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THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY IN THE GDR UNDER HONECKER:
ORTHODOXY, DISSIDENCE AND INTERNAL DEBATE

VOL II

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Chapter Five. The discussion of the relationship between the individual and society in GDR literature

Another area in which there was lively and often controversial discussion of the relationship between the individual and society was GDR literature. Intellectuals as disparate as Bahro, Kuczynski, Heuer and Dölling pointed to the significant role of GDR literature as a source of information and as a forum for discussing the nature of GDR society.

Jiri Brezan argued that GDR literature had the function of a seismograph, anticipating social and political changes and should therefore be closely observed by society (1). In particular, literature was seen as a productive source of information about contemporary social relations in socialist society for sociologists and philosophers (2). The critics Kuczynski, Eva Kaufmann and Richard Pietraß went as far as to suggest that one could obtain more information about the real lives of GDR citizens from literature and documentary literature than from sociological studies, the works of cultural theory and historical studies (3).

This chapter will concentrate upon prose since this provided the most lively and accessible forum for the discussion of the relationship between the individual and society (4). In particular, some of the elements of the new subjectivity in GDR literature during the Honecker period will be highlighted and its varied reception amongst literary critics and cultural theorists discussed. This will enable me to examine the debate about the relationship between the individual and society within another specialist group, namely literary critics and academics.

5i. Development of trends in GDR literature before 1971

In this section a brief overview of developments in GDR literature before 1971 will be given in order to provide the background for an analysis of the discussion of the new subjectivity in the Honecker period. As will be seen, the themes and styles chosen by GDR writers were closely linked with the wider socio-economic and political developments in the GDR and ultimately reflected the historic development of the official view of the relationship between the individual and society.

Whilst in the immediate post-war period GDR writers were primarily concerned with promoting anti-fascist, humanist values, after the foundation of the German Democratic Republic in 1949 they became more concerned with the construction of socialism in the newly-founded republic. They considered it their task to win over the mass of 'the undecided' to socialism, more specifically to recruit the labour force needed in the factories and on the building-sites. This 'Entscheidungsliteratur', so-called because the protagonists were called upon to make a positive commitment to socialism, therefore focussed upon the sphere of work.

In this period the literary hero was an exemplary figure, a political activist and diligent worker, a so-called 'hero of labour', who by his pioneering example quickly won over his fellow-workers to the socialist cause. This socialist-realist model of literature was based upon a dualism of the politically aware hero and the politically regressive bulk of the population, of creative activity and collective reception. As the Western theorist Heinz Hillmann notes, the aesthetic structure of the fifties novel meant that the problem of the individual developing his subjectivity was seen in terms of one exemplary individual rather than as a mass

process. The reader was urged to follow the example of the hero, rather than his own ideals (5).

The literary hero of the fifties anticipated the future socialist modes of behaviour and incorporated a high congruence of personal and social interests and aspirations. The literature of this period used the hero as a representation of 'desirable' socialist values and behaviour and generally did not give a realistic portrayal of the individual.

Fifties literature was based upon the conflict between this politically aware, 'progressive' hero and the vast majority of ideologically backward workers, between the emergent socialist values and subversive, Western influences. The conflicts of GDR society rooted in the system were largely ignored (6).

It was characteristic of this period that many influential writers either focussed upon the fascist past, or avoided controversial subjects when writing about the present. This effectively meant that only the broad outline of official policy was reflected and the individual perspective hardly represented in the literature of this period. Literature, and especially prose, was, in Liddell's words 'overwhelmingly associated with the cause of the collective' (7).

In 1980 the GDR literary critic Roland Opitz criticised the literature of the fifties for emphasising collectivity to the almost total exclusion of individuality and for ignoring the creativity of the extraordinary individual. To make his point he cited the following from Christa Wolf's Nachdenken über Christa T. (1968):

Die Zeit, sich zu unterscheiden, rückte allmählich heran,

aber wir ahnten es nicht. Bis sie uns über den Hals kam
(8).

The First Bitterfeld Conference in 1959 gave rise to the Bitterfeld movement, which aimed at closer links between the intelligentsia and manual workers at two levels: writers were encouraged to go into the factories in order to observe the reality of the production process at first hand and workers to write about their experiences. This movement, however, lost most of its impetus by the Second Bitterfeld Conference in 1964 because most of its original goals had been incorporated in the New Economic System of Economic Planning and Management (NÖSPL). Moreover, the revolutionary fervour of the Bitterfeld Movement did not square with Ulbricht's concept of an established 'socialist human community' (9).

In the sixties the introduction of the NÖSPL and the Scientific and Technological Revolution necessitated a large-scale programme of training and education for most of the population. At the Second Bitterfeld Conference Ulbricht stated that the task of the writer was now to depict the backwardness of the subjective factor vis a vis the objectively necessary increase in productivity and to encourage workers to undertake further scientific and technological training. Writers were exhorted to show the way from the isolated individual to the integration of the individual in the collective ('Der Weg vom Ich zum Wir'), as essentially the integration of the individual in the work process. Literary works therefore continued to be firmly based in the work-sphere.

After the building of the Berlin Wall priority no longer had to be given to persuading the GDR citizen of the benefits of staying in the socialist republic. In the portrayal of the hero emphasis

therefore shifted from the importance of political commitment to the necessity of fulfilling one's work-targets and making a contribution to increasing economic efficiency.

Brigitte Reimann's novel Ankunft im Alltag (1961) gave the name 'Ankunftsliteratur' to a number of works published in the early sixties. In this literary model the central character was led towards the correct consciousness in a prolonged, conflict-ridden and open-ended process. The individual hero became synonymous with a whole generation and was intended to provoke the reader to identify with him and bring about the development of his consciousness. The reader could directly compare the main character and secondary, more politically aware figures, thereby becoming more actively involved in the literary process than was previously the case.

Although these writers gave a more realistic portrayal of contemporary GDR society and the concerns of the individual than had hitherto been the case, they continued to emphasise the primacy of the collective over the individual. According to the GDR literary theorist Dieter Schlenstedt, the hero of the 'Ankunftsroman' was typically a vulnerable, petty-bourgeois citizen or teenager, who underwent a complete, and often incredible, transformation in a short time. The collective surrounding the hero was devoid of conflicts and therefore morally justified in making demands of the individual. Looking back on the period, Schlenstedt wrote that this mechanistic opposition of the ideologically backward individual and the progressive collective did not reflect the true complexity of real life and implied a unilateral conformity of the individual with social expectations (10).

The literary critic Frank Trommler criticised the 'Ästhetik der

'Repräsentanz' characteristic of 'Ankunftsliteratur', that is the treatment of the lives of individual characters as symbols of the process of social evolution. Events in their lives were not realistically represented as individual experiences, but as emblems of the wider, collective reality (11).

According to the Western critic Ingeborg Gerlach, whereas in 'Entscheidungsliteratur' the individual voluntarily conformed to society, the 'Ankunftsliteratur' was based on the premise that the transformation of society was also necessary: backed by the party, the individual strived for the implementation of new ideas in the economic sphere. She believes that from the onset of the Scientific Technological Revolution there was a new discrepancy between the individual and society in the form of a conflict between the old and the new in GDR literature. If the individual did not manage to conform to a rapidly changing society, he often simply withdrew into private life (12).

According to Trommler, the 'Ankunftsliteratur' had exhausted its limited number of themes by the mid-sixties. Writers then began to turn towards a more individualistic, less representative form of writing (13). They increasingly rejected the model laid down by the 'Ankunftsliteratur' and portrayed the process of the individual's assimilation with society as more conflict-ridden. Whereas in the works of the early sixties the individual was always ultimately integrated into society, this was increasingly not the case in later works. Writers also began to develop a different concept of the individual's 'arrival' or integration in society, namely that of self-discovery or self-fulfilment going beyond the mere social integration of the individual (14). This examination of the potential for self-fulfilment in the GDR often led to criticism of

the social factors which restricted the development of the individual in socialism, a criticism of socialist reality which was later also to be found in scientific journals, and to an emphasis upon the individual as a subject rather than object of social conditions, that is on the capacity of the individual to change his environment, rather than of the individual as a passive entity moulded by his environment (15).

GDR and Western critics generally agree that from 1965 onwards there was a growing preoccupation with the details of everyday life and with the emotional problems of the individual in GDR literature. Some critics therefore refer to this period of literature as that of 'Alltagsliteratur'. Novels such as Erwin Strittmatter's Ole Bienkopp, also began to examine problems inherent in the system in closer detail than was previously the case.

The compliant hero of the early 'Ankunftsliteratur' was superceded by a more negative hero, notably Wolf's Christa T., Hermann Kant's Iswall, Erik Neutsch's Gatt and Brigitte Reimann's Franziska Linkerhand, who raised awkward questions about the individual's opportunities for participation in the political processes and represented the claim of all individuals to personal happiness. According to the literary theorists close to the official view, in the latter half of the sixties the hero was still considered to be an exceptional individual, integrated in socialist society. The new novels, however, achieved a greater realism by tackling the emotional and inner sphere of the individual and thus depicting the gradual merging of individual and collective goals:

Eine neue Qualität entsteht bei der Darstellung bewußter Schöpfer der neuen Gesellschaft erst dann, wenn sichtbar wird, wie große und kleine Welt im Denken, Fühlen und

Handeln der Menschen zur Einheit werden (16).

From the official viewpoint, some writers, however, went beyond the bounds of acceptable criticism. At the 11th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee in 1965 most speakers, and Honecker in particular, bitterly attacked Heym, Wolf Biermann, Werner Bräunig, Manfred Bieler and Peter Hacks for their scepticism, pessimism and anarchy. In the eighties the GDR writer Günter Deicke conceded in the journal Sinn und Form that the efforts of writers to explore the immanent conflicts of socialist society in the late sixties frightened the authorities who, suspecting counterrevolution, were excessively dogmatic and repressive (17).

5ii. Changes in the concept of the literary hero in the Honecker period

There was then in the late sixties a gradual shift of emphasis from the requirements of the collective to those of the individual. Under Honecker this trend continued. The exemplary socialist realist hero of earlier literature was replaced by a conflict-ridden, ordinary individual who was sometimes not fully integrated in socialist society and therefore often a negative hero or even an antihero (18). The concept of the hero received particular attention in 1983 after the publication of the literary critic Christel Berger's works on the subject. She suggested that this issue had become almost a taboo subject because theorists were afraid of seeming to lay down excessively rigid guidelines for a typical hero of socialist literature. She observed that the more rigid these guidelines became, the less the socialist hero was actually found in GDR literature (19).

The traditional socialist realist or 'typical' hero prevalent in the literature of the fifties and early sixties was an embodiment

of the ideal qualities attributed to the socialist personality. From the mid-sixties onwards there was a gradual realisation that the typical hero was so ahead of his time that he was largely utopian (20). In other words, he did not represent the average, ordinary individual (21). Furthermore, it was later also acknowledged even at the highest level of the SED by Klaus Höpcke, Deputy Minister of Culture, that the socialist realist hero was merely the personification of anticipated social developments and so tended to lack individuality (22).

In the late sixties the growing realisation that the ideal of a unity of collective and individual goals might not be immediately attainable, or even desirable, also contributed to the decline of the positive hero and of the concomitant optimistic standpoint of literature. The Western critic Liddell interprets this as a radical departure from the original definition of socialist realism with its emphasis upon the need for a socialist perspective and the assimilation of the individual into the collective (23).

In the early seventies the rigid official guidelines regarding the literary hero were relaxed. At the VIII. SED Congress in 1971 Honecker himself criticised the literature of the sixties for generally being superficial, trivial and boring and called upon writers to discuss how they could improve the portrayal of the individual and his problems in everyday life (24). At the 6th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the SED on July 6th, 1972 Hager stated that the goal of the writer was to 'plumb the depths of the individual's inner world' and 'to explore in detail the major human questions', whilst avoiding the mendacity of 'bourgeois individualism' (25). At the VII. Writers' Congress in November 1973 the GDR writer Hermann Kant made it clear

that the Bitterfeld Movement and NÖSPL which had stipulated that the literary hero should be a planner or manager, were to be abandoned.

With the renewed recognition that communism was a relatively distant goal following Hager's keynote speech at the VIII. SED Congress in 1971, first writers, then social scientists began to focus upon the individual who actually existed in contemporary GDR society (26). As seen above, key statements by SED leaders and theorists in the early seventies sanctioned a more realistic literary portrayal of the individual and also encouraged writers to portray the private sphere and personal emotions, in other words to give more emphasis to individual psychology.

The concept of the traditional socialist hero as found in the literature of the fifties and early sixties was subsequently publicly and widely rejected by writers and critics alike as being anachronistic in a modern socialist society (27). Conservative writers such as Erik Neutsch who continued to place more emphasis upon the social than the individual and to attach great importance to portraying all aspects of society in their novels, were criticised for their outdated portrayal of the relationship between the individual and society in the seventies. In her criticism of Neutsch's Auf der Suche nach Gatt, the literary critic Karin Hirdina commented that he had reduced the relationship between the individual and society to that between the part and the whole and in so doing had contradicted the orthodox Marxist-Leninist view that society was more than the sum of its individual members and the individual the sum of his social relations (28). In a discussion of Neutsch's later work Zwei leere Stühle Beatrix Langner criticised his lack of subtlety in the portrayal of his

characters (29). Joachim Hannemann also argued that Neutsch gave neither an accurate portrayal of the contradictions, processes and conflicts in GDR society nor a sufficient insight into the psychology of the characters (30).

One of the more general criticisms of earlier literary models was that they presumed the individual and society were static quantities, with the former subsumed to the latter. Schuhmann argued that this led to a simplistic and falsely harmonious view of reality. He took the view that the individual and society were constantly changing factors which mutually determined and conditioned each other and were partially in conflict (31). Similarly, Opitz wrote that the proponents of a model in which an idealised hero dominated his environment and effortlessly resolved all manner of problems usually understated the difficulties of the transitional process from capitalism to socialism (32).

According to Liersch, Christa Wolf's generation of writers were primarily concerned with the question of which socialist attitudes were important in the actually existing socialism. Their works reflected a dialectical relationship between the individual and society, in which the individual was a subject rather than merely an object who had to raise himself to the level of socialist consciousness required by society and where society was always the sum of the social activity of individuals. The above authors depicted the conflict-ridden, but productive relations in a society which made both the integration (*Ankunft*) and presence (*Anwesenheit*) of the individual in GDR society possible (33).

In the seventies respected GDR writers such as Volker Braun, Karl-Heinz Jakobs, Anna Seghers, Erwin Strittmatter, Reimann and Wolf

rejected a deterministic view of the individual and society and the reduction of the individual to an object implicit in the concept of the socialist realist hero (34). This view was most forcefully expressed by Wolf:

Ich kann und will mich nicht einlassen auf einen blanken historischen Determinismus, der in Individuen, Schichten, Klassen, Völkern nur die Objekte einer sich unumstößlich durchsetzenden historischen Gesetzmäßigkeit sähe und dem eine vollkommen fatalistische Geschichtsphilosophie entspräche; ebensowenig aber auf einen öden Pragmatismus, der in der Moral von Klassen und Individuen nichts sieht als ein Mittel zum Zweck, beliebig manipulierbar, beliebig ignorierbar, mal nützliches, mal unnützes Vehikel (35).

For her, a deterministic view of the individual was wholly inappropriate at the current stage of socialism, where there was a need for more differentiation between individuals:

Die absurde Meinung, die sozialistische Literatur könne sich nicht mit den feinen Nuancen des Gefühlslebens, mit den individuellen Unterschieden der Charaktere befassen, sie sei darauf angewiesen, Typen zu schaffen, die sich in vorgegebenen soziologischen Bahnen bewegen: diese absurde Meinung wird niemand mehr vorbringen. Die Jahre, da wir die realen Grundlagen für die Selbstverwirklichung des Individuums legten, sozialistische Produktionsbedingungen schafften, liegen hinter uns. Differenzierter werden auch die Fragen, die ihre Mitglieder stellen – auch in Form der Kunst. Entwickelter wird die Aufnahmebereitschaft vieler Menschen für differenzierte Antworten. Das Subjekt, der sozialistische Mensch, lebt immer souveräner in seiner Gesellschaft, die er als sein Werk empfindet (36).

Here Wolf suggested that one could afford to take this view given that the foundations of socialism had been laid in the GDR. She later expanded the above point, explicitly stating that she proceeded from the assumption that the individual had a right to self-fulfilment and that the writer should aim to help create the social conditions in which this could be realised. For her, the collective was the means for a person to develop his personality, rather than the goal of his development (37).

In the fifties and sixties the writer was interested in the

individual primarily as a political and then economic entity respectively. This view of the individual directly corresponded to the primary functions of GDR literature in these decades. By contrast, writers were more concerned with the individual as a whole in the seventies. In particular, there was widespread interest in the individual psyche (38). There was also a new preoccupation with love and marriage and with the private sphere which had hitherto been considered the province of Western literature (39). Writers no longer portrayed only those sections of the individual's life considered socially representative, but the whole spectrum of an individual's life, including those elements of his development which came into conflict with social developments. The historian Joachim Streisand saw this as a positive development which had brought about a new realism in literature:

Deutlich tritt das Bestreben hervor, nicht einen Querschritt vom Individuum zur Gesellschaft aufzusteigen – die stoffliche Beschränkung bildet ein wesentliches Merkmal, das fast allen Werken der neuesten Erzählkunst eigen ist. . . Dem widerspricht nicht, daß gerade im Unmittelbaren das Wirken gesellschaftlicher Prozesse faßbar werden, in begrenzten Konflikten und ihrer Lösung Allgemeines erscheinen soll. Auf diese Weise wird das Wirken subjektiver Faktoren deutlicher, und umgekehrt wird mit einem aktiven, mit dem Autor gleichsam mitarbeitenden Leser gerechnet. Diese Wechselbeziehung begünstigt Werke, in denen das Dokumentarische scheinbar, aber eben nur scheinbar dominiert, und sie kommt der Kurzerzählung zugute (40).

After 1971 many writers chose to depict ordinary individuals rather than exemplary figures in their works. Engler drew a linkage between Maxie Wander's statement: 'Ich halte jedes Leben für hinreichend interessant, um anderen mitgeteilt zu werden' and Braun's observation in the short story Die Bühne: 'Eine Gesellschaft ist danach zu beurteilen, welche Möglichkeiten sie den letzten ihrer Bürger gibt', with the interest of writers, particularly the younger generation of writers, in ordinary people.'

For Engler, this was wholly compatible with the humanist goals of socialism (41).

For the literary critic Ingrid Hähnel, the fact that Jochen Laabs made an ordinary man Thomas Grobe the hero of his novel Der Ausbruch (1979) allowed him to make general statements about the potential for self-development in actually existing socialism and tackle the conflicts of everyday life. She believed that the use of a 'mediocre' hero prevented onesided, extreme criticism of GDR society and excessive pessimism and allowed the reader to identify with the conflicts facing the hero (42). She stressed that, although Laabs attempted to give a 'psychogramme' of his main characters, his work tackled significant social questions (43).

Similarly, Berger argued that the new trend towards the hesitant, oversensitive, indecisive and sometimes ideologically insecure individual as a hero meant a more productive examination of social conflicts and a more realistic portrayal of everyday life. In her view, literature could draw attention to problems ignored by institutions because it was concerned with the individual as an entity and because it took the problems of specific groups such as young people seriously (44).

In Nachdenken über Christa T. (1968) Wolf was one of the first writers in the GDR to depict a conflict-ridden figure, a social misfit and 'failure' as her heroine. In this work she dealt with the individual's failure to perform as expected in the public sphere as a potentially positive phenomenon, because it could indicate a deeper commitment to life and society than the readiness to conform.

At the VI. Writers' Congress there was widespread criticism of

Nachdenken über Christa T... E. Röhner, for example, attacked the implication that the reflective hero was the type of hero best able to promote social development (45). However, by the early seventies GDR theorists had began to take a more positive view of her choice of heroine. Hans Kaufmann found it a positive aspect of Nachdenken über Christa T. that Wolf examined the fate of those who were not socially mobile and would therefore remain ordinary workers all their life. He implied that Wolf's novel was a reaction to the importance given to the manager and the upwardly mobile individual in many sixties novels. Kaufmann suggested that in the seventies it was a practical social issue to reassess the qualities of those who had not succeeded in fulfilling their potential (46). Schuhmann noted that writers such as Wolf used the interaction between the social factors determining the plot and the development of literary figures and the subjective factors relating to the character, psyche and consciousness to give a more differentiated view of the individual (47).

After 1971 many other writers also portrayed 'social failures' in a positive light. Their heroes refused to participate in a work sphere and a social environment perceived as alienating, destructive, or simply unresponsive (48). In the eighties young writers such as Doris Paschiller, Beate Morgenstern and Maria Seidemann wrote about a range of 'socially marginal' individuals: single mothers; the elderly; the physically and mentally handicapped (49).

As might be expected, the new trends in the portrayal of the individual and his relations with society after 1971 were not universally welcomed. Despite their apparent liberal statements on literature in 1971, the SED leadership continued to cling to the

idealised concept of an exemplary hero. Honecker, exasperated by works such as Ulrich Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., expounded upon the theme of the hero at the Ninth Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee in June 1973:

Menschen von Fleisch und Blut, tatkräftige, vorwärtsstrebende, ihr gesellschaftliches Sein und sich dabei selber verändernde Menschen spüren nicht den Atem unserer Epoche des Sieges des Sozialismus, wenn künstlerische Darstellungen ihre Leistungen herabwürdigen. . Die in verschiedenen Theaterstücken und Filmen dargestellte Vereinsamung und Isolierung des Menschen von der Gesellschaft, ihre Anonymität in bezug auf die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse machen schon jetzt deutlich, daß die Grundhaltung solcher Werke dem Anspruch des Sozialismus an Kunst und Literatur entgegensteht.

Later in 1986 Hager made the same point that novels with a problematic and suffering hero, or indeed an antihero, could not provide clear ideological guidelines for the working-class (50).

In 1973 Hager named Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. as an example of a work with an undialectical and therefore individualistic view of the relationship between the individual and society:

Mir scheint der Grundfehler einiger Werke der Literatur und Kunst darin zu bestehen, daß sie die enge Wechselbeziehung zwischen dem einzelnen und der Gemeinschaft, zwischen dem Individuum und der sozialistischen Gesellschaft nicht erfassen.

Unser Ideal ist doch nicht Robinson Crusoe. Robinson Crusoe wurde von Marx in der Einleitung zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie gewissermaßen als der Prototyp des bürgerlichen Individualismus geschildert, nämlich als derjenige, der auf sich gestellt. . alle Probleme löst. Marx beantwortete das falsche Bild vom Robinson Crusoe mit der Feststellung, der Mensch sei nicht ein vereinzelter einzelner, sondern ein gesellschaftliches Wesen, und das erst ermöglichte ihm die Entwicklung seiner persönlichen Qualitäten und Fähigkeiten.

Das Idealbild von dem isolierten einzelnen, dessen Qualitäten gewissermaßen nur abseits von der Gesellschaft sichtbar werden, widerspricht sowohl dem Wesen des wissenschaftlichen Sozialismus als auch der Wirklichkeit unserer Gesellschaft, den geschichtlichen Erfahrungen der vergangenen Jahrzehnte (51).

In the same article Hager stressed that the social relations in GDR society were founded upon the principle of collectivity. He argued that Marxist-Leninist ideology should provide guidelines for young people seeking their identity and asking themselves how they could achieve their full potential. He emphasised that self-fulfilment could only take place within the framework of socialist society.

Höpcke wrote that it had been a traditional function of humanist literature to stimulate the good qualities of the individual using the example of a positive hero. He noted that writers were not always successful in fulfilling this same function using the example of a negative hero: firstly, because they did not always maintain a critical distance from their literary figure and, secondly, because the subtlety of this device was sometimes lost upon the reader (52). He rejected Western arguments that in a climate of detente the socialist hero no longer needed to demonstrate the same degree of ideological steadfastness and party discipline as earlier (53). For him, it was inappropriate to make an outsider the hero of a socialist novel:

Weder ein bürgerlicher Geniekult um den Klassiker aus Frankfurt am Main noch ein sich antibürgerlich gebender Geniekult um den 'unangepaßten Außenseiter' aus Frankfurt an der Oder sind unserem Verhältnis zum Erbe gemäß (54).

The main general criticism of literary theorists was that some writers did not always proceed from a Marxist-Leninist standpoint and that their works portrayed an 'undialectical opposition of the individual and society' and were therefore individualistic (55). One such writer was Reiner Kunze, who in 1977 gave as the main themes of his works: the control of the individual; the restrictions upon the development of his full potential; the annihilation of all forms of individuality and the official control

of the arts (56). In 1975 the GDR reference-work on literature Schriftsteller der DDR referred to him as a 'critical individualist', 'who reflected upon the relationship between the individual and society in an undialectical manner, a position which led to a lack of substance and inferior artistic quality' (57). After the Western publication of his work Die wunderbaren Jahre Kunze was expelled from the Writers Union and subsequently emigrated to the Federal Republic in April 1977.

Opitz, whilst rejecting the idealised socialist-realist hero characteristic of the fifties, warned against what he considered to be the opposite extreme in the portrayal of the literary hero in the seventies: namely the recurrent individualistic, hence 'bourgeois' interpretation of the concept of self-fulfilment. Such works were, according to him, sometimes used by Western critics to score propaganda points and were often extremely subjective. He ascribed both extremes in the portrayal of the individual in GDR literature to authors misunderstanding the fundamentally new nature of socialist society (58).

Similarly, Bernhardt argued that the trend away from stressing the representative status of the individual was sometimes taken to the extreme with the result that society and the individual were portrayed as existing at a tangent or completely independently of each other, and the individual seemed to live in self-imposed isolation, as in Christoph Hein's Der fremde Freund (1982); Uwe Saeger's Einer hat getötet (1984) and Johannes Arnold's Solange du lebst (1983) (59).

Schuhmann expressed the concern that if more emphasis was given to the interaction between the individual and society at a reflective

rather than practical level, the conflicts between these two poles would become internalised. This would lead to the subjective or objective factors obstructing individual self-development being morally dismissed as 'bad reality' and to the impression that social conditions could not be changed. He argued that this type of portrayal of the relationship between the individual and society could ultimately produce a restricted view of reality and impose a dichotomy between the idealist who failed to come to terms with reality and the pragmatist who consciously adapted to society (60).

Critics attacked the banal hero in some works. Matthias Oehme, for example, wrote of Uwe Saeger's short story Warten auf Schnee:

Beim Lesen... befiehl mich ein beklemmendes Gefühl. Was eigentlich befähigt diesen larmoyanten Kleinbürger von banalster Durchschnittlichkeit nicht nur zur literarischen Hauptfigur, sondern gar zum Ich-Erzähler dieser wenn auch kritisch zu lesenden Geschichte ? (61)

Berger questioned whether the trials and tribulations of the hesitant, repressed, incompetent, careerist hero were really very interesting and implied that this kind of hero was more of a passing fad than an accurate reflection of reality (62). Furthermore, whilst she did not miss the rigidity of the exemplary hero, Berger did bemoan the lack of ideological commitment in the new kind of hero. She criticised young writers for being more certain of what they opposed than of their goals. She warned that, if they equated an awareness of conflicts with a renunciation of the higher achievements, aspirations and desires of the individual, this would lead to a levelling out rather than a broadening of the range of figures in GDR literature (63).

In Laabs' short story Jeder will König sein the hero and his girlfriend construct a theory, according to which each individual tries to control his sphere by dominating those around him. In

their view, all social relations, including those within the family, are based upon this need to dominate. The literary critic Wolfgang Tittel was critical of the fact that Laabs did not explicitly reject this anti-socialist viewpoint either through other characters or by distancing himself from his hero (64).

One further way in which the individual was used in literature as a vehicle for criticism was the contrast between the individual's experience of socialism and the portrayal of socialism in the press. The hero Grobe in Laabs's Der Ausbruch (1979), for example, stated:

Wenn ich die Zeitung aufschlage, dann will ich mich auch bestätigt sehen. Ich meine nicht, daß ich das lesen will, was ich weiß. Ich will sehen, aha, anderen geht es so wie mir; im Prinzip, versteht sich. . . Der Mensch braucht die Bestätigung, daß sein Leben richtig läuft, einigermaßen richtig. Aber was lese ich: Erfolge, Siege, Siege, Erfolge. Und - und nun kommts - über mich, da fallen nicht ununterbrochen Erfolge an, ich schwebe nicht von einem Zustand der Genugtuung in den anderen, von einem Glücksgefühl ins andere. Ich stecke zu neunzig Prozent oder fünfundneunzig oder noch mehr in Problemen und Schwierigkeiten . . . Harmonie zwischen den Dingen, in seiner Welt, überall. Dieser Zustand kommt nur zustande über die Beseitigung der Widersprüche, die Lösung von Problemen. So vollzieht sich Entwicklung. Und ein Schritt, ein früher Schritt ist die Kenntnisnahme, Problem-Bewußtsein, wie es so schön heißt, die gedankliche Auseinandersetzung. Aber das schafft man schlecht für sich allein, dafür braucht man Partner. Und man braucht vor allem als Partner den, für den man sich einsetzt, arbeitet, für den man etwas leistet, also die Gesellschaft. Und da die Gesellschaft sich über die Presse ausdrückt, halte ich mich an die. Aber die, die ergeht sich in eitler Selbstgefälligkeit. Die läßt mich im Stich (65).

In discussions with his girlfriend Hella Grobe argues that there should a full debate of social problems, whereas Hella argues that this would confuse people and discourage them from seeking the appropriate solutions. She takes the official view that all issues should be seen in terms of the world struggle between capitalism and socialism and that in this sense all issues are clearcut (66).

Their difference of opinion stems from differing views of the individual. Whereas Grobe considers the individual able to form his own opinions on the basis of a wide selection of information, Hella follows the official view that the individual should be given a clear lead when forming his opinions. This is also the fundamental difference between the basic views of the relationship between the individual and society put forward by the radical critics and official theorists.

The changing view of the individual in GDR socialism was also reflected in changing views of the relationship between the reader and writer. The writer Franz Fühmann made explicit the link between the view of the individual as a reader and of the individual as a literary hero:

Es ist mein fester Glaube, daß der ganze Mensch von der Literatur erst genommen werden sollte, erst dann wird auch der Leser ernst genommen, als ganzer Mensch mit all seinen Gedanken und Gefühlen, den vorwärtsweisenden wie den bedrängenden, ernst genommen mit seiner Erfahrung und im Zutrauen zu seiner Urteilsfähigkeit und zu der Kraft seines Handelns in der von Widersprüchen bewegten Welt (67).

From the mid-sixties onwards there was a movement away from the knowledge and representation of reality towards an individual experience and evaluation of reality, which acknowledged the subjective and creative nature of literary reception. By relinquishing the position of the omniscient narrator for one which included his own subjectivity and by adopting a complex narrative structure, the writer created a situation in which the reader's subjectivity became critically involved. The relationship between the writer and reader was no longer that of teacher and pupil, but was based upon a dialogue between two equal and mutually respecting partners, between a socially responsible writer and a mature reader (68).

In the seventies some literary theorists argued for an upgrading of the reader in the literary process (69). In two important essays in the seventies Dieter Schlenstedt expounded upon the new communicative function of literature following the shift in the relationship between the writer and reader in the following democratic literary model:

Sie (literature L. G.) soll sein eine Leistung freier gesellschaftlicher Kommunikation , die für den Sozialismus tätig ist, indem sie in ihm diskutierend sich bewegt, die damit rechnet, daß sich in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft, unter den Bedingungen der Arbeitsteilung, notwendig verschiedene soziale Blickwinkel bilden, daß die Bewegungstendenz unserer Gesellschaft aber einen Verkehr von Gleichberechtigten, vertraut miteinander Arbeitenden einschließt, die auf die Herstellung von mehr Gemeinsamkeit bei der notwendigen ständigen Veränderung unserer Gesellschaft aus ist und für diesen Zweck Öffentlichkeit, auch die Öffentlichkeit des Streites braucht (70).

Schlenstedt used the term 'socially responsible writer' in the sense that the writer's work was an integrated and integrating part of society (71). He defined the 'mature reader' as a reader equal in status with the writer, someone who shared the writer's basic knowledge of social processes, the same thought processes and basic interests. According to this model, the writer had to presume that the reader had well-developed critical faculties and laid down high standards for literature. The reader himself was a subject of the literary process in two senses; he could influence the writer through public discussions of the literary work and also imbue the work with new values in the reception process. Many writers therefore came to recognise that they could no longer treat the public as passive consumers of their works. Given that some GDR citizens did not read at all in their leisure time or preferred the less exacting forms of literature, the writer should also strive to create a readership of equal status to himself (72).

Schlenstedt clearly stated his view that open, public discussion

did not threaten social harmony, but rather laid the basis for this harmony. Literature itself could promote the discussion of various alternatives and further the constant process of defining the nature of GDR society (73). Other theorists also highlighted the essentially democratic nature of literature and the importance of open, public discussion of both literary and social issues. Girnus, until his death chief editor of Sinn und Form, for instance, stated:

Literatur ist ihrer Funktion, ihrem Ursprung, ihrer Wirkung nach eine öffentliche Angelegenheit. Macht man sie zum Gegenstand einer Geheimdiplomatie, dann erwürgt man sie. Und das gilt ebensosehr für die Auseinandersetzung über ihre Probleme (74).

and the critic and researcher at the Ministry of Culture, Heinz Plavius wrote of literature 'in ihr übt das Volk, sich seinen emotional-geistigen Haushalt und seinen Freiheitsraum bewußt zu machen' (75). In this context he appealed for more openness in the literary process.

In the GDR the shift in the writer-reader relationship was variously ascribed to a rejection of the stress upon the paedagogical function of literature, to the same basic pattern of socialisation for all GDR citizens since 1945 and to the maturation of GDR socialism (76). Many theorists partially ascribed the new trends evident in the literature of the early seventies to the increasingly differentiated and sophisticated demands of a newly self-confident reader in the seventies (77).

Finally, the upgrading of the reader had clear implications for the position of the individual in socialist democracy. Goldhahn wrote, for example, that the change in the writer-reader relationship meant that writers could give more consideration to the involvement of the reader in the literary process and in the wider social

processes (78).

5iii. The concept of subjective authenticity and documentary literature

A further aspect of the individual and society debate was based on the concept of subjective authenticity. In the late sixties there was a need to develop a literary concept and terminology with which to examine the tension between individual and social development. Wolf adopted Johannes Bobrowski's concept of 'subjektive Authentizität' and Kunert used the terms 'Kommunion' and 'Diagnose der Befindlichkeit'. Under the influence of Dieter Schlenstedt, the term 'veränderte Subjektivität' also became widely used by literary theorists (79). In their models both Wolf and Kunert gave priority to knowledge gained upon the basis of subjective experience, that is the specific experience of the individual (subjektive Empirie, Kunert), rather than objective knowledge (80). Their focus on the specific individual, as we have seen in chapter four, later inspired social scientists such as Dölling and Heuer to go beyond the orthodox theories about the relations between an abstract individual and society. In focussing upon the experience of the individual, these theorists challenged the official view which gave priority to objective knowledge, that is 'scientific knowledge'. This had political implications in that the communist party's entitlement to rule was based on its supposed insight into the scientific laws governing social development.

Wolf argued that the writer necessarily approached reality in a different way than a scientist. She was convinced that for the sake of inner authenticity the writer should overcome the false divisions between life and the writing process. In the process of

writing the author should therefore draw upon his or her reservoir of previous subjective experiences and transfer these directly into his or her works. In this sense the writer's experiences became a link between the objective reality and his/her subjectivity as a writer. She was therefore critical of the withdrawal of some writers into introspection because they were, in her view, blocking themselves off from this all-important reservoir of experiences (81). She, like the respected writers Morgner and de Bruyn, was highly critical of her first published work precisely upon the grounds that it was not adequately based upon her personal experiences (82). She stressed, however, that literature should not intrude upon others' experiences, but encourage others to make their own discoveries (83). Here Wolf clearly rejects the traditional didactic model of the relation between the writer and the reader put forward by most literary theorists in the sixties and indeed the didacticism implicit in the official view of the relation between the individual and society.

Literature based upon subjective experiences inevitably went beyond the mere portrayal of reality and was imbued by the personality of the writer:

Lassen wir Spiegel das Ihre tun: Spiegeln. Sie können nichts anderes. Literatur und Wirklichkeit stehen sich nicht gegenüber wie Spiegel und das, was gespiegelt wird. Sie sind ineinander verschmolzen im Bewußtsein des Autors. Der Autor ist nämlich ein wichtiger Mensch (84).

For Wolf, this strong element of subjectivity, as opposed to subjectivism, in literature allowed the writer to gain a productive view of reality:

Dies ist durchaus 'eingreifende' Schreibweise, nicht 'subjektivistische'. Allerdings setzt sie ein hohes Maß an Subjektivität voraus, ein Subjekt, das bereit ist, sich seinem Stoff rückhaltlos. . zu stellen, das Spannungsverhältnis auf sich zu nehmen, das dann unvermeidlich wird, auf die Verwandlungen neugierig zu

sein, die Stoff und Autor dann erfahren. Man sieht eine andere Realität als zuvor. Plötzlich hängt alles mit allem zusammen und ist in Bewegung; für 'gegeben' angenommene Objekte werden auflösbar und offenbaren die in ihnen verdeckten gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen nicht mehr jenen hierarisch geordneten gesellschaftlichen Kosmos, in dem Menschenpartikel auf soziologisch oder ideologisch vorgegebenen Bahnen sich bewegen oder von dieser erwarteten Bewegung abweichen (85).

There are clear parallels between the importance Wolf gives to the role of subjectivity in the literary process and Dölling's emphasis upon the psychological make-up of the individual.

Wolf believed that an input of spontaneity could be a liberating factor in the literary process (86). Thus unlike official theorists who associated spontaneity with individualism, Wolf and Heuer linked it with the development of the creativity and initiative of the individual.

Wolf referred to four dimensions of modern prose: the three dimensions of the characters and the fourth dimension of the narrator. She believed that the modern writer should consciously use this last dimension as a method of writing (87).

In response to Hans Kaufmann's criticism of subjective authenticity, Wolf stressed that her views and experiences were based upon Marxist philosophy. She rejected the view widespread in the sixties that writing based upon one's personal experiences inevitably meant self-description and subjectivism. She pointed out that official recommendations to writers were themselves often examples of unfettered subjectivism (88). Since the 'Wende' Egon Krenz, a former leading Politburo member, has admitted that whilst the SED supposedly made objective decisions in the social interest, given its theoretical insight into the development of society, its decisions were totally subjective based on selected information in

line with its own idealistic concepts (89).

Heukenkamp interpreted the new trend towards subjectivity in the poetry of the seventies, based upon the concept of subjective authenticity, as a rejection of second-hand experience and the refusal of poets to integrate their spontaneous experiences and feelings into a comprehensive value-system (90). Schlenstedt wrote that the concept of subjective authenticity with its emphasis upon accuracy was a reaction to the optimistic and abstract portrayal of GDR reality in most of the GDR media:

Bildet der Umstand, daß – wie Jürgen Kuczynski neulich erläuterte – unsere Gesellschaftswissenschaft in der Glätte der Abstraktion oder in samtiger Schönfärberei über die großartig widerspruchsvolle Realität unseres sozialistischen Aufbaus unzureichende Auskunft gibt, kein Umfeld unserer Literatur? Ich glaube, die neuen Akzente, die von vielen Schriftstellern auf die Wichtigkeit der individuellen Erfahrung gesetzt werden, stehen gerade damit im Zusammenhang (91).

Similarly, the writer Jochen Laabs put the trend towards the authentic as reflected in the concept of subjective authenticity and the publication of authentic documents and autobiographies in the seventies down to a loss of faith in the veracity of official pronouncements. In order not to distort the truth in any way, writers preferred to deal with the familiar: namely their own identity and the private sphere (92).

Jarmatz dismissed the criticisms that the writers who adhered to the concept of subjective authenticity promoted subjectivism in their works. In his view, the realist inevitably had to give high priority to his personal experience, which in turn had its objective basis in the foundation of his society:

Die Warnung vor der Erfahrung und der Hinweis auf die Philosophie haben die Poesie.. allzu oft entzaubert und verdorren lassen (93).

He agreed with Wolf that the author's experience was an important

link between social reality and the literary work (94).

For Goldhahn, in the process of letting her reader feel the conflicts between the individual and society through the device of subjective authenticity, Wolf tried to morally sensitise people to humanism. She was, in his view, trying to narrow the gap between the objectively necessary and possible and the subjective aspect of the individual (95).

There was also, however, much criticism of the concept of subjective authenticity. Kaufmann questioned whether subjective authenticity as an ideological/poetic concept could be used to portray the full range of the individual's social relations and the social context of his actions and decisions (96). He warned against the danger that the individual might rely solely upon his limited breadth of experience and accused Wolf of promoting subjectivism with her emphasis upon subjectivity (97).

Kaufmann criticised the tendency of Wolf to seek a self-fulfilment of the individual beyond the necessarily restrictive limits of reality. For him, all moral assessments of literature should take into consideration the interaction of the individual with reality (98).

Schuhmann was concerned that Kunert's concepts might lead to a false opposition between subjective knowledge based upon the individual's instinct and experience and objective knowledge (99).

In an article serialised in Neue Deutsche Literatur in 1983, Jarmatz suggested that the concept of subjective authenticity had outlived its usefulness and led to some authors adopting romantic and irrational concepts. He specifically attacked Braun for indulging in a moralistic criticism of the contradictions found in

actually existing socialism from the perspective of socialist ideals (100).

Similarly, Goldhahn was critical of the view held by Wolf and many others that the most fundamental function of the literature was to promote humanist ideals (101). He thought that such concepts of literature entailed the danger of a tendency towards ahistoric, abstract moral criteria (102).

From the late seventies onwards the concept of subjective authenticity was taken up and developed by the authors of documentary literature. In this period there was a trend towards the exact reproduction of social conditions and personal reactions to them reflected in the increased examples of documentary literature and a preference for the first-person rather than third-person narrative (103)

The best-known example of GDR documentary literature, Maxie Wander's 'Guten Morgen, du Schöne' (1978), was a celebration of individuality and did not claim to be representative of the GDR population. Wander stated in the introduction to her book of interviews:

Ich habe nicht nach äußerer Dramatik gesucht oder nach persönlicher Übereinstimmung. Ich halte jedes Leben für hinreichend interessant, um anderen mitgeteilt zu werden. Repräsentativen Querschnitt habe ich nicht angestrebt. Entscheidend war für mich, ob eine Frau die Lust oder den Mut hatte, über sich zu erzählen. Mich interessiert, wie Frauen ihre Geschichte erleben, wie sie sich ihre Geschichte vorstellen. Man lernt dabei, das Einmalige und Unwiederholbare jedes Menschenlebens zu achten und die eigenen Tiefs in Beziehung zu anderen zu bringen. Künftig wird man genauer hinhören und weniger zu Klischeemeinungen und Vorurteilen neigen (104).

Like Dölling, Wander here rejects official concepts based upon an average, representative individual, rather than a specific individual.

Most GDR critics gave very positive reviews of Wander's highly subjective interviews. Claus Schröder, for instance, positively contrasted the subjectivity and focus upon the individual found in Wander's 'Guten Morgen, du Schöne' with the view that the individual is an object found in statistics and the official media. For him, the subjectivity of Wander's interviews was the major factor in their resonance with the reading public. Richter cited Maxie Wander's interviews as an exemplary model of a literary portrayal of 'mature, socialist subjectivity' (105).

For Wolf, Wander's collection of interviews anticipated the values of a future communist society such as sympathy, self-respect, trust and friendship. She referred to the interviews as 'Vorformen der Literatur' (106).

The role of documentary literature was subjected to further debate in the early eighties when two collections of interviews with men were published: C. Müller, James Dean lernt kochen. Männer in der DDR. Protokolle (1986) and C. Lambrecht, Männerbekanntschaften. Freimütige Protokolle (1986). Again, most theorists appeared to see the subjective elements of documentary literature in a positive light. For Irmtraud Morgner, documentary literature contributed to the intellectual debate on the subjectivity of groups within GDR society such as women, which had previously been regarded only in their capacity as objects of history (107). She believed that documentary literature was essential to the process of emancipation of these groups. Ursula Püschel stated that documentary literature focussed attention upon the individual and therefore promoted the authentic and subjective element of literature:

Insbesondere Protokoll-Literatur hat die Chance, Intimen, Singulärem, Individuellem Publizität zu verschaffen, in öffentlichen Umlauf zu bringen, der menschlichen Nähe

zuzuarbeiten (108).

For Eva Kaufmann, documentary literature could be a more fruitful source of information about GDR society than studies by cultural theorists and sociologists because it was free to take an overall view of the individual. Like Dölling and Wolf, she found it positive that it gave a detailed profile of a specific individual and did not aim at representative status (109).

Kaufmann praised the new documentary literature for giving a new insight into reality by leaving the material open to interpretation by the reader. In this type of literature the author was no longer an omniscient authority, but highlighted his/her own subjectivity, hence Wolf's comment:

Der Autor solcher scheinbar autorenloser Bücher ist in ihnen die unentbehrlichste Person (110).

5iv. The depiction of the private sphere in GDR literature: the example of Erich Loest's *Es geht seinen Gang* (1977)

One good example of the trend towards the withdrawal of the hero into the private sphere in many GDR novels published after 1971 is Erich Loest's novel *Es geht seinen Gang*, which only had one GDR publication with a small print-run in 1977. In this work the central character Wülfle consciously refuses to climb the career ladder, preferring the simple pleasures of his private life to a stress-laden position of responsibility. This conscious decision to concentrate upon his private life antagonises others around him. His wife considers him a failure and constantly pushes him to further his studies. Wilfried the blind historian calls him a 'Kleinbürger', Huppel a 'DDR-Spießer' and 'Frührentner' (111). Loest himself referred to Wülfle as a 'Konsumspießer' in a Western interview (112).

Wülf's refusal to join the officer corps of the GDR army and later to contemplate promotion within his company partially results from his intense dislike of power and authority since his youth. Having himself been the victim of state power during a political demonstration at the Leuschnerplatz against the banning of a rockgroup, he refuses to put himself in a position to wield power and exert authority. In Mohr's words, he adopts a policy of 'resistance on a small scale' (113). He champions the cause of the individual against pressure from authority. This gets him into trouble when he calls a certain Dr Feldig fascist for forcing his son to go into the deep end of a swimming-pool although he cannot swim.

The Leuschnerplatz demonstration taught Wülf at an early age that the GDR citizen cannot influence major political decisions. He therefore decides that there is no reason for him to play an active role in public life:

Du willst nicht einmal Diplomer werden, nun ziehe gefälligst die Konsequenz und mische dich nicht in alles ein (114).

This apoliticism is depicted as being a typical feature of his class, the working class, which, according to the official ideology, should be in the vanguard of the socialist revolution:

Diese Leute sahen Sport und Unterhaltung, sie verbreiteten sich über Lattek und Rudi Carell... Die Politik mieden sie, nicht weil sie Angst gehabt hätten, sie könnten Ärger kriegen, sondern weil sie auf sie keinen Einfluß hatten. . . Musik lief im Radio aus Ost und West; beim ersten Nachrichtensatz drehte der Wirt ab (115).

Loest's observation points to the lack of the individual's political influence in actually existing socialism, which Bahro considered to be one of the main features of GDR society. Here there is clearly a tension between the withdrawal of the individual

into the private sphere as apoliticism and as an ultimately political act with political implications in a system based on an ideology which demands commitment from its citizens.

Loest gives a critical view of the achievement-oriented nature of GDR society and the resulting competitive pressure upon the individual at all levels. Wülf's boss suffers a heart-attack after radical changes to the plan are imposed from above. There is continual reference to the competition for places at the Erweiterte Oberschule (EOS) and thus ultimately to higher education. Even in the kindergarten children are subjected to a harsh swimming training programme. Parents such as Dr Feldig and Wülf's wife are shown to be over-ambitious for their children and oblivious to the stress they cause them. As seen in chapter four, Dölling and other social scientists were also critical of the stress induced in the individual at work and called for a better matching of work tasks to the individual's needs and skills.

In a more positive sense, Wülf's withdrawal into the private sphere as a protest against the competition and performance-orientated thinking in the GDR, means that he has more time to spend with his family. In this he is reacting against the negative example set by his father-in-law who works so hard that he only finds the time to sleep with his wife once every three weeks.

Wülf justifies his refusal to undertake further training in terms of the economic situation of the seventies, that is the overqualification of the workforce as a result of Ulbricht's forced scientific and technological revolution. Significantly, Wülf refers to Kant's Die Aula, a sixties novel which was one of the first to portray the possibility of social mobility in socialist

society, as being outdated for the seventies (116). Wülfff fantasises that a high-ranking party official congratulates him on his 'dialectical thinking' in deciding to remain a blue-collar worker.

Wülfff is keenly aware of the discrepancy between ideal and reality in the GDR. At one point in the novel he compares the pictures in the book celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of the GDR with his experience of the slum areas of Leipzig, the treatment of elderly people and the pollution of the industrial areas (117). He is also critical of the portrayal of the individual in this commemorative book:

Ich blättere rasch weiter: Lachende Pioniere, lachende Schüler, natürlich sind sie wie aus einem Ei geprellt (118).

He thus implies that the official concept of the individual, the socialist personality, lacks individuality. In refusing to follow the accepted career-path he is in effect refusing to conform to this official concept of the socialist personality (119).

The negative aspect of the withdrawal into the private sphere is that the individual deliberately forfeits the opportunity to change society and therefore merely reacts to events around him. The title of Loest's work Es geht seinen Gang would seem to reflect this kind of determinist view of history (120). More generally, one can note that in depicting this trend GDR writers may well have been expressing their dissatisfaction with actually existing socialism, but they have also been accused of maintaining the status quo by not inciting the individual to act to change the system (121). Furthermore, the restricted nature of the reality of the private or inner world hindered these writers from developing alternative models of social behaviour (122).

The other negative aspect of the conscious withdrawal into the private sphere is that the individual may restrict his opportunities for self-development (123). When Wülf ff temporarily takes on a research project at work, he becomes aware of the limited nature of his normal job.

Loest has documented the tortuous publication history of his novel in Der vierte Zensor. Vom Entstehen und Sterben eines Romans in der DDR (1984). Suffice it to note here that after many difficulties it was finally published in the GDR in 1977 after the intervention of Kant (124). This first and only print-run sold out rapidly in the GDR and met with acclaim from other well-respected GDR writers (125). However, it was severely criticised by GDR critics, and the Ministry of Culture blocked further publications of the novel. This reaction from the highest ranks of the SED suggests that the SED did in fact consider the withdrawal into the private sphere as ultimately a political act.

But what most GDR critics and cultural functionaries balked at was Loest's assertion that in his novel he had tried to portray the everyday life of ordinary people in the GDR (126). In other words, he considered Wülf ff, who is clearly far from the official concept of the socialist personality, to be a typical GDR citizen and the withdrawal into the private sphere a widespread phenomenon in the GDR.

In their attacks upon Loest's novel GDR critics argued that Wülf ff's difficulties resulted from his own subjective failure rather than that of society and that he was not a typical GDR citizen:

Es sind nicht die Mühen unserer Ebene. . . . Es sind auch weniger die Mühen der Ebene, die sich aus dem Verständnis für die objektive gesellschaftliche Entwicklung ergeben, sondern es sind vielmehr Mühen, die als Folge des

individuellen Versagens jenes Ich-Erzählers entstehen. Die durch das Erzählmedium geschaffene künstlerische Wirklichkeit ist eine höchst subjektiv gewertete Wirklichkeit; sie entfernt sich von anderen möglichen, übrigens durchaus alltäglichen Wirklichkeitserfahrungen so stark, daß die eigentlich banale Geschichte des Wolfgang Wülff trotz ihrer Anlage im Alltag unserer Republik nicht dessen Alltäglichkeit trifft (127).

As mentioned above, more orthodox theorists traditionally blamed difficulties in the relationship between the individual and society on the individual's inability to understand the wider social interests.

The literary critic Rüdiger Bernhardt did not deny the existence of a trend towards a concentration upon the private sphere in the GDR, represented in this novel by Wülff's conscious decision to reject promotion at work and his wife's consumerism and obsession with social prestige, but he argued that Wülff did not make a real effort to come to grips with this problem. Indeed, he argued that Wülff did not consider the concentration upon the private sphere to be a problem (128). Bernhardt cited the official line that through his work Wülff was involved with the exercise of political power, thus undermining Wülff's reasoning for not accepting promotion. He noted Wülff's pride at his collective and the good atmosphere at work, but stated that this pride was based in the values of his small world (129). It is interesting that here Bernhardt seems to imply that it is impossible for the individual to be apolitical in GDR society.

Significantly, the staff of Loest's publishing-house also did not deny that problems such as the concentration upon the private sphere and excessive management stress existed, but argued that they were not typical of socialist society (130).

Bernhardt argued that, like many other heroes of seventies works,

Wülf's misunderstood the relationship between the individual and society. He also criticised Loest for apparently sympathising with his hero's views:

Ein wesentliches Charakteristikum der Loestschen Gestalt wird erkennbar: ihr mangelt in hohem Maße die Fähigkeit, das Verhältnis von Individuum und Gesellschaft als einen Vorgang der Bewußtwerdung des Menschen zu begreifen. Nun wäre das eine Feststellung, die über eine literarische Gestalt durchaus zu treffen ist und über mehrere Gestalten der Gegenwartsliteratur zu treffen wäre. Indem aber der Autor diese mangelnde Fähigkeit nicht als veränderbar ausstellt, sondern ihr, wie aus der Erzählsituation erkennbar wird, Sympathie entgegenbringt, ist Kritik an Figurenanlage und Figurenführung anzumelden (131).

Similarly, the literary critic Werner Neubert chided Wülf's hypersensitivity and stated that weaklings such as Wülf were living on the back of others who were more conscious of their revolutionary duty and social responsibility. He wrote that Loest completely misrepresented the nature of the relations between the individual and society in socialism and did not adequately portray the relationship between power, responsibility and the participation of each and every individual in socialist society (132).

5 v. The reception of the new subjectivity in literature

This section will examine the reception of the new subjectivity in GDR literature during the Honecker period and is thus an example of the debate about the relationship between the individual and society amongst another group of specialists. The section will concentrate primarily on the reception of works by young writers. This generation of writers is particularly interesting for they were, in Wolf Biermann's words, 'frische, unvermischte DDR-Produkte'. The conflicts depicted in their works therefore largely reflected the conflicts inherent in their political system. Furthermore, whilst all generations of GDR writers reflected upon

the conflicts within their society, the younger generation tended to feel them more keenly and reflect them more intensively in their works. The writer John Erpenbeck, for instance, referred to the younger generation of writers as '*äußerst empfindliche Sensorien der Gesellschaft*' (133).

The features of the new subjectivity of works published in the post-1971 period can be summarised as follows: a thematic concentration upon the private sphere; a detailed profile of the main character with a tendency to home in upon his emotional problems and processes; the widespread selection of ordinary, or socially disadvantaged individuals as the main character of their works; a clear identification of the author with the main character as reflected in the frequent use of the first-person narrative, the diary or letter form; the main characters' need to come to terms with their identity and their personal experiences and a concentration upon problems relating to the development of the individual in socialist society.

The reaction of literary critics in the three main literary journals to the highly subjective works of young writers in particular ranged from savage attacks on their '*weinerliche Ichigkeit*', '*klagreiche Selbstfindungsmanie*' and '*Eheleidigkeit*' to pleading for more tolerance for '*inexperienced*' writers. As will be seen, the more orthodox theorists argued that the new subjectivity in literature represented the withdrawal of the writer into a private sphere and implied that this withdrawal into the private sphere was, paradoxically, a political act, representing a rejection of socialist society. The second group of theorists argued that the new subjectivity was not a withdrawal into the private sphere, but a new way of processing social reality. This literature could, therefore, in their view, make a positive

contribution to socialism. The third and final group argued that the new subjectivity was indeed a withdrawal into the private sphere and that this was a reaction to the conflicts facing the individual in actually existing socialism.

The orthodox critics took a negative view of the young writers' reluctance to set their works in a social context, specifically in the sphere of production (134). Ernst Schuhmacher, a Berlin theatre critic, ascribed this trend to the 'reactionary' view, still widespread amongst the GDR population in the early eighties, that work was a necessary evil and generally not conducive to personality development, hence the unwillingness of the individual to be confronted with it in his free time (135). This negative view of work in the GDR was, as we have seen above, also held by the social scientists Kuczynski and Dölling and Bahro.

Young writers were widely criticised for concentrating upon the private sphere and their personal experiences to the total exclusion of social issues (136). Inge von Wangenheim referred to a 'Substanzverlust' in their work and Mathilde Dau of the Central Institute of Literary Studies in Berlin to a lack of constructive, practical thought (*Operativität*) and to a lack of interest in social and public affairs (137). The following attack upon the young writers who contributed to Klaus Steinhausen's anthology Kein Duft von wilder Minze (1980) by the literary critic Ingrid Pawlowitz was a typical example of this widespread view:

In der Mehrzahl kreisen die Probleme um das eigene Ich, ohne daß es gelingt, objektive Lebensverhältnisse widerzuspiegeln (138).

According to Marianne Krumrey, the social processes and the socio-political fabric of GDR society were considered by some writers to be irrelevant to the process of solving the conflicts between the

individual and society. In her view, the habitual withdrawal of characters into themselves served only to confuse the reader and was indicative of an arrogance towards society (139).

Most literary critics took the view that the young writers' subjectivity indicated a withdrawal into the private sphere, 'crass individualism' and an abdication of social responsibility (140). They suspected that some young writers thought that social isolation was a prerequisite for the development of their artistic ability and therefore deliberately cut themselves off from society (141).

For many critics, the concentration upon everyday life and personal relationships meant that the works of young writers often verged upon the banal, provincial and the trivial (142). Kögler even spoke of a fetishism with trivial detail (143). Similarly, the critic Andreas Reimann equated the concentration of young writers upon a specific individual's problems with superficiality:

Die Inhaltsöde, die diese Jugendlichen. . anzubieten haben, der ganze Haufen Idyllik, Unlogik, Privatkram (privat ist nicht individuell!) deutet für mich auf Oberflächlichkeit der Schreiber hin (144).

The critic Michael Hähnel attacked the young writers for blaming society exclusively for the individual's withdrawal into a private world and for proposing that reality should be oriented towards the needs and interests of the individual. For him, these views were incompatible with Marxism (145). Yet, as we have seen, social scientists such as Heuer, Hanke and Dölling argued that more emphasis in official policy should be given to the needs and interests of each individual.

Although these orthodox critics equated the young writers' introspection with a withdrawal from politics, the vehemence of

their reaction indicates that they perhaps feared that the withdrawal of the writer into the private sphere was in fact a political act. Krumrey voiced their underlying concern that the trend towards a portrayal of merely a section of reality enabled the writer to be ambiguous regarding his political stance (146), contrary to the official expectations that the young writer base his work upon a clear insight into social and political processes on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and adhere to the theory and practice of SED policy (147). Similarly, Pawlowitz and Löffler warned that the literature of young writers was based on abstract humanist and moral rather than class principles, and therefore ultimately in conflict with social needs (148).

The clear preference of young writers for the short story-form and the first person narrative was seen as a symptom of an inadequate depiction of reality, given their lack of social experience (149). Although Klaus Kändler agreed that the first person narrative was not necessarily restrictive, he observed that the preference for this form of narrative made it more difficult for young writers to view the discrepancy between ideal and reality objectively and led to reflections of mood rather than narrative (150).

Much criticism of the young writers focussed upon their sensitivity and emotionality, their 'pessimism', their 'childhood fears' and 'sense of martyrdom' (151). Bernd Leistner, for example, criticised the prose written by the young author Andreas Albrecht in the period 1974 to 1976 and published in Unter Umständen die Liebe (1981), dismissing it as 'elegisch-sentimentale Innerlichkeitsprosa', 'Gefühlsprosa' (152). Some older, conservative writers like Jan Koplowitz did not hide their dislike of the 'emotionally-orientated' and 'maudlin sentimentality' of

their younger colleagues (153). The editor of Weimarer Beiträge Siegried Rönisch warned that the excessive sensitivity of young writers could be counterproductive, condemning the individual to suffering and impotence (154). Similarly, in 1985 Hager argued that the pessimism and resignation found in contemporary GDR literature ultimately hindered the development of social activity and prevented literature from fulfilling its political function. This kind of literature was therefore incompatible with Marxist-Leninist ideology and unacceptable (155).

Some critics such as Jarmatz criticised young writers for being reluctant to portray the dialectic of the individual potential for development in society and the individual's actions (156). Others such as Löffler went further and argued that the simplistic opposition of the self and the world reflected an undialectical, in other words not the correct Marxist-Leninist view of the relationship between the individual and society (157).

Many theorists were irritated by the tendency of young writers to select as their main characters ordinary individuals who were not particularly socially oriented:

Die tragenden Figuren sind gewöhnliche Leute, unauffällige Menschen - auffällig werden sie nur dadurch, daß sie krank, einsam, alt oder der Hilfe bedürftig sind, auffällig werden sie nicht, weil sie Außerordentliches vollbringen oder sich durch besondere Aktivitäten auszeichnen (158).

Many took the view that young writers, reacting against the inadequate portrayal of conflicts in past literature, were almost afraid of portraying positive qualities in their heroes (159). Others, including Krumrey, criticised young writers for giving without comment an often negative portrayal of the individual in GDR society as disturbed, alienated and isolated (160).

Most critics complained that the young writers did not maintain an adequate distance from their main characters (161). Löffler argued, for instance, that the less successful the writer was in distancing himself from the self in his works, the less the individual allowed the outside world, the environment and relationships with others to surface in his work. In her view, this led to a dichotomy between the individual and society. She referred to the overall tone of their works in the following way:

Ein Ton, der das eigene Ich in jeder Lage ganz prächtig und die Umwelt immer ganz schäbig findet (162).

Young writers were attacked for looking upon literature primarily as an opportunity spontaneously to express their own experiences and to empathise with their generation, specifically with their circle of friends, rather than to communicate with the wider collective and engage in social analysis (163). Critics warned that an in-depth analysis of the individual could only be undertaken if the writer remembered that collectivity was the basis of socialist ideals (164).

Whilst in the past there had been a tradition of GDR writers combining a full-time, stable career with writing, the younger generation of writers tended to go immediately into writing without full-time work-experience in other areas (165). Most theorists and older writers criticised this trend on the grounds that it was only through established full-time employment that young writers could attain the degree of social experience necessary in order to produce socially significant works (166). The Hähnels wrote that the ensuing financial insecurity and the relatively restricted social experience had led to feelings of uselessness in young writers and a tendency to withdraw from the public sphere (167).. Pawlowitz went as far as to indirectly accuse young writers of an

'drop-out-mentality', a serious criticism given that work-shyness constituted 'antisocial behaviour', a criminal offence in the GDR:

Literarische Erfahrungen wachsen aus Lebenserfahrungen – und die können sich noch nicht ausgeweitet haben, wenn die berufliche Ausbildung abgebrochen, der Platz in der Gesellschaft noch ungefestigt und um den eigenen weltanschaulich-philosophischen Standpunkt noch gerungen wird (168).

Krumrey ascribed the new 'individualism' in GDR literature to the fact that most writers were freelance and so were isolated from the rest of the working world (169).

Krumrey, Michael Hänel and Nowotny argued that many young writers lacked a solid Marxist-Leninist position and therefore could not correctly distinguish between certain negative phenomena found in the GDR and the fundamentally positive nature of socialist society. Their social commitment was restricted to railing against bourgeois forms of behaviour and bureaucracy in socialism and they tended to completely condemn certain phenomena, rather than carefully assessing the complicated processes of society (170).

Kögler outlined the political implications of the withdrawal of the young writers from the public sphere. In her view, the young writers blamed the political leadership for a lack of openness and collectivity in the GDR and therefore deduced a contradiction between the leadership and the population from the existing contradiction between the private and public spheres:

Der reale Widerspruch zwischen privat und öffentlich wird zu einem Widerspruch zwischen Unten und Oben: das Vermissen von Öffentlichkeit, Kollektivität, von Heimischsein erklärt das Oben für schuldig und begründet Individualismus, der sich selbst genügt und genießt. Betonung von Individualität erscheint als das Wichtigste überhaupt, oft als Infrontstellung gegen Gesellschaftlichkeit, die sich in Angst vor kollektiver Vereinnahmung äußert. Widersprüche werden beklagt, als unnormal zurückgewiesen oder moralisierend vereinseitigt. Neue Fragestellungen stellen das aufgebaute Ideal in Frage, dessen Korrigierung in eine destruktive Abwertung

ausrutscht (171).

For Kögler, the withdrawal into the private sphere, then, was a form of individualism which rejected the political system (172).

Hoffmann and Kühn attacked the idea sometimes voiced by young artists that only sensibility, creative spontaneity and sudden inspiration could form the basis of the creative process and that these elements were diametrically opposed to rationality and a scientific worldview. They argued that it was valid for the young writer to portray the conflicts of GDR society, providing that this was constructive criticism from the correct ideological viewpoint (173).

At the 1982 FDJ Cultural Conference Hartmut König was severely critical of the trend of young writers towards individualism. For him, the young writer Stephan Ernst's concept of the individual developing against society published in the Weimarer Beiträge interviews with young authors contradicted the official view that socialist society created the optimal conditions for the development of the individual. He stated clearly that the SED would not tolerate this 'historically pessimistic', 'ignorant' position regarding actually existing socialism (174).

Others also criticised Ernst's concept of the oppositional function of literature. Herold argued that whilst the arts appealed directly to the individuality of the recipient, one could not conclude from this that the arts had an individualistic function. In his view, the individual drew new strength from the arts, which he subsequently brought into the collective. His conclusion was the following:

Kunst kann im Sozialismus nur 'Stütze des Individuums' sein, sofern sie es gegen Individualismus feit und zu

gemeinschaftlichem Leben anregt (175).

Plavius argued that the oppositional concept of literature was appropriate in capitalism where literature had to preserve humanist ideals against a hostile ideology, but anachronistic in socialism, where society and literature shared the same humanist goals (176). He argued that the creativity of the writer was stimulated by social activity rather than the withdrawal into the private sphere:

Mit den Händen im Schoß, ohne darauf herumhacken zu wollen, ist wirklicher geistiger Reichtum nicht zu erlangen, der, nach Marx, ganz von dem Reichtum seiner (des Individuums) wirklichen Beziehungen abhängt (177).

For him, the views expressed by young writers in the Weimarer Beiträge (no.7, 1979) interviews were problematic because they implied that the individual could exist alongside or outside, rather than within society (178).

Hans Koch noted the search in GDR literature for the definition of values, according to which the maturity of socialist society was primarily to be assessed in terms of the leeway given to the individual in order to find his identity, for his self-development and the assertion of his individuality (179). Although he did not reject this trend, he emphasised that the productivity principle was the most effective means of personality development, a principle which was anathema to many young writers. He criticised writers for setting standards which went beyond what was realistically possible in socialism in the foreseeable future (180).

The Deputy Cultural Minister Höpcke and the critic Horst Haase were sharply critical of writers who implied that the necessary social requirements associated with the building of socialism and with technological progress hindered the development of the individual

and who specifically questioned the human and moral value of the productivity principle. For Haase, this was a non-Marxist treatment of the question of the fulfilment of the individual (181).

In the late eighties the orthodox theorists, however, seemed to take a more tolerant, positive view of the new subjectivity in literature, arguing that this was a means of linking the concerns of the individual even more closely with socialist ideals and reflected the growing social responsibility of each and every individual in the GDR (182). The political leadership also attempted to reintegrate some of the radical young writers into the official literary sphere by allowing the publication of some of their works. This apparent about-turn in official policy would appear to be yet another example of the leadership being forced to legitimise an existing trend in the GDR, which it originally found ideologically unacceptable, but was unable to eradicate.

A second group of critics, however, was more positive about the young writers' work. Many older writers, including the President of the Writers' Union, Hermann Kant, recognised that the work of previous generations should not necessarily be held up to younger generations as a model for future literature and that each generation should process and learn from its own experiences (183). Younger writers should be permitted to express their commitment to socialist society in their own way and perhaps play a role in reminding others that GDR society was still in the process of transformation (184).

Whereas the more orthodox critics wrote that the works of young writers typically indicated a withdrawal from politics and possibly a rejection of socialism, the critic Dieter Schlenstedt and Marianne Schmidt, Deputy Director of the Johannes R. Becher

Institute in Leipzig, argued that young writers accepted the socialist basis of GDR society, taking it as the starting-point for asking questions such as how the individual could fulfil his potential in the GDR (185).

Some critics pointed out that young writers often extended the parameters of public debate, going beyond the range of subjects discussed in the official media (186). They acknowledged that young writers drew attention to the existential problems ignored by GDR society and to problems such as the inadequate development of social relations in the GDR, the enforced conformism of the pupils in the educational system and consumerism (187). The editor of Weimarer Beiträge, Siegfried Rönisch, and Plavius argued that the work of young writers often revealed an astonishing depth of observation of socialist society and could ultimately make a positive contribution to socialism (188).

Whilst conservative theorists implied that young authors were inward-looking and therefore writing for 'selfish' reasons (189), Kändler observed that most of the young contributors to the anthology Kein Duft von wilder Minze were motivated by the need to communicate their experiences to others (190). According to Hartinger, the new generation of poets consciously wanted to take on social responsibility in the form of provoking reflection. Their 'productive restlessness' was expressed in their efforts to examine and overcome the obstacles to forming human relationships and a humane society in the GDR (191).

For Bernhardt, in the early eighties young writers, proceeding from a presumed social consensus of their characters, concentrated upon the isolation of the individual as a phenomenon which complemented

collectivity, hence the trend towards a detailed profile of their characters (192). He wrote that making the hero an 'outsider' could enable the author to give an insight into complicated social processes and to give an intensive view of the individual's participation in social processes. In his view, even if the individual was not fully socially integrated, this could provide an interesting insight into the relations between the individual and socialist society (193). In a similarly positive vein, Berger commented that young writers often concentrated upon the outsiders in a production and achievement-orientated society such as the sick, dying, old and handicapped, who were otherwise neglected in GDR literature (194).

The Daus argued that the withdrawal into the private sphere was not a general trend amongst young writers. Each work which concentrated upon the private sphere therefore had to be carefully assessed to ascertain whether it promoted the development of socially significant structures of individuality, or a conscious withdrawal from the outside world (195). In other words, they did not consider that the concentration upon the private sphere was in itself a negative trend.

Similarly, Heukenkamp wrote that it was incorrect to equate the reluctance of most young poets to tackle overtly political themes and the lack of a direct portrayal of socialist reality in contemporary poetry with an excessive concentration upon the individual's inner world (196). Instead of merely directly reflecting reality, literature now processed reality using a variety of material and themes. Writers selected their material and themes with a view to directly expressing their own experiences, to articulating their needs or portraying their difficulties (197).

Using the example of Kolbe's Hineingeboren (1980), she argued that the process of searching for a sense of self, expressed as a form of restlessness and unease, did not reflect a withdrawal into the inner sphere:

Der Vorgang des Suchens äußert sich als Unbehagen und Unruhe. Daher lässt sich kein 'Draußen' als Gegenwelt und Raum utopischer und geschichtlicher Erwartungen errichten. Aber es wird eben auch kein 'Innen' als poetischer Ort der Zuflucht und Heimlichkeit ausgestattet. Darin erweist sich die Unruhe als produktiv. In diese Gedichte schreibt sich Selbstbewußtsein als Entschluß ein, sich nicht vorzeitig einrichten zu wollen mit dem Zustand der Gegenwart. Und Wollen zeigt sich fast ganz als Unwillen, diesen als fertig anzunehmen. Auch das eigene 'Drinnen', die sogenannte innere Welt, wird von diesem Unwillen nicht verschont (198).

For her, the dichotomy of 'inside' and 'outside' was the common theme of Kolbe's poems in Hineingeboren. She stressed that the concepts of 'inside' and 'outside' were seldom used by Kolbe in the sense of a cosy internal world as opposed to a cold, external world. For her, his works reflected an underlying pull of the individual towards the outside world (199). Heukenkamp rejected Kolbe's claim that he and his poetry were not responsible for social conditions. For her, even his love-poems were based in a clearly defined world. The fissures clearly indicated between the lovers and their world in Kolbe's poetry showed that love here was not considered an island of self-sufficiency or alternative to life in the outside world (200).

The literary critic Sigrid Bock wrote that although most new writers in the seventies concentrated upon personal relationships, in so doing they were primarily concerned with the responsibility of the individual for others and his involvement in society. They therefore did not argue that the individual should withdraw from society to secure personal happiness:

Das eigene Glück realisiert sich über diese Autoren nicht jenseits der sozialistischen Gesellschaft: Es geht vielmehr um die Verwirklichung des Individuums innerhalb der gesellschaftlichen Aufgaben, Erfordernisse und Möglichkeiten. Gefragt wird nach der Verantwortung, die der einzelne gegenüber dem Mitmenschen zu erfüllen hat, ein ideelles Anliegen, das im Augenblick hauptsächlich in der Liebesgeschichte realisiert wird. Nachzudenken über die Liebesbeziehungen zweier Menschen, die am Beginn ihres Lebens stehen, erscheint als das Thema, das jüngeren Autoren am Herzen liegt, das zu meistern sie sich zutrauen (201).

The young writer Bernd Wagner argued that the lack of concrete social content in the work of many young poets was not indicative of a rejection of society, but merely reflected GDR reality, namely the concentration of activity of GDR citizens upon the private sphere (202).

Some critics and writers suggested that the apparently apolitical was in fact political. The young writer Elisabeth Wesuls defended the choice of apparently mundane themes by her colleagues:

Ich habe oft gesehen, wie junge Leute plötzlich das, was sie imstand waren, gut zu machen, als ungenügend erachteten und sich mit klugen Meinungen an wichtige Stoffe heranwagten. Meist ist nichts anderes dabei herausgekommen als breitgeschriebene Stoffe und Meinungsäußerung. Deshalb also meine Beschränkung. Man erreicht gesellschaftliche Relevanz nicht nur und nicht unbedingt durch Stoffe, deren gesellschaftliche Bedeutsamkeit von vorherein ins Auge fällt (203).

She also argued that the refusal to deal with socio-political problems should not be equated with ignorance or a refusal to inform oneself about major issues. Similarly, the young writers Wagner, Gabriele Eckart and Heiner Sylvester argued that the concentration upon the inner sphere could provide an opportunity for reflection and be the prelude to renewed, more intensive activity in the public sphere (204).

On the basis of the official view that the private and public spheres were inextricably linked, the GDR publisher and literary critic Kurt Batt argued that literature could not be apolitical. He

shared the view of Dölling that as the GDR progressed towards communism more emphasis could be given to questions which had traditionally been considered to be the private problems of the individual, but which were in fact social problems (205). Here he clearly rejected the official view dominant in the sixties that equated focussing upon the individual with an exclusive preoccupation with the private sphere (206). The literary critic Ursula Püschel, however, argued that the separation of the public and the private characteristic of capitalist society, continued to exist in the relations between the two sexes in socialist society and that if measures were taken to overcome this negative tradition, these would ultimately have a positive effect upon other spheres of life (207).

Wolf too clearly believed that there was a separation between the various spheres of the individual's life in the GDR. In Voraussetzungen einer Erzählung (1983) she cited a friend who spoke of a destructive splitting of his personality between the irreconcilable spheres of work, public life and private life (208). As was seen above, Heym referred to the separation of public and private spheres in the GDR as schizophrenia and as an epidemic illness affecting almost the whole population (209).

Writers and critics such as Wolf, Batt and Werner Mittenzwei argued that there were historical reasons to explain why the literary emphasis had shifted from one side of the dialectical equation to the other, from collectivity to individuality in the late sixties onwards. They argued that GDR writers could now afford to look more closely at the weaknesses of their society and absorb international trends, given the new-found political and economic stability of their state (210). The writers Stephan Hermlin and Karl-Heinz

Jakobs referred to a new self-confidence of young writers corresponding to the greater self-confidence of the GDR state, which was reflected in the wider range of themes, the more confident use of various styles and the increasing sensitivity and self-reflection, previously dismissed as self-admiration (211).

Many critics and writers ascribed the changes in literature in the Honecker period specifically to the progress of GDR society from socialism to developed socialism (212). Critics and writers including Robert Weimann, the Vice-President of the GDR Academy of Arts, Schlenstedt, Fühmann, Wolf, and Hartinger wrote that the new awareness of the individual in the literature of the seventies stemmed from the greater emphasis upon the individual in developed socialist society and reflected the growing differentiation process in the GDR. GDR socialism had reached a point where on the one hand individuals insisted upon the recognition of their individuality and sought fulfilment of their potential and on the other there was greater potential and necessity for the development of individuality (213).

The writers de Bruyn and Laabs argued that at this stage of its socialist development when the major social questions had been resolved, GDR literature and indeed society as a whole could begin to examine the less obvious and not so critical questions in detail (214). GDR literature and sciences could now legitimately turn to the emotional and psychological problems of the individual, although this should not be at the expense of the discussion of the wider, social questions:

Ich meine, daß Literatur Schicht um Schicht in die Wirklichkeit eindringt. Nachdem es von unserer Literatur bisher eben andere Probleme, betont soziale und gesellschaftliche, zu bewältigen galt; in der ersten Zeit globaler, später konkreter, steht sie jetzt an dem Punkt,

wo sie zunehmend psychologischen Fragen nachgehen muß, freilich ohne das, was sie in vorangegangenen Phasen erreicht hat, dabei wieder aufzugeben. Dieser Trend in der Literatur läuft übrigens mit dem in der Wissenschaft parallel: zuerst waren die Gesellschaftswissenschaften auf der Tagesordnung, danach die Soziologie und schließlich die Psychologie. Das Erfassen psychologischer Vorgänge halte ich für eine zusätzliche Stufe der Wahrhaftigkeit (215).

Wolf and Günter Kunert specifically rejected the view which equated the concentration upon the inner sphere with an escape from reality or a return to private preoccupations (216). Wolf argued that having laid the objective foundations for the self-fulfilment of the individual, GDR society was now engaged in a process of differentiation, where the emotions and feelings of the individual were important (217). However, she made it clear that this should not be understood as an argument in favour of introspection, which could have a negative effect upon writers' productivity, and promote artificial forms of literature which would find no resonance (218).

During the Honecker period writers rediscovered the urgency of individual self-development as a prerequisite of social progress as laid down in The Communist Manifesto. Stephan Hermlin wrote about his life-long misreading of the pertinent section of the The Communist Manifesto:

Unter den Sätzen, die für mich seit langem selbstverständlich geworden waren, befand sich einer, der folgendermaßen lautete: An die Stelle der alten bürgerlichen Gesellschaft mit ihren Klassen und Klassengegensätzen tritt eine Association, worin die freie Entwicklung eines Jeden ist... Ich las ihn so, er lautete für mich so, weil er meinem damaligen Weltverständnis auf diese Weise entsprach. Wie groß war mein Erstaunen, ja mein Entsetzen, als ich nach vielen Jahren fand, da der Satz in Wirklichkeit gerade das Gegenteil besagte (219).

Plavius ascribed Hermlin's misreading of The Communist Manifesto to the historic situation of socialism. Until comparatively recently

socialist society had been forced to lay emphasis upon the collective at the expense of the individual. Hermlin's new, correct reading of the classic text reflected the current situation where socialism was so strong that it not only could, but indeed needed to give more weight to the individual if it was to progress. Plavius wrote that once the importance of the individual had been recognised in theory, the next stage was for it to be translated into practice. He warned that if one lost sight of these historical stages in the process of the recognition of the individual, this would lead to false concepts such as the need to protect the individual from socialist society and the abdication of responsibility for social conditions, as expressed in the 1979 interviews with young writers in Weimarer Beiträge (220). This greater emphasis upon the individual in literature was a partial reversal of Ulbricht's unilateral maxim of the 'Schritt vom Ich zum Wir', which had implied that the enrichment of social relations was the prerequisite for the development of the individual and not vice versa.

Linked with the increased emphasis on the individual was the recognition that the individual could legitimately make demands (Ansprüche) of society. This gave rise to a concept of 'Anspruchsliteratur' in the late sixties. In 1966 Schlenstedt developed the concept of 'Anspruch' in an essay entitled 'Ankunft und Anspruch - Zum neueren Roman in der DDR'. According to him, whereas the concept of 'Ankunft' indicated an initial opposition of the individual and society which was finally overcome through the individual always subordinating his interests to the wider social interest, that of 'Anspruch' described a relationship between the individual and society, in which the individual could legitimately

demand that society should provide the conditions for his self-realisation:

(Der Anspruch) der Helden, sich selbst mit ihren Lebenserwartungen und Lebensvorstellungen aktiv ins Spiel zu bringen und bestätigt zu sehen, ihre Persönlichkeit unverkürzt und im Interesse aller entfalten zu können und damit all ihre Aktivität zur Verwirklichung selbstgesetzter Ziele einsetzen zu können. Aus dem Widerspruch von berechtigtem Anspruch und seiner ungenügenden Realisierung, ja seiner Verletzung in der Umwelt des Helden ergeben sich hier die Konflikte. . (221).

For Schlenstedt, this conflict between the social integration of the individual and the satisfaction of the individual's expectations was able to be resolved. In other words, it was a nonantagonistic conflict (222).

At the VI. Writers' Congress in 1969 the concept of 'Anspruchsliteratur' had been vehemently criticised, particularly in connection with Wolf's Nachdenken über Christa T.. Eberhard Röhner attacked the definition of the literary hero in terms of his demands vis a vis society (223). Fritz Selbmann, a former Minister for Industry, stated that society could justifiably make demands of the individual, but not vice versa. He concluded that one could therefore not speak of conflicts arising from society's failure to meet the individual's demands and that if the individual was properly committed to socialism, apparent conflicts between the individual and society would quickly resolve themselves:

Faßt man den Sozialismus. . .als den konkreten, gegenwärtigen, realen Prozeß auf. . .dann ist es nichts mit dem Anspruch des Helden an die Gesellschaft und der so beliebten, weil so modernen Frustration und allen ihren Folgen. . .Was ist schließlich der Sozialismus anderes als der Gesamtprozeß der Selbstverwirklichung aller Glieder der Gesellschaft, das Ensemble aller individuellen Prozesse der Entwicklung der in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft lebenden Menschen zu sich selbst, wobei allerdings von keinerlei Anspruch des Individuums an die Gesellschaft die Rede sein kann und folglich auch nicht von Konflikten, die sich aus der Weigerung der Gesellschaft, diesen Ansprüchen zu genügen,

ergeben (224).

Braun was quick to point out the political implications of Selbmann's remarks; namely an abstract, undemocratic concept of socialist society, based on the subalternity of the individual and the omniscience of the political leadership:

Auf dem VI. Deutschen Schriftstellerkongreß wurde gefordert, nicht mehr von 'Ansprüchen des Individuums an die Gesellschaft' zu reden, da es diese Ansprüche nicht zu geben habe. Das blieb unwidersprochen. Ein paar kleine Fragen als Antwort: Verlangen die Bürger nicht, was sie von der Gesellschaft verlangen, von sich? Von wem denn da? Ist die Gesellschaft eine Instanz außerhalb der Bürger, die irgendwo über ihnen thront? Muß man sich ihr nähern auf Knien, seinen Zehnten, nein, seinen Ganzen abliefern, ohne selbst zu wissen, was man braucht und verlangen kann? Bekommt also der Bürger, der nichts zu verlangen hat, das, was er bekommt, als Geschenk? . . Wird hier nicht einfach als Gesellschaft die Regierung gesehen und, zugleich, ein Interessenkonflikt zwischen Regierung und Bürger behauptet? Als wenn die Bürger natürlicherweise nur unbillige, unverschämte Ansprüche stellten? . . Ist das kein Obrigkeitssdenken? Und wird da nicht Untertanengeist verlangt (225)?

Unlike the previous literary models of 'Aufbau', 'Aufbruch' and 'Ankunft' where the individual was measured against social expectations and was therefore primarily treated as the object of political propaganda, 'Anspruchsliteratur' measured society against the individual's expectations and therefore largely treated the individual as a subject who had the right to fulfil his potential (226).

In the early seventies the dominant view clearly shifted to accommodate the concept of the individual making demands of society in both the literary and economic spheres. Kaufmann, for instance, stated that it was not necessarily indicative of an ideological relapse that GDR literature was beginning to consider the question of individual fulfilment. He, however, underlined the necessity of distinguishing between legitimate and inappropriate individual demands:

Ist es der Anspruch des Konsumenten, der einfach eine dickere und schmackhaftere Scheibe vom allgemeinen Kuchen beansprucht, . . .? Ist es das monadische, egoistische, das bürgerliche Individuum, das sich zur Geltung bringen will, der Privatmann, der sich dem Staatsbürger entgegenstellt und in der Gesellschaft, dem Staat, nur Mittel sieht, sein Privatinteresse durchzusetzen. . .? Oder ist der Anspruch auf eine höhere Qualität der Teilnahme an den öffentlichen und allgemeinen Dingen gemeint, der Anspruch, gebraucht zu werden, alle Anlagen und Kräfte tätig zu verwirklichen und in dieser Betätigung Selbstgefühl zu entwickeln, ist es der vielleicht instinktiv und daher vulkanisch, undressiert, maßlich sich äußernde Anspruch, des seiner Intention nach gesellschaftlichen Individuums, das an die historischen Grenzen realer Vergesellschaftung stößt (227)?

Whereas speakers at the VI. Writers Congress in 1969 made an explicit link between the concentration upon the private sphere and individualism, at the VII. Writers Congress in 1973 there was extensive discussion of the conditions and criteria for individual happiness and also discussion of philosophical and psychological questions related to the meaning of life and death (228). Speakers such as Hans Richter and Kurt Biesalski observed that the (nonantagonistic) contradictions between the individual and society could sometimes be as dramatic as antagonistic contradictions (229). At the X. SED Congress speakers noted that most writers were preoccupied with questions relating to the individual's claim to happiness and self-fulfilment in the early eighties. Indeed, the attempt to answer such questions was considered 'one of the most noteworthy achievements of socialist-realist art since the IX. SED. Congress' (230). Therefore, the concept that the individual could make legitimate demands of society, which had been vehemently rejected by orthodox theorists in the late sixties, was officially accepted in the early eighties.

Finally, from the sixties onwards, critics argued, GDR literature had been increasingly influenced more by the humanist tradition of classical literature, which had always placed great importance upon

the individual, and by international literature than by the socialist-realist tradition (231). Linked with this increased reference to both the traditions and contemporary trends of Western literature was a rejection of the socialist-realist model, which was exclusively ideologically orientated and tended to neglect the private sphere of the individual (232) and an enthusiasm amongst GDR writers for experimentation in new literary techniques (233).

Whereas conservative critics ascribed the difficulties of young writers had in coming to terms with their society primarily to their subjective weaknesses and rejected the notion that they ensued from a distorted socialist reality, others also pointed to the role of objective factors. Laabs was critical of literary critics who implied that radical works were the product of pure capriciousness on the part of the author, rather than the product of a reality divergent from the socialist ideal. He argued that on the basis of dialectical materialism Marxist-Leninists should recognise that the work of young authors was a product of their existence (234). Disillusioned by the experience of not being able to publish their works, most young writers, in his view, withdrew into a private world (235).

The third group of critics, then, put the new subjectivity in literature down to a new awareness of and the reaction to the conflicts facing the individual in actually existing socialism (236). In Kaufmann's view, this greater awareness of the conflicts of their social reality allowed writers to overcome the enthusiastic, somewhat simplified views of the past:

Erwartungen stoßen sich an der Prosa des Lebens und stellen sich ihr als ein Poetisch-Innerliches, Unverwirklichtes gegenüber (237).

They argued that the new subjectivity of young writers represented

a withdrawal into the private sphere. This generation was generally disillusioned because it felt that on the one hand the time for great, heroic achievements was over and yet the original communist goals had not been attained in GDR society (238). The young writer Wesuls, for example, wrote:

Meine Generation ist in eine Gesellschaft hineingeboren worden, wo die wesentlichen Dinge festgelegt sind. Es gibt viel Arbeit, aber in der täglichen Erfahrung ist es die kleine und manchmal kleinliche Mühsal. Demgegenüber stand für uns jedoch eine Erziehung, die geschichtemachende Gestaltung, die Kämpfen und Siegen in Aussicht gestellt hatte. Eine Ent-Täuschung tat not, doch nach so großen Zielen konnte man die so klein scheinenden Aufgaben kaum anerkennen. Kurz gesagt: unsere Generation steht vor der Aufgabe, sich ihrer Aufgaben anzunehmen. Das heißt vor allem auch, Geduld zu lernen, ohne geduldig zu werden, das heißt, sich auf und nicht in Schwierigkeiten einzurichten. Wir werden uns auf Langwieriges einlassen müssen, auf ganz Normales (239).

According to Gabler, the works of young authors reflected their scepticism about the individual's ability to change society in actually existing socialism , given its firmly established social structures (240). This echoes Bahro's concept of an extremely hierarchical society in the GDR, where the individual had no overview or real political power.

Like Bahro, Wolf saw the widespread concentration upon the private sphere in literature and everyday life as a reaction to the structures of the political system in the GDR:

Das Subjekt treibt sich selbst heraus, wenn es dazu beitragen kann, aus den gegebenen Verhältnissen das Äußerste herauszuholen. Es wird in sich zurückgetrieben, wenn es auf entfremdete, destruktive Strukturen, auf unüberwindliche Tabus in entscheidenden Bereichen stößt (241).

However, unlike Bahro, Wolf associates these destructive structures with the 'paternalistic nature' of GDR society (242). From the mid-seventies onwards Wolf and other female writers developed the view that the traditionally feminine qualities associated with

nurturing and the private sphere might be needed in modern GDR society (243). In other words, these critics and writers saw the private sphere as providing the impetus for change in GDR society, whereas Bahro saw it more as an impediment to this change in that it diverted the individual's energy away from the essential task of human emancipation.

The hero of Jochen Laabs' Der Ausbruch (1979) Thomas Grobe, also stated that on reaching adulthood the GDR citizen was compelled to give up the childhood dream of travelling, and the feeling that one could achieve anything one wanted in life. Faced with the subsequent disillusionment, most individuals chose to restrict their aspirations to their immediate private sphere where they could control their lives:

Ein Bescheidwissen, das man freilich von der ganzen Welt haben möchte, das man aber nicht erreicht, so daß man sich zurückzieht, so weit, bis man eben glaubt, es zu schaffen. Und wo man dann landet, das sind die eigenen vier Wände (244).

This directly contradicts the view put forward above by Bock (245) that the new writers of the seventies did not suggest that the individual had to withdraw from society to secure personal happiness.

Kaufmann, literary theorist and professor at the Central Institute for Literary History, observed that this disillusionment had led to some writers focussing upon the individual as an object, rather than subject of his social environment and losing sight of the ultimate communist goal. However, he argued that these works were generally based upon socialist principles, even if they did not always coincide with the official standpoint, and therefore were acceptable (246).

In interviews published in Weimarer Beiträge (no.7, 1979) students at the prestigious Johannes R. Becher Literary Institute in Leipzig criticised most GDR literature for either exaggerating the potential of the individual in their society or for restricting the portrayal of conflicts within the GDR to the private sphere (247). This latter phenomenon was, as seen in chapter four, also condemned by Dölling. The young writer Stephan Ernst stated that literature should present an oppositional view of actually existing socialism to that propagated in schools, in civic instruction classes and the official ideology:

Die Literatur ist eine Art Opposition. Ich kann es mir nicht anders vorstellen, als daß es sich so verhält. Sie ist Gegenwehr zuerst zu den Erwachsenen, zur Schule, später auch ideologisch. . Ein bestimmtes Bewußtsein von einem Ungenügen braucht Literatur als Gegenwehr gegen seine (the writer's L. G.) Umwelt, auch gegen politische Konzeptionen und meinetwegen auch gegen die marxistische Philosophie, sagen wir: gegen kollektive Vereinnahmung. Er (the writer L. G.) kämpft um seine eigene Individualität (248).

He drew a distinction between the official view that the individual could control and change his environment and the daily experience of the GDR citizen that he was moulded by his environment. He stated that literature had the duty of reflecting this experience, thus belying the official view and helping the individual to cope with this experience (249). Ernst's critical view, like Bahro's concept of subalternity, was based on the very political assumption that the individual had very little power in GDR society.

Ernst believed that the positive principle of collective education had degenerated into the manipulation of the individual in GDR society. He stated that whilst this might be objectively necessary in actually existing socialism, the individual had first and foremost a duty towards himself. Literature had the primary task of helping the individual towards self-assertion:

Literatur ist die Stütze des Individuums, nicht der Gesellschaft (250).

Laabs also pointed to the discrepancy between the constant exhortations to writers to explore major social issues and the stress which official ideology placed upon the participation of the individual citizen in the political processes on the one hand and the realisation of the individual that he was not given access to all spheres of social experience on the other:

Es tragen sich ungeheure, weltweite und weltbewegende Vorgänge zu, und wenn man wachen Sinnes ist, könnte man denken, man ist der Schnittpunkt all dessen. Auch die Medien usw. erwecken den Eindruck, als hätte man ein Wörtchen mitzureden. Aber wird man konkret. . . dann bleibt erschreckend wenig übrig: Eine Unterschrift kann man leisten, in eine Versammlung gehen, na und überhaupt auf seinem Gebiet gut arbeiten. Aber beim letzten, da muß man schon viel Vorstellungskraft aufbringen, um sich den Glauben zu bewahren, daß über diesen indirekten Weg tatsächlich noch eine Wirkung erzielt wird (251).

Whereas the second group of critics described above considered subjectivity to be a positive result of the maturity of GDR socialism, this group of critics stressed the negative aspects of 'developed socialism'. During the debate on Plenzdorf's Die neuen Leiden des jungen W. (1972) one reader argued that the social determination and the planned nature of individual development and the social security in socialist society could lead to complacency and political inactivity. There was a feeling that GDR society was already firmly moulded, which afforded new generations little scope for experimentation. The well-developed system of social security in the GDR could therefore sometimes block individual creativity and encourage a trend towards withdrawal into a private sphere:

Aber Plenzdorf macht aufmerksam, daß diese Sicherheit, die von dem Gewachsensein unseres Staates zeugt, gleichzeitig die Gefahr in sich birgt, sich darin einzurichten wie in einem warmen Nest mit Zentralheizung und Müllschlucker. Nach dem Motto: Alles ist getan, es bleibt mir nur noch die Suche nach dem besten Platz, und das möglichst schnell und ohne Umwege. Wo bleibt da die Notwendigkeit, eigene Fähigkeiten zu erproben und

durchzusetzen, wenn vom Kindergarten bis zur Universität alles geeignet ist? (252).

Similarly, a lawyer Wolfhilde Dierl argued that the aggression of young people and their determination to prove themselves did not find a cutting-edge in the relatively prosperous GDR society (253).

The various debates on the new subjectivity in literature reflected a widespread disillusionment as to the potential for the full development of the individual's potential in actually existing socialism. As discussed in chapters two and four of this thesis, the official view held that the main sphere for the development of the individual was the work-sphere. Many of the young people involved in the debate on Plenzdorf's work, however, shared Wibeau's jaundiced view of the work sphere. David stated that for young people there was a tension between the awareness of the spectrum of possibilities for self-fulfilment and the actual opportunity to take advantage of these. In this context he referred to the disillusionment of school-leavers with their often routine work for which they were overqualified. Whereas David put this problem down to the lack of social and economic resources, Bertsch thought that it was due to the poor management of labour resources (254).

Ute Riese observed that most of the dissatisfaction of young people with their work stemmed from them not being assigned meaningful tasks and of therefore not being able to fulfil their potential, or otherwise being given tasks with which they could not easily identify. GDR research showed that general dissatisfaction with the opportunities for the development of the individual in the work-sphere was one of the factors which led to the high rate of job-fluctuation in the GDR (255). In Petzold's view, it was partially

because Wibeau's collective failed to find a suitable task for him that he decided to build his own invention (256). A student Gerhild F. believed that Wibeau's insistence upon working on his invention alone was a reaction to always having had work-tasks imposed upon him. She thought that Wibeau would never have considered joining an organisation such as the 'Messe der Meister von Morgen' (257). It is interesting to note that this particular literary discussion of the nature of work in GDR socialism preempted the lively debate led by Kuczynski in Forum in 1978 and Dölling's critical analysis of the negative aspects of the work sphere.

Later in the eighties the literary critic Wolfgang Mahlow put the problem of alcoholism partly down to lack of opportunity for the development of the individual in the work sphere (258). He also suggested that the problems for the development of the individual at work caused by the specialisation of labour and routine work-tasks could perhaps be counteracted by his relationships with others, through which he could increase his range of experiences and develop his emotions (259).

Kaufmann wrote that the continued existence of social inequality and division of labour in socialist society were two of the causes of the conflicts between the individual and society in the GDR, which were evident in both daily life and literature. He explained the frequency of conflicts between the individual and society in the literature of the early seventies by the fact that writers were anxious to discuss problems which were taboo before 1971 (260). In his view, although class antagonisms had been eradicated in the GDR itself, the class antagonisms of capitalist society determined GDR society as a whole, but not its structures and the laws governing its development (261).

Like Havemann and Dölling, Laabs pointed to the social and natural limitations imposed upon the individual's potential for self-development:

Wir sind im Leben gefesselt; wir sind gefesselt an unsere physische Existenz und manches andere und haben nur die Möglichkeit, einen einzigen Strang mit nicht allzuweit auseinanderliegenden Anfangs- und Endpunkten, und vielfach nicht mal den, den wir als optimal vorstellen aufzunehmen (262).

In his view, although society inevitably restricted the individual's development, this gave rise to nonantagonistic contradictions in socialism (263).

During the debate on Plenzdorf's work many young readers pointed out that the GDR society, and the educational system in particular, did not allow the individual adequate time for reflection, contemplation and self-determined free-time activities (264). The young writer Gerd Adloff stated that Wibeau was relatively typical of GDR youth in his desire to escape from the seemingly totally programmed course from cradle to grave in the GDR and live his life according to his own criteria (265). Karl-Heinz Jakobs pointed out that in a society functioning on the principle of scientific planning young people insisted upon their right to make their own plans, even if their plans seemed insignificant in comparison with the overall social objectives (266). Similarly, a school-pupil Monika explained that the apparent aimlessness of young people in their leisure time was a reaction to the very structured activities of young people at school. She concluded that this spontaneity was usually neither reactionary, nor directed against socialism (267). As we have seen above, this was the conclusion reached by the prominent GDR researchers on youth Voß and Friedrich.

There are clear similarities between these criticisms of the principle of the state planning every aspect of the individual's life and the radical critics' rejection of state bureaucracy as a parasite upon GDR society. As discussed in chapter three of this thesis, in the last work published before his death, Morgen. Die Industriegesellschaft am Scheideweg. Kritik und reale Utopie (1980), Havemann particularly criticised the rigorous state planning of the education system as inhumane because it often prevents the individual from discovering and pursuing his own interests.

Some critics gave explicitly political reasons for the new subjectivity, writing that the motivations behind the theme of 'Ausbruch' in seventies GDR literature, that is a feeling of claustrophobia and the individual's need to assume more responsibility for his life, would continue to exist as long as socialist society lacked the resources to fulfil all the individual's needs and as long as socialist democracy was not fully developed (268).

Some theorists implied that the strong development of subjectivity and individuality in literature and elsewhere was a reaction to an overemphasis upon the principle of collectivity and bureaucracy in actually existing socialism:

Sollte man nur den Individualismus beklagen beziehungsweise bekämpfen, die Formen der Pseudo-Kollektivität aber darüber vergessen? Denn beides gehört zusammen: Bürokratismus, Technokratismus, Formalismus auf der einen Seite, Egoismus und gesellschaftliche Indifferenz auf der anderen... Tragen wir denn stets und ständig große Konflikte aus? Die Zahl der latenten Konflikte, der verdrängten, ist wohl größer als die der ausgetragenen (269).

Referring to the visitors' book at the Eighth Exhibition of GDR Art held in Dresden in 1978 Kant also commented:

darauf hin, daß ein Übergebot an Kollektivität vorliegt, was etwas Seltsames ist, weil Sozialismus ja nur kollektiv zu machen ist. Aber die Leute wollen auch allein sein (270).

Koch also made the point that the 'objective' interests of society, to which the individual's interests had been traditionally subordinated, were in fact sometimes very subjective:

Und was sind denn - im moralischen Sinne des Wortes - die 'wohlverstandenen' Interessen der Gesellschaft? Werden sie nicht manchmal doch pragmatisiert? Bläht sich nicht hie und da Subjektivismus? Was Gesellschaftsinteresse ist, bestimme ich! Gibt sich nicht manchmal Gruppeninteresse, Kollektivinteresse recht überzeugt als Gesellschaftsinteresse aus - und steht doch im Widerspruch dazu? Und 'überholt' nicht manchmal persönliches Verhalten die gegebenen Interessen der Gesellschaft, setzt ihnen neue Horizonte und gesellschaftliche Wertmaßstäbe? (271).

Similarly, the literary theorists Hartinger and Werner argued that conflicts could arise in advanced socialism when individuals focussed excessively upon their personal needs and neglected the wider social interests or vice versa. It is interesting to note that here they appeared to place equal value upon social and personal interests (272). They warned that if the conflicts between personal and social interests were not resolved, they could hinder the development of the individual and society (273).

Finally, in Voraussetzungen einer Erzählung: Kassandra (1983), Wolf postulated that some people in the GDR had simply grown weary of social commitment and had lost faith in the communist ideal:

Ist diese Müdigkeit, sich zu engagieren, nicht eigentlich Hoffnungsmüdigkeit? (274).

Was the younger generation of writers political or not?

During the 1979 Weimarer Beiträge interviews Kolbe stated that the young generation was generally apolitical:

Meine Generation hat die Hände im Schoß, was engagiertes Handeln betrifft (275).

For him, his generation was disorientated, neither identifying fully with the GDR, nor finding credible alternatives elsewhere (276). Should one believe this statement of extreme apoliticism? It was, in my view, deliberately meant to be provocative, for many young writers were political in their work and/or in terms of links with the various social movements (277). Anderson, Rüdiger Rosenthal, Detlef Opitz and Rathenow were amongst the first signatories of an appeal to the West German parliament against rearmament. They, together with Kolbe, Wilfried Linke, Thomas Günther and Günther Ullmann, were also involved in a peace-anthology (278). Furthermore, Rathenow was a signatory to the 1982 'Berlin Appeal'. On several occasions in his work Frank-Wolf Matthies made clear his support for Wolf Biermann and for the writers who initiated the petition against Biermann's enforced expatriation (279).

Kolbe attributed a political function to his poems, namely to promote peace and public discussion. In 1981 the anthology Bestandsaufnahme 2. Debütanten 1976 - 1980 contained a poem by Kolbe, 'Kern meines Romans', in which he hid this very political message to the GDR leadership:

Eure Maße sind Elend
 Euren Forderungen genügen Schleimer
 Eure ehemals blutige Fahne bläht sich träge zum Bauch
 Eurem Heldenhum den Opfern widme ich einen Orgasmus
 Euch mächtige Greise zerfetze die tägliche
 Revolution

When this was discovered the work which had been officially recommended to cultural functionaries was swiftly removed from sale (280).

Rathenow wrote that there had been a basic conflict between the individual and the forms of state power ever since the institution

of the state. He intended his work to be political and rejected the interpretation of his work as a description of existential situations (281). Both Rathenow and Anderson pointed to the patterns of authoritarian rule and militarism in GDR society, which, in their view, had their historical roots in the Prussian tradition (282). Rathenow made a direct linkage between the forms of authoritarian rule over the individual and war in his work, as he explained in an interview with the magazine aspect:

From the beginning my aim has been to show authoritarian modes of behaviour in their consequences. . . I think my work is much needed here. The socialist form of society is not going simply to evaporate – one has to supply the impulses, lead the dialogue, point out the dangers and promote positive development. I consider myself part of the independent peace movement in the GDR. . . But the war/peace problem is not dependent only upon. . . weapons. It is necessary to diminish authoritarian thinking in all areas of life (283).

In 1985 Kolbe stated that his generation of writers had lost the belief in 'a paradise on a communist earth' and wished to throw away the 'crutches of this ideology'. He believed that the GDR poet no longer reacted to state regulations, but was withdrawing from the social order to discover a new self-awareness (284).

Anderson, one of most active members of the Prenzlauer Berg cultural scene in the eighties, made a distinction between his generation of 'Aussteiger' and the following generation, which had never been integrated into GDR society. According to him, some groups of the latter generation had developed several, small-circulation papers, including Zeithefte, Milkado, Poe Sie All Bum, their own archives and other media. They organised their readings, literary discussions and exhibitions in private houses, in churches and occasionally even in FDJ youth clubs. According to Matthies, as many as 70 people attended these private meetings. They rejected the whole structure of official measures to promote new artistic

talent and in this sense were independent of official organisations and institutions (285).

Many of the young writers, therefore, did not withdraw from politics, but, on the contrary, were active in the alternative movements of the GDR. In this sense they represented a challenge to the political leadership.

As has been indicated above, most conservative critics interpreted the subjectivity of the young writers as a withdrawal from politics, but some clearly thought that this retreat into the private sphere was in some way a political act. This would seem to be borne out by the harsh measures implemented against some of the more radical young writers in the early eighties. In November 1980 Matthies and Rathenow were arrested after their works Morgen and Unbewohnter Raum mit Möbeln (Matthies, 1979 and 1980) and Mit dem schlimmsten wird gerechnet (Rathenow, 1980) were published in the West. Although they were soon released, the charges against them for 'illegally' publishing in the West were not dropped (286). In 1981 Matthies was allowed by the authorities to emigrate to West Berlin after the intercession of Wolf, Fühmann and Stephan Hermlin on his behalf (287). In 1980 the young writer Thomas Erwin was arrested after reading from his work at the Austrian embassy in Berlin.

In 1983 Rathenow received a prize from the Ministry of Culture for one of his plays, yet in the same year was prosecuted for contravening regulations by publishing in the West without permission (288). In the same year Höpcke told a Western reporter that works by Rathenow, Wolfgang Hilbig and Gerd Naumann were not published in the GDR partly for ideological reasons (289). In 1986

the GDR authorities refused Rathenow permission to become a visiting lecturer in the United States on the grounds that only writers whose work demonstrated a clear commitment to GDR politics and cultural policy could be permitted to travel abroad (290). In the mid- to late eighties the GDR authorities seemed to attempt to split the alternative scene in the Prenzlauer Berg district of Berlin by gradually allowing some members of autonomous groups to emigrate to the Federal Republic. They also tried to reintegrate some of the 'difficult' young writers such as Kolbe and Eckart by allowing their works to be published in the GDR.

To summarise, the more conformist critics equated the new subjectivity, and the writing of young writers in particular, with an individualistic withdrawal from politics. However, some of these critics implied that, paradoxically, this withdrawal from politics was a political act in that it represented a rejection of socialism. A second group of more moderate critics believed that the new subjectivity was generally not a withdrawal from politics, but a new constructive contribution to the debate on the progress of socialist society. Finally, a third group saw the new subjectivity as a withdrawal into the private sphere, which in turn was a reaction to the various conflicts between the individual and society in the GDR. As has been seen, the young generation expressed a high degree of subjectivity in their works and some claimed to be apolitical. However, this apparent apoliticism was belied by their activities in the new social movements and the alternative cultural scene of the GDR.

Footnotes

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29. B. Langner, 'Erzählen mit Risiko', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 27 (no.12, 1979), 139 - 142 (p.142).
30. J. Hannemann, 'Widersprüche im Klartext', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 27 (no.12, 1979), 142 - 147 (pp.144, 147).

31. K. Schuhmann, 'Aspekte des Verhältnisses zwischen Individuum und Gesellschaft in der Gegenwartsliteratur der DDR', Weimarer Beiträge, 21 (no.7, 1975), 5 - 36 (p.9).
32. Opitz, 'Volksmasse und Individuum', pp.36 - 37.
33. W. Liersch, 'Von Ankunft zur Anwesenheit', (pp.54, 58)
34. J. Engler, 'Gerti Tetzner: Karen W.', Weimarer Beiträge, 21 (no.11, 1975), 122 - 129 (p.128).
35. H. Kaufmann, 'Gespräch mit C. Wolf', Weimarer Beiträge, 20 (no.6, 1974), 90 - 112 (p.112).
36. C. Wolf, 'Selbstinterview', Kürbiskern (no.4, 1968); see also C. Wolf, Nachdenken über Christa T., Luchterhand Verlag (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1971), p.57; Klaus Jarmatz at the VII. Writers Congress in 1973, K. Jarmatz, Neue Deutsche Literatur, 22 (no.2, 1974), p.90; J. Streisand, Kultur in der DDR. Studien zu ihren historischen Grundlagen und ihren Entwicklungsetappen, VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften (Berlin, 1981), pp.141 - 142.
37. 'Christa Wolf liest aus Nachdenken über Christa T.: Zu Beginn ein Gespräch mit der Schriftstellerin über die Arbeit an der Erzählung', Berliner Rundfunk, 18 Oktober 1966, cited in I. Artes Hedlin, The Individual in a new society. A study of selected Erzählungen and Kurzgeschichten of the German Democratic Republic from 1965 to 1972, Peter Lang (Bern, 1977), p.53.
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40. Streisand, Kultur in der DDR, p.140.
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49. See Rosenberg, 'Redefining the public and the private', pp.2 - 3.
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51. K. Hager, 'Anspruch und Wirklichkeit der ideologischen Arbeit', Neues Deutschland, May 30, 1973.
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62. Berger, 'Wer oder was ist ein Held', pp.115, 120 - 122.
63. ibid., p.124.
64. W. Tittel, 'Will wirklich jeder König sein?', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 31 (no.12, 1983), pp.147 - 151 (p.150).
65. J. Laabs, Der Ausbruch. Roman einer Verführung, Mitteldeutscher Verlag (Halle-Leipzig, 1979), pp.35 - 36.
66. ibid., p.173.
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(p.11). For a discussion of the change in the relationship between the reader and the writer see: I. Wallace, 'Teacher or partner? The role of the writer in the GDR', New German Studies, 10 (no.1, 1982), 1 - 20.

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69. See D. Kliche, R. Lenzer, 'Die Funktion der Literatur in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft', Einheit, 29 (no.8, 1974), 966 - 975 (p.974).

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76. John Erpenbeck, cited by M. Jäger, 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 16 (1983), 1025 - 1029 (p.1028); Hans Kaufmann, cited by E. Nohara, 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 11 (1978), 820 - 826 (p.823); and Schlenstedt, 'Prozeß der Selbstverständigung', pp.8 - 9 respectively.

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82. See Eröffnungen. Schriftsteller über ihr Erstlingswerk, Aufbau-Verlag (Berlin and Weimar, 1974), p.141; C. Wolf, Lesen und Schreiben, Luchterhand Verlag (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1980), p.37.

83. C. Wolf, Lesen und Schreiben. Aufsätze und Prosastücke, Luchterhand Verlag (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1972), p.199.

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87. Wolf, Lesen und Schreiben, (Leipzig, 1980), p.27.
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90. U. Heukenkamp, 'Wandel einer Mitteilung', Sinn und Form, 30 (no.5, 1978), 1088 - 1091 (p.1088).
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93. Jarmatz, 'Nachdenken über Schreiben', p.19.
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99. Schuhmann, 'Aspekte des Verhältnisses zwischen Individuum', pp.31 - 32.
100. K. Jarmatz, 'Literatur der kollektiven Selbstverständigung', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 31 (no.7, 1983), 53 - 59.
101. For examples of this view see R. Melchert, 'Imagination. Die Dimension des Autors', Sonntag, 1.11.87, p.5; S. Hermlin, 'Aufgabe der Literatur: die Vermenschlichung des Menschen fördern', Sonntag, 31, 25.11.87, p.3.
102. Goldhahn, 'Zur Entwicklung des Funktionsverständnisses', pp.110 - 111.
103. M. Gerber, 'Wie hoch ist eigentlich der Preis der Emanzipation? Social issues in recent GDR women's writing', draft paper, p.5.
104. M. Wander, 'Guten Morgen, du Schöne', Luchterhand Verlag (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1983), p.8.

105. C. B. Schröder, 'Gerammelt voll leben', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 27 (1979), 151 - 153 (p.152), H. Richter, 'Der Erzähler als struktureller und funktionaler Faktor im heutigen Prozeß epischer Weltaneignung' Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.3, 1979), 24 - 37 p.35.

It is interesting to note that Christa Wolf made this same comparison between the literary and official view of the individual in perhaps a more radical way:

About reality. The insane fact that in all the 'civilised' industrialised nations, literature, if it is realistic, speaks a completely different language from any and all public disclosures. As if every country existed twice over. As if every resident existed twice over: once as himself and as the potential subject of an artistic presentation; second, as an object of statistics, publicity, agitation, advertisement, political propaganda

- C. Wolf, Cassandra: A novel and four essays (London, 1984), pp.224 - 268 (extracts), cited by R. Woods, Opposition in the GDR under Honecker 1971 - 1985, Macmillan (London, 1986), p.203.

106. C. Wolf, 'Foreword', in Wander, Guten Morgen, pp.9, 12.

107. Cited by Püschel, 'Dreizehn arbeitende Menschen', p.78.

108. ibid., p.82; see also p.77..

109. Kaufmann, 'Zwiespältigkeiten', p.135.

110. Wolf, cited by Püschel, 'Dreizehn arbeitende Menschen', p.80.

111. E. Loest, Es geht seinen Gang oder Mühen in unserer Ebene, C. H. Beckmann (Stuttgart, 1978), pp.264, 278, 270 respectively.

112. 'Es geht seinen Gang oder Mühe in unseren Ebenen. Ein Gespräch mit dem DDR-Schriftsteller Erich Loest', Frankfurter Rundschau, April 3, 1976.

113. H. Mohr, 'Mühen in unserer Ebene: Erich Loest und sein neuer Roman', Deutschland Archiv, 11 (1978), 872 - 879 (p.876). Mohr lists the following as the characteristics of 'kleine Verweigerung' in the GDR: indifference towards politics and ideology; ignorance of GDR history; lack of interest in so-called 'higher' culture; a distancing from the stress upon achievement and the ideal of the dynamic socialist personality involved in lifelong learning. As Mohr notes, this goes hand in hand with a concentration upon the private sphere; the opposition of the public and private spheres and the search for a restricted form of happiness in the private sphere, Mohr, 'Mühen in unserer Ebene', p.877.

114. Loest, Es geht seinen Gang, p.135.

115. ibid., p.137.

Zimmermann points to an interesting discrepancy between Loest's and Bahro's view of the emancipation of GDR society. Whilst Bahro

believes that the impulse for social change in the GDR will initially come from the technical intelligentsia, Loest depicts in the engineer Wülf a subaltern individual who is neither aiming to overthrow the state nor pressing for the emancipatory interests of the working class. Using the example of Wülf, Zimmermann argues that the majority of the GDR intelligentsia profits from the status quo at the cost of the underprivileged sections of GDR society and to this extent provides the strongest pillar of support for the GDR leadership. Zimmermann however concedes that the literary and creative intelligentsia already plays an important role in criticising the bureaucratic excesses of the GDR system and might provide the impulse for the future emancipation of GDR society, P. Zimmermann, Industrieliteratur der DDR. Vom Helden der Arbeit zum Planer und Leiter, Metzler Verlag (Stuttgart, 1984), p.298.

116. Loest, Es geht seinen Gang, pp.103 - 104.

117. Mohr interprets this section of the novel in the following way:

politisches Desinteresse als notwendige Folge ideologischer Indoktrinierung - Ideologie hier im Sinne von Marx verstanden als falsches Bild der Wirklichkeit. Wer mit falschen Bildern der Welt überfüttert wurde, der verzichtet überhaupt auf ein Bild der Welt. Er taucht einfach weg; lebt sozusagen unterhalb der offiziellen politischen Rede seinen unpolitischen Alltag, Mohr, 'Mühen in unserer Ebene', p.876.

118. Loest, Es geht seinen Gang, pp.246 - 247.

119. Ian Mitchell also reaches this conclusion, I. Mitchell, "... ich sehe mich leider gezwungen. . .": The individual and the system in two novels by Erich Loest', GDR Monitor (Summer, 1984), 1 - 11 (p.2).

120. Gerlach argues that by withdrawing into the private sphere the individual subjectively becomes what he is already objectively, a passive object of history, Gerlach, Der schwierige Fortschritt, p.136.

121. W. Rossade, 'Grundzüge gegenwärtiger Kulturpolitik der SED', in Kultur und Gesellschaft in der DDR. 10. Tagung zum Stand der DDR-Forschung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. 31 Mai bis 3. Juni 1977, Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik (Cologne, 1977), 32 - 56 (p.37).

122. I. Hanke, 'Anpassung, Apathie und Ritualisierung von Politik. Politische Kultur im Spiegel der Gegenwartsliteratur der DDR', in DDR, Kohlhammer, (Stuttgart, 1983), 146 - 168 (p.158).

Stahl similarly writes that the concentration upon the individual's problems implies that the individual no longer seeks to cooperate with others to bring about changes in society. In her view, the 'retreat into the self' is therefore indicative of an arrogance towards others in that the individual does not believe that others can follow the complexity of his thought-processes, S. Stahl, Der Ausbruch des Subjekts aus gesellschaftlicher Konformität, Peter Lang (New York, 1984), p.131.

In his review of Es geht seinen Gang, Werth writes that the official policy of depoliticising the population with force and material rewards has led to a sterility of the system and has therefore become counterproductive, cited in E. Loest, Der vierte Zensor. Vom Entstehen und Sterben eines Romanes in der DDR, Edition Deutschland Archiv (Cologne, 1984), p.54.

123. See Gerlach, Der schwierige Fortschritt, p.136; Hillmann, 'Subjektivität in der Prosa', p.433.

124. See Zimmermann, Industrieliteratur, p.298.

125. See 'Interview mit Loest', Deutschland Archiv 11 (1978), 1201 - 1203. Heym asserts that the novel is basically pro-GDR because it shows that ordinary people can find personal happiness there, cited in Loest, Der vierte Zensor, p.37.

126. 'Interview mit Erich Loest', p.1202.

127. R. Bernhardt, 'Die Mühen des Wolfgang Wülf'f', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 26 (1978), 141 - 148 (p.141), see also pp.142, 144. This argument was also used by critics within Loest's publishing house, Loest, Der vierte Zensor, p.20. Some Western critics have been equally critical of Loest's hero, for example Mohr, 'Mühen in unserer Ebene', 872 - 879.

128. Bernhardt, 'Die Mühen des Wolfgang Wülf', p.145.

129. ibid., p.147.

130. Loest, Der vierte Zensor, p.19.

131. Bernhardt, 'Die Mühen des Wolfgang Wülf', p.144.

132. Sonntag, 32, 30 July, 1978, cited in Loest, Der vierte Zensor, p.44.

133. John Erpenbeck cited by E. Scherner, 'Erfahrung der Generation', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (1981), 115 - 119 (p.117).

134. I. Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft von wilder Minze', Weimarer Beiträge, 24 (no.9, 1982), 137 - 145 (p.144).

135. E. Schuhmacher, 'Darstellende Künste und sozialistische Lebensweise', Weimarer Beiträge, 28 (no.9, 1982), 60 - 65 (p.62).

136. M. W. Schulz, 'Fördern und Fordern', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (1981), 30 - 41 (p.35); W. Liersch, 'A. Albrechts Unter Umständen die Liebe', Weimarer Beiträge 25 (no.1, 1983), 12 - 15 (p.13).

137. I. von Wangenheim, 'Genosse Jemand und die Klassik', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (no.3, 1981), 103 - 106 (pp.104 - 105); M. Dau, Sonntag, 31, 10 July, 1977, p.3.

138. Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.143.

139. M. Krumrey, 'Junge Prosa der 80er Jahre', Zeitschrift für

Germanistik, 8 (no.6, 1987), 677 - 687.

140. S. Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', temperamente (no.2, 1980), 140 - 144 (p.141); E. Wenig, 'Literaturdebatte. Fragen. Leserbrief', Sonntag, 33 (no.47, 1979), p.2; W. Gabler, 'Doris Paschiller: Die Würde', Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.1, 1983), 14 - 18 (p.16); B. Dyrlich, 'Von der Suche nach der poetischen Heimat', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (no.1, 1981), 112 - 114 (p.114).
141. See also Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', p.141.
142. M. Krumrey, 'Zu einigen Tendenzen der jungen Prosa', temperamente (no.2, 1981), p.17; I. Jarmatz, 'Traumgrenzen. Bemerkungen zu Prosadebüts der letzten Jahre', Sonntag, 41 (no.43, 1987), p.4; W. Predel, 'Problematische Naturen', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 28 (no.7, 1980), 118 - 124 (p.119).
143. Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', p.141.
144. A. Reimann, 'Andreas Reimann: Es ging nicht um Herrn Ypsilon', Sinn und Form, 25 (no.6, 1974), 1311 - 1320 (p.1317); A. Pielenz, 'Arno Pielenz zu 'Die neuen Leiden der jungen Lyrik'', Sinn und Form 25 (no.3, 1974), 661 - 663 (p.662); A. Reimann, 'Die neuen Leiden der jungen Lyrik', Sinn und Form, 25 (no.2, 1974), 439 - 448.
145. M. Hähnel, 'Meine Generation!?', Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.3, 1980) 171 - 174 (p.173).
146. M. Krumrey, Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.2, 1983), 305 - 309 (p.308).
147. H. - J. Hoffmann, W. Kühn, 'Junge Künstler - Weggefährten und Kampfgenossen', Einheit, 35 (no.2, 1980), 179 - 186 (pp.179, 181 - 182).
148. Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.144; A. Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 26 (no.9, 1978), 130 - 140.
149. Krumrey, Weimarer Beiträge 25 (no.2, 1983), p.308.
150. K. Kändler, 'Prosa junger Autoren', Sinn und Form, 33 (no.5, 1982), 1092 - 1097 (p.1095).
151. Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', p.134.
152. B. Leistner, 'Versprochenes', Sinn und Form, 32 (no.3, 1983), 632 - 638 (pp.632 - 633).
153. J. Koplowitz, Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.1, 1983), 86 - 100.
154. S. Rönisch, Weimarer Beiträge (no.1, 1983), 345 - 349 (p.349).
155. K. Hager, 'Probleme der Kulturpolitik vor dem XI. Parteitag der SED', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 34 (no.1, 1986), 1 - 14 (p.13).
156. Jarmatz, 'Traumgrenzen', p.4.

157. Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', p.139.
158. Jarmatz, 'Traumgrenzen', p.4; D. Welke, 'Gefragt: geistige Übereinkunft', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 31 (no.2, 1983), 156 - 158 (p.157); Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.144.
159. Cited by Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', p.136.
160. Krumrey, 'Zu einigen Tendenzen der jungen Prosa', p.17; R. Melchert, 'Hautnähe des Lebens', Neue Deutsche Literatur 29 (no.10, 1981), 152 - 156 (p.152); see also Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.144.
161. See Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.143.
162. Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', p.138; see also M. Schmidt, 'Unerschöpflich wie das Leben', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 26 (no.9, 1978) 152 - 154, (p.153) and B. Leistner cited by B. Schirmer, 'Laudatio auf Harald Heinze', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 28 (no.9, 1980), 162 - 163 (p.162).
163. Krumrey, 'Junge Prosa der 80er Jahre', 677 - 687; Gabler, 'Doris Paschiller: Die Würde', p.18.
164. Engler, 'Zwischen Erfahrung', pp.131, 132.
165. J. Laabs, 'Fördern und Fordern', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (1981), 30 - 41 (pp.33 - 34); I. and K.- D. Hähnel, 'Junge Lyrik am Ende der siebziger Jahre', Weimarer Beiträge, 23 (no.9, 1981), 127 - 154.
166. Leistner, 'Versprochenes', p.638; G. de Bruyn on young authors in temperamente, cited by Kändler, 'Prosa junger Autoren', p.1093; Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', p.144; T. Namowicz, 'Zur Lyrik der jüngsten Dichtergeneration der DDR', Weimarer Beiträge, 19 (no.11, 1973), 113 - 127 (p.117); R. Bernhardt, 'Die Sonderlinge der Debütanten', Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.1, 1983), 6 - 12 (pp.6 - 7); Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.142. For similar remarks made by Hermann Kant at the Tenth Congress of the Writers' Union in 1987 see 'Offene Türen', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, November 25, 1987, p.27.
167. M. and R. Dau, 'Noch einmal: Junge Lyrik am Ende der siebziger Jahre', Weimarer Beiträge, 28 (no.3, 1982), 152 - 156 (p.156); Hähnel, 'Junge Lyrik am Ende der siebziger Jahre', p.128.
168. Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.141.
169. M. Krumrey, Weimarer Beiträge, 27 (no.11, 1981), 173 - 178.
170. J. Nowotny, 'Forderungen an uns', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 27 (no.4, 1979), 11 - 21 (pp.6 - 7); Jarmatz, 'Traumgrenzen', p.4; Krumrey, 'Zu einigen Tendenzen'; Hähnel, 'Meine Generation!?', p.173.
171. Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', p.141.
172. ibid., p.142.

173. Hoffmann, Kühn, 'Junge Künstler - Weggefährten', pp.182 - 184.
174. H. König, 'Die Verantwortung der FDJ für Kultur und Kunst in den Kämpfen unserer Zeit', Junge Welt, 22 October 1982, 5 - 9 (p.8).
175. H. Herold, Forum (no.23, 1979).
176. H. Plavius, 'Positionsbestimmung', Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.6, 1980), 136 - 147 (p.144).
177. ibid., p.147; see M. Jäger 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 13 (1980), 1024 - 1027 (p.1026).
178. Plavius, 'Positionsbestimmung', pp.141, 143.
179. H. Koch, Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.10, 1980), 13 - 20 (p.14).
180. ibid., p.20.
181. K. Höpcke, 'Phantasie für das Wirkliche', Einheit, 37 (no.2, 1982), 173 - 179 (p.175); Haase, 'Unsere Literatur gestern', pp.283 - 284.
182. See F. Trommler, 'Der zögernde Nachwuchs', in Tendenzen der deutschen Literatur seit 1945, Alfred Kröner Verlag (Stuttgart, 1971), pp.92 - 93; H. Hammer, 'Bücher unserer Liebe. Gespräch mit Klaus Höpcke', Sonntag, 25 (no.47, 1987), p.10.
183. J. Brezan, 'Über Widerspiegel, das kleine und große Erleiden und die Würde des Schriftstellers', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 30 (no.4, 1982), 5 - 15 (p.5); F. Fühmann, 'Schneewittchen. Ein paar Gedanken zu zwei jungen Dichtern', Sinn und Form, 27 (no.6, 1976), 1259 - 1264 (p.1261); H. Kant, Forum (no.6, 1983), 8 - 9 (pp.8 - 9).
184. Nowotny, 'Forderungen an uns', p.4; Konrad Wolf, 'Gesprächsprotokolle. Dresden 1978', Sinn und Form, 29 (no.6, 1978), 1129 - 1175 (p.1130).
185. Marianne Schmidt, cited in H. Kähler, 'Nicht etikettieren, sondern analysieren', Einheit, 29 (no.7, 1974), 865 - 868 (p.868); Schlenstedt, 'Prozeß der Selbstverständigung', p.21.
186. Manfred Jendrysik in 1982, revising his former opinion that recent short prose lacked substance, cited by K. Kändler, 'Jahrgang 1948', Sinn und Form, 35 (no.5, 1983), 1113 - 1119 (p.1115); see also Leistner, 'Versprochenes', pp.637 - 638; C. Berger, 'Prosa-Erkundungen einer Lyrikerin', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 31 (no.6, 1983), 155 - 157 (p.156).
187. Engler, 'Zwischen Erfahrung', pp.131, 132; Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', pp.142 - 3; Schlenstedt, 'Prozeß der Selbstverständigung' p.21; see also Namowicz, 'Zur Lyrik der jüngsten Dichtergeneration', p.117.
188. S. Rönisch, 'Notizen über eine neue Autoren generation', Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.7, 1979), 5 - 10 (p.7). Plavius, 'Positionsbestimmung', p.144.

189. Cited by Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.140.
190. Kändler, 'Prosa junger Autoren', p.1094.
191. W. Hartinger, 'DDR-DebÜts in der Reihe 'Poesiealbum'', temperamente (no.3, 1980), 149 (p.149).
192. Bernhardt, 'Die Sonderlinge', p.9.
193. ibid., p.9.
194. Berger, 'Prosaerkundungen einer Lyrikerin', p.157.
195. Dau, 'Noch einmal: Junge Lyrik', p.154.
196. U. Heukenkamp, 'Gedanken zur jungen Lyrik', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 26 (1978), 110 - 118 (p.113).
197. ibid., p.114.
198. U. Heukenkamp, 'Das Ungenügen an der Idylle', Sinn und Form, 33 (no.5, 1981), 1120 - 1130 (pp.1121 - 1122).
199. ibid., p.1121.
200. ibid., p.1127.
201. S. Bock, 'Neuer Gegenstand - neues Erzählen', Weimarer Beiträge, 19 (no.10, 1973) 93 - 116 (p.97).
202. U. Heukenkamp, 'Ohne den Leser geht es nicht', Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.7, 1979), 41 - 52 (p.50).
203. E. Wesuls, 'Sich einlassen auf das Langwierige', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 29 (no.1, 1981), 75 - 78 (p.76).
 See also ibid., pp.77 - 78; G. de Bruyn, 'Jean Paul und die neuere DDR-Literatur', in Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft, vol 10, (Munich, 1975), 205 - 211 (pp.209 - 210), cited by G. Schlichting, Gesellschafts- und Individualproblematik im Prosawerk Günter de Bruyns und ihre Rezeption in der DDR und der BRD, Ph.D. thesis (New York University, 1982), p.36. Schlichting accepts de Bruyn's argument. She writes that in concentrating upon the individual de Bruyn examines society in a committed way through the prism of the private sphere, Schlichting, Gesellschafts- und Individualproblematik, p.214. See also I. Hanke, 'Debütantinnen', Deutschland Archiv, 15 (1982), 420 - 430.
204. Heukenkamp, 'Ohne den Leser geht es nicht', p.50.
205. K. Batt, 'Realität und Phantasie. Tendenzen in der Erzählliteratur der DDR', in Silbermann, Interpretationen zum Roman, 104 - 119 (p.114).
206. ibid., p.114.
207. Püschel, 'Dreizehn arbeitende Menschen', p.78.
 Thomas Brasch writes that the views expressed in Wander's collection of interviews reflect the womens' conscious decision to

remain in a 'transparent private sphere', a decision based upon the recognition that they cannot in practice play a significant role in public affairs. He argues that this is not equivalent to a 'retreat into the private or inner sphere, this being the prerogative of disillusioned idealists. The women presented in Guten Morgen so he argues, never had any such illusions, but at best learnt the relevant pieces of Marxism-Leninism by heart in order to pass examinations, T. Brasch, 'Die Wiese hinter der Mauer', Der Spiegel, 32 (no.31, 1978) 137 - 139.

208. C. Wolf, Voraussetzungen einer Erzählung: Kassandra, Luchterhand Verlag (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1983), p.109.

209. S. Heym, 'Distanz und Nähe des Außenstehenden', Der Spiegel 43 (no.28, 1988), 43, 46 (p.46).

210. Batt, 'Realität und Phantasie', p.116; Kaufmann, 'Gespräch mit Christa Wolf', p.98; see also Wolf, 'Selbstinterview', in Wolf, Lesen und Schreiben, (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1972), p.72; W. Mittenzwei, 'Brecht 1973 oder das Problem der Individualität', Theater der Zeit, 28 (no.2, 1973), 6 - 11 (p.7); Predel, 'Problematische Naturen', p.119; Schlenstedt, Wirkungsästhetische Analysen, cited by I. Hähnel, 'Jochen Laabs: Der Ausbruch', Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.6, 1980), 129 - 135 (p.130).

211. Zipser , Schoeps, DDR-Literatur im Tauwetter, p.111.

212. See Schlenstedt, cited by Nieraad, 'Subjektivität als Thema', 289 - 316; Richter, 'Der Erzähler', pp.31, 33 - 34.

213. Gabler, 'Doris Paschillers Würde', p.14; M. Dau, 'Mit meinen Augen. Junge Lyrik beim Entdecken neuer Wirklichkeit', temperamente (no.3, 1979), 90 - 106 (p.91); Hartinger, 'DDR-Debüts in der Reihe 'Poesiealbum'', p.148; Zipser, Schoeps, DDR im Tauwetter, pp.122 - 123; A. Giesecke, 'Konflikte in der Kurzprosa. Zu einigen Entwicklungstendenzen in der Erzählungsliteratur der DDR', Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift Universität Rostock (Gesellschafts- und sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe), 22 (no.5, 1973), 471 - 478 (p.473); R. Weimann, 'Erzählsituation und Romantypus', Sinn und Form, 18 (no.1, 1966), 108 - 115 (pp.110 - 111).

214. S. Topelmann, 'Interview mit Günter de Bruyn', Weimarer Beiträge, 14 (no.6, 1968), (pp.1178 - 1180); I. Hähnel, 'Interview mit Jochen Laabs', Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.6, 1980), 51 - 73 (p.71).

215. Hähnel, 'Interview mit Laabs', p.71; See also Zipser, Schoeps, DDR-Literatur im Tauwetter, pp.119, 116 - 117 respectively and K. Schumann, 'Weite und Vielfalt der Wirklichkeitsdarstellung in der DDR-Literatur', Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.8, 1980), 5 - 23 (p.8).

216. Wolf, 'Selbstinterview', (p.557); G. Kunert, Süddeutsche Zeitung, March 23, 1979, p.35; see also Mittenzwei, 'Brecht 1973', p.7.

217. Wolf, 'Selbstinterview', p.557.

218. Kaufmann, 'Gespräch mit Christa Wolf', pp.95 - 96.

219. S. Hermlin, Abendlicht, Verlag Klaus Wagenbach (W. Berlin, 1980), pp.21 - 22.
220. Plavius, 'Positionsbestimmung', p.142.
221. D. Schlenstedt, 'Ankunft und Anspruch', Sinn und Form, 18 (1966), 80 - 86 (p.82).
222. ibid., pp.81 - 82.
223. Röhner, 'Redebeitrag auf dem VI. Deutschen Schriftstellerkongreß', p.307.
224. Fritz Selbmann, 'Von der Ankunfts- zur 'Anspruchsliteratur', supplementary documentation from the VI. German Writers' Congress, p.26.
225. V. Braun, 'Die Anspruchslosen (1969)', in V. Braun, Es genügt nicht die einfache Wahrheit. Notate, Mitteldeutscher Verlag (Halle-Leipzig, 1975), p.65. As Zimmermann rightly points out, both Braun and Selbmann reached very different conclusions from the same assumption that there was no basic conflict of interest between the individual and society, Zimmermann, Industrieliteratur der DDR, p.268. Knipp sees flaws in both viewpoints put forward at the Congress. On the one hand the adherence to the socialist realist model of literature leads, in his view, to the false generalization of one form of artistic appropriation of reality. On the other hand literature which concentrates solely upon the psychological factor leads to a diminished view of reality. For him, it was inevitable that the concept of a hero making demands of socialist society was interpreted as irrelevant in the context of the 'socialist human community'. Knipp argues, however, that the concept of a hero making demands of society, the literary model of individual self-development, the emphasis upon subjectivity and the inner world of the individual raise the process of the non-reconciliation of the individual and society to a qualitatively higher level and are therefore not individualistic, or inappropriate for a socialist society. He refers to the literature since the mid-Sixties as 'Anspruchsliteratur', Knipp, Zum Verhältnis vom Individuum, pp.528 - 529, 532.
226. W. Brettschneider, Zwischen literarischer Autonomie und Staatsdienst. Die Literatur in der DDR (Stuttgart, 1980), pp.59 - 60. In Brenner's view, this critical element inherent in the literary portrayal of the individual's demands upon society was generally readily absorbed in the sixties, but began to develop its own momentum in the Seventies, P. Brenner, Plenzdorfs Neue Leiden des jungen W., Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt/Main, 1982), p.16.
227. E. and H. Kaufmann, Erwartung und Angebot, p.28.
228. Cited by Staadt, Konfliktbewußtsein und sozialistischer Anspruch, p.42.
229. ibid., p.41.
230. Cited by W. Tittel, 'Glücksanspruch und weltanschauliche Bewußtheit', Weimarer Beiträge, 29 (no.2, 1983), 362 - 367

(p.362).

231. Cited by M. Jäger, 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 6 (1985), 240 - 245 (p.242); Richter, 'Der Erzähler', pp.31, 33 - 34.

232. Kögler, 'Zur Diskussion junger Künstler', p.144; Brezan, 'Über Widerspiegel', p.5; Krumrey, 'Junge Prosa der 80er Jahre', pp.677 - 687; Löffler, 'Der Anspruch und die wirkliche Leistung', p.134; Hähnel, 'Interview mit Jochen Laabs', p.56.

233. Haase, 'Unsere Literatur gestern', pp.283 - 284; Predel, 'Problematische Naturen', 118 - 124.

234. Hähnel, 'Interview mit Jochen Laabs', pp.56, 72 - 73.

235. ibid., p.72.

236. A. Arndt, 'Polemische Prosa', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 27 (no.12, 1979), 132 - 139 (p.132).

237. H. Kaufmann, 'DDR-Literatur der 70er Jahre', Sinn und Form, 30 (no.1, 1978), 171 - 175 (p.171).

238. Pawlowitz, 'Kein Duft', p.143; E. Scheibner, 'Schwieriger Weg einer Selbstfindung', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 30 (no.11, 1982), 141 - 144 (p.143); G. Adloff, 'Freundlichkeit, das schöne Bild', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 28 (1980), 50 - 54 (p.52); Heukenkamp, 'Gedanken zur jungen Lyrik', p.111; Kaufmann, 'DDR-Literatur der 70er Jahre', pp.172 - 172.

239. Wesuls, 'Sich einlassen auf das Langwierige', pp.77 - 78.

240. Gabler, 'Doris Paschillers Würde', p.14.

241. Wolf, 'Vorwort', in Wander, Guten Morgen, p.11.

242. ibid., p.11.

243. C. Zehl Romero, 'Recent developments in GDR literature', in M. Gerber (ed), Studies in GDR culture and society: Selected papers for the Sixth New Hampshire Symposium on the German Democratic Republic, University Press of America (Lanham, 1981), p.111 - 126 (p.121).

Irma Hanke gives the following as reasons for the apparent lack of political discussions in current GDR literature: this merely reflects reality; a possible lack of reader-interest in political problems; a certain nostalgia for a 'harmonious world'; a weariness of political issues caused by the omnipresence of overt political agitation in socialist society and finally the author's fear that the introduction of political issues into his work could cause problems with the authorities. She sees the 'retreat into a new subjectivity' and the 'romantic examination of the inner sphere' as a reaction to the rational nature of their society, Hanke, 'Anpassung, Apathie und Ritualisierung', pp.151, 157 - 158.

She also suggests that in concentrating upon the individual and his emotions, writers are increasingly raising existential questions to which the official ideology seems unable to provide the answers. It

is in this sense, she argues, that the concentration upon the private sphere can mean an extension of reality in GDR works, *ibid.*, pp.157 - 158.

244. Laabs, Der Ausbruch, p.166.

245. see fn. 201.

246. Kaufmann, 'DDR-Literatur der 70er Jahre', pp.171 - 172; D. Schlenstedt, Weimarer Beiträge, 26 (no.10, 1980), 145 - 150 (p.148), cited by M. Jäger, 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 14 (1981), 354 - 358 (p.356).

247. 'Vorbild - Leitbild', Weimarer Beiträge, 25 (no.7, 1979), 11 - 21 (p.15).

248. *ibid.*, p.17; see also *ibid.*, p.12.

249. *ibid.*, pp.17 - 18.

250. *ibid.*, p.18.

251. Hähnel, 'Interview mit Laabs', p.58; see also Plavius, 'Positionsbestimmung', p.145 and H. Koch, Sonntag, 36 (no.47, 1982), (p.9).

252. 'Der nie jemand Ärger gemacht. Zu Plenzdorfs Roman Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.', Forum (no.8, 1973), p.14. This argument is also cited by Bernhardt, 'Die Mühen des Wolfgang Wülf', p.142

253. W. Dierl, 'Ist die Werther Problematik noch aktuell?', Forum (no.12, 1972), 10 - 11 (p.10).

254. David, 'Diskussion um Plenzdorf' (no.3, 1973), p.676, *ibid.*, p.676; Bertsch, 'Stimmen', p.870.

255. U. Riese, 'Stimmen', pp.878 - 879; see also 'Lachen über Wibeau', p.1286. For details on the problem of job-fluctuation see J. Kunert, 'Überqualifikation oder Bildungsvorlauf?', Deutschland Archiv, 17 (no.2, 1984), 497 - 520.

256. A. Petzold, 'Zwei Werke der frühen siebziger Jahre im Vergleich', Weimarer Beiträge, 20 (no.8, 1980), 170 - 174 (p.172).

257. Gerhild F., 'Der neue Werther', pp.147 - 148.

258. W. Mahlow, 'Aufklärung und Appell', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 35 (no.3, 1987), 140 - 145 (pp.144 - 145).

259. W. Mahlow, 'Zwei neue Erzähler', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 26 (no.9, 1978), 159 - 167.

260. Kaufmann, 'Literatur in einer dynamischen Gesellschaft', in Kaufmann, Erwartung und Angebot, 1 - 35 (pp.15, 32).

261. *ibid.*, pp.31 - 32.

The Western critic Brettschneider rather cynically wrote that the state apparatus used the theory of antagonistic and nonantagonistic contradictions in the following way in order to

control literature. If a writer touched upon taboo subjects in his work, these were termed anatgonistic conflicts, thereby condemning the work as a whole. Other conflicts depicted in literary works were labelled nonantagonistic, thereby minimising their significance and neutralising the writer's critical message. In Brettschneider's view, this theory smoothed the regulatory process and gave it a certain flexibility, Brettschneider, Zwischen literarischer Autonomie, p.35.

262. Hähnel, 'Jochen Laabs im Gespräch', p.117.
263. *ibid.*, p.118.
264. G. Kohlmey and G. Draheim in 'Stimmen', pp.849, 872; Bertsch, 'Stimmen', p.870.
265. Adloff, 'Stimmen', p.867; see also D. Siegel. 'Stimmen', p.868; see the discussion of teenagers in 'Der neue Werther. Ein Gespräch', Neue Deutsche Literatur, 21 (1973), 139 - 149 (pp.140 - 142); Bertsch, 'Stimmen', p.871.
266. K. - H. Jakobs, 'Plenzdorf', in Heimatländische Kolportagen. Ein Buch Publizistik (Berlin, 1975), 237 - 244.
267. Monika, 'Der neue Werther. Ein Gespräch', p.147.
268. See also Dau, 'Noch einmal: Junge Lyrik', p.154.
269. Liersch, 'Andreas Albrechts 'Unter Umständen die Liebe', p.14.
270. 'Gesprächsprotokolle Dresden', pp.1129 - 1130.
271. Cited by M. Jäger, 'Kultur', Deutschland Archiv, 14 (1981), 354 - 358 (p.356).
272. W. Hartinger, K. Werner, 'Zur Konfliktgestaltung in der sozialistisch-realistischen Literatur und Kunst', Weimarer Beiträge, 18 (no.9, 1972), 119 - 131 (pp.124 - 125).
273. *ibid.*, pp.124 - 125.
274. Wolf, Voraussetzungen einer Erzählung, p.94.
275. 'Ohne den Leser geht es nicht', p.46.
276. *ibid.*, p.44.
277. C. Cosentino, 'Gedanken zur jüngsten DDR-Lyrik: Uwe Kolbe, Sascha Anderson und Lutz Rathenow', The Germanic Review, 60 (no.3, 1985), 82 - 90 (p.82).
278. See 'Eine Friedens-Anthologie aus der DDR', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, November 14, 1983, p.4.
279. J. Wallmann, 'Zerbrochen werden nur die Graden', Deutschland Archiv, 12 (1979), 1203 - 1206 (pp.1204 - 1205).
280. See 'Der Kern des Gedichts', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 24, 1982, p.23.

281. Cited in W. Fuld, 'Der Knoten im Taschentuch', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, June 12, 1984, p.26.
282. Cosentino, 'Gedanken zur jüngsten DDR-Lyrik', pp.81, 84, 88.
283. 'Interview mit Lutz Rathenow', aspect (no.26/27 /winter 1983), 107 - 113 (pp.108 - 112), cited by Cosentino, 'Gedanken zur jüngsten Lyrik', p.88.
284. 'Langer Abschied', Der Spiegel, 39 (no.6, 1985), 183, 186 (p.186).
285. S. Anderson, 'Die Generation nach uns ist freier', Der Spiegel, 40 (no.36, 1986), 74 - 78.
286. G. Bolaender, 'Balsam und Beton. Entscheidungsmöglichkeiten junger DDR-Literaten', die horen, 26 (no.4, 1981), 109 - 114 (pp.110 - 111).
287. 'Schmerz im Album', p.82.
288. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, August 8, 1983, p.17.
289. 'Autoren müssen jede Lesung melden', Frankfurter Rundschau, March 15, 1983, p.1.
290. H. Wenderoth, 'Lutz Rathenow darf nicht nach Amerika', Journal 1. RIAS 3, June 24, 1986, p.1.

Chapter Six. Conclusions

The comparative, interdisciplinary approach of this thesis has shown that aspects of the discussion of the relationship between the individual and society were taken up by writers, legal theorists and social scientists throughout the seventies and eighties. This not only demonstrates the all-embracing nature of this theme, but also its importance in the period under study after decades where the discussion of the status of the individual, his interests and problems had seemed inappropriate in a society based upon a collectivist ideology. We have seen that there were parallels between the debates which took place within the various disciplines. In their works the theorists Dölling, Kuczynski, Heuer and Bahro either indirectly or directly alluded to the fact that they were inspired by the literary discussions of themes relating to the individual and society.

In the seventies social scientists and literary writers argued that GDR society had reached a point in its history when it could afford to reflect on the individual's needs rather than the needs of society. The new subjectivity in terms of themes, the choice of hero and style which became apparent in GDR literature in the seventies reflected this gradual shift from an emphasis on the requirements of the collective to an emphasis on the requirements of the individual. It represented a renunciation of the traditional, didactic socialist realist model, which was based upon the assumption that the writer should inculcate the correct socialist values in the reader and thus reflected a hierarchical view of the individual and society. The new subjectivity, and the concept of subjective authenticity in particular, laid stress on the individual, his interests and needs and was based on the

assumptions that it was valid to examine the GDR's problems from the individual perspective, that the individual experience was of equal significance as any 'objective' view of social reality propounded by the party.

The orthodox literary critics and writers attacked the new subjectivity in literature as a withdrawal into the private sphere and a form of individualism. However, the very vehemence of their attacks suggested that they thought that the withdrawal into the private sphere was indicative of a political ambiguity at best and, at worst, a rejection of socialism.

Literary theorists who were more sympathetic to the trend towards subjectivity argued that it was indicative of a withdrawal into the private sphere, but that this was positive in that it helped expose the negative phenomena of GDR society. It thus ultimately made a positive contribution to the development of socialism. By emphasising the political relevance of the withdrawal into the private sphere, they tended to point the reader in the direction of arguments which were a criticism of GDR socialism, for example that the withdrawal into the private sphere was a reaction to the political impotence of the individual. Thus both sides of the literary debate argued that the new subjectivity in literature was political, but the hostile critics found it unacceptable, the liberal critics acceptable.

The creative writers raised the question of subjectivity versus the 'objectivity' of the official ideology, the validity of 'subjective' individual interests versus the 'objective' interests of society and the state. In the course of the contradictions debate in the seventies Kuczynski suggested that there was a

conflict between these two sets of interests in actually existing socialism. Whereas at the beginning of the seventies official theorists vigorously denied that the conflicts between the individual and society which existed in capitalist society also existed in the GDR, by the eighties their existence in GDR society was tacitly conceded by the SED leadership.

Hager's renunciation of the harmonious concept of the 'socialist human community' in 1971 led not only creative writers, but also social scientists to examine everyday life in the GDR and the GDR's social problems in the seventies. As has been seen in this thesis, theorists like Dölling, Heuer, Kuczynski, Lekschas and Kräupl spoke of a conflict between the development of the individual and social requirements in actually existing socialism. They suggested that socialist society, which, according to the orthodox Marxist-Leninist view, was supposed to create the conditions for individual development, was a block on individual development in the GDR.

In particular, Kuczynski, Hanke and Dölling were sharply critical of the working conditions of many GDR citizens, thus implicitly rejecting the official view that the sphere of work alone could provide conditions for the individual's development. Like Bahro, they suggested that the individual compensated for his negative work experiences by aggressively pursuing his own interests in his leisure time. Hanke and Dölling suggested that this problem could be solved by matching work-tasks more precisely to individuals. Theorists, including Dölling, also spoke of the need to overcome the traditional division of labour which socialist society had inherited from capitalism. Like Bahro, Dölling specifically referred to the disadvantageous position of individuals caught at the bottom of the hierarchy of labour functions.

Some literary theorists, creative writers and Heuer argued that, contrary to the official propaganda, the GDR citizen was neither given adequate opportunity, nor sufficient information to participate in the social decision-making processes. He therefore tended to withdraw into the private sphere. Similarly, Dölling warned that the individual would withdraw into the private sphere, if the coincidence of social and individual interests was not apparent to him.

Dölling, Heuer and Hanke all argued that official policy should be based on the specific individual with his specific interests, capabilities and needs resulting from his unique psychological make-up, rather than on an abstract, theoretical individual with assumed interests and needs. They also challenged the traditional official view, which implicitly considered the individual as primarily an object of theoretical study or of political education.

Although it is impossible to prove a relationship of cause and effect between these discussions and SED policy, one can perhaps say that the intellectuals prepared the climate for official policy to acknowledge social trends which it was not in a position to control. The intellectuals also provided the politicians with the ideological arguments to legitimise apparent about-turns in policy.

Reading the works of the radical critics and the other theorists, one is struck by the fact that they often describe the same negative phenomena in GDR society: the excessively hierarchical nature of their society, the lack of openness and discussion in the GDR, the lack of individual fulfilment at work and at leisure, the political ritualism and the consumerism of GDR citizens. The

difference between the radical critics and other theorists therefore does not lie so much in their analysis of GDR society as in the degree of radicalness of their proposed solutions. A theorist became radical, that is went beyond the limits of officially tolerated criticism, if he drew political conclusions from his observations of GDR reality and proposed solutions which implied a change in the political status quo. The radical critics were radical precisely in that they extrapolated from the conflict between the individual and society a conflict between the 'rulers' and the 'ruled'. The GDR leadership quite correctly perceived this to be a questioning of the legitimacy of their rule and a threat to their position and dealt with the radical critics accordingly.

Over the period under study the official line developed in response to pressures inside and outside the GDR. The seventies and eighties saw a gradual erosion of Marxist-Leninist ideology until it was pared down to little more than the maintenance of the legitimacy of SED rule. As Gransow and Krisch predicted (1), the non-communist elements of the dominant political culture became more influential in the GDR.

Under Honecker official policy became more biased towards the actual needs and interests of the citizen, and the SED gradually conceded more freedom of action to the individual in the private sphere. This was largely for pragmatic reasons. It, for example, promoted an increase in the quantity and quality of goods and services ultimately in order to boost the productivity of the workforce through material incentives; it extended private ownership of land to promote agricultural output and liberalised leisure activities in order to maintain the political quiescence of the population. Recognising that it was impossible to regulate all

activity in the private sphere, the SED permitted the watching of Western television, the following of Western fashions and music, and individual-based leisure activities. The only condition for this increase in individual freedom laid down by the SED was that the GDR citizen at least publicly support its policies.

SED policies under Honecker were clearly designed to promote individualisation rather than individualism, but did they in fact lead to a form of individualism which would seem to be at odds with the collectivist Marxist-Leninist ideology, to which the political leadership still publicly adhered?

The term individualism implies that primacy is given to individual over social interests. The well-documented trend towards consumerism, the lack of real political commitment and conspicuous consumption in the GDR suggest that GDR citizens did, indeed, usually put their personal interests before the wider social interests in the leisure sphere where they had relative freedom of choice. In this sense they were individualistic. Some of the younger writers such as Stephan Ernst were also individualistic in the sense that they had little regard for the wider social interest and were almost exclusively interested in the individual and his introverted world.

In the seventies Kuczynski's thesis of antagonisms in actually existing socialism was first adopted by a minority of theorists in the academic journals and then later tacitly adopted by official theorists in the eighties. Whilst the radical critics spoke of an antagonism between the political leadership and the population, insider critics such as Heuer, Lekschas and Dölling were careful to adhere to the official public line that there could be conflicts

between specific individuals and society, rather than between the individual and society in general. According to the insider critics, individualistic behaviour, for example crime and conspicuous consumption of material goods, occurred when certain individuals tried to solve social problems themselves or reacted negatively to social problems.

The thrust of the arguments presented by most theorists considered in this thesis was that official policy should place greater emphasis on the individual, his needs, interests and problems. They called for individualisation rather than individualism, for more emphasis to be placed on the individual, whilst maintaining the dominance of social over individual interests. This is not surprising since they espoused the basic principles of socialism, including the primacy of the social over the individual. Almost all stressed that collective solutions should be found to most problems facing individuals, because they were problems pertaining to society as a whole, because they had a social basis and because only society had adequate resources to ultimately resolve them.

The recognition of subjective rights in socialism by GDR theorists in the period under study was not a return to individualistic positions, but reflected the growing awareness of the need to develop the potential of each and every individual in socialism and the need to prevent the growth of the bureaucracy, so vehemently attacked by the radical critics. The majority of the legal theorists were primarily concerned with developing a theory of subjective rights to optimise the contribution of the individual to fulfilling the goals set by the party, rather than with setting up a system by which the individual could assert his rights against the state.

It has been seen that the internal critics of the official line often put forward controversial, if not oppositional views. They presented 'negative' phenomena of GDR society, such as the withdrawal into the private sphere, consumerism or the informal socialising of young people, for discussion, arguing that these phenomena were potentially useful to socialism, or that the analysis of them was an essential precondition for the further development of the GDR.

They made these views more palatable to the GDR leadership by often presenting their arguments in the traditional, Marxist-Leninist language and by suggesting that the translation of their concepts into official policy was ultimately in the social interest. They argued, for example, that the implementation of their suggestions would encourage the development of socialist democracy, or lead to a more effective implementation of economic and cultural policy.

In the period under study there was, then, a pattern. The radical critics bluntly stated the problems regarding the individual's status and his development in socialism and proposed radical solutions, which posed a threat to the leading role of the party. The established critics took up these same problems, but in a more subtle way, and proposed less radical solutions. Over the period under study official theorists began to concede the existence of some of these problems. They also sometimes moved from a position of attacking certain phenomena in the GDR as bourgeois to later legitimising these same phenomena as compatible with the socialist way of life.

What can these debates tell us about the nature of GDR society under Honecker? In this period the GDR system clearly had a number

of totalitarian features, including what was in effect a one-party system, a powerful state security and state apparatus, the repression of certain freedoms of expression, demonstration and religion and the censorship of the media. However, GDR society was not totalitarian in the sense that the state apparatus was all-powerful and all-pervasive. The individual had increasing freedom to organise his leisure activities as he wished and to build his 'niche'. Contrary to the totalitarian model, the individual was not manipulated by the state in every aspect of his existence.

The totalitarian model implies that the individual can exert no form of pressure on the state. However, as we have seen, under Honecker the state went out of its way to accommodate social trends in order to maintain the population's goodwill. It was very conscious that it was competing with the Federal Republic of Germany for the hearts and minds of its population.

According to the totalitarian model, the ruling and totalitarian state cannot brook any form of dissent or discussion within its borders. It is of course true that the radical critics were either silenced in the GDR's own media or forced to move to the Federal Republic of Germany, but, as this thesis shows, there was a surprisingly broad range of sometimes controversial discussion within the SED itself and in GDR publications. In the seventies many previously taboo subjects were opened up for discussion for the first time in the GDR.

Given this breadth of discussion, the concept of totalitarianism is clearly inappropriate for GDR society under Honecker. The concept of 'Teilöffentlichkeit' is perhaps more useful, which implies different levels of discussion aimed at different

audiences. Whilst controversial discussion took place in restricted academic spheres, there was still adherence to the orthodox ideology in official pronouncements and in the high-circulation newspapers. Thus, whilst at one level there was considerable sympathy for Ulrich Plenzdorf and his work Die neuen Leiden des jungen W., the highest levels of the party pursued the traditional orthodox line. In a famous speech in 1973 Honecker accused Plenzdorf of imposing his own problems on society.

Furthermore, the totalitarian model does not provide for any form of change in the ruling ideology. Yet, as we have seen, the GDR leadership made numerous ideological concessions in the seventies and eighties in order to accommodate the population's needs and interests. The emphasis which the totalitarian model places upon the omnipotence and omniscience of the state apparatus and the leading role of the party implies that the party and state apparatus is firmly established. However, the rapid collapse of the GDR state after the opening up of the Berlin Wall exposed the real weakness of the SED.

Although there were various interest-groups in the GDR which sought to influence the decision-making centre, the GDR system clearly lacked the traditional features of a pluralist system. Authoritarianism is perhaps the best term to describe the mix of totalitarian and pluralist features in the GDR system, but it is important to remember that the limited pluralism documented in this thesis was at the level of intellectual debate in a limited forum, and that this debate did not always convert into policy reform.

Interviews with former members of the SED leadership since the 'Wende' inevitably contain an element of self-justification, but

they also give an interesting insight into the thinking behind the official policies and interpretation of the Marxist-Leninist ideology under Honecker. One of their major self-criticisms is that of subjectivity. They now argue that whilst the SED was supposedly making objective decisions in the social interest on the basis of its theoretical insight into the necessary development of society, its decisions were in fact totally subjective based on selected information in line with their own idealistic concepts (2).

Egon Krenz and Klaus Gysi have stated that the SED was misled by a false, idealised concept of the individual. It, for example, assumed that the higher the level of education and training, the more stable the development of the individual (3). Gysi has conceded that the SED also underestimated the length of time needed to fundamentally change the individual in line with the new society (4). This is official recognition that the theoretical concept of the socialist personality never became reality in the GDR.

Krenz partly ascribes the ultimate failure of the SED to the fact that it was not cognisant of the population's opinions and feelings. According to him, the Politburo lived apart from the general population and had such a low regard for public opinion in the GDR that it dissolved the GDR's public opinion research institute. He admits that the Politburo rarely had concrete analyses of the population's thinking and falsely believed that a modern society could be led purely by the will of the Politburo. Gysi states that although the SED took up the correct positions after the Second World War, like a teacher it tried to inculcate these into the population. Later on it proved difficult to progress from this 'teacher - pupil' relationship to a more equal, democratic relationship between the party and the GDR population.

These thoughts now voiced by former Politburo members echo those of the radical critics on the gulf between the SED leadership and the population, Dölling's and Heuer's frequent appeals to the party to analyse and plan policy according to the population's actual needs and interests and the writers' insistence on the validity of the individual's experiences. It is also an admission of the highly hierarchical nature of GDR society, which was attacked by the radical critics for being detrimental to the development of the individual.

If the arguments advanced by radical and insider critics proved to be highly relevant to the stability of the GDR, the SED leadership ultimately proved too inflexible to act upon them. In these circumstances even the SED's reduced aim of maintaining power became unachievable.

Footnotes

1. V. Gransow, 'The changing culture of popmusic in the GDR', GDR Monitor (no.17, Summer 1987), 30 - 47 (p.40); H. Krisch, 'Changing political culture and political stability in the German Democratic Republic', Studies in Comparative Communism, 19 (no.1, 1986), 41 - 53 (p.50).
2. E. Krenz, 'Die Karre steckte tief im Dreck', Der Spiegel (no.6, 1991), 54 - 91 (p.54).
3. K. Gysi, 'Das bessere Deutschland', Der Spiegel, (no. 15, 1991), 154 - 167 (p.158); Krenz, 'Die Karre steckt', p.56.
4. Gysi, 'Das bessere Deutschland', pp.158 - 160.

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