an editor at this point and the piece is the first article, in a position previously held by „Unsere Meinung.“

7/1958 NDL „Eine Lektion über Wahrheit und Objektivität,“ in a section called „Probleme des Realismus in unsere Literatur.“

11/1958 NDL „Erziehung oder Gefühle.“ (Rezension Rudolf Bartsch, *Geliebt bis ans bittere Ende*, Mitteldeutscher Verlag: Halle, 1958).

2/1959 NDL „Vom erfüllten Leben.“ (Rezension Ruth Werner, *Ein ungewöhnliches Mädchen*, Verlag Neues Leben: Berlin, 1958).

3/1959 NDL „Literatur und Zeitgenossenschaft," in a section called „Die Neue Dimesion." Christa Wolf was an editor at this point and the piece is the first article, in a position previously held by „Unsere Meinung."

5/1959 NDL „Sozialistischer Literatur der Gegenwart." Christa Wolf was an editor at this point and the piece is the first article, in a position previously held by „Unsere Meinung."

20 Juni 1959 167/1959 ND „Die Literatur der neuen Etappe: Gedanken zum III. Sowjetischen Schriftstellerkongress."

8/1959 NDL „Anna Seghers über ihre Schaffensmethode," in Werke 4

Wir, unsere Zeit Two volumes: Prosa aus Zehn Jahren; Gedichte aus zehn Jahren. Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von Christa und Gerhard Wolf. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1959.

6/1960 NDL „Auf den Spuren der Zeit?" (Rezension *Auf den Spuren der Zeit: Junge deutsche Prosa*, Hg. Rolf Schroers, Paul List Verlag: München, 1959.

März 1961 „Probleme junger Autoren" *Freiheit* in Werke 4

77/1961 BZ Ein Volk, das sich Dichter leisten kann ... die Bedeutung der Bitterfelder Konferenz***** I have been unable to locate this article**

77/1961 ND „Deutschland unserer Tage: Über Anna Seghers' Roman ‚Die Entscheidung'"

5/1961 NDL „Land in dem wir Leben: Die deutsche Frage in dem Roman „Die Entscheidung" von Anna Seghers."

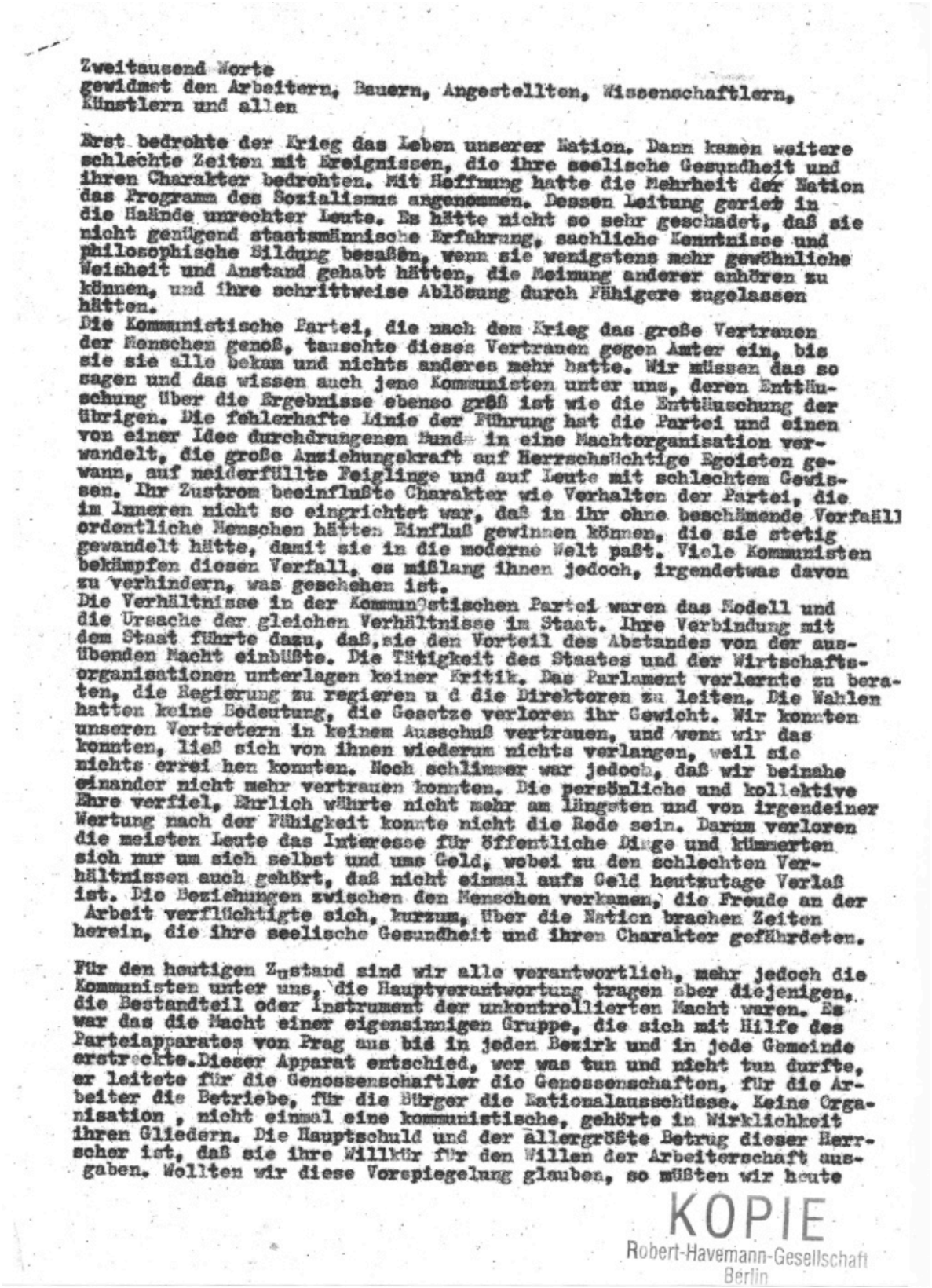
95/1961 BZ „...wenn man sie durch Arbeit mehrt: Werner Heiduzek – ein Beitrag zu unserer Reihe ‚Wir stellen junge Autoren vor'"

10/1961 NDL „Ein Erzähler gehört dazu." (Rezension Karl-Heinz Jakobs, *Beschrebung eines Sommers*, Verlag Neues Leben: Berlin, 1961).

8/1962 NDL [Über die Beziehung der Literatur zur Nation] Beitrag zum Konferenz junger Schriftsteller.

Appendix 3.1 East German Reactions to the Prague Spring

First and last pages from a typewritten copy of the "Two Thousand Words" Manifesto by Vaculík in German and a short annoucement to tourists protesting the Soviet invasion dated 1968. From the personal archive of Heiko Lietz in the Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft Archive, Berlin. RHG/HL 180



Zweitausend Worte
gewidmet den Arbeitern, Bauern, Angestellten, Wissenschaftlern, Künstlern und allen

Erst bedrohte der Krieg das Leben unserer Nation. Dann kamen weitere schlechte Zeiten mit Ereignissen, die ihre seelische Gesundheit und ihren Charakter bedrohten. Mit Hoffnung hatte die Mehrheit der Nation das Programm des Sozialismus angenommen. Dessen Leitung geriet in die Hände unrechter Leute. Es hätte nicht so sehr geschadet, daß sie nicht genügend staatsmännische Erfahrung, sachliche Kenntnisse und philosophische Bildung besaßen, wenn sie wenigstens mehr gewöhnliche Weisheit und Anstand gehabt hätten, die Meinung anderer anhören zu können, und ihre schrittweise Ablösung durch Fähigere zugelassen hätten.
Die Kommunistische Partei, die nach dem Krieg das große Vertrauen der Menschen genoß, tauschte dieses Vertrauen gegen Ämter ein, bis sie sie alle bekam und nichts anderes mehr hatte. Wir müssen das so sagen und das wissen auch jene Kommunisten unter uns, deren Enttäuschung über die Ergebnisse ebenso groß ist wie die Enttäuschung der übrigen. Die fehlerhafte Linie der Führung hat die Partei und einen von einer Idee durchdrungenen Bund in eine Machtorganisation verwandelt, die große Anziehungskraft auf herrschsüchtige Egoisten gewann, auf neiderfüllte Feiglinge und auf Leute mit schlechtem Gewissen. Ihr Zustrom beeinflußte Charakter wie Verhalten der Partei, die im Inneren nicht so eingerichtet war, daß in ihr ohne beschämende Verfälle ordentliche Menschen hätten Einfluß gewinnen können, die sie stetig gewandelt hätte, damit sie in die moderne Welt paßt. Viele Kommunisten bekämpfen diesen Verfall, es mißlang ihnen jedoch, irgendetwas davon zu verhindern, was geschehen ist.
Die Verhältnisse in der Kommunistischen Partei waren das Modell und die Ursache der gleichen Verhältnisse im Staat. Ihre Verbindung mit dem Staat führte dazu, daß sie den Vorteil des Abstandes von der ausübenden Macht einbüßte. Die Tätigkeit des Staates und der Wirtschaftsorganisationen unterlagen keiner Kritik. Das Parlament verlernte zu beraten, die Regierung zu regieren u d die Direktoren zu leiten. Die Wahlen hatten keine Bedeutung, die Gesetze verloren ihr Gewicht. Wir konnten unseren Vertretern in keinem Ausschuß vertrauen, und wenn wir das konnten, ließ sich von ihnen wiederum nichts verlangen, weil sie nichts errei hen konnten. Noch schlimmer war jedoch, daß wir beinahe einander nicht mehr vertrauen konnten. Die persönliche und kollektive Ehre verfiel, Ehrlich währte nicht mehr am längsten und von irgendeiner Wertung nach der Fähigkeit konnte nicht die Rede sein. Darum verloren die meisten Leute das Interesse für öffentliche Dinge und kümmerten sich nur um sich selbst und ums Geld, wobei zu den schlechten Verhältnissen auch gehört, daß nicht einmal aufs Geld heutzutage Verlaß ist. Die Beziehungen zwischen den Menschen verkamen, die Freude an der Arbeit verflüchtigte sich, kurzum, über die Nation brachen Zeiten herein, die ihre seelische Gesundheit und ihren Charakter gefährdeten.

Für den heutigen Zustand sind wir alle verantwortlich, mehr jedoch die Kommunisten unter uns, die Hauptverantwortung tragen aber diejenigen, die Bestandteil oder Instrument der unkontrollierten Macht waren. Es war das die Macht einer eigensinnigen Gruppe, die sich mit Hilfe des Parteiapparates von Prag aus bis in jeden Bezirk und in jede Gemeinde erstreckte. Dieser Apparat entschied, wer was tun und nicht tun durfte, er leitete für die Genossenschaftler die Genossenschaften, für die Arbeiter die Betriebe, für die Bürger die Nationalausschüsse. Keine Organisation , nicht einmal eine kommunistische, gehörte in Wirklichkeit ihren Gliedern. Die Hauptschuld und der allergrößte Betrug dieser Herrscher ist, daß sie ihre Willkür für den Willen der Arbeiterschaft ausgaben. Wollten wir diese Vorspiegelung glauben, so müßten wir heute

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und der verhältnismäßig guten Meinung entsprche, die wir ursprünglich vo uns hatten. Dieser Frühling ist soeben zuende gegangen und wird nie wiederkehren. Im Winter werden wir alles erfahren.
Damit endet dieser Aufruf an die Arbeiter, Bauern, Angestellten, Künstler Wissenschaftler, Techniker und an alle. Geschrieben wurde er auf Anregung der Wissenschaftler.

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Die Unterschriften sind keine vollständige Sammlung der zustimmenden Äusserungen, sondern lediglich eine Auswahl von Beispielen aus verschiedener Gruppen der Mitbürger, je nachdem, wie man die betreffenden erreichen konnte.

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Auf Wunsch vieler Leser bringen wir hiermit im vollen Wortlaut den in der Wochenschrift Literarny listy, dem Organ des Tschechoslowakischen Schriftstellerverbandes, am 27.Juni veröffentlichten Leitartikel, der im In- und Ausland so viel Aufsehen erregt hat, samt den zwei wichtigsten, in der Diskussion hierüber veröffentlichten Äußerungen führender Politiker unserer Republik. Der Aufruf, dessen Verfasser der Schriftsteller LUDVIK VACULIK ist, hat Zehntausende Unterzeichner gefunden. Auch viele Kollektive, Organisationen und Belegschaften haben sich hinter ihn gestellt. Zu den ersten, die ihn unterschrieben haben, gehörten neben Bestarbeitern au Industrie und Landwirtschaft MUDr. Oldrich STARÝ, Rektor der Karlsuniversität, der Weltreisende Ing.Jiri HANZELKA, der Schöpfer des modernen Puppenfilms Nationalkünstler Jiri TRNKA, der Schauspieler und Nationalkünstler Jan WERICH; der Schöpfer der weltberühmten Laterna magica, Regisseurr und Nationalkünstler Alfred RADOK, die Olympiasieger Emil ZÁTOPEK Dana ZATOPKOVA und Vera CASLAVSKA -also Kommunisten wie Nichtkommunisten

- - - - - - - - - - -

Prager Volkszeitung, 19.7.1968

Rozdavite J E N nemeckym turistum!

F R I E D E N - W A H R H E I T !

An alle Bürger der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, an alle Touristen aus der DDR!
Ihr alle habt jetzt die Möglichkeit, unsere zerstörte Heimat zu sehen. Ja leider ist es so, diesmal war es nicht Hitler, sondern die Truppen der Warschauer Paktes, die dieses Werk vollbrachten. Diese Truppen, unter den sich auch Truppen aus der DDR befinden, machten schon von ihren Waffen gebrauch. In einigen Städten unserer Republik wurden schon Kinder, Frauen und Männer durch den Waffengebrauch der Interventionstruppen getötet.
WARUM? Wo befindet sich die Wahrheit, wo ist die so oft proklamierte Freundschaft, wo ist der Frieden, über den wir in der DDR überall lesen können?
Diese Taten sind ein Schlag gegen alles, gegen alle Proklamationen, an di wir noch glaubten. Beobachten sie alles gut, was sie bei uns sehen und hören. Seid tapfer und verbreitet in der DDR die Wahrheit, die richtigen Nachrichten, das, was ihr bei uns mit eigenen Augen gesehen habt. Wir rufen "Raus mit den Truppen des Warschauer Paktes!". Die Freundschaft mit der Sowjetunion zerstörten diese Truppen.
Nein, in unserem Land war und ist keine Konterrevolution! Es geht um unsere inneren Angelegenheiten, wir wollen dem Sozialismus das menschliche Gesicht wiedergeben, einen demokratischen Sozialismus aufbauen in Freundschaft mit allen, auch mit den sozialistischen Ländern.
Unsere Bevölkerung trägt es schwer, daß an der Okkupation auch Truppen aus der DDR teilnehmen, nur zu sehr erinnert diese Tat an die Jahre 1938 und 1939; damals waren es Truppen der faschistischen Wehrmacht, heute des Warschauer Paktes!
Fürchtet Euch nicht zu Hause über und die Wahrheit zu sagen. Die Massenmedien der DDR berichten nicht objektiv über die Vorgänge in der CSSR. Wir wollen NICHTS anderes, als friedlich und frei unseren Sozialismus aufbauen, einen Sozialismus, der auf der Grundlage einer vollkommenen

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Demokratie aufgebaut ist, wo jeder seine Gefühle und Meinung frei und ohne Repression zum Ausdruck bringen kann. Unser ganzes Volk steht hinter der legalen Regierung und dem Präsidenten Svoboda!

Die Bevölkerung der CSSR

Redakce Rantupu

(an deutsche Touristen verteilter Handzettel in der CSSR nach dem 21.August 1968)

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Appendix 3.2 A Selected Bibliography of Jiří Gruša

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